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IMPEDIMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN TOKE KUTAYE WOREDA/DISTRICT/, WEST SHEWA ZONE, OROMIYA REGION, ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Cooperatives have been accepted as a major vehicle for rural development. A little research has been done on impediments for the development of agricultural cooperatives at grassroots level. The objectives of the study were: to study the participation of cooperative members towards cooperative development; to study the major problems affecting the development of agricultural cooperatives in Toke Kutaye Woreda and to identify the suitable measures to overcome the inherent weaknesses of agricultural cooperatives development. Survey strategy was adopted for the study. In addition, some Participatory Appraisal Tools and techniques-mainly group discussions were employed to complement the survey statements, and multistage sampling procedure was used for selecting sample. Major findings revealed that the majority of members enjoyed the benefits of marketing (97.3%) and input supply (88.3%). 46.8 % and 40.5 % of members availed of the benefits of savings and credit respectively. Lack of cash credit led 87.4 %, 42.3 % and 36.7 % of the members to borrow from friends, relatives and moneylenders respectively. Improved seeds credit was low. In addition, limited purchase of grain, lack of timely supply of inputs, high storage expenses, low support from union and poor management of cooperative were identified. 27% of the members did not sell produce to cooperatives. Establishing rural saving and credit associations, market linkage for farmers' products with private businesses, timely supply of inputs, expansion of intensive agriculture, improving the fertility status of the soil and improved support of unions will increase the number of members. Stakeholders should, solve the impediments of agricultural cooperatives development. Further research in agricultural cooperative development should be conducted at grassroots level to attract the attentions of stakeholders.

KEYWORDS

Agricultural development, Agricultural input supply, Agricultural product marketing, Cooperatives development, rural development, Ethiopia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Like many other developing countries agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy. Special attention to the development of agricultural cooperatives was paid since 1995. The previous thirty five years cooperative life on all sectors had several problems. Development in Ethiopia did not change subsistence agriculture. There were economic, political and other changes that have had impact in agriculture in the country. Agricultural cooperatives have been established for the purpose of marketing of inputs and farmers' products. The farmer's business performance is related to the performance of the services of agricultural cooperatives for which the business relies on. The impediments at primary and union agricultural cooperative levels need attention. Members, chairmen and board of directors are generally responsible for the success or failure of their cooperatives so long that they get the necessary technical, managerial supports etc.

Farming plays several important roles in the national economy; it provides a means of living for more than 85% of the national population and accounts for 50 % of the GDP and 85 % of the export earnings of the country (MEDaC, 1999). Since the early 1970s, per capital agricultural production has been declining (Befekadu and Berhanu; 2000, Devenreux, 2000) which has made the country dependant on commercial imports of food and food aid, the later contributing the largest share (Clay et al. 1999). Low input use and complete dependence on natural rainfall and low output are the salient features of Ethiopian agriculture; and the overall result has been food insecurity in all its manifestations- chronic, cyclical and transitory at both national and household levels. At present, Ethiopia is one of the poorest and most food insecure countries in the world (Berhanu and Seid 1999; Mulat et al. 2004). Agriculture produces raw materials to manufacturing industries. Farming is the main source of food for household's consumption and the cash income of the majority of the rural population is mainly generated from agriculture. However, in spite of its importance to the national economy, Ethiopian agriculture has only remained at subsistence level and contributing little to the improvement of the living standard of the rural masses.

In Ethiopia, there are three well-known traditional cooperatives or self-help groups that still operate almost in all parts of urban and rural areas. **Edir**: - It is similar with burial cooperatives or organization. **Eku**: It is a financial form of traditional cooperative formed voluntarily. **Debo/ Wenfel/ Jigie**: Debo is a system of farmer's cooperation during the time of farming, weeding, harvesting, trashing, and house construction etc. in the rural areas of the country (Veerakumaran, 2007).

Modern cooperative movement started in 1960 in Ethiopia during the regime of the emperor. The number of registered cooperative societies was 112 during the imperial government out of which 76 was farmers' cooperatives; while the rest consists of different sectors mainly handicrafts and marketing cooperatives. (Hagos, 1987)

The number of cooperative societies reached to well over 13,500 during the Derg government. After the fall of the Derg regime, a large number of cooperative societies was dismantled by their members for different reasons. (Hagos, 1987)

The Cooperative Proclamation No. 147/1998 identified clear goals and authorities, which supported a more conducive legal environment for the formation of Ethiopian cooperatives. The required human resource has been assigned starting from the *Woreda* to federal level. (Emana, 2009).

Cooperatives appear to operate on a significant scale in developing countries: studies have shown that over seven per cent of the African population is affiliated to primary cooperatives, and this number is increasing (Delvetere, 2008; Pollet, 2009). Agricultural cooperatives play an important role in food production and distribution, and in supporting long-term food security. Cooperatives are also sometimes seen as beneficial for conflict resolution, peace building and social cohesion.

Despite the dominant role of agriculture in the Ethiopian economy, the number of non-agricultural cooperatives outweighs the number of agricultural cooperatives. Approximately 37 per cent of the primary cooperatives are engaged in agricultural activities. Multipurpose agricultural cooperatives dominate the list of primary cooperatives (28 per cent) followed by saving and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs), which are organized both in the rural and urban centres (26 per cent) (Emana, 2009).

The impediments of agricultural cooperatives' development at *Woreda* in Ethiopia have not been adequately studied. The study identified the major obstacles of agricultural cooperatives at *Woreda* level and suggested appropriate interventions. Past research on cooperative development concentrated at macro level (state and region levels). Hence, the study tried to identify the impediments of agricultural development at *Woreda* agricultural cooperatives

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are the following:

1. To study the participation of cooperative members towards cooperative development;

2. To study the major problems affecting the development of agricultural cooperatives in Toke Kutaye *Woreda* and
3. To identify the suitable measures to overcome the inherent weaknesses of agricultural cooperative development

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Survey strategy was adopted for the study. In addition to the survey, some participatory appraisal tools and techniques mainly group discussions were employed to complement the survey statements and multistage sampling procedure was used for selecting the samples. Sample cooperatives were selected and sample members were selected from sample cooperatives. Sample non-members were selected from those who live around the sample cooperatives. Due to problem of inaccessibility farmers living far away from the sample cooperatives were not selected.

