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VOLUNTARY VILLAGIZATION SCHEME (VVS) FOR TRANSFORMING SEMI-PASTORAL COMMUNITIES IN BENISHANGUL-GUMUZ REGION, NORTHWESTERN ETHIOPIA: CHALLENGES AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

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ABSTRACT

The main intent of the Voluntary Villagization Scheme (VVS) is to collect a scattered settlement pattern of rural populations onto a nucleated form of villages to sustainably supply rural communities with social and economic infrastructures so that they can improve agricultural production and productivity. This helps the villagized communities overthrow rural poverty and Chronic Food Insecurity (CFI) and ensure the sustainability of the livelihood and food security in rural areas. However, this goal is achieved if and only if the scheme is appropriately implemented according to the guideline of villagization action plan. Thus, this study was aimed at assessing the extent of implementation, challenges, consequences and development indicators of VVS in Benishangul-gumuz Region (BGR) during the past two years. To achieve this objective, the data were collected from the annual report on the overall implementation of the scheme from the regional government, case studies, key informants and field observations. The result shows that the scheme was under-implemented at 56.4% with regard to clustering of the households, forces were applied to some extent during relocation of resettlers and major principles of VVS were only partly respected. Moreover, people in some villages refused the scheme and still remained there. While some basic infrastructures were only partly supplied, others were incomplete and others such as road infrastructures were totally nonexistent. The under-implementation, low capacity of implementers, attitude and lack of will of villagers, inappropriate site selection, gaps in promise and practice, and continued poverty and CFI were found to be major challenges to VVS in the region. The environmental consequences such as deforestation and intensive grazing are also added to these. Despite those challenges and consequences, the vehicles to development-i.e. socioeconomic service and road infrastructure developments indicate that there is an opportunity for future sustainable development that will be reflected in sustainable livelihood systems and food security in the new villagization sites. Therefore, it is recommended that the scheme should be further planned and implemented in those areas that haven't been considered. However, there is a need for careful and critical follow-up of the implementation process of scheme.

Keywords: Villagization, Implementation, Challenge, Consequence, Development indicators, Benishangul-gumuz Region

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The year 2003 marked the revitalization of population relocation strategies of resettlement and villagization (R&V) by the government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). Resettlement by Emperor Haile-selassie and both R&V by the Derge were of course attempted although ultimately failed. In any case, resettlement aims at redistribution of populations from resource deficit and overcrowded areas to resource rich but sparsely populated areas of the country (Terefe & Ignatius,

2012). In a similar fashion, villagization scheme is aimed at collecting scattered households into selected nucleated villages to improve their access to social, economic and administrative services. This later topic, villagization is, therefore, the concern of current study, specifically in Benishangul-gumuz region (BGR). Thus, it is essential to overview the historical existence of R&V in Ethiopia and hence in BGR.

The beginning of population relocation in Ethiopia as a strategy to transform rural population dates back to the period of Hail-Selasie I, most probably in 1958 (Messay, 2009). But others generally suggested the commencement of this strategy to be during the early 1960s. In both cases, it seems that the beginning of resettlement in Ethiopia revolves around the period 1960s. Obviously, while resettlement programme was launched in 1984 by the Derg regime and extensively implemented following the 1984 -1985 famine of Ethiopia (Sandra, 1987; Kloos, 1990), villagization was initiated one year later in 1985 (Messay & Bekure, 2011) although Sandra (1987) argues that both R&V equally began in 1984. A village was, therefore, planned to host 200 – 300 households within a $100m^2$ compounds.

Accordingly, the Derg had extensively implemented both R&V programs in Ethiopia since 1984. As Ofcansky & Berry (2002) cited in Messay & Bekure (2011), by l986, about 4.6 million people in *Shewa*, *Arsi*, and *Hararge* had been relocated into more than 4,500 villages; by 1989, about l3 million people were villagized throughout the country with the exceptions of two administrative regions (the then *Kifle-hagers*) of Tigray and Eritrea in the process of villagization. During the same period (i.e. by March 1986), about 800, 000 people were, forced to move from their Northern highlands and, collected in a selected sites far in Southwestern part of Ethiopia (Sandra,1987). On the other hand, villagization programme which started in 1984 on a relatively small scale, had accelerated its pace due to national complain launched in 1985 and by February 1987, about 5.7 million people (15% of the rural population) had been moved into 11,000 new villages. In addition, by the end of this year, 10 million rural inhabitants (25 percent of the population) are expected to be villagized in 12 of Ethiopia's 13 provinces with the objective of creating the necessary "preconditions" for agrarian socialism, and facilitating the provision of human social services by concentrating scattered homesteaders into central communities (Sandra, 1987). Researchers found that the R&V programmes were more of political than ecological and socio-economic arguments (Sandra, 1987; Lorgen, 1999; Hilhorst & Leeuwen, 2000). Sandra found that the programmes were hastily designed for militarization of the communities in resettled villages to defend opposition parties such as Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in Wollega and Gambella People's Liberation Front (GPLF) in Gambella district. There was a hidden political agenda of 'militarization of the Ethiopian communities through R&V programmes during the Derg regime in order to be able to weaken the guerrilla fighters of the time. With this and other objectives such as 'agrarian socialism' (Sandra, 1987), the Derg relocated people forcefully. However, some facts showed that there the majority of the resettlers from the Northern part of the country during the Derg were relocated on their will/voluntary basis, for example, resettlers of Anger-Guten in Eastern Wollega (Zelalem, 2009). As a result, the programme failed manifesting itself into the process of returning of the villagized people to their previous areas perhaps fled to other countries and lived in refugee camps as the case found in Sudan by Sandra. Abbute (2000, 2004) attempted to study the impact of resettlement in Beles valley, Metekel zone of BGR like any impact assessment study, but not focusing on villagization. Moreover, specifically the social impact study in the same areas was conducted (Abbute, 2009).

Theoretically the current R&V programmes are, therefore, revitalized accounting those problems committed during the Derg regime (New Coalition for Food security in Ethiopia, [NCFSE], 2003; Benishangul-gumuz Regional government, [BGRG], 2010). The R&V schemes in both regimes (the Derg and the FDRE) are of course attempted with generally similar pretexts of promoting rural development and ecological arguments (Sandra, 1987; NCFSE, 2003) and specifically to reduce households' poverty and food insecurity problems. Whereas resettlement was mainly inter-regional during the Derge, with regard to villagization both the Derg and FDRE are similar in that both pursued intra-regional approach. The regime of FDRE took the voluntary villagization scheme (VVS) as a strategy of transforming the livelihood of settlers and ensure food security by providing socio-economic and infrastructural delivery and solving the problems committed by the Derg on a voluntarily principle through intra-regional approach (NCFSE, 2003). As such, in principle basic rural infrastructures, including the social and economic services, according to the policy document of NCFSE (2003) should be made available at the destination ahead of relocating the people. The R&V schemes were suggested to be based on four pillars and 13 principles (NCFSE, 2003; Yntiso, 2005). The four major pillars are voluntarism, availability of under-utilized land, consultation with host communities, and provision of minimum infrastructure. On the other hand, partnership, community participation, transparency of program design, and development are some of the 13 principles.

The new Ethiopian voluntary resettlement programme (VRP) which founded a base for VVS was devised in November, 2003 (NCFSE, 2003) because the 1990s marked the theoretical demise of forced resettlement and late the citizens to freely decide on their own fate (Zelalem, 2009). The intra-regional resettlement has the aim of resettling 400,000 households from four regions (Amhara, Tigray, Oromiya and SNNP) on voluntary basis (see NCFSE, 2003). According to Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC), until 2011, about 228, 343 (52%) of potential resettlers (440,000 households) had been relocated and of these about 220,801(97%) have become self sufficient in food supply and/or food security (Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission, [DPPC], 2011). What matters is whether the pillars and principles were appropriately pursued; challenges are minimized, its consequences are at least reduced, some developments are brought or not. Yntiso (2005) indicated that generally there were gaps in this regard in Ethiopia. Moreover, Yntiso (2004) tried to assess the causes for the failure of resettlement scheme in Metekel. Most resettlement projects usually end up with negative consequences such as health hazards. In this regard, Kloos (1990) in his study of health status of resettlement in Ethiopia found malaria and other health hazards, in addition to psychological stress, in new villages than in the origin area. Moreover, the ecological/environmental implication of resettlement is immense, which for example, the loss of wildlife and forests around Ager-Guten in Wollega (Zelalem, 2009). In contrast, in some resettlement areas, many resettlers are very happy and successful. For example, Zelalem (2009) in his assessment study of Anger-Guten resettlement area found that the majority of them, mainly the Tigrians were successful and decided to remain there forever. Messay (2009) in his study of the status of resettlers in Nono district (Central Ethiopia), also found that resettlers were sufficiently endowed with basic infrastructures and ensured their food security by attaining nationally set minimum dietary requirement, which they had never had in their origin areas.

Similarly, Villagization is a rural-based strategy primarily aimed at gathering pastoral and semi-pastoral communities in Afar, Somali, Gambella and Benishangul-gumuz regions on a voluntary basis. It was planned to villagized about 1.5million people by 2013 and relocations started in 2010 (BGRG, 2010; HRW, 2011). It aims at, besides supplying basic rural infrastructures

and socio-economic services, helping them lead a sedentary way of life (NCFSE, 2003). Of course, its implementation particularly in BGR has started since September, 2010 and is a part of Benishangul-gumuz regional food security strategy (BGRFSS) designed in 2004. However, there has not been a study on villagization scheme both at national and regional as well as local scales in Ethiopia. This is the motive for taking up the current study at least in BGR.

From the above discussions, one can note that the cause of population relocation in the form of both R&V tends to vary. These may be giving way to development projects like dam and road construction, political discomfort, industrialization and urbanization, or the attainment of food security (Lawson, 1968; Kalitsi, 2004; Scudder, 1965; Owalepo, 2008; Mberengwa, 2010 cited in Terefe & Ignatius, 2012) and their effects on the affected populations also vary (Terefe & Ignatius, 2012). In Ethiopia, the need for these schemes is ensuring sustainable food security through ensuring sustainable supply of development vehicles (the socioeconomic services and other infrastructures such as road, telephone and electric power) (NCFSE, 2003; BGRG, 2010).

