



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**POTTERY PRODUCTION AN ASSET  
FOR WOMEN LIVELIHOOD  
CASE STUDY ON *KECHENE* WOMEN POTTERS  
IN ADDIS ABABAA**

**BY  
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ADDIS ABABA  
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**Running Head: POTTERY PRODUCTION ASSET FOR WOMEN LIVELIHOOD**

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa  
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Advisor: Alice.K.Johnson Butterfield (Professor)

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Mulu Yeneabat

## Glossary

<b><i>Eqube</i></b>	It is a traditional money saving association. One can be a member of more than one <i>Eqube</i> . The number of members usually could vary from two up to hundreds. The saving deposit dates defined according to the members' interest; either weekly, biweekly, or monthly. The members' capacity determines the amount of money to save. Each time they collect the saving, lot in the presence of all or the majority of the members will determine the member taking the saving.
<b><i>Gulele</i></b>	The name of one of the ten Sub Cities in Addis Ababa
<b><i>Injera</i></b>	A kind of pancake, Ethiopians staple diet, usually made from teff, but also prepared from grains such as barley, wheat, maize and sorghum and eaten with different soup
<b><i>Kebele</i></b>	The smallest administrative unit of the local government structure in Ethiopia
<b><i>Kechene</i></b>	A neighbourhood whereby weavers and potters communities are residing in the <i>Gulele</i> Sub City, in the Northern outskirts of Addis Ababa
<b><i>Edir</i></b>	Traditional voluntary self-help association organized for burial ceremony and comfort families of the deceased. One can be a member of more than two <i>Edirs</i> according to his/her wishes and capacity. <i>Edirs</i> could be organized based on neighbourhoods, Institutions, friendship, or on place of birth, etc. The dominant one is the <i>Edir</i> organized based on neighbourhoods.
<b><i>Tsewa Mahber</i></b>	A voluntary monthly get-together association organized by the Orthodox Christianity followers. In the Ethiopian Orthodox religion, the dates within the month are celebrated after angles, saints, holy trinity, holy savoir, etc. The members could choose one of the Saints names and celebrate it every month. An individual can have as many <i>Tsewa Mahbers</i> as his capacity and his devotion allows him to celebrate.
<b><i>Wot</i></b>	A kind of soup prepared from lentils, chickpeas, peas, meat.

## **Abstract**

The thesis explores the livelihoods of the women potters in the Kechene neighbourhood, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It focuses on how they ensure their livelihood by the (1) Traditional pottery production knowledge, 2) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery, 3) Business environment (production, market, and community attitudes), 4) Pottery production contributions to the family, and 6) Pottery production using a house as a production unit and/or association facilities. The research is a multiple case study using standard techniques for exploring the women potters' production and marketing of their products for their livelihood. In-depth interviews with 40 women potters and direct observations were the major sources of data. The 40 women potters were purposively selected from two potters association producing pottery within their association workshops and from two groups of potters making pots using their homes as a production unit. The research indicates that potters organized in association have a better working environment and marketing opportunity than those producing in their homes. It also shows that the stigma and discrimination against traditional handicrafts producers is decreasing. The prevailing production barriers to the pottery production activities are the lack of appropriate production tools and facilities such as pottery firing places. The clay soil site being used as a residential construction and green area plantation site is a crucial and burning issue to the potters which needs urgent correction by the city administration. Analyzing the production by four groups of potters, their pots are accepted by their customers. The potters appreciate their traditional skill and adore it. Transferring the traditional knowledge to younger generations was a common theme. Most of the potters had learned their skills from their mothers and are training their daughters. They are training and are willing to train others. They accept that the gender-based division of the traditional skill is not right; and both genders should know the skill and lead their livelihoods. The research indicates that traditional pottery producing women should be assisted in acquiring improved production tools such as wheels and production shades in small groups or large association as per their preference near to their living quarters. Market outlets and pottery design trainings are vital to potters. The level of stigma and discrimination, the relation of the potters with intermediary traders needs further in-depth qualitative study and research

## **Pottery Production an Asset for Women Livelihood**

The thesis explores women potters livelihood in *Kechene* neighborhood, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It demonstrates that traditional handicraft has a social and economic significance as a means of livelihood. It examines the ways in which pottery can provide security rather than just a survival or a coping strategy for the women endowed with the skill. The women engaged in pottery as income generating and livelihood activities depend on their access to the apprentice training from their families, relatives or neighbors and over assets such as raw materials (clay soil). Pottery is one of the strategies adopted by families to support themselves and build on their assets. In addition to pottery production by women, weaving is the major craft as a means of livelihood engaged by men in the neighborhood.

The second chapter is the background section of the thesis. It explores the literature on the history of the handicrafts in Ethiopia and the society's reaction to the producers' livelihood. Discussion of the theoretical literature of livelihoods using the sustainable livelihood framework developed by Department For International Development (1999) with the relevance of traditional pottery production is discussed. The framework shows how, in different contexts, sustainable livelihoods are achieved through access to different resources and opportunities. These different resources are physical assets such as property, human assets such as skills and time, social assets such as networks and collective assets, and natural capital such as land and raw materials. The opportunities include association memberships, networks, and government and/or institutional policies.

The third chapter is the research method. The research is a case study, which attempts to describe the life experience of potter women in their production and marketing efforts. The

significance of multiple case study approach is it combines different information from different sources to create a meaningful method of inquiry.

The fourth chapter is the case study from *Kechene* women potters derived from four groups of potters, and explores their livelihoods with six themes. The groups of potters are 1) *Kechene Women Potters Cooperative*, 2) *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget Women Potters Association*, 3) Women potters producing pottery using their house as a production unit, and 4) Women potters who withdrew their membership from the *Kechene Women Potters Cooperative*. The themes of the case study are; 1) Traditional pottery production knowledge, 2) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery; 3) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes); 4) Pottery production contributions to the family; and 5) Pottery production using a house as a production unit and/or association facilities; and 6) their personal profiles. The case study explores the value of the pottery production to explain how the traditional handicraft as a means to livelihood option can be successful.

Based on the findings, discussion is conducted in chapter five on the differences and similarities of the research findings. The livelihood of the potters' community with the sustainable livelihoods framework is discussed. It provides pottery's importance to the women's livelihoods. The concluding remarks emphasizes on the potter women's perspective as the focus of the research process and address issues relevant to the discipline of social work.

### ***Motivation for the study***

I came across the artesian community of the *Kechene* neighborhood (potters, weavers and blacksmiths) as a regular customer to the three traditional handicrafts producers when I was involved in a traditional artifacts export business including pottery from 1996 up to 2001.

I enjoyed my relationship with the artisans, more than I enjoyed my 19 years service as a civil servant. I learned a lot about the artesian community's production outputs with simple production tools used for centuries and their devotion to the traditional art. Based on this exposure, my colleagues and I conducted a group-work community assessment practice, as a first year student at the Addis Ababa University, School of Social Work Masters Program in 2005/2006 academic year. In due course, the Community Assessment Course Instructor, Prof. Alice K. Johnson Butterfield encouraged and recommended that it would be interesting to study this community, as a primary exploratory research in the discipline. This increased my desire to develop an in-depth understanding of the women potter's livelihood within the *Kechene* neighborhood.



## **Traditional Handicrafts**

Traditional handicrafts production and marketing are decentralized and unorganized sectors of the Ethiopian economy. Despite the long history and certain unique characteristics of cultural and religious manifestations of traditional handicrafts such as the blacksmith products (iron ploughshares, axes, knives, crosses, etc.), hand woven cotton clothes, clayware, religious paintings (icons, canvas paintings), the handicrafts sector and the crafts-people in Ethiopia were given little focus.

The traditional handicrafts sector is one of the most important sectors. It has long history of producing the most vital utilities associated with the daily lives of both the rural and urban community. It is this sector, which supplies agricultural utilities such as ploughshares and its accessories, cotton dresses of all sorts, and leather utilities (dresses, grain container and sleeping mats). The women potters produce the Ethiopian traditional baking plate, cooking pots and water containers. The blacksmiths produce jeweler with traditional designs from gold, silver, brass, nickel and copper, both for religious and other decorative purposes. Traditional handicrafts play a positive role in the daily lives of the community and are mediums of the communities' beliefs through the artistic designs and paintings.

The sons and daughters of the handicrafts producers are the heirs to the artistic traditions by continuing the craft making. They learn their skills from their fathers or mothers by family affiliations and learning by observation as apprentices. It is a home-based, small-scale production sector, which requires appropriate and minimum capital, infrastructure and/or training. The production activity utilizes existing local skills with locally available materials and the process could be easily adapted.

According to Dubois (1996, p. 6), the “traditional handicraft, in its original form is both a vocation and a way of life. Tourists may thus experience for themselves a living museum of a most diverse culture where the old co-exists with the new in everyday life of its people.” In the Ethiopian community, traditional handicraft production and marketing as an income generating activity facilitates the economic, cultural and social balance. Almost all the agricultural and pastoral communities are dependent on the traditional handicrafts for generations, and the handicraft producers still use their skills as a primary source of income.

The Ethiopian traditional handicrafts (blacksmith, tannery, pottery and weaving) are full of many paradoxes. As an example, basketry and cotton spinning are handicrafts, which measure women’s competence and respect within the community members. However, weavers, who transform the spin yards into clothes, have had no respect by the users of their products. Smith products (gold, silver, brass, nickel or copper) are highly appreciated signifying the prestigious status of women. Religious artifacts such as processional and hand crosses play vital roles for Orthodox Christian celebrations and daily activities, but blacksmiths have been highly stigmatized and despised.

### ***Background of Traditional Handicraft Producers***

The traditional handicrafts producers (potters, blacksmiths, weavers and tanners) used to be marginalized groups and were not allowed to own land. They were forced to live in separate villages without intermarrying with other community members (Quirin, 1977, cited in P.M. McNutt 2001. Quirin argues that the segregation and the out-casting of the Beta Israelis had a religious motivation. Since they refused to convert from their Judaic religion to Christianity, Emperor Yeshaq who ruled Ethiopia between 1413 and 1430 proclaimed, “May he who is baptized in the Christian baptism inherit the land of his father; otherwise let him be

uprooted from his father's land and be a stranger (*falaa si*). Since then the [Beta] Israel were called Falashas (*falaa shoch*)” (Quirin, 1998, p. 201).

The displacement of the Beta Israelis from the land they plough forced them to be tenants. In order to compensate their lost income, they engaged in handicrafts production. “Because they didn't have land, they were working as carpenters and builders and the women were doing pottery” (Quirin, 1998, p. 201). Since then the predominantly known traditional handicrafts producers were the Falashas. They used to live in the highlands of Ethiopia in the present day Tigray and Amhara Regional States. The Falashas call themselves “Beta Israel [and] attempted to maintain the purity of their people by self-imposed religious isolation ... [T]he marginality of these people is reinforced by both the Beta Israel themselves [residing in Gondar] and by the dominant groups, who call them Falasha” (Quirin, 1977, p. 218). This had imposed sanctions reinforced by each side. According to Leslau (1979, p. XL) their integration was considered as “polluting. [And] some Ethiopians call them ‘don't touch me’” (cited in: McNutt, 2001). The general population also used to fear the Beta Israel and avoid them except for the necessary exchange of goods in the market place. Much of the fear exhibited by non-Beta Israel groups was reinforced by the belief that the Beta Israelis possessed by "evil eye" which can cause illness or death ((Quirin, 1979, p. 251, cited in McNutt, 2001). Quirin states:

The root of the attitudes may lie in the mystery surrounding the process of transforming earth into clay and “rock” into iron in the context of a technologically simple society. In such a society, those who can work such transformations are naturally assumed to have supernatural help.

This applies to all traditional handicrafts producers throughout the country as indicted by Hallpike C. R. (1968) research conducted about the Konso artisans (Southern Ethiopia).

The segregation, marginalization and uprooting of the Beta Israelis from landownership is explained by Emperor Yeshaq's proclamation that landownership is allowed only for Orthodox Christians. In addition, in Southern Ethiopia there were different myths to the discrimination and the displacement, as if the traditional handicrafts producers "are seen more as associated with nature and the wild... Where kinship is posited, the marginalized group is often described as sibling with lower status" (Pankhurst A., 1999, p. 488).

A research conducted by Karsten (1972) about the traditional handicrafts producers (blacksmith, weavers and tanners) in Southern Ethiopia confirmed that they marry women potters as wives. The potters and all the handicrafts producers were discriminated, intermarriage with farmers and the nobility was impossible, and they were assumed as possessed with evil spirit and causes for illness and death.

Prof. R. Pankhurst reaffirmed this by citing historical records as far as the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century explorers such as Almeida, Barradas and Ludolf. The handicrafts producers faced serious offensive punishments up to death for the crimes they did not commit. "It was 'quite usual' to 'suspect nearly all illness as coming from sorcerers' and to 'attribute them to the blacksmiths'. 'Many' of the later paid for their assumed guilt with lives" (Pankhurst, R., 1993, Dieci and Viezzoli [eds], p. 253). This has played a negative role in the development of the handicrafts sector and the well-being of the artisans.

Anne Cassiers in her research on the Handicrafts and Technical Innovations in Ethiopia described that it "is not only in Ethiopia that those who work with fire are considered to possess evil powers ... Society would call on them to provide certain implements and practical objects, but kept them in a marginal position" (Cassiers, 1975, p. 104). The

marginalization and the plight of the traditional handicrafts producers in other parts of the world faced similar difficult destiny:

[I]f born a blacksmith one will always be a blacksmith ... no one from the class of rulers or subjects will not marry into them, nor will they eat or drink with them ...

[T]hey must live on the outskirts of 'normal' society so that their noise and smoke does not pollute the public ... The craft is hereditary; the female child ... will be a potter, and the male child may work with iron, aluminium, wood, or leather (Tobert, 1985, pp. 279-280).

Some historians and anthropologists take the plight of the handicrafts producers back to Cain and Abel as the manifestation of rivalry between the siblings. They cite their evidence from Genesis 4:9-22. The text states that as a punishment for killing his brother Abel, Cain was cursed that:

as an agriculturalist for whom the earth will bear no fruit ... a wanderer ... As the ancestor of both city dwellers ... and tent dwellers ... he represents a kind of social marginality... His other descendants, a metalworker ... and a musician ... introduce to culture both arts and technology (McNutt, 1999, pp. 45, 54).

The age-old persecution of the blacksmiths in particular and all the handicrafts producers for generations was catastrophic and degrading. In a heart breaking words, one of the blacksmiths interviewed by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century travelers Combes and Tamsier explained his suffering, as having relations with devil and being a cause of illness and death. In fear of persecution, he exiled himself from the Semein province (present day North Gondar) to Tigre, then to Gondar, again to Amhara (Wollo) and to Gojjam. Nevertheless, wherever he went his

persecution followed him. At last, he decided not to live as a blacksmith and started to live as a monk confined in a cave. He described his life to Combes and Tamsier in such a way.

Oh! If instead of being a blacksmith I had worked the land or adopted the occupation of a soldier, I would not have had to exile myself. I would still be in my native country, in the midst of a family which loved me; and here I live alone in a cave which wild animals will perhaps one day dispute with me. Oh! Why was I born a blacksmith? My skill in that art made my entire life miserable. (Combes and Tamsier 1838, IV, pp. 73-6. cited in Pankhurst, R., 1993, p. 263)

The Ethiopian nobilities and rulers further enforced the segregation and persecution of the traditional handicrafts producers. Emperor Yohannes 1<sup>st</sup> declared a proclamation in 1668 A.D. for “the separation of Muslims and Falashas, or Beta Esra'el, popularly known as Ethiopian Jews.” The decree stated that, “The Falashas called Kayla, who is of the Jewish religion, must not live with Christians, but must separate themselves from them, and live apart, forming a village” (Pankhurst, 2001, [www.addistribune.com/Archives/2001/01/19-01-01/Praise.htm](http://www.addistribune.com/Archives/2001/01/19-01-01/Praise.htm)). This is a continuation of Emperor Yeshaq’s uprooting the Beta Israelis and taking more segregating and discriminating measures. Emperor Yohannes issued a second decree in 1678, ordering strict segregation of both Muslims and *Falashas*. Accordingly, they settled in the outskirts of Gondar city. Their settlement area is still, popularly called *Kayla Meda*, or *Falasha* Field.

