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OBSTACLES FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT IN AMBO ZURIA WOREDA/DISTRICT/, 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 obstacles for the development of primary 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 Ambo Zuria 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 of the research revealed that the vast majority of members' economic conditions didn't improve after joining cooperatives. Lack of cash credit led 52.2 % of the members to borrow from friends and 34.3 % from relatives while 50.7 % borrowed from moneylenders. Credit in kind was low except for fertilizer. In addition to the above constraints, lack of regular purchase of grain, lack of timely supply of inputs, high price of inputs, low support from union and poor management of cooperative were identified. The majority of the members didn't sell their produce to the cooperatives because the cooperatives occasionally purchased grain, were not paying good prices, were not giving dividends and significant number of farmers were not in a position to produce marketable surplus. Establishing rural saving and credit associations, establishing 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 in cooperatives and result in improved living standard of the rural mass. Stakeholders of agricultural cooperatives with the participation of farmers should, however carefully evaluate the situation, prioritize and solve the obstacles of agricultural cooperatives development.

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 obstacles 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. **Ekub**: 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 (Veerakumar, 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 centers (26 per cent) (Emana, 2009).

The obstacles of agricultural cooperatives' development at *Woreda* in Ethiopia have not been adequately studied. The study identified the major 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 obstacles of agricultural development at *Woreda* agricultural cooperatives level.

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 Ambo Zuria *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

Ambo Zuria *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 km. away from Addis Ababa on Addis Abeba - Nekemte road. The *Woreda* capital is Ambo (Ambo *Woreda* was divided into Ambo Zuria and Toke Kutaye *Woredas* at the end of 2005/2006). Ambo Zuria *Woreda* has got a total area of 83599 hectares (old Ambo was 149094 hectares). In the year 2006/07, 68 % (56820 hectares), 10 % (8370 hectares), 1.6 % (1379) and 20.4 % (17030 hectares) of the land was used for crop production, grazing land, vegetation and for other purposes respectively while in the year 2007/8 65 % (54289 hectares), 10 % (8370 hectares) 1.6 % (1379) and 23.4% (19561 hectares) of the land was used for crop production, grazing land, vegetation and for other purposes respectively (PBD AWFEDO, 2008).

In the year 2007/08 the average land-holding size per household was 2.5 ha. In the same year the number of households holding less than 1ha, 1-2 ha, greater than 2 to 3 ha, greater than 3 to 4 ha and greater than 4 ha accounted to 18%, 40%, 22%, 12% and 8% respectively (ibid.).

Ambo Zuria *Woreda* has got 34 Peasant Associations (PAs) and 7 *Kebele* (urban) Associations (KAs) in the towns. There were 23396 households in the rural areas in 2006/07 and 2007/08. The household size of the *Woreda* shows that it is 3.92 and 3.55 for rural areas in 2006/07 and 2007/08. According to the census of 2007 the total population residing in the rural areas of the *Woreda* was 109468 (54741 male and 54727 female). Out of the total population of the *Woreda*, about 98.8% resided in the rural areas and 1.2% was urban dwellers (FDRE, PCC 2008).

Multipurpose agricultural cooperatives (MPAC) are formed from farmers of different peasant associations. There were 13 registered multipurpose agricultural cooperatives with total members of 3497 in 2006/07 and 2007/08 and with a capital of Ethiopian Birr (ETB) 2174905 and 2181420 Birr in 2006/07 and 2007/08 respectively. In the years 2006/07 and 2007/08 male members accounted for 88% while female members accounted for 12% of the total members (PBD AWFEDO, 2008). While crop and livestock mixed farming system is practiced in the *Woreda*. The major crops cultivated include teff (*Eragrostis tef*), wheat, barley, maize, sorghum, horse beans, and noug (*Guzotia Abyssinica*). 6872.5 quintals and 8550 quintals of fertilizer Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) was distributed to the farmers in 2006/7 and 2007/8 in the *Woreda* respectively. 4323.5 quintals and 4484 quintals of the fertilizer Urea was distributed to the farmers in 2006/7 and 2007/8 in the *Woreda* respectively. Improved seeds such as teff, wheat, maize, and barley etc. were distributed to the farm households in 2006/07 and 2007/08. About 85%, 9% and 5% of the improved seeds distributed in the *Woreda* in 2006/07 accounted for wheat, maize and teff respectively. Improved wheat, maize and teff seeds were the only seeds that were distributed to the farmers in the *Woreda* in 2006/07 (ibid). In the years 2006/07 and 2007/08, on average about 12% of the farmers did not own any oxen, 21% owned one ox, 33% owned a pair of oxen and 34% of the farmers owned 3-4 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 182676 in the *Woreda* in 2006/07. Out of which cattle, sheep and goats accounted for 60%, 20 % and 9.5 % respectively. The total number of horses, donkeys and mules was 8509, 9416 and 600 respectively in 2006/07 in the *Woreda*. Horses, donkeys and mules each accounted for 4.6 %, 5.2%, and 0.34 % respectively of the livestock population in the same period (PBD AWFEDO, 2008). The chicken population was 52084 in 2006/07. The major livestock feed include open grazing, hay and crop residue (OPEDWSZ, 1998). There were 4569 and 7099 beehives in the years 2006/07 and 2007/08 respectively, out of which 148 were modern beehives in each of the period. The average yield per modern beehive was 20 kg and the average yield per traditional beehive was 7 kg in each of the period respectively. There was an increase in livestock population in a range of 2.5% - 6% from 2006/07 and 2007/08 except for sheep population where there was no change from 2006/07 to 2007/08 (AWFEDO, PBD 2008).

