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Title >> **The Dynamics of Resettlement with reference to the Ethiopian Experience**

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Date of Publication >> 2009

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Abstract

This paper is a summary of a thesis submitted to the Kimmage Development Studies Centre, Dublin in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MA in Development Studies. The paper focuses on the dynamics of resettlement with reference to the Ethiopian experience. Because of rapid economic growth, population pressure and the degradation of natural resources, the resettlement of people to new locations has become a dominant development discourse in many parts of the world. Research evidence suggests, however, that many such initiatives have not brought positive results. Broadly, there are two divergent arguments as to why resettlement often fails to improve the situation of the people concerned. Some argue that it is an inherently complex process, emanating from unfair wealth distribution. Others, on the contrary, say that it is an inevitable consequence of development and that what matters is the presence of efficient and effective frameworks to plan and implement it. The aim of the research I conducted in 2006 in a government-sponsored resettlement scheme in Southern Ethiopia was to assess these arguments, with the help of empirical evidence provided largely by the affected people themselves. This evidence suggested that the resettlement scheme had both positive and negative aspects.

This paper argues that resettlement could be a viable strategy for solving the pressing problem of food insecurity in Ethiopia, but if it is implemented on a large scale, without in-depth feasibility studies, proper planning or adequate resources, it could have multiple negative impacts, both on resettlers and the environment. Resettlement may indeed offer improved livelihoods for those who move voluntarily, provided it is done on a manageable scale with sufficient government resources; that it is implemented within a relatively small geographical area and within a relatively homogeneous ecological zone; and that it is planned and executed with proper care and support for the resettlers.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Focus

Over the last few decades, resettlement in Ethiopia has been adopted as a strategy to alleviate various socio-economic problems. The resettlement programme that was in progress during 2003-2005 was intended to provide food security for those suffering from a lack of food due to land shortage and the ecological deterioration of their home areas. My research focussed on Boreda resettlement scheme in Ethiopia's Southern Regional State. The scheme comprises two villages, called Gumgumta and Dugana-Gamero, and the total population resettled by February 2004 was about 3,000 persons. My research aims were to:

• understand how the resettlers were adapting to their new situation (were they adapting positively or negatively and what new institutional arrangements had been put in place?);

• explore qualitative differences in the livelihoods of resettlers, in order to understand the impact of new strategies, particularly in relation to food security;

• examine if resettlement is an effective response to food insecurity in the light of current debates.

1.2 Methodology

A qualitative approach was utilized for the research, mainly because it allows flexibility with regard to the choice of research tools, instruments and research procedures (Sarantakos 1993). Flexibility was important because of the complexity and political sensitivity of the proposed research.

Different methods were used to collect relevant data from the field, government offices and other sources. The methods used were observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussion. Twelve persons participated in key informant interview and two groups each with 6 persons took part in focus group discussions. Case studies were also used to analyse the community's own perception of its situation and to consider in detail the activities of the resettlement program and the people's efforts to ensure food security. Samples were selected to include representatives from the different strata of the resettlers (e.g., single person households, women headed households, those who performed well and those who performed less well, persons from the host community, and women).

1.3 Limitations of the Research

The resettlement program was designed with the expectation that the resettlers would be self-reliant in one to two years. Many argue, however, that it takes much longer to ensure self reliance after resettlement (Rahmato 2003). As a result, it is difficult to draw conclusions based on such a relatively short time period, other than by looking at trends, as Rahmato points out, "it is too early to assess the current settlement program, partly because settlers relocation was initiated very recently, and partly because there is very little information, at least in the public domain, about the execution and progress of the program" (2004, p.27). Therefore it should be noted that the findings of this research are limited to presenting trends and do not draw concrete conclusions concerning the long term impact of the resettlement scheme.

With the available resources and designated timeframe, the scope of the research was focused on one out of about eight resettlement locations in the Southern Region. In addition, the research did not include a visit to the resettlers' place of origin and did not, therefore, catch the view of the community they left behind. However, the situation of the resettlers, both in their place of origin and resettlement location, was thoroughly explored to capture the change between their past and present situations, as viewed by them.