The persecution of the traditional handicrafts producers (the Beta Israelis) in Northern Ethiopia (present day Amhara region) was severe. They were segregated and most of the times fled away in search of refuge of the warlords who need their arts. According to one of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Ethiopian popular chroniclers, Asma Giyorgis, the traditional handicrafts producers

fled to Shoa from Gondar. The warlord (the then ruler of Shoa) Abbeyye “treated them ‘respectfully’. They made him axes and chisels with which the people of Sawa [Shoa] cleared the forest of Yefat, as well as sickles, hoes and ploughshares which enabled them to cultivate the province more efficiently” (Bairu Tafla.1987:513.cited in Pankhurst, 1993:261). This shows their major role in the agrarian transformation of the country. Even when they exiled to Shoa and were described as living ‘respectfully’, they settled forming their own isolated villages in “Morat and Zalla, in the vicinity of Fecce” (Pankhurst, 1993, p. 264).

In order to stop the persecution of the traditional handicrafts producers and recognizing their vital role in the livelihoods of the community, Emperor Menelik II proclaimed a decree on January 25, 1908:

[D]o not insult the artisan for the trade he practices ... All human creatures take their root from Adam and Eve... God said to Adam, ‘You will earn your bread by the sweat of your brow.’ If this no longer holds and everyone indulges in sloth, then there is no government, there is no country. And you who proffer insults, you empty my country and bring ruin upon it by depriving it of those who sharpen the ploughshare. From now on, for he who thus proffers these insults, it is I he is insulting, not the other one (Cassiers, A. 1975, p. 103).

In addition to the proclamation, Emperor Menelik II encouraged the traditional handicrafts producers to settle around the newly established capital city, Addis Ababa. Gold smiths and other decoration and embroidery workers settled near to the palace named Serategna Sefer, while the women potters with their husbands (weavers and blacksmiths) from present day Northern Shoa (Morat) settled in the present day *Kechene* neighborhood for its proxy to the clay soil.

Even though the segregation and discrimination of the handicrafts producers did not decrease, persecution as the cause of illness and death started to decrease. Urbanization, modern education, the advent of industrialization and tourism has increased the social interaction between different social groups contributing to attitudinal changes between and within the artisans and the other social groups.

Recounting the discrimination and segregation of the traditional handicrafts producers based on different myths leads one to ask an important question, 'How were these traditional skills transferred from generation to generation despite all these difficulties?' As what the blacksmith who wished to abandon his craft, while recounting his life to Combes and Tamsier, why they did not become soldiers or fled to far villages and abandon the crafts and live as farmers or pastoralists? This is a hard question to answer because the inheritance and transferring of the traditional skill used to continue.

### ***Sustainable Livelihoods Framework***

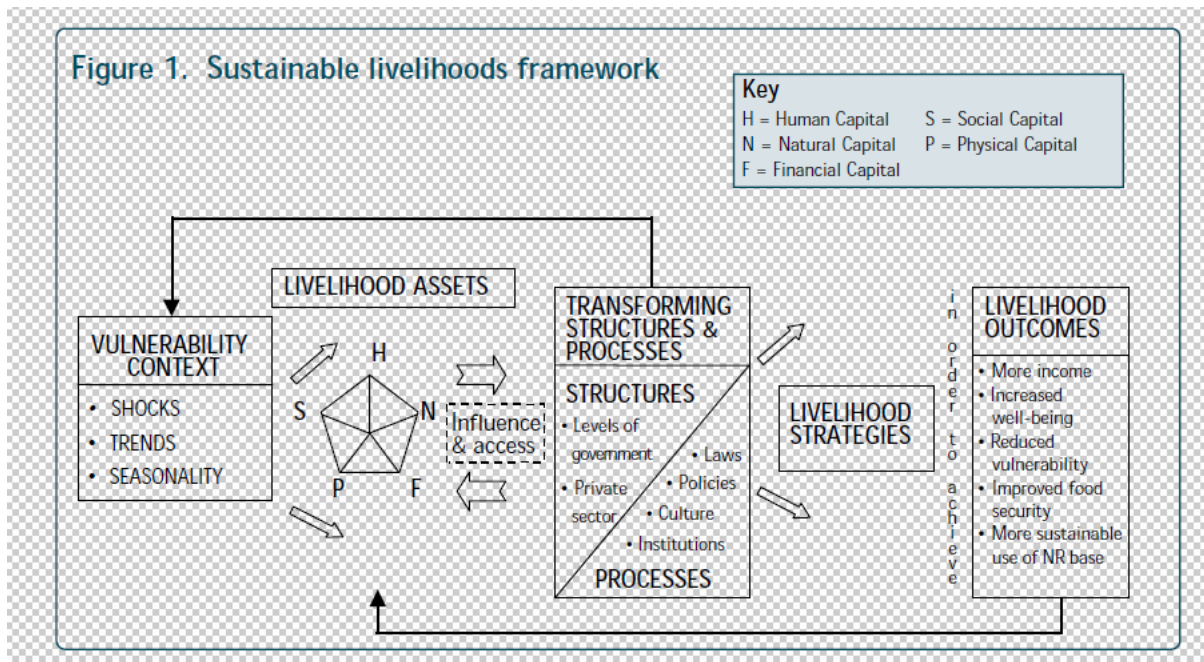
People who have limited financial resources often have other assets or strengths that give them possibilities. Chambers and Conway (1992, pp. 9-12) define livelihood as "... the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base." Accordingly, livelihood is a set of economic activities, involving self-employment and/or wage-employment by using one's endowed skills (human and material) to generate adequate resources (cash and non-cash), for meeting the requirements of self and the household, usually carried out as a means of life. Livelihood should keep a person meaningfully occupied in a sustainable manner and with confidence.



Individuals and household members use different actions to lead and improve their livelihood. They may produce and consume whatever they produce or exchange their products for necessities. Those who could not produce to meet their consumption may specialize in different skills like the artisans, uprooted from the land they plough because of their dedication to their Jewish religion, to produce artifacts to exchange for their necessities.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework advocated by the Department For International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom puts emphasis on people and their full participation (DFID, 1999). The framework gives a checklist of fundamental topics and illustrations about their relationships. It also gives a picture on the basic interdependence and processes giving emphasize in their interactions between the various factors on the outcomes of the livelihoods.

According to DFID, livelihood is a combination of resources and activities used in order to live. The resource might consist of human capital (individual skills and abilities), natural capital (land, water, soil and forest), financial capital (earnings, savings), physical capital (equipment, infrastructures like roads, telecommunications, production places, etc.) and social capital (formal support groups or informal networks that facilitate in the activities). These correlate with the livelihoods asset pentagon in the Sustainable Livelihood framework (Fig 1).



The arrows within the framework are used as shorthand to denote a variety of different types of relationships, all of which are highly dynamic. None of the arrows imply direct causality, though all imply a certain level of influence.

Source: DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets Section 2.1, April 1999.

The DFID defines human capital as the skill, knowledge, ability to labor, physical capability and good health that enable people to choose different livelihood strategies and fulfill their livelihood objectives. Human capital is a factor of the amount and quality of labor available; depending on each household, individual skill levels associated with the ability to use the labor of other household members. Human capital makes the framework people-focused, since it demonstrates that all the other four capitals require people to use any of the four types of assets. Qualified and appropriately trained human capital considerably could add up to social (networks) and financial (flows of money, more savings and more supply) and natural (land, raw materials) capitals for productive activities.

The sustainable livelihoods perspective fits with an understanding of the women potters' efforts with their daily entrepreneurship of managing the opportunities and risks of diverse and complex tasks to the promotion of traditional handicrafts as a sustainable

livelihood asset. For women potters, if their traditional skill (human capital) is facilitated with the provision of suitable production equipments such as wheels, soil grinders, mixers and kilns (physical capital) closely linked to the capability to enter markets (social capital); it will make their production process easier. The time spent on producing with obsolete tools, if assisted with these facilities would improve their products and the women could have more time with their family and contribute to their community development.

The research would like to show that the traditional handicrafts producers' basic human capital (traditional skills) can contribute to the sustainable livelihoods of their families. The research is based on the understanding that qualitative measures of the five components of assets (the pentagons) formulated by DFID namely human, social, natural, physical and financial, in relation to the *Kechene* neighborhood women potters' livelihood.

The *Kechene* women potters' livelihoods depend on access to the assets, which fall into the DFID's five pentagon categories. No individual category of capital is sufficient on its own to create a livelihood, but must incorporate all with particular emphasis to human capital. Based on this, pottery is a useful means of strengthening the *Kechene* potter's livelihoods because it uses and creates a range of assets based on the women's human capital (Table 1).

Table 1. Type of Capital (asset) for Traditional Pottery Production

<b>Type of Capital</b>	<b>To access</b>
Natural	Clay soil, tiny sand stones, water, sunshine
Human	Traditional knowledge, skills, good health, strength to work, market
Physical	Production tools, transport and communication, production place, firing materials (energy)
Social	Business environment, friends, networks, membership groups, market information
Financial	Initial capital, savings, access to credit or grants

## Method

### *Case Study Design*

According to Yin (2003, pp. 21-28) for case studies the most important and relevant components of a research design are five: “a study's questions; its propositions, if any; its unit(s) of analysis; the logic linking of the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the findings.” This study will use standard techniques for exploring the women potters’ production and marketing of their products for their livelihood. The data collected through exploring women’s traditional pottery production knowledge; the market supply and demand for the pottery; the business environment (production, market, community attitudes); the contributions of the income from pottery to the family; and the production facilities are the basis upon which to interpret and understand the potters livelihoods. It is appropriate to probe different issues to provide explanations for the potters’ livelihoods. Answers from the probed questions can provide a rich knowledge about potters. In this research, the potters in *Kechene* have many similar livelihood activities, but have different levels of production facilities, which can give insights about their production process and earnings from their production.

The study focuses on exploring the women potters’ production knowledge, the business environment, marketing of their products and their incomes contribution for their livelihood. The analysis of the findings provides grounds to understand the overall livelihood of the *Kechene* potter women.

The study uses a case study research method because this method is appropriate for describing the individual and collective views, opinions and life experiences of the potter women. Yin (2003, pp.13-14) gives a detailed and technical definition of case studies:

1. *A case study is an empirical inquiry that*

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident...

2. *The case study inquiry*

- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis

Case studies provide opportunities for in-depth assessment of the *Kechene* women potters' situations associated with their livelihoods, organization or population. Case studies can involve in-depth interviews with participants and key informants, the examination of documents, archival records, existing data, and physical artifacts as well as direct and participant observation. Case studies have a practical function in that they can be immediately applicable to understand the case in research. According to Yin, "the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence..." (2003, p. 8). Accordingly, the sources of information for this case study include all of the above, but with more emphasis on in-depth interviews, direct observation, physical artifacts (pottery and its raw materials).

When the research case is an individual, an important concept to consider is its life history. According to Yin (2003, p. 2) "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the

desire to understand complex social phenomena [because] the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events.” Case studies are chosen as a research strategy when questions such as “who, “what, “where, “how” and "why" are posed to inquire about the case, when the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on some real-life circumstance (pp. 5-10).

### ***Research Questions***

Research questions guiding the case study ask about the description and experience of the phenomenon in question. As part of the case study protocol, Yin proposes that the set of case study questions are the core points of the method. The research questions keep the researcher focused in the right direction. The researcher side-by-side with direct observation administers the designed in-depth open-ended interview guides. These facilitate the researcher’s efforts to move closer to understand the experiences and the life situation of the participants. The questions are broad and loosely structured, in line with the objective of the research. The major questions addressed in this research give special emphasis to, “What are the means the potter women use to lead their livelihoods?” To answer this, the following exploratory questions are posed with regard to their pottery production knowledge and its means as a source of livelihood.

- 1) What are the sources of their traditional pottery production knowledge?
- 2) How is the market supply and demand for traditional pottery?
- 3) How is the business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)?
- 4) What is the contribution of pottery production to the family?
- 5) What are the facilities of pottery production using a house as a production unit and/or association facilities?

6) And questions including their personal profiles (Appendix A).

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Data collection and analysis occur as process, wherein the researcher moves between the literature and field data collection. Contributions to this case study came from published books, journals, in-depth interview and direct observation. Yin (2003, pp. 67-77) offers a basic protocol for case study, field procedures, case study questions, and a guide for the final write up. He argues that such steps are important in increasing the reliability of the research.

Table 2. Data Collection Themes and Sources

Data collection Themes	Data Collection Sources	Result/Analysis	Conclusion
<b>What are the means the potter women use to lead their livelihoods?</b> 1. Traditional pottery production knowledge 2. Market supply and demand for traditional pottery 3. Business environment 4. Pottery production contribution to family 5) Pottery production using a house as a production unit and/or association facilities 6) Personal profiles	<i>Kechene</i> Women Potters Cooperative	Findings Analyzed	Multiple Cases Discussed And Implications forwarded
	<i>Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget</i> Women Potters Association	Findings Analyzed	
	Potters who withdrew their membership for the Cooperative	Findings Analyzed	
	Women potters producing using their house as a production unit	Findings Analyzed	

The above table shows the theme of the data to be collected from the four groups of potters. According to Yin (2003, p. 75),

Such tables shall help in several ways. First... force you to identify exactly what data are being sought. Second, they ensure that parallel information will be collected at different sites where a multiple-case design is being used. Finally... aid in understanding what will be done with the data.

The different sources of the data make the research a multiple-case design. The case study uses the multiple-case design, because “[t]he evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust” (Herriott & Firestone, 1983, cited in Yin, 2003, p. 46). The data collected from each individual group of potters separately “in which convergent evidence is sought regarding the facts and conclusions of the case; each case’s conclusions are then considered [first separately but later]... Both the individual ... and multiple case results ... should be the focus of a summary report” (Yin, 2003, p. 50). The multiple case study method is used since it allows to document in depth the experience of the potters studied. Having more than one case allows discovering elements of similarities and differences. It is with this understanding that the four groups of potters are selected to explore the livelihood of the potters based on different data themes.

Being guided by the above table (Table 2), data are collected from potter women, working in two different potter associations and potter women working using their houses as a production unit and women potters who withdrew their membership from one of the cooperatives. My previous relationship with the members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative, when I was involved in a traditional artifact export business, made these women potters more accessible. However, for the rest of the potters, exploratory visits in the neighborhood using the previous contacts with some of the potters in the neighborhood were necessary. Only after frequent contacts and through direct observation I was in position to prearrange home and workshop visits. The leaders of the two potters associations assisted me in meeting potters and in conducting the interviews. This facilitated good communication with potters who were taking a keen interest in the research and volunteered to contribute some of their time. The most convenient places to meet potters in *Kechene* were their production

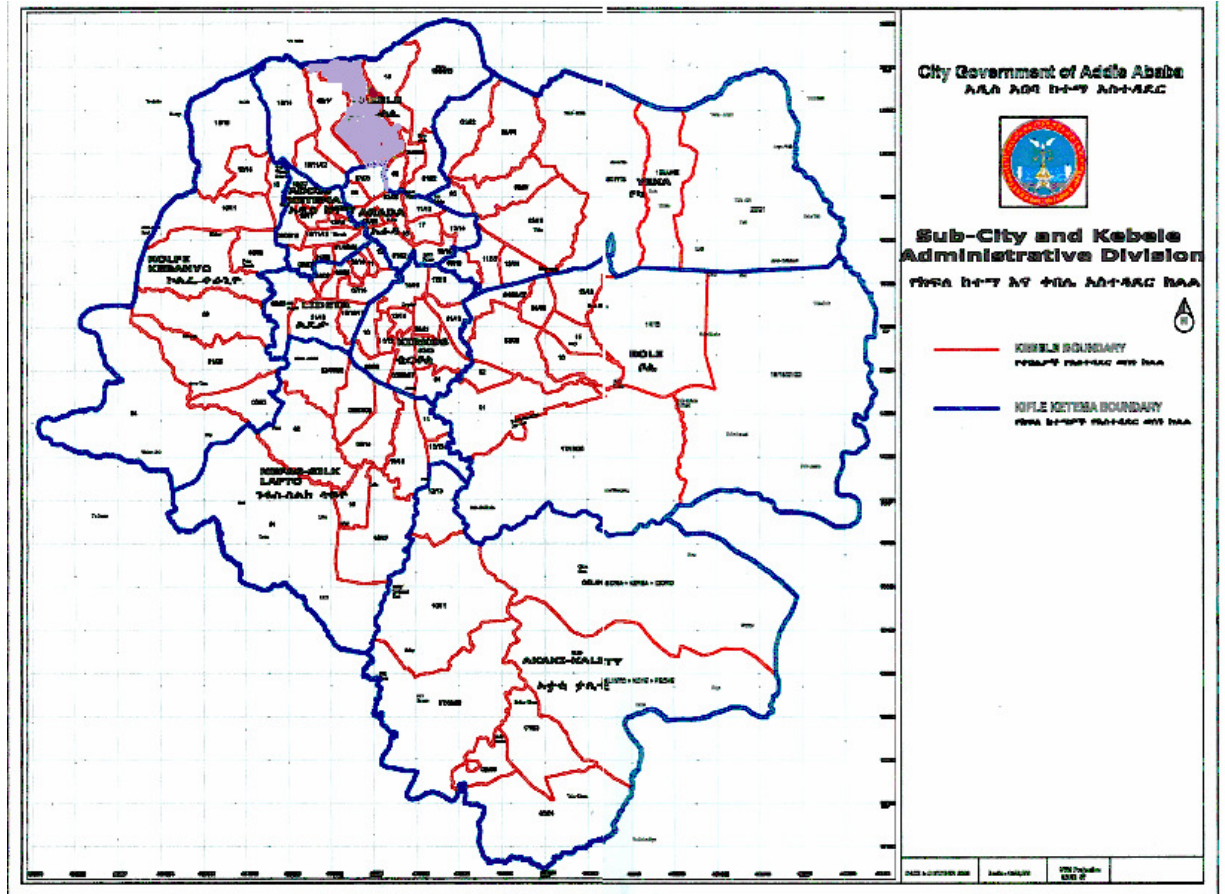


places, both at home and in the workshops. No interviews interrupted their production activities.