3.1.1. THE STUDY AREA

Toke Kutaye *Woreda* is one of the 20 *Woredas* in West Shewa Zone of Oromiya Regional State of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The capital city of West Shewa Zone is Ambo town, which is located in Ambo Zuria *Woreda*. Ambo town is 125 kms. away from Addis Ababa on Addis Ababa - Nekemte road. The capital city of Toke Kutaye *Woreda* is Guder (after the division of Ambo *Woreda* into Ambo Zuria and Toke Kutaaye *Woreda* at the end of 2005/2006). Toke Kutaye *Woreda* has a total area of 65495 hectares (old Ambo was 149094 hectares; computed by author from OPEDWSZ 1998 and AWFEDO, 2008). In the year 2007/08, the average land-holding size per household was 1-2 ha. In the same year the number of households holding less than 1ha, 1-2 ha, greater than 2 for 3 ha, greater than 3 to 4 ha and greater than 4 ha accounts to 36.54%, 20.89%, 15.52%, 11.60% and 15.43% respectively Toke Kutaye *Woreda* Finance and Economic Development Office (TKWFEDO, 2008).

Toke Kutaye *Woreda* has 31 Peasant Associations (PAs). There were 17434 households in the rural areas in 2007/08. According to the census of 2007, the total population residing in the rural areas of the *Woreda* was 104003 (51986 male and 52017 female). Out of the total population of the *Woreda*, about 86.72% resided in the rural areas and 13.28% was urban dwellers (*Ibid*).

Multipurpose agricultural cooperatives (MPAC) are formed from farmers of different peasant associations. There were 12 registered multipurpose agricultural cooperatives with total members of 8517 in 2006/07 and 9215 in 2007/08 and with a capital of Ethiopian Birr (ETB) 5589776.28 in both 2006/07 and 2007/08 years. In the years 2006/07 and 2007/08, male members accounted for 92.66% while female members accounted for 7.34% of the total members (TKWFEDO, 2008). Crop and livestock mixed farming system is practiced in the *Woreda*. The major crops cultivated include teff (*Eragrostis tef*), wheat, barley, maize, sorghum, noug, (*Guzotia Abyssinica*) and linseed. 12601 quintals of Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) was distributed to the farmers in 2006/7 in the *Woreda*. 5181.5 quintals of Urea was distributed to the farmers in 2006/7 in the *Woreda*. Improved seeds such as teff, wheat, maize, barley and chickpea were distributed to the farm households in 2006/07. About 74.5 %, 9.4 % and 8.9 % of the improved seeds distributed in the *Woreda* in 2006/07 accounted for wheat, chickpea, and barley respectively (*Ibid*). In the years 2006/07 and 2007/08, on average about 8.81 % of the farmers did not own any oxen, 11% owned one ox, 38.98 % owned a pair of oxen and 41.21 % of the farmers owned 4 and more oxen in the *Woreda* (*Ibid*).

Farm households in the *Woreda* own different types of livestock for draught purposes, milk, egg, and meat production. The total livestock population was 162245 in the *Woreda* in 2006/07 out of which cattle, sheep and goats accounted for 63.39%, 10.03% and 15.27% respectively. The total number of horses, donkeys and mules was 8464, 9284 and 600 respectively in 2006/07 in the *Woreda*. Horses, donkeys and mules each accounted for 5.22 %, 5.72 %, and 0.37 % respectively of the livestock population in the same period. The chicken population was 72189 in 2007/08. There were 72189 bee colonies in the year 2007/08 (TKWFEDO, 2008). The major livestock feed include open grazing, hay and crop residue Office of Planning and Economic Development for West Shewa Zone (OPEDWSZ 1998).

3.1.2. SELECTION OF THE STUDY UNITS AND RESPONDENTS

Out of 12 multipurpose agricultural cooperatives, 4 (about 33% of the multipurpose agricultural cooperatives) were purposively selected since they are accessible and found convenient to the researcher. Moreover, other factors like agro-ecological conditions, and dominant farming systems were considered. The selected sample multipurpose agricultural cooperatives were:

1. Mutulu multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 22 kilometres (kms) from Ambo on Ambo - Guder - Mutulu road, where the MPAC serve for seven peasant association.
2. Toke Hamus Gebeya multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 29 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Nekemte road, where the MPAC serve for one peasant association.
3. Toke Kombolcha multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 56 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Nekemte road, where the MPAC serve for six peasant association
4. Wajira multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 28 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Guder - Ababa - Wajira road, where the MPAC serve for one peasant associations

Sample multipurpose agricultural cooperatives (MPAC) members were selected at field level using simple random sampling technique. 32, 39, 13 and 27 MPAC members were randomly selected from Mutulu, Toke Hamus Gebeya, Toke Kombolcha and Wajira MPAC respectively. A total of 111 approximately 2.82 % of the members from the cooperatives was selected. About 1.7 % from Mutulu, 3.47% from Toke Hamus Gebeya, 3.63% from Toke Kombolcha and 4.74% from Wajira members were selected. The sample representative included cooperative executives and ordinary members of the selected cooperatives. Purposive sampling method was employed to select representatives from non-members living in and around the areas of the selected cooperatives. 87 sample non-member farmers were randomly selected from the vicinity of the selected cooperatives. 32, 29, 10 and 16 non-members were selected from Mutulu, Toke Hamus Gebeya, Toke Kombolcha and Wajira respectively. This makes the total respondents (members and non-members) to be 198.

Only 4 out of 12 MPACs were members of Ambo Union. All the sample cooperatives were members of Ambo Union. As from Ambo *Woreda* Cooperative Office data (before the division to Ambo Zuria *Woreda* and Toke Kutaye *Woreda*), the status of the sample cooperatives was classified as strong (1) medium (2) and new (1).

3.1.3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The methods of data collection were a mixture of questionnaire survey (with both closed and open ended questions) and some participatory appraisal tools mainly group discussions with representatives of sample multipurpose agricultural cooperatives (for members) and representatives of non-members from three peasant associations. The agricultural development agents of the areas organized the group discussions. Discussions were held in the local language (in Oromifa) and interpreted by another person who was a graduate in rural sociology and extension and member of the Department of Cooperatives at Ambo College of Agriculture (at present Ambo University). The enumerators were given training on the content of the questionnaire, methods of data collection and on how to approach farmers. During the fieldwork, the researcher closely supervised the enumerators.

The secondary source of data included both published and unpublished information about the study area in general and cooperatives agricultural production in particular. Along with secondary data collection, several discussions with key informants and *Woreda* agricultural personnel were conducted to get insight about the study area and to assess the previously conducted research and development works. The study was conducted from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006. Data from respondents were collected in March 2006 and group discussions with selected farmers were conducted in the first week of April 2006. The collected data were processed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple percentages and averages were used. The facts revealed by the farmers during the group discussions were also complemented to the survey statements.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study are presented in two sub-chapters. Sub-chapter 4.1 deals with farmer members of MPAC while sub-chapter 4.2 deals with non-member farmers of Toke Kutaye *Woreda*.

