

JIMMA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF ECOTOURISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON LOCAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF ARSI NEGELLE WOREDA, OROMIA  
NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE

BY:

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Challenges and Prospects of Ecotourism and its implications on Local economic development: The Case of Arsi Negelle Woreda, Oromia National Regional State

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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies for Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Urban and Regional Development planning

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Jimma, Ethiopia

## Declaration, Confirmation, Approval, and Evaluation

**Research Title:** Challenges and Prospects of Ecotourism and its implications on Local economic development: The Case of Arsi Negelle Woreda, Oromia National Regional State

**Declaration:** I declare that this thesis entitled “*Challenges and Prospects of Ecotourism and its Implications on Local economic development: The Case of Arsi Negelle Woreda, Oromia National Regional State*” is my original work and that all the relevant information or sources used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

## Confirmation and Approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a thesis advisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis manuscript to my wife Tadelech Hirpasa for nursing me with affection and love and for her dedicated moral encouragement in the success of my life.

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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ANWFEDO	Arsi Negelle Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office
ANWCTO	Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office
ASLNP	Abijata-Shalla Lakes National Park
CSA	Central Statics Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTPII	Growth and Transformation Plan second
IES	International Ecotourism Society
MoCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
STEP	Sustainable Tourism and Elimination of Poverty
STMP	Sustainable Tourism Master Plan
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education Culture and Science Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United State Dollar
WCoE	World Commission on the Environment
WCU	World Conservation Union
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WWFI	World Wildlife Fund International



## ABSTRACT

*Ecotourism is a recently emerged concept described as an ecologically friendly, economically viable, and socially acceptable form of tourism. It has basic principles for conservation of the environment, local culture, and ensuring the major beneficiary and participation of local communities. The purpose of this study was to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development: the case of Arsi Negelle woreda of West Arsi Zone. To achieve the objective of the study employed a descriptive survey design and both quantitative and qualitative mixed-method was employed. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were employed. The researcher took a total of 184 respondents (157 Sample respondents, 9 key informant interviews, and three FGDs or 18 people from local communities) who were included in the study. A stratified sampling method was used to randomly select kebeles. Lowland, midland, and highland agroecology were considered as the based three strata of sampling techniques. From each stratum, one kebele was selected and thus a total of 3 Kebeles were selected for the study using a simple random sampling method. The data were gathered through a questionnaire, key informant interview, focus group discussion, field observation, and document analysis. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequency and percentage when appropriate while qualitative data were used to triangulate and substantiate the study. The result of the study reveals that several challenges against the ecotourism development to local economic development in the study area were identified as follows lack of safety and security, lack of community awareness, lack of trained manpower, the absence of clean tap water, and seasonal nature of the business, language barriers for efficient communication with tourists, lack of cooperation among stakeholders, naturally and culturally incompatible infrastructural developments, cultural commercialization and abuse from tourists and community are among the challenges which merely seeks quick intervening solutions. The research investigated the challenges of developing ecotourism in the study area. The effort made to improve the participation of the local community through ecotourism development is very low. So, continuous awareness creation and encouragement should be given to the local community to increase their status in ecotourism development activities. In light of those circumstances, the study strongly recommends that Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office to use ecotourism as alternative economic sources through local community empowerments and involvement were the main challenge of ecotourism development activities.*

**Keywords:** *Challenges, Prospects, Ecotourism, Implications, Local economic development, Arsi Negelle woreda*

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the study

Ecotourism is a new concept in tourism, which was originally sparked off by the idea of making harmonious coexistence with nature a reality once again. As defined by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) (2006), also define ecotourism, “as a form of ecotourism where the local community has substantial control over and involvement on, its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community. It fosters sustainable use of land and natural resources”.

Nowadays, ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry. Its growth potential is virtually unlimited. Any tourism program which is nature-based, ecologically sustainable, where education and interpretation are a major concept and where local people are benefited can be called ecotourism (Aregawi, 2016).

The term “ecotourism” has come to include concepts such as planning before development; sustainability of resources; the economic viability of a tourism product, no negative impact on the environment and local communities; responsibility for the environment from both developers, the tourism industry and tourists; environmentally friendly practices by all parties concerned; and economic benefits flowing to local communities (Harrison, 2001). Hence, it is viewed as a means of protecting natural areas through the generation of revenues, environmental education, and community participation. In such ways, both conservation and community development is claimed to be achieved in a sustainable form. While providing enjoyable experiences in natural settings, the fundamental functions of ecotourism are the protection of the exotic, pristine, and remote areas, production of revenue, fostering education, and community participation (Assegid, 2011). Ecotourism destinations are always environmentally sensitive because ecotourism activities directly involve various environmental phenomena including bird watching, trekking, mountaineering, horse riding, and wilderness trail, staying in natural caves, studying about flora and fauna, simple bushwalking, animal behavior study and ecological studies. Ecotourism was given more concerns since the world Ecotourism Summit in 2002 because it is expected as a tool for ensuring sustainable conservation of destination areas, satisfying the enjoyment of tourists, benefiting the destination community and contributes to poverty reduction (Gobena, 2008)

In recent years the tendency in the tourism industry was returned towards nature and authentic cultural values. This driving travel revolution is causing mass travel and mass consumption with escalating impacts on fragile ecosystems, human health, and social systems (Zolfani et al. 2014).

Ecotourism contributes to the conservation of biodiversity; sustains the well-being of local people; involves responsible action on the part of the tourist and the tourism industry; promotes small and medium tourism enterprises; requires the lowest possible consumption of natural resources; stresses local participation, ownership, and business opportunities, particularly for rural people; and above all includes the learning experiences (Kipper, 2013).

The significant growth of the tourism industry resulted in one of the most remarkable economic activities and social phenomena in the world. The sector is estimated to represent 10% of global GDP and is expected to continue expanding significantly to reach 1.8 billion international tourists in 2030. As a worldwide export category, tourism ranked fourth in 2013, after fuels, chemicals, food, and ahead of automotive products (UNWTO, 2015). Major global policy initiatives taken by international development agencies show that the importance of ecotourism for sustainable development will continue to expand in the post-2015 period. In the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development Goals 2030 held in September 2015, world leaders agreed that they will ‘devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products’ (UN, 2015).

Africa’s tremendous ecotourism potential all over the continent makes it the future ecotourism destination of the globe. The continent can use ecotourism as an alternative economic tool in the fight against poverty eradication and elimination in the coming future. Eco-tourists choose Africa for their holidays to visit and enjoy the continent’s vast and diversity of natural, socio-cultural as well as historical tourist attractions.

Even though Ethiopia is economically poor, it is immensely rich in both cultural and natural forms of tourism resources. Archaeologically Ethiopia is considered as the oldest soul and the earliest sites of the emergence of a modern human, *Homo sapiens*. Ethiopia also possesses the most UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Africa. In addition to unique landscapes, flora, and fauna with varieties of land and water forms, Ethiopia possesses many national parks, wildlife reserves, and community-based conservation areas, lakes, rivers, and valleys that can be an asset/capital. This richness in tourism resources makes Ethiopia one of the few destinations with high potential for ecotourism development (Daniel, 2011)

The Government of Ethiopia has been setting striving growth targets for the tourism sector, which will shape the sector's strategies in the upcoming years. In line with the projections of GTP2, the STMP has set a high growth target of 5 million international visitors in 2025. Based on this high growth scenario, receipts from international arrivals is projected to increase from a baseline of ETB 14.197 billion in 2012 to ETB 180 billion in 2025, with the corresponding number of tourism-related jobs rising from 985,500 to 4.8 million(MoCT 2015).

Arsi NegelleWoreda is one of the few areas that have protected natural forest places in Ethiopia where the oldest protected area in Africa is found. The Woreda is having different nature-based tourist attraction centers such as natural lakes (namely Abijata, Shalla and Langano), Lephis Waterfall (Finchaw Lephis), diverse wildlife, birds, floras, beautiful landscapes, and local cultures are among the ecotourism resources of the area. Lephis natural forest is the home for different species of mammals and birds, including endemic mammals and bird species such as are some of them (Ferehiwot and Shewit, 2015). These make the area an ideal place for ecotourism development. The problem here is how the country can use these abundant resources especially it's potential in ecotourism development and to enhance the tourism industry. Therefore, still, it needs a great deal of main hinder ecotourism development assessment and well sound researches on the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of the study area.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Tourism is one of the major earning sectors of developing countries and is the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in 46 of the least developed countries. Nowadays up to 70% of the world's poorest countries income was generated from this sector and more the 80% of low-income countries included this sector in the poverty reduction strategies (UNWTO, 2014)

Ethiopia is immensely rich in both cultural and natural forms with unique landscapes, flora and fauna make her an opportunistic in ecotourism terms. Besides this, the availability of national parks, wildlife reserves, and conservation areas, including several lakes and rivers adds its competitiveness. These protected areas are centers of biodiversity that host different species of birds, butterflies, flowering plants, mammals, and numerous species of plants useful for herbal medicine (MoCT, 2015).

The Ethiopian economy is largely dependent on agriculture for many decades and other economic sectors such as tourism were not given due attention. As agriculture alone could not transform the Ethiopian economy in its endeavor for the last fifty years, the country has now recognized the

importance of diversifying its economic activities. The tourism industry is one of the economic sectors which are given outstanding attention recently. For example, the Federal Government of Ethiopia has launched a new tourism development policy in 2009 which aims to integrate tourism development into agricultural development policy (Gemechu *et al*, 2014).

The challenge is thus to formulate tourism development strategies that specifically harness these benefits into the local community. The effectiveness of tourism in the future will ultimately depend on what form of tourism has to be developed and who will benefit, as well as where, when, and how it can be appropriately implemented. Different types of tourism will assume different forms and functions, and how they are developed and managed will also influence the degree to which they can contribute to development. In this regard, Ecotourism has emerged as one of the most promising methods of integrating natural resource conservation, local income generation, and cultural conservation in the developing world (Miller, 2017).

World ecotourism summit held in Canada by the year 2002 acknowledged the significant and complex social, economic and environmental implications of tourism and the role of ecotourism in ensuring the sustainability of the overall tourism by increasing economic benefits for the host community (TIES, 2015).

Ethiopia is endowed with unique biodiversity, eye-catching topographic features, various agro-climatic zones, immense hydrological spheres, rich authentic cultural resources, and the existence of traditional lifestyles, the development of tourism is not balanced with its potential resources. Ethiopia's Protected Areas, which include national parks, game reserves, and wildlife sanctuaries and controlled hunting areas which cover about 14% of the country are most suitable for ecotourism development (Daniel, 2011).

Oromia national regional state particularly West Arsi Zone, Arsi Negelle woreda has vast nature-based tourism resources of Ethiopia, the potential ecotourism resources of the area to develop ecotourism so poor yet. There are various challenges of ecotourism development and as well as contributions to local economic development are not yet fully studied and not identified by the government and/or other stakeholders in Arsi Negelle woreda. Therefore, the study was focused to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle Woreda.

A few studies have been conducted related to the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the country. For example, a study conducted by Ermias (2013) revealed that poor performance of marketing, poor infrastructural development



especially road, illegal settlement, environmental pollutions and begging, and unsuitable institutional structure were identified as challenges to religious tourism development in Gishen Debre Kerbe Mariam, North Central Ethiopia

Similarly, Zemenu (2014) indicated that the abundance, and diverse resources, the area had limited practices of Community Based Ecotourism and had no significant infrastructure facilities that could cater to the needs and wants of the customers. This study found that the area had faced different challenges that can hinder Community Based Ecotourism Development in Lake Zengena and its Environs, Banja Woreda, Awi Nationality Administration, Amhara National Regional State.

On the other hand, Berihsu (2015) conducted a similar study on Lake Hashenge, and its surroundings, in his study, indicated that Lake Hashenge and its surroundings have substantial ecotourism potential products with hopefully expected economical, socio-cultural, and environmental future success. However, the local community's level of awareness about their living area's potential ecotourism resources and Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) is found unsatisfactory.

A more recent study conducted by Fasika (2017) revealed that there are high opportunities to develop Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) in Loka Abaya National Park. The presence of many physical features, such as natural resources including scenic features, forest, birdlife, wild animal, hot springs, and sharing of some proportion of water from Lake Abaya, create favorable conditions to develop Community Based Ecotourism in the area. Many cultural features including showing cultural dances and hairstyles, traditional festivals, and food and drink preparation systems, are also available in Loka Abaya National Park (LANP).

However, this study is different from the previous studies by the research methodology the researcher used that it focused on the following variables: local community perception towards ecotourism development, the contribution of ecotourism development to local economic development, and challenges that affect ecotourism development in the study area. To the level of my knowledge, there is no study done so far in the study area regarding challenges and prospects and its implications on local economic development in Arsi Negelle Woreda. Therefore, this study aims to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in Arsi Negelle Woreda. Consequently, this may be because the Arsi Negelle woreda has a great opportunity and potential through ecotourism development when compared it with other rural woredas of West Arsi Zone.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle Woreda of West Arsi Zone.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were:

- To assess the ecotourism development status in the study area.
- To evaluate the contributions of ecotourism to local economic development in the study area
- To assess the prospects of ecotourism development in the study area.
- To identify the main challenges of ecotourism development in the study area.
- To examine the perception of local communities towards ecotourism development in the study area.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

In order to meet the stated objectives, formulating basic research questions was very important. Therefore, the following basic research questions were formulated.

1. What are the main challenges that affect the development of ecotourism in the study area?
2. What are the contributions of ecotourism to local economic development in the study area?
3. What are the prospects of ecotourism development in the study area?
4. How do the local communities perceive ecotourism development in the study area?

### **1.5. Significances of the study**

This study was focused to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development with particular reference to Arsi Negelle woreda, West Arsi Zone. Hence, the findings of this study were expected to generate the following benefits.

It might help the tourism managers and planners, local communities, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, Non-Governmental Organizations to clearly understand eco-tourism potential, barriers, and level of participation of the local communities in tourism development and so that they take remedial actions to boost the contributions of the sector to local and national economic development. It can help policymakers and implementers by boosting their understanding of the potential of ecotourism resources and identify areas requiring special attention. The finding of the

study may help to show a road map to enhancing ecotourism development. Lastly, the findings of the study may serve as a springboard for those who have the intention to undertake a more detailed study.

### **1.6. Delimitation of the Study**

In order to make the study more manageable, it was delimited both geographically and conceptually. Geographically the study is delimited Arsi Nagelle Woreda, West Arsi Zone. West Arsi zone is one of 21 Zones of Oromia Regional State which consists of 12 rural Woredas. From this rural Woredas', the researcher has select Arsi Nagelle woreda because this woreda has the potentials for ecotourism development and consists of different natural lakes in its surrounding area. Therefore, to make the study more manageable, it was delimited geographically, conceptually, and temporally. Geographically, the study was delimited to Arsi Negelle woreda and three kebeles such as Gubeta Arjo, Daka Delu Harengama and Lephis kebeles that were selected purposely. Content-wise, the study was delimited to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development. Temporally, the study was conducted from November 2019 up to July 2020.

### **1.7. Limitations of the study**

In the process of conducting this research, there were some limitations. The shortage of well-organized and documented data related to the study was one of such limitations. Also, other limitations were encountered in this study are a shortage of relevant literature on the topic especially in the Ethiopian context, there were acute shortages of books, and Lack of obtaining sufficient, reliable, and up-to-date data from different organizations influenced the study to generate and analyze accurate information. The case of COVID-19 was also one of the obstacles for data collection; however, data were collected from households through precautionary measures. Another limitation that hampers the study was the dispersed geographical location of the kebeles and lack of transportation facilities. Despite all these challenges, the researcher has tried to critically analyze the obtained data to answer questions raised in the study.

### **1.8. Organization of the study**

The study contains five chapters. The first chapter contains, the introductory part is presented. This has a background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, research questions, and scope of the study, the significance of the study, limitations, and definition of key terms are included. In chapter two different theoretical and empirical related reviews of the

literature have been discussed. The third chapter deals with the description of the study area and research methods. Under chapter four data analysis and discussions of the result are included and Finally, chapter five was about the conclusion and recommendations based on the data was collected and the analysis was undertaken, conclusions and important recommendations were forwarded.

### **1.9. Definition of Key Terms**

The major operational definitions of the terms were identified as follows:

**Awareness:** the quality or state of being aware: knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists.

**Cultural:** community's traditional way of life.

**Challenges:** Several factors or barriers that hinder or limit the development of the ecotourism industry in the study area.

**Ecotourism:** responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education.

**Handicrafts** are activities such as embroidery and pottery which involve making things with your hands in a skillful way.

**Kebele:** is the lowest administrative unit in the Ethiopian government administration hierarchy.

**Natural:** climate and the relief, the landscapes, flora, and fauna - unique in East Africa (and some of the Earth), wildlife diversity and beautiful scenery, numerous species of plants, and invertebrate species.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. The Concepts and Definition of Ecotourism

The term ecotourism, like many other social science terminologies, is one of the most enigmatic and controversial concepts which has no distinct universally accepted definition. The complexity of ecotourism has especially been recognized and called by many names such as “soft tourism”, “responsible tourism”, “green tourism”, and “alternative tourism” and so on. At times, the terms nature-based tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable tourism seem to be used almost interchangeably. The only consistency found within these names is the link to nature (Gebeyaw, 2011).

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), ecotourism can be defined as:

*...environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature that promotes conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local people (Ngece, 2002).*

Similarly, The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 2006), also defines ecotourism, as a form of ecotourism where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community. It fosters the sustainable use of land and natural resources. The /TIES/ definition of ecotourism, clearly explain how the administration and operation of ecotourism can be exercised, yet it neglects to incorporate what kind of activities will be carried in the destination area. After all, the following UNWTO definition is more explanatory to the concepts and agenda behind ecotourism; it defines ecotourism as a purposeful trip to natural areas to understand the culture and natural history of the environment, taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, while producing economic opportunities that make the conservation of natural area (UNWTO, 2014).

#### 2.2 Theoretical framework of the studies

Ecotourism is further associated with the adaptability platform which regarded it as a form of alternative tourism (Weaver, 2008). Under the adaptability platform, ecotourism is contrasted with a mass tourism model perceived to be inherently unsustainable. Ecotourism is also considered to be a small scale with limited ecological and social impacts when compared to traditional tourism. This claim is because ecotourism limits the number of guests who visit a destination as there is adherence to the physical carrying capacity of the tourist resource base (Weaver, 2008).

Not contradictorily, some believe as ecotourism has been a direct product of a modernistic approach to development, where the sustainability discourses and other theoretical debates have indirectly influenced its theory and practices. It is important to highlight that in this context, development should be as the process of social and economic progress in society, and its ability to generate income through activities that improve social living conditions in harmony with nature (Wubishet, 2018).

