Rural Household Livelihood Strategies: Options and Determinants in the Case of Wolaita Zone, Southern Ethiopia

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Abstract
Due to severe land scarcity, high population pressure and recurrent drought, farm households in the study area widely engage in and pursue diverse activities as livelihood strategies. The carrying capacity of agriculture to attain food and livelihood security is extremely declining from time to time. Diversifying livelihood strategies at current time become a common phenomenon in the study area. The major objectives of this study are, therefore, to identify the existing livelihood strategies adopted by rural households and to assess factors that determine households’ decision to choose alternative livelihood strategies. For the purpose of this study primary data were collected from randomly selected 300 households in four woredas (districts) of the zone. Descriptive statistics was applied to characterize the sample households’ social, economic, demographic and institutional factors. The finding of the survey result indicates that rural households in the study area practice diversified livelihood strategies, in that large part of the respondents (57.7%) combine agriculture with other activities (non/Off-farm). Surprisingly, some farmers were pursuing non-farm and off-farm activities as the primary livelihood strategies rather than agriculture. Multinomial logit model applied to investigate factors influencing the household’s choice of livelihood strategies. In this regard, a total of 19 explanatory variables were included in the empirical model of which 11 were significant. These variables include agro-ecology, sex, education, farm size, livestock ownership, participation in social leadership, annual cash income, fertilizer use, improved seed use, age, and training which were determining farmers’ choice of livelihood strategies. The results of this study suggest that development interventions, policies and supportive services should be designed to suit the felt needs and circumstances of different groups of farmers.

Keywords
Livelihood Strategies, Rural Households, Ethiopia, Multinomial Logit Model

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Presentedat School of Graduate of Haramaya University. [26]. Household food insecurity was high in the study area compared to urban national level. Being single household


Rural Household Livelihood Strategies Choices: The Case of Humbo Woreda, Wolaita Zone, Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, Ethiopia. Shambel Bekele. Abstract.Â The main objectives of the study were, to identify the existing livelihood strategies choices in the study area and to identify the determinants of rural households’ choice of livelihood strategies. Both primary and secondary data sources were used and a total of 140 rural households were contacted. The study results reveal that majority (57.9%) of the sample households participated in agriculture plus non/off-farm livelihood strategies choices to pursue their livelihood. Petros Woldemariam, Department of Rural Development and Agricultural Extension, Wolaita Sodo University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia Vishak Gecho, Department of Rural Development and Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, Wolaita Sodo University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia. Received: Feb. 9, 2017; Accepted: Feb. 10, 2017. Factors Influencing Adoption of Soil Conservation Practices in South Gondar Zone: The Case of Farta District. An M.Sc. Thesis Presented to the School of Graduate Studies of Alemaya University. 129p. [25]. WorkichoJateno,2007.Contribution of Small-Scale Irrigation to have Household Food Security and Income: The Case of Koro Irrigation Schem, Arsi,Zone Unpublished M.A Thesis Presentatde School of Graduate of Haramaya University. [28]. Household food insecurity was high in the study area compared to urban national level. Being single household head, having more than two dependent members in the household, daily laborers of household head and low monthly food outlay had statistically significant relationship with


household food insecurity in negative direction. On the other hand, food security appraisals in Ethiopia have traditionally focused on rural areas, and urban food security problems have got little attention [9]. All household’s head in Wolaita Sodo town and all randomly selected household heads in selected villages within the town were source and study populations.
The study was conducted to assess local dairy cattle production and reproduction performances in rural community of Wolaita Zone, Southern Ethiopia from January to May 2015. Multistage sampling method was used and it was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The collected data was analyzed statistically using SPSS (version 20) for windows. Determinants of rural household livelihood diversification strategy in South Gondar Zone, Ethiopia. Journal of Agricultural Economics, Extension and Rural Development, 4, 548–560. Dev, T., Sultana, N., & Hossain, M. (2016). Analysis of the impact of income diversification strategies on food security status of rural households in Bangladesh: A case study of Rajshahi district. American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Business, 2, 46–56. Di Falco, S., Bezabih, M., & Yesuf, M. (2010). Rural Farm households’ income diversification: The case of Wolaita Zone, Southern Ethiopia. Social Sciences, 5, 94–105. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ss.20160506.13. Kumar, S. Y. (2006). So, we were interested to assess food insecurity and its determinants in the rural households in Damot Gale Woreda, Wolaita zone, southern Ethiopia. Cross-sectional household survey was used to collect primary data from 155 randomly selected households; focus group discussion and key informant interview were conducted. The data analysis techniques involved both descriptive and bivariate and multivariate logistic regression analyses. The strategy followed in this research is concurrent triangulation to explain concepts, characteristics, descriptions and measures to express situations of the issue. Data sources and methods of collection. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to collect data from both primary and secondary sources.