



Figure 1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework adapted from Scoones 1998

4. Research Method

This research examined the role of PSNP in achieving sustainable rural livelihoods in the study areas. In order to investigate the inquiry under study both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilized. With regard to instruments, in case of Choriso kebele (kalu) both structured and semi-structured interviews and questionnaires used to gather relevant data from 4 key informants, 107 sample households and 2 experts. Whereas in Yedoget kebele (wadela), Semi-structured interviews used to get data from 15 PWPs, 3 WAOE[12] and two Keble level administrative staffs and 2 focused group discussions. Additionally, policies, strategy documents and reports assessed to gather pertinent data. Finally, the results analyzed within the blue print of this framework (Figure.1)

5. Results and Discussion

With the primary aims of discussing research results, the five years drought recovery program, and consequent sustainability outcomes assessed in the following fashion.

5.1 Sustainability of Agriculture

As the matter of mutual consensus, agriculture is a dominant means of rural livelihood. Accordingly, its sustainability is quite often considered as a prominent parameter to measure a success story of any rural livelihood rehabilitation policy and program. Hence, the role of PSNP and sustainability outcomes of agricultural livelihood were analyzed by considering sustainability of the following five livelihood assets as outlined by Scoones (1998).

5.1.1 Capital Sustainability

Cash, credit, saving and other economic assets, including basic production equipment and technologies are essential for the pursuit of any livelihood strategy. With general aims

of boosting economic and financial requirements of agricultural productivity, a five years income generating employment opportunity (PSNP) was providing 6birr/day for 5 working days for about 5,127 chronically food insecure households, since 2005. By doing so, unlike previous emergency-based food assistance, PSNP provided predictable financial income (cash) to meet PWPs' minimum food requirements. Because of the above, food in secured households have been protected from famine, and loss of life. However, the money which has been injected to targeted households were too limited to purchase livestock holdings, chemical fertilizers, improved seeds, herbicides and related agricultural inputs. Based on key informants respond, shortage of finance and corresponding lack of livestock holdings have caused: First; households were unable to cultivate all of their lands, this in turn led to agricultural production entitlement decline. Second; reduction in coping strategies - livestock holding is a key household strategy to manage risk. Livestock provide insurance that can be exchanged during bad years when other income sources are insufficient for households. In other words, the availability of livestock holding to these drought victims could provide substitution capabilities among assets and activities. However, lack of this asset has minimized PWPs' survival and coping strategies, since drought induced crop failure has not been compensated by redeployment of livestock asset or switch between them.

5.1.2 Natural Resource Sustainability

Since rural livelihoods are reliant on the natural resource base, sustainability of these resource are crucial. According to field level observation, physical structures coupled with afforests are practiced on degraded communally owned lands. In this aspect, though it needs further research the extent which soil conservation and a forestation practices maximized moisture retention, and improved level of ground water, its importance could be significant. Despite the fact that, PWPs' land and related natural resources have been

equally affected by repetitive drought incidences, PSNP excluded PWPs' degraded land from five years rehabilitation package. As it is clearly described by FDRE (2004), public works must be 'communal' with the exception, investment activities (e.g. irrigation development undertaken on the lands of poor woman headed households). As a matter of consensus, sustainability of rural natural resource requires sustainability of both communally owned land resource, and individual household farmland. To this end, public work program was supposed to give equal attention to PWPs' resources. Since this was not the case, PSNP posed a negative spillover effect on overall environmental sustainability in the study areas.

5.1.3 Sustainability of Physical Assets

In line with FDRE (2004) national drought disaster policy, public works have been performed to promote drought proof developments: with the primary objectives of achieving long term self-sufficiency and self-resilience to public work participants and the community in general. In this regard, based on field level observations, communally owned degraded physical assets like economic and social infrastructures, like small-scale village level rural roads, elementary schools, and clinic compounds have been rehabilitated by public works. However, from sustainability perspective, physical asset development and rehabilitation process have faced a number of challenges. One of the most important hurdles was that, the entire process, and selection of recovery project packages have been universally applied top down development approach, which inherently lacked meaningful participation of PWPs'. Owing to this, PWPs' lacked sense of empowerment and ownership on projects, due to the fact that, the interventions inadequately responded to households' asset status, aspirations and livelihood requirements. Most of all, as key informants, and focused group discussion results revealed, lack of training and awareness creation during project commencement, the existence of free riders, labor competition, and local administrative malice have posed sustainability dilemma on physical asset reconstruction in the study areas.