Then, later on, ecotourism is considered innovative, in which the sustainability discourse expanded into all sectors of the developed and developing societies, promoting a series of environmental and socio-cultural considerations that societies needed to adopt to tackle current and future development needs. These considerations implied that environmental and social problems could not be solved. Independently and a comprehensive, and holistic approach was required to tackle environmental issues while sustaining socio-economic growth. In other words, matters but should include social, environmental and ethical considerations such that its measurement may integrate indicators of poverty, unemployment, inequality and self-reliance (Mbaiwa, 2003). It has been noted that developing an ecotourism enterprise is a complex and difficult undertaking often involving a thorough understanding of market principles and business fundamentals involving building strong, lasting, and equitable partnerships with local communities. The argument that has been propounded being that sustainable development implies moving towards intra-generational equity of access to resources and respect for environmental limits (Wubishet, 2018).

### **2.3. Types of Tourism and Other Forms of ecotourism**

Tourism can broadly be divided into Mass Tourism and Alternative Tourism (Rai, 2005; Daniel, 2009)

**Mass Tourism** is purely leisure and entertainment-oriented usually offering higher degrees of comfort and convenience regardless of any environmental effects (Rai, 2005). Mass tourism leads to high concentrations of people in relatively small places and in such cases, tourism often appears to be less of a blessing and more of a blight. Moreover, there is the danger of tourism killing tourism.

**Alternative Tourism**, on the other hand, seeks to face mass tourism from the opposite side. This involves a lesser number of people as well. According to Rai, (2005) mentioned five types of Alternative tourism. These are:

**A. Nature Tourism:** it involves travels to unspoiled areas to experience and enjoys nature. It is highly concerned with the utilization of natural resources in a relatively undeveloped state, including scenery, topography, water features, vegetation and wildlife.

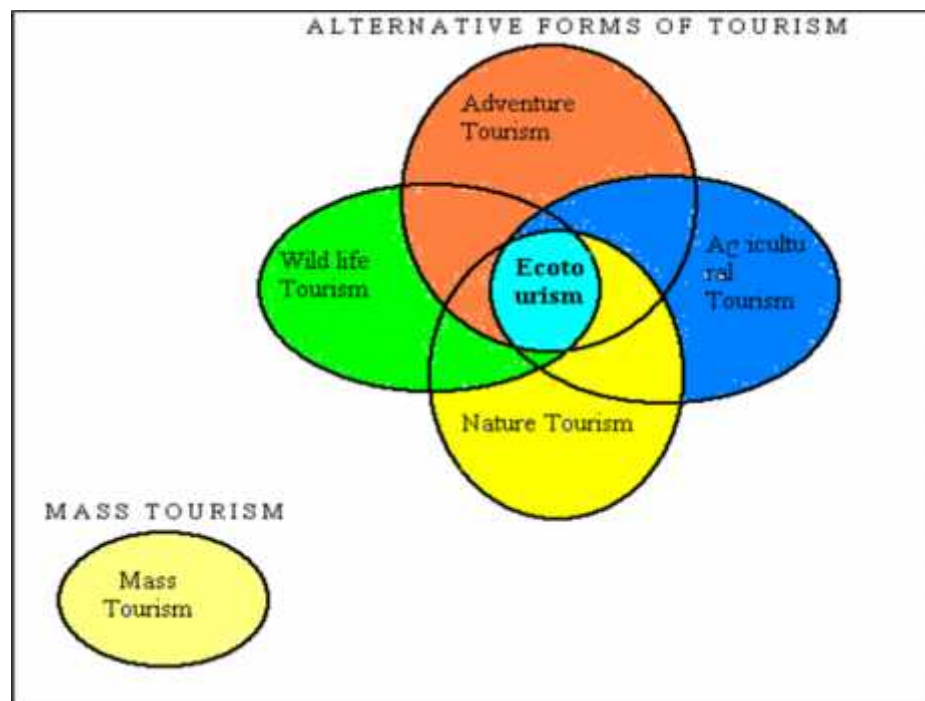
**B. Adventure tourism** is nature tourism with a kick. This requires physical experience or skill and involves a degree of risk-taking. For example, rock climbing, mountaineering and snorkeling.

**C. Wildlife tourism:** it involves travel to observe wild and game animals, like birds, mammals, and fish in their native habitat. This includes both consumptive and non-consumptive use of wild animals. For example, visit parks and birds watching

**D. Agricultural/rural tourism** is a newly emerging form of tourism where farmers offer many opportunities for tourists to find experiences closely connected with agricultural practices. For example, Horseback riding and homestays.

**E. Ecotourism** can include all the above types of tourism. But in addition to recreation ecotourism should result in strong benefits to conservation and the local people as well.

Generally, ecotourism aims to increase experiences by encouraging activities such as long-distance walking, camping, boating, hunting, sightseeing, swimming, cultural activities, bicycling, observing wildlife and nature, skiing, visiting historical places and horse riding among others (Daniel, 2009)



**Figure 2.1: Relation between Ecotourism and other forms of tourism**

**Source: Adopted from Daniel, 2009**

## **2.4. Historical development of Ecotourism at the world level**

Beginning of the 1990s, ecotourism has been raised 20-30% per year. In 2004, ecotourism/nature tourism was increasing internationally 3 times quicker than the tourism industry as a whole. Nature tourism is increasing at 10-12% per annum in the global market. Tourism has now matured as a market and its growth is projected to remain flat. In contrast, experiential tourism, which includes nature, culture, heritage, ecotourism, and soft adventure tourism, as well as sub-sectors such as rural and community tourism is

among the sectors projected to rise rapidly over the next two decades (TIES, 2006). Tourism is the biggest business sector of the world economy; it provides 10% of global GDP and 35% of the world's export services. Since 1985, tourism has raised an average of 9% per year. In 2005, receipts from global tourism reached US\$6.82 trillion, a rise of 49 billion dollar over 2004. The United States is the world's biggest producer and beneficiary of tourism, which accounts for about 15% of total spending. Tourism is also acting as the most important task in the economies of 125 countries in the world. More than two-thirds of U.S and Australian travelers, and 90% of British tourists, believe the active preservation of the environment and to keep of local communities an element of a hotel's accountability. In Europe: 20-30% of travelers are alert of wanting and principles of sustainable tourism. 10-20% of travelers give the impression of green options and 5-10% of travelers demand green holidays. In Germany, 65% of travelers suppose environmental quality; 42% "think that it is mainly significant to find ecological aware accommodation". Surveys in Britain tourist travel to a business that had written regulations to guarantee a good working environment, preserve the environment and maintain local charities in the tourist target (Honey and Krantz, 2007)

According to UNWTO, (2010) Tourism has become one of the major global export trade categories, ranking fourth after fuels, chemicals, and automotive products. In 2009, export income from inbound tourism generated more than US\$1 trillion (about US \$3 billion per day) and accounted for 30% of the world's exports of commercial services. It also accounted for 6% of the overall export of goods and services, 67% of all overall jobs (direct and indirect) worldwide, and contributed an estimated average of 5% to the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The industry has witnessed an increase in global international arrivals (generating US\$852 billion) in 2009, which is a slight decline from 919 million arrivals (generating US\$ 941 billion in 2008, as a result of the global economic recession (UNWTO, 2010). International arrivals are projected to reach nearly 1.6 billion by the year 2020 (UNWTO, 2010). Ecotourism is an important and rapidly growing " niche market" within the global tourism industry, which offers an opportunity to develop products that can contribute to national environmental conservation, socioeconomic and cultural objectives by providing livelihoods for local communities and cultural objectives by providing livelihoods for local communities and giving value to the maintenance of local traditions and culture. Ecotourism activities have been expanding rapidly over the past decades worldwide and further growth is expected in the future. With an estimated worldwide annual growth rate of 10-15%, ecotourism is expected to grow faster than other forms of traditional tourism which seem to have reached a saturation point (UNWTO, 2015).



International tourism is rising and developing markets have grown at an average rate of 6-8% over the past decade which is twice the rate of growth in industrialized countries. Between 1996 and 2006, International tourism in developing countries expanded by 6% as a whole, by 9% for least developed countries and 8% for other low and lower-middle-income economies because the sector will be more and more recognized as a key agent in national poverty reduction strategies and development financing (UNWTO, 2016).

#### **2.4.1. Ecotourism Development in Africa**

By considering its multi-dimension contribution many developing countries consider ecotourism to be important for economic progress and poverty reduction. According to Fennell (2014), ecotourism plays a crucial role in economic, social and environmental development for developing countries. Ecotourism attractions are mostly pristine natural conservation areas rich in biological diversity and have attendant rural communities with diversified cultural mosaics. Ecotourism in Africa is a developing industry and have gone through several changes and have learned from their failures. By 1980, many species in Africa's varied ecosystem were on the verge of extinction. Efforts to preserve species like the mountain gorilla in Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo were hampered not only by unstable political systems but also by misunderstanding by indigenous people (Leah et al, 2018).

Ecotourism has gained popularity among developing world countries and has shown increased impetus since 1988 due to the proliferation of specialized ecotourism tour operators and by the increasing number of ecotourism conferences, festivals and fairs in those countries (Kiper, 2013). For many destinations within the developing world, ecotourism is becoming the most important tourism market segment due to the presence of vast advantage of biodiversity and the extent of pristine, natural environments (Funnel, 2011).

For more than 100 years, Africa's wildlife and natural beauty have been attracting tourists, but until recently tourism often did more damage to the ecosystem than good. In the 1980s, Africa led the international trend toward sustainability while keeping the lucrative business of tourism alive. Africa's ecotourism industry functions as both protector and educator, and because of the continent's unique political and cultural factors, the practice is like no other region (Trobaug, 2018).

Nowadays, ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the tourism industry in Africa. Visitors show their appreciation for the continent's natural beauty while embracing environmentally friendly approaches to travel by flocking to the eco-lodges and eco-attractions by the thousands. Ecotourism in Africa is also beneficial to local communities, who have taken advantage of the opportunities afforded by the industry (Mikva, 2016).

According to Leah et al (2018), tourists always have come to Africa expecting to be engaged by the wildlife and indigenous people, and African ecotourism continues that tradition with differences in execution. Instead of a passive safari-type tour, African ecotourism strives to involve the traveler in the community by introducing him to local people and customs, and seeing wildlife in the context of education and protection bring back the idea of traveling to discover combined with responsible sustainability. Simply put, African ecotourism functions as a way to keep tourist money in the local economy while preserving the environment and culture. It offers travelers a chance to learn about regional ecosystems and have a hand in preserving endangered species of animals and plants, while also gaining respect for a people that have often battled political strife. According to Leah et al (2018) and Mikva (2016), Benin, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Ivory Coast are among the best ecotourism destinations in Africa for their unmatched wildlife, mesmerizing landscapes, and fascinating culture.

#### **2.4.2. Ecotourism Development in Ethiopia**

Even though tourism has a history of more than fifty years in Ethiopia it passes through different ups and downs. Changes in governmental policies with the change in political ideologies play a crucial role in limiting the contribution of the sector to the overall economy of the country (Henze, 2007). Starting from the end of the 1990s tourism shows significant change due to the shift of governmental focus to the sector with some improvements in policy, institutionalization of the sector, privatization, and some incentive for private sectors that have motives to participate in the sector. As a result of sweeping economic reforms, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) has been enjoying unprecedented tourism growth in recent years. International tourist arrivals have been on a growth trajectory since the 90s rising from 64,000 in 1990 to 681,249 in 2013.

This has been matched by growth in the contribution of the travel and tourism sector's direct contribution to the country's GDP which in 2013 was 4.2 and is expected to grow by 4.8% to reach ETB 59,495.2million (3.6% of GDP) by 2024 (WTO, 2015). Further, the industry is now an important source of employment accounting for 3.8% of total employment in 2013 representing 985,500 jobs directly. The tourism industry increasingly becoming an important economic sector in the country and has consequently been identified as an avenue through which the plan for accelerated and sustainable development to end poverty can be achieved, as articulated in the country's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), (2010-2015) vision to become 'One of the Five Top Destinations in Africa by 2020. Ethiopia's immensely rich in both cultural and natural forms with unique landscapes, flora, and fauna make her an opportunistic in ecotourism terms. Besides this, the availability of national parks, wildlife reserves, and conservation areas, including several lakes and rivers adds to its competitiveness. These protected areas are centers of

biodiversity that host different species of birds, butterflies, flowering plants, mammals, and numerous species of plants useful for herbal medicine (MoCT, 2015).

In terms of culture having more than 80 ethnic groups, each with their own cultures, languages, and mystical traditions in terms of art, literature, music, dance, food, clothing, and lifestyles of these groups are major attractions for eco-tourists interested in culture and arts, especially for Community based ecotourism. Similarly, the country has several tangible and intangible World Heritage Sites identified by UNESCO. Ethiopia could not adopt an effective tourism policy to guide the sector in a fully-fledged manner until 2009 when the first Tourism Development Policy was adopted to help ensure that tourism growth delivers broad and equitable social, economic, and environmental benefits, With a vision: “To see Ethiopia’s tourism development led responsibly and sustainably and contributing its share to the development of the country by aligning itself with poverty elimination.” This is the reason why Ethiopia was named the World's Best Tourism Destination for 2015 by the European Council on Tourism and Trade, citing Ethiopia's outstanding natural beauty, dramatic landscapes, and ancient culture (MoCT, 2015).

The Tourism Development Policy sets the sector’s general objectives that emphasize tourism’s potential in terms of growth, employment generation (particularly for women and youth), foreign exchange earnings, and image building for the country. It also stresses the importance of achieving tourism growth sustainably, in alignment with other national development policies, and with broad participation by the different stakeholders. The policies have highlighted the country’s natural and cultural richness and have emphasized that tourism can be an important strategy for Ethiopia’s development (MoCT, 2009).

To make the sector more sustainable Ministry of Culture and Tourism prepared the Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) with the main aim to establish a national framework for sustainable tourism development to contribute to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation covering 2015-2025 (MoCT, 2015).

In recent years visitors have increased to other areas of major environmental interest: the Semien mountains, the Bale mountains, the Rift Valley lakes, and especially to the Omo valley and other parts of the Southwest. Eco-lodge development in some regions of the country has begun in different parts of the country. Some tour organizations are beginning to specialize in animal and bird watching, tours to observe indigenous forests, and unusual geologic features (Henze, 2007).

In addition, the government of Ethiopia also has recognized the development and promotion of ecotourism and provided consultancy services for many potential developers of ecotourism sites. Although developers and policymakers do not properly take the idea of ecotourism, some investors started to involve in the development of ecotourism in different regions of Ethiopia. Bishan-gari EcoLodge located at Eastern of

Langano Lake in Oromia National Regional State and Village Ethiopia located in the Afar Region (Bilen) is an example of these private eco-tourism developments in Ethiopia (Adem, 2008).

## **2.5. Most Common Challenges of Ecotourism Development**

Generally, tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on economic, cultural, and environmental resources depending on circumstances that how it is managed in areas, where tourism impacts on country and society, there may well be conflicts with competing demands for other sectors of the economy, or with community interests at large. Ecotourism is thus an important concept in tourism development to solve these problems (Stradas, 2002; Okello, 2003). Ecotourism opportunities also come with many challenges and limitations in their development and assessment. First, Increases in the number of tourists to environmentally degraded areas consequently increases the human impact on the ecosystem, which potentially negates an important benefit of ecotourism. Additional challenges could include difficulty in determining the carrying capacity of the project site (Liu, 2003).

### **i. Weak policy, legal and regulatory framework**

Invested in the formulation of policies, laws, and guidelines to enable the development of tourism many private operators, community, and civil society organizations feel that most of them are not being enforced and implemented by the government. Some argue that if the existing laws and policies were to be fully implemented, then ecotourism would automatically develop even without any additional legislation (Lumprey, 1990). For instance, Berhanu (2015), the buffer zone of the park was managed solely by the North Gondar Natural Resource Management office with no collaboration with the park office, and the Justice Office considers criminal cases such as illegal hunting, fishing and other unsustainable resource utilization as minor cases and sometimes such cases are left to lapse without either any formal sanction or penalty in evidence.

### **ii. Conflict of interest over resource usage and ownership Problems**

Conflict of interest among different stakeholders who live around valuable ecotourism resources was one of the frequently stated constraints for ecotourism development. According to Bires (2014) in his study about the challenges and opportunities for community-based ecotourism in Lake Zengena, Amhara region revealed that there was a serious ownership problem between the church communities and the government, particularly the BanjaWoreda Culture and Tourism Office. Similarly, Ketema (2015) also found that there was a conflict of interest on the ownership of Wonchi Crater Lake which is situated in Oromia Regional State, in central Ethiopia. Also, Ambelu (2011) in his study in Meket Wollo, Amhara Region in Northern Ethiopia, identified that land ownership issues were a challenge for the development of community lodges in some of the ecotourism sites and that conflict over farming land borders is sometimes raised by

communities where the trekking routes passed adjacent to their farming land. Moreover, Alemayehu (2011) in his study in Awash National park also reported the existence of inter-ethnic conflict between the Kerreyu, Ittu and Afar pastoralists over resource ownership rights of dry-season grazing lands and vital access to water points, and conflict between the park scouts and the local pastoralist is also a common occurrence (Sewnet, 2017).

### **iii. Lack of basic ecotourism infrastructure and facilities**

The few existing infrastructures in rural areas usually deteriorate and in most cases near collapse. This limits the competitiveness of the member states and region, in general, to attract eco-tourists in comparison to other destinations in Africa and beyond. Basic ecotourism facilities such as accommodation, transportation, health services, and other support facilities are essential to enhance the satisfaction of eco-tourists and to maximize the length of stay of tourists to any area (Sewnet, 2017).

Furthermore, Berhanu (2015) has also reported that poor health and accommodation services, very limited shopping, banking and postal services, the absence of all-weather roads, and no telecommunication services are all huge problems requiring urgent support. In addition, Alemayehu (2011) asserts that the community has an acute shortage of clean water and local people who reside adjacent to the park are forced to use the irrigation canal for themselves and their livestock.

### **iv. Lack of Cooperation among Stakeholders**

Lack of stakeholder integration is one of the repeatedly mentioned challenges for ecotourism development in different parts of Ethiopia and also globally. For example, Ambelu (2011) stated that a lack of cooperation and a solid formal relationship between the community tourism enterprises and other stakeholders was identified as a 'bottleneck' in the study area which conceivably emanated from a lack of capacity and the failure to legally register community tourism enterprises and also a deficiency of support from government offices. Berhanu (2013), in his study at Alatish National Park, revealed the existence of weak integration among different stakeholders and the park office. In other studies, Alemayehu (2011) and Aynalem (2013) have also reported a lack of stakeholder cooperation as a challenge for community-based ecotourism development in their respective study areas.

