

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
School of Continuing Education

Thesis Project Report

On

**Seasonal Migration and Rural Livelihoods:
The Case Study of Bahir Dar Town and Three Rural Kebeles
in Amhara Region**

By

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School of Continuing Education

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts
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DECLARATION

I here by declare that the Dissertation entitled:

“SEASONAL MIGRATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS:
THE CASE STUDY OF BAHIR DAR TOWN AND THREE RURAL
KEBELES IN AMHARA REGION”

Submitted by me for the partial fulfillment of the M.A. in Rural Development to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) New Delhi is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier either to IGNOU or to any other institution for the fulfillment of the requirement for any course of study. I also declare that no chapter of this manuscript in whole or part is lifted and incorporated in this report from any earlier work done by me or others.

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This is to certify that Mr. Addis Alem Atalay, student of M.A (RD) from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, was working under my supervision and guidance for his project work for the course MRDP - 001. His project work entitled entitled

“SEASONAL MIGRATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS:
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GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
<i>Areke</i>	local alcoholic drink
<i>Ato</i>	<i>a</i> title used before the first name of a man which is equivalent to Mr. in English
<i>Birr</i>	Ethiopian currency
<i>Chat</i>	<i>catha edulis</i>
<i>Derg</i>	the committee of the provisional military government that ruled Ethiopia between 1974 and 1991
<i>Kebele</i>	lowest administrative unit in Ethiopia. It is also known as Peasant Administration (PA) in rural Ethiopia
<i>Timad</i>	unit of land, equivalent to one quarter of a hectare
<i>Wa/zero</i>	<i>a</i> title used before the first name of a married woman which is equivalent to Mrs. in English
<i>Woreda</i>	an administrative unit in Ethiopia that is below zones and above <i>Kebeles</i>
<i>Zone</i>	an administrative unit in Ethiopia that is below region and above <i>Woredas</i>

ACRONYM LISTS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ACSI	Amhara Credit and Saving Institution
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
BDCA	Bahir Dar City Administration
DFID	Department For International Development
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GIS	Geographic Information System
HH	Household
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDR	Institute of Development Research at AAU
IDS	Institute of Development Studies (at the University of Sussex)
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PA	Peasant Administration
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TB	Tuberculosis

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ABSTRACT

Seasonal migration of labour to Bahir Down Town and other rural areas is found to be an important component of the livelihood strategies of people living in the study area. This study aimed at examining the opportunities and challenges of seasonal migration of labour on the livelihoods of migrant people. To generate the necessary data, both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed.

Seasonal migration of labour in the study area is undertaken by many rural households so as to diversify households' portfolios, save and invest in rural areas, and reduce risk and vulnerability. The remittances obtained from this type of migration have served rural households to supplement their income from agriculture and alleviate the problem of land shortage and landlessness. In addition to the remittances, labour migrants bring back home some kind of items such as household utensils, consumable goods, clothes and educational materials. They are positively contributing to the development of the recipient area by supplying cheap labour power. On the other hand, they exert pressure on social services in the town, increase unemployment, and pollute the environment. The major factors that drive rural people to migrate for seasonal wage earning employment are attributed to economic, social and cultural factors. The availability of employment opportunities at destination and the attractiveness of the payment appear to be another major pull factor of seasonal out-migration of labour. The stream of seasonal out-migration of

labour is predominantly carried out to rural areas of other region. Most of them have earlier experiences of out-migration either to the same place or in other areas and they prefer rural to urban areas for their future out-migration and permanent residence. Migrants usually stay at destination from 1-5 months and the majorities migrate in September as this time is the peak labour demanding time at the destination. Because of their short stay at the destination, the skill acquired by migrants is negligible. The major problems in which labour migrants often face during their journey and at the destination are inability to get social services, social discrimination, labour exploitation, exposure to illnesses, misleading information, shortage of transportation, and robbery.

By considering the positive contribution of off-farm seasonal wage employment towards improving the livelihoods of the rural poor, the rural development strategy should be directed towards promoting a policy that maximizes the benefits incurred from labour migration and minimizes the risks and challenges associated with it. There is also a need to consider labour migration as an alternative livelihood option for the poor rural households in increasing assets, reducing poverty and alleviating the problem of farmland and landlessness.

Similarly, in Ethiopia, the expansion of industries, construction and service activities in major towns has attracted many rural people to flow to urban areas. Besides, due to natural and human induced factors, the rural parts of the country have been vulnerable to different socio economic problems. One of the coping strategies

pursued by peasants is, therefore, rural-urban migration. As the economic, political and social activities increased in Bahir Dar town, it has become the destination of many labor migrants. A large number of seasonal migrants work in urban informal sectors as casual laborers, head-loaders, and employed temporarily in the construction and service sectors during the slack periods of farming activities in their home areas and return in the peak agricultural season.