Likewise, the aim of the VVS is to transform the living condition of pastoral and semi-pastoral communities of these regions sustainably by improving their access to socio-economic services on the principles of voluntarism (NCFSE, 2003; BGRG, 2010). BGR is comprised dominantly of semi-pastoral communities, whose livelihood is mainly dependent on both arable and livestock farming, among others. The majority of farm households in the three administrative zones (administrative units lower than region but larger than 'woreda'), namely Assosa, Kamashi and Metekel, are living on the most traditional ways of living, a prominent examples being the Gumuz, the Berta, the Mao and the Komo ethnic groups which are still practicing hunting and gathering activities as well as shifting cultivation in the remotest areas (see Benishangul-gumuz Regional Food Security Strategy, [BGRFSS], 2004; Guyu, 2011). Moreover, the settlement pattern of the people in the region is highly scattered and is not suitable for implementation of development programmes (BGRG, 2010; Guyu, 2011). As a result the majority of people in the region are living much far away from social, economic and other infrastructures and majority are food insecure in many parts of the region (see BGRFSS, 2004; Guyu, 2011). Thus, the government seems to have observed this situation and planned VVS as a strategy and begun to implement it since September, 2010. The regional food security strategy document of BGRS mentions VVS as one of the strategies to ensure the food security of rural households (BGRFSS, 2004). Thus, the VVP was prepared in harmony with the principles and pillars of the national R&V programmes devised in 2003 (see NCFSE, 2003). The current VVP is expected to pursue the regional villagization programme implementation manual devised in Sept, 2010 (Sept, 2003 Ethiopian Calendar, [EC]). Therefore, villagization taken as an integrated component of food security strategies is supposed to promote and encourage people to participate voluntarily and on a participatory approach (BGRFSS, 2004). Accordingly, since its commencement in September, 2010, the implementation of VVP had attained about 61% within two years of implementation period-i.e. between November, 2010 and May, 2012 (ETV news, May, 2012) as opposed to the current findings of 56.4% in the region. However, what matters is whether the process of practical implementation has been voluntarily or forcefully, villagers are informed, promises by the government are fulfilled ahead, etc or not, as these are the most basic principles to the effective and efficient achievement of both R&V schemes (NCFSE, 2003, BGRG, 2010). The current study, therefore, aims at examining the process of implementation of VVS in BGR so as to understand how well it has been going on, the awareness and attitude of villager towards it, the challenges it

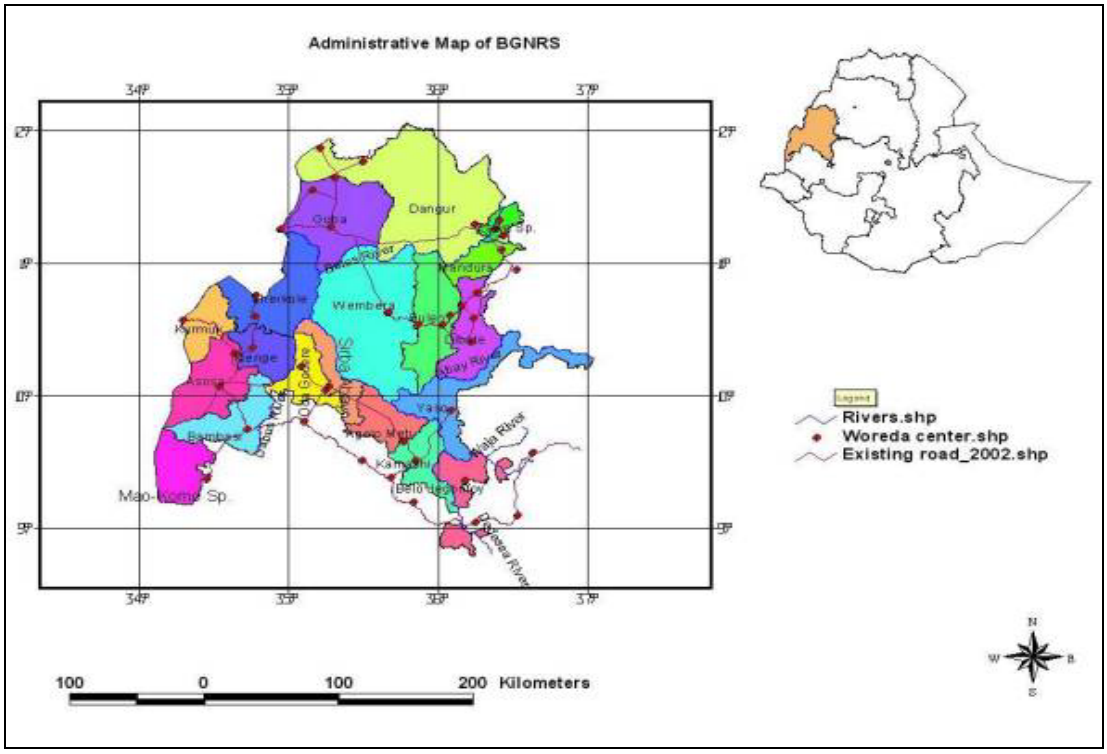
faced, its development indicators and finally its policy implications so as to suggest some possible remedies for the future. Thus, the following basic research questions are employed to guide the study:

- Are social and economic services provided as per the plan in the study area? To what extent were these implemented? Are the programme implemented in accordance with the basic principles of voluntary villagization?
- What are the major challenges of the programme? Did the government implement the promises timely? Were there returnees after villagized to original homesteads? What are the major socio-economic and environmental consequences of the programme? Did the concerned bodies attempt to create awareness about the programme and its benefits among the potential villagers?
- What development indicators have been emerged due to villagization? What is its implication for sustainable development?
- What is the attitude of villagers and capacity of implementers toward the programme?

THE STUDY AREA

Benishangul-gumuz Regional State is one of the nine regional states established in 1994 by the new constitution of Ethiopia that created a federal system of governance. According to BGRFSS (2004) the region is located in the western part of the country between 09.17^{0} - 12.06^{0} North latitude and 34.10^{0} - 37.04^{0} East longitude. The region has international boundary with the Sudan in the West and is bordered by the Amhara region in the North and Northeast, Oromiya in the Southeast and South as shown on the following map. The regional capital, Asossa is located at a distance of 687 km west of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. The region has a total area of approximately 50,380 km^{2} with altitude ranging from 580 to 2,731 meters above sea level (masl). Agro-ecologically, it is divided into Kolla about 75% (lowlands below 1500 masl), Woina Dega about 24% (midland between 1,500-2,500 masl) and Dega about 1% (highland above 2,500 masl). Annual rainfall varies from 800 to 2000 mm. The temperature reaches a daily maximum of 20^{0} C to 25^{0} C in the rainy season and rises to 35^{0} C to 40^{0}C in the dry season. The hottest period is from February to April. The minimum daily temperatures range from 12^{0}C to 20^{0}C, depending on season and altitude. Based on CSA abstract of 2007, the total population of the region is about 670,000. The population density is about 11.5 persons /km^{2}. This implies that there is extensive unoccupied land area in the region. The average number of family members of a household in the region is 6.7. Of the total population, 92.2% lives in rural areas and 7.8% is urban population (BGRFSS, 2004). According to the same source, the population composition of the region has diverse ethnic groups five of which are indigenous. The indigenous ethnic groups in their order of population number are Berta (26.7%), Gumuz (23.4%), Shinasha (7.0%), Mao (0.6%) and Komo (0.2%. Significant numbers of Amhara (22.2%), Oromo (12.8%) and others (7.1%) also reside in the region. Significant numbers of resettlers brought to the region from various parts of the country as a result of the national resettlement program conducted by the past government are found. The religious affiliation of the population of the region is Muslim (44.1%), Orthodox Christian (34.8%), traditional religions (13.1%), Protestant Christian (5.8%), Catholic (0.5%) and others (1.5%).

Figure 1.Administrative Map of Benishangul-gumuz Regional State



Source: BGRFSS, Bureau of Finance and Economic Development,2004

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Effective implementation of VVS is a key to tackle problems of poverty and CFI of vulnerable communities in a country, first by establishing a nucleated villages and then building social, economic and administrative institutions in those villages. One way of effective implementation of VVS is providing villagers with sufficient information in order to aware them about its potential benefits. However, it doesn't mean that awareness creation alone will result in effective achievement of VVS. Rather the promises proposed to the potential villagers must be implemented if VVS is to be achieved effectively. Otherwise it will become deceiving the villagers temporarily, which may ultimately accompanied by failure as the case during the Dege. However, there is a doubt that the implementation of current VVS is going in line with the principles of voluntarism, particularly in BGR. Empirical observations and informal information point out that there is mismatch between the principles of the VVS and ways of implementation at grassroots levels by local authorities. Therefore, the gap exists between the principles and the process of implementation. So, this will inevitably threaten the success of the scheme. Thus, all actors of the programme at all levels and other development agents involved in rural development need to understand the bottlenecks to its achievement in order to take a remedial action. The findings of this study, therefore, are expected to provide empirical evidences on the problems that may cause the potential failure and overall achievement of the VVS to policy makers. Thus, based on these empirical evidences and suggested policy recommendations, the stakeholders are expected solve the existing challenges and maintain the sustainability of the programme so as to contribute to GTP of the country.

CONCEPTUALIZING VILLAGIZATION AND THEORETICAL MODELS FOR ANALYZING

The concept of villagization may seem overlap with resettlement as many researchers used in literatures. For instance, Mhando (2011) alternatively use them as if they were the same. Similarly, Messay & Bekure (2011) use resettlement and internal displacement as if they were similar concepts joining them by conjunction, "or" while they have certain difference within some sort of similarity. In this conjunction, resettlement and villagization conceptually overlap while they have also differences. Although villagization is an aspect of resettlement, it involves the relocation of scattered dwellings and settling in mostly similar geographic and administrative units. In this regard, the capacity of resettlers to readjust new environment is less complex than that in resettlement. Some authors for example Hilhorst & Leeuwen (2000) use the concept of villagization without mixing with resettlement and treated it as distinct concept from resettlement. This seems correct utilization of the concept as it has its own defining character that makes it different from resettlement although they overlap conceptually in certain uses. Of course, there are points where they overlap and where they differ. Theoretically, all forms of settlement readjustment, including villagization, inevitably involve resettlement, be it voluntarily or involuntarily, planned or spontaneous. Resettlement has been defined by several authors in almost similar expression. Piguet & Dechassa (2004) defined it as a planned or spontaneous redistribution of population. Asrat (2006) equates resettlement, land settlement, colonization, or transmigration all referring to the phenomenon of population redistribution, either planned or spontaneous. Messay & Bekure (2011) although equating with internal displacement, define resettlement by modifying from UNHCR (2004), as a process that involves the fleeing of a person or a group of persons from their usual residence to new area forcibly or voluntarily. In all cases, the movement of individuals or group of people and voluntarism in the definitions are the principles shared by resettlement and villagization. Although literatures on villagization are highly scarce, the existing ones defined it as the process of gathering scattered form of settlements into a predetermined center or site either voluntarily or forcibly (Sandra, 1987; Mhando, 2011; Messay & Bekure, 2011). This article shares this definition of villagization as it involves establishing nucleated villages to deliver social, economic and administrative services intended to be implemented on a voluntary basis. As such, the models, approaches and conceptual frameworks to study both R&V should inevitably overlap each other following the above premises.