Ketema (2015), states unfair benefit-sharing, the inability of ecotourism to substitute traditional agriculture, illegal land marketing, plantation of eucalyptus trees on the Shore of Wonchi Lake, and other institutional constraints as the primary challenges for community-based ecotourism development in Lake Wonchi crater and its surrounding areas.

### **v. Lack of awareness, lack of trained manpower and limited participation**

It is obvious that ecotourism development encourages a local community's participation and they also benefit in sharing activities and also enhance their understanding of the natural and cultural resource conservation initiatives. Nevertheless, most of the ecotourism destinations in Ethiopia are not in line with the principles of community-based ecotourism. For instance, According to Alemayehu (2011), most of the local people in his study area had no awareness about either ecotourism or community-based tourism, and they did not participate at any stage in park management decisions.

Tourism professionals play significant roles in the development of ecotourism since they are capable of planning and organizing ecotourism initiatives or activities effectively, which will in turn help increase the satisfaction of eco-tourists in the destinations (Sewnet, 2017).

Moreover, Aynalem (2013), the majority of the personnel serving in many cultures and tourism, offices are not experts in tourism at all, which tends to diminish their value as far as ecotourism/community-based tourism is concerned.

#### **vi. Safety and Security related to Eco-tourists**

The issues of safety and security in the ecotourism industry have always been very important conditions. However, it is an unquestionable fact that safety and security issues gained much bigger importance in the ecotourism industry. Also, security and safety in ecotourism development have become a complex multidimensional notion with a wide range of components belonging to them such as political security, public safety, health and sanitation, personal data safety, legal protection of tourists, consumer protection, safety in communication, disaster protection, environmental security, getting authentic information, quality assurance of services, etc. (Asrat, 2017)

They are also one of the determinants of ecotourism development in any destination in the world. The issues of safety and security should need a great concentration from all stakeholders of the tourism industry. In the case of Ethiopia in general and study area, in particular, the issue of safety and security is not a minor challenge of ecotourism development because there are some problems are related to lack of quality assurance disaster protection, environmental protection and the like even though relatively our country is secured.

### **2.6. Prospects of Ecotourism Development**

Ecotourism means that our tourism activities involve local people. It also means that local communities are actively participating in the development and management of tourism activities. Communities actively involved in tourism usually still retain a traditional way of life and culture that is of interest to tourists (UNESCO, 2001). If properly planned and managed, ecotourism can be a viable source of economic benefits for governments, private entrepreneurs, and local communities alike. Furthermore, it can serve as

an effective tool for the conservation of natural and cultural assets (Nabil, 2003). When ecotourism is a local community-based, it essentially brings the market home, and this allows for different ways of participating in the market economy without necessarily or irreversibly disrupting normal livelihoods or social relations. And according to (Fiorello& Damien, 2012), community-based ecotourism is anchored on the three main elements of sustainable development: economic efficiency, social equity, and ecological sustainability.

### **2.6.1 Benefits of ecotourism to local economic development**

Ecotourism can bring about economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits for the government, private sector, and local communities if well implemented. The economic, environmental, and social benefits that ecotourism provides are immense. According to Buckley (2008), ecotourism is widely recognized for its positive impacts on the environment, ecotourism operators and tourism lobbyists argue that ecotourism has contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of the local communities by conserving and supporting the protected areas. Though ecotourism has multiple objectives to address, improvement of the economic condition of the stakeholders and harmonizing local traditions and culture are major objectives (Afenyo and Amuquandoh, 2014). Major global policy initiatives taken by international development agencies show that the importance of ecotourism for sustainable development will continue to expand in the post-2015 period. In the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development Goals 2030 held in September 2015, world leaders agreed that they will ‘devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products (UN, 2015). According to Belachew (2016) and Green (2018), received from works of different scholars, the benefits of ecotourism in economic, environmental, and social terms have been identified as follows:-

#### **Economic Benefits**

This is manifested through employment opportunities, stimulation profitable domestic industries like hotels and other lodging facilities, restaurants and other food services, transportation systems, handicrafts, the guide services, minimize leakage, ecotourism contributes a great deal of gross domestic product, foreign exchange earnings, development of infrastructure, and transfer of income.

#### **Environmental Benefits**

Ecotourism is a relatively less-pollutant industry, which can enhance the conservation and promotion of natural and cultural heritages, foster responsible tourist behavior, conservation of important wildlife habitats and ecosystem, best alternative activity to environmentally damaging activities like farming, logging, and mining, encourages individual conservation efforts and encourages small scale infrastructure construction.

## **Social Benefits**

Ecotourism development, in addition to economic and environmental benefits, might contribute socially by enhancing local community esteem and provides the opportunity for greater understanding and communication among people of diverse backgrounds. Ecotourism helps for the political empowerment of local communities and fosters respect for different cultures (helps to develop a tolerance). It is an important vehicle for promoting cultural exchanges.

## **Aesthetic Benefits**

The advantages that ecotourism offers travelers are personal, but their effects are widespread. Through visiting areas of stunning natural beauty, seeing animals in their native habitats and meeting members of local communities, travelers can increase their awareness of the importance of conserving resources and avoiding waste. They're encouraged to live more sustainably at home, and they can also increase their understanding of and sensitivity toward other cultures. Additionally, travelers learn how to help support other communities, not by handing out free gifts like toys and stationery, but by buying local produce and goods. When eco-tourists return home, they spread the message to their families, friends, and coworkers.

All forms of tourism have impacts on the environment, economy, and socio-culture. The impacts of ecotourism tend to be concentrated in areas of the highest conservation value, hence the need to manage and minimize these. As of benefit ecotourism also have negative impacts and always connected to natural resources, local culture and disturbance arose by ecotourism in their development (Mai Ly and Quynh Anh, 2011).

### **2.6.2 Ecotourism and Local Community**

Ecotourism helps in environmental conservation and socio-economic development. It also helps in increasing employment and entrepreneurship at a local level. Income and expenditure of local people will increase because of ecotourism. Participation in ecotourism, the education level, an increase in productive human capital and an increase in income can enhance people's livelihoods (Anup, Kedar, & Sapkota, 2015).

Ecotourism contributes both to environmental conservation and the economy. Ecotourism is a type of tourism broadly considered as an opportunity for local people to derive positive socio-economic benefits from tourism development while conserving natural resources. Developing ecotourism in the rural areas will help to sustain viable rural communities and at the same time satisfy the preferences of the new breed of tourists (Kamilah et al, 2018).

In recent ecotourism arenas, active participation and involvement of local communities are considered to be a crucial step in the success of sustainable tourism planning and development (Jamal & Stronza, 2009), for



they are the ones who are directly affected by the growth of tourism in their locality and its subsequent adverse effects on their way of life and thus their participation is of paramount importance. Local community participation in ecotourism development is ‘eco-tourism programs, which take place under the control and with the active participation of local people who inhabit or own a natural attraction’. Through the involvement of host communities, tourism can generate support for conservation as long as the communities derive some benefits. In order to make ecotourism to be successful and sustainable, the local community awareness and commitment are important (Kamilah, et al, 2018).

To achieve sustainable tourism development local communities need to participate in decision- making process. Local communities can take part in identifying and promoting tourist resources and attractions that form the basis of community tourism development. To achieve long-lasting outcomes, communities need to be active participants rather than passive observers.

Theoretically, the role of local communities in tourism development in the context of policy and decision-making depends on the type and level of participatory approach within a tourist destination. According to Mannigel (2008), there are different levels of participation ranging from simple sharing of information to a full transfer of power and responsibilities. The power of the local communities to influence decision making, as well as policy-making, will therefore depend on the level of .participatory approach being in operation in a particular destination.

## **2.7. Stakeholders of Ecotourism Development**

Ecotourism is a multi-sectoral tourism activity that requires different partners of various interests to involve. Some may be more important than others. Whoever more important, however, the success of community-based ecotourism is highly determined by the strong integration among those stakeholders. The key stakeholders in ecotourism development include park administrators, local communities, government officials, NonGovernment Organizations, funders, academics, and the private sector (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

### **i) Administrators of the Park and Protected Areas**

As aforementioned, the prime settings of ecotourism development are pristine, exotic, remote and natural areas easily prone to threats and damages. Thus, developing Community-based ecotourism practices in such areas requires precarious measures most often taken and implemented by the administration of parks and protected areas (Drumm and Moore 2005).

The skill, knowledge, and motivation of the personnel undertaking the administrative functions greatly determine the success of community-based ecotourism. Therefore, the administration staffs need to be skillful enough to closely work with all stakeholders in reconciliation with their interests. It is the

administration and its personnel that could closely work with natural resources changes and opts to take diagnostic measures. Moreover, the park and protected areas personnel are still playing a key role in providing environmental education and promoting the awareness level of the local communities and the guests (tourists) about environmental resources (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

### **ii) Local Communities**

Brandon (1996), states that there is increasing recognition of the need for local communities' participation in planning to develop and to manage Ecotourism activities. Nonetheless, the degree of participation and who exactly participates remains a challenging issue. It is mostly underpinned that ecotourism gives the local people more opportunities to participate effectively in development activities, empowering them to mobilize their capacities to become social actors rather than passive subjects. The local community's participation in ecotourism activities is important for two main reasons. Firstly, it is their homeland and workplace that attracts tourists and activities related to it should not opt to go against the traditional livelihoods rather invited the local people to become the sole architect and engineers in planning and managing ecotourism activities. Secondly, the natural wealth of the settings of ecotourism could only be maintained if and only the local people take self-mobilization and motive to conserve the natural environment. In this sense, natural resource conservation can only bear fruit with the effective involvement of the local community. Hence, Community based ecotourism can assist in spreading the benefits of development, stimulating economic activity and growth and provide an opportunity for diversification of the economy among the local community if and only if the local community emerged as a sole stakeholder. It can be a tool for conservation and rural development, but this will only materialize if a practical effort is made to incorporate local populations into the tourism industry. Involvement with local people and consequent rural development will not happen automatically. In some cases, tourism activities in protected areas are not benefiting the surrounding population (Drumm and Moore, 2005)

### **iii) Government**

Drumm and Moore (2005) stated that the institutional framework, the available human capital and tourism policy are crucial to determine the success of Ecotourism. Ecotourism, as an alternative to sustainable development, demands clear laws, legislations, and regulations formulated and enforced by the government. It also demands the prevalence of an effective institutional framework trend to effectuate ecotourism development. Moreover, Community based ecotourism development requires effective leaders who can combine and articulate the national goals with the goals of ecotourism. The government also demands to establish specific ecotourism policies in parks and protected areas. The government is the sole partner in developing suitable conditions for the local people to benefit directly from the establishment of

national parks and protected areas in and around their homeland, and the emerging eco-tourism businesses. According to Drumm and Moore (2005), the specific responsibilities of the government in ecotourism development include: Creating linkage and integration between ecotourism projects and other related projects take place in the ecotourism destinations, Provision of technical assistance through the established government departments, Undertaking market research and promoting ecotourism products and destinations through the tourism bureau, Providing direct financial support, Formulation and enforcement of policies that allow for the flexible development of ecotourism enterprises, Licensing and registering of activities related to ecotourism.

#### **iv) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are valuable partners in the process of ecotourism development (Drumm and Moore, 2005). They provide technical and financial assistance. NGOs' involvement in ecotourism development revolves around two focal areas. These are the protection of biodiversity and environmental resources and ensuring sustainable development for the local communities. Hence, they can develop a myriad of programs such as research, training, community development, protected area management, and target conservation initiatives (Drumm and Moore 2005). They offer a means of communication with a great number of interested stakeholders in fostering community-based ecotourism development. NGO's also serve as facilitators between protected areas, or directly managing ecotourism sites. These organizations can also serve as a vehicle for bringing together all elements of ecotourism. Thus, implementation of ecotourism, directly financing the projects, training, and providing advice for business partners are among the focal areas whereby NGOs actively involve (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

#### **v) Academics**

Academics such as universities and research centers are another group that plays a secondary valuable role in planning, developing, managing and examining the overall effects of community-based ecotourism development. It is this group that helps to frame the issues of ecotourism including community-based ecotourism and raise questions about whether ecotourism meets its stated goals or not. Thus, researchers and academic institutions greatly contribute to community-based ecotourism development by diagnostically evaluating the economic, environmental and social implications of community-based ecotourism development (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

#### **vi) Funders**

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2002), the financial constraints to cope up with natural resources conservation and community development are believed to be sponsored and funded by bilateral and multilateral donor agencies such as World Bank, IMF and World Wildlife Fund

(WWF). These can fund the development of community-based ecotourism through loans or grants. These contributions are often of critical values for parks and protected areas conservations and sustainable community-based ecotourism development (UNEP, 2002; Drumm and Moore, 2005).

**vii) Private Enterprises in Tourism Industry**

Since the tourism industry is massive and highly interlinked with other sectors, it involves a variety of people who engage in tourism activities in different approaches (Drumm and Moore 2005). The tourism industry in general and Ecotourism, in particular, involve the private sector including tour operators and travel agents, airline and other transportation services, mega-hotels and lodges, handcraft makers, tour guides and other people who independently offer goods and services to tourists. Hence, the private sector also plays a vital role in clearly understanding and projecting the travel trend, identifying consumer behavior and what they want, and influencing the tourists by encouraging good behavior and promoting ecotourism (Drumm and Moore, 2005).

**Table 2.1: Forms of community involvement in ecotourism development**

Type of enterprise/Institution	Nature of Local involvement	Examples
Private business run by outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Employment</li> <li>) Supply goods and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Kitchen staff in a lodge</li> <li>) Sale of food, building materials, etc.</li> </ul>
Enterprise or informal sector operation run by local entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Enterprise ownership</li> <li>) Self-employment</li> <li>) Supply of goods and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Craft sales, food kiosk, campsite, homestays</li> <li>) Guiding services</li> <li>) Hawking, sale of fuelwood, food.</li> </ul>
Community enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Collective ownership</li> <li>) Collective or individual management</li> <li>) Supply of goods and services</li> <li>) Employment or contributed labor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Community campsite</li> <li>) Craft center</li> <li>) Culture Centre</li> </ul>
A joint venture between the community and private operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Contractual commitments</li> <li>) Shares in revenue</li> <li>) Lease/investment of resources</li> <li>) Participation in decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Revenue sharing from the lodge to the local community on agreed terms</li> <li>) Community leases land(resources) concession to lodge</li> <li>) Community holds equity in the lodge</li> </ul>
Tourism planning body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Consultation</li> <li>) Representation</li> <li>) Participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Local consultation in regional tourism planning</li> <li>) Community representatives on the tourism board and in planning</li> </ul>

Source: Baker, 2008

## **2.8. Empirical Review on Ecotourism development in Ethiopia**

According to Christian (2012), the country's seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the diversified topography reaching from the lowest point of the earth's surface in the Danakil Desert to the Ethiopian Highlands with some of the highest peaks in Africa or the overwhelming biodiversity are just some of the manifold potentials contrasting to the mere "safari image" of many other African countries. Experiencing Ethiopia is an encounter with fascinating nature and culture, with one of the most outstanding histories on the continent. Ethiopia is a country that is endowed with a vast array of ecotourism resources including cultural, historical, archaeological and natural resources which are ideal for the development of sustainable ecotourism ventures. Ethiopia's wildlife is one of the richest and most diversified in Africa with several of its protected areas and wetlands. Out of the total wildlife resources, more than 320 mammals (39 endemics), 918 birds (19 endemics), 240 reptiles (16 endemics), 71 amphibians (30 endemics) and 172 fishes (38 endemics) species are recorded in Ethiopia (Amare, 2015).

In this regard, tourism is claimed to fit both as a tool for conservation and as a driver of local economic development. Notwithstanding the overarching need for tourism to make an ecologically net positive contribution to the conservation of the natural environment it depends upon, given the potential benefits of tourism to local communities, there is a strong argument in favor of community involvement in any tourism planning processes associated with protected areas. Even though, sound ecotourism policy the priority to be considered in community-based ecotourism operations, to this date, there is no single out ecotourism directives or policy available, other than it is been stated holistically. Community-based ecotourism in Ethiopian tourism is not a recent phenomenon; there are many community-based ecotourism destinations all-round the country, and most of them are initiated by foreign NGOs, such as Adaba-Dodola, which is financially and technically supported by the German Agency of Technical Cooperation or GTZ (now GIZ) on the northern slopes of the Bale Mountains in Oromia National Regional State and a pilot ecotourism project on Semen Mountains National Park (Sisay, 2004).

According to Sewnet (2017), the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has initiated what is termed as the Climate-Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) initiative to protect the country from the adverse effects of climate change and to help build a green economy that will help the country realize its ambition of reaching middle-income status before 2020. Sewnet (2017) also described as Community Based Ecotourism could be one of the best choices to ensure a green economy as well as to realize the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II).

Although Community based ecotourism has long been taken as a sustainable development strategy for developing countries like Ethiopia, no such community-owned and managed products have come to the

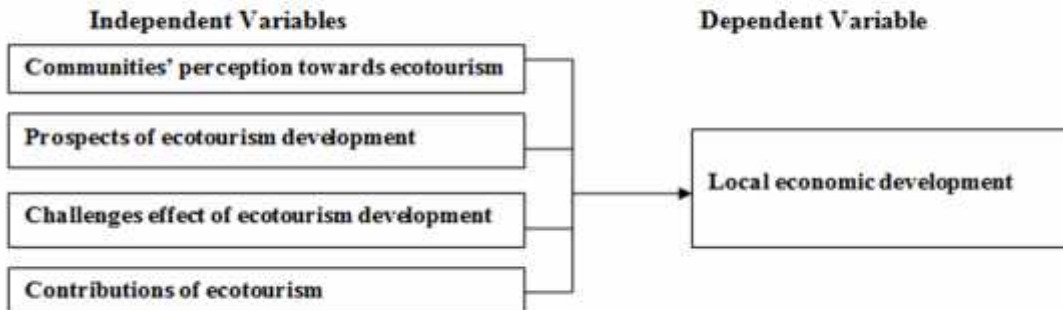
fore in a lasting and meaningful way to become a model for similar initiatives elsewhere. This is not to say of course, that there are no attempts to develop community-based ecotourism destinations rather community participation in tourism has been exceptionally poor, and genuine community-based ecotourism is rare. However, community-based ecotourism will only bring benefits to conservation and communities if good quality, viable ecotourism products, which reflect market demand, are created and actively promoted. The tourism policy of Ethiopia which is endorsed in 2009 highlights some specific provisions for the active participation of local people in tourism. Yet, despite this policy call for community involvement in tourism, there is still no formal mechanism for community participation (Gebeyaw, 2011).