4.1. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF MEMBERS OF MULTIPURPOSE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

The results of Focus group discussion; questionnaire survey (with both closed and open-ended questions) are presented and discussed in this chapter.

4.1.1. GENERAL - PRELIMINARY DETAILS

TABLE 1: SAMPLE MPACS AND SAMPLE MEMBER RESPONDENTS IN TOKE KUTAYE WOREDA

S. No	Name of MPAC society	Number of member respondents	Percent
1	Mutulu	32	28.8
2	Toke Hamus Gebeya	39	35.1
3	Toke Kolbolcha	13	11.7
4	Wajira	27	24.3
	Total	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

4.1.2 PURPOSE OF JOINING IN THE COOPERATIVE

TABLE 2: MEMBERS PURPOSE TO JOIN MPAC IN TOKE KUTAYE WOREDA

Purpose	Response				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	No. of Resp.	Percentage
Credit	59	53.2	52	46.8	111	100
Input	108	97.3	3	2.7	111	100
Marketing	95	88.3	13	11.7	111	100
Other	5	4.5	106	95.5	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is obvious from Table 2 that 97.3% of the respondents joined in cooperatives for getting input from the institution. Nearly 95 respondents (88.3%) were of the opinion that they have joined to avail the marketing facility given by the cooperatives. Only 59 respondents (53.2 %) of the respondents said that they have joined cooperatives for availing of a credit facility.

TABLE 3: MOTIVATION FOR ENROLLMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOIN MPACS

Category	Respondents				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Friends	13	11.7	98	88.3	111	100
Relatives	7	6.3	104	93.7	111	100
Other members	40	36	71	64	111	100
Cooperative leaders	65	58.6	46	41.4	111	100
Local Administrative Leaders	46	44.1	62	55.9	111	100
Community Elders	18	16.2	93	83.8	111	100
On their own	54	48.6	57	51.4	111	100
Others	1	0.9	110	99.1	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

The efforts taken by the cooperative leaders in this Woreda regarding the enrolment of membership is evident from Table 3 that 65 respondents (58.6%) were of the opinion that they have enrolled in cooperatives only because of the motivation given by the cooperative leaders. Next to cooperative leaders, 48.6 % of the respondents said that they have joined in cooperatives on their own. Local administrative leaders (44.1%) also contributed in motivating the public to join in the cooperative movement.

TABLE 4: MEMBERS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES, BYLAWS AND HOW A COOPERATIVE IS ORGANIZED

Description	Responses				Total Response	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Knowledge of cooperative Principles	3	2.7	107	96.4	110	100
Knowledge of cooperative bylaws	17	15.3	94	84.7	111	100
Knowledge how a cooperative is organized	15	13.5	96	86.5	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is clear from Table 4 that the majority of the respondents did not know the bylaws of the cooperative, the principles of cooperatives and how a cooperative is organized. Among these responses, 96.4 % of the respondents were of the opinion that they did not know the principles of cooperatives and 86.5 % of the respondents did not know how a cooperative is organized. 84.7 % of the respondents did not know the cooperative bylaws. Among those who responded that they knew the principles (2.7 %), none of them were able to state any one of the principles. Among those who responded that they knew how a cooperative is organized (15), 6.3% said to get organized and to work together, and (7) 6.3% said to pay shares and become members.

4.1.3 ECONOMIC BENEFITS DERIVED

TABLE 5: ECONOMIC BENEFITS WHICH MEMBERS DERIVED FROM MPAC IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07

n=111						
Benefits	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Credit	45	40.5	66	59.5	111	100
Input	98	88.3	13	11.7	111	100
Marketing	108	97.3	3	2.7	111	100
Savings	52	46.8	59	53.2	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Cooperative members get organized to get a number of benefits. Table 5 discloses the economic benefits derived from cooperatives to its members. One can conclude from the above Table 5 that the vast majority (97.3 %) 108 of the respondents enjoyed the benefit of marketing from cooperatives. 98 respondents (88.3%) got the economic benefit of input supply. Rest of the 52 and 45 respondents (46.8 % and 40.5 % respectively) availed of the economic benefits with regard to savings and credit respectively.

4.1.4 SOURCE OF BORROWINGS OF MEMBERS OF MPAC

TABLE 6: SOURCE OF BORROWINGS OF MEMBERS OF MPAC IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07

Source	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Relatives	47	42.3	64	57.5	111	100
Friends	97	87.4	14	12.6	111	100
Money lenders	41	36.7	70	63.1	111	100
Others	1	0.9	110	99.1	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Borrowings become the part and parcel of the peasant community. The right source will lead the farmers in right direction. From Table 6 it is very clear that the majority of the respondents (87.4 %) borrowed money from their friends, 36.7 % of the respondents were under the clutches of moneylenders, and 42.3 % of the respondents depended upon their relatives for their monetary needs. It is good to see that 70 respondents (63.1 %) got borrowings from other sources other than from the moneylenders. No member was able to borrow from the cooperative. This indicates that the credit facility has to be strengthened. It is clear from the table that some of the members borrowed from more than one source.

4.1.5 TYPE OF CREDIT IN KIND FOR MEMBERS OF MPAC

TABLE 7: TYPE OF CREDIT IN KIND WHICH MEMBERS OF MPAC GOT IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07

Type of input	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Fertilizer	100	90.1	11	9.9	111	100
Improved Seeds	20	18	91	82	111	100
Herbicides	77	69.4	34	30.6	111	100
One or more of the above four	102	91.9	9	8.5	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Issue of components like fertilizer, seeds, herbicides etc. credit in kind, to the members is the major subsidiary business to all cooperatives. It is very clear from Table 7 that 100 respondents (90.1%) availed fertilizer from the cooperatives and 77 respondents (69.4%) procured herbicides from the cooperatives. Only 18 % of the respondents purchased improved seeds from the cooperatives. The supply of improved seeds to farmers is low.