5.1.4 Sustainability of Labor Capital

One of the primary goals of PSNP has been to sustain human capital in the study areas: through introducing skills, knowledge, ability to labor, good health and physical capability. These are crucial aspects for successful pursuit of different rural livelihood strategies. In an employment-based program as the PSNP the work requirement is an important cost to PWPs'. According to this research finding, households spent on average more than 15 days per month on public works to fill on average 39% of household food income. Owing to this, households have faced shortage of time and labor to deal with other livelihood portfolios. The PWPs' dependency' on PSNP could indicate that the intervention has not tackled the underlined root causes of food insecurity. This could cause a possibility that majority of households may fall in to vicious circle of poverty and malnutrition if the PSNP cease as per its schedule.

5.1.5 Sustainability of Social Assets

Social assets are the ability of actors to secure benefits by the virtue of their membership in social networks (Krishna, 2000). Moreover, it is the state of being in common within

community based on trust (Moser, 1998). As focused group discussions and interviews results revealed, village level traditional social arrangements including sharecropping and labor exchange, transfer of food and related household commodities among community members, have served as a survival and coping strategies to poor farmers during manmade and drought associated risks and famines. Implementation of the program has touched the essence of social assets of the community in various forms. To begin with, the positive aspect, in relative terms, the intervention has improved financial resources' of PWPs' through work for food programs. Owing to the above, PWPs' have gotten relative guarantee and confidence to borrow and access relevant economic and social resources from better off households.

In the contrary to the above, as a range of data sources disclosed, due to favoritism potential beneficiaries were excluded where as rich households were included to be part of the program in the initial targeting process. In addition, some members of the community were exploiting communally owned resources without adding value to public works (the existence of free riders). Moreover, some part of the community hold a perception that PWPs' have gotten special treatments from the government: have played potentially counter-productive on traditional social assets, mutual support and coexistence. Most of all, a relative deterioration of those traditional social arrangements could pose greater challenge on sustainability of survival and coping strategies of PWPs' in the study areas.

5.2 Sustainable Livelihood Strategy Outcomes and Resilience

As Hussein and John (1995) similarly argued, rural livelihood strategy changed, shaped and reshaped through risk and non-risk factors. Within the context of repetitive drought incidences, rehabilitation programs need to realize successful, resilience and sustainable rural livelihood; in such a way that adverse drought events can be withstood without compromising future survival (Elli, 2000). With due consideration to the above, PSNP has been implemented in the study areas to bring sustainable rural livelihood through drought proof development (FDRE, 2004). This program announced by many actors as a flexible and cost-effective way to deliver targeted aid, promote community development and improves long-term prospects for development and food security.

Nevertheless, due to the top down nature of drought disaster management, institutional impediments, inadequate resource provision, and partial rehabilitation of degraded livelihood capitals/assets/, the intervention has been unable to bring sustainable rural agricultural livelihoods to the food in secured households'. In fact, the last five years of recovery works has been challenged to make drought led disasters history through realizing drought proof development. A case in point, according to Kalu district Food security Bureau (2000) report, since 2005-2008, belg season rain shortage damaged around 6,072,200 kg of food, and killed a number of livestock. In this aspect, as Scoones (1998) argued, the last five years public works and recovery program that implemented in the study areas have not created resilient

rural agricultural livelihood which cope with and recover from stresses and drought shocks.

Another sustainability dilemma was that, 50% of PWP's were considered as self-sufficient and graduated from the program in 2011. Nevertheless, all of PWP's who claimed to be graduated were re-instated in the program for additional five years, owing to the fact that, PWP's were not able to sustain their life without the PSNP. Based on an assessment made by this research, the ever-growing dependence on the program could partly explain that, the concerted effort of recovery program has not able to break the vicious circle of food insecurity, as per its time frame, in the study areas.

As it has been well articulated by (ISDR [13], 2005) states have the power as well as the responsibility to protect their citizens and their natural assets by reducing the losses from drought disaster. In line with this argument, post-drought disaster policy and institutional arrangements established to restore or improve the pre-disaster condition of chronically food in secured communities (FDRE, 2004). Nevertheless, a mega project like PSNP has faced the following problems, which related with the entire chain of theory-policy and practice of drought disaster management.

5.2.1 Post-Drought Disaster Management Policy Direction of the Country

Scoons (1998) argued that, rehabilitation of drought led rural asset depletion and chronic food insecurity can be applied at a range of different scales-from individual to household, household clusters to extended kin grouping, to village, region or even Nation with sustainable livelihood outcomes assessed at different levels. The specification of policy direction and the scale of analysis are therefore critical to bring drought victims back to normal condition.

