

# Government Strategies and Implementation Challenges on Evicted Farming Households in Ensuring Sustainable Livelihoods: The Case of Gondar City-peripheral Rural- Communities. Gondar, Ethiopia

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine strategies, processes and implementations in ensuring sustainable livelihoods of land expropriated households. Thus, samples of 293 evicted households were taken for this cross-sectional mixed research. Both primary and secondary data were complimented to the study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data whereas the qualitative data was analyzed in thematic analysis techniques. The finding shows that there are, in Ethiopia, national and regional laws, policies, and strategies including the Ethiopian constitution that describe how expropriated households should be treated, compensated and give rehabilitation to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Though government policies and proclamations declared appropriate compensations to evicted farmers, the livelihood of expropriated farmers challenged; mainly in time delay of compensation, low compensation, and absence of consistent payment to farmers, lack of job opportunity considering their educational and social status. Besides, there is no rehabilitation and follow-ups on what the farmers do with the compensation money. Policies and strategies are not properly implemented at the grass root level so that sustainability of farmers' livelihood is going in to questions. Therefore, policies should consider current living conditions, inflation rates and social characteristics of farming peoples. Finally, local governments, nongovernmental organizations and higher education institutions need to be concerned to properly design and implement policies and resolve negative consequences of urban expansion on the surrounding farming households.

**Keywords:** peri- urban, livelihood, eviction, and government.

## Introduction

Urban expansion which results land eviction usually affects farming communities of urban peripheries. Hence it needs resettlement and rehabilitation support based on the extent and severity of the expropriation (UNHCHR, 1993). Urban development policies are vital to rehabilitate the social and economic welfare of evicted peoples and to ensure sustainable development. in cognizant to this, the UNHCHR(1993) approved certain guidelines to mitigate the inevitable negative effects of evictions such as: relocation should be minimized; affected peoples should be fairly compensated and rehabilitated; evictees should benefit from the development process and, at minimum, should be no worse off than before relocation, evictees should participate fully in the relocation planning and management process, and the parties benefiting from the development causing the relocation should pay the full costs of the relocation process, including the socioeconomic rehabilitation of those affected to at least their former level.

The World Bank (2004:40-41) also recommends that providing replacement land or cash compensation will be enough if the total land loss of the expropriated farmer is less than 20 percent of the total land holding. If the total land loss is more than 20 percent of the total land holding, the type of compensation should include other rehabilitation packages in addition to the land replacement or the cash compensation. However, if more than 80 percent of the total land holding is subject to expropriation the remaining 20 percent should also be compensated because it is no longer economically viable.

Accordingly, most countries have constitutional requirements for paying compensation when the government expropriates private assets for public purposes. In the United States (US), Philippine and Brazil, the Constitution requires "just compensation" for all takings of private property. The US government provides the tenants with new residences that meet city standards in instead of cash compensation (ADP, 2007).

Italian law provides for a high level of compensation and strong incentives for agricultural landowners and users to accept the compensation offered by the state. When agricultural land is expropriated and rezoned for urban uses, the municipality offers compensation of 1.5 to 3 times the government-established average value of similar agricultural land in the locality. Their higher-than-market value<sup>1</sup> offer of compensation has encouraged landowners to accept the monetary compensation without appeal to the courts (ADB, 2007).

The Chinese compensation law caps the sum of compensation for loss of land, in which agricultural lands is

<sup>1</sup>The ADB (2007) presented as **fair market value** is the amount that the land might be expected to realize if sold in the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer.

owned by collectives of peoples, and resettlement subsidy at 30 times the average annual output value for the preceding 3 years if the statutory standards are insufficient to maintain farmers' original living standards. Because of the existence of collective landowners, compensation for loss of land and resettlement subsidies is allocated to the households within collective landowner. In addition, the Chinese government negotiates with respective industries located on expropriated land to provide permanent employment for the expropriated farmers (ADB, 2007 and (UN-Habitat, 2013).

The Ethiopian laws, policies, and strategies including the constitution in art.40, The FDRE proclamation no.455/2005 and the Amhara regional state directive no 5/2011 described that how expropriated households should be treated, compensated and give rehabilitation so as to ensure future livelihoods. This paper tried to assess the policies and different support programs in Ethiopia and its implementation process to improve the livelihood of their expropriated citizens.