3.1.2. SELECTION OF THE STUDY UNITS AND RESPONDENTS

Out of 13 multipurpose agricultural cooperatives, three (about 23% 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. Altufa multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 17 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Wonchi - Woliso road, where the MPAC serve for one peasant association.
2. Awaro multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 5 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Addis Abeba road, where the MPAC serve for one peasant association
3. Meti multipurpose agricultural cooperatives - 15 kms from Ambo on Ambo - Addis Abeba road, where the MPAC serve for five peasant associations

Sample multipurpose agricultural cooperatives (MPAC) members were selected at field level using simple random sampling technique. 13, 24, and 30 MPAC members were randomly selected from Altufa, Awaro, and Meti MPAC respectively. A total of 67 approximately 4% of the members from each cooperative was selected. About 5% from Altufa, 3.5% from Awaro and 4.2% from Meti 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. 49 sample non-member farmers were randomly selected from the vicinity of the selected cooperatives. 12, 24, and 13 non-members were selected from Altufa, Awaro, and Meti respectively. This makes the total respondents (members and non-members) to be 116.

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 February 2006 and group discussions with selected farmers were conducted in the first week of March 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

4.1 MEMBERS' FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 shows the number of sample MPACs and the number of member sample members of the cooperatives.

TABLE 1: SAMPLE MPACs AND SAMPLE MEMBER RESPONDENTS IN AMBO ZURIA WOREDA

Sl. No	Name of MPAC society	Number of member respondents	Percent
1	Altufa	13	19.4
2	Awaro	24	35.8
3	Meti	30	44.8
4	Total	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

4.1.1 PURPOSE OF JOINING COOPERATIVES

TABLE 2: MEMBERS PURPOSE TO JOIN MPAC (n=67)

Purpose	Respondents				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	No. of Resp.	Percentage
Credit	37	55.2	30	44.8	67	100
Input	67	100	0	0	67	100
Marketing	50	74.6	17	25.4	67	100
Other	0	0	67	100	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is very obvious from table 2 that one hundred % of the respondents joined cooperatives for the purpose of getting input from the institution. 50 respondents (74.6 %) were of the opinion that they have joined to avail the marketing facility given by the cooperatives. Only 37 respondents (55.2 %) of the respondents said that they have joined cooperatives for the purpose of availing of a credit facility. All the 67 respondents responded that they have joined cooperatives for availing input.

TABLE 3: ENROLLMENT OF MEMBERSHIP TO JOIN MPACs

Category	Respondents				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Friends	5	7.5	62	92.5	67	100
Relatives	7	10.4	60	89.6	67	100
Other members	7	10.4	60	89.6	67	100
Cooperative leaders	32	47.8	35	52.2	67	100
Local Administrative Leaders	28	41.8	39	58.2	67	100
Community Elders	7	10.4	60	89.6	67	100
My own	12	17.9	55	82	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

The efforts taken by the cooperative leaders in this *Woreda* regarding the enrollment of membership is clearly evident from table 3 that 32 respondents (47.8 %) informed that they have enrolled in cooperatives only because of the motivation given by the cooperative leaders. Next to cooperative leaders, local leaders (41.8 %) also contributed a lot in motivating the public to join in the cooperative movement. 17.9 % of the respondents said that they have joined cooperatives on their own.

