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Perception and Adaptation Strategies of Rural People against the Adverse Effects of Climate Variability

A Case Study of Boset District, East Shewa, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study explores the perception and adaptation strategies of rural households to the adverse effects of climate variability. To attain this purpose we posed two research questions: i) how do rural households perceive and/or experience the effects of climate variability? and ii) what are the adaptation strategies of people to events of climate variability? We surveyed 397 heads of households selected through systematic random sampling; and generated additional data from key informant interviews, focus group discussions, personal observations, and meteorological data. The results revealed overwhelming that the majority (99.5%) of respondents noticed changes in temperature which was also confirmed by the meteorological data; and 97.5% of the respondents again acknowledged changes in rainfall. As a consequence, households experienced reduced yield, complete crop failure, shortage of water both for people and animals, soil erosion, and assets destruction. To offset such consequences, 91.5% of the respondents used an array of adaptation strategies which broadly comprised of crop management related strategies, land management strategies, and diversification into non-farm activities. Nonetheless, respondents

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