### **Statement of the problem**

Though the government policies and proclamations declare to appropriate compensation to evicted farmers, the livelihood of expropriated farmers in various towns of Ethiopia did not improved mainly due to two reasons: first, there is no follow-up on what the farmers do with the compensation money and many of them fail to invest in value adding activities. The second reason is relative inadequacy of compensation compared to the income they were getting from their farms and the high cost of living in urban areas (Dejenie, 2011 and Muluwork, 2014). Lack of municipal support toward the rehabilitation of expropriated farmers who are only skilled at cultivating land but suddenly exposed to an urban lifestyle has caused considerable suffering. No personal financial planning advice regarding proper use of their compensation in a way that improved their livelihood. The policy had not taken in to account the lives of rural households living in the vicinity of cities. It results for the economic and social marginalization of urban periphery households. Despite to this problem many researchers conducted in peri-urban places of Ethiopia are not concerned compare policies and strategies with its actual practices at the grass root level. For instance, (Alemu and Amare, 2015) studied at urban expansion but concerned on assessing farmers perception on urbanization and displacement as well as the participation of farmers on the decision of displacement and compensation. Nigissie et al (2012) also examined Bahir Dar City and focused on the dynamics of urban expansion and its impact on land use/land cover change and small-scale farmers living near the urban fringe. More particularly a study at Gondar town was conducted by Eyaya (2014). He was targeted on the impact of urban expansion on the agricultural land use a remote sensing and GIS approach. All of above studies were not emphasized to look Federal and regional urban expansion policies and implementations. The current national and regional land acquisition policies/strategies regarding to land expropriation are not assessed so far. Above all, the implementation of land acquisition strategies among evicted households in Gondar city peripheral rural- communities is not clearly investigated. By considering these gaps, this paper tried to address the following general and specific objectives.

### **General Objective**

The main objective of this study is to examine government strategies, processes and implementations in ensuring the sustainable livelihoods of evicted households in Gondar City peripheral Rural- Communities.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To review the current national and regional land acquisition policies/strategies
- To identify the major challenges of evicted people faced during and after land eviction

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Description of the study area**

Gondar, established in 1636, is situated in North western administrative zone<sup>1</sup> of Amhara region in the high land of northern Ethiopian Plateau at 12°36'N37°28'E North latitude and 12.6° 37.467°E Longitude and at an altitude of 2200 meter above sea level. It is relatively located north of Bahr Dar (the capital city of Amhara regional state), east of Metemma, south east of Semien National park. The city is found at 727 Km distance from Addis Ababa (the capital city of Ethiopia and the seat of the Africa Union). The demographic information of the town is presented by the table 1.1.

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<sup>1</sup> Zone is an administrative level which composed various districts

**Table: 1.1. The population growth of Gondar city from 1994-2014**

Year	Male	Female	Total	Average annual growth rate
1994	51,366	60,883	112,249	3.9%
2007	98,085	108,902	206,987	6.5%
2011	108,883	121,700	230,583	2.8%
2014	149970	156276	306,246	10.9%

Source: CSA report, from 1994-2015

Due to natural increase and migration (Baheru, 1998), the demand for housing and investment increased at higher rate which encouraging both unplanned settlement and horizontal urban expansion in the urban fringe. Then, the government had forced to revise the master plan, which had got the first master plan during Italian occupation by Gherardo Bosio in 1936, of the city in different times. Its master plan had been drafted and revised in 1937-1975, 1976-2006, and 2007- 2011 (Rifkindn, n.d) and Gondar municipality, 2015). The continuous physical expansion incorporated a considerable amount of farmland to the city administration which leads for decreasing in agricultural land holding and food productions.

## 2.2. Research Design

The study was undertaken in cross-sectional design from primary and secondary sources in relevant data collection techniques. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. In quantitative approach, sample survey was used so that the researcher selected sample individuals from study households based on stratified random sampling. According to the city administration data, there were 892 households who were expropriated their farming land from 2013. Thus, sample size was calculated using Yamane (1967) simplified proportion sample size estimation formula;  $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$  to determine the required sample size at a confidence level of 95 %, a 0.05 margin of error, and a 5 % non- response rate. Hence, 293 respondents (total sample) were selected from the total population of 892 individuals. Consequently, household heads or members were selected based on proportional random sampling technique from the list of households in five communities and structured questionnaires were prepared which include both close- ended and open-ended questions.

On the other hand, Focus Group Discussion and key informant interview were complimented to gather qualitative data and to capture more deeper and comprehensive information from participants about the expropriation process and its impact on households. As a result, three FGD (with eight members) were purposively organized at three communities where majority of evicted people are found. Key informant interview was made with knowledgeable people on the areas under investigation. Ten key informants from affected households and five informants from government officials of selected communities were deliberately selected. Instruments like note book, tape recorder were used to record data.

### Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequencies was used to analyze quantitative data using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20) for analyzing-coded questionnaires. Thematic analysis was employed for qualitative data and finally, concurrent triangulation was used to cross check the reliability of data collected from both approaches.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Ethiopian laws, policies and Strategies on Peri-Urban land expropriation

Still recent time, Ethiopia did not have a comprehensive urban policy that guides the development its urban centers. However, there are sartorial policies and strategies which describe urban development. The 1995 Constitution, article 40(3) declared that “the right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as of all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the State and in the people of Ethiopia”. Though, basic ownership and administration of the land stayed with government, it must be recognized that the land tenure situation was nevertheless dramatically transformed by the 1995 Constitution. Article 40 expanded the rights of citizens to acquire, use and transfer private property. However, in Article 40(8), the government retained the power of eminent domain to compulsorily expropriate property from owners if and when needed for public purpose subject, of course, to payment in advance of compensation commensurate to the value of the property.

The Ethiopian Federal laws on expropriation declared that households must be compensated with equivalent land in another part of the area where they live, or, if there is no land, financial compensation. Officially, farmers who expropriated their land should be paid displacement compensation which shall be equivalent to ten times the average annual income he secured during the five years ceding the expropriation of the land (FDRE pro. no.455/2005). In practice, this figure is impossible to calculate for an individual plot so administrators calculate a common price per square meter for the whole project area instead.

As per the federal proclamations, Amhara regional national state also approved its guidelines on 2011. it presented directions to why peri-urban land is expropriated, how it would be compensated and when evicted peoples are informed and leaved their land. The regional guideline indicated detail about the variation of

monetary compensation by the type of land, cost of land improvement and the amount and value of assets at evicted land.

### **3.2. Major Challenges of Evicted People Faced During and After Land Eviction**

#### **3.2.1. Low and Monetary Limited Compensation for evicted households**

The Ethiopian laws, policies, and strategies including the constitution in art.40, The FDRE proclamation no.455/2005 and the Amhara regional state directive no 5/2011 described that how expropriated households should be treated, compensated and give rehabilitation so as to ensure future livelihoods. However, according to the information obtained from key informants, no job opportunity was made for evicted households. Although payment is made for the properties lost in the land, there are complains on the appropriateness of evaluation procedures. Key informants from Loza Maryam Kebele land administration office points out that: “the current compensation estimation procedure is not considering the actual value of the land and property at the land.” On the other hand, there are other cases that some farmers did not obtained appropriate compensation payment for the properties lost on the land. Key informants suggested that this kind of problem was faced on some affected households whose land was already within the boundary of the city.

FGD participants identified that unsatisfactory compensation is among main factors of why the livelihood of expropriated farmers has not improved: the first factor was inadequacy of enough compensation compared to replace the income they were getting from their farms and survive in the high cost of living by the current time. Thus, the information from the FGD discussants and Key informants revealed that most farmers who lost their land were not satisfied even with the current compensation because it is not enough to re-establish their economic base or to sustain their livelihood and therefore, replace their income that was previously earned from agricultural land. Moreover, in the compensation decision process the family size of the households is not considering so that other researchers also presented (Alemu A. and Amare G, 2015).

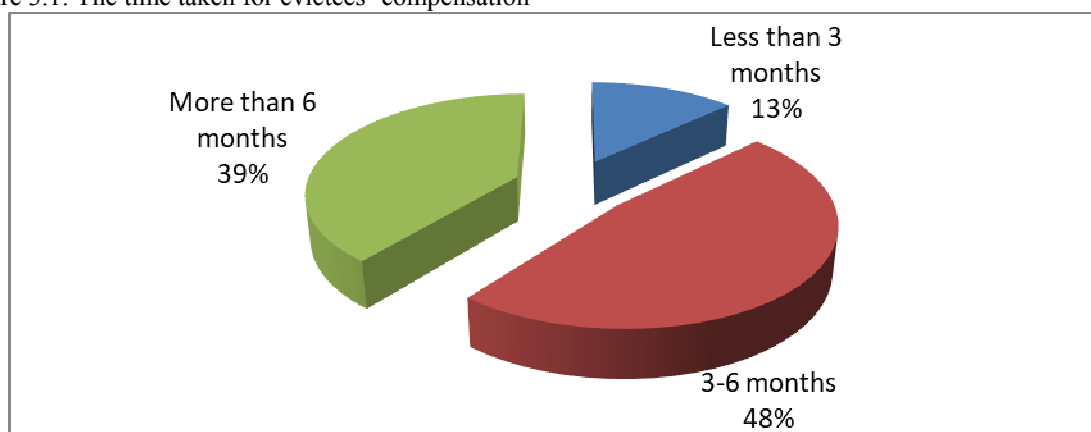
One of the objectives why farmers land was given for private investors and industries was so as to create job opportunity for the local people including non-educated persons. But, the reality is not as it was expected by the local farmers. FGD participants from all groups confirmed that *“no new industry was started around the area rather it makes the farming place idle. Large amount of land served neither for industries nor for agricultural productions.”*