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	9	13.4	58	86.6	67	100
Knowledge of cooperative bylaws	15	22.4	52	77.6	67	100
Knowledge how a cooperative is organized	13	19.4	54	80.6	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is clear from table 4 that the majority of the respondents didn't know how a cooperative is organized, bylaws of the cooperative and principles of cooperatives. Among these responses, 86.6 % of the respondents didn't know their principles and 80.6 % of the respondents didn't have the knowledge how a cooperative is organized. 77.6 % of the respondents did not know the cooperative bylaws. Among those who responded that they know the principles (13.4 %) none of them was able to state any one of the principles. Among those who responded that they knew how a cooperative is organized (19.4 %), 3 % said that to get organized and to work together, 15 % said pay shares and become members, and 1.5 % said advice non-members to become members of cooperatives.

TABLE 5: 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	9	13.4	58	86.6	67	100
Knowledge of cooperative bylaws	15	22.4	52	77.6	67	100
Knowledge how a cooperative is organized	13	19.4	54	80.6	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is clear from table 5 that the majority of the respondents didn't know how a cooperative is organized, bylaws of the cooperative and principles of cooperatives. Among these responses, 86.6 % of the respondents didn't know their principles and 80.6 % of the respondents didn't have the knowledge how a cooperative is organized. 77.6 % of the respondents did not know the cooperative bylaws. Among those who responded that they know the principles (13.4 %) none of them was able to state any one of the principles. Among those who responded that they knew how a cooperative is organized (19.4 %), 3 % said that to get organized and to work together, 15 % said pay shares and become members, and 1.5 % said advice non-members to become members of cooperatives.

4.1.2 ECONOMIC BENEFITS DERIVED FROM COOPERATIVES

TABLE 6: ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO WHICH MEMBERS DERIVED FROM MPAC IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07 (n=67)

Benefits	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Credit	9	13.4	58	86.6	67	100
Marketing	36	53.7	31	46.3	67	100
Input	65	97.0	2	3	67	100
Savings	13	19.4	54	80.6	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Cooperative members get organized to get a number of benefits. Table 6 discloses the economic benefits derived from cooperatives to its members. One can conclude from the above table that the vast majority (97 %) of the respondents enjoyed the benefit of input supply from cooperatives. Nearly 36 respondents (53.7 %) got the economic benefit of marketing. 13 and 9 respondents (19.4 % and 13.4 %) availed of the economic benefits with regard to savings and credit respectively.

4.1.3 SOURCES OF BORROWINGS OF MEMBERS OF MPAC

TABLE 7: SOURCE OF BORROWINGS OF MEMBERS OF MPAC IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07 (n=67)

Source	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Cooperative	2	3	65	97	67	100
Relatives	23	34.3	44	65.7	67	100
Friends	35	52.2	32	47.8	67	100
Money lenders	34	50.7	33	49.3	67	100
Others	7	10.4	60	89.6	67	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 7 it is very clear that the majority of the respondents (52.2 %) borrowed money from their friends and 50.7 % of the respondents were under the clutches of money lenders and 34.3 % of the respondents depended upon their relatives for their monetary needs. It is good to see that nearly 33 respondents (49.3 %) got borrowings from other sources other than from the money lenders. Only 3 % were able to borrow from the cooperative (the amount not revealed) which 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.

4.1.4 TYPE OF CREDIT IN KIND WHICH MEMBERS OF MPAC GOT

TABLE 8: TYPE OF CREDIT IN KIND WHICH MEMBERS OF MPAC GOT IN THE STUDY AREA IN 2006/07 (n=67)

Type of Input	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	No. Answer	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Fertilizer	65	97	1	1.5	1	1.5	67	100
Improved seeds	20	29.9	44	65.7	3	4.5	67	100
Herbicides	53	79.1	12	17.9	2	3	67	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 8 that 65 respondents (97 %) availed fertilizer from the cooperatives and 53 respondents (79.1 %) procured herbicides from the cooperatives. Only 20 respondents (29.9%) purchased improved seeds from the cooperatives.