Development planning at national, regional or local levels and/or urban or rural areas needs selection of appropriate theoretical approaches and models. It is because these theories and approaches that serves as a foundation for selection of appropriate strategies that would be adopted and implemented. Thus, there is a need for reviewing some theoretical approaches and models that explain development, paves ways to select appropriate framework for the analysis of current data. Accordingly, development thinkers suggest different but integrated strategies for urban and rural transformation. For example, in Ethiopia, the economic development strategy that has been functional for longer period of time is the Agricultural-Development-Led-Industrialization (ADLI). This strategy is assumed to bring about significant changes in rural areas and would lead to economic development in Ethiopia. However, it couldn't have brought the expected transformation in rural areas of the country. It seems that the currently the government has understood this failure of the strategy that led it to gradually shift to Industrial-led development strategy. Accordingly, there are two different strategies namely villagization in rural areas and micro and small scale enterprises (MSEs), implemented in parallel both in urban and rural areas. Thus it is essential to overview some models/framework and approaches that underpin the study of R&V.

The belief that rural development cannot be brought without villagization scheme (Mhando, 2011) has dominated the development models and approaches of those nations that used to adopt villagization. Those models prioritized villagization are mostly associated with the minds of policy makers of many developing countries mainly African governments. Mhando (2011), for instance, tries to explain how rural development without villagization would be jeopardy in Ujamma villages in Tanzania. Such a belief is of course ignoring the experience of some developments of rural areas around the world without adoption of villagization programme. Moreover, centers selected for villagization are believed to act as a springboard for development. The Ujamma villages in Tanzania, for example, were seen as the springboard upon which much change would emanate, thus enabling the attainment of higher production levels and the elimination of poverty (Mhando, 2011). But, the programme ultimately failed even in Tanzania due to inappropriate planning and implementation processes (Sakamoto, 2003). The same was true in Ethiopia where R&V schemes started, extensively implemented and ultimately failed during the Derg regime due to ill-planning and inappropriate implementation, mainly based on involuntary basis (Sandra, 1987). Therefore, successful implementation of VVS partially requires addressing the major principles of Voluntarism and implementation of promises (BGRG, 2010), otherwise accompanied with serious failure.

The most recent and dominant model adopted by several authors for analyzing population relocation of any type, be it resettlement or villagization, is the one first suggested by Cernea (2000) and later modified and used by others (Collins, 2009). The model is termed as the Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model and is mostly based on the 'inadequate inputs' approach (DeWet, 2004). This approach, which basically employs IRR model, recognizes that forced relocation/resettlement of people is usually accompanied by ecological, social, economic and cultural impoverishment and may be reconstructed through viable intervention policies. Although criticized for its incompleteness, the IRR model has got currency in analyzing resettlement programs (Collins, 2009). The 'inadequate inputs' approach theorizes that the impoverishment risks occur due to inadequate supply of necessary resources in villages collected. This model is an eight factors framework that is open-ended so that any additional factor can be amended according to the local context. These factors are landlessness, homelessness, joblessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased morbidity and mortality, social disarticulation and loss of access to common property (Cernea 2000) cited in (Collins, 2009) and later added an eighth factor, loss of access to common property, was added later. Collins (2009) stated that the IRR model is criticized for its incompleteness as follows. Using cases from Colombia, the model was tested to assess its value as a framework and tool for policy and planning with regard to conflict-induced displacement (CID) by Mughah. As the model was designed to be used flexibly amending with relevant factors, researchers added relevant factors and tested the model in accordance with Cernea's own suggestion (Collins, 2009). This is because Cernea's IRR model was originally developed to reduce impoverishment of risks that might emerge mainly during dam construction or urban renewal projects. It is criticized for focusing on avoiding risk, ignoring the events leading to resettlement and the reasons for relocation, and over-emphasis on economics at the expense of human rights (Collins, 2009). However, although it is criticized for a highly generalized framework, this model is generally adaptable to local contexts. Thus, the IRR model is a basis for the analysis of resettlement study.

Reviewing general approaches adopted to ensure development objectives are important in employing the expected outcome of a given development strategies such as that of villagization. In short expression, development approaches can be top-down or bottom-up (Sakamoto, 2003) although the later being the most effective approach. For instance, with self-reliance,

villagization was pursued in Tanzania along with the concept of African socialism (Sakamoto, 2003) in order to create self-reliance for agriculture and provision of basic health and education services as supporting elements, but accompanied with not only economic but also with social and cultural failure. This is because the government implemented villagization in a top-down fashion in order to effectively move people into villages (Sakamoto, 2003). However, according to Sakamoto (2003) this approach of forcing people to live in villages disrupted the accumulated knowledge of the people and created them into mere laborers. In the first case, the policies and strategies are theoretically and in most developing nations practically designed and imposed onto the subjects at grassroots level for implementation. This is ignoring the inputs from the majority and/or the subjects to which development is assumed. The bottom-up approach is a complete contrary to top-down approach in which the lower level participation is highly important. Therefore whether the planning and implementation process of villagization program had involved villagers (both potential and receiving) or not, matters in achieving the aim of the programme. This is one of the issues this study is concerned with.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA

BGR is one of the nine federal regional states of Ethiopia located in Northwestern part of the country. The region is rich in virgin land where about 670, 874 population of which 86.5% i.e. 572,882 (CSA, 2007) is living highly scattered under the forest. The region is divided into 3 administrative zones and 20 ‘woredas’ (administrative unit lower than zone but more than ‘kebele’). Therefore, the current study assesses the overall process of plan and implementation, challenges and development indicators of VVS/VVP which has been practical since 2010 (2003 EC) in the region. The document survey and a case study design were employed to generate secondary and primary data respectively in order to achieve the objectives of the study. A cross-sectional design was applied because it is appropriate in assessing the current overall process of implementing VVS base on current information. The case study design involved the inclusion of case individuals for study and ways of approaching issues related to VVS during field studies through those case individuals. As such, the philosophical backgrounds of the study could be said a mixed method approach (pragmatism view point) which combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques of data capturing and analyses. Moreover, the interviewee would be confidential in that any information they provide should be secrete between the author and them. This confidentiality was secured by informing them that the study was conducted for suggesting a solution for better and practical implementation and sustainability of the scheme. Then, the informed consent of the key informants and case individuals was assured before the actual interview or discussion with them. This made ease to acquire sufficient data for the study.

Quantitative data were therefore drawn from annual reports on implementation of VVS by BGRG. The reports on the implementation of the scheme were, therefore, intensively employed in the article. There were two such annual reports on the implementation of the 2010/11 and 2011/12 periods which served as sources of secondary data. Although highly limited, such data were acquired from regional official reports and Dibate ‘woreda’ Agricultural and Rural Development Office (ARDO) during round the table discussion with the head. Moreover, primary data were collected from case individuals to cross-check the reports. Some key informants from relevant offices were also the source of information. In addition, qualitative data, on the other hand, were generated by arranging a key informant from Dibate, individual villagers from Sas and Chilanko villagization sites in Dibate and Bullen ‘woredas’ respectively, informal discussions with certain villagers in

Dibate, Bullen and Bolojingafoy 'woredas' and field observations using occasions that invite visiting of any villagization site. For example, such observations, in addition to the above sites, on Wondihan, Merertu-Lagabuna and Bary villages in Dibate and Lije village in Bolojingafoy 'woredas', have added significant insights to enrich the data obtained from reports and other primary sources mentioned above. Moreover, the author used telephone interviews with certain stakeholders in order to substantiate the data for this study. In general, 2 individuals in Sas village and 3 individuals in Chilanko village and an individual in Lije area were made involved in in-depth interviews as case study in addition to informal discussions here and there and supportive photographs taken during field study.

The data obtained from region's annual report was critically examined and analyzed using means and percents in order to draw conclusion. The findings from the reports are presented on tables and interpreted by crisscrossing with the qualitative data. The data acquired through these qualitative methods were carefully recorded, organized and analyzed qualitatively and interpreted with great care. The reports were also assessed and cross-checked with the field realities found from primary sources. Then, findings were presented qualitatively in words, and interpreted in the context of the problem, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were suggested to serve as a guideline for practical solutions of the problem by policy makers and implementers at the local level.

RESULT

VOLUNTARY VILLAGIZATION SCHEME (VVS) IN BENISHANGUL-GUMUZ REGION

The Plan and Actual Implementation

According to the general information got from the region, the actual implementation of the VVP has intensively started since February, 2011 although some 'woreds' might begin earlier or later. The process of collectivizing people into a nucleated village is, therefore, suggested to consider the major principles of VVS such as voluntarism, participatory, consultation of the community, preparation and so on. Thus, the following sub-sections are devoted to analyzing the processes of implementation of the VVS for the past two years (2010/11 and 2011/12) based partly on, annual reports of the region and, the author's personal observations and field studies.

Construction of Housing and Relocation of Selected Villagers

One of the preconditions for successful implementation of VVS is the preparation of housing for those households (hhs) to be relocated. This was intended to be effective through the participation of communities at different levels (BGRG, 2010). In this regard, the plan of 2010/11 (2003 EC) indicates 18,792 hhs that should have been villagized on a regional scale, but about 18,047 hhs (96.04%) of them were actually collected in 18 'woredas' and 93 villagization sites of the region (see table 1).