4.1.6 ADVANTAGES IN SELLING PRODUCT THROUGH COOPERATIVES

TABLE 8: ADVANTAGES IN SELLING PRODUCT THROUGH COOPERATIVES IN THE STUDY PERIOD IN THE STUDY AREA

Advantages	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Price Advantage	33	29.7	78	70.3	111	100
No cheating while weighing	55	49.5	56	50.5	111	100
No cheating in payment	9	8.1	102	91.9	111	100
Dividend received	78	70.3	33	29.7	111	100
Members who sold produce to cooperative	84	75.7	27	24.3	111	10

Source: Computed from the survey data

There are so many advantages one can avail of from the cooperatives by way of selling their agricultural produces. 75.7 % of the members sold their produce to the cooperatives while 24.3 % sold their produce to others than the cooperatives. In Table 8 some of the advantages are listed (believed to exist) by the respondents, among all the advantages no cheating in weighing stood first 49.5 %, next comes price advantage (29.7 %), cheating in payment was said by 9 (8.1%) of the respondents. The reasons why 24.3 % of the respondents didn't sell to their cooperatives include 3.4 % of them said that the cooperatives purchased occasionally, 4.5% believed that the cooperatives did not offer good prices, 9% believed there was no surplus generated from the cooperatives and 4.5% believed other different reasons.

TABLE 9: AMOUNT OF MONEY INCURRED FOR DAP AND UREA BY COOPERATIVE MEMBERS IN THE WOREDA IN THE STUDY YEAR

Fertilizer	Amount paid in Birr for fertilizers								Did not purchase		Total	
	201 - 250		250-300		301-400		above 400					
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
DAP	12	-	0	2	1.8	50	45.1	47	42.3	12	10.8	111
Urea	41	12	10.8	9	8.2	47	42.3	2	1.8	41	36.9	111

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 9 depicts that 1.8 %, 45.1%, and 42.3%, of the respondents incurred 251-300, Birr 301-400 Birr and over 400 Birr for DAP respectively while 10.8%, 8.2 %, 42.3 %, and 1.8 % incurred% 201 – 250, Birr 250-300 Birr and Birr 301-400 Birr and above 400 Birr for urea respectively.

To the question, for the price paid in cooperative is low or high, 67.6 %, 21.69 % and 10.8% said price is low, high and didn't know respectively. According to the respondents, the high price was due to high inflation and interest (3.6 %), storage (2.7 %), did not know (4.5%) and for other different reasons (8.1 %). Those who responded that the price was low justified that cooperative are not for profit (46.8 %), burden reduced due to advance payment (3.6%), traders charged high price (1.8 %), didn't know (9.9 %) and for other reasons (5.4 %).

4.1.7 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC CONDITION AFTER BECOMING COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

TABLE 10: MEMBERS' ECONOMIC CONDITION AFTER BECOMING COOPERATIVE MEMBERS IN THE WOREDA IN THE STUDY YEAR

Particulars	Response				Total no of respondents	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Additional land	8	7.2	103	92.8	111	100
Better house condition	43	38.7	68	61.3	111	100
Livestock	40	36.0	71	64	111	100
Believed economic condition improved	47	42.3	63	56.8	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is very clear from Table 10 above that the majority of the respondents were of the opinion that they had some kind of improvement in their economic condition due to their membership in cooperatives. 7.2% to 42.3 % of respondents said that they had some economic improvement in their life.

4.1.8 REASONS FOR SLOW GROWTH OF THEIR COOPERATIVES AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS

TABLE 11: MEMBERS' VIEWS REGARDING GROWTH, SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICE, BOARDS' EFFICIENCY AND EMPLOYEES IN THEIR COOPERATIVES

Description	Response						Total	
	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%	No. of Respondents	%
Cooperatives showed growth	89	80.2	20	18	2	1.8	111	100
Satisfied with the variety of services	78	70.3	32	28.8	1	0.9	111	100
Think board is efficient	85	76.6	6	5.4	20	18	111	100
Think the cooperatives have enough employees	40	36	57	51.4	14	12.6	111	100
Cooperatives' employees are courteous and helpful	56	50.5	28	25.2	27	24.3	111	100
Cooperatives have enough capital	48	43.2	46	41.4	17	15.3	111	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 11 reveals that 80.2 % of members believed that their cooperative showed growth while 18 % believed that their cooperative did not show any growth. 1.8% of members said they did not know. Data from Open Ended Question Responses (OEQR) show that among those who perceived that their society did not show growth believed that they didn't see cooperative expansion (1.8 %), felt that there was corruption (1.8 %), felt board members did not work in team spirit (1.8 %), there was no input supply other than fertilizer (0.9 %), the cooperative had no sufficient money (1.8 %), for other different reasons (9.9 %). Regarding the number or variety of services of the cooperatives, 70.3 % of members were satisfied while 28.8 % were not satisfied. Data from OEQR show that their reasons for dissatisfaction included no cash credit (18 %), cooperatives have very limited services (5.4 %), no organized marketing services (1.8 %), and for other different reasons (6 %). Data from OEQR show that regarding additional services by the society, members proposed cash credit services (40.5 %), supply of consumer goods at fair price (39.6 %), timely purchase of agricultural products (5.4 %), and for other different reasons (9 %). 76.6% (85) of respondents think that the board is efficient. 36% (40) of respondents think that the cooperatives have enough employees 56.5% (56) of respondents think that cooperatives' employees are courteous and helpful. Only 43.2 % (48) of respondents think that cooperatives have enough capital.

4.1.9 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE SOCIETY AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS

TABLE 12: PROBLEMS FACING COOPERATIVES AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS

Members' impression	Yes	%
Problems related to funds		
1. Shortage of cash	28	25.2
2. Corrupt	9	8.1
3. No problem	30	27
4. Don't know	43	38.7
5. Others	1	0.9
Total	111	100
II. Problem related to marketing		
1. Don't purchase grain regularly	17	15.3
2. Store grain they purchase	4	3.6
3. No problem	51	45.9
4. Low price for produce	4	3.6
5. Don't know	25	22.5
6. Others	10	9
Total	111	100
III. Problem related to input		
1. No timely supply of inputs	27	24.3
2. High price of inputs	10	9
3. No problem	62	55.9
4. Don't know	9	8.1
5. Others	3	2.7
Total	111	100
IV. Problem related to stores		
1. Shortage of storage capacity	24	21.6
2. High storage expense	9	8.1
3. No storage problem	61	55
4. Don't know	15	13.5
5. Others	2	1.8
6. Total	111	100
V. Problem related to staff (employees)		
1. Shortage of staff	9	8.1
2. Misunderstanding of staff	4	3.6
3. No problem of staff	26	23.4
4. Don't know	67	60.4
5. Others	5	4.5
Total	111	100
VI. Problem related to board and chairman		
1. Poor management capacity	2	1.8
2. Don't work cooperatively	1	0.9
3. No Problem	62	55.9
4. Don't Know	38	34.2
5. Others	8	7.2
Total	111	100
VII. Problem related to government		
1. No sufficient government control	6	5.4
2. High fertilizer price	5	4.5
3. No problem	65	58.6
4. Don't know	30	27
5. Others	5	4.5
Total	110	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 12 reveals problems facing cooperatives as perceived by members. Regarding problems related to funds members 25.2 % (28), and 8.1% (9) of the respondents said that the cooperatives have shortage of cash and problem corruption respectively, 27 % (30) and 38.7 % (45) of the respondents viewed that the cooperatives do not have problems and do not know respectively.