The interview sessions with the 29 potters, a tape recorder was used to record the interviews and took from one hour up to three hours. The women were free to stop me and ask for clarifications. The actual recorded times for the interviews were between 25 minutes and 70 minutes. Eleven of the potters preferred the interview session without a tape recorder. According to their preference, the researcher took notes, and the session took 90 minutes each, on average. The interviews were carried out over ten days between 25 April and 27 May 2007 within the *Kechene* neighborhood. Most of the interviewed data were checked and corrected in the same day, while some were checked and corrected the next day. The interviews were transcribed in Amharic word by word and then translated in to English.

### ***Research Site***

The research was conducted in a neighborhood, popularly known as *Kechene*, presently referred as *Kebele* 08/16 and *Kebele* 07/17. According to *Gulele* Sub City Administration, there are 3,000 potters and 60,000 weavers out of the 346,023 residents. The majority of the potters (2,852 of the 3,000) are residing in the *Kechene* (*Kebeles* 08/16 and 07/17) among the population of 77,766. There are also 18,400 weavers in these two *kebeles* (*Kechene* neighborhood,). There are four potters associations with 638 registered members. However, presently there are only three women potters' associations with 34 members, and two newly organized potters associations with 41 and 12 members are functional.



Legend: - *Kechene* neighborhood,   
*Kebele 08/16 and Kebele 07/17*

## Participants

The research participants are 25 women potters living in the *Kechene* neighborhood organized in two pottery producers' associations, 5 potters who have withdrawn their membership and 10 women producing pottery by using the house as a production unit. Selection of the women potters for the interview was through purposive sampling. The rationale for purposive sampling is to acquire most knowledgeable informants on the study area and to increase its validity and avoid the limitations of case study design. Yin (2003, pp.33-39) discusses about the criteria for judging the quality and validity of research based on

the sources of information. He argues that “to increase construct validity when doing case studies... the use of *multiple sources of evidence*, in a manner encouraging convergent lines of inquiry ... is relevant during data collection” (p. 36). The data with regard to the potters’ livelihood in the *Kechene* neighborhood is collected from the four groups of potters, direct observation and the literatures reviewed are the multiple sources to validate this multiple case study. The focus of the research is on the potters within their livelihood context.

### ***Ethical considerations***

The women potters gave their consent to participate in the research. After their consent, they signed an agreement, which states that they agreed to give information on their own free will and allows the researcher to use the information for academic purposes only (Appendix B). The researcher also agreed not to disclose their names. The informed consent was prepared in Amharic and read to each participant individually. The participants were compensated with Birr 25 (US\$ 2.75) for the time they spent in providing information for the study according to the agreement.

### ***Procedures***

An open-ended structured interview guide was adapted from the United States Alternative Development, Inc. (2004) impact assessment methodology prepared to assess the contribution of stakeholders on the private sector with particular emphasis to the micro and small enterprise sector at different levels. The adapted thematic issues are developed to design the interview guide to collect data for the case study about the livelihoods of potter women. The interview guide was pre-tested using five participants, for cultural, gender, social and ethical issues. Based on the feedback, the interview guide was modified avoiding questions that were ambiguous, culturally insensitive and less relevant. The research adviser approved the final interview guide before conducting the research. The researcher administered all the in-depth interviews. The in-depth interview communication language was the country's federal working and the community's mother tongue, Amharic.

The interviews were conducted in the homes and production workshops of the potters so as not to disrupt their production. Based on the consent of the 29 participants, a tape recorder was used for the interview sessions. Notes were taken based on the loosely structured questionnaires. The other 11 participants preferred to conduct the interview without a tape recorder. Transcribing all the tape-recorded interviews, first made in Amharic word by word, and translated into English by the researcher. Categorizing the translated information was prepared case by case for analysis.

### ***Analysis***

According to Yin (2003, p. 109) data analysis consists of "examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study." The analysis focused on linking the data to the research proposal and clarified the findings.

In this study, major themes identified with the use of in-depth interviews and direct observations assisted by different secondary sources come out as focal areas of the analysis. Four complete cases are analyzed (two groups of potters associations, potters producing in the house as production unit, potters who withdrew their membership from cooperatives). These groups of potters were selected to explore the livelihood of different groups of potters with different capacities, production physical facilities and market outlet opportunities. This might help to find out whether working in association or cooperatives or residential house as a production unit is more appropriate for the potters. Analysis is made separately with focus on describing the potter women's (1) Personal profiles, 2) Traditional pottery production knowledge, 3) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery, 4) Business environment (production, market, community attitudes), 5) Pottery production contributions to the family, and 6) Pottery production using a house as a production unit and/or association facilities.

The research has the following three limitations.

1. The research participant cases are few in number and cannot represent all women potters in the *Kechene* neighborhood.
2. As the life of potters, have passed through severe cultural stigma and marginalization, so the women potters might have not given clear answers to culturally sensitive question and their incomes.
3. As potters are all females, the cultural biases in responding to a male researcher might be another additional barrier.

## Results

The case study from *Kechene* women potters derived from four groups of potters, and explored their livelihoods with six themes. Data collected from the four case study groups are from –

- Case Study A. *Kechene* Women’s Potters Cooperative
- Case Study B. *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Potters Association
- Case Study C. Women Potters producing pottery in their houses
- Case Study D. Potters who withdrew their membership from the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative

**Table 3. Personal Profile of the Women Potters**

		<i>Kechene</i> Women Potters Coop.		<i>Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget</i> Potters Association		Potters producing using their house		Potters withdrew membership <i>Kechene</i> Potters Coop.		Total	
		N <sup>o</sup>	%	N <sup>o</sup>	%	N <sup>o</sup>	%	N <sup>o</sup>	%	N <sup>o</sup>	%
Age	19-28	1	6	6	60	3	30			10	25.0
	29-38	3	20	2	20	3	30			8	20.0
	39-48	7	47	1	10	2	20	1	20	11	27.5
	49-58	4	27	1	10	2	20	4	80	11	27.5
Marital Status	Single	2	13	3	30	2	20			7	17.5
	Married	9	60	3	30	5	50	2	20	19	47.5
	Widowed	2	13	2	20	1	10			5	12.5
	Separated	2	13	2	20	2	20	3	60	9	22.5
Education Status	Illiterate	1	6	2	20	1	10			4	10.0
	Read/Write	3	20	2	20	3	30			8	20.0
	Grade1-6	5	33	3	30	3	30	3	60	14	35.0
	Grade 7-12	6	40	3	30	3	30	2	40	14	35.0
Residence	Personal	6	40			3	30	1	20	10	25.0
	Public	8	53	7	70	4	40	4	80	23	57.5
	Individual	1	6	2	20	2	20			5	12.5
	Dependent			1	10	1	10			2	5.0
Family Size	1-5	6	40	9	90	4	40	5	100	24	60.0
	6-10	8	53	1	10	6	60			15	37.5
	11+	1	6							1	2.5
Monthly Income from Pottery	100-250			4	40	9	90	2	40	15	37.5
	251-400	1	6	2	20	1	10	2	40	6	15.0
	401-500	7	47							7	17.5
	501-1000	6	40					1	20	7	17.5
	1001 +	1	6							1	2.5
	Difficult to estimate			4	40					4	10.0
Info. & Commu.	Radio	15	100	10	100	10	100	5	100	40	100.0
	T.V.	15	100			5	50	1	20	21	52.5
	Telephone	13	87			5	50	1	20	19	47.5
Social Network	<i>Eqube</i>	13	87	10	100	6	60	5	100	34	85.0
	<i>Edir</i>	15	100	10	100	10	10	5	100	40	100.0
	<i>Tsewa Mahiber</i>	13	87	5	50	5	50	5	100	28	70.0
Status	Well to do	7	47	3	30	3	30			13	32.5
	Satisfactory	8	53	6	60	5	50	5	100	24	60.0
	Unsatisfactory			1	10	2	20			3	7.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>5</b>			

Table 3 is prepared to show the summary of the four case study participants involved in the multiple case study. Each group's detailed personal profile is discussed within each group.

### **The *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative members**

#### ***a) Personal profile of cases***

Personal profiles of the 15 potters interviewed among the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative members explain that nine are married, two widowed, and two divorced, while one is single. Their age ranges between 28 years and 59 years. Their educational status: one is illiterate, one knows how to read and two know how to read and write, while the others are between grades 4 and 10 dropouts (Table 3). Eight of the potters are living in *Kebele* 08/16 while the other seven are living in *Kebele* 07/17.

Their income ranges from Birr 400 up to Birr 1,000 with one exceptional potter who declares that she earns by the present market Birr 2,000. Seven of them declare that they earn Birr 500 per month. The income from their pottery supports family members ranging from 2 up to 14. Out of the nine potters who are married, four of them have husbands as weavers; one of them is a guard and, at the same times, a part-time weaver, while the other three are taxi drivers. The women say that it is difficult to tell their husbands monthly income, due to market fluctuation in the traditional dress market and for other reasons they do not want to tell. The husband of one of the potter's was a carpenter, but now he is too old to work and his wife's income from pottery is their source of livelihood. The other seven potters have no other income other than their pottery.

Six of the potters own their private residential houses, while eight of them live in public houses by paying the rent to the *Kebele* administration. The other one lives by renting a

house from an individual. Thirteen of them have their own private dry pit latrines, while the two share with their neighbors. Twelve of them have their own water pipe, while three share with others. Fourteen have their private kitchen, while one shares with her neighbors. All of the potters' home have electricity. All the interviewed potters have a radio and a television. Twelve of them have a telephone.

The researcher asked the potters how they perceive and categorize their living conditions as per their income. Five of the potters categorize their living and economic status as very satisfactory; eight regard it as satisfactory while the other two say they have a very good living standard. Their basic standard to measure their status is that they are healthy and are able to work and earn their livelihood. They support their argument by saying that they are able to support their family and fulfill their social obligations. Eleven of them are members of two *Edirs* (traditional burial associations); two are members of three *Edirs* while the other two are members of four *Edirs*. Thirteen of the potters are members of *Tsewa Mahbers* (the monthly get together religious associations), with members ranging from 12 up to 60; while two are not members of the *Tsewa Mahbers*. Thirteen potters save money through the traditional saving scheme, *Eqube*. They save each week from Birr 20 up to Birr 40. One of the potters, who did not use the *Eqube* to save money say that she deposits her income; using her bank account. However, the remaining potter say that she consumes whatever she earns since her family size is large.

***b) Traditional pottery production knowledge***

The women learnt the traditional pottery skill from their mothers by observing and assisting small pottery errands at some stage in their childhood. Out of the 15 potters interviewed, three acquired the skill from someone else besides their mothers. Two of them



say that they learnt the skill from their elder sisters, while one learnt from her neighbor potters. Even though the members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative gain the knowledge of the traditional skill from their mothers, sisters and neighbors, they testify that, it is after they organized their Cooperative that they became more professional in pottery designs and production. In the Cooperative, they improved their skill by learning from each other and qualified pottery experts gave them different trainings. One of the potters clearly testified that she learnt “the art from those potter women with best skills.” Another potter also said that:

Ever since my childhood, I was observing and assisting my mother with small pottery errands such as soil grinding, sieving, and smoothening. After a thorough observation ..., I started to work by myself. Even though I was capable of producing traditional pottery by that time, it was after I joined the Cooperative that I managed to produce more quality items with different designs and standards.

The raw materials for traditional pottery production according to the potters are different types of clay soils, tiny sand stones and broken pieces of used pottery. The broken pieces are particularly from the traditional bread, *Injera*, baking plate. The broken pieces are grounded up and serve to ferment the clay mud. These resources are available in the area. Traditionally, potters themselves or with the assistance of their family members used to dig and fetch the clay soil and the clay firing materials. Now, there are people who dig and sell to the potters by packing it on donkey’s back or on children’s shoulders. The source of the clay soil is *Mariam* River and *Meketeya* within the neighborhood, while the source of the tiny sand stones is the outskirts of *Kechene*. Cow dung, logs of wood and eucalyptus branches and leaves are the materials used to fire the clay pots. These are sold in the area and sometimes their customers bring it to the potters’ workshop. Previously, the potters used to collect broken



their houses is that the workshop cannot accommodate all 34 members. Out of the 15 interviewed, four are producing their pottery within their houses.

The potters in the Cooperative are specialized with different types of pottery items. they produce kitchenware pottery such as coffee pots, cooking pots, and serving plates for different purposes, water containers, flower vases, etc. They also produce different figurines and decorations. Each potter has different specialization and only she produces her products. They have a rule that the other members should not replicate other members' pottery samples in order to avoid competition among them.

The potters reply about the types and the amount of pottery they can produce was that it is difficult to calculate within a specified time. The reason is that the pottery with designs determines the speed since it takes time and demands patience. One potter describes the art as:

I cannot count the number of pottery items that I produce ... Pottery is like consuming food. Sometimes your appetite will be good and you will consume too much. Sometimes you will lose appetite and you will consume very little or not at all. The art of pottery is similar to this ... There are times you feel comfortable and produce as many as you want. The reasons are that you might be bored while mixing the clay soil and making the designs ... Even if you try ... it will never come out as what it must be ... That is the art of pottery processing.

The other factor that affects their production capacity is the season. In non-rainy seasons, since it is sunny, the pots will dry sooner; in the rainy seasons, the pots will not dry easily.

### ***c) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery***

The *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative members have different options to sell their pottery. They have a sales shop within their workshop, they use a monthly bazaar facilitated to small handicraft producers by the International Evangelical Church, and customers give orders both at their homes and in the workshop. There are also occasions some organizations, such as Alliance Ethio-Francaise, arrange exhibitions for market promotion and sales for traditional handicrafts producers like the *Kechene* potters.

They use different options with different selling prices. If they sell, their pottery in the Cooperative's sales shop and the bazaar, their Cooperative sells with fixed prices. The prices are good to the potters. After the sale, the Cooperative will deduct 20 % as a contribution for the Cooperative overhead costs and give 80 % of the sales to the producer of the pottery. However, if each individual potter sells its pottery using her own way to a customer, the prices are less than the price in the Cooperative's sales shop. As one potter clearly states it, "The advantage of selling to the pottery traders is that, even though their offer is not that much attractive, we will get the money at the time they take the pottery ... The pottery sales in our Cooperative sales shop is not as fast as we need the money ... but it is sold with a good price." In fact, pottery sold in the Cooperative sales shop have more quality and attractive designs than those sold to the pottery traders. The pottery traders also give orders to kitchenware and utility pottery with simple designs, while the pottery sold in their cooperative sales-shops are with best quality including decoration artifacts and figurines.

While fixing the prices of their pottery, the potters try to take into consideration the cost of raw materials such as clay soil, firing materials, the time and the intensity of the design. When a potter produces a new design, they discuss among themselves on how to fix

the price. In the discussion with colleagues and the Cooperative's sales shop, they give priority to the time a pottery consumes and the amount of art on it. They also discuss that if the price of a pottery is expensive, it will stay on shelf and the potter should understand that her pottery will not pay her back quickly.

The potters are aware of the demand factor for their pottery. In order to produce a good quality pottery, they give proper care starting from raw material selection, clay soil preparation, and all the production and finishing processes. They understand that producing different samples with different designs and improved quality is a means to attract more customers and to have a good market. They said that customer handling including delivery dates with a fair price is vital to their market. Because of their attention to their customers' desires and handling, they believe they do not have a significant market problem. All the potters are capable of producing different items with different purposes (utility and decoration) and produce them based on customers' demands and by assessing market opportunities. According to the potters, there are different occasions that each pottery item is needed. As an example, in the rainy season, flower vases are highly demanded; at Easter, big cooking pots for traditional soups are easily sold. They produce different figurines that go along different occasions to attract their customers.