Table1. The Plan and Implementation of Housing construction for Voluntary Villagers by 'zone', 'woreda' and Number of Households during 2010/11 (2003 EC)

'Zone'	Woreda	No. of Villagization Sites by		No. Hhs for Relocation by		Hhs in Host site (b)	Total (a+b)	Status of Housing construction & No of Households			Achievement (%)
		Research	Woreda	Research	woreda (a)			Under construction	Finalized, but not occupied	Finalized& occupied	
Assosa	**Total**	**25**	**36**	**5796**	**7235**	**3872**	**11107**	**0**	**5**	**7230**	**99.9**
	%	**34.7**	**38.7**	**36.2**	**38.5**	**35.0**	**37.2**	**0.0**	**4.1**	**40.1**	**-**
	Assosa	6	6	1755	1084	368	1449	-	-	1082	100.0
	Bambasi	6	10	961	2915	902	3817	-	-	2915	100.0
	Menge	3	5	343	837	671	1508	-	-	837	100.0
	Kurmuk	4	3	167	148	420	568	-	5	143	91.2
	Sherkole	2	3	436	576	464	1040	-	-	576	100.0
	Oda-bildigilo	4	9	2134	1675	1050	2725	-	-	1675	100.0
Kemash	**Total**	**19**	**24**	**3811**	**4913**	**2436**	**7349**	**265**	**93**	**4216**	**85.8**
	%	**26.4**	**25.8**	**23.8**	**41.7**	**22.0**	**24.6**	**91.4**	**76.2**	**23.4**	**-**
	Kemashi	5	7	732	927	675	1602	76	-	796	85.9
	Sirba Abay	3	4	666	1444	192	1614	24	-	1422	98.0
	Yaso	3	5	453	741	483	1224	116	-	547	73.8
	Bologingafoi	3	3	1144	1061	767	1828	22	13	1027	96.8
	Agalo-Meti	5	5	946	762	319	1081	31	80	424	55.6
Metekel	**Total**	**25**	**29**	**5790**	**5915**	**4705**	**10620**	**25**	**24**	**5865**	**97.4**
	%	**34.7**	**31.2**	**36.1**	**31.5**	**42.5**	**35.6**	**8.6**	**19.7**	**32.4**	**-**
	Mandura	5	6	1273	1440	999	2638	-	-	1640	100.0
	Bullen	3	3	993	1109	499	1608	-	-	1109	100.0
	Wonbera	2	2	304	690	54	744	-	-	690	100.0
	Dangur	6	5	1206	510	187	697	-	11	499	97.8
	Guba	4	4	560	648	613	1261	25	13	609	94.0
	Dibate	5	9	1454	1345	2353	3671	-	-	1318	98.0
Mao-Komo sp. Woreda		**3**	**4**	**630**	**729**	**46**	**775**	**0**	**-**	**736**	**100.0**
%		**4.2**	**4.3**	**3.9**	**3.9**	**0.4**	**2.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**4.1**	**-**
Total		**72**	**93**	**16027**	**18792**	**11059**	**29851**	**290**	**122**	**18047**	**96.0**
%		**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**-**

Source: BGRG 2010/11 (2003 EC) implementation report on villagization

According to table1 above, about 29,851 hhs (18,792 potential villagers to be relocated and 11,059 host villagers) were planned to be affected by the villagization programme in 2010/11 (2003 EC) in the region as a whole. These 18,792 hhs were planned for relocation in about 93 sites identified by the 'woreda' administration. This is about 36% of the total plan (52,142

hhs) that will be villagized within three years implementation period (2010/11 – 2012/13 or 2003 -2005 EC). Of the 18,792 potential villagers, it was planned to locate 7235 hhs (38.5%) on 36 site in Assosa zone; 4913 hhs (41.7%) on 24 sites in Kemashi zone; 5915 hhs (31.5%) on 29 sites in Metekel zone, and 729 hhs (3.9%) on 4 sites in Mao-Komo Special 'woreda'. The distribution by each 'woreda' can be easily seen from table 1. Of the 18,792 hhs planned for relocation onto new villages, 18,047 hhs i.e. about 96% were actually transferred to the new villagization sites. This implies that there were about 29,106 hhs who were villagized in BGR, of which 11,059 were hosting villagers and 18,047 newly arrived hhs. The achievement level varies among the three zones and the 18 'woredas'. Among the three zones, Assosa had achieved better at 99.9% followed by Metekel (97.4%) and Kemashi (85.8%). Moreover, the distribution by 'woreda' revealed that all 'woredas', except Kurmuk which had attained 91.2%, achieved 100% in Assosa zone. There was lower achievement of the 'woredas' in Kemashi zone. While Agalo-Meti recorded the lowest (55.6%), the highest was recorded in Sirb-Abay with 98% implementation of the plan. Thus, the reason for such low achievement in Kmashi 'zone' need to investigated. In metekel 'zone', there is still better achievements in which three 'woredas', Mandura, Bullen and Wonbera, each scored 100% while the remaining three 'weredas', Dangur, Guba and Dibate achieving at 97.8%, 94% and 98% respectively. However, the micro-scale observation of villagization sites reveals the rebouncing of some relocated hhs, a good example being those from Wondihan village who, after relocated to Merertu-Lagabuna center, returned to their previous village, Wondihan. This and other issues are discussed in section under "Challenges of Villagization". Similarly, it was intended to collect about 18,145 potential hhs to be relocated and 13,608 hosting hhs, a total of 31,753 hhs into 90 villagization centers in 15 'woreda' during the 2011/12 (2004 EC) implementation period. The implementation had astonishingly been less achieved. The overall level of this period was 63% as compared to 96% during the 2010/11 (2003 EC) period.

Table2. The 2004EC Plan and Implementation of Housing construction for Voluntary Villagers by zone, 'woreda' and Number of Households

'Zone'	'Woreda'	No of Villagization Sites	Hhs in Host site	Hhs identified for Relocation (a)	Total (4+5)	Housing construction & hhs			Implementation (%) (b/a)x100
						Finalized Housing unit	Finalized & living in (b)	Hhs didn't began live	
Assosa	**Total**	**30**	**4349**	**7327**	**11676**	**6057**	**4768**	**2559**	**65.0**
	%	**33.3**	**31.9**	**40.4**	**36.7**	**44.6**	**41.9**	**37.8**	-
	Assosa	9	1578	1316	2894	1145	491	825	37.0
	Bambasi	7	467	2217	2684	1563	1017	1200	46.0
	Oda-Bildigilu	9	1561	2543	4101	2494	2486	57	97.7
	Sherkole	2	188	784	972	465	450	334	57.0
	Menge	3	555	467	1022	390	324	143	69.0
Mao-Komo Spetial W.		**5**	**515**	**1163**	**1678**	**1163**	**1163**	**0**	**100.0**
%		**5.6**	**3.8**	**6.4**	**5.3**	**8.6**	**10.2**	**0.0**	-
Kemashi	**Total**	**18**	**1791**	**3859**	**5650**	**1225**	**679**	**3180**	**18.0**
	%	**20.0**	**13.2**	**21.3**	**17.8**	**9.1**	**6.0**	**47.0**	-
	Kemashi	3	162	494	656	120	96	398	19.0
	Agalo-Meti	7	356	1675	2031	587	172	1503	10.0
	Bologingafoy	4	672	716	1388	341	259	460	36.0
	Yaso	4	601	974	1575	176	152	822	16.0
Metekel	**Total**	**37**	**6953**	**5796**	**12749**	**5120**	**4773**	**1023**	**82.0**
	%	**41.1**	**51.1**	**31.9**	**40.2**	**37.7**	**41.9**	**15.2**	-
	Mandura	13	2499	1845	4344	1875	1845	0	100.0
	Dibate	8	1927	869	2796	739	739	130	85.0
	Bullen	4	1013	1222	2235	1222	1222	0	100.0
	Dangur	8	1049	1475	2494	1060	713	762	48.0
	Guba	4	495	376	871	254	254	122	68.0
Total		**90**	**13,608**	**18,145**	**31,753**	**13,565**	**11,389**	**6764**	**63.0**
%		**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	-

Source: Computed from BGRG's Annual report on10month implementation period, May, 2012(2004 EC)

As can be seen from table2, during 2011/12 implementation period, about 31,753 hhs were planned to be affected due to VVS. Of these, 13,608 hhs were found in a hosting villages while 18,145 hhs were identified to be relocated into different new villages. These hhs were planned to dwell in 90 selected villagization sites. 33%, 20%, 41.1% and 5.6% of these sites were selected in Assosa , Kamashi, and Metekel zones and Mao-Komo Special 'woreda' respectively. Therefore, those

31,753 hhs were theoretically considered as villagized by their own will without any forceful relocation measures. Despite its overall low levels of achievement, the zonal and 'woreda' distribution revealed greater differences between the highest and the lowest achieved 'woredas'. Accordingly, only Mao-Komo special 'woreda' implemented the plan at 100%. In contrast, Assosa, Kamashi and Metekel zones implemented it at 65%, 18% and 82% respectively. Regarding the 'woreda' distribution, In Metekel zone, Mandura and Bullen woredas each implemented 100% while the remaining 'woredas', Dibate, Dangur and Guba implemented the plan at 85%, 48% and 68% respectively showing best achievements. In Kemashi zone, it was implemented at 10% in Agalo-Meti, 16% in Yaso, 19% in Kamashi and 36% in Bolojingafoy 'woredas'. In Assosa zone, it was best implemented in Oda-Bildiglu 'woreda' at 97.7% followed by Menge (69%) Sherkole (57%), Bambasi (46%) and Assosa (see table2 for other details). However, the question may be asked on whether, the above figures are correct, the reported hhs are living in new sites and leading stable ways of life, villagers (relocated and hosting) were voluntary, etc, or not behind such an appreciable achievements during the 2010/11 period. Moreover, the causes for too low achievement during the second implementation period (2011/12 or 2004 EC) and other site observation results will be analyzed in the section and sub-sections of "Challenges to VVS".

Social and Economic Institutions

Establishing Social and economic institutions is one of the cores of the VVS. These institutions should be constructed in new villages prior to actual relocation of hhs that were supposed to leave their areas. Equivalent number of water wells (both shallow hand-pulled and medium hand-pumps), health posts, primary schools, farmers training center (FTC), livestock health posts (LHP) and road were some of these infrastructures built during the first implementation period (2010/11 or 2003 EC) in the study region. The plan and implementation of these institutions for the period as reported by BGRG is given in table3.