Although various methods were employed to enhance rapport with the respondents, some were not open enough to give precise information on some issues mainly because of the political sensitivity of the scheme.

1.4 Terms and Concepts of Displacement

Resettlement, land settlement, colonization, or transmigration all refer to the phenomenon of population redistribution, either planned or "spontaneous". In the Ethiopian context, the first term seems to be the more appropriate as it suggests relocating people to areas other than their own. "Resettlement" implies moving people or people moving to new locations. In Latin America, the term often employed is "colonization" which implies opening up or reclaiming lands for utilization. "Transmigration" is favored by those writing on the Indonesian experience; the word is meant to suggest cross-ocean or cross-island relocation (Rahmato 2003).

From the point of view of state policy, the notion of movement may serve to differentiate resettlement from two other policies: 'villagisation', where the basic notion is regroupment, which may or may not involve moving significant distances; and 'sedentarisation', which aims to settle mobile populations, usually herders, a process which need not involve moving them away from the area in which they are living (Apthorpe 1966 cited in Pankhurst 1992).

Chambers suggests that "resettlement is characterized by two main features: a movement of population; and an element of planning and control" (1969, p.11). In its broader definition, people may be involved in resettlement either on their own initiative or under external circumstances which force them to do so. The manner in which people resettle to a new land on their own initiative may be called 'spontaneous resettlement'. If the resettlement is imposed on people by an external agent in a planned and controlled manner, it may be called 'planned resettlement' (ibid). My research is concerned with state sponsored resettlement in Ethiopia, which may be described as 'planned and controlled population movement under state control'.

2. The Ethiopian Experience of Resettlement

The last three governments of Ethiopia have all carried out resettlement projects with different objectives and with varying intensity but, broadly speaking, the premises on which each justified the need for resettlement were similar, at least in theory.

2.1 Resettlement under the Imperial regime

In the 1960s and 1970s there were a few settlement schemes run by some government departments and non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, these were invariably small in size, *ad hoc* in nature, and were mainly designed to achieve specific and limited objectives (Berhane 2003).

At that time state-sponsored-resettlement was largely undertaken to promote two objectives. The first of these was to rationalize land use on government "owned" land and thus raise state revenue. The second was to provide additional resources for the hard pressed northern peasantry by relocating them to the southern regions (where most government land was located) which were mainly inhabited by what were regarded as 'subordinate populations'[1] (Rahmato 2003). It was seen as a viable program because it was believed that it would expand the farmed area of the country and thereby increase gross agricultural production. It was also recommended as a means of creating employment and of addressing the problem of the growing excess labour force. The settlers comprised landless peasants, evicted tenants, pastoralists and shifting cultivators, urban unemployed and ex-servicemen (Pankhurst 1992).

Yet it was hard to claim it was successful, since it often failed to meet the intended objectives. In brief, settlement costs were high, the rate of success was low, and the viability of a number of schemes was under question. Some assessments noted specifically that the difficulties stemmed from the inadequate planning of programmes, inappropriate settler selection, inadequate budgetary support, and inexperienced staff (IEG cited in Rahmato 2003)

2.2 Resettlement under the Derge

Planned resettlement gained currency and gathered momentum after the commencement of the revolutionary process in 1974 (Berhane 2003). The government believed that resettlement would provide a "lasting solution" for the 'hard-pressed' peasantry, and particularly for the population living in the drought prone areas. It was conceived as a primary measure to rehabilitate victims of famine. For instance, the

1. People belonging to the minority cultural groups who are commonly referred to as Nilotic or Nilo-Saharan, and many of whom live in western and southwestern Ethiopia (Rahmato 2003).

planned relocation, involving hundreds of thousands of afflicted people, took shape in the immediate aftermath of the 1984/85 famine and was greatly hoped to provide a durable solution for the victims (Pankhurst 1992). The policy was first initiated, therefore, as a means of dealing with the famine problem, but gradually issues of population pressure, food production, land use, etc, became major justifications (Rahmato 2003).