4.1.5 ADVANTAGES IN SELLING PRODUCT THROUGH COOPERATIVES

TABLE 9: ADVANTAGES IN SELLING PRODUCT THROUGH COOPERATIVES IN THE STUDY PERIOD IN THE STUDY AREA

n=67						
Advantages	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Price Advantage	19	28.4	48	71.6	67	100
No cheating while weighing	24	35.8	43	64.2	67	100
No cheating in payment	14	20.9	53	79.1	67	100
Dividend received	17	25.4	50	74.6	67	100
Product sold to cooperative	28	42	39	58	67	100

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. In table 9 some of the advantages are listed by the respondents, among all the advantages no cheating while weighing stood first (35.8 %), next comes price advantage (28.4 %), no cheating in payment was said by 20.9 % of the respondents but the majority of the respondents (71.6 to 79.1%) were of the opinion that they haven't availed of any of these advantages from their institution. 42 % of the members sold their produce to the cooperatives while 58 % sold their produce to others than the cooperatives. The reasons why they didn't sell to their cooperatives (OEQR) include 21 % of them said that the cooperatives purchased occasionally, 9 % believed that the cooperatives did not offer good prices, 13 % believed there was no surplus generated from selling to the cooperatives and 15 % believed other different reasons.

TABLE 2: 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								Total
	200 and below		201-300		301-400		Above 400		
	Respondents Number	%	Respondents Number	%	Respondents Number	%	Respondents Number	%	
DAP	1	1.7	6	10	27	45	26	43.3	60
Urea	6	10.9	17	30.9	32	55.2	-	-	55

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 10 depicts that 10%, 45%, and 43.3%, of the respondents incurred 201-300 Birr, 301-400 Birr and over 400 Birr for DAP respectively while 10.9%, 30.9%, and 55.2% incurred below 200 Birr, 201-300 Birr and Birr 301-400 Birr for urea respectively.

4.1.6 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC CONDITION AFTER BECOMING COOPERATIVE MEMBERS (MPAC)

TABLE 11: MEMBERS' ECONOMIC CONDITION AFTER BECOMING COOPERATIVE MEMBERS (MPAC) IN AMBO ZURIA WOREDA IN THE STUDY YEAR

Particulars	Response				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Additional land	2	3	65	97	67	100
Better house condition	5	7.5	62	92.5	67	100
Livestock	3	4.5	64	95.5	67	100
Other	0	0	67	100	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is very clear from table 11 that the vast majority of the respondents were of the opinion that they haven't seen any kind of improvement in their economic condition due to their membership in cooperatives. Only very meager number of respondents said that they had some economic improvement in their life such as additional land, better house condition and livestock.

As from the investigator's field discussions, it looked that there was low support from Ambo Union due to the union's limited capacity then and the high needs of member cooperatives especially in marketing of produce and supply of improved seeds.

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

TABLE 12: 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 Respo-ndents	%
Cooperatives showed growth	37	55.2	26	38.8	-	-	67	100
Satisfied with the variety of services	37	55.2	30	44.8	-	-	67	100
Think board is efficient	48	71.6	15	22.4	4	6	67	100
Think the cooperatives have enough employees	25	37.3	38	56.7	4	6	67	100
Cooperatives' employees are courteous and helpful	33	49.3	25	37.3	9	13.4	67	100
Cooperatives have enough capital	20	29.9	43	64.2	4	6	67	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 12 reveals that 55.2 % of members believed that their cooperative showed growth while 38.8 % believed that their cooperative did not show any growth. Data from Open Ended Question Responses (OEQR) reveal that among those who perceived that their society did not show growth believed that they didn't see cooperative expansion (17.9 %), felt that there was corruption (6 %), felt board members did not work in team spirit (4.5 %), there was no input supply other than fertilizer (4.5 %), the cooperative had no sufficient money (4.5 %), for other different reasons (7.5 %). Regarding the number or variety of services of the cooperatives, 55.2 % of members were satisfied while 44.8 % were not satisfied. Data from OEQR reveal that their reasons for dissatisfaction included no cash credit (23.9 %), cooperatives have limited services (11.9 %), no timely supply of inputs (1.5 %), no organized marketing services (1.5 %), and for other different reasons (6 %). Regarding additional services by the society, members proposed cash credit services (58.2 %), supply of consumer goods at fair price (13.4 %), no timely supply of inputs (7.5%) no timely purchase of agricultural products (7.5 %), and for other different reasons (6 %).