Table3 shows the level of implementation of VVS in 2010/11 (2003 EC). The overall regional plan for construction of water wells (both shallow hand-pulled and medium hand-pumps), health posts, primary schools, FTC, LHP and road (in kms) was 160, 25, 27, 54, 61 and 585.5 respectively. Some of the achievements were more than 100% (e.g. clean water supply at 138% and road building by human labor at 110.4%) while health posts was achieved at 100%. But the remaining institutions were under-implemented. Accordingly, primary school, FTC, LHP and Road construction were implemented at 63%, 27.8%, 88.5% and 83.7% respectively. This implies that there is a gap between the service supply and the demands by villagers, the serious gap prevailing in primary school. Besides the burden on the schools of the hosting areas, this might affect the quality of education as the ratio between the numbers of the children and the school facilities and teachers wouldn't be balanced.

***Table3. Social and economic institutions Built in Different Villagization sites in 2010/11 (2003EC) in 18 'woredas' of* BGR**

'Zone'	'woreda'			Number of Major Social and economic Institutions building Plan and Implementation					
		Clean water (Wells)		Primary School		Agri. Institutions (FTC + LHP)		Road (machinery + Labor) in Km.	
		Plan	effective	Plan	effective	Plan	Effective	Plan	Effective
Assosa	**Total**	**58**	**65+65**	**7**	**25+4**	**24+19**	**(5+8)+(19+18)**	**81.5+58**	**57+58**
	%	**36.3**	**120./%**	**25.9**	**57.2%**	**31.2**	**(33.3%)(94.7%)**	**18.3+41.6**	**(69.9%)+(100%)**
	Assosa	19	17+19	-	5+0	5+2	(1+3)+(5+2)	16+0	16+0
	Bambasi	12	8+12	2	7+0	6+3	(1+1)+(3+3)	0+0	0+0
	Menge	9	15+6	1	4+0	3+5	(2+0)+(2+4)	0+46	0+46
	Kurmuk	4	7+4	-	3+0	3+1	(1+3)+(2+1)	21.5+0	21+0
	Sherkole	4	3+4	-	2+0	2+2	(0+0)+(2+2)	20+0	20+0
	Oda-Bildigilu	10	15+19	4	4+4	5+6	(0+1)+(5+6)	24+12	0+12
Kemashi	**Total**	**40**	**50+65**	**7**	**18+4**	**8+14**	**(13+4)+(4+11)**	**182.5+64.5**	**143+64.5**
	%	**25.0**	**162.5%**	**25.9**	**57.2%**	**23.0**	**(57.1%)(78.6%)**	**40.9+46.2**	**(78.4%)+(100%)**
	Kemashi	8	7+14	3	5+3	4+4	(3+1)+(2+4)	10.5+6.5	10.5+4.5
	Sirba Abay	8	11+16	1	4+0	1+2	(2+2)+(1+2)	48+18	48+18
	Yaso	6	9+8	1	4+1	2+2	(1+0)+(0+0)	0+10	0+12
	Bologingafoy	9	15+10	-	3+0	0+1	(3+2)+(0+0)	39.5+0	0+0
	Agalo-Meti	9	8+17	2	2+0	1+5	(4+1)+(1+5)	84.5+30	84.5+30
Metekel	**Total**	**53**	**55+86**	**12**	**22+9**	**18+24**	**(12+3)+(8+21)**	**124+7**	**78+22**
	%	**33.1**	**162.3%**	**44.4**	**75%**	**39.4**	**(16.7%)(87.5%)**	**27.8+5.0**	**(62.9%)+(143%)**
	Mandura	12	12+38	3	4+2	2+4	(5+2)+(1+4)	24+0	0+0
	Bullen	11	8+5	1	2+0	3+3	(0+0)+(0+0)	20+0	20+0
	Wonbera	2	2+1	1	1+0	1+2	(1+0)+(0+0)	20+0	16+0
	Dangur	12	8+10	4	4+4	4+6	(2+0)+(0+0)	36+0	26+0
	Guba	7	4+5	1	3+1	2+2	(1+1)+(1+1)	0+7	0+7
	Dibate	9	23+27	2	8+2	6+7	(3+0)+(6+7)	24+0	16+15
Mao-Komo Special W.		**9**	**2+5**	**2**	**4+0**	**4+4**	**(0+0)+(0+4)**	**58+10**	**58+10**
%		**5.6**	**55.6%**	**7.4**	**0%**	**6.6**	**(0%)(100%)**	**13.0+7.2**	**(100%)(100%)**
Total		**160**	**172+221**	**27**	**69+17**	**54+61**	**(30+15)+(31+54)**	**446+139.5**	**336+154**
%		**100**	**138%**	**100**	**62.9%**	**100.0**	**(27.8%)(88.5%)**	**100.0**	**(75.3%)(110.4%)**

Source: Computed from BGRG's Annual report on the implementation of 2010/11 (2003EC) Villagization plan; May, 2012(2004 EC)

On average, all zones had implemented water wells' construction plan more than 100% except the Mao-Komo Special 'woreda' which constructed 5 water wells i.e. 55.6% accomplishment out of the 9 planned (see table3). With regard to health posts, all 'zones' and the Mao-Komo special 'woreda' had accomplished 100%. The low level implementation of primary school construction was attributed to all zones, and the special 'woreda' where all of them under-implemented it despite the variations among them. There were variations in the implementation of FTC and LHP constructions among the above administrative units. For example, the average implementation of the FTC and LHP were 8 and 18 in Assosa 'zone' as compared to their plans at 24 and 19 respectively showing the respective achievements of 33.3% and 94.7%. Similarly, the

respective achievements of FTC and LHP were 50% and 78.6% for Kamashi ‘zone’ and 16.7% and 87.5% for Metekel ‘zone’ and 0% and 100% for Mao-Komo Special ‘woreda’. More specifically, significant variations are observed among the 18 ‘woredas’ in the level of implementation of the construction plans (see table 3).

***NB**: In the columns of the FTC and LHP, the left and the right side values from “+” sign of the “plan” column represents the ‘planned values of FTC and LHP respectively, while the left and right side values from “+” signs in each bracket of the “effective” column represent the ‘previous’ and ‘the currently achieved plans’ respectively.*

Farmland distribution to landless hhs is the other precondition during the implementation of VVS. Ttable4 summarizes the implementation of the aforementioned activities. According to table4, the average regional land distribution for landless villagers was 2.8ha per hh. However, there were differences in per capita land distribution among the 18 ‘woredas’ of the region, the lowest being 1.8ha/hh in Kamashi ‘woreda’ and the highest being 3ha/hh for most ‘woredas’. The zonal average per capita farmland ranges from 3ha/hh for Assosa and Metekel each to 2.4ha in Kamashi and 2.5ha in Mao-Komo Special ‘woreda’. Generally, the size of farmland per hh was uniform in Assosa and Metekel zones while great variation existed in Kemashi zone. The discussion round the table with the key informant at the ARDO of Dibate ‘woreda’ confirmed by repeating the 3ha distribution of regular farmland in each villagization center in the ‘woreda’. Moreover, all landless hhs had got land after going to new villages except the Mao-Komo special ‘woreda’ in which 95% of the landless accessed it.

Table 4: Summary of 2011/12 (2004 EC) Farmland Distribution Implementation in the 3 'zone' and 18 'woreda' during villagization Process

Zone	'Woreda'	Farmland Possession and Distribution status & Health Extension Workers					
		Planned Hhs for villagization and their land possession status					
		Planned no. of hhs	Have Land	landless hhs	Hhs who got land	Hectares distributed	Av. Ha/hh Given
Assosa	**Total**	**7235**	**5357**	**1878**	**1878**	**5634**	**3ha**
	%	**38.5**	**36.6**	**45.2**	**100**	**48.8**	**-**
	Assosa	1084	1038	46	46	138	3ha
	Bambasi	2915	2281	634	634	1902	3ha
	Menge	837	722	115	115	345	3ha
	Kurmuk	148	121	27	27	81	3ha
	Sherkole	576	0	576	576	1728	3ha
	Oda-Bildigilu	1675	1195	480	480	1440	3ha
Kamashi	**Total**	**4879**	**4235**	**644**	**612**	**1450.5**	**2.4ha**
	%	**26.0**	**28.9**	**15.5**	**95.0**	**12.5**	**-**
	Kamashi	908	669	239	239	424	1.8ha
	Sirba-Abay	1331	1292	39	39	111.5	2.9ha
	Yaso	741	658	83	81	162	2ha
	Bolojingafoy	1061	796	265	233	699	3ha
	Agalo-Meti	838	820	18	18	54	3ha
Metekel	**Total**	**5942**	**5039**	**903**	**903**	**2709**	**3ha**
	%	**31.6%**	**34.5**	**21.7**	**100.0**	**23.3**	**-**
	Mandura	1640	1581	59	59	177	3ha
	Bullen	1109	863	246	246	738	3ha
	Wonbera	690	615	75	75	225	3.4ha
	Dangur	510	360	150	150	450	3ha
	Guba	648	398	250	260	750	2.9ha
	Dibate	1345	1222	123	123	369	3ha
Mao-Komo Sp. Woreda		**736**	**0**	**736**	**736**	**1840**	**2.5ha**
(%)		**3.9%**	**0**	**17.6**	**100.0**	**15.8**	**-**
Total		**18792**	**14631**	**4159**	**4129**	**11633.5**	**2.8ha**
% of Total		**100**	**77.9**	**22.1**	**99.3**	**100.0**	**-**

Source: Computed from BGRG's Annual report on the implementation 2010/11 (2003EC) plan; May, 2012 (2004 EC)

The health and sanitation issue that may threaten the health of the villagers following villagization was also accounted in the implementation process. For that matter, in addition to construction of health posts, HEWs were deployed to teach the villagers in different health packages and helped in the construction of pit latrines. Table 5 shows the implementation of these services. According to Table5, on average, there were about 100 health extension workers (HEWs) throughout all centers in the region despite variations among 'woredas' and among sites. That is, there was 1HEW for 100 hh or 1HEW for 450 people taking the average family size per hh of the region as 4.5 (CSA, 2007). Coupled with their inefficiency and public attitude toward them, this ratio may not be fair to achieve the objectives of the sanitation problems. Moreover, the construction of health posts was implemented 100% in all sites. One of the best things seen from table5 the graduation of model farm hhs in the health extension packages by the HEWs in which Metekel zone better achieved in graduating 69.8% followed by kamashi (19%) and Assosa (11.2%) of the total graduates in the region as a whole. There were such HEWs planned for Mao-Komo special 'woreda' perhaps because it has had it already. Moreover, the ratio of hhs-to-HEWs was106.4, 99.6, 97.4, and 81.8 for Assosa, Kamashi, Metekel zones and Mao-Komo special 'woreda' respectively, showing that there is no as such numerical problem perhaps except their qualification issue. Whatever the size of the HEWs, overall, there were 12522 latrines constructed in the region over the period. Average zonal distribution reveals 50%, 19.5%, 25.7% and 4.4% of these latrines were found in Assosa, Kamshi and Metekel zones, and Mao-komo special 'woreda' respectively. The problem of the latrines dug in rural areas is that they may add more health problems as there is no care taken in constructing them. As a result, they are polluting the villages and most hhs prefer open spaces rather than latrines. These may cause double health problems. This is the problem that the author had observed with his necked eyes in Chilanko site, where most latrines had been destroyed within a year long and badly polluting the village. And even the is a probability for the cattle to fall into it, which also having another threat to the villagers.

