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Research Article

# Contradicting Strategy to Rural Resettlement: Analysis of Socio-Economic Rehabilitation Nexus Environmental Management at Adola Rede and Odo Shakiso in Eastern Gujii Zone

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to assess incongruity between resettlement strategies and environmental management at resettlement scheme of Adola and Shakiso in Eastern Guji Zone. This research is case study research design by its nature, which focus on resettlement practice and resultant environmental responses. Resettlers from four resettlement scheme in Adola and Shakiso were target groups. Then, sample respondents selected by using simple random sampling techniques from each kebele. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were the data gathering tools employed. Obtained information were analyzed by using SPSS and presented in simple statistical tools. It is investigated that, even though 44.1%, resettlers' had chance of owing their own land, the compensation made haven't helped them assist themselves in sustaining livelihoods. The resettlement practices were procedurally unplanned and environmentally devastating. The process of the relocation was socio-economically worthwhile but environmentally disparaging. Resettlers are reluctant in protecting big, old and sacred trees and wild animals being eager in the extension of size of their farm land. There was over consumption of scarce resources than its generation rate. From this, it can be concluded that, absence of close follow up in how to use forest resources and limited guidance in improving livelihood of the resettled community destroyed the virgin forest to the extent it becomes farm land.

**Keywords:** Resettlement; Environmental ethics; Resource management; Livelihood

## INTRODUCTION

Majority of the research work suggest that resettlement has as long history in human life. It has varying reasons and objective of the execution. For instance, Pankhurst [1], affirmed resettlement has been taking place to further a wide range of political, economic and social objectives. Ethiopia has been practicing population resettlement either planned or spontaneous since the imperial period [2]. During the dark days of the 1984-1985 famine, Ethiopia made plans to relocate virtually its entire rural population - somewhere between 33 and 37 million people [3]. And even it claimed as together they constitute one of the largest mass movements of people anywhere in the world. Moreover, recurrent drought and famine also aggravated resettlement in the country. The large forcible resettlement scheme under *Derg* regime was been criticized for its large social and environmental impacts.

In Ethiopian history, peasants have been relocated from north, north east and mainly central Ethiopia to less densely populated regions in the West, South and South-West of the country which were widely covered with Ethiopia's last remaining rainforests. However, most of the resettlement program in Ethiopia vividly depicts the absolute failure, harsh and ruinous life experience since 1970s [4]. Today, many parts of areas in pocket area of the country, basically areas that covered with dense forest resource is considered to be an area of destination of mass resettlers where Adola Rede and Odo Shakiso in Guji zone is part of this scheme. Any kind of resettlement without clear and inclusive planning, the outcomes of such type will bring irreversible social risks and environmental damages. For instance, clearing of tree species of sal (*Shorea Robusta*), Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus Tereticornis*), poplar (*Populus Deltoides* Marsh), and teak (*Tectona Grandis*) forests reduces carbon storage ranges from 101 to 156 mg/ha/year [5]. Consequently, it needs intervention of stakeholders, government and many individuals to use exhaustible and scarce natural resources sustainably where the country is practicing resettlement as a means of rescuing people from environmental stress and food insecurity.

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### General objectives of the study

The general aim of this study was to discuss contradicting practice of rural resettlement nexus environmental resource management at *Biluu* resettlement scheme at *Adola Rede* district

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Description of the study area

The study was conducted in rural kebeles of *Adola Rede* and *Odo Shakiso* district in *Guji* zone during 2015. *Adola Rede* is located at about 480 km from Addis Ababa, on the way to *Nagele* the capital town of zone **(Figure 1).** And *Shakiso* found at about 25 km at right side of the way to *Nagele*. And in the *Adola Rede* district, the research was incorporated three rural kebeles *Biluu, Gunaacho* and *Duda Goromsa* peasant association. And, from *Shakiso* resettlement, the reseacher took *Magado* and research study was carried out. Both districts are known for their high accumulation of mineral resources; where Gold at Laga Dambi and Tantalum is prominently known from *Shakiso* and *Adola Rede* district respectively. Majority of the area was covered with forest, though it is coverage continued to reduce with an alarming range due to population pressure. The vegetation surrounding the resettlement scheme comprises of different habitats namely forests, thicket, closed grasslands, as well as closed and open woodlands.