According to NPDPM (1993), and FDRE (2004) the scope, level of analysis and direction of the national post-drought disaster reconstruction policy and corresponding strategies have prioritized community level intervention. Which mean, the cause and consequence of drought disaster, the required recovery or rehabilitation measures, and consequent sustainability of rural livelihood outcomes have been analyzed and interpreted at community level. As the result, household contexts including vulnerability factor, livelihood activity, asset status, and the strategies that chronically food in secured households adopt for survival have got inadequate attention. Ellis (2000) argued that, there is clearly scope to operate simultaneously at many different scales of policy, provided the limitation of the particular scale chosen, identified and understood. The recent tendency, according to Ellis, has been to move away from large domain policies towards village, households and individual level policies.

5.2.2 Awareness Creation on PSNP

Awareness creation program on implementation of the PSNP was given to program officers, professional extension staff, and the targeted beneficiaries in the in the study areas at different times. For instance in 2006, initial training held for experts at the Kobocho district. Given interview results from experts, the trainings were sources of confusion that lacked mutual consensus among participants. In fact, most important pillars of program implementations including,

whom to include in the program, how to select these targets, how to identify different assets, how to evaluate the graduation criteria among others, lacked common understanding among implementers. As a result, the experts were obliged to put in place their own different understanding in to public works.

5.2.3 Initial Targeting of PSNP Beneficiaries

According to administrative documents of the study areas, PWP's were selected by community level committee and administrative committee; based on household asset holdings such as social capital, human capital, natural resource and related livelihood assets. A huge program like PSNP required a deep stakeholders' analysis of household asset holdings, capacity and vulnerability factors. However, based on the data obtained from key informants and group discussions, committees were selecting beneficiaries without having the necessary knowledge, skills and training. In addition to the above, selection of beneficiary PWP's was exposed to favoritism. Consequently, the initial stage of targeting process was characterized by inclusion of undeserved better off households, and exclusion of the right candidate in the program. Hence, as to an assessment made by this research, significant number of chronically food in secured households were not put in place at the center of PSNP in the study areas.

5.2.4 Targeting Graduates-Exit Strategy

In line with FDRE (2004), through continuous rehabilitation package coupled with OFSP [14] intervention (household financing to engage in income generating activity), PWP's were expected to graduate from the program and then be food secured after five years. However, institutional aspects of facilitation of exit strategy or the process of targeting candidate graduates have faced a number of hurdles to realize program objectives. Among which, program implementers were inadequately equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge with regard to household asset estimation and compare against established benchmark which 4200 Ethiopian birr. In addition to that, access to credit facility and household level business plan development were inadequately funded, ill implemented, and partially monitored. On top of the above, facilitation of graduation-exit strategy has faced difficulties, due to the fact that regional and local administrators were not able to create broad based coalition among development partners and stakeholders, who engaged in various development activities in the study areas.

6. Summary

PSNP as post-drought disaster reconstructions program has injected resources, so as to strengthen sustainable and resilience of rural livelihood to chronically food in secured communities. For these to happened: a consistence, predictable and multi-year-framework intervention has filled desperate food demands of PWP's. As a result, besides fighting famine, it discouraged PWP's desperate search for daily labor around urban, maintain communities together and redirect these labor resources to reconstruct degraded natural resource, which is the base of their livelihood. In addition to the above, PSNP protects household assets, which could have been forcefully sold to filled part of their

food consumption. Above all, as part of long term vulnerability reduction, degraded communal assets have been rehabilitated through a forestation and soil conservation practices.

However, from the perspectives of PWP's, the program has not adequately introduced sustainable, resilient and successful rural livelihood strategies, in such a way that adverse drought events can be withstood without compromising future survival. This is due to, first despite drought disaster seriously weakens the capacity of PWP's through depleting livestock holding and related household farm lands, PWP's private productive assets has not been reconstructed. Second PSNP provided no space to PWP's participation and ownership in program design, implementation and feedback. Third, since PSNP has been labor intensive; it created labor and time competition among other PWP's livelihood strategies. Consequently, it compromised the pursuit of other livelihood activities. Finally, though the program clearly argued that the post-drought disaster reconstruction should create drought disaster proof preventive measures still these days', drought lead disaster has caused livestock deaths and crop failure. In this context, the intervention insufficiently achieve sustainable livelihood through reduction or elimination of the underling drought risk factor.

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