There are only a few studies conducted in Ethiopia on ecotourism development. This could mainly be attributed to the fact that the development of ecotourism development in Ethiopia is at its infant stage. As a result, the concept of the challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development has not been well studied. Besides, many of the existing studies have focused on well-established national parks and protected areas, such as Siemen National Park (Mulugeta,2011), Bale National Park (Assegid,2011), Awash National Park (Daniel, 2011), Adwa and its environs (Cherinet, 2008), Abijata-Shala Lakes National Park (Adem, 2008) and South Wollo (Aregawi, 2016). Even though, empirical studies on the challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development in an Ethiopian context are few.

## **2.9. Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework in research is a diagrammatical presentation of the different variables being analyzed in the research study. The conceptual framework (figure 2.2) shows that the main activities of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development in the case of the study area. Independent variables were measured based on the pillars of ecotourism development namely; contributions of ecotourism to local economic development which included economic, environmental, and socio-cultural prospects, prospects of ecotourism development, challenges of ecotourism development, and communities' perception towards ecotourism development. Dependent variables ecotourism development was determined by its changes in the local economic development of the local community. The following figure shows the schematic representation of the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its

implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle Woreda.



**Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework of the study**

**Source: From Literature review and researcher own concept, 2020**

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

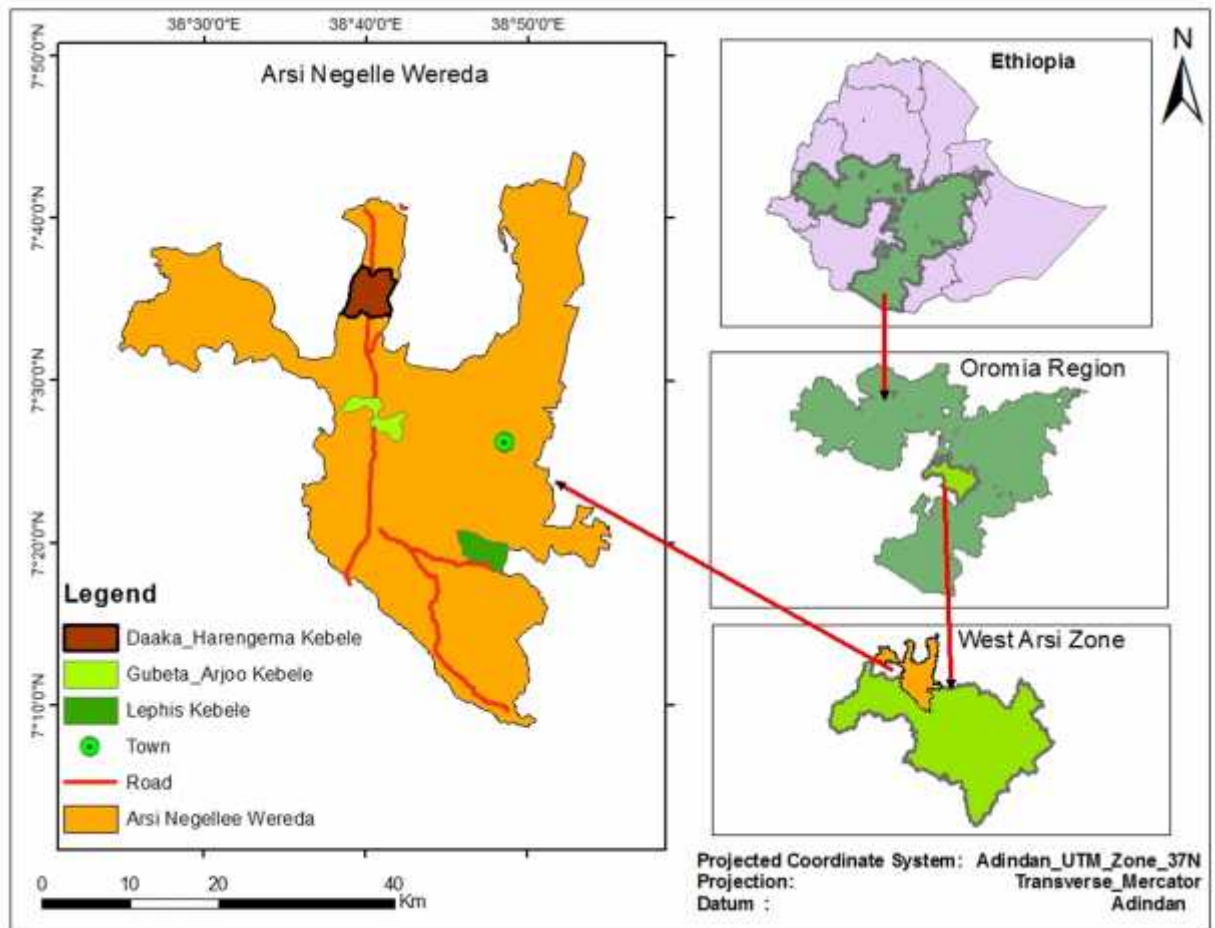
#### 3.1. Description of the Study Area

The study was carried out in Arsi Negelle woreda. The woreda is one of the sixteen (16) woredas in the West Arsi Zone of Oromia National Regional State. It is located 225 km from Addis Ababa and 25 km the paved highway north of Shashemene town. Astronomically, Arsi Negelle Woreda lies between 07°0'0" up to 07°40'0"N latitude and 38°0'0" up to 38°55'0" E longitude. Arsi Negelle woreda is bordered on the south by Shashemene woreda, on the southwest by Lake Shalla which separates it from Shalla woreda, on the west from the SNNPR, on the north by East Shewa Zone with which it shares the shores of Lakes Abijata and Langanu, and on the east by the Arsi Zone.

The woreda has 36 rural kebeles (the smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia) and 5 peri-urban and three town kebeles. According to the information obtained from the Arsi Negelle woreda agriculture and rural development office, the relief of the woreda is 29% lowland, 40% midland and the rest 31% is highland. Wheat, maize, teff, potato, and onion are important cash crops. The total population of the woreda is 260,129, of whom 128,885 are men and 131,244 are women; 51,535 or 19.81% of its population are urban dwellers. The majority of the inhabitants are Muslim, with 68.86% of the population follow this belief, while 20.2% of the population are practicing Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, 8.99% of the population are Protestant, and 1.04% are Catholic (Arsi Negelle woreda Finance and Economic Office, 2020).

The annual total average rainfall of the woreda is about 862mm; the woreda has 2 Hospitals (one private), 8 Health Centers, and 37 health posts that provide basic health services to the community. Access to the safe water supply of the woreda is about 56%, indicating that still; about 44% of the population depends on unsafe and unreliable surface water from rivers and open wells (Arsi Negelle woreda Finance and Economic Office, 2020). Land use pattern in the study woreda is only a small percentage of uncultivated land; there must be an expansion of non-farm activities. The three major lakes of this woreda Abijata, Shalla, and Langanu cover about 32% of its area. However, a significant proportion of the woreda land is covered by water mainly with the three lakes which have a great contribution to the tourism industry (one of the potential non-farm activities) of the study area (Arsi Negelle woreda Finance and Economic Office, 2020).





**Figure 3.1: Map of the Study Area**

Source: CSA, 2013

## **3.2. The Research Methodology**

### **3.2.1. Research design**

In this study, a descriptive survey research design was employed. Thus, a descriptive survey design was believed to be the most appropriate for addressing the main purpose of this study. It was helpful to obtain relevant information from a variety of groups on the actual implementation of the problem under the area of study. A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. In fact, the research design is the conceptual structure within which research was conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004).

Thus, a descriptive survey design helps to use to describe what was happened and what was happening. The reason why the researcher preferred the descriptive survey was to show the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the study area.

### **3.2.2. Research Approach**

In this study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. Therefore, in this research, a mixed research approach was used. From different types of mixed research approaches a fully mixed concurrent dominant status quantitative design was employed. The design is chosen because it enables the researcher to get data more quantitatively and provide support information by qualitative data.

According to Powell et al. (2008), a fully mixed concurrent dominant status quantitative designs was ascribed that both quantitative and qualitative phase occurs at approximately the same point in time, with the quantitative phase being given higher priority and mixing occurring within or across the data collection, analysis, and interpretation stages. In general, a quantitative approach was systematic empirical investigation and explanation of phenomena by collecting numerical data that can be analyzed mathematically while the qualitative approach was employed as a supplementary to the study with the information gained by open-ended questions and key informant interviews were used in this study to substantiate the quantitative data.

### **3.3. Sources of Data**

In order to conduct this study, both primary and secondary data sources were employed.

#### **3.3.1 Primary Sources of Data**

The primary sources of data were used in this study. It was referring to individuals or organizations from which information has to be originated directly as a result of the particular problem under study. The primary data was obtained from sample respondents through questionnaires, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field observation. The purpose of choosing this technique was that it helps to collect fresh data from direct sources.

#### **3.3.2 Secondary sources of Data**

The secondary source of data was gathered from Arsi Negelle woreda Finance and Economic Office documents that might help to enrich the information obtained through other tools of data related to ecotourism development such as Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office Annual reports in relations to ecotourism, Agriculture and Rural Development Office and Abijata Shalla Lake National Park Administrators minutes of meeting with Ecotourism development, Tourism strategic plan, and government policies and guidelines concerning ecotourism development in the study area.

### **3.4. Study Population and Unit of Analysis**

Study population refers to the large group of people to which a researcher wants to generalize the sample results and the complete set of cases (Johanson & Christensen, 2012) and before data collection takes place, it is imperative to be clear on the study population. According to the information obtained from the Arsi Negelle woreda Finance and Economic Office, the three selected kebeles (Gubeta Arjo, Daka Delu Harengama, and Lephis kebeles) have a total of 2460 households. In addition, from Woreda 2 sample households from Agriculture and rural development office, 2 sample households from Culture and tourism office and 2 samples from Abijata Shalla lakes national park) office heads, 3 sample households from Hotels/lodges owners, and for Focus group discussion 18 Local communities' elders and youths were included in the study with a total population of 2469.

### 3.5 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Techniques

The rationale for the selection of these sites is the existence of both natural and man-made ecotourism resources which have greater value if properly used and protected. These natural or man-made attributes could be assets to the country's economy and thereby assets to the livelihood of the local community. From 16 rural woredas that exist in the West Arsi zone, the researcher has purposively selected Arsi Negelle woreda to find out the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the study area. A multistage sampling procedure was employed to select the sample households. A stratified sampling method was used to randomly select kebeles. Agro-ecologically this woreda is categorized as lowland, midland, and highland which are considered as the based three strata of sampling techniques. From each stratum, one (1) kebele was selected and thus a total of 3 Kebeles were selected for the study using a simple random sampling method. It also used when the population was large and spread over a large area rather than enumerating the whole population, it was divided into segments, and then several segments were chosen randomly to samples select from them to reach the desired sample size. The sample size of 157 was allocated proportionally to the size of households in each kebele. This may help to provides independent and equal chances to be selected for the kebeles. Therefore, the total number of household heads in the selected three kebeles of Arsi Negelle woreda was 2,460 and the precision (margin of error) is 0.05(5%) at a 95% confidence level. Taking the entire household for this research was difficult taking time, and requires enormous financial cost. Because of these challenges, the researcher used the simplified formula provided by Yamane (1967) to determine the required sample size as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = the total population that was studied

n = the required sample size

e = the precision level which was =0.05(5%)

$$n = \frac{2}{1+2 (0.05)^2}$$
$$n = \underline{344}$$

By using this formula, the sample population of households for the residents was 344, but because of factors like inaccessibility, time, budget constraints, and also difficulty to manage, the researcher decides to select 157 sample individuals from the sample populations through the lottery method of simple random sampling techniques to provide an independent and equal chance of being selected for each resident from the selected kebeles. In addition, from Arsi Negelle Woreda (A/N/W), 2 experts from Agriculture and rural development office, 2 experts of Culture and tourism office, 2 experts from Abijata Shalla lakes national park and 3 Kebele chairpersons and 3 Hotels/lodges owners, 18 local communities elders and youths were selected through purposive sampling techniques. Because they were enriching the information since they knowledge about ecotourism development in the study area as well as they were expected to provide relevant information about the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and implications on local economic development in the study area.

**Table 3.1: The Summary of target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

No	Name of Kebele's	Agro-ecology	Total household (N)	The proportion of sample size	Sample size(n)	Percent
1	Gubeta Arjo	Lowland	773	$773/2460*157=$	49	31.2
2	Daka Delu Harengama	Midland	812	$812/2460*157=$	52	33.1
3	Lephis	Highland	875	$875/2460*157=$	56	35.7
	Total		2460		157	100

**Source:** Arsi Negelle Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2020

**Table 3.2: Sampling Size for Key Informant Interviews and FGDs**

No	Name of organizations and experts	Categories	KII's respondents and FGD(N=27)
1	Government offices heads	A/N/W/Agriculture and Rural Development Office	2
		A/N/W/Culture and Tourism Office	2
		Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park	2
2	Key informants from the local community	Hotels/lodges owners	3
		Local communities elders and youths	Three FGD or 18 individuals
	<b>Total samples</b>		<b>27</b>

## **3.6 Instruments of Data Collections**

### **3.6.1. Quantitative Data Collection Instruments**

#### **a) Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was an instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose to gather information from respondents. Usually, a questionnaire consists of several questions that the respondent has to answer in a set format. A distinction is made between open-ended and closed-ended questions. An open-ended question asks the respondent to formulate his own answer, whereas a closed-ended question has the respondents pick an answer from a given number of options. The response options for a closed-ended question should be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. For this study, close-ended questions were used to effectively manage the responses of respondents. The questionnaire employed for the study was divided into five main sections namely, Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, the contribution of ecotourism to local economic development, prospects of ecotourism, challenges that affect ecotourism development, and local community perception of towards ecotourism development in the study area. Based on the nature of the questions the possible answers to the questionnaires were categorized into two parts. Such as five-point Likert scales with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree, and Yes or No questions. The use of Likert type scale in tourism research could produce high validity. The questionnaire was prepared in the English language, but to reduce barriers of communication the researcher translated it to the local language (Afan Oromo). Finally, questionnaires were administered to 157 sample households' members.

### **3.6.2. Qualitative Data Collection Instruments**

#### **A) Key Informant Interviews (KII's)**

In addition to collecting data through a questionnaire; a qualitative data collection technique, involving one-to-one interviews with selected respondents was conducted. According to Creswell, (2007) stated that interviews were an important step in the process of data collection to find the right people and places, and to gain access to establish a rapport with subjects so that they can provide valuable information. Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to get in-depth information concerning ecotourism development in relation to its implication on local economic development challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development. A semi-structured interview was based on the situation and

the flow of conversation and its advantage of flexibility in which new questions were forwarded during the interview based on the responses of the interviewee. The key informant interviews were conducted with 9 Government officers and private business sectors such as 2 office heads from Agriculture and rural development office, 2 from Culture and tourism office, 2 experts from Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park, and 3 from hotels/lodges owners. For each key informant interview, independent checklists were prepared. The respondents were selected because of their extensive knowledge, experience, expertise, and involvement with the tourism sector in the study area. The key informant interview questions for the participants in the interview sessions were asked per question with similar content during the work time.

### **B) Focus Group Discussion**

Another data gathering tool employed in the study was the Focus group discussion. FGD was particularly suited to be used when the objective was to understand better how people consider an experience, ideas or events because the discussion in the FGD meeting was the challenges affect ecotourism and contributions of ecotourism to local economic development information about what people think, or how they feel, or on the way of the act. With respect to the number of participants in the session, the usual approach was to use a group of moderate size four to six people by was kept their social distance due to the global widespread of the Corona Virus (Covid-19) pandemic. A Focus group discussion was conducted, three groups. Therefore, 18 peoples of local communities' elders and youths to take the advantage of were collected a variety of shared understanding from these interact individuals. This helped to understand the situation from the facial expression of the participants. To reduce barriers to communication the researcher has translated the questions into the local language or Afan Oromo language. Having prepared all these instruments, the researcher administered all the instruments carefully and accordingly to get detailed data. And then, those data were seriously and carefully gathered to get the realized and detailed pictures of the problem in the case study area in the best possible way.



**Figure 3.2: FGD at Gubeta Arjo kebele, May 2020**

### **C) Personal Observation**

Personal field observation was another data collection instrument used in this study to supplement the information collected with the help of a questionnaire. Direct field observation included observation of the infrastructure patterns, ecotourism activities, tourist services and facilities, natural and cultural resources management and institutional structure, local communities participate in ecotourism like horse renting, boat services, handicrafts, Hotels/lodges services and who offer other services. Through observation, the researcher was able to take field photographs and field notes which were helpful to justify the reality of some observable ecotourism attractions, facilities, accommodations, accessibilities, and available challenges that affect ecotourism development.

### **D) Document Analysis**

Documents refer to those sources of data that are not produced at the request of the researcher but produced and out there waiting to be assembled and analyzed that include such forms as letters, diaries, photographs, newspapers, magazines, videos, audios, and autobiographies (Bryman, 2008).

To make this research a more valid and credible document analysis was also the other essential data collecting tool of the study. Various documents such as Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office Annual reports in relation to ecotourism activities, Agriculture



and Rural Development Office, and Abijata Shalla Lake National Park Administrators minutes of meeting with ecotourism development, and government policies and guidelines in relation to ecotourism development were analyzed.

### **3.7. Method of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The information collected from the data gathering tools was analyzed quantitatively in percentages, frequencies, figures, and tables. The main purpose of this study was to assess and identify the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle woreda.

#### **3.7.1 Quantitative Methods of Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics like percentages, frequencies, figures, and tables. The quantitative data, responses were categorized and frequencies were tallied. Percentage and frequency tally was used to analyze the characteristics of the population as they help to determine the relative standing of the respondents. The items in the questionnaires were presented in tables according to their idea coherence. The collected data were coded, recorded, edited, and cleaned before entry. After organized and coded data were stored in an editable excel spreadsheet and imported to SPSS version 25 for analysis. The close-ended items were formulated in a five-point liker scale (Strongly disagree =1, Disagree =2, Neutral=3, Agree =4, Strongly agree =5) and open-ended items were provided for the respondents to freely express their ideas. For the sake of data analyses, the mean value 1.00-2.50 as a low, 2.51-3.50 as moderate, and 3.51-5.00 as high by merging the responses of the respondents very low and low as a low, moderate and high and very high as a high (Desalegn, 2014) and the items in the questionnaire were presented in the tables according to their idea coherence.