### Selection of sample informants

The selection of informants was done in different ways during the different stages of the study. Firstly, the kebeles to be studied put in separated strata (mainly four strata based on kebele's geographic location). This is based on the district's resettlement scheme that found at *Bilu, and Gunacho* from *Adola Rede*. From each strata proportional number of the resettlers identified using the formula mentioned here below. Accordingly, sample household was identified using sample size determination [6]. Thus it is to mean, sample size of the respondents from each kebele identified from each strata using the same formula. Thus, the total number of the respondents selected from four kebeles of the study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n=the desired sample size, N=the population size, and e=the level of precision/sampling error. According to above formula "n" for this study were calculated as follows;

According to the formula

$$n = \frac{354}{1 + 354(0.05)^2} = 148$$

### Sources of data and methods of data collection

**Sources of data:** The researcher used both primary and secondary data sources to carry out the study. Respondents were used as primary data sources while existing written documents and researches were used as secondary data sources.

**Data collection methods:** Primary data were collected through semi-structured survey questions for both statistical and qualitative analysis of the problem at each resettlement spot. As another option, in-depth interview were used as instrument of data gathering. The interview, which included semi-structured interview questions, was administered to local officials, development agents and other experts working in districts offices of social affairs. Accordingly, 5-10 respondents from each (four) study site was identified for the interview.

### Method of data analysis

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative data analyzing method. Answers to the survey questions was first transcribed and analyzed qualitatively with the help of statistical package for social science (SPSS version 20.0). The output of the computes presented using charts, graphs and percentages. Responses to interview were analyzed qualitatively and presented in narration.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

#### Imperfect plan vis-a-vis implausibility of sustainable resettlement

The issue of sustainability is very broad and complex in its nature. The process of relocating people is not environmentally safe

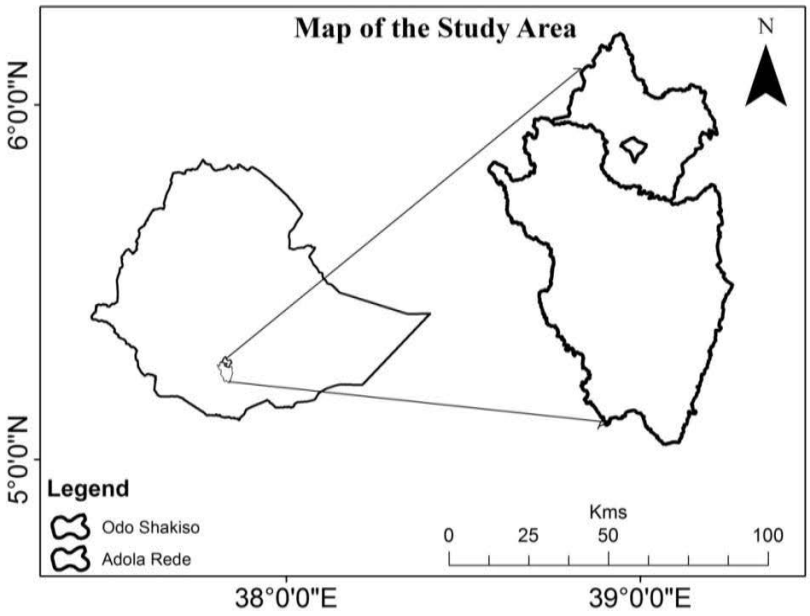


**Figure 1:** Outline map of the study area.

and socio-culturally sound. For instance, in contextualizing the resettlement practices of the study district, the practice of creating awareness among the community under move before they shift from their normal home to the resettlement area were imperfect. For instance, the resettlement practices were followed by socio-economic problems related to landlessness which have manifested in unequal and improper allocation of proper land. This is because, almost all (93.45%) of respondent tried to bring their close relatives from their home land to the resettlement area. Thus, as family size increased, farm or residence land size decreased. This incidence aggravated the over removal of indigenous trees (forest) just to expand farm land. Consequently, to expand farm land, the newly arrived settlers to the land of no pity on nature was resulted in cruelty clearance of forest resource.

In another case, social risks were joblessness. Even though joblessness can be permanent or temporary by its nature, this research focused solely on temporary one. As family size increase, the opportunity of properly feeding the whole family decreases. In this regard, land to be cultivated under a single household becomes smaller and smaller and the income failed to feed the whole family at once and consistently. Due to this reason, few young groups flee their home and move to the town nearby their resettlement area searching for a job of different kind. Muktar Aliy, the young boy at *Bilu* resettlement spot at *Adola Rede*, who came home few months before this research survey, explained joblessness by saying:

*"For the past five years that we have lived here as resettlers, we used to live somehow as happy family. We did not deficient in what to wear, what to eat and drink. And also we did not force to look for other's help. However, since last year, my father brought his brother with whole family and then now we are altogether 13 living together as a family. Thus, what we gain from farm land failed to feed us all and we became destitute. At the time, we lacked enough land to cultivate or no other off-farm jobs to be engaged in and help my family survive. Thus, I and my elder brother left this place in search of better job. We went to Shaakkisoo to Gold mine. Now we come back with little amount of money. We hope this can give relief to our family, but still it won't let us help the family pleasingly."*