Table 5: Summary of 2011/12 (2004 EC) Health Activities & Extension workers Plan and Implementation in the 3 zones and 18 'woreda'

Zone/'woreda'		Health Post Construction and HEW deployed					
		*Health Post cons		Health Service Implementation and HEW			
		Planned	Effective	No. of HEW	hh/HEW	Latrine Built	Graduated model hhs
Assosa	**Total**	**9**	**30+9**	**68**	**106.4**	**6306**	**313**
	%	**36.0**	**100.0**	**36.4**	**-**	**50.4**	**11.2**
	Assosa	-	9+0	18	60.2	2037	0
	Bambasi	1	9+1	23	126.7	1804	0
	Menge	1	3+1	5	167.4	439	110
	Kurmuk	-	3+0	6	24.7	117	108
	Sherkole	2	1+2	6	96	408	95
	Oda-Bildigilu	5	5+5	10	167.5	1501	0
Kamashi	**Total**	**7**	**16+7**	**49**	**99.6**	**2447**	**529**
	%	**28.0**	**100.0**	**26.2**	**-**	**19.5**	**19.0**
	Kamashi	2	5+2	16	56.8	662	125
	Sirba-Abay	1	2+1	7	190.1	392	204
	Yaso	2	3+2	10	74.1	179	64
	Bolojingafoy	-	3+0	6	176.8	1020	92
	Agalo-Meti	2	3+2	10	83.8	194	44
Metekel	**Total**	**6**	**20+6**	**61**	**97.4**	**3224**	**1948**
	%	**24.0**	**100.0**	**32.6**	**-**	**25.7**	**69.8**
	Mandura	1	5+1	13	126.2	1091	512
	Bullen	1	2+1	6	184.8	415	160
	Wonbera	-	2+0	4	152.3	215	13
	Dangur	4	2+4	12	42.5	224	125
	Guba	-	4+0	8	81	715	260
	Dibate	3	5+3	18	74.7	564	878
Mao-Komo Sp.Woreda		**3**	**1+3**	**9**	**81.8**	**545**	**0**
(%)		**12.0**	**100.0**	**4.8**	**-**	**4.4**	**0**
Total		**25**	**67+25**	**187**	**100.5**	**12522**	**2790**
% of Total		**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**		**100.0**	**100.0**

***Health post construction was for the period 2010/11*

Source: Computed from BGRG's Annual report on the implementation 2010/11 (2003EC) and 2011/12 (2004 EC) plan;

FIELD CASE STUDY RESULTS FROM DIFFERENT VILLAGIZATION SITES

A Case Study from Dibate 'Woreda'

In Dibate 'woreda' as a whole, it was planned and implemented the VVS on 10 sites in 8 'kebeles' in 2010/2011 (2003 EC) and on 7 site in 5 'kebeles' in 2011/2012 (2004 EC). According to a key informant from ARDO of Dibate 'woreda', the implementation of the programme has begun since December, 2010 (2003 EC). Each villager was given 30mx33m ($990m^2$ i.e. about 0.1ha) land for building house and 3hectares of farmland for regular cultivation at new villages. In addition, although the fate of the previous farmland has not been clearly decided, villagers can cultivate on their previous holdings. Table6 summarizes the selected sites from respective 'kebeles' for establishing new villages and the level of implementation for the periods of 2010/11 (2003) and 2011/12 (2004 EC).

Table 6 Implementation of Villagization in Dibate 'woreda' by 'kebele', site, and Year

2010/2011(2003E.C.) Implementation Period			***2011/2012 (2004EC) Implementation period***					
'Kebele' Name	Site Name	Effective	**'Kebele' Name**	Site Name	Hosting hh	Planned for relocation	Effective	% effective
Angtok	Angtok	396	**Yamp**	Gidim	313	125	338	100
Wubgish	Wubgish	81	**Sirben**	Dadus	262	80	342	100
Kido	Kido	97		Dibashuwa	148	110	258	100
			Mondirmo	Laymondirmo	101	263	**364***	**0**
Zigih	Zigih	80	**Sas-Manden**	Diwan	53	315	368	100
Girz	Girz	37		Sas	23	341	364	100
	Komed	87	**Tuski-Gambella**	Gambella	42	300	342	100
Legabuna	Legabuna	107	**Muzen**	Misreta	84	128	212	100
Donben	Lay Donben	178						
	Tach Donben	75						
Par-zeit	Par-zeit	118						
Total => hosting=2353; planned=1345; Effective=1256=94%			**Total**		1026	1662	2688	86.5

*****Represents the total hhs of Mondirmo village who didn't accept relocation programme.

Source: key informant from ARDO of Dibate 'woereda'(May, 2012); BGRG's Villagization Detail programme for 2011/12 implementation period

Table6 employed data from the BGRG's plan report and key informant from ARDO of Dibate 'woreda'. Although information was lacking for the 2010/11 (2003 EC), the available one shows that there is some gap between the regional

report and key informant. The regional report shows the overall implementation of 98% while the key informant about 94% showing a 4% variation implying there was exaggerated report from the regional level. Moreover, the information on 2011/12 (2003 EC) implementation period is complete at the 'woreda' level. The discussion with the key informant revealed an 86.5% achievement of the implementation while the regional report on the 'woreda' revealed an 85% implementation, implying the match between both reports. The remaining 15% unimplemented in the 'woreda' was clearly attributed to those villages which refused villagization. Good examples of these villages are: the whole dwellers in Mondirmo and Barry, and many hhs in Wondihan village (who returned back after relocated to Merertu-Lagabuna center). But finding numerical data of these villages (except Mondirmo village = 364 hhs) was very difficult. However, according to the author's personal observation, the Bary has a significant number of dwellers for establishing its own villagization center although it may not satisfy the requirement of the 'woreda'- i.e. a minimum of 300 households. The case of Wondihan village is different in that it has smaller number of households than the previous two. However, its best advantage of being very close to main road and the town of Berber for accessing any social, economic and other information along with topographical inconvenience to join Merertu-Legabuna center. This might have been the main reason for rebouncing to their former village, Wondihan. The key informant stated that those involuntary hhs and villages were not forced to join the programme mentioning that every hh was gathered on the basis of his/her will. Despite this saying, there is an indirect ways of forcing them through banning rural infrastructures. The following was the saying of the key informant from Dibate 'woreda' during the discussion with him. The saying is common to any government official although questioned for its extent of truth.

> *"…every household was brought to the new village based on its will, informed consent-voluntarily…and no one was forced to leave his previous home area without his/her will…even those who want to return back to their previous home could do it without any interference, but they cannot claim for separate institutions/institutional development like health, education,…and road…e.g. I can mention the residents of Mondirmo and Wondihan"*

From the two villages quoted above, while the former totally refuses the programme, some settlers from the later returned after being gathered into new site known as Merertu-Legabuna. The same informant stated that a site for villagization is selected if the number of dwellers is 300 and above in addition to other criteria. But, the case is not true in Mondirmo and Wondihan and that is why they should be relocated. However, the issue is whether those villagized hhs were really voluntarily and whether those who returned back will be positively acknowledged by the government. From the author's point of view and critical field observations, initially the relocation of dwellers from Wondihan village and resettling them at Merertu-Legabuna site was routinely addressed without thorough and critical study. Mondirmo too faced similar conditions. This is because, these villages are already situated on some of the infrastructures considered in the villagization programme such as main road that connects Dibate town with Galessa town through Mondirmo, Wondihan and Berber town. This might be perhaps one of the reasons for the refusal of those villages.

Sas Villagization Site in Dibate 'woeda'

Sas site is one of the two new sites of Sas-Mandan'kebele'in Dibate 'woreda'. The Sas village site is located at $10^0$42'52"N and $36^0$15'43"E and has an average elevation of 1537meters above mean sea level (Taken by the Author using GPS, May,

2012). In Sas-Mandan kebele (Table6), the total number of hosting hhs in the new sites was 76, of which 53 and 23 were on Diwan and Sas sites respectively. The numbers of hhs that was relocated and joined the site were 315 and 341 on Diwan and Sas sites respectively. Two individuals (one ordinary dweller and one immediate government official) were contacted for the case study at Sas site. Along with these cases, observation and photographs were taken to support the information on the site.

The official worker at the site taken as case individual stated the existing reality of the implementation of Sas site. He indicated that there are hhs who returned to their previous places for several inconveniencies in the new village, mainly due to conflict with each other and for some of the promised services had not been finalized (e.g. the school and health post). The toilet of the school under construction and the drinking water-well are too close to each other, the water-well being located on lower elevation than the toilet. This is a good example of low capacity of implementers. This, according to the individual informant, was told to the concerned bodies at the beginning that there is a possibility of affecting the drinking water. However, no one responded to this complain of the villagers. The following photo in figure1shows the proximity of the drinking water-well and the primary school under construction at the end of the implementation period.

Figure1. Drinking water and toilet closer to each other, Field photo taken from Sas village /site, May, 2012

Moreover, the socio-economic institutions had not been completed although gathering of hhs was finalized. In addition to the primary school seen from Figure1, the health post had not been finalized until May, 2012. This is one of the problems of implementing the promises from the government side that may possibly generate claims from the villagers and is another indicator of the low capacity of implementers directly. The following figure shows the state of health post construction until May, 2012 in Sas Site.