Regarding problems related to marketing members revealed that cooperatives do not purchase grain regularly 15.3 % (17), cooperatives store the grain they purchase 3.6 % (4), cooperatives pay low price for produce 3.6 % (4), believe that there is no marketing problem 45.9 % (51) some said that they don't know 22.5% (25) some stated other reasons 9 % (10).

Regarding problems related to input members revealed that cooperatives do not supply inputs on time 24.3% (27), believe cooperatives charge high price for inputs 9 % (10), believe that there is no problem with input supply 5.9 % (62), some said that don't know 8.1 % (9), some stated other reasons 2.7 % (3).

Regarding problems related to stores members revealed that shortage of storage capacity 21.6 % (24), some said that there is high storage expense 8.1 % (9); some said that there is no storage problem 55% (61); some said that they do not know 13.5 % (15); some said other reasons 1.8 % (2).

Regarding problems related to staff (employees) members revealed that there is shortage of staff 8.1 % (9), some said that there is misunderstanding of staff 3.6 % (4), some said that there is no problem of staff 23.4 % (26), some said that they don't know 60.4 % (67), some said other reasons 4.5 % (5).

Regarding problems related to board and chairman members revealed that board and chairman poor management capacity 1.8 % (2), the don't work cooperatively 0.9 % (1), some revealed that there is no problem 55.9 % (62), some said that they don't know 34.2 % (38), some said other reasons 7.2 % (8).

Regarding problems related to government members revealed that there is no sufficient government control 5.4 % (60) expressed that there is high fertilizer price, 4.5 % (5), believed that there is no problem 58.6 % (65), some said that they don't know 27 % (30), some said other reasons 4.5 % (5).

Table 12 further reveals that shortage of cash, lack of regular purchase of grain by the cooperatives, lack of timely supply of inputs, high price of inputs, and shortage of storage capacity are problems that need attention for better development of cooperatives. The cooperatives should purchase grain regularly from members to improve its output marketing efficiency. Rural saving and credit cooperatives need to be established to improve cash credit services. Regarding problems related to employees, board and chairman, and government, there is no serious problem as such which is positive and encouraging for cooperative development in the *Woreda*.

4.1.10 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FINDINGS (MEMBERS OF MPAC)

A team of researchers went to the area with the objective of assessing major problems encountering cooperative societies in the area. Accordingly, major problems facing cooperative societies in the area were assessed with active participation of farmers as members.

As to the procedure followed in conducting the focus group discussion, chairpersons of cooperative societies, administrators of peasant association, opinion leaders and community development workers were contacted to arrange the group discussion meeting. 12 members of cooperative societies were established in the area for purpose. Accordingly, the major problems facing the cooperative societies in the area and opportunities were assessed and analyzed with the help of PRA techniques. The points raised in the focus group discussion conducted are summarized as follows.

The participants of the focus group discussion reached consensus on the following issues.

4.1.10.1 BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES (SOCIAL AND DEMOCRATIC)

i. SOCIAL BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

The cooperative societies in the area have the following social benefits:

- Non-members wish to be like members of cooperative societies.
- Members are seen as good examples for non-members to attract them to the cooperative societies.

ii. DEMOCRATIC BENEFITS OF COOPERATION IN THE AREA

The cooperative societies in the area are fully democratic and have following democratic benefits:

- Members have got full right to elect and being elected
- Duties and responsibilities are clearly described for members
- Members are convinced about the importance of cooperatives
- Meetings are organized to attract and motivate non-members.

Even though the above benefits exist, the cooperative societies in the area are lacking the following democratic benefits:

- There is nominal cooperation
- Duties and responsibilities are not clear for members
- Members are not convinced about the importance of cooperatives
- There were no meetings organized to attract and motivate non-members.

4.1.10.2 SERVICES PROVIDED BY COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE AREA

The cooperative societies in the area are providing the following services on credit basis:

- Provision of Agricultural inputs like fertilizer, improved seed and herbicides
- Provision of poultry packages
- Provision of fattening technologies

As to the preference of service provision, the group participants agreed that fertilizer is the first choice in the area because of its importance to sustain the livelihood of farmers.

The cooperative societies in the area are providing the following services on credit basis:

- Provision of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, improved seed (wheat, maize and teff).
- Grain Marketing.

As to the preference of service provision, the group participants agreed that improved seed and fertilizer are the first choices in the area because of their importance to sustain the life of farmers.

4.1.10.3 PROBLEMS RELATED TO SERVICE PROVISION IN THE AREA

The following problems were agreed upon as problems related to service provision of cooperative societies in the area:

- Less supply and high demand of improved seeds of wheat, maize and teff.
- Lack of adequate research on improved agricultural technologies and soils as prerequisite for wide scale agricultural production.
- Serious prevalence of cattle diseases.
- Lack of research on livestock diseases.
- Poor communication infrastructure.
- Lack of quality agricultural inputs.
- Lack of consumable food and non-food items
- Interference of merchants.

4.1.10.4. PROBLEMS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN THE AREA

i. PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE CONSTITUTION OF COOPERATIVES

Regarding problems related to constitution of cooperatives, the cooperative societies in the area have no problems. As a witness, they reported that:

- The geographical coverage is not a problem that even people from other peasant associations are becoming members.
- The objective of the cooperative society is clear for all members of the society who are residing both at nearby places and at distant places from the cooperative societies.