#### **3.7.2 Qualitative Methods of Data Analysis**

The data collected from the key informant interviews, personal field observation, FGD, and document analysis were analyzed qualitatively. The written notes of the interviews were transcribed; categorized and compiled together into a theme. The result was summarized and organized with related categories. Analysis and interpretations were made based on the questionnaires and key informant interviews.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability Checks**

Validity refers to how accurate a data collection instrument can be in measuring what it was developed to measure (Dillman, 2010). The validity of the data instrument was done by using research experts who read through the questionnaire and do the necessary adjustments. Checking the validity and reliability of data collecting instruments before providing for the actual study subject is the core to assure the quality of the data. To ensure the validity of the instrument's content of the research instruments was checked. This was realized by seeking an advisor's opinion on the content of the questionnaire. In addition, to be sure of their face validity, senior colleagues were invited to provide their comments. The pilot-test was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the content. It was done with the objectives of checking whether or not the items included in the instruments could enable the researcher to obtain the relevant information and to identify and eliminate problems in collecting data from the target population. Before conducting the survey, these enumerators were given one-day training to make them acquainted with the content of the interview schedule, methods of interviewing to capture accurate information and approaching respondents to establish a good rapport. The pretest of the questionnaire was done during the training of the data collectors in one Kebele, which is outside of study kebeles. Each field questionnaire was rechecked just after the interview in order to correct any misunderstanding for the respondents and data collectors during the time of pretesting. After the dispatched questionnaires were returned necessary modifications on three items and the complete removal and replacement of four unclear questions were made. Additionally, the reliability of the instrument was measured by using the Cronbach alpha method with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25. Based on the pilot, reliability coefficient (alpha) the average reliability result was found to be (0.967) and hence the result was reliable.

**Table 3.3: Reliability Test Result with Cronbach's Alpha**

No	Variables	No of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	local communities perceive towards ecotourism development,	7	0.934
2	Economic prospects of Ecotourism development	3	0.986
3	Environmental prospects of Ecotourism development	3	0.976
4	Socio-cultural prospects of Ecotourism development	3	0.980
5	Socio-economic challenges towards ecotourism development	3	0.956
6	Challenges of ecotourism development towards infrastructure	5	0.973
	<b>Average reliability result</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.967</b>

### 3.9. Ethical considerations

According to Mc Millan and Schumacher (2006), the researcher was ethically responsible for the rights and welfare of the subject by being knowledgeable about the professional guidelines, legal considerations, and ethical requirements. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, coded names were used. It was important for the researcher to obtain both consent and permission for the study. The researcher needed to protect the privacy of the participants and assure minimal misinterpretation of the data. This was for the interest of the participants. The respondents were treated politely and with respect in order to avoid misunderstanding between the researcher and respondents and they were informed of the purpose of the study. Each respondent was politely requested to fill the questionnaire and assured of confidentiality with regard to any information they provided.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter deals with the major findings of the study; mainly ecotourism resources of Arsi Negelle Woreda (both natural and cultural); socio-economic situations and perception of the local communities towards ecotourism and its implications of ecotourism development to the local economic development in the study area. It also deals with how local communities can be benefited from ecotourism development in the study area and major challenges and prospects of ecotourism development in the study area. The chapter focuses on the analysis of data collected from purposively selected three kebeles local community's participation in ecotourism in the study area on the basic characteristics of the sample households, i.e. the demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational level, family size and their source of livelihood of local communities.

#### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

##### 4.1.1 Gender of respondents

In table 4.1 below, the data of the study revealed that out of 157 sample respondents (73.9%) of the respondents were males headed households, while the remaining (26.1%) were female-headed households. This implies that the majority of the sample respondents are males.

**Table 4.1: Gender of sampled respondents**

Gender of the household heads	Frequency	Percent
Male	116	73.9
Female	41	26.1
Total	157	100

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

##### 4.1.2 Age structure of the respondents

Concerning the age structure of the respondents, based on the data obtained from the survey the age of the respondents lies within the range of below 20 years old up to above 51 years old.

**Table 4.2: Age structure of sampled respondents**

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percent
Below 20	15	9.6
21-30	51	32.5
31-40	47	29.9
41-50	33	21

Above 51	11	7
Total	157	100

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

The surveyed data indicates that the age structure of the respondents 9.6% aged below 20 years, while 32.5% are aged between 21-30, were within the age range 31 to 40 (29.9%), were as the range age 41 to 50 (21%), while the remaining of 7% are above 51 the age. This implies that study participants were involved from different age groups and the great majority of them were within the adult aged group.

#### **4.1.3 Marital status of respondents**

The highest proportions of the respondents 61.1% were married followed by a single 29.9 % and legally divorced 5.7% and while the rest 3.2 % were widowed. As it was indicated in the above (table 4.3), the majority of the respondents are within a productive age group with the potential to evolve them in ecotourism activities through capacity building and empowerment in the study area.

**Table 4.3: Marital status of sampled respondents**

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	96	61.2
Single	47	29.9
Divorced/Separated	9	5.7
Widowed	5	3.2
Total	157	100

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

In areas with a high unemployment rate with a high productivity age group, the creation of economic opportunities with extensive job opportunities like eco-tourism is recommended. Thus, ecotourism can be used as the best option to eradicate the unemployment rate in the area.

#### **4.1.4 Education level of sample respondents**

In this part, the sampled household heads' educational level was surveyed. Accordingly, 17.1% of the sample respondents were grouped in the unable to read and write category, 20.4% of the respondents are capable to read and write. On the other hand, about 30.6%, 18.5%, and 13.4% of the sample households are found between primary school and secondary school and Certificate/diploma/degree holders respectively. Uneducated household in ecotourism sites is unable to understand technical and scientific concepts thereby participate

in ecotourism development tasks, perform tourism activities up to the standard and manage ecotourism products properly.

**Table 4.4: Education level of sampled respondents**

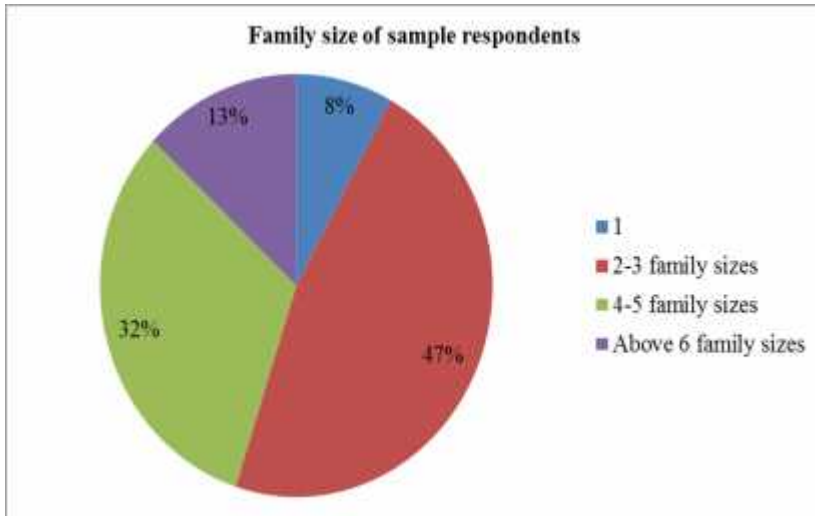
Education level	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	27	17.1
Read and write	32	20.4
Primary school	48	30.6
Secondary school	29	18.5
Certificate/diploma/degree holder	21	13.4
Total	157	100

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

According to Gebeyaw (2011), education is a basic parameter for any development activity, particularly for the ecotourism/tourism industry. And what we can understand from this finding, illiterate is could have negative implications on ecotourism development because uneducated people may not early understand easily the technical and scientific concept of ecotourism development.

#### **4.1.5 Family size of sample respondents**

As indicated below by figure 4.1, out of the total 157 respondents, 7.6 % household heads have 1 family size, whereas 47.2% have 2 to 3 family sizes, 32.5% have 4 to 5 family size and the remaining is household heads that have more than 6 family sizes 12.7% in their households. And what we can understand that there are three or more household families per household. This implies that there is a high dependency rate of family members on households which leads to less benefit sharing and increase poverty.

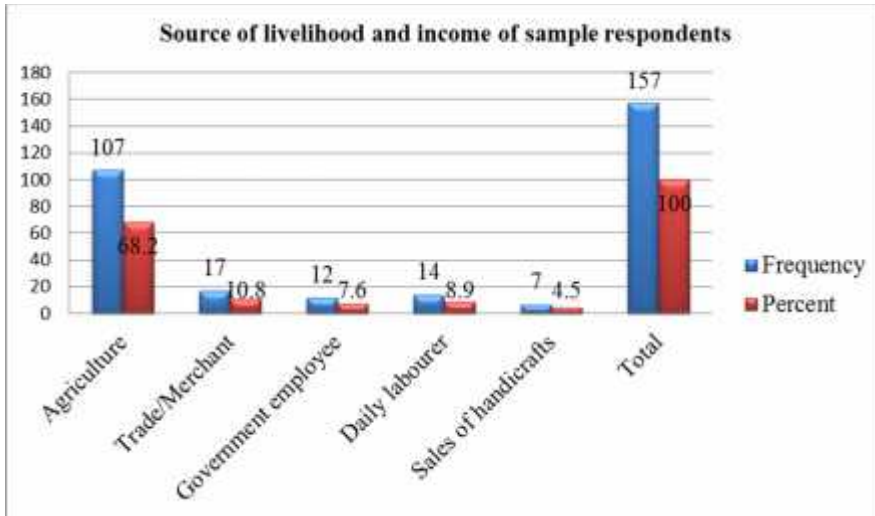


**Figure 4.1: The family size of sampled respondents**

**Source:** Own field survey, May 2020

#### **4.1.6 Source of livelihood of the respondents**

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood in most rural people of Ethiopia; similarly, people who live in Arsi Negelle woreda are also highly agrarian as a principal source of livelihood income. Correspondingly, animal rearing is also highly practiced along with agriculture. According to the findings in the household survey, 68.2% of the respondents are depending on their lives on antique agricultural practice as a major source of livelihood. However, the yield generated from this traditional agricultural practice is not sufficient to supply the yearly food consumption of each household, whereas 7.6% of respondents were government employees, 10.8% of respondents were engaged in different Trade/Merchant, 8.9% of respondents were daily laborer and 4.5% of them were involved in sales of handicrafts get income from different tourism-related activities. The economic diversity of the local community is significant for developing the ecotourism industry. A potential problem in the development of ecotourism for countryside communities creates economic dependence on the trends of fluctuating industry of international tourism (McLaren, 1998).



**Figure 4.2: Source of livelihood and income of sampled respondents**

**Source:** Own field survey; May 2020

As indicated in the above figure 4.2 agricultural practice is not enough to aid the food consumption of households throughout the year. Hence, the notes taken from key informant interviews have also assured that their yearly agricultural yield is not enough for their sustainable livelihood. However, only some key informant interviews have claimed that their harvest could be enough for their yearly food consumption. The above figure 4.2 implies, out of the five mentioned occupations, a great majority of households were agriculture/farmers. Therefore, from this, we can understand that there is a need to develop and expand alternative livelihoods such as tourism as an alternative source of livelihood and income for the local community.

#### **4.2 Potential of ecotourism site and activities in Arsi Negelle woreda**

According to the survey, the result shows that, the different ecotourism potentials attractions in the case of Arsi Negelle woreda. The household survey and field observation study areas comprise impressive attractions of natural and cultural settings that are the prominent sources of ecotourism development potentials. Natural resources of the study area are natural forests, Lakes (namely Abijata, Shalla and Langan), Birds, Mammals, Weather conditions, Hot springs, Lephis waterfall, and Mountain/landscape scenery. While the socio-cultural attractions of ecotourism development such as dressing styles, handicrafts, and so on.



#### 4.2.1 Natural tourist attraction sites

The existence of natural tourist attraction sites in the study area is considered to be a great opportunity to develop the tourism industry. Natural tourist attraction sites are the entire flora, fauna, ecosystem generation, and geological features inherited from past generations and maintained in the present to be passed on to future generations (WTO, 2014). The annual report of Woreda Culture and Tourism Office (2019), stated that there are a lot of natural tourist attraction sites in the study area such as; several natural lakes (Abijata, Shalla, Langano and Citu), a hot water spring, Lephis waterfall, natural cave and others). Having such tourism potentials in the study area make it more attractive and unique from other parts of West Arsi Zone woredas and it's a great opportunity to develop ecotourism since tourism potentials are the hub of the tourism industry.



**Figure 4.3: Birds species (Ostrich) at Abijata Shalla National Park**

**Source:** Own field survey, May 2020



**Figure 4.4: Lephis Waterfall (Finchawa)**

**Source:** Own field photo, June 2020

**Lephis waterfall:** Lephis waterfall which is the main tourist attraction site in the woreda is located about 240 km to the south-east of Addis Ababa and about 18 km east of Arsi Negelle woreda. Around Lephis natural forest is a source of many streams such as Gadamsa, Huluqa and Ajoftu originated from the mountain chains of Munessa natural forest and flow down westwards and eventually drain into Lake Langano after all the way providing an enormous economic advantage to people living downstream. From this, it could be possible to understand that the spectacular nature of Lephis waterfall is the greatest opportunity to develop tourism. To reach this astonishing natural place, passing through mountains that are covered with dense forests is a must. What makes the waterfall unique is the water that comes through a long way when it reaches this place, it faces around the cave-like feature and it falls and passes through the cave from above to a downbound channel. The expression of the press document from (Arsi Negelle woreda Culture and Tourism Office, 2019) about this waterfall is; “Words fail to tell about Lephis Waterfall, it is an extraordinary feature of nature and it is very wonderful and one can find mind-blowing happiness by watching it”.

The local elders during the key informant interview time indicated that they use the Lephis waterfall area for different traditional practices like “Sinqee” celebration (traditionally the local women performed at the time of disaster that happens in their area) and used as a place of conflicts resolution in the study area.



**Figure 4.5: Boat Service at Langanu Lake**

**Source:** Own field photo, June 2020

**Lake Langanu:** Lake Langanu located in the eastern part of the Abijata Shala Lakes National Park (ASLNP) at 3 kilometers, is one of the Central rift valley lakes. It has a high potential for ecotourism recreational site, because of its importance for swimming, enjoys sandy beaches, and its accessible location. The lake is most suited for swimming along with opportunities for sunbathing offered by the sand beaches. The Lake also creates opportunities for observing the scenic beauty of both sunrise and sunset. This makes the lake an excellent spot for tourists. There are hotels and lodges along the shore of the lake which provides different services for tourists. In and around the lakes of Lanago and Shalla are the home of so many fauna species such as Birds, Hippopotamus (Hippopotamus amphibians), and others which make it more preferable for a tourist.

#### **4.2.2 Natural forest of tourist attractions in the study area**

The assessment of Arsi Negelle Woreda natural forest of tourist attractions site for ecotourism development was evaluated based on the availability of diversified topographic features, diverse flora, variety of fauna, and appropriate environmental conditions for potentials of community-based ecotourism development. According to key informants' interviews and researcher field observations, Arsi Negelle woreda natural forest has extraordinary topographic features and a wide variety of plant and animal species, which are endemic and have great aesthetic value. Hence, the natural resources are crucial for ecotourism

development activities, such as photography, nature touring, wildlife viewing, forest exploration education and other nature-associated activities are all some of the potential ecotourism aspects in the natural forest.



**Figure 4.6: A Part of Lephis natural forest**

**Source:** Own field survey, June 2020

### **4.2.3 Man-made tourist attraction sites**

Ecotourism development could help to conserve man-made tourist attractions such as intangible attractions (religion, local music and dances, language, festivals, funeral ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, irreecha(thanksgiving), and way of life of the entire population) and tangible attractions (eco-friendly lodges/businesses and enterprises, traditional housing style and handicraft shop). Such a kind of man-made tourist attraction can be a good tourist attraction resource. Even though it needs further and detailed investigation, the cultural activities and cultural products the irreecha (thanksgiving), local dressing style, local music and dances, locally produced handicrafts and others can be good for tourist attraction resources (ANWCTO, 2019). The figure below depicts some of the man-made tourist attraction resources available in the study area.



**Figure 4.7: Traditional food container and handicrafts in the study area**

Source: Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office document, 2020



**Figure 4.8: Thanksgiving (Irreecha) festival in the study area**

Source: Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office document, 2020

Irreecha constitutes the cultural and religious treasury of the Oromo nation. It is one of the greatest pillars of the Oromo identity. It symbolizes the inherent unity and solidarity among the Oromo. That is why so much sacrifice has been paid to retain and revive its ritual for over a century. Nothing explains the relevance of Irreecha to the Oromo much more than the sacri-

fice they paid. The cultural and religious values embedded in its traditional institution are too big for the Oromo, who by in large constitute the biggest ethnic group in Ethiopia, to be irrelevant. In addition, Irreecha is connecting the Oromo nation with other peoples around the globe. It is also becoming one of the attractive rituals drawing the attention of the ever-growing numbers of tourists, generating income for the country.



**Figure 4.9: Females indigenous dressing styles, showing local songs and dances festival in the study area.**

Source: Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office document, 2020



**Figure 4.10: Pictures of a cultural festival in the study area**

Source: Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office document, 2020



**Figure 4.11: Traditional horse-riding of the local communities in the study area**

**Source:** Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office document, 2020

With regard to the benefits of ecotourism as related to cultural tourism attraction in Arsi Negelle woreda, the participants in the FGD and key informant interview sessions pointed out that the local community can get benefits. The mentioned potential cultural features in the study area are performing traditional handicrafts, selling of cultural food and drink, dressing style, cultural festivals and traditional horse riding, to the visitor who comes to tourist attraction sites. The local communities can also open souvenir shops to sell traditional material and cloth. Hence, the presences of such kinds of cultural features in the study area are opportunities for the development of ecotourism in the Arsi Negelle woreda. In a similar manner to the pictures used to illustrate the physical features of the study area.

### 4.3. Contributions of ecotourism to local economic development in the study area

Ecotourism development can bring national and regional development, by creating employment opportunities, fetching exchange earnings, improving the balance of payment advantages, and important infrastructure developments benefiting locals and visitors alike if there is a strong linkage between tourism stakeholders. Since the tourism industry is labour-intensive, it has great potential in creating job opportunities, selling handicrafts and local food, boat services, renting mules/horses, and other contributions of ecotourism to local economic development in the study area.