Resettlement under the Derge, however, encountered a series of setbacks and a host of problems. Rahmato (2004, p. 24) sums up this experience as follows:

> In the period 1984-86, the Derge resettled some 600,000 people mostly in the lowlands of western Ethiopia. In this same period, some 33,000 settlers lost their lives due to disease, hunger, and exhaustion, and thousands of the families were broken up. It is estimated that close to half a Billion Birr was spent on emergency resettlement, but the cost of damage caused to the environment, of the loss of livestock and other property, or of the distress and suffering caused to numerous people and communities will never be known.

2.3 Resettlement under the EPRDF

Following the ousting of the Marxist military regime, with the exception of a few isolated attempts to relocate people, it seemed that planned resettlement was indefinitely suspended for some years. Recently, however, the EPRDF government appears to be in favor of launching planned resettlement schemes, primarily to tackle the chronic food insecurity problem in some parts of the country. According to official statements, voluntary resettlement is viewed as a major and essential component of endeavours aimed at addressing the paramount problem of food insecurity in Ethiopia (GFDRE 2001).

It is believed that voluntary planned relocation of vulnerable individuals and households is instrumental in ensuring their food security while at the same time easing overwhelming pressure on the fragile resource base in the highlands in particular (GFDRE 2001). Therefore the government considered resettlement as the cheapest and most viable solution to the problem of food insecurity on the basis of (a) availability of land in receiving areas, (b) labour force of resettlers, and (C) easing pressure of space for those remaining behind, especially after three years (Abbute 2004).

However, implementing state-sponsored resettlement schemes is inherently complex (De Wet 2004). Experiences in Ethiopia, elsewhere in Africa and the world over show that things often go wrong with resettlement operations unless they are managed with meticulous care

(Cernea 1996). It is only a short time since the recent resettlement program was embarked upon under this government but some critics have started to claim that it is being hastily executed without thorough preparation. They urge all concerned parties to take the necessary precautions to avoid negative humanitarian and ecological consequences (OCHA-IRIN 2005 and Rahmato 2003).

3. Development-Induced Resettlement

3.1 The Objectives and Practices of Resettlement

Across the world, resettlement schemes have been undertaken for various purposes. They are often supposed to facilitate the implementation of a rural development policy – e.g., new roads, dam construction, the implementation of land tenure reform, the intensification of agriculture, the protection of wildlife, and the preservation and exploitation of timber resources (Evrard and Goudineau 2004). Resettlement in relation to such high investment projects may be undertaken as a form of compensation for the displacement of populations whose lands have been taken over.

Often resettlement projects have also been aimed at relieving population pressure and land shortage, and promoting land consolidation and sound agriculture in areas of high population density. The emphasis here is on the rationalization of natural resources, particularly land. In contrast, one may speak of the rationalization of populations, which refers to population relocation for the purpose of developing "new" or "underutilized" lands (i.e. colonization) (Rahmato 2003).

Resettlement has frequently been undertaken to rehabilitate populations that have been adversely affected by natural disaster, unfavorable climatic conditions and/or political conflict (Rahmato 2003). The large scale resettlement scheme undertaken in Ethiopia in the 1980s by the *Derge* regime and the current intra-regional resettlement program come into this category. Both were based on the premise that resettlement can be a durable means to relieve environmentally degraded and drought-prone highland areas, and to utilize 'abundant' agricultural land in lowland parts of the country to ensure food security.

The official objective of resettlement schemes in Ethiopia, both in the past and current regimes, as stated in various documents, was to prevent famine (or attain food security) by moving people from drought-prone and over-crowded areas to sparsely populated regions and unoccupied virgin lands (Yntiso 2002). In some instances resettlement in Ethiopia has been employed as a strategy to sedentarize nomadic pastoralists and shifting cultivators. The objective is, according to officials, to settle the scattered and mobile communities in concentrated settlements and provide them with improved agricultural inputs and other services. They are often expected to adopt the plough and abandon shifting cultivation (Yntiso 2003). In such instances one can argue that resettlement is planned and executed as a means of speeding up the integration of ethnic minority cultures into dominant national cultures. The word 'resettlement' thus refers to a double process: *deterritorialization*, which not only means leaving territory, but for many nomads also entails changing their whole traditional way of life (ecological, cultural,

technical); and *reterritorialization*, which implies not only settling in a restricted environment but also accepting and integrating into the cultural references that are bound up with it (Goudineau 2000 cited in Evrard and Goudineau 2004).