- People in the area are not afraid of bankruptcy and corruption of cooperative leaders and they are becoming members based on the historical success story of the cooperative society.
- The membership of the cooperative societies is on voluntary basis. Farmers are becoming members of cooperative societies based on their willingness.

ii. PROBLEMS RELATED TO MANAGEMENT OF COOPERATIVES

Regarding problems related to management of cooperatives, the cooperative societies in the area have the following problems:

- There is implementation problem
- Committee members are not in the office most of the time
- Lack of transparent management system
- Equity problems in distribution of scarce cooperative services like improved seed of maize
- There is no strong bond between the members and management bodies of the cooperative societies

iii. PROBLEMS RELATED TO ADMINISTRATION OF COOPERATIVES

Regarding problems related to management of cooperatives, the cooperative societies in the area are not having problems. The interference of the government in the administration of cooperatives is perceived as positive action. The facilitation of government in providing training and agricultural inputs was highly acknowledged by the group discussion participants. The only problem raised by the group discussion participants was the skyrocketing of prices of agricultural inputs and the low price of agricultural products. However, the following points were suggested to get the attention of the government in the area:

- Building of storage facilities
- Subsidizing prices of agricultural inputs
- Discouraging the interference of merchants in grain marketing and input delivery
- Creating favorable environment for cooperative societies

iv. PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE INTERFERENCE OF MERCHANTS

The participants reached consensus that there is serious interference of merchants to misguide members from established goals and objectives of cooperative societies in the area.

5.2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF NON-MEMBERS OF MPAC

The results of Focus group discussion; questionnaire survey (with both closed and open-ended questions) are presented and discussed in this chapter.

4.2.1. GENERAL -PRELIMINARY DETAILS

TABLE 13: NON-MEMBERS' SAMPLE POPULATION BY TYPE OF SOCIETY

Society	Number of respondents	Percent
Mutulu	32	36.8
Toke Hamus Gebeya	29	33.3
Toke Kombolcha	10	11.5
Wajira	16	18.4
Total	87	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 13 shows the non-members' sample population by type of society. The reason why the non-member respondent is low is because of the influence of the purposive sampling of non-members' selection around the sample cooperatives. This may be because most of the farmers who live in the vicinity of the office of the MPACs are members of MPACs.

4.2.2 REASONS FOR NOT JOINING COOPERATIVES

TABLE 14: NON-MEMBERS' REASONS FOR NOT JOINING IN COOPERATIVES

Reasons	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Not interested	6	6.9	81	93.1	87	100
Corrupt Administration	2	2.3	85	87.7	87	100
Inefficient Administration	3	3.4	84	96.6	87	100
Cannot afford to pay the fees	67	77	20	23	87	100
Others	12	13.8	75	86.2	87	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

The researcher wanted to know the reasons why non-members did not join in the cooperatives. Table 14 depicts the reasons why non-members did not join in cooperatives. It is evident from the above table that a good majority of the respondents 67 in number (77 %) were of the opinion that they didn't have enough money to pay for the share subscription and entrance fee, 6.9% of the respondents said that they didn't have any interest in becoming member and 3.4 % of the respondents boldly were of the opinion that the administration is inefficient. Among those who gave other reasons 3.4 % of them said that they did not know the advantage of cooperative and the other 10.4 % stated different reasons.

TABLE 15: COMPARISON OF BENEFIT FOR NON-MEMBERS BETWEEN COOPERATIVES AND OPEN MARKET MERCHANTS

Comparison points	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Good price	16	29.9	60	10.1	86	100
Advance Money	12	13.8	75	86.2	87	100
Immediate payment	15	17.8	72	82.8	87	100
Others	2	2.3	-	-	-	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Most of the non-members had a feeling that they pay higher price for inputs to open market merchants than the cooperatives. Table 15 also reflects the same feeling of the non-members. Most of the respondents (86.2 %) were of the opinion that the cooperatives did not provide advance money like private market players and 82.8 % of the non-members said that there was no immediate payment done by the cooperatives but only 16 respondents (29.9 %) were of the opinion that cooperatives were paying good price for their produces.

Cooperatives were generally expected to pay higher price for produces to members. Because of cash shortage of cooperatives and members' high need for cash, farmers appreciate selling produce in the market at a price even lower than the cooperatives. The price difference was the cost paid for getting the cash when needed. Cash shortage of the cooperatives was the cause for not purchasing farmers' produce when they needed to sell their produce.

TABLE 16: NON-MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION IF THEY HAVE INTENTION TO JOIN IN COOPERATIVE AND THROUGH WHOM THEY JOINED

Particulars	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Own	81	93.1	6	6.9	87	100
Board Member	7	8	80	92	87	100
Other cooperative member	10	11.5	77	88.5	87	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is obvious from table 16 that 81 respondents (93.1 %) have an idea to join in the cooperative; they said the decision is taken by their own. Members also motivated some of the respondents (10 in number, 11.5%) to join in cooperatives.

4.2.3 FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) FINDINGS OF NON-MEMBERS

The participants of the FGD expressed their views on the following points:

Regarding the utilization of services of cooperative societies, the group discussion participants agreed that services are not provided for non-members because of the rules and regulation. Nevertheless, non-members are getting services indirectly through members.

Regarding their interest to become members of cooperative societies, they reached to the consensus that they are very much interested to become members of the cooperative societies.

Regarding the proposed solution to attract non-members for membership, they reached to the consensus that exemplary work about the advantages of cooperatives in the area and demonstration of successful cooperative societies via experience exchange field visits are the two important events to happen in the area.

Regarding their general perception about cooperatives, they reached to the consensus that cooperatives are important elements to enable farmers to alleviate the complex socio-economic problems in the area. As suggested by the group discussion participants the most important thing to be done in area is to support cooperative societies in the area through education of cooperative principles to members and arrangement of experience exchange field visits for both members and non-members. On top of that, proper management of cooperatives and government interference in creating favourable environment are suggested for healthy and successful cooperatives.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON MEMBER RESPONDENTS' FINDINGS

The study attempted to identify important problems, which influence agricultural cooperative development in West Shewa zone of Oromiya Region, Toke Kutaye Woreda.

5.1.1 IMPEDIMENTS

5.1.1.1 PURPOSE OF JOINING COOPERATIVES AND CREDIT FACILITY

The purposes of members' joining cooperatives were to avail the marketing facility (88.3 %), to get input (97.3 %) and to get credit facility (53.2 %). The purpose of members' joining cooperatives was fulfilled except credit facility. Moreover, 59 % of the respondents got the economic benefit of saving in the cooperatives. The study in general revealed that about 66.3% believed that their purpose of joining of cooperatives was fulfilled while 33.7 % of the respondents did not have that their purpose of joining of cooperatives was fulfilled. 40.5 % of member respondents revealed that they got economic benefits from joining cooperatives. Regarding improvement in economic benefit after becoming member of cooperatives, members revealed that they had saving facility provision (52.3 %), saved money (45 %) and got income increased (29.7 %). The majority of the respondents were of the opinion that they did not see any kind of improvement in their economic condition due to their membership in cooperatives.