All the interviewed potters feel confident that they are producing the best quality item. One of the potters said, "When I see my products, I feel happy and promise to myself to improve it more and more. It gives me a great pleasure." The other potter explained her skill "Even though it is hard to appreciate one's skill, I do not think I have a problem of producing quality pottery." They also appreciate one another and compete. Another potter describes such competitions:

I do always look for pottery product, which I believe is better than mine's, and will try to be more efficient than the other potters. I used to give constructive comments to my friends on their pottery designs, at the same time ask comments about my pottery and accept their suggestions.

They give high value to the presence of a more qualified potter in their Cooperative as a resource to attract more customers. The reason according to one of the potters is “when they come to purchase her pottery, we can get new customers” since there is a chance that they will visit the sales shop and look at their pottery on the display.

Their customers represent different categories of consumers. Direct consumers and tourists buy their products in their sales shop and at the bazaar. While pottery traders (both exporters and local traders) give orders, both in the production workshop and at their houses. The local pottery traders are selling in Addis Ababa and outside Addis Ababa, but they do not have any clue as to where the traders export the pottery.

The potters report that their customers are urging them to increase the quantity of their products by maintaining the present quality, and by adding new designs. One of the potters in the Cooperative participated years back in an international pottery festival at Athens. There was a show on Ethiopian television about her pottery exhibited in Athens and in Addis Ababa. After watching this show, people expressed their appreciation. This potter recounts, “...some people ... on the road and some public places ... come, greet me, speak about my art ... They even tell me that, it is women like me, who could be models of potter women to break the harmful and stigmatizing trend against the artisans.”

***d) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)***

The business environment is encouraging to the potters. They say that their relationship within the members and non-member potters in their area is supportive. They have also good and mutual relationships with the pottery traders. The non-potters (non-artisans) have smooth relationships with the potters' community. The potters replied that they participate in similar traditional community associations, such as traditional burial association (*Edirs*), traditional saving associations (*Equbes*) and monthly religious get-together associations (*Tsewa Mahbers*). They also said that there is intermarriage between the potters and the non-potters. It is only three of the potters, who still strongly believe that there are still stigmatizing attitudes towards potters.

One of the potters argues, "Nowadays, the stigmatization and the discouraging conditions are no more an issue. Yes, there were different stigmatizing and discriminating activities." The other potter reaffirmed that the attitude of people is changing and this creates a favorable production environment. "The old harmful traditional practices are I think becoming a history. I did not come across with a person speaking against my profession. On the contrary, many people ask for training on pottery." The potters are appreciating their profession by comparing it with the presence of many people who are looking for employment. They are producing continuously and do not face a market problem up to now. One of the potters explained her production activities "There are times that I wish temporarily if there were no orders; ... [to] take some rest. ... but when you see others looking for jobs ... you will praise God since there is plenty of work that you can gain a living" as a potter.

The potters are encouraged to improve their designs and the types of items they produce, and some of their customers bring different samples and give advices on how to

produce it and where they can access a market. The pottery traders' advise the potters to produce different items on different occasions based on consumer demand. The pottery traders also support the potters in times of crisis. According to one of the potters, they give loans and credits to the potters since they are "confident enough on our capacity of paying."

The potters have obtained different supports from governmental and non-governmental Institutions. The establishment of their association was an initiation by a Canadian woman named Margaret (they do not know her family name). Following her footsteps, different government and non-governmental organizations gave different trainings and supplies to them. They got permission to use their present workshop free of charge on temporary basis for the last 17 years. The government recognized and issued a legal identity for them as a Pottery Producers' Cooperative. Different organizations support them free of charge to display and sell their products at bazaars and exhibitions. They appreciate the support given by the UNDP, Ethiopian Tourism Training Centre, Alliance Ethio-Francaise, International Evangelical Church, and individuals for the trainings and the facilities given to them. Most of the members have had the opportunity for training on bookkeeping, market assessment, customer handling, product display and pottery designing. They also received wheels and some materials from different organizations.

The potters believe that for pottery production and marketing, the availability of capacity building services is necessary. The potters believe that life skill training on how to utilize their incomes and family and reproductive health trainings are vital to the potters' community. One of them said, "I think that we need such trainings, including me, on how to utilize our income in a more economical way." For their production activities, supports for modern machineries such as clay soil mill and mixer are vital. Clay soil grinding and mixing,



as one potter stated it, are “parts of pottery production process, which consumes a lot of our energy and time. If we could save our energy and time, then we will be living more economically.” The other crucial issue that they are worried about is that they are using their workshop on temporary basis, and they need a permanent usage right for this workshop or a replacement. They also wish to have their own sales shop in an appropriate place comfortable to customers, since the present one is far from the centre of the city.

The potters appreciate the ecological situations within their neighborhood. They said that *Kechene* is appropriate area for pottery production, most particularly for two reasons. The raw materials for pottery production such as clay soils and firing materials are easily available and most of the inhabitants in the *Kechene* are artisans. According to one of the potters, “since the pottery production process has too much smoke, it is better if our community (potters) live within the same area. Not only could the smoke, but also waste products such as the ash may offend the non-potters.”

***e) Pottery production contributions to the family***

The potters said that they allocate their income to their family after purchasing the raw materials and other expenses associated with pottery production. One of the potters described the way she utilizes her income: “It is with the income I earn from the pottery that I am supporting and educating my children. I do not have any other income nor any support from someone since my husband has passed away.” The other potter who has a large family size (14), with 11 children described her expenditures and the contribution of her pottery to her family,

The priority is for all necessary materials for the next pottery production. Then after, I will purchase my house necessities. As an example, if I have to buy edible oil I will

buy extra liters if I have the money ... The same applies to the other items. Because, I might be sick for a week or there might be unanticipated problem that might hinder my pottery production ... By that time, my family should not face a problem. That is how I am living.

The potters describe pottery as the source of their asset or net worth in different ways. They say that since they are able and earn a living, it is by itself an asset. They said that they do not have to look to others favor. They are able to feed, clothe and educate their children. At the same time, except two out of the 15 potters, 13 save money through the traditional saving scheme, *Eqube*. They save each week from Birr 20 up to Birr 40. That is from Birr 80 up to Birr 160 per month. This is their net worth income in addition to what they might save differently. One of the potters, who did not use the *Eqube* to save, says that she deposits her savings using her bank account. The other potter has her own reasons and states it, “The size of my family is in tens. Asset means for me having sufficient food storage. When I have some extra money... I purchase extra lentil, butter, or oil. These are the food items I like to store not the money.”

The potters give due respect to their profession as being “the basis of my survival and the satisfaction for my dignity” according to one of the potters. Another potter said that she is proud of her profession since “it is by the income, I get by the skill that I ... feed my family ... I have raised my children. Even though their father dies [her husband] I do not have to look for the support of others since I have this skill.”

All the potters interviewed would like to transfer the traditional skill. They believe that as they are able to feed and support their family by the income they earn from the pottery, others should learn and create job opportunities for themselves. They have given training to

their fellow potters to improve their skill both within their association and by going out of Addis Ababa. There are also occasions some people come to their workshop to get training.

They would like the coming generation to inherit the traditional skill and improve it. One potter states, “Everybody should know the art. ... if those who do not know are trained and work and live on their toil based on my training, then my name will remain in the people’s heart and they will remember me and thank me.”

All say that pottery production, even if it requires toil and spoils them with mud and smoke, it gives them great pleasure and happiness as a means of livelihood. One of the potters explains this: “There is nothing, which could satisfy me as what pottery could satisfy me. It is by pottery that I am living a satisfactory life and support my children.” Due to the love and appreciation of the skill, the other potter wishes “if the entire world could be a potter.” In expressing her love for her art, another potter says that the compulsory non-working two days per week, Saturdays and Sundays “are too long for me. I am eager for Monday to start my pottery. When I produce pottery, even though I am sick, I feel healthy. I like to produce pottery even though I have a hard pain ... my pottery will treat and cure me.”

In the *Kechene* potters community, there is a clear division of gender-based skills. Pottery is for women while weaving is for men. According to the members of the potters Cooperative, this is a custom inherited for generations. Most of the potters say that their sons assisted them when they were young, but stopped as they grew older and were exposed to the environment, which tells that ‘pottery is for women and not for men.’ Then after, they feel ashamed when assisting their mothers, and turn to their fathers’ profession, weaving, or look for other jobs. Some of the potters are training their sons the art of pottery. Out of the fifteen, two potters have trained their sons and are still producing with them even though they are in

their late teens and early twenties. This is unusual within the community, since boys stop assisting their mothers in their middle teens.

One of the potters two sons are not only assisting their mother with pottery errands, but are producing marketable pottery. Her son who is about 18 years old is producing flower vases and figurines. According to her, her husband assists her in some pottery errands when he comes back from his work. This woman says, “One of my son’s ambitions is to have a pottery workshop with modern facilities. Now when he comes from school, he produces pottery as late as 11:00 P.M.”

Almost all are willing to train their sons or brothers the art of pottery. However, one of the potters said, “It is difficult for me to train neither my son nor my brother. There is a traditional division of labor. In addition, I do not feel comfortable to teach a male, the pottery ... we are not used to do this.”

#### **f) *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative**

The potters interviewed are members to the cooperative ever since its establishment in 1990, except one who joined after two years. According to the potters, the idea of organizing the cooperative is an initiation by a Canadian woman named Margaret (They do not know her family name). She discussed the idea with people working in the Ethiopian Tourism Commission and contacted the potters through an Ethiopian woman working in the Commission who was a resident in the *Kechene* neighborhood. They contacted some of the potters and registered those who volunteered to form a cooperative. They started to gather and discuss the issue in one of the houses of the woman who was working in the Ethiopian Tourism Commission. One of the senior potters recounts this:

People come to my house and told me a ‘Canadian lady named Margaret wants to organize a potter’s cooperative, please come and discuss the issue with her.’ ... I refused; but these people urged me... Then I met her and she clarified her vision and convinced me. She told me to have a list of potters ... interested to be members of the cooperative ... She asked us to look for an open plot of land or to look for an idle house. We showed her this workshop and she negotiated with the *Kebele* administration. That is how I become part of this association.

During their discussions, according to the potters, Margaret and others have advised them on the advantages of forming a cooperative. Margaret advised them how to use their cooperative in facilitating the flow of production and marketing. They were convinced that they should not waste their production time by going in search of raw materials, but create mechanisms and buy the raw materials by creating job opportunities to others. This would save their production time and energy. By the consecutive discussion they made, the potters said that they were convinced that working with colleagues has advantages to protect their rights, would have a possibility of improving their production quality and quantity.

At the beginning, the potters who gave their names were in hundreds, but during the discussion, most of them withdrew. They established their cooperative with 89 women potters. Among the 89, many withdrew due to different reasons. The main reasons were having consecutive training sessions and since they were not producing and selling, they did not have income to support their families, which creates a gap for their survival. After their short training in order to motivate their production process, their organizers discussed with the Ethiopian Tourism Training Centre to be the main purchaser of their pots for glazing. However, the Centre discarded most of their products as unfit as per its standards. This has

discouraged some of their colleagues and they withdrew. As one of the potters explains it, “Those who are tested remained as members of the association. Our number becomes smaller because of lack of patience and non-commitment for market competition ... Those of us, who have patience and who believe in efficiency, remained as members of the association.”

The potters give due respect and appreciation for their association for many reasons.

They say that they have gained many benefits such as:

- Learning from each other by observing others while they are working
- Skill trainings
- Selling their products at their sales shop or customers coming and collecting the pottery rather than carrying the pottery and looking for buyers by going to the weekly markets
- Increased market for their pottery
- Benefited having many friends and networking
- People knowing and appreciating their pottery skills
- Producing opportunities as much as they can since their workshop has ample space than their houses

The potters also give due respect for the knowledge they gain by being members, such as customer handling and on expressing ideas. A potter explained the benefits of being a member of the cooperative.

Previously, we used to speak [all] at the same time ... We all used to speak aloud without waiting the other to finish her words ... Later we learned to raise hands before speaking. ... We learned also how to approach people. Is this not a good development? ... We also learned how to enter an official’s office. Previously, we just jump into the official’s office, but now we learned that we should knock first; and when we get the permission, we have to sit on a chair and express our cases. Is this, not great?

The potters said that if they were not members of the cooperative, they might have been only either producing coffee pots or cooking pots. Nevertheless, since they took training on pottery designing, now they are capable of producing different pottery items. One of the

potters says that, “Now I am a good potter who knows different skills of pottery design with good income.” Her colleague further strengthens this appreciation about their cooperative by saying, “Previously, while I was producing at home, we have problems of covering our daily expense ... thanks God ... Now I do not have to worry on how to cover my living expenses and on how to support my children.”

When they compare their previous production practice using their house and their present production facilities at their workshop, they give high value to their cooperative. They say that while they were producing at their houses, both the mud and the smoke were spoiling their houses. One potter says, “Now our homes are free from the smoke. After we accomplish our daily task here in the association, we wash up ourselves and changing our clothes, we will go to our house being clean and will get a clean home by our standard. This is a good development.”

### ***Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget Potters Association***

#### **a) Personal Profile**

Personal profiles of the ten potters interviewed from the *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Women Potters Association explain that three are single, three married, and two widowed, while the other two are divorced. Their age ranges between 19 years and 46 years. Their educational status, two are illiterate, three know how to read and write, while the others are between grades 3 and 10<sup>th</sup> grade dropouts. All of the potters are living in *Kebele 07/17*.

Four of the potters say that it is difficult for them to estimate their monthly income while three earn about Birr 250 per month and the other three about Birr 200 per month. Three of the potters have weaver husbands. Four of them do not have additional income, while the three singles give their incomes to their potter mothers. Both the married and the single potters

say that it is difficult to estimate their husbands' and their mothers' income. Their income from pottery supports family members from one up to ten.

Five of the potters live in public houses by paying the rent to the *Kebele* administration, and three of them own private residential houses, while the two are living in houses rented from individuals. Seven of the potters share the water pipes and dry pit latrines with other neighbors, while the three have their own private water pipe and dry pit latrines. Five of them have their own private kitchens, while the other five share with neighbors. All of them have a radio, but do not have a television and a telephone.

Three of the potters categorize their living situation and economic status as very satisfactory, and six of them say it is satisfactory, while one of them say she is living below average. Their basic yardstick to measure their status is that they are healthy and are able to work and earn their livelihood. They support their argument that they are able to support their family and fulfill their social obligations. While the one who says that her living situation is below average argues that, even though she is healthy, she and her family members could not cover their basic needs, since she has younger sisters and her father is not healthy, while her mother is getting older.

All of them are saving through *Eqube*, nine of them save Birr 10 per week while one is saving Birr 5 per week. Their *Eqube* membership ranges from 20 members up to 60 members. Four of them are participating in one *Edir* while six of them are members of two *Edirs* (the singles also participate through their families). Five of the potters are members of *Tsewa Mahbers* with membership varying from 18 up to 60.



***b) Traditional pottery production knowledge***

Eight of the potters say that they learnt the skill from their mothers while two from their neighbors. Other than the training during their childhood from their mothers and neighbors, they did not get the opportunity for other pottery training. The source of the raw materials for pottery production is within their neighborhood. They said that there are people who dig different types of clay soils and sell it to them. One of the potters says, “Everything we need for pottery is supplied by people whose livelihood is selling these.” In addition to their hands, the production tools are cornhusk, pieces of bamboo, pieces of tiny tree branches, pieces of wire, marble from tombs, round pieces of broken clay, pieces of old shoes, rubber, plastic water pipe, gourd, etc. All of the potters interviewed are producing their pottery in their association workshop.

***c) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery***

Eight of the potters have permanent customers who buy their pottery. They accept orders from their customers and produce as per the instruction, while two of the potters, prefer to sell their pottery to permanent customers and by contacting additional customers. The potters say that they fix the prices of the pottery based on the prevailing market conditions and the quality. One potter said, “There are times that prices are good and there are times that the prices are very low. Since we do not have any alternative, we will sell it at a cheaper price.” The other factors that determine the prices of their pottery are seasons. In the dry and sunny seasons, the price of the pottery are cheaper since the pots demand lesser time to dry, but in the rainy seasons, they take more time and energy. They also need more firing materials. The cost of the firing materials is more expensive in the rainy seasons. In order to sell the pottery

with a good price, the potters try to keep up the quality and work it with patience, starting from the preparation of the soil to the finishing.