The Ethiopian proc. No.455/2005 stated that young household member have to get a resident place if the land was completely taken for urban purpose. It is assured by art 8(4a) which stated that landholder whose landholding has been expropriated would be provided with a plot of urban land, the size of which shall be determined by the urban administration, to be used for the construction of a dwelling house. Related to this issue, a question was raised to respondents whether family member get additional resident place for the young household members. Thus, the survey shows that all of the respondents (100%) were not earned additional resident places for their young children. Therefore, one can understand about the land acquisition process in Gondar city is not full of benefit package for the expropriated farmers or it is not implemented as per the designed policy and strategy of the country.

#### **3.2.2. Time delay in land compensation process**

The FDRE proclamation no 455/2005 declares that any landholder who has been served with an expropriation order shall hand over the land to the urban administration within 90 days from the date of payment of compensation. The Amhara regional state directive no. 5/2011 also stated that any urban administration or private project should pay the compensation money within 30 days after the estimation process is finished. The information gathered from key informant and FGD discussants, however, revealed that the land compensation process is not consistent to all communities.

Figure 3.1: The time taken for evictees' compensation



Source: sample survey

The study divided the time of compensation process in to three categories (less than 3 months, 3-6 months and more than 6 months) based on federal and regional proclamations and the information gathered from key informants. Therefore, the above table indicates that 13.1% were received the compensation before three months, 47.7% were obtained the money between 3 and 6 months and the rest of sample respondents (39.2%) were earned their land compensation in a time of more than 6 months. Even if majority of the proportion of evicted respondents had gained the payment within 6 months after land was expropriated, the study also implies as it is no small number of households who did not earn the money by the specified time. A key informant in Azezo T/Haymanot was saying:

*“ some individuals were receiving money within three months but others were not getting their compensation by the time promised before land expropriation.....time delay affects the household neither using compensation money nor to plough the land on the proper season of cultivation.”*

It is disadvantageous since expropriated farmers got the money payment by the early estimation after a year that had compensation difference. Other key informant described the consequence of time delay on farmers here as follows:

*I have received the money after a year but by the previous level of estimation. During a time when I was received the amount of money per Kada was 87 thousand but I get 54 thousand per kada which is the previous level of estimation. The responses of the concerned offices were like absence of budget, the process is not finished, and others bureaucratic reasons. Thus, I got neither the updated estimation nor used the money timely” [key informant at Azezo T/Haymanot interviewed on March, 27, 2016]*

### 3.2.3. Absence of Essential Trainings and Rehabilitation Support

Lack of follow-up on what the farmers do with the compensation money and absence of support towards the rehabilitation of expropriated farmers who are only skilled at cultivating land was another factor that caused to considerable suffering. In line with this, questions related to assess the trainings and the support made for expropriated farmers were designed and addressed to sample respondent farmers who lost their farmlands due to urban expansion.

Table 3.1: Percentage of respondents taking training for future livelihoods

Questions	Answer	Number	Percent
Do you take training so as to manage and invest your compensation?	Yes	3	1.1
	No	290	98.9
	Total	293	100.0

Source: Sample Survey

The above table indicates that 98.9% of respondents had not provided any type of training which can help them for spending the compensation money in appropriate way. Only 1.1% had responded “Yes” that they may get the training by their involvement in different income generating activities. Key informants also stated that evicted individuals did not get any training and favorable working place so as to make their livelihood sustainable. However, in some cases orientation regarding the way to utilize cash compensation has been given by people from experts of city administration.

According to UNHCHR (1993) and Zemenfes et al (2014), in addition to cash compensation, healthy practice of peri-urban land acquisition should be relied on the social support and rehabilitation. Since a potential intervention activity may bring substantial change in improving living standard of evicted farmers in creating diversified and sustainable income sources. For instance it involves skill trainings, personal planning advice,

business building support, etc. Nonetheless, this study found that evicted households were literally abandoned once they receive cash compensation.