Figure2. State of Health post construction, Field photo taken from Sas village/ site, May, 2012

Obviously, the figure indicates the accomplishment of the health post construction is not approximately more than 20% at the end of the implementation period. Equally important aspect of this village is the poor status of housing construction as seen from the in front of figure2 above.

A Case Study from Bullen 'Woreda: Chilanko Villagization Site:

One of the 'woredas' in Metekel zone where villagization had been implemented is Bullen. The same plan of implementing the programme was put forth for the period 2010/11-2012/13. Two of the villagization sites fortunately visited by the author in this 'woreda' are Chilanko and Bakuji. However, the author has examined the overall conditions of Chilanko village in detail taking sufficient time. This village is rapidly transforming into urban form of living. In this case study area, the author's personal field observation, informal discussions with some dwellers and government representatives, as well as individual case studies were conducted. Chilanko village is generally located in the Southern part of the 'woreda' center-i.e. the town of Bullen. The exact number of hhs currently living in the village could not be decided as it is increasing from day to day. Currently, the number of dwellers may be counted in thousand due to continuous inflow of people into the village.

In principle, the basic infrastructures should be prepared well prior to implementing the programme. In this regard, the case of Chilanko villagization site was well-done. As to the author's field observation at the site, hand pumps (clean water), primary school (grade 1-8 although existing one), health post, mobile phone (although by chance), sufficient milling motors and one micro association for distribution of consumption items are available. Although there is no empirical research conducted, the village is no more a rural village, rather a town. The non-farm activities such as formal trades like warehouse trade, service trades such as food and beverage selling bars, coffee and tea houses and boutiques have already under practice. Moreover, there is a weekly market functional in addition to a possibility of marketing everyday, which is an indication of urbanism. The police force has office also in the village to protect any potential security problems.

The other principle that "voluntary villagization" and prior information would have been implemented (see RARDO, 2010). In this regard, another individual selected for case study information reported that the majority of those relocated were forced to leave their previous villages and settle onto the new village. To quote the sayings of the informant directly:

"…I can tell you the case of Ayicompi village, where almost all dwellers refused to leave for Chilanko when told by the 'woreda' officials although we could not know and predict the benefit of living in Chilanko village…This was not for the sake of refusing the programme, but we asked to stay there and bring those living far in the dark forest to us. Because, we don't want to be detached from the village in which we were born, ever existed church is there, our ancestors' grave is there, and more than this our farmlands are found there at about an average walk of 3hrs. …But, the officials couldn't listen to us and on a bright day destroyed our homes using the so-called development forces ordered from Chilanko village site deploying police force in the village"

From the saying of the individual, although seems exaggerated, one can understand that there was a condition of forcing villagers rather than convincing them. Obviously, this is outside of the government villagization policy and contradicting the principles. Thus, there was mismanagement of the programme by the local level implementers so that the villagers have considered it as a forceful act done by the officials.

MAJOR CHALLENGES TO VILLAGIZATION:

Under-implementation

As mentioned earlier, the overall implementation of villagization scheme had reached at about 56.4% after the completion of two years implementation periods. In other words, the remaining 43.6% of implementation is expected to be finalized within a year which might be unachievable. However, if the region continues at similar rates to the past two years, it is unthinkable to complete as planned. So, if the past rate will continue to function, the remaining implementation requires about 1.6 years showing half-a-year delay. Thus, **under-implementation** can be considered as one of the challenges to the VVP in the region.

Lack of Voluntarism and Attitude of Villagers

The overall accomplishment of the programme during the past two years had not been as smooth as the plan tells us. The collection of villagers alone (excluding the social and economic institutions) had shown only 56.4% implementation of the regional plan in two years period. One of the main challenges to this is clearly the attitude that villagers develop towards the scheme. For example, 122 finalized houses in the region had remained unoccupied by the hhs to whom it was constructed (see table1). This figure may perhaps represent those extremely involuntary hhs who stayed at their previous homes. For example, the lowest implementation in Kemashi 'zone' can be explained by taking the case of, Bolojingafoy 'wereda' (mainly Lije area) where 13 such houses, had remained unoccupied. Similar cases were also observed by the author in Dibate and Bullen 'woredas' during field studies. Such villages as Ayikompi in Bullen 'woreda' and Mondirmo, Bary, Wondihan and few in Bagin in Dibate 'woreda' are where clear in-voluntarism was observed. The discussion of the later site is already given and the case of Lije area is also similar to the others. The only fact in Lije village that lead to unwillingness of the villagers to be relocated is the presence of the perennial river that passes very close to the village, which the dwellers are using it for small-scale irrigation. Moreover the area has several other perennial rivers here and there for their cattle as opposed to the suggested new site. The new site has only the advantage of proximity to the main road from Arjo-Gudatu, a town on the asphalt road that joins the towns of Nekemte and Gimbi in Oromiya region.

The Capacity and Attitude of Local Implementers

In most cases, whatever other challenges, lack of commitment from the implementing bodies adversely affects the overall progress of VVSs. This is partially related to their capacity and attitude, mainly that of the immediate local implementers such as those from 'woreda' and 'kebele' levels. In this regard, the author quoted what one local implementer told while travelling by mini-bus to the Chilanko villagization center in Bullen 'woreda'. His speech was ironical in expressing the villagization in general, when the author asked him where he was going to. He said ironically along with laughs:

> *"I am going to collect people to a center as per the government plan. For that matter, I used to go to any one villagization site every days of a month until it will be completed…and I collect money as per-dime so that everything is ok…but, I don't think people will continue to live where they are collected".*

The observation of the author was that the person used to go any site because he was paid daily allowance well, but not as such in a concerned manner to accomplish the task of the government. This might be associated partly with his capacity and partly with his general attitude toward the programme. That is, he perhaps suspects the finalization of the scheme and simply moving daily to collect money, which might be the motive of most local implementers. The second aspect of low capacity of implementers is reflected in the way they manage any disagreement from villagers at the sites. A good example is the situation one villager of Chilanko site told the author about the process of relocating the hhs from Ayikompi village to Chilanko site. To quote the direct sayings of the other person,

> *"The dwellers of Ayikompi didn't want to leave the area, because, it is the place where our ancestors lived for time immemorial. We have long existed church, our farmland is there and is too far from Chilanko site and the area is very suitable for raising children, livestock rearing and crop cultivation. But we could do nothing rather than being forced to leave our lovely village… thus, our homes were destroyed by the group known as 'development group' from Chilanko site when ordered by the official the 'woreda."*

The above saying generally indicates the relocation of hhs from Ayikompi village without their will although the officials from the 'woreda' claim that it was on the will of the villagers.

Gaps between Government promises and Practical Implementation

The lack of fulfilling the promises by the government that would have been implemented ahead of relocation of the villagers was one of the challenges faced in many sites. For example, the construction of socio-economic services was not timely completed and the rendering of services delayed. A good example is the case in Sas site (fig1 & fig2) in which the school and health post were delayed while the implementation period is almost up. The other problem of promise is the gap in the amount of hectares of farmland planned to distribute and the actual distribution. For example, while the farmers of the region are claiming that 3ha is not sufficient in 'kola' region like BGR, some hhs were give about 1.8ha, for example, in Kamashi 'woreda' (see table 4). In this regard, one of the informant case individuals from Sas Village told that the woreda

administration couldn't fulfill the necessary services mentioning the request for administrative office at the site as recorded from the field study, saying the following:

> *"…in support of government, the villagers have contributed about 3000.00ETB for the construction of administrative office for the village. This was following the promise of the 'woreda' administration that if we were able to contribute some of the money; the remaining amount would be covered by the government. However, despite the push from the dwellers, there hasn't been response from the government side"*

So these and other gaps between the promises and implementation are the features of almost all sites in the region and could be the major causes for returning of relocated hhs to their former areas.

The Continued Conditions of Poverty and Food Insecurity

One of the major aims of villagization is to help hhs escape from poverty and CFI. However, although the programme has lasted for a short period of time, these conditions seem to continue to exist within the majority of the villagers, mainly among the Gumuz ethnic groups. The children of this ethnic group couldn't have dressed well; families have no sufficient food to survive, and have no oxen and are forced to lead traditional hoe-farming system. In general, the following field photo taken at Sas site depicts the poverty and food security situation of this group of villagers.

Figure3. The Poverty and Food insecurity conditions in Dibate 'wereda' Photo taken at Sas site, May, 2012

Fig.3 above was taken to illustrate poverty conditions of the villagers in Dibate 'woreda' at Sas site. The photo shows the extent to which the families in the village couldn't dress their children because of the deep-rooted poverty. The only alternative was to leave their children with bare body. Some may complain that being bare body is the culture of this ethnic group. However, this is not truly a culture rather it was once a result of tradionalism but gradually has been changed. Moreover, this village is very close to Dibate town (the 'woreda' center) so that one can say the bareness is not the culture rather the result of poverty. This can also be supported by the food insecurity situation in the region and specifically in the site. The wild-food, which children are feeding (yellowish-as seen from the photo) known as "Oula" in the local language, is

used as a coping food source in the region (see Guyu, 2011). This is an example of food shortage that farmers are facing in the region. However, it doesn't mean that all farmers are facing these problems in the same degree.

Inappropriate Site selection

Inappropriate selection of villagization sites is also another challenge to VVS in the region. This seems most important factor determining the decisions of villagers to stay at a new site. For example, the dwellers of Mondirmo and Wondihan are better situated to access all services from Berber town than Merertu-Lagabuna new site. Lije area is well endowed with river water than the new site, etc. This has also impact on the distance that the villagers will travel to cultivate their lands.

Inappropriate Credit Utilization

This is a serious problem in BGR since the hhs consider the credit as an aid that will not be returned. As a result, almost all hhs consume it rather than working for benefit. This was well explained by one informant from the Sas site. According to the informant, most hhs take the loan and couldn't return it which let them to a chronic poverty and food insecurity. This is a common challenge in Chilanko village too. One informant in the village told the author that he was taken to be detained as he couldn't repay the credit and after 48hrs of detention, he borrowed from one neighbor and paid some of it. He told the reason for consuming the money was due to misunderstand that it wouldn't be repaid. However, the mistake was committed by the creditor too for giving the money without ample orientation.