Six of the potters produce only coffee pots; one of them produces cooking pots, and the other three have the capacity to produce different types of pottery. The potters believe that their customers and the market accept their pottery, because their customers take whatever amount they can produce. However, their production capacity is very low, since they do not have appropriate facilities such as the wheel. Their customers are both from Addis Ababa and from the provincial town named Ambo.

***d) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)***

The production, marketing and relationship between the producers and the other community members in the neighborhood, are good and encouraging for the *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Pottery Association members. One potter said that although they used their house as a production unit: “If our pots are displayed to dry, and if the rain comes, they [non-potter neighbors] will assist us in collecting them. In addition, if we are not around, they will collect it for us so that the rain might not spoil our pots.” The other potters reaffirm that they are having a peaceful relationship and respect each other. Both groups know the livelihood of one another since the non-potters “know that we are hard working and are raising our children.” Another potter said, “My husband is from a non-potters family, but we are married and have two children. This is good, as he and his family observe us they have realized that the story about us [evil-eye] is fake.”

The members of the *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Potters Association believe that the services that they were expecting from the government and other organizations were many, but they obtain little up to now. The government gave five-day training on the advantages of

forming an association, bookkeeping and entrepreneurship. The *Kebele* administration has temporarily facilitated the rent of the two production shades on reduced tariff.

The potters believe that capacity building and other services are vital for the potters' community. They prefer to get training on pottery processing and design, to have a permanent production workshop, pottery firing facilities, production tools like wheels, sales shop, credit for raw material purchasing, etc. Currently, the potters' crucial issue is the source of the clay soil. The potters are worried about the source of the clay soil and one of them say "people are constructing houses on... the source of the clay soil. Because of that, we could not get clay soil ... If we could not get the clay soil ... There is no more survival. It means that my children are at stake. We need support from government to... stop the construction."

Six of the potters expressed their perception about the existence of negative attitudes towards the potters, by the non-potters who are residing outside their neighborhood. They all agree it is decreasing. One of them says:

This attitude is a harmful traditional practice, having a long story coming from generations. However, we are proud of our skill. We live by our toil. There are times that our children come back from school ridiculed because they are children of the artisans. Nevertheless, the skill is very good and we lead a good life.

When some non-potters come to *Kechene* to visit their non-potter relatives or friends "they feel terrified and try to avoid our sight ... Since we are accustomed to it and since it is ignorance ... we laugh at them and let them act whatever they feel." The other potter described such people as "Idle observers assuming that we are different people." All agree that pottery is the source of their livelihood and an art that needs respect and appreciation. Their neighborhood, *Kechene*, is a popular place for its artistic products both in pottery and weaving,

as one of them says “we give deaf ears whatever they may say against us and show them good behavior on return... we give attention to our production. This is what is important for us.” Even though there are few people with such negative attitudes, the potters testify that “previously people will not dare to come and rent a house to live. Now many non-potters are coming and settling in our community. That is a good attitudinal change.”

They appreciate that *Kechene* is appropriate place for pottery production since there are people with similar professions like pottery and weaving, and it is rich with clay soil. They realize that by establishing an association they have benefited, even though the association only recently had a workshop in October 2006. The potters say that the workshop:

- Created a good friendship among themselves; but previously they work in their house and did not know much each other.
- Gave the opportunity to know what the others are producing, since they can see and could observe and train each other.
- They understood that they can avoid the discomfort from the smoke both for the neighbors and for themselves; and their houses could be cleaner
- They realized that it is good if all potters organize associations and produce in a pottery workshop in-group.

#### ***d) Pottery production contributions to the family***

According to the potters, they purchase the raw material for their next pottery production after they sell their pottery. The remaining income is used for household consumption. They also use the income from pottery to pay their social obligation for their monthly contribution to *Edir*. Some of them save from Birr 5 up to Birr 10 per week through *Eqube*. They acknowledge that using the traditional way of production they do not have much speed, so their product and their sales are limited.

The potters appreciate their traditional skill since it is their source of livelihood and speak confidently that they are able to support themselves and their family. One of the potters

appreciates her profession, “Thanks God! It is because I have this skill that I am living confidently. I left my husband’s house with my two children and now I am fully supporting and educating my children.” Two of the potters are widows while two are divorced. It is by the income they earn from pottery that they support themselves and their children. One of the widows says, “If I had not this skill, how could I raise my children? What could have been my fate?”

The potters want to share their skill so that others could earn their livelihood by pottery production. One of the potters is pleased to train others “who are living in a worst condition than I am living. Even though my living standard is not good, theirs is worst... If they learn the skill, they can lead a better life than what they are now.” Another believes that “It is God who gave us this skill, hence I should share what God has given me.” They all want to train their daughters, and at the same time those who are interested to know the art.

Most of the potters believe that there is nothing wrong for men producing pottery other than the tradition, which comes from generations. They also testified that boys assist their mothers before adolescence. They wish that their sons or brothers could learn pottery if they are willing, but one of them said, “I do not think this neither for my son nor for my brother.”

#### ***f) Selam Ena Firkre LeEdget Women Potters Association***

The ACORD-Ethiopia initiated the idea of establishing a potters association. Based on that, about 150 potters registered, but due to unknown reasons for the potters, the organization delayed its support. However, the potters in consultation with the *Kebele* administration organized their association with 41 members, and after two years, they got the chance to rent their present workshop. They all joined the association assuming that it may improve their production and marketing capacity. They also believed they would have an opportunity of

support and training in both pottery and other issues, from each other and by different organizations. One of them said, “We can give hands when someone is in trouble, but if I am alone at my house there is rarely someone... We will have the chance to know each other and help each other. In addition, if we want to demand or ask for help, it is better through an association than an individual.”

Even though according to the potters, it is too early to evaluate the association, there are signs of benefits. “Previously, I had only two customers while I was producing at my house. Now more customers are coming and my market opportunity has increased... I live renting an individual’s house. The family was not willing to let me fire my pottery... Now ... I have a better opportunity.” They also appreciate that it has helped them to produce with schedule, since they are producing their pottery, without interruption, by house errands and by guests. One potter expressed her decision to join the association and her present benefits.

I live in a house rented from an individual and it is very small. My husband is weaving there; my children are playing within the same room. That room is everything for us. It is so difficult. Now while I work here, my house is better to live for all of us. My children have better and free space and they do not have to worry about the pottery being on their way.

The potters believe that the association is their future hope to improve their skill and market. As 19 years old potter said, “As a child first crawls before it is able to walk by itself; I understand that there will be a lot of ups and downs before we succeed.”

## Women Potters Producing Pottery in Their Houses

### *a) Personal Profile*

Personal profiles of the ten potters interviewed from the women potters producing within their homes explain that two are single, five married, and one widowed, while two are divorced. Their age ranges from 19 years up to 58 years. Concerning their educational status, one is illiterate, three know how to read, and the rest are from grade 3 up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade dropouts. Four of the potters live in *Kebele* 08/16 while six of them live in *Kebele* 07/17

The potters' monthly income varies from Birr 150 up to Birr 400 per month, the majority of them earning Birr 250 (four of them) and Birr 200 (three of them). Five of the potters have weaver husbands earning additional income, while one of them has a brother who is a student, but working as a weaver in his spare time. The others do not have additional income, except the two singles supporting their families with their potter mothers. The family size supported by both the income from their husbands and/or themselves alone varies from one up to ten.

Four of the potters own private residential houses, three live in public house by paying the rent to the *Kebele* administration. While two are living by renting individuals' houses and one is living as a dependent to her relatives with her five children. Six of them have private pit latrines and water pipes, while four share with neighbors. Seven have private kitchen, while three share it with neighbors. All of them have a radio, while five have a television and a telephone.

Five of the potters classify themselves as a well to do and three say that they are living a satisfactory life. However, two of them classified themselves as having a lower living condition. Six of them save through *Eqube* from Birr 10 up to Birr 20 per week, while the

other four are unable to save. Their *Eqube* members range from 40 up to 100. Seven of them are involved into two *Edirs*, while three of them are involved in one *Edir*. Five of them are involved in *Tsewa Mahbers* with membership ranging from 15 up to 30.

***b) Traditional pottery production process***

Five of the potters said that they learnt the traditional pottery skill by observing and assisting their mothers during their childhood. One said that she learnt the skill from her elder sister. The other three said that they learnt the skill from their neighbors and relatives. While one say that since, “I did not give attention to what my mother was doing. I learned the skill from my neighbors after my marriage. It is after I gave birth that I started to produce pottery. Later on my husband died and I raised my children by the income I earn from the pottery.” None of them had additional was training except one, who had the opportunity of training by a private pottery firm for two years.

They buy the clay soil from people, who dig it from *Mariam* River, within the *Kechene* neighborhood. Eight of them buy the pieces of baking plate from people who collect and sell it in a market place, while two of them buy it by going from house to house.

The potters’ production tools are their hands and materials available within their household, such as round piece of broken baking plate, pieces of old shoes, marble stones, bamboo, gourd and other small items. All of them produce their pottery in their living rooms. It is only three of them, who have separate bedrooms from their living rooms. The other seven have one room for everything, for production, for dining and bedroom.

Seven potters produce single items such as coffee pots or cooking pots or incense burners, while the other two are able to produce coffee pots, flower vases and cooking pots. It is only one of them, who can produce different items since she had additional training. One



elder potter in her late 50s said, “Throughout my life, I use to produce coffee pots only. I do not have the skill to produce other types of pottery.” All of them produce their pottery side by side with their home affairs. One of the potters said,

I give priority to my home affairs. I will bake injera every four days ... I will prepare wot, every morning. I have to give to my children their breakfast; pack their lunch since they have to go to school. After I finish these, I will start my pottery, so that our livelihood is not affected. I will work until 11:00PM. The income we earn from pottery determines our livelihood.

***c) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery***

All of the potters interviewed have permanent customers for years who buy their pottery. Eight of them have one regular customer, while two of them have two customers. One potter say, “I did not try to have additional customers; I have only one customer for the last eight years. We negotiate on our prices, whenever there is a market fluctuation, we agree. I have no reason to change my customer.” Either the customer comes and collects it at home, or in consultation, the potters will deliver it to their customers’ shops. Usually the intermediary pottery traders collect the pots from the potters’ houses, while those who have shops here in Addis Ababa prefer the potters to deliver them at their shops. The pottery traders sell the pottery here in Addis Ababa at different market places. Some pack it to provincial towns like Ambo (about 100 km. west of Addis Ababa) while the intermediary traders distribute to different pottery traders both here in Addis Ababa and to those coming from different provincial towns.

The pottery prices are determined by the prevailing pottery market. It does not take into consideration the potters labor time and the cost of the raw materials. As one potter sates

it “If I calculate as per my labor and the material expense, then the pottery traders will not buy from me. I know they like my products but they are not in a position to pay me reasonable prices. They look for their benefit.” Most of them are producing kitchenware pottery. They say that their customers buy all their products, and if their pottery is of poor quality, their customers might not have continued their relationships. What their customers need from the potters is to keep the quality and the delivery dates properly. The customers also urge the potters to increase the quantity and to produce different pottery items.

***d) Business environment (production, market, community attitudes)***

The production and marketing environment among the potters community in *Kechene* is peaceful to the potters. They say that they exchange information about the pottery market, including the raw material. One of the elder potters says that, “We ... have a good friendship. ... They are working here and there. .... If one does not have pottery firing materials, she will take from one of us. If I am short of clay soil, I will bring it from one of them and produce... We give hands to one another; we never envy in our neighborhood.”

They said their relationship with their non-potters neighbors is also peaceful, even though “There is minor complaint about the smoke while firing our pottery. In our part, our home accommodates the smoke and the dust since we do not have other options.” However, they say that they have good relationships and are members of the same traditional associations like *Edirs*, *Equbes* and *Tsewa Mahbers*. They also enjoy holidays together and invite each other. Whenever there is a problem in either of the houses, they comfort and support each other. If a potter needs a hand of her neighbor who is not a potter, she is sure that she will get it. If a potter displays her pots to dry in the sun and in the mean time if the rain comes, her neighbors who are not potters will collect and give it a shelter.

Nevertheless, some of the potters believe that non-potters outside their neighborhood have still some negative attitudes towards the potters' community. One of the elder potters says that, "I do not know what their problem is. Let God know what their problem is ... They like ... all our products. I do not know why they do not like us! ... It is God who knows it." A potter in her 30s reaffirmed this: "When we go to purchase the broken pieces of the baking plate, some of them ... ridicule us .... Moreover, we ignore their acts and look for the raw material."

The potters report that they do not get any encouraging supports from government and non-governmental organizations. On the contrary, a potter says that, "the source of the clay soil is allotted by ... the *Kebele* administration ... for house construction. They [people who constructed houses] forbid ... digging the clay soil."

The potters believe that capacity-building services such as training on pottery design, production tools such as wheels, open market places for potters to sell their products, credit facilities to purchase raw materials and supportive facilities are vital to the potters' community. They believe that it is important if the government could facilitate opportunities to establish more potters associations, with their own production places and facilities. One potter states "Pottery firing place is very crucial. Here in our home, we produce, we live in it, and we eat at the place that we produce. In addition, the smoke spoils everything that we have, and with our clay, we are smoked together."

The potters appreciate the ecological situations of their neighborhood, *Kechene*, because of four major points. First, it is their birthplace; second, the raw materials for pottery production are easily accessible; third, the inhabitants are almost all artisans (weavers and potters); and lastly the place is popular for its traditional artifacts. As one of the potters states

it, “*Kechene* is a place for the poor. There is no place, for those who sit idle. There is no one looking for the mercy of the other; he has to work. One must not necessarily be a potter; she/he can assist the weavers in many errands, such as thread making and cotton spinning... to earn a living.”

***e) Pottery production contributions to the family***

All interviewed potters said that, after they sell their pottery, they will give priority to the purchase of the raw material for the next production, then the rest is used to their household consumption. They use it also to contribute to their social obligations such as paying regular contributions to their *Edirs* and saving to their *Equbes*. While one of the potters’ who could not save states that, her income is “from hand to mouth.”

These potters appreciate their pottery profession as a reward that is the source of their livelihood. One potter in her 40s explained the benefits of her traditional skill in such a way.

My marriage broke before six years. However, since I have this skill, with full confidence, I left him and now I am capable of educating my five children. Mind you, I am able to support five souls, since I have the skill. Nevertheless, if I had not this skill, then I may not attempt to break my marriage. Then, since we had disagreement now and then, either he, or I or my children might have died in the middle of our fight.

All the potters say that pottery has assisted them to support their family, they are able to send their children to school and their children are neither hungry nor thirsty. The elder potter in her late 50s says that,

I pray to God to keep me healthy .... I like my profession since I am not at the mercy of others. I produce and sell; I am not hungry; ... my children are not short of their stationery materials... If I did not produce, I will not get, if my child cries demanding

even ten cents, where will I get it to give him. Because of all these, there is nothing good than working, forever.

All the potters are willing to transfer their traditional knowledge to those who want to know it. They also want their daughters to know the art as an additional skill, side by side with their modern education. For all of the ten interviewed potters, due to tradition, pottery is for women while for men it is weaving, blacksmith or other threads, but not pottery. The question about men's role in pottery production surprised some of them and asked me by saying; "Do you mean males and females division of labor with regard to pottery production? Pottery! Pottery production? The man has his duty as per the tradition." Two of the potters said that they are not willing to train men as potters. Accordingly, to one of them, "Men must not interfere in women's profession; women should not interfere with men's profession. They should produce as per the tradition." While the other one says that, "Why should I train him to be a potter? He should work men's work not women's work ... I do not feel comfortable to train men." The other two also were hesitant about training men as potters. It was six of them, who say they would train them to be potters since it is worth a living and does not have a problem.

#### ***f) Pottery Production Using the House as a Production Unit***

All the potters are producing in their houses since it is a tradition they inherited from their parents and since it helps them to look after their home affairs including raising children. One potter says that, "I can produce whenever I feel ... I know that the production rate and speed could be better in production centers, since they can work hard by competing. I know that there could be better space there, but still I prefer to work here." All of them recognize that pottery production using the house as a production unit has many problems. Nevertheless,

it was only six of them, who wish to be members of potters associations and produce pottery in a place other than their house. The other four still appreciate to produce within their houses and do not want to join associations.

Two of the potters are living with their mothers. The income they and their mothers earn is their source to support themselves and their younger siblings. If they were not supporting their mothers, their mothers alone, could not send their children to school. Unfortunately, both families have large family size and their fathers are dead. The other two potters are divorced, but are able to support themselves and their children. While those married potters, according to one of them, say “Working alone; and depending on the income of my husband will make life difficult. Cost of life is very expensive ... I have to work and help my husband side-by-side raising children and looking after the home affairs.”