**Table 4.5: Respondents view about getting benefit from ecotourism in the study area**

Have you benefited from ecotourism in your village/kebele			If yes how?		
	frequency	Percent		frequency	Percent
<b>Yes</b>	34	21.6	A. create job opportunity	8	23.5
<b>No</b>	123	78.4	B. selling handicrafts and	14	41.2
<b>Total</b>	157	100	C. Renting mules/horses	7	20.6
			D. Other	5	14.7
			<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

Source; own survey, May 2020

As indicated in table 4.5 above the majority of 78.4% of respondents replied as ecotourism development has not got benefit from ecotourism development, while only 21.6% of respondents' were responded as ecotourism development improves their local economic development. Out of the sample respondents 21.6% that is getting benefit from ecotourism development. Moreover, 23.5% of the respondents' were responded as they are getting benefits from ecotourism development through creating job opportunity, were out of the sample that is getting benefit 41.2% of them are selling handicrafts activities as sources of a supplementary source of income (seasonally), while the remaining 20.6% and 14.7% were replied as ecotourism contribution to their economy through renting horse/mules and other services improve their source of income respectively.

The majority of the respondent presume they will get benefits in the future. Currently, they are not getting (neither formally nor informally) any kind of benefit from ecotourism development in the case of study area.



The main reasons suggested vary from individual to individual and even among the kebeles. However, almost the majority of local respondents (78.4%) were under other categories and they specified the reason is that they are not getting benefit from the tourism industry except only a smaller proportion of the local community.

**Table 4.6: Respondents level of agreement on the contributions of ecotourism to local development in the study area**

N <sub>o</sub>	Variables	Options	Frequency	Percent
1	How much do you agree on ecotourism contributions to the socio-economic development of the local community?	Strongly disagree	5	3.2
		Disagree	9	5.7
		Undecided	11	7
		Agree	49	31.2
		Strongly Agree	83	52.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Do you believe that you have been receiving some benefits from tourism activities that are undertaken in your community?	Strongly disagree	7	4.6
		Disagree	86	54.9
		Undecided	9	5.8
		Agree	41	26.4
		Strongly Agree	13	8.3
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Ecotourism development improved the livelihood of the local community.	Strongly disagree	9	5.7
		Disagree	11	7
		Undecided	20	12.7
		Agree	46	29.3
		Strongly Agree	71	45.3
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

As shown under item 1 of table 4.6 above, the sample respondents showed their level of agreement towards ecotourism contribution to the socio-economic development of the local community in the study area. Accordingly, about 3.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed whereas 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 7% of respondents reply undecided, while the remaining 31.2% and 52.9% of respondents reported that they have agreed and strongly agree respectively. There is no doubt that ecotourism merits the socio-economic development of the local community to generate some revenues that enhance some of the local community incomes.

The researcher also observed that if the ecotourism development activity is practiced as an alternative source of income in the study area, it could be a fruitful business and could change the life of the local community who live nearby by gaining additional income and even a good source of income for the government by boosting the foreign exchange earnings of the country that generated from tourism. The other one of ecotourism's greatest contributions to natural resource conservation is the degree, to which it can shift community activities from the threats category to that of opportunities; that is those activities that contribute to local economic development and the achievement of natural resource conservation goals. Local communities will be beneficiaries of the development of ecotourism directly and indirectly. The development of ecotourism in Arsi Negelle Woreda can create employment opportunities for the local communities. According to the key informant interviewee's and tourism expert of woreda, local communities can participate in tourism-related employments like guiding, accompany, kitchen staff in lodges and hotels, etc. Local communities could also involve in different job opportunities that are related to travel and tourism like hiring and pulling of pack animals, hire properties, selling goods and services, campsite homestay (guest houses), provision of food, and drinks for tourists (hotels, cafeterias).

Within regarding item 2 above table 4.6, about 45.3% and 29.3% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree and agree respectively on the contribution of Ecotourism development to the improvement of the livelihood and source of income to a local community. Ecotourism development enhances the development of infrastructures like rural roads, communication networks, health facilities, power, clean water, etc. which are in turn vital for the local community. However, about 12.7% of the respondents were undecided about the asked question. Whereas the remaining 7% and 5.7% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree about the improved livelihood and source of for local community development through ecotourism development in the study area.

On the other hand, the key informant's interviewees also agreed that the ecotourism development in the study area brings a source of income and diversification for the local community. Similarly, individuals involved in focus group discussants reported that “development of ecotourism on the study area brings so many investment opportunities and infrastructures development in the study area.

For example, if ecotourism is developed, rural road construction, hotel and lodge investment, horse renting, boat services, tour guides will be developed and accessibility easy for this investment development of infrastructures will also develop in the study area”. Generally, what we can understand from this contribution of ecotourism activities to local economic development is numerous advantages for local communities in the study area.

#### **4.4. Prospects of Ecotourism Development in the study area**

This section looks at the analysis of the future prospects of ecotourism development will be measured through positive benefits to the local community such as economic prospects, environmental prospects, and socio-cultural prospects in the case of Arsi Negelle Woreda. The study used descriptive statistical analysis to assess how factors related to the local community affected their participation in ecotourism activities using descriptive data analysis methods. The factor analysis was used to determine the most prominent factor in local community participation in ecotourism activities at Arsi Negelle Woreda.

##### **4.4.1 Economic Prospects of Ecotourism Development**

If the activities of ecotourism are practiced as a system in the study area, the future success in the economical aspect will immensely result. The economic prospects that will be obtained from ecotourism development to the local communities are the creation of employment, fostering their living standard, and increasing their livelihood option by participating in the ecotourism activities. Ecotourism can be integrated with other sectors of the rural economy, creating mutually supportive linkages and reducing financial leakage away from the study area.

It can also be coordinated with agriculture, in terms of the use of time and resources and in providing markets for local produce (WWF, 2001). By considering these views, the cast of mind about the economic prospects of ecotourism development in the case of the study area by the sampled respondents of this finding was presented as follows.

**Table 4.7: Economic prospects of ecotourism development in the study area**

No	Variables	Five-point Likert scale options	Frequency	percent
1	Ecotourism will create employment opportunities and additional jobs in your kebele/village	Strongly disagree	11	7.0
		Disagree	16	10.2
		Undecided	31	19.7
		Agree	34	21.7
		Strongly Agree	65	41.4

		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0
2	Ecotourism can contribute to positive local community capacity development in your village/kebele in the future	Strongly disagree	13	8.3
		Disagree	8	5.1
		Undecided	20	12.7
		Agree	50	31.8
		Strongly Agree	66	42.0
		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0
3	Ecotourism development will create opportunities for investment and development of infrastructures.	Strongly disagree	10	6.4
		Disagree	10	6.4
		Undecided	24	15.3
		Agree	43	27.4
		Strongly Agree	70	44.6
		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

As it was revealed above in table 4.7, the sampled respondents showed their level of agreement about the economic prospects of ecotourism development in the study area. The result showed that about 21.7% of the sampled respondents agreed that ecotourism can create employment opportunities at Arsi Negelle woreda. It is obvious that many ecotourism projects create local employment or generate some revenues (not necessarily profits) that enhance some local incomes or help support community projects (Kiss, 2004). Besides this, the interviewed with key informant interviews indicate that ecotourism is practiced in their area a lot of employment opportunities could be created, and from the types of jobs, they thought to include rent horses for tourists, boat service for tourists and selling agricultural products to the service providing organization which can be built if ecotourism is practiced.

From the interviews made within one, the respondent revealed that: *“The local people could be recruited as waiters/waitress, guard to the hotel establishments, as a cook and the local community could be also benefited by selling locally made handicrafts, fast foods to tourists and by performing cultural dancing and music”*.

The researcher also observed that the ecotourism activity is practiced as a major economic activity in the study area, it could be a fruitful business that could change the life of the local community who live thereby gaining additional income and even a good source of income for

the government by boosting the foreign exchange earnings of the country that generated from tourism activities.

From item 2, the response about ecotourism can contribute to positive local community capacity development in the study area. Results revealed that about 8.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 5.1% of the respondents disagree that Ecotourism does not create employment opportunities in the study area. On the other hand, out of the sampled respondents, 12.7% of the respondents remain undecided on the idea. Whereas the remaining 31.8% and 42% of respondents reported that they have agreed and strongly agree respectively on the idea.

Regarding the Ecotourism development will create opportunities for investment and development of infrastructures shown in the above table 4.7, about 44.6% and 27.4% of the respondents strongly agree and agree on the development of Ecotourism to raise their living standard by participating in different ecotourism activities to enhance their income to improve their life activity, like using modern transportation to take their local products to the market instead of using a traditional way of transportation like using back animals and traveling on foot, get full medical treatment and so on, they do this because they could get enough money from the activity they made in Ecotourism development in their area. Whereas about 15.3% of them did not decide about the issue. But 6.4% of the respondents strongly disagree about the creation of opportunities for investment and infrastructure development through Ecotourism development in the study area.

In addition to the above economic prospects created by ecotourism development in this study area, it will also create fertile ground for investment and development of infrastructures, to strengthen this idea, according to WWF (2001) it is important to remember that ecotourism is a business. As well as community-led initiatives, private enterprise and investment should be encouraged where appropriate, within a structure which enables the community to benefit, and have decision-making power over the level and nature of tourism in its area.

*“Development of Ecotourism on the area brings so many investment opportunities and infrastructure development, for example, if Ecotourism is developed, lodges, fishing organizations, tour guiding institutions will be developed and to accessibility easy for this investment development of infrastructures will also develop”.* The key informant interviews also agreed that the development of Ecotourism in their area brings different infrastructure developments and investments that could be created by ecotourism development on Arsi Negelle worda three purposely selected kebeles.

According to Eshetu (2010), the development of ecotourism enhances the development of infrastructures like roads, communication networks, health facilities, power, clean water, etc. which are vital for the local community.

#### 4.4.2 Environmental Prospects of Ecotourism Development

As for the Economic prospects, the development of Ecotourism in the case of the study area is very essential to keep the environmental aspect of the area safe. So, if ecotourism is practiced properly if its development is well managed and practiced with the full participation of the local community. Ecotourism development in the study area helps to protect and conserve the flora and fauna of the area. Many local communities had a strong tradition of respect for wildlife and natural resources that need to be fostered and not undermined by too much emphasis on economic value. It is important to get the balance right (WWF, 2001).

**Table 4.8: Environmental prospects of ecotourism development in the study area**

No	Variables	Five-point Likert scale options	Frequency	percent
1	Ecotourism development contributes to environmental conservation	Strongly disagree	12	7.6
		Disagree	16	10.2
		Undecided	30	19.1
		Agree	51	32.5
		Strongly Agree	48	30.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Do you think ecotourism can be an ideal tool for environmental conservation?	Strongly disagree	12	7.6
		Disagree	16	10.2
		Undecided	46	29.3
		Agree	32	20.4
		Strongly Agree	51	32.5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Ecotourism development can build environmental awareness and respect.	Strongly disagree	5	3.2
		Disagree	12	7.6
		Undecided	27	17.2
		Agree	44	28.0
		Strongly Agree	69	43.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

As the results depicted in the Table 4.8, about 32.5% of the respondents agreed the Ecotourism development contributes to environmental (biodiversity, wildlife, and ecosystem) conservation of the study area. The key informants interviewed also supported the belief of the above respondents that, the practice of Ecotourism development in the study area make a great

influence on the conservation of the environmentally sustainable tourism aspect. They added that the government has to act actively to protect the precious natural environment by creating laws that are formally approved and invested with legal authority and conservatory organizations should be established to sustain the environmental conservation of the study area.

However, about 19.1% of the respondents remain undecided on the idea of Ecotourism development contributions to environmental conservation. Moreover, about 10.2% of the respondents did not agree about the contribution of Ecotourism to conservation. Their intention for refusal of this idea is according to some of the key informants especially the Development Agents (DAs) when they manifest the farmer's perception generally about Ecotourism development and particularly its contribution to environmental conservation;

*“The farmers could think about the conservation of the environment through Ecotourism because they spent much time of their whole time on agriculture and the grazing land for their cattle and the fertile land they plow, which is found on the edge of Lakes (Abijata, Shalla and Cittu ) so if Ecotourism is developed in the case of study area they assume the government could snatch them for the sake of conserving the land and make them keep their cattle on home, so for this reason, some of the local farmers would not accept the idea of developing Ecotourism on this area”.* So, the local community's disagreement and abstains about the contribution of Ecotourism to environmental conservation could be the idea of the key informant interviews. But this perception of the local community must be changed and to change this perception according to Gebeyaw (2011), there is a general belief that the generation of income from tourism increases, the awareness of communities about the economic value of the existing natural resources. This further leads to improved conservation and protection practices. This amount of result would not happen, the reason for the limited agreement on this idea is maybe because the local community had no enough awareness about the total ecotourism contribution. Rather, it is a crystal clear truth that Ecotourism's major objective is the conservation process must be aided financially in addition to other essential practical contributions. The other 29.3% and 10.2% of the respondents showed their abstinence and disagreement respectively. On the contrary, about the question asked to the sampled households related to the environmental awareness and respect build by Ecotourism, about 28% of the respondents revealed their agreement. As conservation of the environment demands the dedication and full activity of local community awareness and respect about the environment, it is highly expected from them to protect and conserve their

environment from anything that could threaten the sustainability of their environment, so this could be a big deal on this point. The remaining 7.6% of the sampled households showed their disagreement, while the rest 17.2% of the respondents were undecided about the asked question. However, the environmental future success or the prospect of Ecotourism in the study area based on the results revealed above have a prominent chance to be applicable. From the researcher's point of view, from tourism experts and officials and some of the key informants, these misunderstandings could be corrected by changing the awareness of the local community through education about ecotourism. To support this idea, according to Mulugeta (2011) ecotourism is also an environmental and educational opportunity to amplify both visitor's and resident's awareness of environmental and conservation issues, and even to inspire conservation action beyond its financial reward to locals.

Generally, the finding indicates that the Environmental prospects of ecotourism development were a high contribution for the local community to boost ecotourism development by enhancing natural resources conservation, and also to attract tourists to visit beautiful biodiversity. In addition to this from the interviews conducted indicates that Arsi Negelle Woreda's have a high potential for the tourism industry in the country.

#### **4.4.3 The Socio-cultural Prospects of ecotourism development**

Despite, the positive contribution to economic and environmental prospects to be successful in the future in Arsi Negelle woreda, the development of Ecotourism also has a great impact on the socio-cultural aspects of the area. In a destination that has immense socio-cultural resources, the products must be used as one way of development by applying the concept of Ecotourism. Because ecotourism activity is practiced for the local people by the local people and the local people are the main responsible stakeholders to keep the socio-cultural resources for a prolonged time. According to the results illustrated in below table 4.9, only 28% of the respondents displayed their agreement about Ecotourism development contribution to maintaining local ownership, control and develop a sense of pride in the study area. Maintaining local community ownership level on their local products with high value, make them control over all activities in their areas and help them to develop a sense of pride in their culture and tradition. However, about 24.8% of the respondents did not decide on the issue discussed and 8.3% of them also showed their disagreement in the study area.



But on the opposite of this, the opportunity to learn from a traditional culture is increasingly valued by travelers, and community participation adds considerable value to an ecotourism program. At the same time, traditional communities can feel greater self-esteem as a result of the respectful interest shown by visitors, especially if outside attitudes have tended to be little them (Andy & Alan, 2002).

**Table 4.9: Socio-cultural prospects of ecotourism development in the study area**

No	Variables	Five-point Likert scale options	Frequency	percent
1	Ecotourism development can maintain local ownership, control, and develop a sense of pride.	Strongly disagree	25	15.9
		Disagree	13	8.3
		Undecided	39	24.8
		Agree	44	28.0
		Strongly Agree	36	22.9
		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0
2	Ecotourism minimizes physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts on the local community.	Strongly disagree	29	18.5
		Disagree	22	14.0
		Undecided	38	24.2
		Agree	29	18.5
		Strongly Agree	39	24.8
		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0
3	Ecotourism development creates Ecotourism should respect the rights and spiritual activities of the indigenous communities.	Strongly disagree	17	10.8
		Disagree	15	9.6
		Undecided	29	18.5
		Agree	39	24.8
		Strongly Agree	57	36.3
		<b>Total</b>	157	100.0

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

As the findings in table 4:9 above different subtitles revealed, ecotourism could have different positive effects if it is practiced properly in Arsi Negelle woreda. But, through an interview, it was found that some of the tourism experts and key informants expect some physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts on the local community would be observed after the introduction of Ecotourism to the area, the impacts they expect to happen are like, maybe farmers could stop their usual agricultural activity and depend on ecotourism like it is observed in other places which already developed Ecotourism the habit of begging and engaging in prostitution by the local communities could be developed. This perception of experts and key

informants could be the same perception of the sampled households because their perception goes with the data in the above table 4.9 which showed as only 18.5% agreed on the ability of ecotourism to minimize the physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts on the local community, but 24.4% of them didn't show their agreement while 14% of the respondents disagreed with the question. These all disagreements and low knowledge of the local community on Ecotourism must be changed through intensive follow-ups and continuous training by the responsible parties. If ecotourism development is carefully planned and practiced in the study area, it could be the best weapon to change and upgrade the awareness level of the local community. The sampled respondents were asked about the respect expected from Ecotourism practices to the rights and spiritual activities of the indigenous people, and the majority of the respondents 24.8% agreed on the respect expected from Ecotourism, as the percent of the agreement is high on this idea, the researcher thought that the local community had a good level of awareness here. For example, a distinctive expression from one of the Abijata Shalla National Park tourism experts;

*“The practices of Ecotourism in a given destination must respect and develop the rights and spiritual activities of the local people because those spiritual activities are one of the socio-cultural resources that the Ecotourism uses as attraction and if Ecotourism did not give respect to the local spiritual activities and their rights, a conflict would be created and the development of Ecotourism would not be fruitful in this area”.*

Generally, Ecotourism is expected not to change the socio-cultural life of the local community instead it should have to contribute to its development, even if it is hard to bring full development in all aspects. According to WWF (2001), Ecotourism is no panacea. It is important not to exaggerate the opportunities and benefits it can bring. Careful planning and improved knowledge are needed. Ecotourism and responsible tourism should be part of wider sustainable development strategies, whether at a community or an international level.

To sum up, from the above table 4.9, it indicates that the Socio-Cultural prospects of ecotourism development were the high implication for the local community by showing cultural festivals such as wearing style, horse riding, cultural food; cultural handicrafts were some socio-cultural prospects which boost local economic development.

## 4.5 Challenges that affect ecotourism development

In the following section, major challenges that affect ecotourism development in the study area were discussed. These challenges include environmental disasters, lack of political instability, lack of safety and security for visitors, Lack of environmental safety, and Lack of quality assurance service are the major challenges that affect ecotourism development in Arsi Negelle Woreda of West Arsi zone.