The majority of the member respondents (87.4 %) borrowed money from their friends and 36.7 % of the respondents were under the clutches of moneylenders and rest of the 42.3 % of the respondents depended upon their relatives for their monetary needs. It is good to see that 70 respondents (63.1 %) who got borrowings from other source other than from the moneylenders. No member was able to borrow from the cooperatives. This indicates that the cash credit facility has to be strengthened. It is clear that some of the members borrowed from more than one source. In fact, the finding did not reveal whether they got the amount of credit they needed or not. Experiences of USAID and the visionary Bank of Abyssinia showed that cooperatives have been able to access credit and have sufficiently demonstrated their creditworthiness (100% on-time repayment) (Assefa, 2011). Therefore, establishment of rural saving and credit cooperatives by farmers or rural people belong to the means that creates access to credit for farmers. Even though the amount of capital that can be accumulated by credit cooperatives operating at the local level is low, the earlier they establish their saving with what they can afford the better will be their business future. Access to credit is necessary for success. Financial cooperatives contribute to poverty reduction in various ways. Access to credit to finance micro, small and medium enterprise generates employment and incomes. Low-cost savings facilities for the poor and small depositors help to reduce members' vulnerabilities to shocks such as medical emergencies, and encourage future investments, including education and small business enterprises (UN, 2009). The study revealed that 90.1 %. 18% and 69.4 % of the respondents got fertilizer, improved seeds and herbicide credit in kind respectively from their cooperatives. The type and quantity of improved seeds supplied was very small showing that improved seed supply remains a serious constraint of agricultural production in the study area.

5.1.1.2 SELLING PRODUCE

Cooperatives were generally expected to pay higher price for produces to members. Because of cash shortage of cooperatives and members' high need for cash, farmers appreciate selling their produce in the market at a price even lower than the cooperatives. The price difference was the cost paid for getting the cash when needed. Cash shortage of the cooperatives was the cause for not purchasing farmers' produce when they needed to sell their produce.

5.1.1.3 ADVANTAGES IN SELLING THROUGH COOPERATIVE

The study revealed no cheating in weighing (49.5 %), price advantage (29.7 %), no cheating in payment (8.1%), were the advantages members enjoyed by selling their produce through their cooperatives. 75.7 % of the members sold their produce to the cooperatives while 23.4 % sold their produce to others than the cooperatives. 67.6 % (75) of the respondents believed that that price paid for inputs in cooperatives was low.

5.1.1.4 KNOWLEDGE OF HOW A COOPERATIVE IS ORGANIZED, BYLAWS OF THE COOPERATIVE AND PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATIVES

The majority of the respondents did not know how a cooperative is organized, the bylaws of the cooperative and the principles of cooperatives. Among those who responded that they know the principles (2.7 %), none of them was able to state any one of the principles.

5.1.1.5 PARTICIPATION

68.5 % (76) of members said that they participated in the general assembly whereas 34.2 % (38) admitted that they did not participate in the general assembly. In the general meeting discussion, 65.8 % (73) revealed that they participated while 31.5 % (35) said that they did not participate. 21.6 % (24) stood for election.

5.1.1.6 PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE INTERFERENCE OF MERCHANTS

The participants reached consensus that there is serious interference of merchants to misguide members from established goals and objectives of cooperative societies in the area.

5.1.1.7 GROWTH OF COOPERATIVES AND VARIETY OF SERVICES OF THE COOPERATIVES

80.2 % of members believed that their cooperative showed growth while 18 % believed that their cooperative did not show any growth. Regarding the number or variety of services of the cooperatives, 70.3 % of members were satisfied while 28.8 % were not satisfied.

5.1.1.8 GENERAL PROBLEM

Shortage of cash, lack of regular purchase of grain by the cooperatives, lack of timely supply of inputs, high price of inputs, and shortage of storage capacity are problems that need attention for better development of cooperatives. The cooperatives should purchase grain regularly from members to improve its output marketing efficiency.

5.1.2 OPPORTUNITIES

The vast majority of the respondents believed that it is useful to be member of MPAC, and 13.5 % said that it is not wasteful. The MPAC should improve its services to change the attitude of the 4.5 % of its members.

5.2.1.1 MOTIVATION TO JOIN IN COOPERATIVES

About two third of the member respondents revealed that they have enrolled in cooperatives only because of the motivation given by the cooperative leaders (58.6 %). Next to cooperative leaders, 48.6 % of the respondents said that they have joined cooperatives on their own. Local leaders (44.1%) also contributed in motivating the public to join in the cooperative movement. About half of the respondents were motivated by local leaders and cooperative leaders.

The major crops that cover most of the arable land area were wheat, teff (*Eragrostis tef*), maize, sorghum and faba bean, shows the most largely produced crops in the *Woreda* were wheat, teff, maize and sorghum in 2004/05.

27 % (30), 14.5 % (16), and 18.9 % (21) of wheat producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 40.5 % (45), 23.4 % (26) and 42.3 % (47) of teff producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 82.2 % (99), 55.9 % (62) and 70.3 % (78) maize producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 86.5 % (96), 73 % (81) and 80.2 % (89) of Sorghum producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. Quite a significant number of member farmers were not in a position to retain for seed, food and market from their major crops production. The intervention options to alleviate this problem may include timely supply of inputs, expansion of intensive agriculture through the adoption of appropriate crop technologies and improving the fertility status of the soil by adopting appropriate soil and water conservation strategies.

This issue requires further study.

5.1.2.2 ATTITUDE, VIEWS OF MEMBERS ON WOREDA COOPERATIVE BUREAU OFFICIALS

The majority of members showed positive attitude to the leaders and *Woreda* Cooperative Bureau officials. It is encouraging to have such high positive altitude of members towards the above groups. Attention should be given to the needs of other members to increase the confidence of members on *Woreda* Cooperative Bureau officials.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON NON-MEMBER RESPONDENTS' FINDINGS

5.3.1 IDEA TO JOIN THE COOPERATIVES

The study showed that about 97 % of the respondents have an idea to join in the cooperative and the decision was taken by their own. Cooperative members also motivated some of the non-member respondents (11.5%) to join in cooperatives.