Apart from its declared objectives, resettlement may advance multiple socio-economic and political agendas in accordance with the vested interests of various actors. Some have emphasized, for example, that the Ethiopian government's resettlement project of the 1980s advanced a political agenda, alongside its explicit socio-economic objectives. It has been argued that the *Derge* sought to remove populations from Tigray that might have been supporting the TPLF (the then opposition fighters) while providing garrisons against the Oromo Liberation Front in the west (Pankhurust 2004). In addition, although the resettlement was officially portrayed as a response to famine, the overall decision to establish resettlement in remote locations may have been partly driven by perceived political advantages, such as controlling outpost regions (Yntiso 2003).

Generally, when a community is relocated, it is not simply lifted up and set down whole in a new site. In most cases the community is reconfigured in specific ways. Most development projects, especially those that occasion the large-scale resettlement of populations particularly in rural areas, directly or indirectly further two fundamental processes: the expansion of the state and integration into regional and national market systems. Neither of these processes of inclusion is particularly simple or straight forward, but, in most instances, provokes a restructuring of social, economic, and political relationships toward the priorities of the larger society (Oliver-Smith 1996). The emerging political institutions in Boreda resettlement schemes support this assumption. For example, the Kebele administration is the unit which governs all social, economic and political affairs in the villages. It is the one to allocate land, to distribute provisions, to enforce law etc. Compared to the situation in their home areas, therefore, the resettlers are under closer government scrutiny with regard to their day to day undertakings.

3.2 The Manner of Displacement

The manner of human displacement is often broadly categorized as either voluntary or involuntary (Hansen and Oliver-Smith 1982 and Cernea and Guggenheim 1993 cited in Yntiso 2004). This conventional distinction is commonly used in the literature on resettlement.

It is a feature of many parts of the so-called 'third world', especially in the more remote and ecologically marginal areas, that human activity is to a large extent controlled by nature. In order to cope with the prevailing

natural constraints while undertaking their livelihood strategies, people move periodically between different areas and ecological zones. Some of the common forms of movement include hunting and gathering, shifting cultivation, nomadism, and transhumance. These types of movements can be considered as the traditional forms of movement in many parts of the world (Parnwell 1993).

Involuntary displacement, on the other hand, is commonly planned and executed by external agencies without peoples' genuine consent. On the basis of these distinctions, Yntiso (2002) defines involuntary migrants as people who are intimidated or forced to leave their habitual environment or place of origin. Such forms of movement may be enforced by the prevailing political, environmental or developmental circumstance.

Terms used in association with such forms of involuntary movement include refugee, evacuee and resettlement (Parnwell 1993). Parnwell further defines resettlement as the process whereby people are displaced from their home by such phenomena as natural disasters (volcanic eruption, drought, earthquake, typhoon etc.) and various infrastructural projects (such as reservoir and air terminal constructions etc.). They move to a new location and, generally, are given assistance by government in order to establish themselves there.

Although most resettlement schemes in many parts of the world are said to have been undertaken on the basis of peoples' genuine consent, they are often criticized for their coercive nature. In addition, the situations under which people make 'decisions' to resettle greatly influence the manner of their displacement. For instance, large scale relocation following natural or human-made calamities must be considered as involuntary resettlement since the settlers involved were either too powerless to refuse participation in the program, too shocked to use their judgment properly, or unaware of the prospects ahead (Rahmato 2003).

