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# **A Review of Ethiopian Agriculture: Roles, Policy and Small-scale Farming Systems**

SUMMARY

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“*A Review of Ethiopian Agriculture: Roles, Policy and Small-scale Farming Systems*” assesses the role of the agricultural sector in the Ethiopian economy at both the macro- and the micro-level, considering the sector’s vital role in relation to food security in what is Africa’s second most populated nation.

The paper first discusses the country’s major agricultural policy directions, specifically regarding the national development strategy entitled *Agricultural Development Led-Industrialisation* (ADLI). It gives a response to the question of how the policy has affected the development efforts at both national and local level in terms of development outcomes and perceptions.

Ethiopia’s economy is fundamentally rural and agricultural, and 85 per cent of the working population are employed in the sector which contributes half of the national gross domestic product. This research therefore continues by analysing the major constraints faced by small-scale farmers in earning their livelihood as well as the coping mechanisms utilised to address these constraints.

For this purpose, interviews were held with groups of farmers in both the North Showa Zone of the Amhara National Regional State and in District Nine of Akaki Kaliti, which is one of Addis Ababa’s most heavily industrialised sub-cities.

Moreover, a female community development worker as well as a senior expert of the Ministry of Agriculture have been interviewed on themes such as the future directions of the country’s agricultural development and possible gaps for intervention, especially at the household level. These interviews were then complemented with systematic field observations which helped to verify the information that was provided by the interviewees.

Identifying some of the gaps within the development endeavours of the small-scale farmers, this paper concludes by providing a number of recommendations concerning possible areas for intervention by the voluntary sectors in the efforts to achieve national and local development objectives.

Whilst Ethiopia is rich in vital resources concerning agriculture, the sector has been “[...] hampered due to ill-designed policies, natural calamities and backward peasantry farming techniques with a low input-output ratio.”

The voluntary sector is therefore encouraged to

- (1) support the successful implementation of the current national agriculture development policy with financial provisions, especially through collaboration with international funding agencies;
- (2) build the capacities of the local governments’ agricultural offices through trainings for developing extension experts and leaders and by providing logistics support;
- (3) provide functional, practical and productive education and improved agricultural technologies as well as supplies and improving access to markets for small-scale farmers.

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The publication has been written by Dr Atsbaha Gebre-Selassie on behalf of the Maltese non-governmental development organisation KOPIN (Koperazzjoni Internazzjonali - Malta), and by Mr Tessema Bekele on behalf of the Ethiopian non-governmental organisation Emmanuel Development Association (EDA).

It was edited by Dominik Kalweit and William Grech (KOPIN) and reviewed by Stefano Moncada, Assistant Lecturer at the European Documentation and Research Centre (EDRC), University of Malta.

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