4.1.8 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE SOCIETY AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS

TABLE 13: PROBLEMS FACING COOPERATIVES AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS

Members' impression	Yes	%
Problems related to funds		
1. Shortage of cash	20	34.5
2. Corrupt	4	6.9
3. No problem	5	8.6
4. Don't know	26	44.8
5. Others	3	5.2
Total	58	100
II. Problem related to marketing		
1. Don't purchase grain regularly	23	36.5
2. Store grain they purchase	2	3.2
3. No problem	23	36.5
4. Don't know	15	23.8
Total	63	100
III. Problem related to input		
1. No timely supply of inputs	17	25.8
2. High price of inputs	9	13.6
3. No problem	30	45.5
4. Don't know	9	13.6
5. Others	1	1.5
Total	66	100
IV. Problem related to stores		
1. Shortage of storage capacity	5	7.5
2. High storage expense	5	7.5
3. No storage problem	55	82.0
4. Don't know	2	3.0
Total	67	100
V. Problem related to staff (employees)		
1. Shortage of staff	7	10.6
2. Misunderstanding of staff	3	4.6
3. No problem of staff	27	40.9
4. Don't know	27	40.9
5. Others	2	3.0
Total	66	100
VI. Problem related to board and chairman		
1. Poor management capacity	9	13.8
2. Don't work cooperatively	4	6.2
3. Problem	31	47.7
4. Don't Know	18	27.7
5. Others	3	4.6
Total	65	100
VII. Problem related to government		
1. No sufficient government control	4	6.6
2. High fertilizer price	1	1.6
3. No problem	39	64
4. Don't know	16	26.2
5. Others	1	1.6
Total	61	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 13 reveals problems related to funds, to marketing, to inputs, to stores, to staff, to board and chairman and to government. Regarding problems related to funds the respondents revealed that shortage of cash, lack of timely supply of inputs, high price of inputs, lack of regular purchase of grain by the cooperatives and poor management capacity are very important problems that need attention for better development of cooperatives. The cooperative 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 marketing the respondents revealed that the cooperatives don't purchase grain regularly (36.5 %), sort the grain they purchase (3.2%), believe that there is no problem of marketing (36.5%) and stated that they do not know (23.8 %). Regarding problems related to inputs the respondents revealed that there is problem of timely supply of inputs (25.8 %), high price of inputs (13.6 %), believe that there is no problem related to inputs (45.5 %), stated that they don't know (13.6 %) and stated other reasons (1.5 %). Regarding problems related to stores the respondents revealed that there is shortage of storage capacity (7.5 %), high storage expense (7.5 %), believe that there is no storage problem (82%) and stated that they don't know (3%). Regarding problems related to staff/employees the respondents revealed that they believe that there is shortage of staff (10.6%), believe that there is no problem of staff (40.5%) there exist misunderstanding of staff (4.5 %), believe that there is no problem of staff (40.5 %), and stated other reasons (3%). Regarding problems related to board and chairman the respondents revealed that there is poor management capacity (13.8 %), don't work cooperatively (6.2%), believe that there is no problem (47.7%), stated that they don't know (27.2%) and stated other reasons (4.6 %). Regarding problems related to government, the respondents revealed that there is no serious problem (64 %), believe that there is no sufficient control (6.6 %), expressed that there is high fertilizer price (1.6 %) stated that they don't know (267.2%) and stated other reasons (1.6 %).

4.1.9 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (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.

4.1.9.1 BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES (SOCIAL AND DEMOCRATIC)

i. SOCIAL BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

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

- Members of the cooperative societies in the area are trusted and accepted
- 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 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.

4.1.9.2 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 improve the living standard of farmers.

4.1.9.3 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:

- Lack of quality agricultural inputs.
- Lack of timely delivery of agricultural inputs
- Lack of adequate research on improved agricultural technologies and soils as prerequisite for wide scale agricultural production.
- High price of agricultural inputs and lower price of agricultural products.
- Poor communication infrastructure

4.1.9.4 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 the following problems:

- There is no adequate training and education for members of cooperative societies on cooperative principles
- The geographical coverage is wider and some members are not well addressed about the decisions passed on the meetings.
- The objective of the cooperative society is not clear for some members of the society who are residing at distant places from the cooperative societies.
- Some of the people in the area are afraid of bankruptcy and corruption of cooperative leaders and refrain from becoming members.
- The membership of the cooperative societies is not on voluntary basis. Farmers are becoming members of cooperative societies only to get agricultural inputs.

