

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Needs assessment for inter- and trans-disciplinary training and research for the enhancement of rural transformation in the *Amhara* region, Ethiopia**

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## Abstract

Ethiopia is an agrarian country and agriculture is the backbone of its economy. Because of this fact, the government of Ethiopia has devised Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) as the country's overall economic development policy and the country has been investing appreciably towards agricultural growth. Particularly for the last 15 years, public investment towards the expansion of higher education, research and extension in agriculture and natural resource management has been so enormous. These higher education and research institutions are expected in turn to play a great role in stimulating rural transformation. In reality, however, they are not sufficiently responsive to rural transformation especially in addressing problems and priorities of resource poor small-scale farmers. Thus, to assess the needs of trainings that are more responsive to rural transformation including inter- and trans-disciplinary trainings in higher education and research institutions is a paramount importance. To this effect, survey studies were conducted to collect primary information from focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Checklists and semi-structured questionnaires were also developed for respective groups of discussants and respondents. Stratified and purposive sampling technique was dominantly employed during the survey studies. Most respondents regardless their backgrounds were unaware of the term inter- and trans-disciplinary. This was because different stakeholders used to work independently which they had no experience how to integrate work in to a common goal. So, awareness on inter- and trans-disciplinary training/research can be created by practically involving stakeholders how they are working with in and across disciplines in which understandings change in response to the perspectives of others. Respondents who have awareness of the term inter- and trans-disciplinary training agreed with the relevance of inter- and trans-disciplinary training/research for addressing farmers' problems in stimulating rural transformation. Therefore, putting in to practice and giving emphasis on inter- and trans-disciplinary training/research in each stakeholder will much contribute to rural transformation.

**Keywords:** Rural transformation; Need assessment; Awareness; Responsiveness.

## INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia is an agrarian country and agriculture is the

backbone of its economy. Agriculture is thus believed to be the major source of the country's economic growth and its development is expected to adequately drive the process of industrialization. Because of this fact, the

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