For instance, in the context of the 1980s resettlement in Ethiopia in the aftermath of the 1984-5 famine, Pankhurst argues that "in times of crisis, particularly of famine, a much larger number of people express a 'willingness' to resettle. In many ways, of course, this is not a genuine willingness but one promoted by desperation and lack of choices" (2004, p.115). Therefore one can conclude that, in most cases, planned and controlled resettlement is a form of involuntary population movement because, given the choice, the movers would generally have preferred to stay (Parnwell 1993).

Nevertheless, some argue that the two conventionally distinct forms of displacement – voluntary and involuntary - fail to highlight the specific conditions of resettlement. Indeed it is widely recognized that this distinction is more theoretical than empirical (Guggenheim 1994 in

Yntiso 2004). In an attempt to tackle this limitation Yntiso (2004) has proposed a modified conceptual tool capable of capturing most population movements. The approach identifies four major types of relocation: voluntary, induced-voluntary, involuntary or forced, and compulsory-voluntary.

He further defines each as follows (2004, p.106-107), and I quote:
Voluntary resettlement occurs when the migrants have the power to make informed and free relocation decisions and the willingness to leave their original place.
Induced-voluntary movement takes place when people leave their place to resettle elsewhere due to deliberate acts of inducements perpetrated by outside agencies. Although the migrants may maintain decision-making power, the facts on the basis of which their decisions are made are provided and analyzed by other agencies.
Involuntary migration refers to the forcible uprooting of people from their original place of residence. The agents of force could be natural disasters and/or humans
Compulsory-voluntary migration occurs when people embrace forced removal out of desperation, and when voluntarily resettled people are denied the right to leave the resettlement area.

3.2.1 The Manner of Displacement – Boreda Resettlement

Based on the above analysis, between 2003 and 2005, conditions under which the people moved to the sites in the Boreda resettlement could be characterized as 'compulsory voluntary', for the majority of settlers who decided to resettle mainly as a result of 'push factors' such as land shortage and unemployment; 'induced voluntary' for those who opted for resettlement mainly as a result of government promises; and 'voluntary' for the remaining very few resettlers who decided in favor of resettlement as a means of enhancing their household asset base.

When we look at the manner of resettlement in Boreda resettlement areas, no use of force or intimidation during the recruitment process was reported by the respondents. However the attractive promises of the government was considered as a 'pull factor', particularly for those who may have deserted at an early stage because of their unmet expectations. In interviews and focus group discussions it emerged that those who did not regret their decision, despite unmet expectations, were influenced more by 'push factors', such as a lack or shortage of land and unemployment in their home areas.

Given the length of time they have stayed in the areas (since February 2004), the resettlers seem to have made up their minds to stay. Almost all

the research respondents reported that they would not leave, though this view may have been more informed among the Gumgumta village resettlers, since they have already stayed for a long time without government support. The Dugana-Gamero village resettlers, on the other hand, have been getting government support in various forms and no one can be sure how withdrawal of this support would affect resettlers' decision to stay or leave. Although the initial decision of the resettlers was partly affected by government promises, this is no longer relevant as a 'pull factor', at least for Gumgumta resettlers. Currently, for the great majority of resettlers, access to fertile land and sufficient grazing appear to be the most significant 'pull factor'

3.3 Displacement – Social and Economic Impoverishment

In order to minimize, if not avoid, the risks associated with the displacement of people, one requires theories which are capable of explaining how displacement may lead to social and economic impoverishment. In this regard there are at least two views as to why things often go wrong in displacement and resettlement. According to De Wet (1996) these may be called the 'inadequate inputs' and the 'inherent complexity' approaches respectively. The following sections attempt to elaborate these approaches in some detail.

3.3.1 Impoverishment, Risks and Reconstruction

When people move to a new place in a planned and controlled manner, they are faced with various challenges in adapting to the altered circumstances. The unique ecological, social, economic and cultural situations in which they have to settle require diverse adaptive strategies. Often this adjustment is difficult and bears multiple risks. Cernea (1996) argues that, in order to mitigate these risks, the identification and application of a viable conceptual framework is of paramount importance. He has consequently proposed an 'Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction Model' (IRR) to help in the analysis and prediction of risks in relation to forced displacement.