After outlining the problems related to the constitution of cooperative societies the group discussion participants agreed that they have to continue being members of the cooperatives to improve their living standards on sustainable basis even though the benefits are meager. ("We should not destroy the house that we own until we build a better one"(an interpretation from expression in Oromifa to explain the idea that they should not dismantle their cooperatives). That was how they perceive cooperation in general.

As to their future plan being members of cooperative societies in the area, they are planning to establish a grain bank through which they can alleviate problems related to grain marketing.

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 no regular meeting organized as per the agreement on the bylaws
- Members are not willing to participate on the meetings
- There is no strong bond between the members and management bodies of the cooperative societies.
- Members do not trust the management bodies because of the bad experience of cooperatives during the past socialist regime.

iii. PROBLEMS RELATED TO ADMINISTRATION OF COOPERATIVES

Regarding problems related to management of cooperatives, the cooperative societies in the area are not having problems related to administration. 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.

iv. PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE INTERFERENCE OF MERCHANTS

There is no Interference of merchants to misguide members from firmly established goals and objectives of cooperative societies in the area.

4.2 NON- MEMBERS' FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.2.1 GENERAL -PRELIMINARY DETAILS

TABLE 14: NON-MEMBERS' SAMPLE POPULATION BY TYPE OF SOCIETY

Society	Number of Respondents	Percent
Altufa	12	24.5
Awaro	24	49
Meti	13	26.5
Total	49	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 14 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 AWARENESS OF NON-MEMBERS ABOUT COOPERATIVES

TABLE 15: SOURCES OF INFORMATION WHERE NON-MEMBERS HEARD OF COOPERATIVES (n=49)

Category	Respondents				Total	
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Friends	13	26.5	36	75.5	49	100
Relatives	12	24.5	37	73.5	49	100
Cooperative leaders	23	46.9	26	53.1	49	100
Officials	2	4.1	47	95.9	49	100
Cooperative members	11	22.4	38	77.6	49	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

Table 15 reveals that 46.9 % of non-member respondents heard about cooperatives from cooperative leaders of the area while 26.5 %, 24.5 %, and 22.4 % heard about cooperatives from friends, relatives and cooperative members respectively. Cooperative leader contributed a lot to influence non-members to know about MPAC.

4.2.3 REASONS FOR NOT JOINING COOPERATIVES

TABLE 16: NON-MEMBERS' REASONS FOR NOT JOINING COOPERATIVES

Reasons	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Not interested	8	16.3	41	83.7	49	100
No good opinion	3	6.1	46	93.9	49	100
Corrupt Administration	1	2	48	98	49	100
Inefficient Administration	7	14.3	42	85.7	49	100
Cannot afford to pay the fees	34	69.4	15	30.6	49	100
Others	8	16.3	41	83.7	49	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

The researcher wanted to know the reasons why non-members did not join in the cooperatives. Table 16 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 34 in number (69.4 %) were of the opinion that they didn't have enough money to pay for the share subscription and entrance fee, 16.3 % of the respondents said that they didn't have any interest in becoming member and 14.3 % of the respondents boldly were of the opinion that the administration is inefficient. Among those who gave other reasons 8.15 % of them said that they didn't know the advantage of cooperative and the other 8.15 % stated different reasons.

TABLE 17: COMPARISON OF BENEFIT FOR NON-MEMBERS BETWEEN COOPERATIVES AND OPEN MARKET MERCHANTS

Comparison points	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Good price	12	24.5	37	75.5	49	100
Advance Money	4	8.2	45	91.8	49	100
Immediate payment	9	18.4	40	81.6	49	100
Farm purchase	1	2	48	98	49	100
Others	0	0	49	100	49	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 17 also reflects the same feeling of the non-members. Most of the respondents (91.8 %) were of the opinion that the cooperatives didn't provide advance money like private market players and 81.6 % of the non-members said that there was no immediate payment done by the cooperatives and almost all the respondents (98 %) complained that there was no farm gate purchase done by the cooperatives but only 12 respondents (24.5 %) were of the opinion that cooperatives were paying good price for their produces.