Table 3.2: percentage of respondents gaining rehabilitation support after losing land

2	Do you take any types of support after being evicted?	Frequency	Percent
	Yes	5	1.7
	No	288	98.3
	Total	293	100.00

Source: Sample Survey

Hence, as indicated from table 3.2, almost all of the sample respondents(98.3%) replied ‘No’ implying that nothing was done . similarly, focus group discussion participants stated that “the government interventions program was vastly focused on the provision of money compensation and information sharing for the farmland eviction.”

There was no any formal training or deliberate intervention for rehabilitating displaced households so that plenty of people had lost the money they get as land compensation. The key informants from urban agricultural office, land administration office and Kebele chair persons in sharing this idea stated that:

*“Awareness creation towards wise use of compensation money was given for evicted people simultaneously with other programs.... farmers were informed as they should not spend their money in a way of beyond their knowledge and skills. For instance, farmers were advised not to purchase vehicles since which may expose them for unanticipated risks.”*

This shows that the intervention program regarding organized training and provision of rehabilitation service was not implemented yet. Because of this, majority of evicted households used the compensation money for direct consumption or prefer keeping the money in Bank which is open to draw the money frequently and used for household consumption.

### 3.3.1. Promises before expropriating the land and implementations

According to the information gathered from Key informants and FGD participants, prior to land expropriation, government officials were convinced the people by telling them as various compensation packages will be provided for those who lost their land in particular and the community in general. The following issues are among several promises that were informed by the government bodies:

- To organize the youth in different income generating activities- the local government officials told evicted people as skill development will be provided for them by forming cooperatives and provision of appropriate working place and made favorable conditions.
- To give residential plot of land for youth member of evicted households
- To accelerate infrastructures like, water, electricity, road and transportations
- To make the life style of farming household better.
- To increase job opportunities, economic options or income alternatives
- To create market relationships for farmers production.

Thus, most evicted people were delighted hoping to get better living condition and accessibility. Though, more things were promised to the farming people, the present situation shows that there is no any access of social services yet in the exception of some peri urban areas like part of the Blajig community and Loza Maryam where infrastructural services like electricity is provided for few households. Most of the farmers who lost their land are complaining about low compensation and lack of other economic options which were promised and are vital to make a living. Here one individual were presented the current situation by the following way:

*When the land was decided to be given for industry zone, I was hopeful to have better job opportunity; Infrastructural services like water pump, electricity and road construction will situated in the area. Besides, me and my neighbors also expect urban land plot for our young family members since many things were told by the kebele chairman and other focal persons ...today almost all of things what they were promised and we were anticipated are not implementing. This makes us to be dissatisfied by the government action.*

## Conclusion

This study reviewed Ethiopian current proclamations and strategies that are concerned on peri urban land expropriation. both the federal and regional strategies presented why, how and when land acquisition should be implement as well as how land compensation is given to evicted peoples. Though the government policies and proclamations declare to appropriate compensation to evicted farmers, the livelihood of expropriated farmers in various towns of Ethiopia did not improved. No training regarding proper use of their compensation in a way that improved their livelihood. Lack of municipal support toward the rehabilitation of expropriated farmers who are only skilled at cultivating land but suddenly exposed to an urban lifestyle has caused considerable suffering. There is no well-founded rehabilitation program to recognize the capabilities of those displaced and make

provision for skills training. The policy had not taken in to account the lives of rural households living in the vicinity of cities. In addition, government and other institutions did not involve in any social and economic intervention to rehabilitate affected householdes rather they were limited in payment of compensation money.

### Recommendations

The study finally recommended that:

- The local government should work about early awareness creation, and building the capacity of evicted farmers through different training programs
- Regarding to the case of government intervention, urban agriculture office and other stakeholders like urban business and economic development office, small scale and micro enterprise office and other related government and non-government institutions are responsible to support the rural communities so as to ensure sustainability of income sources.
- Academicians especially higher institution should engage on building the capacity of expropriated farmers(the college of agriculture in University of Gondar must make its target on the area)
- Policies and strategies need to in account the rapid inflation rates so as to provide satisfactory payments to evicted peoples.
- The plan, process and implementation of land expropriation have to be considered the benefit, future threat and opportunities of evicted households. To this effect, policy implementation follow up is needed from Federal –to- Woreda levels.

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