5.3.2 PURPOSE BEHIND THE JOINING IN COOPERATIVE INSTITUTION

The majority of the respondents (93.1 %) were of the opinion that getting inputs from the cooperatives was the major purpose behind the joining in cooperative institution. 72 respondents (nearly 83 %) told that availing marketing facilities was another reason to join in cooperatives. The FGD revealed that the services of cooperative societies were not provided for non-members because of the rules and regulation. Nevertheless, non-members were getting services indirectly through members.

50.5 % of the respondents acquired inputs from the market while 48.3 % got from MPAC. 69 % of the respondents sold their produce in the market and to merchant while 17.2 % sold to cooperatives. Non-members had used the services of the cooperatives. Improving the type and quantity of the services will further attract non-members to join in cooperatives.

The views of the non-members were good and reflected the encouraging efforts of both the managers and the employees and created good impression towards the cooperative in the *Woreda*. In fact, more effort should be exerted to change the attitude of those who rated the manager and the employees as poor.

The majority of the respondents viewed that there was no much political influence in the activities of cooperatives. According to some respondents, the government is not helping the cooperatives. Their reasons included that the government was not financing any fund to cooperatives (2.3 %) and the government was not checking corruptions in cooperatives (8%). Non-members will learn that cooperatives are self-help groups when they join in cooperatives.

The study revealed the reasons why non-members did not join the cooperatives. Their reasons were that they did not have enough money to pay for the share subscription and entrance fee (77 %), did not have any interest in becoming member (6.9%) and were of the opinion that the administration was inefficient (3.4 %). Gabre-Madhin et al. found also that the reasons why non-members do not join cooperatives among others, fees are too high compared to benefits (Gabre-Madhin et al. 2003).

Most of the respondents revealed that the cooperatives did not provide advance money like private market players (86.2 %) and there was no immediate payment done by the cooperatives (82.8 %) but only 26 respondents (29.9 %) were of the opinion that cooperatives were paying good price for their produces.

5.3.4 INFLUENCE OF NON-MEMBERS TO JOIN MPAC

Non-member respondents heard about cooperatives from cooperative leaders (46.2 %) of the area, from cooperative members (37.9 %) friends (26.4 %), relatives (24.1 %). Cooperative leader and cooperative members contributed a lot to influence non-members to join MPAC.

5.3.5 KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATIVES AND HOW A COOPERATIVE IS ORGANIZED

Few non-member respondents knew the principles of cooperatives (1.1 %) and how a cooperative is organized (10.3 %). None of them was able to state the principles and to explain how a cooperative was organized. About 98 % and 90 % of the respondents did not know the principles of cooperatives and how a cooperative was organized respectively.

5.3.6 PREVENTION TO JOIN COOPERATIVES

It is interesting to know that the chairman and board members of the cooperatives prevented the non-members to join in cooperatives. The study revealed that the chairman and board members of the cooperatives prevented 4.6 % of the non-members to join in cooperatives

Only a very meager number of respondents told that they were not able to get the recommendation from the board members and from the chairman (1.1 %). Almost all the respondents 96.7% (84) rejected the reasons like "no good opinion on me" and previous enmity jealousy for preventing them from membership. However, most of respondents were of the opinion that no administrative person prevented them to join cooperatives.

5.3.7 PRODUCTION AREA

About 88.7 % of non-member farmers produce in an area up to 1.5 hectare while only 11.3 % produce wheat and teff on 1.5 up to 3.5 hectares. No farmer produced on greater than 3.5 hectares

43.7 % (38), 35.6 % (31) and 53.9% (46) of wheat producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 36.6 % (32), 25.3 % (22) and 54 % (47) of teff producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively 79.3 % (69), 69 % (60) and 95.4 % (85) of maize producers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. Quite a significant number of non-member farmers were not in a position to retain for seed, food and market from their major crop production. The intervention options to alleviate this problem may include timely supply of inputs, expansion of intensive agriculture through the adoption of appropriate crop technologies and improving the fertility status of the soil by adopting appropriate soil and water conservation strategies. This issue requires an in depth study.

Most of non-members viewed that they did not have any such purpose for visiting the cooperatives in the area. Only very meager number of respondents accepted the purpose of visiting the cooperatives. Out of 87 respondents, only 5 respondents (5.7 %) said that they liked to know the working of the cooperatives. 95.4 % of the respondents said that the cooperative location is near to them while 4.6 % said that the location is far for them.

5.3.8 NO TALK TO THE CHAIRMAN

Most of the non-members respondents did not talk to the chairman. The reasons were no purpose to talk (13.8 %), did not know the chairman (4.6 %), didn't have time (2.3 %), didn't talk because not member (3.4 %), and for other different reasons (6.9 %).

5.3.9 ATTITUDE AND VIEWS

The views of the non-members on both the manager and the employees (95.4 %) is good and reflects the encouraging efforts of both the managers and the employees and created good impression towards the cooperative in the *Woreda*. In fact, more effort should be exerted to change the attitude of those who rated the manager and the employees as poor (4.5 %).

Non-member respondents believed that the *Woreda* cooperative promotion officials made proper supervision (59.8 %); the *Woreda* cooperative promotion officials guided the cooperative properly (55.2 %); the government was encouraging the promotion of cooperatives (78.2 %); and there was political interference was said by 10.3 % of the respondents. The views of non-members towards the *Woreda* cooperative promotion officials and the government were positive. More than half of non-member respondents (51.7%) believed that board members and chairman of cooperatives worked for the cooperative without any benefits. The non-members are positive towards board members and chairman of cooperatives of their areas. The services of the cooperatives have to be improved to attract non-members to be members of cooperative.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to one year. The study area covered only the rural area of Toke Kutaye *Woreda*. Sample members of the agricultural cooperatives were included and sample non-member farmers living in and around the sample cooperatives were included in the study

7. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study assessed the impediments to the development of agricultural cooperatives. The study was conducted through interview schedule and focus group discussion regarding the participation of cooperative members towards cooperative development and the major problems affecting the development of agricultural cooperatives in Toke Kutaye *Woreda*. The fact that the study is conducted in one *Woreda* the findings may vary from other *Woredas*. Nevertheless, the study was not free from certain limitations. Non-availability and dearth of data regarding contributions of cooperatives to benefit their members was witnessed. The study was carried out covering a wide cross section of cooperatives in a particular *Woreda*, the inferences and conclusions, which are drawn from the study, may be generalized to the entire Oromiya Region since the *Woreda* under survey reflect the paradigms of cooperatives in Oromiya Region. Therefore, research in the impediments of agricultural cooperative development should be conducted at grassroots level to attract the attentions of stakeholders.

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