**Table 4.10: Challenges of ecotourism development related to socio-economic in the study area**

No	Variables	Five-point Likert scale options	Frequency	Percent
1	Environmental disaster	Strongly disagree	7	4.5
		Disagree	9	5.7
		Undecided	10	6.4
		Agree	80	51.0
		Strongly agree	51	32.5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Political instability	Strongly disagree	40	25.5
		Disagree	20	12.7
		Undecided	16	10.2
		Agree	68	43.3
		Strongly agree	13	8.3
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Lack of safety and security for visitors	Strongly disagree	28	17.8
		Disagree	40	25.5
		Undecided	49	31.2
		Agree	30	19.1
		Strongly agree	10	6.4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
4	Lack of environmental safety	Strongly disagree	80	51.0
		Disagree	19	12.1
		Undecided	49	31.2
		Agree	6	3.8
		Strongly agree	3	1.9
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>
5	Lack of quality assurance service	Strongly disagree	10	6.4
		Disagree	20	12.7
		Undecided	65	41.4
		Agree	45	28.7
		Strongly agree	17	10.8
		<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

According to the above table 4.10, the environmental disaster is the challenge of ecotourism development-related environmental disaster, the majority of respondents 51% of the respondent were at a level of agree whereas 6.4% replies neutral, 4.5% feels strongly disagree while 5.7% and 32.5% respondents disagreed and strongly agree respectively.

On the other hand, to identify the political instability problems respondents respond level of agreement on political instability. The respondents respond that 25.5% of respondents strongly disagree, next to this 12.7% of respondents disagree, 10.2% were undecided, and 43.3% and 8.3% of respondents were undecided and strongly agree respectively.

In addition to this data gathered from Focus group discussant with local elders and youths at kebele also stated that “there is youth protest occasionally causing damages on properties people like hotels, cafes, lodges, and the guesthouse was burned. Such like deeds are one of the major problems why not ecotourism is not developed well”. Key informant interviews revealed that most of the hotels and lodges are located along the shore of Lake Langano. For instance, hotels and lodges like Wabe Shebelle and Bekelle Molla because of political instability in the area currently not functional. From this, it could be possible to recognize that political instability is the main factor that limits tourism development in the study area.

Regarding item 3 in the above table 4.10 respondents pointed out a lack of safety and security for visitors, sample respondents of 17.8% where levels of strongly disagree, whereas 25.5% respondents reply disagree, whereas 31.2% respondents respond undecided, while the remaining of 19.1% and 6.4% respondents were responded agree and strongly disagree respectively. Tourism is a very sensitive area of development so that it mostly depends on the safety and security aspects of a destination. A single act of robbery and/or abuse of tourists will lead to bad publicity of a destination and cut the flow of tourists radically.

From the sample households' item 4 in table 4.10, 51% strongly agree whereas 12.1% of the respondents responded agree and 31.2% replied undecided while the remaining 3.8% and 1.9% respondents were responded agree and strongly agree respectively. Key informant interview with tourism officers in Abijata Shalla National Park, observation, local elders, and Annual report of Arsi Negelle woreda Culture and Tourism Office (2019). As above table 4.10 indicated that the local community is cutting a tree from the sites especially in Lephis natural forest and Dalu Daka Harengama kebeles. It is also a major environmental safety problem and it has the power to limit the development of ecotourism in the study area.

Accordingly, from the last item which the respondents, 6.4% of the respondents were at a level strongly agree, whereas 12.7% of respondents have replied disagree, while 41.4% respondents respond undecided, 28.7% and 10.8% of the respondents respond agree and strongly agree respectively. Besides this, a key informant interview with the tourism officer of Arsi Negelle woreda Culture and Tourism Office indicates that most of the accommodation, catering, guiding, and transportation is not offering a quality service to the visitor. There is a shortage of good-quality bedrooms, lack of professionals in all touristic business giving centers, sewerage or health and sanitation problems in most of the lodges, cafes, restaurants, pension, and other accommodation centers are identified.

**Table 4.11: Underdeveloped Infrastructural challenges of ecotourism development in the study area**

No	Variables	Five-point Likert scale options	Frequency	Percent
1	Lack of road access	Strongly disagree	18	11.5
		Disagree	15	9.6
		Undecided	28	17.8
		Agree	45	28.7
		Strongly agree	51	32.5
2	Shortage of telecommunication	Strongly disagree	70	44.6
		Disagree	40	25.5
		Undecided	21	13.4
		Agree	15	9.6
		Strongly agree	11	7.0
3	Shortage of health services	Strongly disagree	15	9.6
		Disagree	35	22.3
		Undecided	52	33.1
		Agree	45	28.7
		Strongly agree	10	6.4
4	Shortage of clean water	Strongly disagree	16	10.2
		Disagree	40	25.5
		Undecided	58	36.9
		Agree	29	18.5
		Strongly agree	14	8.9
5	Lack of electric power supply	Strongly disagree	36	22.9
		Disagree	45	28.7
		Undecided	41	26.1
		Agree	21	13.4
		Strongly agree	14	8.9

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

Infrastructural development is the most significant part of the tourism industry because it is the hub of tourism development.

By taking into account sample households are asked about infrastructure and a high percent of them are not happy with the infrastructural development of the area. Key informant interviews with Arsi Negelle woreda Culture and Tourism Office officer and annual report of (2019) also indicated that the tourism infrastructure of the study area is not developed to hold the tourism industry. It's also the main factor that limits the development of tourism in the study area.

Accordingly, the respondents were asked to respond to item 1 of the above table 4.11, 28.7% of the respondents were ranged at the level of agreed whereas 17.8% replies neutral, 11.5% feels strongly disagree while 9.6% and 32.5% respondents disagreed and strongly agree respectively.

On the other hand, looks for the respondent's level of agreement on the shortage of telecommunication infrastructure. The respondents were responded that 44.6% of respondents strongly disagree, next to this 25.5% of respondents disagree, 7.0% were strongly disagreed, 13.4% and 9.6% of respondents were undecided and agree respectively. There is a shortage of telecommunication infrastructure in the study area. Such as shortage of internet access, guiding problems (communication gap between the visitors and guide due to language barriers most of the local guides are not skilled to speak the English language), and no tourist information giving center in the study area. From this, it could be possible to understand that the area is highly faced with the telecommunication infrastructure challenge. It is also one of the main factors that limit the development of tourism.

From item 3 of the above table 4.11, respondents were responded to health services infrastructure. Accordingly, 9.6% strongly disagree whereas 22.3% of the respondents respond disagree and 33.1% replied undecided while the remaining 28.7% and 6.4% respondents were responded agree and strongly agree respectively.

The finding reveals that item 4, as indicated in table 4.11, the impacts of a shortage of clean water can affect ecotourism development or not. Accordingly, 36.9% undecided whereas 25.5% of the respondents respond disagree and 18.5% replied agree while the remaining 10.2% and 8.9% respondents were responded strongly disagree and strongly agree respectively.

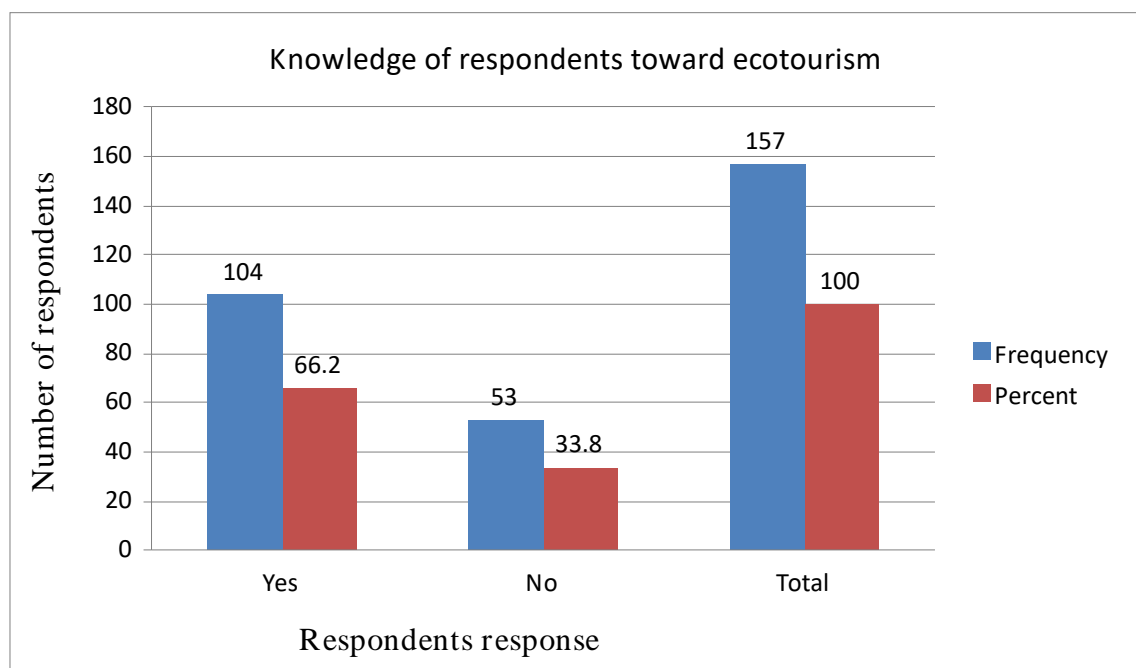
Regarding the last item 5, which says lack of electric power supply can affect ecotourism development or not with the 28.7% of the respondents were responded that disagree in addition to this 26.1% have replied undecided while 22.9%, 13.4%, and 8.9% of the respondents have strongly disagreed, agree and strongly agree towards the idea that says of electric power supply can affect ecotourism development in the case of the study area.

Current ecotourism facilities and overall infrastructure at Arsi Negelle woreda are limited. There is no accommodation and service give body for customers in the area at all and visitors have not to option unless staying at Shashemene or Hawassa town after visiting. Only small cafes and restaurants are found in rural kebeles. For visitors that want to stay a night, there no sufficient hotels or other means unless tourists hold their own tent. Additionally, transportation in the Dalu Daka Harengama, Gubeta Arjo and Lephis kebeles is a big challenge for those who are not using private vehicles. Telecommunication and health services also other limited services in the area.

Generally, in Arsi Negelle woreda those three selected kebeles, their basic infrastructural needs like road access, telecommunication, health services, clean water, and electric power are not satisfied.

#### **4.6. Community attitudes, perception and interests on ecotourism development**

Community attitudes, perceptions, and interests can affect the degree of community participation and ownership in ecotourism development. Thus, to better understand how the local community's attitude, perception, and interest if ecotourism to be developed in their locality the researcher points out questions for them on the issue.



**Figure 4.12: Knowledge of respondents towards ecotourism development**

**Source:** Own field survey, May 2020

As indicated in the above figure 4.12 knowledge of the local community towards ecotourism development is low. To identify their knowledge, respondents were asked about the ecotourism/tourism industry; only 66.2% of them have information about the practice of ecotourism/tourism industry in their area. The rest 33.8% have no information about the practice of the tourism industry. In addition to this data from annual reports of the Arsi Negelle woreda culture and tourism office (2019), also noted that the awareness of the local community towards ecotourism development is low. There are various factors for low awareness of the tourism industry such as lack of information about the industry, less development of the tourism industry in their area, and lack of promotional work toward ecotourism development. Because it could be possible to realize that the majority of the host community is not aware of ecotourism. This indicates that ecotourism development is highly challenged by a lack of knowledge about the tourism industry in the study area. Low levels of ecotourism development, shortage of awareness creation by local government, and shortage of promotion are the main factors for ecotourism development.

**Table 4.12: Capability of Agricultural income to household expenses**

Does agricultural income cover all household Expenditure?	Variables 68	Respondents	
		Frequency	Percent



	Yes	49	31.2
	No	108	68.8
		157	100

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

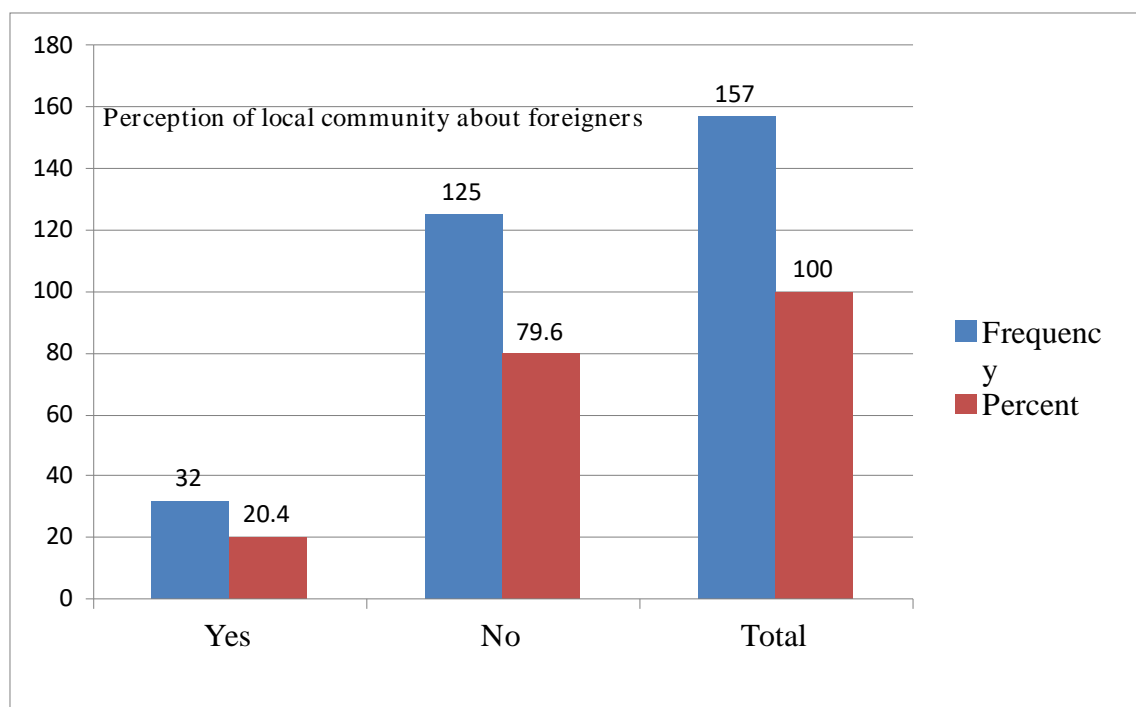
According to table 4.12 above, regarding does agricultural income cover all household Expenditure, 68.8% of households of respondents replied that their income from agriculture is cannot fully support their expenditures. While 31.2% of the sampled households reported that the income, they gaining from agriculture is sufficient enough for their livelihood. Those respondents, who indicated the insufficiency of agricultural income, figured out the presence of different factors that contributes to this situation. The most frequently mentioned reason includes; low productivity of the land, scarcity of arable land, large family size, overexploitation of the land (every year the land is ready without gap for cultivation), frequent drought and seasonal production (rainfall based production system). Therefore, the income shortage needs to be covered by some means other than agriculture, perhaps off-farm activity such as tourism.

**Table 4.13: Feelings of local communities when seeing foreigners/visitors**

What could be your feeling if foreigners (visitors) come to your locality? And why?	Variables	Responses	
		N	Percent
	Happy	115	73.3
	Disturbed	22	14
	Embraced	12	7.6
	No opinion	8	5.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Own field survey; May 2020

The feelings of local communities can affect the degree of ecotourism development and ownership in the tourism industry. Thus, to better understand how the local communities feel when seeing foreigners/visitors the researcher point out questions for them on the issue. Therefore, as found in table 4.13 above shows the majority of sample households' 73.3% replied as they were proudly happy when seeing foreigners/visitors. Likewise, 14% of sample households from selected households' responded as they were disturbed. In contrast, equivalent ratios 7.6% and 5.1% of respondents were express their feeling is about the coming tourists/visitors have embraced and no opinion when seeing foreigners/visitors to their locality. This is because they are fear the coming of different unnecessary things like prostitution, cultural assimilation, diseases, and modern styles, which strictly contradict the beliefs and way of life of the local people.



**Figure 4.13: Perception of the local communities about foreigners/visitors**

**Source:** Own field survey, May 2020

As shown by the above figure 4.13, respondents were asked about the impact of the coming of foreigners on their area. Accordingly, 79.6% of the respondents say “No” (the coming of foreigners have a positive impact or there is no adverse effect on the native people’s culture), while the rest 20.4% of the respondents say of course there is an adverse impact on the local culture. The available literature in this area supports that, they are associated with the invasion of their culture by the foreigner’s culture; they related the coming of tourists with hidden missionary activities which they do not want at all. K. Belanger (2006) says many indigenous cultures affected by tourism are not accustomed to the fast-paced, material-oriented lifestyle of developers and the tourists that soon follow. The interviews held with key informant indicates that the impact of tourism on culture and even on the environment is mainly not the sector by itself, rather an absence of properly controlled tourism planning by participating and consulting the indigenous peoples. Thus, lack of awareness is not a major challenge for establishing community-based ecotourism in the study area.

**Table 4.14: Community conflicts over resources**

Have you faced any resource ownership problems as a result of ecotourism development in your village?		Respondents	
		N	Percent
Response	70	Yes	95 60.5

	No	62	39.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Own field survey; May 2020**

The use of resource ownership for natural resources is another challenge. Local communities, for example, people who live in and around Lephis natural forests, Gubeta Arjo, and Delu Daka Harengama kebeles area depend on the natural resources for their livelihoods in many ways. Concerning the exploitation of natural resources of the forest and their dependency on such resources, the sample respondents were asked whether they use resources from Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park (ASLNP). The majority of them replied “yes” and only 39.5% of them replied “No” to the asked question (Have you faced any resource ownership problem as a result of ecotourism development in your village). The key informant interviews with the representatives of the local communities (kebele manager and elders) indicate that major resources are used from the Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park (ASLNP). The local communities depend on the park for firewood collection, cutting grasses, and beekeeping purposes. This implies that the local communities highly exploit resources from Lephis natural forest and Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park (ASLNP) for a different purpose. The cutting of trees for timbering was not mentioned by these informants; perhaps due to strong monitoring of the scouts in the Abijata Shalla Lakes National Park (ASLNP). Key informant interviews Abijata Shalla National Park mentioned that cutting of trees for timber purpose was a problem before. After the scouts are hired and equipped with firearms and uniforms, this problem has minimized. The park scouts argued that they chase out those individuals who are involved in the collection of dry woods from the park and those who use woods for charcoal production even though it is difficult for the park scouts to stop such activities. Nonetheless, as the researcher himself observed during a field study and as reported in the document obtained from Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism Office (2019), the local people around the park use the forest for the production of firewood and charcoal as a source of additional income. Ecotourism development is the most preferable type of tourism because of its connection with nature, culture, and heritage. It supports active local community involvement in all levels of development so they benefit from conservation, economic development, and education.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study and concludes on the bases of findings. Lastly, possible recommendations were forwarded based on the findings of the study.