Cooperatives are 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 is 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 18: NON-MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION IF THEY HAVE INTENTION TO JOIN COOPERATIVE AND THROUGH WHOM THEY JOIN

Particulars	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Own	42	85.7	7	14.3	49	100
Board Member	0	0	49	100	49	100
President	1	2	48	98	49	100
Other cooperative member	6	12.2	43	87.8	49	100
Others	1	2	48	98	49	100

Source: Computed from the survey data

It is obvious from table 18 that 42 respondents (85.7 %) have an idea to join the cooperative; they said the decision is taken by their own. And other members also motivated some of the respondents (6 in number, 12.2%) to join in cooperatives.

4.2.4 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (NON-MEMBERS)

Non-members of cooperative Societies with 12 members was established with active participation of community development workers, team of researchers, opinion leaders and community development workers. The points raised in the focus group discussion conducted are summarized as follows.

Non-members of cooperative society's views on cooperation: 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 being provided only for actual members. Nevertheless, the main service being provided by cooperative societies in the area is fertilizer. Surprisingly, non-members are also getting fertilizer provision service.

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 provided that previous members will be good examples in deriving benefit and teaching them about the advantages of being members. Regarding reasons for their refusal to become members of the cooperative societies, they reached on the consensus that the socialist regime negative impact is the stumbling block for them to become members. That means they are afraid of the corruption and mistrust of cooperative leaders.

Regarding the proposed solution to attract non-members for membership, they reached 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 consensus that cooperatives are important elements to enable farmers alleviate the complex socio-economic problems in the area. As suggested by the group discussion participants the most important thing to be done in the area is to support cooperative societies through education of cooperative principles to members and arrangement of experience exchange field visits for both members and non-members.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**5.1 CONCLUSIONS ON MEMBER RESPONDENTS' FINDINGS****5.1.1 OBSTACLES**

Results of the schedule survey and the FGD revealed that there are problems to the agricultural cooperatives development in the study area. Unmet expectations of members from agricultural cooperatives was manifested by not having their purpose of joining in cooperatives fulfilled i.e. to get credit, inputs and marketing of agricultural products. The service available is input distribution out of which fertilizer is the main one. Marketing of agricultural products is very small. This finding is in line with the case study findings that "input supply constitutes the major activity of the cooperatives, and marketing of products needs additional attention" (Assefa, 2011) and the importance of marketing of agricultural products was further emphasized by the fact that "co-ops have failed without a market-driven approach that allows small business owners and farmers to compete effectively in local, regional and global markets, with the motivation of increased profits" (US Overseas Development Council, 2010). Dorsey et al, also revealed that "as a result of market linkages farmers have obtained higher prices and guaranteed market for their products" (Dorsey, J., and Assefa, T., 2005). ODCD emphasized that "cooperatives have failed without a market-driven approach that allows them to compete. They need a competitive advantage through professional management, operational and financial efficiency, high quality products, and competitive pricing" (OCDC, 2007). The marketing of products of members of agricultural cooperatives was mentioned by Gabre-Madhin, et al, 2003, Kodama, Y. 2007, Meherka, A. 2008 in Tanguy Bernard et al, 2010; "Although the cooperative movement in Ethiopia has chalked up successes in traditional export sectors, such as coffee (see Gabre-Madhin et al. 2003; Kodama 2007), its successes in the food staple sector are far fewer". "During 2003–07, cooperatives marketed 282,000 metric tons of grain, less than 1 percent of total grain production in the country" (Meherka, 2008).

Under such circumstances one should not wonder if the cooperative members did get low or no economic benefits from joining agricultural cooperatives from marketing of products. As a result members' economic conditions did not change. Improving the marketing of the products of primary cooperatives by establishing business linkages with the private sectors should be focused by the cooperatives with the help of their unions, federal and regional cooperative agencies and NGOs.

The other problems that were found from the study were no cash credit and very limited credit in kind. 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, 2007). 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).

Low awareness of members on cooperative principles, bylaws and how a cooperative is organized have been witnessed by the study. Training of farmer members about cooperative concepts and principles and the basic knowledge of cooperative business is important for better agricultural cooperatives development at grassroots level

Advantages in selling products through cooperatives were no cheating while weighing, no cheating in payment, price advantage ranging from 10 to 60 Birr per quintal and dividend to be received by members from the cooperatives. Only few members used these opportunities. The reason being cooperatives did not purchase products from members due to financial limitations as members needed to get cash.

Shortage of cash, lack of regular purchase of grain by the cooperatives, lack of timely supply of inputs, high price of inputs, and poor management capacity were problems as perceived by members that hinder the development of agricultural cooperatives.