Recognizing that pottery is the source of their livelihood, the potters try to compete by making their products as attractive as possible. They say that they are producing as per the orders given by their customers and keep the delivery dates as promised and maintain their smooth relationships. They try their best that their pottery should be marketable to their customers to keep the flow of production and marketing. They also know that the offer they earn is too low, but they do not have any option to look for other markets since they can produce only a single item. Not only that, they know that they could not produce as many as their customers are demanding, since they produce it by traditional tools and side by side with their home affairs.

## **Potters Who Withdrew Their Membership from the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperation**

### ***a) Personal Profile***

Personal profiles of the five potters interviewed from the potters who withdrew their membership from the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative explain that, two are married while three are divorced. Their age range is between 46 years and 56 years. Their educational status is between 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade dropouts. Three of them live in *Kebele* 08/16 while two live in *Kebele* 07/17.

Their monthly earning from pottery is Birr 250 (two potters), Birr 300 (two potters) and Birr 600 (one potter). Four of the potters do not have additional income, while one has a husband who is a guard and a part-time weaver. The married woman was unable to tell her husband's income. They support family members of four and five, including themselves. One of the potters owns a private residential house, while the others are living in public houses paying the rent to the *Kebele* administration. Four of them have their private dry pit latrine and water pipe while one shares it with her neighbors. All have their private kitchen and radio. It is only one of them, who have a television and a telephone. They all regard their living conditions as satisfactory.

All save through *Eqube*, four of them Birr 20 each, while the other one saves Birr 50 per week. Their *Equbes* have members between 40 and 65. All are members of *Edirs*; one is a member of four *Edirs* while the others are members of two *Edirs*. One of them is a member of two *Tsewa Mahbers*, while the others are members of one *Tsewa Mahber* with members varying from 12 up to 18.

### ***b) Traditional pottery production knowledge***

Four of the potters learnt the skill from their mothers while one said she learnt from her elder sister. In addition to the knowledge they gained from their mothers, they took some training while they were members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative.

The potters say the source of the clay soil is within their neighborhood and the broken pieces of the baking plate, is available in Mercato. People whose livelihood is selling these raw materials bring and sell it to the potters. The pottery production tools are simple materials easily available. These are cornhusk, piece of old shoes, piece of flat iron, sponge, used hair combs, pieces of plastic water pipe. Three of them have a wheel, which is a modern tool. They all produce within their house. Even though they took pottery design training while they were members of the potters' cooperative, they are producing the usual kitchenware such as cooking pots, coffee pots and incense burners. One of them produces cooking pots and coffee pots only, two of them produce coffee pots only, and one produces incense burners only, while the other one produces different sizes of bowls and cooking pots.

### ***c) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery***

One of the potters has two regular customers while the other four have one customer each who collect their pottery regularly for years. The pottery traders fix the pottery prices and the potters do not have much bargaining power. The potters understand that the market accepts their pottery, since they prepare them based on their customers' orders. The pottery traders expect the potters to produce as per the orders keeping the quality and deliver on the agreed dates and places. The usual delivery dates are Tuesdays and Fridays for the Wednesdays and Saturdays markets. Their pottery customers sell the pottery in Addis Ababa and Ambo.



*d) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)*

The production and marketing environment is good for the potters, since the pottery traders buy their products regularly it is encouraging to produce more. As one of the potters, “It is good to have a buyer ... even though the price might be cheap.” They are encouraged to produce different pottery items by their customers, but as one of the potters “I do not have the spare time to try other types of pottery in addition to my home affairs and taking care of my children.”

These potters believe that the imported plastic and metallic utensils have an impact on the pottery kitchenware. The imported plastic and metallic kitchenware affects the pottery price and demand, since pottery is more fragile. Because of this, according to one of the potters, “We are also selling our pottery at a lower price to support our daily lives.” The other potter also says, “The market for my cooking pots and serving bowls ... could have been better, if the plastic materials from China were not imported in such quantity. Their price is low and some people prefer to have them since they are less fragile than our pottery.”

The potters argue that the traditional coffee pots’ market is more stable, since people in countryside prefer to use the clay coffee pots. While the “the market for the cooking pots is decreasing because of the metallic cooking utensils, which are not fragile, our cooking pots cook well but are fragile.”

Their relationship among the potters and with the non-potters within the neighborhood is encouraging according to these potters. They are members of similar traditional burial associations, celebrate festivities, and comfort each other in time of crisis. These potters agree that the stigma and the discrimination against the artisans is decreasing. One of the potters testifies this: “In my neighborhood ... They did not consider me as an evil-eyed woman; and I

did not think they discriminate me because of my profession... my former husband was from the non-artisan community. ... Previously, leave alone marriage, neighborhood was so difficult.”

*Kechene* is appropriate place for pottery production to these potters. It has clay soil within its neighborhood and there are plenty of potters. One of them said, “We do not have to complain one another about the smoke spoiling a neighbor’s or our house .... If I see a smoke in the neighborhood, I should collect my clothes if they are outside in the sun.”

***e) Pottery production contributions to the family***

These potters also give priority to the purchase of raw materials after they sell their pottery. They use the remaining for household expenditures. As one of them tells it, “No, no, from what, there is nothing in excess. However, it is only the *Eqube*, which is our saving”. They also give high value for their traditional skill, and appreciate their skill as the main means of their livelihood. Another woman remarked, “If I was not a potter, then I might have been a prostitute, or my children may have been hungry. Thanks God, I am raising my children single-handed with my traditional skill.” They are all willing to transfer their skill for those who wish to learn.

According to the potters, the division of skill, weaving for men and pottery for women has no justification except tradition. They are willing to train men if they are willing, but one of them is hesitant by saying that men are not willing at all.

***f) Reasons to withdrew from the Kechene Women Potters Cooperative***

The women have different reasons to choose working in their houses withdrawing their membership from the cooperative. One of them said that, “While the association started, it seemed to me that it is time consuming, both the training and their discussions... I was

calculating how many coffee pots that I might have produced. I did not attend the meeting full heartedly.” The other two potters left the association since they were breast-feeding and to look after their house affairs rather than attending trainings and discussions.

They also say that, at the beginning, whatever they produce was as per the orders given by the Ethiopian Tourism Training Centre. The Institution wants the pots to be prepared for glazing. However, on the delivery dates, the experts discard our products as inadequate, and we chose to come back home and produce what we know since our childhood; say the other two potters. All the potters regret their decision and should have continued their membership in the cooperative with patience.

### ***Direct Observation***

Direct observation is one of the sources of information to understand the potters’ community. The *Kechene* neighborhood is full of sloppy terrains covered with houses constructed with wood and mud houses, with few houses constructed with hollow blocks and bricks. There are pedestrian roads, some constructed with stones while others are not. Except on weekends and some holydays, one could hardly see people on the roads. Every compound is busy with wet pots and cotton threads displayed to the sun. On Fridays and rarely on Tuesdays intermediary pottery traders move from house to house looking for pottery.

Women and children with logs of firewood and cow dung on donkey’s back or on arrying themselves move within the neighborhood, to sell it to the potters. Usually on Mondays and Saturdays, people who sell the clay soil, broken pieces of baking plates, and tiny sandstones move within the neighborhood looking for their customers.



A donkey loaded with cow dung for firing pottery (left) and on the right side a donkey loaded with clay soil excavated from the clay source Mariam river basin

Pottery is inexpensive and simple household items, all made by traditional potters. The pottery production has four steps: preparing the clay mixture, shaping the clay, decorating and polishing the pot, and firing. The firing temperature gives pottery its finished appearance and its strength. Pottery in *Kechene* includes both kitchenware (coffee pots, cooking pots, bowls, vases, dishes, and incense burners) and decorative items such as figurines.

The potters communicate brief prayer, before firing, to *Selassie* (The Holy Trinity an Orthodox Church in outskirts of *Kechene*) or *Medhaniyalem* (The Holy Savior, Orthodox Church within the neighborhood), or to Virgin Mary or to their favorite angels or saints to assist them by reducing the wind, which might endanger the firing process. They also pray every time they start a pottery and every day and plea *Beseme Ave, Wolde we Menfes Kidus*

(by the name of The Holy Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit) that their working days be peaceful and productive.

The *Kechene* potters fire their pots without kiln, by building a fire of dried cow dung and logs of branches over and around the pots keeping it burning at low heat for a minimum of four hours for small pots and figurines, but longer for larger items. To make them black, they bring out the pots from the firing place and while still hot cover them with leaves, mostly with eucalyptus tree leaves from five to ten minutes. In order to give it different colors, brown or mixed black and brown, the potters take off the pots earlier than five minutes. However, if they want them red they will not cover them with leaves.

The potters who are working with *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative and *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Women Potters Association enjoy themselves as they produce in-group in their workshop. The whole day, they discuss different issues, including their pottery designs and market. They consult and ask each other for help. Their time passes nicely as they discuss and laugh together. Therefore, it seems that they are happy. Even though the potters producing pottery using their house as a production unit claim that they prefer to produce in their house due to different reasons. They appreciate producing in the pottery workshop as having advantages starting from knowledge increasing possibilities, better pottery production and firing space, and more market opportunities.

The potters in *Kechene* do not have expenditure and income accounts separate from their family expenditures. Their perception of production activities are not based on accurate net profit calculations, but to keep on their daily livelihoods. Even though members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative took bookkeeping and market assessment short-term training, they still do not see their business separate from their family expenditures. The

potters' lack of knowledge of costing and pricing is a critical weakness in their pottery price settings.

The *Kechene* potters are not the primary sellers of their products. There are different types of customers who are trading the *Kechene* pottery. There are pottery intermediary traders, who collect the pots and supply them to other traders, and the traders who have sales shops. The intermediary traders facilitate an inter-market trade, supply shops and other traders of Addis Ababa and provincial towns, without maintaining any retail facilities themselves. These intermediary traders enquire potters if they have pots to sell, usually on Fridays and rarely on Tuesdays for the Saturdays and Wednesdays markets. This needs further exploration.

The actual non-working days are Saturdays and Sundays, otherwise the potters have activities to do even on Orthodox Holydays. They smooth, polish, prepare clay soil, if that day is a holyday; but will not start a new pottery. According to the potters, there are pottery errands left for holydays.

## Discussion

### *Livelihood theoretical perspective*

Livelihood is a combination of the resources used and the activities undertaken in order to live. As discussed by Chambers (1992) and by the DFID livelihood framework (1999) earlier, the resource consist of individual skills and abilities (human capital), land, savings and equipment (natural, financial and physical capital) and formal support groups or informal networks (social capital) that assist in the activities being undertaken.

The livelihoods perspective should broaden our understanding of the women potters' livelihood struggling to earn an income and support themselves and their family. This research attempts to explore and find effective alternatives for the advancement of pottery as a sustainable livelihood option. It considers all the five livelihood resources in general and human capital in particular to understand pottery in the sustainable livelihood framework.

The traditional skill, knowledge, ability to produce, and good health of the potters to enable them to achieve their livelihood objectives is their human capital (DFID, 1999). The human capital is required to use any of the other four types of assets. In the case of this research, the women potters' traditional skills and other components of the human capital is a prerequisite, to the achievement of positive livelihood outcomes. Human capital could substantially increase to social (networks), financial capital (flow of money, savings) and accessing natural capital (raw materials). Facilitating their social, financial and natural capital, the women potters could have the possibilities of accessing improved physical capital (tools, production workshops and sales shops). Their social networks, membership of associations, and/or access to information and markets, could improve the barriers to the pottery markets.

The absence of direct marketing outlets, production problems, lack of guidance in pottery design and development based on the understanding of the traditional potters, are full of many constraints. Financial capital as an initial fund, to access raw materials and other production facilities and the scarcity of the raw materials are critical concerns for the potters.

The traditional pottery skill needs precise adaptation with proper quality, standard sizing and proper costing to win and have constant market. In other words, the right combination of human, financial, physical and social capital is essential. Pottery is a commercial activity; the produced pottery should be saleable competing with industrial kitchenware and figurines. This is vital to the continuing survival of the potters and their traditional skill. The amount of income from pottery is usually the core problem of the potters' financial capital. It is what restricts the economic development and the well-being of the potters and their families.

The world economy is progressively expanding the markets for 'modern' industrial products at the cost of the traditional handicrafts markets. At the same time, employment and job creation opportunities are very rare in developing countries like Ethiopia. Traditional pottery production, as one of the self-employment opportunities, is a means for women livelihood, which used to evolve for generations, undermining and stigmatizing the potters. Despite all the difficulties, the traditional handicrafts sector still serves the society and is a means of survival for the producers. There could have been dual benefits to the country's economy from the traditional handicrafts sector in generating foreign exchange, as well as, employment opportunities. This could also give a chance to show to the world the ancient Ethiopian traditional artifacts as what Dubois (1996) suggested to the Ethiopian Tourism Commission to establish production and training centers in the tourist attraction sites of the



country. This needs proper understanding and proper planning of the sector. The traditional handicrafts producers (potters, weavers and the few blacksmiths) are live examples for Mr. Dubois arguments, since most of the souvenirs shops in Addis Ababa are their customers.

The research findings “Pottery Production an Asset for Women Livelihood: Case Study on *Kechene* Women Potters in Addis Ababa” come out with similarities and differences.

### ***Similarities***

#### ***a) Traditional pottery production knowledge***

The women’s human capital is their traditional knowledge, which they learnt from their mothers and relatives. The other similarities are their natural, physical and social capitals. The natural capital is the clay soil, tiny sand stones and the sun to dry their pottery, while their physical capitals are their hands, the production tools, their production place and the firewood as a source of energy (logs of woods, cow dung and the eucalyptus tree branches and leaves). Their common social capital is the market outlets, such as their networks, customers giving orders at their workshops and homes, and the intermediary pottery traders.

#### ***b) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)***

The business environment is the other social capital, which facilitates their livelihood. The potters' relationship among themselves and pottery traders has created good opportunity to their production and marketing environment. Their involvement in different social networks like *Edirs*, *Equbes* and *Tsewa Mahibers* has given them wide range of opportunities to fulfill their basic needs, savings, social obligations and religious duties. This shows that they have a good bond of social capital. Their dedication to produce and earn a living and the strong social network has facilitated for the reduction of the stigma against them. The presence of many artisans within the neighborhood is one of the good opportunities that strengthened their social

capital. All accept that it is better for the potters' community to live within similar neighborhood in order to reduce the misunderstandings as the result of the smoke from the pottery firing between the potters and the non-potters community. Most of the potters acknowledge that there is a reduction of the stigma since an enter-marriage between the potters and the non-potters, and the settlement of non-potters within the *Kechene* neighborhood as a positive phenomenon.

All the potters are at risk regarding the supply of the raw material (natural capital) since people are constructing residential houses and planting trees on clay excavation site. This is a shock according to the DFID framework definition. It needs a solution or the potters should get alternative sources.

***c) Market supply and demand for traditional pottery***

All the potters believe that the market accepted their pottery. What they should do is to produce with good quality by giving proper care starting from the material selection up to the finishing. They all understand the significance of producing different pottery with different designs to access good market opportunities.

***d) Pottery production contributions to the family***

The income they earn from their pottery is their financial capital that facilitates their livelihoods. Their production efforts have given the capacity to lead their livelihoods confidently and even lead their families single-handed after divorce or widowhood, and/or contribute their share to their family. This is different from women in the non-potters community, since widows or divorced women without employment usually tend to look for the support of their relatives or ex-husbands to raise their children. Housewives of the non-artesian community members, both in rural and urban areas use to look after their house affairs

and raising children only, it is usually the responsibility of the husband to fulfill all necessary expenditures for the household. Women from the non-potters community, after divorce or widowhood need the support of their former husbands and/or families to raise their children and themselves. The potters are confident and could find alternative solutions if they face problems within their marriage, since they have their traditional skill as a source of livelihood.

### ***Differences***

#### ***a) Traditional pottery production knowledge***

The potters in the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative obtained trainings in different ways of pottery designs, bookkeeping, market assessment, etc. The potters in the cooperative are capable of producing different types of pottery, while the other potters produce only a single or few items, since they lack trainings. Even those who have had the chance of training while they were members of the cooperative are producing single items, since they do not have good market outlets.

#### ***b) Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)***

The potters in the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative have more social networks that facilitated their training opportunities and market outlets than the other groups of potters. They have different groups of customers such as tourists, local and export traders. Nevertheless, the other groups of potters have only one or two customers, which let their market with lesser opportunity giving more power to the traders.