Initially, this model was developed to explain 'development-induced' forced displacements. However, although he did not claim that his model also captures the situation of host populations, it has gradually been adapted to other forms of displacement and to the analysis of implications for host populations (Yntiso 2003). According to Cernea, this theoretical model can provide a 'magnifying lens', capable of making visible unfolding causal mechanisms that otherwise would remain obscured. It helps to reveal trends, trade-offs, and contradictions in development, and it focuses attention on actors, either as *risk-generators* or as *risk bearers*, and on their social behaviors (Cernea (undated)).

According to the IRR model, development-induced displacement may lead to eight forms of socio-economic risks: unemployment, homelessness, landlessness, marginalization, food insecurity, loss of access to common property, erosion of health status, and social disarticulation. This model captures not only economic but also social and cultural impoverishment, reflecting the fact that displaced people lose natural capital, human capital and social capital (Cernea 1996).

With reference to De Wet's distinction between the 'inadequate inputs' and 'inherently complex' approaches in explaining the failure of most planned resettlement schemes, Cernea's IRR model emphasizes the 'inadequate inputs' approach. Cernea (undated) argues that impoverishment processes are *potential* risks in displacement, not necessarily inevitabilities, but most often these risks materialize into actual, real processes of impoverishment because they are not pre-empted or reduced through up-front counter-risk strategies and reconstruction plans. This clearly suggests that viably conceived, planned and implemented displacement will not have adverse effects on the people concerned. This approach tends to conclude that resettlement goes wrong, principally because of a lack of the proper input: national legal frameworks and policies, political will, funding, pre-resettlement surveys, planning, consultation, careful implementation, and monitoring (De Wet 2004).

3.3.1.1 Impoverishment, Risks and Reconstruction – Boreda Resettlement

As revealed by my research, the preparation, recruitment and implementation process of the Boreda resettlement was similar to the previous government's resettlement programs. It suffered from inadequate inputs, unsound planning, poorly observed criteria, rushed out feasibility studies and inefficient village administration. According to one of the key informants interviewed,

> before our departure the government officials told us many things. They explained to us about the existence of abundant, fertile, and virgin land in the proposed resettlement area. They promised us that every one of us would get a minimum of two hc. [hectares] of fertile farm land and 0.1hc garden field. But I only got 11/2 hc of farm land which is less productive and located at two different places.

Another key informant further pointed out that,

> the village leaders do not treat all the resettlers equally. They often tend to favor those from their home areas. They also seem to make unfair decisions in favor of some individuals who have closer relations

with them. I think this needs immediate attention of the concerned authorities.

There were serious limitations of financial, material, and logistical resources at all levels, which inevitably constrained the proper implementation of the program. Most basic services, such as veterinary services, education and health services, were poor in quality and sometimes inadequate to serve the needs of resettlers. Desertion of the resettlers at the initial stage was also largely aggravated by the inadequacy of support. Dugana-Gamero resettlers in particular found themselves in a worse situation than before they moved and they attributed this to improper planning and inadequate funding on the part of the government.

As pointed out by one of the key informants interviewed,

the government has not kept its promise. it was hard for us to cope with the situation without the promised support of the government. We have told you that our farmland was full of trees and shrubs, the roots remained in the soil. Hence we could not dig with a hoe. But we were given an ox late after the first farming season.

According to the IRR model, therefore, the direct and indirect consequences of development – in this case development-induced population displacement – which harm the lives and livelihoods of people are avoidable, and the harmful effects can be mitigated through more enlightened national and international policies. On the other hand the implementation of poorly designed resettlement projects may exacerbate the stresses occasioned by uprooting people from 'environments of trust' (Mc Dowell 1996).

By and large, the 'inadequate inputs' approach embodies a fundamentally optimistic view of planned resettlement. Proper policy, political will and provision (particularly funding) can overcome the problem of the inadequacy of inputs, and the impoverishment risks can then be turned into opportunities for reconstruction, such that resettlement becomes resettlement with development, leaving the resettled people better-off than before (Cernea 2000 in De Wet 2004). However, some criticize this approach as broadly economic and technical in character (Koenig 2001 in De Wet 2004).