The general objective of this study was to assess the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle Woreda of West Arsi Zone, Oromia National Regional State and to come up with remedial solutions in order to enhance ecotourism development and forwarded for identified problems.

#### 5.1 Summary of Major Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, it was possible to come up with the following major findings in relation to the basic research questions.

The study revealed that the community perception, attitude, awareness and interest in ecotourism development were low. There are various factors for low awareness of the tourism industry such as lack of information about the tourism industry, underdevelopment of basic infrastructures, less development of the tourism industry in their area and lack of promotional work toward ecotourism development in the study area. So it could be possible to conclude that the majority of the hosting community is not aware of ecotourism development in the study area. The study revealed that agricultural income was insufficient, figured out the presence of different factors that contributes to this situation, the participation of the local community towards ecotourism activities not as much as interests and they believe that the coming of visitors brings different problems to the area such as begging, prostitution, environmental destruction. These suggested that the majority of the host community has an interest in the coming of tourists and they are aware of the significant contribution of visitors to their local economic development.

The study also shows that the impact of tourism on culture and even on the environment is mainly not the sector by itself, rather the absence of properly controlled tourism planning by participating and consulting the indigenous peoples. Thus, lack of awareness is a major challenge for ecotourism development in the study area and there was the exploitation of natural resources of the forest and their dependency on such resources.

The triangulated qualitative data from respondents indicate that the community participation towards ecotourism development for local economic development was low due to low awareness of the local community to ecotourism industry because economic benefits that were obtained

from Ecotourism to the local communities are the creation of employment, fostering their living standard, and increasing their livelihood option by participating in the activities of ecotourism. Ecotourism development can be integrated with other sectors of the rural economy, creating mutually supportive linkages and reducing financial linkages of other sectors. However, currently, the ecotourism activities were not well functionally. The study revealed that ecotourism is practiced in their area a lot of employment opportunities could be created, and from the types of jobs, they thought to include rent horses for tourists, rent a boat for tourists, and selling agricultural products to the service providing organization which can be built ecotourism is practiced and the local people could be recruited as waiters/waitress, guard to the hotel establishments, as a cooker and the local community could be also benefited by selling locally made handicrafts, fast foods to tourists and by performing cultural dancing and music.

The study indicates that the practice of ecotourism in the study area make a great influence on the conservation of the environmentally sustainable tourism aspect. They added that as the government has to act actively participate in protecting the precious natural environment by creating laws that are formally approved and invested with legal authority and conservatory organizations should be established to sustain the environment of the area. They were conservation of the environment through Ecotourism because they spent much time of their whole time on agriculture and the grazing land for their cattle and the fertile land they plow, which is found on the edge of Lakes(Abijata, Shalla and Langano) for the ecotourism development. The study indicates that The practices of ecotourism in a given destination must respect and develop the rights and spiritual activities of the local people because those spiritual activities are one of the socio-cultural resources that Ecotourism uses as attraction and if Ecotourism did not give respect to the local spiritual activities and their rights, a conflict would be created and the development of ecotourism would not be fruitful in this area.

The study revealed that there were natural tourism potentials are the entire flora, fauna, ecosystem generation and geological features inherited from past generation and maintained in the present, to be passed on to future generation (WTO, 2014) such as three natural lakes (Abijata, Shalla and Citu Lakes), a hot water spring, Lephis waterfall (Finchawa ) natural cave and other natural tourist attraction sites.

The major cultural ecotourism resources of Arsi Negelle woreda include the lifestyle of the local community, thanksgiving (ireecha), distinctive cultural patterns, local arts and handicrafts,

cultural festivals, etc. Even though it needs further and detailed investigation, cultural activities and cultural products like the wedding ceremony, honeymoon ceremony after marriage, local music and dances, locally produced artifacts, etc. can be good tourist attraction resources (ANWCTO, 2019). Therefore, Local communities can earn income by demonstrating cultural activities or by selling locally produced artifacts to tourists, Cultural products include handicrafts made from traditional garment and wool, jewelry, pottery, wood, embroidery, netting, weaving, and basketry. Figure 4.7 depicts some of the cultural ecotourism resources available. The study further found that ecotourism development was declining due to the following factors such as lack of safety and security, low level of accommodation facilities and hospitality services, lack of community awareness, lack of trained manpower, lack of promotion. The study showed also that the effort to enhance ecotourism development for local economic development remained a challenge for the government.

The finding indicates that a substantial proportion of the respondents claimed that they agreed with the local community's perception towards ecotourism development, the contribution of ecotourism to local economic development, and challenges that affect ecotourism development. This means local communities' perception of ecotourism development in the local community development from the ecotourism activities.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

From the summary of the major findings and based on the objectives of the study the researcher was drawn the following conclusion.

Currently, the perceived local community towards ecotourism development was low because there where a lack of information about the ecotourism industry, less development of the tourism industry in their area, and a lack of promotional work toward ecotourism development. The feelings of the local community in relation to ecotourism development were low due to tourism brings such problems as begging, prostitution, environmental destruction to the host community, and there where exploitation of natural resources of the forest.

The contribution of ecotourism development to the local communities where such as the creation of employment, fostering their living standard, and increasing their livelihood option by participating in the activities of ecotourism. Ecotourism can be integrated with other sectors of the rural economy, creating mutually supportive linkages and reducing financial leakage of other sectors. In generally, ecotourism development enhances local through the following prospects

such as Economic prospects development by boosting the local community in ecotourism activities such as selling locally made handicrafts, fast foods to tourists and by performing cultural dancing and music, Environmental Prospects of Ecotourism development contribute to the environmental (biodiversity, wildlife, and the ecosystem) conservation eco-system. The socio-cultural prospects of ecotourism develop the rights and spiritual activities of the local people because those spiritual activities are one of the socio-cultural resources that ecotourism uses as attraction and if ecotourism did not give respect to the local spiritual activities and their rights, a conflict would be created and the development of Ecotourism and Cultural and Religious resources include the lifestyle of the local community, irreecha (thanksgiving), distinctive cultural patterns, local arts and handicrafts, cultural festivals, etc.

The findings of the study revealed that several challenges against the ecotourism development to local economic development in the study area were identified as follows, lack of safety and security, low level of accommodation facilities and hospitality services, lack of community awareness, lack of trained manpower, lack of promotion, the absence of clean tap water and seasonal nature of the business, language barriers for efficient communication with tourists, lack of cooperation among the community lodge members, grievances from the other side of the community members.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The findings of the study were believed to have some practical implications, which might highlight areas of intervention to improve ecotourism development on local economic activities. To improve the contribution of ecotourism development to the local community, increasing the participation of stakeholders, sense of accountability, responsibility, and identify the challenges that affect ecotourism development is important. Based on the major findings of the study and conclusions drawn concerning the challenges and prospects of ecotourism and its implications on local economic development in the case of Arsi Negelle woreda, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The effort being made by stakeholders to boost the participation of the local community in ecotourism development is very low. So, continuous awareness creation and encouragement work should be given to the local community to increase their status in ecotourism development activities. Therefore, the researcher recommends that Arsi Negelle Woreda Culture and Tourism

Office should give attention to ecotourism development activities. Besides, to improve this government and concerned stakeholders should be doing in collaboration.

2. There is a lack of adequate infrastructure and services in the area like accessible roads, telecommunication, health services, power supply, clean water, hotels, lodges, campsite services, etc in the area. Particularly, the asphalt road that passes through Arsi Negelle woreda to Shashemane and Hawassa town is more advantageous. So, to improve the stay of a customer in the area for income generation, such facility problems should be overcome.

3. The study also underlined that government should formulate ecotourism development rules and regulate coordinate stakeholders, provide capacity building programs, provide credits for locals, facilitate conditions for investors and local entrepreneurs, invest in infrastructure to make tourism a tool for the local economic development and communities well-being enhancement. Implementing the plan, environmental, socio-cultural, and economical goals of sustainable tourism will be achieved. Thus, the future education and training should be given by focusing on the practical aspect of tourism development and management to upgrade skills and knowledge by hands-on training that will improve the local community's attitude toward participation in tourism coupled with financial support from the Arsi Negelle woreda Administration.

4. In the future, in terms of economic prospects (additional employment and job opportunity will be created to the local community, serve them as an additional livelihood option and bring foreign exchange earnings to the government), environmental prospects (conducive environment for the diversified fauna and flora of the area and contribute to the conservation and preservation process of the natural habitats), and socio-cultural prospects (develop indigenous socio-cultural practices and traditions and build the local communities sense of pride by their culture in the study area) a viable Ecotourism development strategy has to be formulated.

5. To enhance ecotourism development, all concerned stakeholders need to be empowered and mobilized towards a common goal of areas natural resource protection and economic growth through sustainable ways of resource use while all should be actively engaged in all ecotourism development processes from the scale and type of development decision to conservation and use of natural resources. All concerned governmental bodies are expected to be a focus on ecotourism its central roles in environmental protection, employment creation, foreign revenue generation and cultural preservation through active local community participation.



6. Focus of the future research should also be to assess the factors determining local community participation in Ecotourism development

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**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**APPENDIX 1:** A Research Questionnaire prepared for respondents on the challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development: The case of Arsi Negelle woreda.

**Dear respondents,**

The researcher is one of the master's students at Jimma University, College of Social sciences and humanities, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Master's program in "**Urban and Regional Development planning (URDP)**". As a partial requirement for the completion of the program, he is researching the "**challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development: The case of Arsi Negelle woreda**". The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect firsthand information on the theme at hand. All questions to be asked are purely for academic purposes. Your individual answers will be kept strictly confidential. The answers from respondents will be anonymously combined in the research analysis and no reference will be made to you in particular. So, please feel free for your perceptions, attitudes, opinions, experiences, and best of your knowledge about the challenges and prospects, contributions, and significance. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine responses.

**Thank you very much for your patience and collaboration!!!**

**N.B: No need of writing your name.**

**Part One:** General Profile of Respondent

Kebele name \_\_\_\_\_

Instruction: Please tick (✓) your choices from the given alternatives

1. Gender: Male  Female
2. Age: A. Below 20  B. 21- 30  C. 31- 40  D. 41-50  E. Above 52
3. Marital status: A. Married  B. Single  C. Divorced/Separated  D. Widowed

4. Education level: A. Illiterate  B. Read and write  C. Primary school  D. Secondary school   
E. above diploma/degree holder

5. Including yourself, how many members of your household are currently living with you?

A. 1  B. 2-3  C. 4-5  C. 6 and above

6. Source of income of the respondent's household heads. Mark your response with ()

A. Agriculture  B. Trade/Sales of handicrafts  C. Government employee  D. Daily wage   
 other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part Two: Community perception, attitude and interest towards Ecotourism development**

1. Do you know that ecotourism is going on in your village? A. Yes  B. No

2. Does agricultural income covers all household Expenditure? A. Yes  B. No

3. Does any member of your household participate in tourism-related activities?

A. Yes  B. No

4. Do you appreciate the coming of foreign visitors to your village? A. Yes  B. No

5. What could be your feeling if foreigners (visitors) come to your locality? And why?

A. Happy  B. Disturbed  C. No Opinion  D. Embraced  E. Indifferent

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you think the coming of foreigners to your locality can affect your culture? A. Yes  B. No

7. Have you faced any resource ownership problem as a result of ecotourism development in your area? A. Yes  B. No

### **Part Three: Questions related to the contribution of ecotourism to local development**

1) Are there tourism organizations in your village? A. Yes  B. No

2) If your answer to question Number "1" is yes, who is taking the initiatives for their establishment?

A. local community  B. Government  C. Nongovernmental Organizations  D. private business   
 If others specify \_\_\_\_\_

3) Have you benefited from ecotourism in your village/kebele A. Yes  B. No

4) Do you know the stakeholders who participate in ecotourism development in your village?

A. Yes  B. No

5) If your answer for number "6" is yes mention some of them \_\_\_\_\_

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7) Does ecotourism contributing to positive community development?

- A. Yes  B. No

8) If your answer for question Number “8” yes explain in what way? \_\_\_\_\_

**Part Five: Questions related Prospects of ecotourism development**

1) What is tourism contributing to the local economic development in your village?

- A. Job opportunity  B. Business opportunities  C. Development of infrastructures  D. Providing raw material

2) The statements written below are concerning ecotourism development in Arsi Negelle woreda. In each statement, you are expected to rate on a scale of one to five. A score of five indicates that you strongly agree with the statement, and a score of one indicates that you strongly disagree (NB.1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree and 5= strongly agree)

No	Items related to Economic prospects of ecotourism	Degree of opinion				
		Strongly disagree (✓)	Disagree (✓)	Undecided or Neutral (✓)	Agree (✓)	Strongly Agree (✓)
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Ecotourism will create employment opportunities and additional jobs in your kebele/village					
2	Ecotourism can contribute to positive local community capacity development in your village/kebele in the future					
3	Ecotourism development will create opportunities for investment and development of infrastructures.					
	<b>Items related to Environmental prospects of ecotourism</b>					
1	Does ecotourism development contribute to environmental conservation?					
2	Do you think ecotourism can be an ideal tool for environmental conservation?					
3	Ecotourism development can build environmental awareness and respect.					
	<b>Items related to Socio-cultural prospects of ecotourism</b>					

1	Ecotourism development can maintain local ownership, control and develop a sense of pride.					
2	Ecotourism minimizes physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts on the local community.					
3	Ecotourism should respect the rights and spiritual activities of the indigenous communities.					

**Part Five: Challenges towards ecotourism development**

The following questionnaires were related to the Socio-political Challenges towards ecotourism development and reply to them with 1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, and 5= strongly agree.

No	Kinds of problem	Degree of opinion				
		Strongly disagree (✓)	Disagree (✓)	Undecided or Neutral (✓)	Agree (✓)	Strongly Agree (✓)
1	Environmental disaster					
2	Political instability					
3	Lack of safety and security for visitors					
4	Lack of environmental safety					
5	Lack of quality assurance service					

If any other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

The following questionnaires were related to underdeveloped Infrastructural challenges of ecotourism development in relation to the tourism Infrastructure problem and reply to them with 1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree and 5= strongly agree.

No	Underdeveloped the an infrastructure problem	Degree of opinion				
		Strongly disagree (□)	Disagree (□)	Undecided or Neutral (□)	Agree (□)	Strongly Agree (□)
1	Lack of road access					
2	Shortage of telecommunication					
3	Shortage of health services					
4	Shortage of clean water					
5	Lack of electric power supply					

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2: Key Informant Interview Questions for Tourism officials, Experts, Tour Operators and Tour Guides.**

1. What do you know about ecotourism?
2. What are the cultural and natural eco-tourism potential products?
3. What kind of natural and cultural ecotourism potential products found in Arsi Negelle woreda?
4. Do you think ecotourism development in Arsi Negelle woreda has an economic benefit for the local community? How?
5. Based on your opinion, how ecotourism development in Arsi Negelle woreda can contribute to the conservation of the area?
6. Do you think the development of ecotourism can improve local ownership and create a sense of pride in the local community?

## **APPENDIX 3: Household survey questionnaires for Arsi Negelle woreda Culture and tourism Office experts**

**Dear respondents,**

The researcher is one of the master's students at Jimma University, College of Social science and humanities, Department of Geography and Ecotourism Studies, Master's program in **“Urban and Regional Development planning”**. As a partial requirement for the completion of the program, he is researching the **“challenges and prospects of ecotourism development and its implications on local economic development: The case of Arsi Negelle woreda”**. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect firsthand information on the theme at hand. All questions to be asked are purely for academic purposes. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The answers from respondents will be anonymously combined in the research analysis and no reference will be made to you in particular. so, please feel free for your perceptions, attitudes, opinions, experiences, and best of your knowledge about the challenges and prospects, contributions, and significance. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine responses.

**Thank you very much for your patience and collaboration!**

**N.B: No need of writing your name!!!**

Part One: General Profile of Respondent

Instruction: Please tick (✓) your choices from the given alternatives

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Sex: Male  Female

- 2) Age: A. 18- 28  B.29- 39  C. 40-50  D. > = 51
- 3) Education Level: A. Below certificate  B. Diploma  C. First Degree  D. MA/MSc and above
- 4) Year of Experience: A. 1-3 years  B. 4-6 years  C. 7-9 years  D. Above 10 years

**Part Two: Answer the following questions depending on the nature of the questions.**

1) In which ecotourism practices do the local communities participate? Your answer may be more than one. Mark your response with (✓)

No	Services	
1	House Renting and cultural shows	
2	Lodging	
3	Hotel Services	
4	Souvenir Sales	
5	Photographing	
6	Tour Guiding	
7	Horse Renting	

If anything different mention \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Based on your opinion, what forms of tourism development will be suitable within Arsi Negelle woreda?
- 3) Do you think ecotourism development should respect the rights and spiritual activities of the indigenous people? Why?
- 4) How do you measure the level of the local community's involvement in ecotourism?
- 5) What are the major factors that determine the local community's participation in ecotourism activities?
- 6) How do you think ecotourism development creates employment opportunities and the development of infrastructures in Arsi Negelle woreda?
- 7) Based on your view, does ecotourism development can raise the local Community's standard of living?
- 8) How far you go to overcome challenges and constraints to utilize the area's eco-tourism potential?
- 9) Do you have any recommendations to add?

#### **APPENDIX 4: Checklist for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

- 1) What are the challenges in undertaking ecotourism development in your locality?
- 2) What kinds of solutions are made to possible challenges?
- 3) Is tourism activities generate income for the local communities to improve their living standard?
- 4) Is ecotourism the current or potential opportunity to cope up with the livelihood options of the local communities?
- 5) What kinds of negative and positive economic challenges are happening in your locality as a result of ecotourism?
- 6) What kinds of negative and positive Socio-cultural challenges are happening in your locality as a result of ecotourism?
- 7) To what extent the local communities enjoy economic advantages from ecotourism activities?
- 8) Why tourism is not integrated into the local livelihood in your locality?
- 9) What mechanisms should be taken place to encourage community participation in tourism?

#### **APPENDIX 5: Checklist for Field Observation**

- 1) Major challenges and constraints of ecotourism development in the study areas.
- 2) The current level of ecotourism development in the areas.
- 3) The current level of infrastructure, accommodation, and facility.
- 4) Current Level of local community participation and factors determining their participation.
- 5) Areas Ecotourism potentials.
- 6) Status of stakeholders in the areas.
- 7) Current local community status and involvement.