28.4 % (19), 43.3 % (29), and 41.8 % (28) of wheat, teff and gauda producers were not able to retain for seed respectively. 17.9 % (12), 22.4 % (5) and 41.8 % (28) of wheat, teff and gauda producers were not able to retain for food respectively. 52.2 % (35), 58.2 % (39) and 77.6 % (52) of wheat, teff and gauda non-member farmers were not able to retain for market respectively. About 29 to 44%, 18 to 42% and 53 to 78% of wheat, teff and gauda member farmers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 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. Attention should be given to increase production so that member farmers can retain for seed, food and market by improving the supply of inputs and extension services. Further research should be conducted to reveal the severity of the constraints.

5.1.2 OPPORTUNITIES

The findings showed that there are several opportunities. 57 % of attendance and 39 % of active participation in the general assembly, positive attitude of members towards cooperative leaders, employees and *Woreda* Cooperative Bureau officials are important invaluable assets for the development of agricultural cooperatives. This has to be supported by improved economic benefits of members from their cooperative activities.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS ON NON-MEMBER RESPONDENTS' FINDINGS**5.2.1 OBSTACLES**

The survey result revealed the reasons as to why non-members did not want to join in agricultural cooperatives. The reasons included that non-members didn't have enough money to pay for the share subscription and entrance fee, didn't have any interest in becoming members and the cooperative administration is inefficient. 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). The FGD with the non-members reached consensus that they are very much interested to become members of the cooperative societies provided that previous members will be good examples in deriving benefit and teaching them about the advantages of being members and further reached consensus that the socialist regime negative impact was the stumbling block for them to become members for they were afraid of the corruption and mistrust of cooperative leaders. The survey and the FGD findings don't complement each other therefore the issues need further investigation.

The FGD further outlined that the main service being provided by cooperative societies in the area is fertilizer and non-members were also getting fertilizer provision service. The survey result regarding services of cooperative societies revealed that there were limited services of improved crop seeds and herbicides to members.

About one third of respondents of non-members also accepted that there is a political influence in the election process, decision making process and in admitting new members. This problem was stressed by DFID from its statement; "a main challenge facing many cooperatives is over-control and regulation by government (DFID, 2010). Autonomy and freedom from government control is positively associated with success. While government support can be helpful, governments should avoid overregulation. In Ethiopia, US technical assistance has helped overcome this legacy" (Assef, a 2007).

32.7 % (16), 38.8 % (19), and 49 % (22), of wheat, teff and gauda producers were not able to retain for seed respectively. 18.4 % (9), 32.7 % (16), and 46.9 % (23), of wheat, teff and gauda producers were not able to retain for food respectively. 46.9 % (23), 65.3 % (32) and 55.1 % (27) of wheat, teff and gauda non-member farmers were not able to retain for market respectively. About 33 to 49%, 19 to 47% and 47 to 66% of wheat, teff and gauda member farmers were not able to retain for seed, food and market respectively. 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. Attention should be given to increase production so that non-member farmers can retain for seed, food and market by improving the supply of inputs and extension services. Further research should be conducted to reveal the severity of the constraints.

Refusal of non-members to become members of the cooperative societies was due to socialist regime's negative impact for they were afraid of the corruption and mistrust of cooperative leaders. Tanguy *et al.* also found out under the previous regime, cooperatives were used to extend strong government control to the local level and to promote socialist ideology through compulsory participation (Tanguy *et al.*, 2010). The political interference finding of the study was 15 years after the downfall of the Derg government. It will still take several years to have trust in cooperatives. Tanguy *et al.* have got truth as their findings of field observations suggested that "a long process of trust recovery is required for present-day cooperatives to overcome persisting suspicion and wariness on the part of potential members" (Ibid.).

5.2.2 OPPORTUNITIES

The views of non-members towards the *Woreda* cooperative promotion officials and the government were positive and can also be considered as an opportunity for cooperative development. Future research needs to be conducted to identify the constraints and opportunities of cooperatives in general and agricultural cooperatives development at *Woreda* levels in particular.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to one year. The study area covered only the rural area of **Ambo Zuria 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 obstacles 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 Ambo Zuria Woreda. The fact that the study was 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 obstacles of agricultural cooperatives development should be conducted at grassroots level to attract the attentions of stakeholders.

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