The potters' income from the pottery determined their capacity of savings. The potters in the cooperative have better income than the other groups of potters. As a result, the amount of savings through the traditional saving scheme shows that the majority of the cooperative members are saving more amount than the other groups in general. Potters in the cooperative

and the association and those who withdrew their membership from the cooperative are saving every week, while only half of the potters who produce within their house are saving.

There is a high feeling of stigma by those potters who are producing within their houses and by the newly organized potters' association members (*Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget*). While the potters in the cooperative are having lesser feelings of being discriminated with the majorities believing that the stigma is becoming a history. This needs further exploration on both sides (on potters and non-potters).

### ***c) Production place***

Potters who are producing at their homes are producing at their least capacity due to house and childcare responsibilities and lack of training. Their houses also force them to produce lesser quantities due to space and lack of appropriate tools such as wheels. The raw materials, the production process and the final products also congest their houses. However, those producing in the workshops have better production and storage places.

## **Conclusion and Implications for Social Work**

### ***Conclusion***

The case study has examined the importance of pottery to the women in the *Kechene* neighborhood and has demonstrated that even today, pottery as a traditional handcraft has a social and economic significance as a means of sustainable livelihood. Traditional pottery production can provide longer-term security rather than just a survival or coping strategy for the women in *Kechene* and if employed by others could stand out as a possibility. Pottery offers the women an employment opportunity and means of livelihood to support their families. They are aspiring to keep their tradition alive and to be self-reliant.

The potters including the traditional handicrafts producers should be recognized and supported in different roles they serve, and should have a dignified status within the society. All rounded approach to the business environment of the potters' community should focus around their livelihoods. The different constraints, including the scarcity of raw material, and ideal production place and tools with access to market need attention to improve the livelihood of the potters. Enabling women potters to pool and share resources is crucial. These could be working shades, pottery firing centers, clay soil grinding mills and soil mixers, wheels, sales shops to handle some aspects of the pottery market in-group, purchase of raw materials, storage both for raw materials and for unfinished and finished pottery products.

The *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative is a good example of how improvements in pottery production workshops within the neighborhood, can have positive effects on both income and working conditions, and how working conditions affect the efficiency and quality of production. This workshop made the production process safer as well as less problematic (starting from clay soil preparation up to firing and selling). If potters and other traditional handicrafts producers are organized and have similar production and sales shops could be accessible to visitors and donors. The recent grant of US\$ 5,000 to the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative by a United States citizen, Mr. Randell McShepard, Director of Community Affairs, Ohio, Cleveland, is a good opportunity in improving the potter's livelihood. (The researcher was involved in creating the network between the potters and Mr. McShepard)

The workshop provided the women with a more comfortable working environment and reduced the discomfort they had while they were producing using their homes. Moreover, the other potters within the *Kechene* neighborhood who are not members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Cooperative and the newly established *Selam Ena Fikre LeEdget* Potters Association

are the great majority and need assistance. The potters within the two associations also need additional trainings on pottery design and on how to access new market opportunities and improved production tools.

### ***Implications for Social Work***

Social work “is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people’s lives.” (<http://www.bls.gov/home.htm>). The USA National Association of Social Workers further elaborated that in order to facilitate community developments efforts, social workers should “work to improve systems and develop new resources so that more people in the community will have access to the services they need to function at their best” (<http://www2.usiouxfalls.edu/academic/swk/profession.htm>). The *Kechene* women potters need the assistance of social workers to direct and facilitate conditions that could improve their livelihoods using house as a productive family unit. According to Kordesh, a productive family is

the family that controls enough of its time and resources in order to ... grow its food, prepare its own meals, operate its own business, teach children, care for the sick members, maintain its house, create healthy living practices, establish its own faith practices, create neighborhood environment ... create crafts...(2006, p. xv).

The great majority of the *Kechene* women potters are working within their houses but need support to make their houses create a healthy leaving by avoiding the smoke, which is polluting their households and their neighbors’ and create a good environment. The potters producing using their associations’ workshops are good models and are productive family members since they are operating their business

(pottery production) within their neighborhoods. All the potters who participated in this research are creating crafts, practice their community obligations by being members of *Idirs*. The majority are also members *Tsewa Mabbers* and *Equbes*. Teaching and caring for their children and the sick is their regular family roles. The duties of members of *Tsewa Mabbers* and *Idirs* are helping each other in times of crisis, sickness and comforting deceased family members.

In order to improve the potters livelihoods in *Kechene*, social workers together with the potters community, could explore and advocate for many possibilities to make their houses as productive and as accessible as possible. These are arranging trainings on pottery designs, facilitating improved production places and tools such as wheels, soil grinding mills, soil mixers, etc. The women potters should be in a position to choose and find alternatives that are appropriate as per their desires. These could be forming associations and arranging production centers within their vicinity, or arranging production shades in small groups, in order to make their houses fit to live without smoke polluting their homes. As one of the potters said it, not to be “smoked together with [their] ... pots” alternatives arrangements are required. The other facility could be arranging pottery display and sales shop run by the potters’ community in order to increase the amount of earning by avoiding the intermediary pottery traders. These and other efforts will raise the income of women potters mainly by improving production processes and organization. In order to increase their livelihood opportunities in a sustainable manner, all the potters in the neighborhood, need better productive and marketing training skills based on their actual and potential skills and on market feasibility. Training must be practical and simple, linked to actual experience, close to women potters place of work or residence, and appropriate to their educational level, technical abilities and work schedule.

This would avoid potters losing hope, and withdrawing from training and cooperative as five of the research participants said that their causes for withdrawal was, the sessions were too long and affected their income. Since they were not producing during the training, they do not have a means to cover their daily needs and even after the training, the customer organization rejected their products as unfit.

One must make a crucial link between social work practice and pottery including all the traditional handicrafts as a means to sustainable livelihoods. In order to pursue sustainable development, an understanding of human capital (assets) is crucial. In this respect, social work has a key role to play with the understandings and priorities of the potters and other crafts producers. It is also important to recognize how specific conditions could influence people's relationships and to acknowledge the role of the livelihood opportunities in contributing to the well-being of marginalized community members.

Social workers can play key roles in contributing to a wider understanding of livelihoods, and in terms of improving the income level of the potters. They should take into account the women potters and other traditional handicrafts producers' access and control over the assets, their access to markets, infrastructure and information on policies envisaged for the sector, if there are any. They could also advocate on behalf of the traditional handicrafts producers to have state and others supports.



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## Appendix

### Annex A: Interview Guide

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School Of Graduate Studies**  
**School Of Social Works**  
**Master's Thesis Project**  
**Topic of Study – Pottery Production Asset for Women Livelihood**  
**Case Study Interview Guide – developed by Mulu Yeneabat Alemu**

#### Case Study Interview

**A.A Case name/Code** \_\_ **Age** \_\_ **House N** \_\_, telephone (if available and permitted to register) \_\_ **specific location (area identification)** \_\_\_\_\_

**A.B. Case drawn from:** *Kechene* Women Potters Association \_\_\_\_\_

#### The Interview Guide For Members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Association

- ☞ The Interview questions listed below are guiding questions. There will be probing questions based on the answers that would be provided by the Interviewee to get more information associated with the study.
- ☞ These interview questions will be translated into Amharic. When the Researcher gets the permission of the interviewee the interview will be tape-recorded. Then the researcher will transcribe the interview and his field notes first in Amharic, then after will summarise/narrate the Amharic transcribed document into English.
- ☞ If the interviewee is not comfortable with tape-recording, the researcher will use his field notes to transcribe the interview.

#### A1. Traditional pottery production process.

A1.1. Where did you learn the skill to produce pottery?

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A1.2. Who gave you the training of pottery production?

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A1.3. Where did you get the raw materials?

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A1.4. What are your production tools and equipments?

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A1.5. Where do you produce the pottery?

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A1.6. How many pottery items do you produce within a month?

(Please give me by comparing one type of artifact from the other)

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**A2. Market supply and demand for traditional pottery.**

A2.1. How do you sell your pottery?

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A2.2. What are the criteria to set the price of your pottery?

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A2.3. What are the factors that affect the demand of your pottery products?  
(Both positively and negatively)

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A2.4. What are the mechanisms you use to expand your pottery markets and attract more customers?

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A2.5. What types of pottery are you producing?

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A2.6. Are your pottery with similar designs and standards?

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A2.8. How do you assess your production and the demand for your pottery?

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A2.9. Where does your customers sell your pottery?

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A2.10. What kinds of pottery do your customers prefer to buy fro, you?

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A2.11. What is the comment of your customers about your products?

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**A3. Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)**

**Business environment means the production, marketing and the relationship between the producers and the other community members. There are conditions, which support or discourage the producers and their products in many ways.**

A3.1. What is the contribution of the business environment in facilitating the pottery production and marketing (both positive and negative)?

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A3.2. Does it encourage improving the quality of products and/or introducing new designs?

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A3.3. What kinds of services do you get from government or non-government institutions?

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A3.4. Is the availability of capacity building services (such as credit, training, donation, etc.) a necessary condition for the production and marketing process? Please explain in detail.

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A3.5. How does the pottery business environment affect your income?

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**During production and in leaving together or near by the relationship of the producers among themselves and their neighbors might be peaceful and support each other. There are also situations that the producers among themselves and their neighbors might not be smooth and healthy. In your case;**

A3.6. How do you interact among yourselves in the pottery production and marketing process?

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A3.7. How is your relationship with other non-pottery producing community members?

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A3.8. What is the ecological situations that facilitated your pottery production?

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**Some government and non-government organizations give different support to people engaged with small-scale handicraft and trade activities. These can be facilitating loans, trainings, facilitating market outlets, services such as production shades, supplying raw materials and equipments, tax exemptions, etc.**

A3.10. What support/service or problems do you have from your surroundings for your production efforts?

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A3.11. Who supports or creates problems on your production activities?

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**A4. Pottery production contributions associated households**

**Some people allocate their income for different types of asset accumulation, daily expenditure, open bank accounts and save money. While some expend it to their basic consumption.**

A4.1. What is the contribution of your pottery production to your family?

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A4.2. What is the role of your pottery production in the asset or net worth of your family?

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A4.3. What is the benefits of your traditional skill to your status?

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A4.4. How did you appreciate your traditional skill [both positively/negatively]?

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A4.5. Are you willing to transfer your traditional skill?

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A4.5.1. If you are willing, what motivates you to transfer your skill?

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A4.5.2. To whom will you transfer your traditional skill about pottery?

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A4.5.3. If you are not willing to transfer your skill, what are your reasons?

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A4.6. What is the proportion of male and female involvement in the pottery production?

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A4.6.1 According to my observation, it is only females who are producing pottery?  
What are the reasons that men are not seen in the production process?

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A4.6.2 If you are willing to transfer your traditional skill are you willing to train  
your son or brother?

**A5. Kechene Women Potters Association**

**Some people prefer to work individually in their production workshops. While other; choose to produce marketable items in their houses, using their residence as a production unit. However, other organizes themselves in cooperatives or associations and produce in their Cooperation Workshops. Still others organize themselves in cooperatives or associations and produce their products in their homes and bring their products to their cooperative shops for sale.**

A5.1. When did you join the Kechene Women Potters Association? \_\_\_\_\_

A5.2. What motivates you to be the member of the association?

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A5.3. What benefits you gain from the membership?

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A5.4. What additional capacities (trainings, manufacturing equipments, etc.) you gain from the membership?

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A5.5. Does the Women Potters Association facilitates conditions to increase your revenues and profits?

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A5.6. Does the Association enables you to increase the value of your assets (house, utilities, skills, house wares, savings, etc.)?



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A5.7. What does it help you to upgrade your production process and/or improve your products to get more profits?

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A5.8. What is the benefit of working in the Association production centre rather than using the houses as a production unit?

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A5.9. How do the association capacitate you to compete in the market?

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A5.10. What are the reasons that the members of the association are smaller while there are many women potters in the community?

**A6. Personal information**

A.61. Marital status: single \_\_\_ separated \_\_\_ widowed \_\_\_ divorced \_\_\_

A6.2. Education level: \_\_\_\_\_

A6.3. Number of families including the case \_\_\_\_\_

(Spouse \_\_\_ own children \_\_\_ relatives \_\_\_ non relatives \_\_\_)

A6.4. Additional Means of income other than pottery production: \_\_\_\_\_

A6.4. Amount of monthly income from Pottery production \_\_\_\_\_

A6.5. Additional monthly income from other sources \_\_\_\_\_

A6.6. Available assets/facilities at home level

Privately owned home            yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Toilet/pit latrine                yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Water pipe                        yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Home with private compound    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Radio                                yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

TV                                    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Telephone                         yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

A6.7. How do you categorize yourself in terms of economic status?

As a well to do \_\_\_\_\_

As a well off \_\_\_\_\_

As satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

As not satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation and time

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School Of Graduate Studies**  
**School Of Social Works**  
**Master’s Thesis Project**  
**Topic of Study – Pottery Production Asset for Women Livelihood**  
**Case Study Interview Guide – developed by Mulu Yeneabat Alemu**

**Case Study Interview**

**B.A Case name/Code** \_\_ Age \_\_ House N \_\_, telephone (if available and permitted to register) \_\_  
 specific location (area identification) \_\_\_\_\_

**B.B. Case drawn from:** **Newly Organized Women Potters Association** \_\_\_\_

**The Interview Guide For Members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Association**

- ☞ The Interview questions listed below are guiding questions. There will be probing questions based on the answers that would be provided by the Interviewee to get more information associated with the study.
- ☞ These interview questions will be translated into Amharic. When the Researcher gets the permission of the interviewee the interview will be tape-recorded. Then the researcher will transcribe the interview and his field notes first in Amharic, then after will summarise/narrate the Amharic transcribed document into English.
- ☞ If the interviewee is not comfortable with tape-recording, the researcher will use his field notes to transcribe the interview.

**B1. Traditional pottery production process.**

A1.1. Where did you learn the skill to produce pottery?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B1.2. Who gave you the training of pottery production?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B1.3. Where did you get the raw materials?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B1.4. What are your production tools and equipments?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B1.5. Where do you produce the pottery?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B1.6. How many pottery items do you produce within a month?

(Please give me by comparing one type of artifact from the other)

\_\_\_\_\_

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**B2. Market supply and demand for traditional pottery.**

B2.1. How do you sell your pottery?

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B2.2. What are the criteria to set the price of your pottery?

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B2.3. What are the factors that affect the demand of your pottery products?  
(Both positively and negatively)

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B2.4. What are the mechanisms you use to expand your pottery markets and attract more customers?

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B2.5. What types of pottery are you producing?

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B2.6. Are your pottery with similar designs and standards?

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B2.8. How do you assess your production and the demand for your pottery?

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B2.9. Where does your customers sell your pottery?

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B2.10. What kinds of pottery do your customers prefer to buy fro, you?

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B2.11. What is the comment of your customers about your products?

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**B3. Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)**

**Business environment means the production, marketing and the relationship between the producers and the other community members. There are conditions, which support or discourage the producers and their products in many ways.**

B3.1. What is the contribution of the business environment in facilitating the pottery production and marketing (both positive and negative)?

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B3.2. Does it encourage improving the quality of products and/or introducing new designs?

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B3.3. What kinds of services do you get from government or non-government institutions?

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B3.4. Is the availability of capacity building services (such as credit, training, donation, etc.) a necessary condition for the production and marketing process? Please explain in detail.

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B3.5. How does the pottery business environment affect your income?

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**During production and in leaving together or near by the relationship of the producers among themselves and their neighbors might be peaceful and support each other. There are also situations that the producers among themselves and their neighbors might not be smooth and healthy. In your case;**

B3.6. How do you interact among yourselves in the pottery production and marketing process?

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B3.7. How is your relationship with other non-pottery producing community members?

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B3.8. What is the ecological situations that facilitated your pottery production?

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**Some government and non-government organizations give different support to people engaged with small-scale handicraft and trade activities. These can be facilitating loans, trainings, facilitating market outlets, services such as production shades, supplying raw materials and equipments, tax exemptions, etc.**

B3.10. What support/service or problems do you have from your surroundings for your production efforts?

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---

B3.11. Who supports or creates problems on your production activities?

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**B4. Pottery production contributions associated households**

**Some people allocate their income for different types of asset accumulation, daily expenditure, open bank accounts and save money. While some expend it to their basic consumption.**

B4.1. What is the contribution of your pottery production to your family?

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B4.2. What is the role of your pottery production in the asset or net worth of your family?

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B4.3. What is the benefits of your traditional skill to your status?

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B4.4. How did you appreciate your traditional skill [both positively/negatively]?

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B4.5. Are you willing to transfer your traditional skill?