3.3.2. The Complexity of Resettlement

The 'inherently complex' approach views resettlement as a complex and problematic undertaking by its very nature. The frequent failure of planned resettlement essentially originates from the unique characteristics of involuntary resettlement as a development policy.

According to De Wet (2004), involuntary resettlement has five characteristics. First, it involves imposed special change which has cultural, social, political and economic implications. Second, it usually involves a change in the pattern of people's access to resources. Third, resettled people find themselves in larger and more heterogeneous settlements than before. Fourth, it involves people in wider structures. And fifth, it involves accelerated socio-economic change which is beyond the capacity of people to cope with. De Wet (2004) further argues that due to the combination of these factors, resettlement tends to lessen people's material well being, limit their choices and control over their circumstances, and increase the presence of social tension and conflict within new settlements.

3.3.2.1 The Complexity of Resettlement – Boreda Resettlement

In the Boreda resettlement scheme, according to a key informant from local government, of the 565 household heads who arrived initially, 172 left in just a few weeks. Reasons given by the participants included unmet expectations, the hostility of the environment, lack of medical care and shortage of water. The physical environment of their home area is very different from that of the new settlement. The former is characterized by a cold climate while the latter is hot. According to informants, the resettlers' earlier cultural practices, socio-economic activities and physiological needs were very much influenced by the highland ecology with which they were familiar before resettlement. The sudden change to what they saw as an inhospitable environment made the resettlers' first experiences very difficult. As pointed out by one of the respondents,

> *Initially, many of us were shocked and uncomfortable by what we were experiencing and observing immediately in the aftermath of the resettlement. The shelters we were provided to live in were poorly constructed. The climate is hot which is very different to our home area. Mosquitos and other insects were a problem at night.*

Respondents reported that some resettlers became sick due to the sudden shift from a highland environment to a lowland one; many of them were exposed for the first time to health hazards caused by endemic diseases such as malaria, which is rampant in and around the resettlement area.

Resettlement often imposes conditions on people that may completely transform their lives, evoking profound change in the environment, productive activities, social organization and interaction, in leadership and political structure, and in world-view and ideology (Oliver-Smith 1996). These fundamental changes, to which the resettled people need to adapt, pose challenges which are often difficult or impossible to cope with, at least in the first period of resettlement.

Pankhurust asserts that "resettlement is a complex process that involves intricate combinations of social, political and economic factors that render the outcomes difficult to predict and manage….resettlement often follows a somewhat unpredictable and uncontrollable logic of its own" (2004, p.113). The various actors involved in the schemes with their different interests and motives, the varied circumstances under which resettlement takes place, the relation between various stakeholders, etc.- these and other factors contribute to the complex nature of resettlement. According to De Wet, therefore, the 'technical fix' nature of the 'inadequate inputs' approach is incapable of preventing all the threats associated with resettlement.

> However necessary 'adequate inputs' are, there are complexities in resettlement that cannot be dealt with in this manner. It is not simply a matter of getting better legal frameworks, policies, planning, etc. Complexity (not just complicatedness) requires us to start from open-endedness, and flexibility, rather than from the boundedness of frameworks and procedures that are dictated by policy (De Wet, 2004, p. 66).

3.3.3 Resettlement Outcomes

Another classification of approaches to development-induced resettlement, made by Dwivedi (2002) cited in Morvaridi (2004) seems essentially the same as the above two positions. He argues that the discourse broadly falls into two perspectives- the 'reformist-managerial' and the 'radical-movementist'. The managerial approach treats displacement as an inevitable consequence of past and future development and its central focus of analysis is on how to manage the inadequacies and failings of resettlement, to minimize negative impacts. This view is essentially in line with Cernea's IRR model, which emphasizes the formulation of strategies that will reconstruct or protect the livelihood of those subject to 'involuntary' displacement.