CONSEQUENCES OF VILLAGIZATION

Villagization versus Environment

Despite its long run benefits, villagization inevitably affects the environment negatively. Clearing of forest for new farmlands and villagization site is one of these environmental consequences. For example, the construction materials for the planned 52,142 hhs in the region were totally derived from forest. This is a great destruction to the indigenous forest trees in the region. The concentration of livestock onto a site is also another source of ecological degradation through overgrazing. A good example is observed from Chilanko site where too much cattle is changing the landscape in the middle of the forest. Both deforestation and overgrazing have direct impact on the water contents of rivers around the sites. A perennial river (tributary of Bar river), that is very close to Chilanko village, for example, has become intermittent following the intensive settlement. This is the indirect impact of villagization through those means on water tables. Degradation and overgrazing are also sources of carbon and related gasses emissions into the atmosphere. Villagization is generally accompanied with latrine construction. Moreover, too much waste disposals from homes are inevitable although the situation of latrines was more severe. The inappropriate construction and utilization of latrines and waste disposal mechanisms in villagization sites have been polluting the villages, for example, in Chilanko site that may lead to other diseases. This is the problem that the author had observed with his necked eyes in Chilanko site.

Socio-cultural and economic Consequences

The most serious consequence of a villagization scheme is the disintegration of the long existed and strong social chains and interactions, and destruction of cultural institutions. The social networks such as kinship, social institutions such as 'iqub', 'mahiber', 'idir', etc and cultural institutions such as church and mosques together with their elements and cultural values will inevitably be disturbed leading to what is called social impoverishments. The informant from the chillanko site told that there is a mixing strategy of different clans of the Gumuz ethnic group when providing housings in the village. That is, one from Ayicompi and the other from Gich-duki and Kush-Agonji villages have different backgrounds but settled one after the other. Although this needs detail study, the author has come across 3 to 4 such hhs in the village. This strategy has an impact on socio-cultural adjustment on the villagers. Moreover, the kinship relations, the 'iqub', 'mahiber', 'idir', etc, might have been broken up and the chain of helping each other may stop until adjustments may take place. This will have its impact on the living conditions of the dwellers. The Orthodox Church at Ayicompi was also transferred to Chilanko and merged with the existing one. Moreover, a case individual from Sas site told that there was no a church at the new site. The distance traveled to cultivate farmland is an example of economic consequence unless the relocated hhs are given sufficient land near the new village. Many examples can be cited in this case although mentioning the case of Sas and Chilanko sites is given here. A case individual at Sas site told that he used to walk a significant distance to arrive at his farmland. Besides the author's observation, an informant told the average distance from Chilanko site to any relocated hh to be more than 2hours. But, the author's empirical observation makes it more than 3 hours. For example a farmland of some hhs from Ayikompi may take 3 and half an hour walk on foot. This has an implication on the food supply of these villagers. The villagers may be relocated from places of better ground water tables to the worse ones. A good example is the case of Lije case in Bolojingafoy 'woreda'.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS OF VILLAGIZATION

The concept of development as defined in different literatures goes beyond growth and is measured using not only by mere economic growth but also by socio-cultural, political and psychological indicators. Any project with its particular strategies aiming at developing a nation or a region, therefore, considers these indicators in order to measure the success. Thus, achievement of R&V as strategies to transform rural living conditions can also be measured through social, economic, administrative and psychological indicators (Giovannetti, 2006) among villagers. Therefore, whether villagization has some encouraging development indicators in BGR or not can be assessed based on the current situations of social, economic and administrative institutions of the villagers as reported by the BGRG and as observed during field study and discussions conducted by the author.

Social and economic Indicators

Analyses of the regional report on the implementation of the VVP as well as the author's field study revealed the government's effort in fulfilling socio-economic and administrative institutions in all villagization sites of the region that had been attempted although the majority of these are incomplete. For instance, as can be seen from tables (1,2,&3) building of FTCs, primary schools, water-wells, human and livestock health posts and latrines in all sites was visually observable despite

their incompleteness in some sites. Moreover, the necessary amount of land, agricultural and Health Activities & Extension workers (see table4) were provided and has shown some efforts in changing the living conditions of the villagers. For example, many families of villagers in Chilanko (as observed by the author) have began to join school, get health services and clean water for drinking because of living in those villages, which had never been attempted before. Moreover, they have started to use agricultural inputs including extension and training services in the village in FTCs. Similarly, some of them, although not exaggerated, have been graduated as model hhs in adopting and applying health packages. In this regard, many examples can be mentioned: the Chilanko and Bakuji site have been connected with the main road that joins Chagni town in Amhara region) and Wonbera (Debre-zeit town) in BGR. The Sas, Giriz, Komed and Mondirmo sites are connected with the main road joining Chagni, Dibate, Berber and Galessa towns.

Income Diversification as an Indicator

Although the current study didn't collect data on the income situation of the villagers, the empirical observation of the author during field studies witnessed emerging futures of the non-farm income generating activities in new villages. As a result, some villages have been changed into urban form of living. A good example is the Chilanko and Bakuji villages, both are more of towns rather than rural today although it needs an assessment of standard criteria of urban area. Thus, such an income diversification that is transforming the rural and traditional ways of living to urban and modern ways of living is a good indicator of local development emerging following VVS.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Basically the aim of population villagization is to ensure sustainable supply of basic socioeconomic services such as education, health, water, credit facilities, agricultural inputs, etc and other infrastructures such as electric power, telephone and road that facilitate rural development. An aspect of such sustainable rural development indicators is ensuring food security sustainability in the villagization sites. In this regard, the result of this study reveals that VVS has laid some hope for future development of rural communities in handled well. The services mentioned above are established in villagization sites although there are still deficiencies. Some areas have had un urban form following the scheme as a result their livelihood systems have been altered into urban form showing diversification in their livelihood systems. Schools, health facilities, agricultural extension inputs and workers, etc have appeared in the area which the villagers had never seen in their former villages. This implies that the VVS, if managed properly, will have a positive contribution to further rural developments in a sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Annual reports of the reagion and case studies as well as the author's critical observation during field studies were used to examine the implementation, challenges, consequences and development indicators of current VVS in the BGR, Northwestern Ethiopia. The study result revealed that, over the past two years period the programme was implemented 56.4%

of its plan showing under-implementation. It had lagged behind by about half-a-year from the plan as it should be completed after one more year. Despite this ambitious plan of the government of FDRE to transform rural areas, it was found that both clear and invisible objections from villagers have threatened the implementation of the past two years' plan of the programme. But, the government has still insisted on implementing the scheme to transform rural communities taking it as one of the main strategies to achieve its GTP. The challenges of VVS faced are attributed to both implementers' low capacity and villagers' unwillingness. As a result, the implementation was reduced from 96% during 2010/11period to 63% during 2011/12 period. This decline in implementation generally implies the lower achievement of the programme in the region despite partial fulfillment of the promised socio-economic and administrative services. That is, although incomplete, the social and economic institutions had been built while the villagers are not satisfied with them due to perhaps the institutions are not the primary issues for them.

Moreover, under-implementation due to lack of will from some villagers, their attitudes, the capacity of the implementing bodies and the gaps between government promises and actual implementation were found to be major challenges faced. These are interrelated challenges that could have been solved by working on awareness creation among these stakeholders. However, the continued poverty and food insecurity, inappropriate site selection and inadequate credit supply to villagers have created suspicion among the villagers on the scheme. From the very beginning, the environmental consequences of villagization have become evident. This is manifested in deforestation and overgrazing that resulted in drying up of rivers, and pollution of villages due to inappropriate latrine construction and utilization. The problems of socio-cultural adjustment difficulties among the new villages are the other consequence of villagization. The villagizing pattern in a village which redistributed the households with new neighbors destructed the earlier social networks and relations. This may take longer time to create new social network and relation, which may threaten the sustainability of the scheme. However, it doesn't mean that the programme come up without some contributions to the local development. There are some development indicators in almost all villagization sites. The socio-economic institution established such as Farmers' Training Centers (FTCs), schools, health, and income diversification efforts and its changing effect on the villages into urban culture are major ones. Thus, to enhance the sustainability of the scheme and its contribution to sustainable development of rural areas, the following recommendations are suggested.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following points are recommended as solution for the problems identified in the study.

The study revealed that the overall programme was under-implemented in terms of collecting indentified households to a selected site at about 56.4% in the past two years. Moreover, such low level implementation was attributed to the villagers and the implementing bodies. Thus:

- The capacity of both implementing bodies was found to be low in all standards. This is seen in actual collection of villagers, construction of institutions, their ability to convince villagers etc. Associated to these was weak attitude toward the

programme. Therefore, there is a need to build their capacity and change their negative attitudes through education and training.

Most villagers were found to be involuntary to adopt the programme some of them by direct objection and others expressing their feelings after villagized during field study. This seems mostly due to lack of information about the potential benefits of VVS to villagers themselves and the government as a whole. Thus, there is a need for a strong implementing body to work on convincing dwellers for the sustainability of the programme.

The construction of socio-economic institutions in many sites was also found to be lagging compared to the plan. This could be due to lack of timely preparation of the necessary materials or contractors for the programme. Thus, the concerned bodies should follow-up the construction process and take relevant measures whenever it lags. Otherwise, it will become deceiving the public.

As a whole the challenges to the programme were found to be associated with the low capacity and attitude of the implementers and the negative attitude of the villagers. Thus, relevant and efficient implementers who can follow the basic principles of villagization should be selected for the remaining implementation period as well as to convince those already villagized.

The consequences of the programme were found to be environmental and socio-economic and cultural.

- The environmental consequences such as deforestation and overgrazing can be solved by deploying the experts who can encourage planting new trees to replace the destroyed forest; and for the remaining period trees cut for construction purpose should be either artificial such as eucalyptus tree or cut for dual function such as from clearing for farm plots.
- The pollution of air and water through latrines can be solved in two ways: one is through building using durable materials. That is possible by sharing the expenditure of each hh. Secondly by educating the hhs to follow-up and maintain the latrines before totally destroyed. The problem of inappropriate location of latrine and drinking water wells such as in Sas village clearly emanate from lack of integrated planning. Thus, there is a need for integrated planning which involves simultaneous way of designing the location of water-wells and latrines.

Finally, villagization scheme was accompanied by some developments. Such development indicators should be used as a mobilization technique for the following implementation periods. The improved accessibility to social and economic institutions benefits of villagization scheme should be clearly elaborated to the dwellers.

Shortage of a 3ha farmland was one of the most important challenges that should be solved. This can be solved through teaching of farmers to apply intensive way of cultivation step by step.

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