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B4.5.1. If you are willing, what motivates you to transfer your skill?

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B4.5.2. To whom will you transfer your traditional skill about pottery?

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B4.5.3. If you are not willing to transfer your skill, what are your reasons?

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B4.6. What is the proportion of male and female involvement in the pottery production?

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B4.6.1 According to my observation, it is only females who are producing pottery? What are the reasons that men are not seen in the production process?

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B4.6.2 If you are willing to transfer your traditional skill are you willing to train your son or brother?

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**B5. Newly Organized Women Potters Association**

B5.1. When did you join the Women Potters Association? \_\_\_\_\_

B5.2. What/who motivates you to be the member of the association?

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B5.3. What benefits did you expect to gain from the membership?

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B5.4. What additional capacities (trainings, manufacturing equipments, etc.) you gain from the membership up to now?

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B5.5. Does the Women Potters Association facilitates conditions to increase your revenues and profits?

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B5.6. What would you expect from your Association to enable you to increase the value of your assets (house, utilities, skills, house wares, savings, etc.)?

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B5.7. What does it help you to upgrade your production process and/or improve your products to get more profits?

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B5.8. What is the benefit of working in the Association production centre rather than using the houses as a production unit?

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B5.9. How do the association capacitate you to compete in the market?

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B5.10. What are the reasons that the members of the association are smaller while there are many women potters in the community?

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**B6. Personal information**

B6.1. Marital status: single \_\_\_ separated \_\_\_ widowed \_\_\_ divorced \_\_\_

B6.2. Education level: \_\_\_\_\_

B6.3. Number of families including the case \_\_\_\_\_  
(Spouse \_\_\_ own children \_\_\_ relatives \_\_\_ non relatives \_\_\_)

B6.4. Additional Means of income other than pottery production: \_\_\_\_\_

B6.4. Amount of monthly income from Pottery production \_\_\_\_\_

B6.5. Additional monthly income from other sources \_\_\_\_\_

B6.6. Available assets/facilities at home level

Privately owned home                      yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Toilet/pit latrine                            yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Water pipe                                    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Home with private compound            yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Radio    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

TV    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Telephone                                    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

B6.7. How do you categorize yourself in terms of economic status?

As a well to do \_\_\_\_\_

As a well off \_\_\_\_\_

As satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

As not satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation and time
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**Addis Ababa University**  
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**Master’s Thesis Project**  
**Topic of Study – Pottery Production Asset for Women Livelihood**  
**Case Study Interview Guide – developed by Mulu Yeneabat Alemu**

**Case Study Interview**

- C.A** Case name/Code \_\_ Age \_\_ House N \_\_, telephone (if available and permitted to register) \_\_ specific location (area identification) \_\_\_\_\_
- C.B.** Case drawn from: **Potters using their house as a Production Unit** \_\_

**The Interview Guide For Members of the *Kechene* Women Potters Association**

- ☞ The Interview questions listed below are guiding questions. There will be probing questions based on the answers that would be provided by the Interviewee to get more information associated with the study.
- ☞ These interview questions will be translated into Amharic. When the Researcher gets the permission of the interviewee the interview will be tape-recorded. Then the researcher will transcribe the interview and his field notes first in Amharic, then after will summarise/narrate the Amharic transcribed document into English.
- ☞ If the interviewee is not comfortable with tape-recording, the researcher will use his field notes to transcribe the interview.

**C1. Traditional pottery production process.**

- C1.1. Where did you learn the skill to produce pottery?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- C1.2. Who gave you the training of pottery production?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- C1.3. Where did you get the raw materials?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- C1.4. What are your production tools and equipments?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- C1.5. Where do you produce the pottery?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- C1.6. How many pottery items do you produce within a month?  
 (Please give me by comparing one type of artifact from the other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_



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**C2. Market supply and demand for traditional pottery.**

C2.1. How do you sell your pottery?

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C2.2. What are the criteria to set the price of your pottery?

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C2.3. What are the factors that affect the demand of your pottery products?  
(Both positively and negatively)

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C2.4. What are the mechanisms you use to expand your pottery markets and attract more customers?

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C2.5. What types of pottery are you producing?

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---

C2.6. Are your pottery with similar designs and standards?

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---

C2.8. How do you assess your production and the demand for your pottery?

---

---

C2.9. Where does your customers sell your pottery?

---

---

C2.10. What kinds of pottery do your customers prefer to buy fro, you?

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C2.11. What is the comment of your customers about your products?

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**C3. Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)**

**Business environment means the production, marketing and the relationship between the producers and the other community members. There are conditions, which support or discourage the producers and their products in many ways.**

C3.1. What is the contribution of the business environment in facilitating the pottery production and marketing (both positive and negative)?

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C3.2. Does it encourage improving the quality of products and/or introducing new designs?

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C3.3. What kinds of services do you get from government or non-government institutions?

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C3.4. Is the availability of capacity building services (such as credit, training, donation, etc.) a necessary condition for the production and marketing process? Please explain in detail.

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C3.5. How does the pottery business environment affect your income?

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**During production and in leaving together or near by the relationship of the producers among themselves and their neighbors might be peaceful and support each other. There are also situations that the producers among themselves and their neighbors might not be smooth and healthy. In your case;**

C3.6. How do you interact among yourselves in the pottery production and marketing process?

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---

C3.7. How is your relationship with other non-pottery producing community members?

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---

C3.8. What is the ecological situations that facilitated your pottery production?

---

---

**Some government and non-government organizations give different support to people engaged with small-scale handicraft and trade activities. These can be facilitating loans, trainings, facilitating market outlets, services such as production shades, supplying raw materials and equipments, tax exemptions, etc.**

C3.10. What support/service or problems do you have from your surroundings for your production efforts?

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---

C3.11. Who supports or creates problems on your production activities?

---

---

**C4. Pottery production contributions associated households**

**Some people allocate their income for different types of asset accumulation, daily expenditure, open bank accounts and save money. While some expend it to their basic consumption.**

C4.1. What is the contribution of your pottery production to your family?

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C4.2. What is the role of your pottery production in the asset or net worth of your family?

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C4.3. What is the benefits of your traditional skill to your status?

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C4.4. How did you appreciate your traditional skill [both positively/negatively]?

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C4.5. Are you willing to transfer your traditional skill?

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C4.5.1. If you are willing, what motivates you to transfer your skill?

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C4.5.2. To whom will you transfer your traditional skill about pottery?

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C4.5.3. If you are not willing to transfer your skill, what are your reasons?

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C4.6. What is the proportion of male and female involvement in the pottery production?

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C4.6.1 According to my observation, it is only females who are producing pottery?  
What are the reasons that men are not seen in the production process?

---

---

C4.6.2 If you are willing to transfer your traditional skill are you willing to train your son or brother?

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**C5. Potters using their house as a Production Unit**

C5.1. What is the benefit of producing pottery in your house?  
(There will be many probing questions here)

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C5.2. What/who motivates you to produce your pottery in your house rather than on some other place?

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C5.3. Where did you get additional inputs for your production (trainings, manufacturing equipments, etc.)?

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C5.5. How does the pottery production using your house facilitates conditions to increase your revenues and profits?

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C5.6. How do you compete in the pottery market?

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C5.7. Do you know that there are pottery producing women's associations?

\_\_\_\_\_

C5.8. What are the reasons that you are not a member of one of pottery producing women's association?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**C6. Personal information**

C6.1. Marital status: single \_\_\_ separated \_\_\_ widowed \_\_\_ divorced \_\_\_\_\_

C6.2. Education level: \_\_\_\_\_

C6.3. Number of families including the case \_\_\_\_\_

(Spouse \_\_\_ own children \_\_\_ relatives \_\_\_ non relatives \_\_\_)

C6.4. Additional Means of income other than pottery production: \_\_\_\_\_

C6.4. Amount of monthly income from Pottery production \_\_\_\_\_

C6.5. Additional monthly income from other sources \_\_\_\_\_

C6.6. Available assets/facilities at home level

Privately owned home                      yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Toilet/pit latrine                            yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Water pipe                                    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Home with private compound            yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Radio    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

TV    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Telephone                                    yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

C6.7. How do you categorize yourself in terms of economic status?

As a well to do \_\_\_\_\_

As a well off \_\_\_\_\_

As satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

As not satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation and time

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School Of Graduate Studies**  
**School Of Social Works**  
**Master's Thesis Project**  
**Topic of Study – Pottery Production Asset for Women Livelihood**  
**Case Study Interview Guide – developed by Mulu Yenebat Alemu**

**Case Study Interview** **Date:- \_\_\_\_\_**

**D.A Case name/Code**\_\_\_\_ **Age** \_\_\_\_ **House N** \_\_\_\_ **Kebele**\_\_\_\_, **telephone**\_\_\_\_  
 (if available and permitted to register) specific location (area identification)

**D.B. Interview Guide For Women Potters Who Withdrew Their Membership Association**

The Interview questions listed below are guiding questions. There will be probing questions based on the answers that would be provided by the Interviewee to get more information associated with the study.

☞ These interview questions will be translated into Amharic. When the Researcher gets the permission of the interviewee the interview will be tape-recorded. Then the researcher will transcribe the interview and his field notes first in Amharic, then after will summarise/narrate the Amharic transcribed document into English.

☞ If the interviewee is not comfortable with tape-recording, the researcher will use his field notes to transcribe the interview.

**D1. Traditional pottery production process.**

D1.1. Where did you learn the skill to produce pottery?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D1.2. Who gave you the training of pottery production?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D1.3. Where did you get the raw materials?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D1.4. What are your production tools and equipments?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D1.5. Where do you produce the pottery?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D1.6. How many pottery items do you produce within a month?  
 (Please answer by comparing one type of artifact from the other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**D2. Market supply and demand for traditional pottery.**

D2.1. How do you sell your pottery?

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D2.2. What are the criteria to set the price of your pottery?

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D2.3. What are the factors that affect the demand of your pottery products?  
(Both positively and negatively).

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D2.4. What are the mechanisms you use to expand your pottery markets and attract more customers?

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D2.5. What types of pottery are you producing?

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---

D2.6. Are your pottery with similar designs and standards?

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---

D2.7. How do you assess your production and the demand for your pottery?

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D2.8. Where does your customers sell your pottery?

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D2.9. What kinds of pottery do your customers prefer to buy from you?

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D2.10. What is the comment of your customers about your products?

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**D3. Business environment (Production, market, community attitudes)**

**Business environment means the production, marketing and the relationship between the producers and the other community members. There are conditions, which support or discourage the producers and their products in many ways.**

D3.1. What is the contribution of the business environment in facilitating the pottery production and marketing (both positive and negative)?

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D3.2. Does it encourage improving the quality of products and/or introducing new designs?

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D3.3. What kinds of services do you get from government or non government institutions?

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D3.4. Is the availability of capacity building services (such as credit, training, donation, etc.) a necessary condition for the production and marketing process? Please explain in detail.

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---

D3.5. How does the pottery business environment affect your income?

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**The relationship of the producers among themselves and their neighbors might be peaceful and support each other. There are also situations that the producers among themselves and/or their neighbors might not be smooth and healthy. In your case:**

D3.6. How do you interact among yourselves in the pottery production and marketing process?

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D3.7. How is your relationship with other non-pottery producing community members?

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D3.8. What is the ecological situations that facilitated your pottery production?

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D3.9. What is the ecological situations that are encouraging or hindering your pottery production?

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**Some government and non-governmental organizations give different support to people engaged with small scale handicraft and trade activities. These can be facilitating loans, trainings, facilitating market outlets, services such as production shades, supplying raw materials and equipments, tax exemptions, etc.**

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D3.10. What support/service or problems do you have from your surroundings for your production efforts?

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D3.11. Who supports or creates problems on your production activities?

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**D4. Pottery production contributions associated households**

**Some people allocate their income for different types of asset accumulation, daily expenditure, and have saving accounts**

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D4.1. What is the contribution of your pottery production to your family?

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D4.2. What is the role of your pottery production in the asset or net worth of your family?

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D4.3. What is the benefits of your traditional skill to your status?

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D4.4. How did you appreciate your traditional skill [both positively/negatively]?

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D4.5. Are you willing to transfer your traditional skill?

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D4.5.1. If you are willing, what motivates you to transfer your skill?

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D4.5.2. To whom will you transfer your traditional skill about pottery?

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\_\_\_\_\_

D4.5.3. If you are not willing to transfer your skill, what are your reasons?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D4.6. What is the proportion of male and female involvement in the pottery production?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D4.6.1 According to my observation, it is only females who are producing pottery?  
What are the reasons that men are not seen in the production process?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D4.6.2 If you are willing to transfer your traditional skill are you willing to train  
your son or brother?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**D5. Potters producing in their house withdrawing from the Association**

D5.1. What is the benefit of producing pottery in your house?  
(There will be many probing questions here)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.2. What/who motivates you to produce your pottery in your house rather than on some  
other place?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.3. Where did you get additional inputs for your production (trainings, manufacturing  
equipments, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.5. How does the pottery production using your house facilitates conditions to increase  
your revenues and profits?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.6. How do you compete in the pottery market?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.7. Do you know that there are pottery producing women's associations?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D5.8. What are the reasons that you withdrew your membership from the association?

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D5.9. How do you feel now for withdrawing your membership?

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**D6. Personal information**

DC.61.Marital status: single \_\_\_\_ separated \_\_\_\_ widowed \_\_\_\_ divorced \_\_\_\_

D6.2.Education level: \_\_\_\_\_

D6.3.Number of families including the case \_\_\_\_\_

(Spouse\_\_\_\_ own children \_\_ relatives \_\_\_\_ non relatives\_\_\_\_)

D6.4.Additional Means of income other than pottery production: \_\_\_\_\_

D6.4.Amount of monthly income from Pottery production \_\_\_\_\_

D6.5.Additional monthly income from other sources \_\_\_\_\_

D6.6.Available assets/facilities at home level

Privately owned home            yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

Toilet/pit latrine                yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

Water pipe                        yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

Home with private compound    yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

Radio                              yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

TV                                 yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

Telephone                        yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

D6.7. How do you categorize yourself in terms of economic status?

As a well to do \_\_\_\_\_

As a well off \_\_\_\_\_

As satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

As not satisfactory for basic needs \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation and time

## Appendix

### Annex B: Informed consent

Good morning/afternoon

I am conducting a research on the livelihood of Women who are producing pottery using their traditional skills. The research is conducted by conducting in-depth interview with the collaboration of Women Potters. The in-depth interview is about their traditional skills, abilities, and entrepreneurship. The information you provide will help me and others understand how women use their traditional skills in ways that help them generate income to support their families. This information, we hope will help people to contribute in improving their living conditions and their neighborhood, finding jobs or starting small businesses. This information may also help design community development projects that will benefit the local community.

This study includes 50 women potters in *Kechene* (Kebele 08/16 & 07/17) ten pottery traders and ten experts working on Small and Medium Micro enterprise government offices. Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or you may stop answering these questions at any time. There are no negative consequences from the University of Illinois at Chicago, Addis Ababa University, or from the Gulele sub-city government administration or from your Kebele administration for not responding to this interview.

To obtain a full picture women's livelihood that are using their traditional skills living in the *Kechene* community, you are one of 50 women selected to participate in the study. The respondents will be interviewed regarding their traditional pottery production and marketing patterns.

This study will keep your name and your household confidential. Only the researcher will know your name and household. For the purposes of our research analysis, individual responses to the interview questions will be either separately analyzed or added together, and all information from the study will be presented in summary.

The information that we learn from this study will be available in a written report submitted to Addis Ababa University and Gulele sub-city Kebele 08/16 & 07/17 administration. We may also use the information for academic purposes such as conference presentations, journal articles and book chapters. You will receive a payment of 25 birr (approximately \$3.00 USD) for taking part in this study. If you agree to take part in this study, your responses will be written directly on the blank spaces of the interview form in Amharic language which will be translated into English. If you give the permission, I will record our conversation in a tape recorder; to transcribe it later on. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for Protection of Research Subjects at the University of Illinois at Chicago, at 011-312-996-1711.

For questions about this study, contact the researcher: Alice K. Johnson Butterfield, Principal Investigator University of Illinois at Chicago, Jane Addams College of Social Work, 1040 West Harrison Street (M/C 309), Chicago, Illinois USA 60607, Phone: 312-996-0036. Email: [akj@uic.edu](mailto:akj@uic.edu). In Ethiopia, contact MULU Yeneabat, Research Assistant, Graduate School of Social Work, Box 1176, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Email: [korabageru@yahoo.com](mailto:korabageru@yahoo.com) Telephone 251-0911-480522:

Completion of the interview implies your consent to participate in the study.