### Struggle in livelihood improvement in the expense of unwise resource utilization

**Resettlement plans** must take environmental considerations into account in order to prevent any impacts that result from the development of infrastructure during resettlement. Moreover, priority has to be given to environmental protection from damage to reduce pressure on natural resources and ecologically sensitive areas. In all resettlement spots under study, the ecological crisis is deepening. Respondents claim, very little was done in executing training that help them work for their future good and leading sustainable livelihood An environmental impact assessment, and socio-economic induced impacts of resettlement on the host environment was rarely carried out at. Moreover, after they depleted one area, they moved to the new frontiers fertile forest area where they increased the degree of depletion of those resources.

Accordingly, from Figure 2, the number of resettlers who holds land size less than 1hectare in 2010 was 46.07% hurriedly reduced to 20.47% by the year 2016 with forest land conversion rate of 2.1% to agricultural land. Similarly, respondents with average land holding size of 1-2 hectare increased from 29.35% to 34.12% in the same year. Respondents with average land holding size of 3ha and above increased from 22.86% to 44.36%. Resetllers assume that environment they are living in has an unlimited supply of resources thus, they can consume for free. Thus, the assumption is direct indication of less sympathy to resources.

### Socio-economic challenges of the resettlers

Without proper planning and management, involuntary resettlement may result in long-term hardship for affected people and environmental damage to the locations in which they are resettled [7]. As, the first socio-economic problems related to the resettlement; these research gave priority to landlessness. It was identified that, as family size increased, farm or residence land size decreased. The other risk were, resettlers claim they temporarily lost shelter that last for few months to a year due to different reasons. Another part of challenge was when they claim there was slight difference in socio-cultural disparity, religious practices and economic status that brought the difference among the two counter parts. There was difficulty in sharing culture, religion, and norms for the first six months post resettlement. However, later on both sides tried to share all social tenets, where host community and the resettlers start to accept and peacefully live together. In that case, few people who were originally there and were not follower of any religion become Muslims while even few Muslims become Christians. Moreover, by far from what they sense and believe when they initially come there, now they started to be engaged and getting married to one another. Another part where the resettlers face challenge is temporal food insecurity. Food insecurity is dependent on people's capacity to afford imports; yet again emphasizing the importance of sustaining their level of income and earning potential [8].

## CONCLUSIONS

In all resettlement spots mentioned within the study area *Adola* and *Shakiso*, resettlement improved the livelihood condition of resettled households in multi dimensions. In the expense of unwise utilization of the natural resources, on average, majority

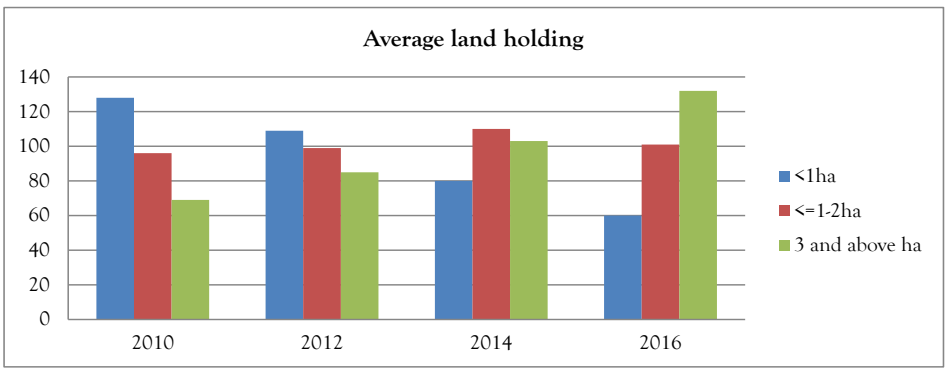


**Figure 2:** Extent of farm land change per two years; survey by researcher in early 2015.

of the resettled households produced more than the minimum requirement for members within the family. From the very beginning, resettlement programs, on the other hand, caused a huge destruction of forests in which almost indigenous trees cleared to expand agricultural lands. Moreover, bringing families from home land by the resettlers to the area of resettlement without the normal and legal consent of the local authority, exacerbated the over utilization of the forest resources. The resettlement practices were unplanned and environmentally unsafe. There were a number of social and cultural challenges that resettlers faced which includes joblessness, food insecurity, social and cultural disarticulation and homelessness for the past few years.

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