The 'radical-movementist' position does not hold with such determinism, considering displacement as evidence that development can contribute to the uneven distribution of benefits and resources. This approach does not suggest how resettlement can be executed better, but rather questions its very legitimacy by raising concerns around fundamental political issues, such as rights and governance. The bureaucratic system within which displacement is managed and the legislative definitions and practices that it adopts tend to work against local people and deny them rights to protect their economic and social well-being. Opponents of displacement document negative outcomes in order to deconstruct displacement, to critique the development structures that support it and to highlight problems of development (Dwivedi 2002 cited in Morvaridi 2004).

3.3.3.1 Resettlement Outcomes – Boreda Resettlement

In terms of household food self sufficiency and the outcomes of the Boreda resettlement, the Gumgumta resettlers were more successful than the Dugano-Gamero resettlers. The suitability of the site, the proximity of resettlers to their home areas (intra-Wereda), the opportunity to maintain regular contact with their home area, and earlier livelihood experience were the major factors accounting for this differential success.

From my observations and respondents' accounts, the major factors contributing to the relative difference in the performance of the two villages in agricultural production were both human and natural. For instance, the soil in Gumgumta is fertile and has adequate drainage and the area received relatively good rainfall during the last few farm seasons. Rainfall in Dugana-Gamero over the past three seasons, however, has not been reliable. In the first season it was too little and in the next two seasons it was too much.

The major human factor that affected the success of the resettlers was their knowledge of the area and their past livelihood experience. All the resettlers of Gumgumta village came from within Boreda Wereda. Therefore, because of the proximity of the village to their earlier homes, all had a good knowledge of the new place. Gumgumta village, furthermore, shares a similar agro-ecology with their former home villages. This gave them a big advantage in adapting to their move to a new place. Another advantage they had was that they were able to maintain regular contact with their previous home areas. As pointed out by the key informants interviewed, they were still considered members in their home villages and were able to maintain their existing social networks and thus continue to benefit from their existing social capital.

The resettlers of Dugana-Gamero, on the other hand, were drawn from different Weredas and the climatic conditions and agro-ecology of their new village was very different from that of their original homes. As they pointed out, the agricultural practices they were accustomed to were very different from those of the new area. Whereas they formerly cultivated using hand tools, they now had to learn how to use oxen ploughs. For some, even, farming was a new experience, since they had depended on off-farm activities such as weaving, for their livelihoods. Those from the highlands were accustomed to eat *ense*, barley and wheat products, none of which were easily available in the new village.

Due to the factors discussed above, Gumgumta resettlers were better able to cope with the immediate resettlement experience and were able to make rapid progress towards achieving food self-sufficiency, at least in the short term. The Dugana-Gamero resettlers, in contrast, faced multiple stresses, with the result that they still receive government food support

in various forms and are still far away from producing sufficient to feed themselves. In terms of household food self sufficiency, the Gumgumta resettlers were more successful than the Dugano-Gamero resettlers. As opposed to Dugano-Gamero resettlers, the suitability of the site, the proximity to resettlers to their home areas (intra-Wereda), the opportunity to maintain regular contact with their home area, and earlier livelihood experience were the major factors accounting for the success of the Gumgumta resettlers.

4. Conclusion

A dominant consensus tends to prevail that resettlement and population displacement are unavoidable. In a market led economic world, more infrastructural development and further environmental degradation which could force people to relocate seem inevitable. Similarly, with the rapid annual population growth rate of 2.31 percent and considerable economic growth (8.9 percent GDP estimated for 2005) it is likely that resettlement will also continue in Ethiopia, both spontaneously and through state initiated programmes (CIA 2006).

Given the complexities of the food security, population, political and ecological challenges in Ethiopia, the 'radical-movementists' position – avoiding resettlement altogether – does not seem a viable option. On the other hand resettlement needs to be considered only after all other alternatives are exhausted. From the research, it seems that resettlement may indeed provide improved livelihoods for those who move voluntarily, provided it is done on a manageable scale with sufficient government support; provided it is implemented within a relatively small geographical area and within a relatively homogeneous ecological zone; and if it is planned and executed with proper care and support for the resettlers.

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