

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Psychosocial Challenges of Disability and Coping
Mechanisms: The Case of War Veterans in Axum and
Adwa Towns**

BY

Sisay Kahsay

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis
Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Special Needs Education**

June 2010

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BY
SISAY KAHSAY

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Acronym and Abbreviations

- ALP - Adult Literacy program
CRS- Catholic Relief Service
DRP - Demobilization and Reintegration program
EC - European Commission
EDU - Ethiopian Democratic Union
ELF - Eritrean Liberation Front
ENDF - Ethiopian National Defense force
EPLF - Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front
EPRDF - Ethiopian peoples Revolutionary Democratic front
FBVE- Federal Bored for Vocational Education
FWVWD – Female war veteran with Disabilities
ICRC- International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO - International Labour organization
MWVWD - Male war veteran with Disabilities
NGO - Non Governmental Organization
OLF - Oromo Liberation Front
PLAN - People’s Liberation Army of Namibia
PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
REST - Relief society of Tigray
SWAOP - South West African people’s organization
SWATF - South West African Territorial Force
TDVA- Tigray Disabled Veteran Association
TGE - Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF - Tigray people Liberation front
WVWD - War Veterans with Disabilities
WV – War Veterans

Abstract

This study attempts to examine the challenges of psychosocial disability and coping mechanisms ware veterans living in Axum and Adwa towns. To meet this purpose qualitative study design was employed. Participants were selected purposefully with preset criteria. The criteria included severity of disability being a member of war veterans of TPLF and living in Axum and Adwa. The data was collected mainly through semi-structured interview methods and focus group discussion. The findings of this study shows that the war veterans disability experience stress disorder repletion due to undesirable and unsuccessful life they currently live with.

Glossary-

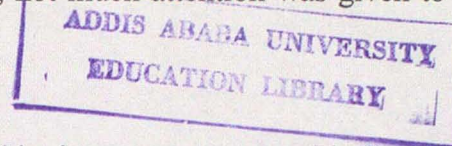
Ekub- a mutual help voluntary association for the purpose of sharing and credits services. Every member can take the money by his term with lottery method

Idir- Voluntary association Organized mostly for funereal purposes

CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Background of the Study

At present, there has not been any study about psychosocial challenges in coping up with consequences of disability and coping mechanism in the case of war veterans in Ethiopia. Although the issue is very important for the development of all war veterans in general and war veterans with disability in particular, not much attention was given to it by the government and the society at large.



It may be difficult to give take care of the Ethiopian war veterans with disability unlike that of war veterans with disability in the developed world. Our knowledge and attitude about war veterans with disability varies according to our educational background and socio economic situation of the country. In Ethiopia, there is a general tendency to think of persons with disabilities as weak, hopeless, dependent and unable to learn and the subject of charity (Tirusew 2005) .When we think negatively towards their disability they will develop low self- esteem and may increase dependency and hopelessness. If people treated, respected and give value for war veterans with disability in a good manner they may have good perception for themselves. As Wolfens berg (1985) in Berine, Patton & Ittndach(1994) stated, "How a person perceived affects how that person will be treated". War veterans with disability deserve psychological, educational and economic support to improve their life situation.

Their disability occurred when the degree regime came to power in 1967 E.C. the Tigray peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) launched armed struggle in 1967 E.C. to over throw the degree regime from power up to 1983 E.C. with in all these 17 years, they faced different problems. To mention some of the problems, some of them loss their arms, legs, vision... etc.

Most war veterans with disability are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder include

- Unwanted distressing memories
- Nightmares and difficulty falling or staying a sleep restfully

- Bodily stress and tension when remind of their traumatic experience
(Department of health and human service in USA n.d)

When war veterans with disability have such difficulties, to minimize the problems and to intervene their adjustment to life coping is very important. As Lazarus (1966) in Hampan and mall (1995) argued that:

People should combine task and emotion focused coping strategies. Task- focused strategies attempt some form of action directly targeted on dealing with the source of stress-adaptation of the environment- where as emotion focused strategy attempt to attenuate the emotional experience associated with that stress adaptation to the environment

Moreover, Dewe (1987) identified the following coping strategies: post poning action by relaxation and destructing attention, developing a greater ability to deal with the problem, rationalizing the problem and drawing support through spiritual commitment.

Victims of traumatic events cope with any concomitant psychological difficulties they experience in a variety of ways. Two main ways of coping are coping through processing the recollection of the event and avoidance (Hunt and Robbins 2001)

War veterans with disability at Axum and Adwa may suffer not only from economic problem but also from psychological problems. I observed some problems from some war veterans with disability, and became interested to study about psychosocial challenges of disability and coping mechanisms. This study also tries to write some possible suggestions at the end of the discussion.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia war veterans in general and war veterans with disability in particular have paid higher price to defend their country and people from internal repression and external enemies. For this, they deserved motivation, encouragement, recognition and reward. However most of them are subject to post traumatic stress disorder. This is true particularly with the war veterans with disability living in Axum, and Adwa, Tigray. The post traumatic stress disorders have consequences on work and educational opportunities. Because, getting and keeping a good job or returning to complete school or for advanced

education requires mental concentration, managing anger, solving problems with out turning them into crises,... etc.

When war veterans with disability return to civilian society, they are not received with conducive social environment. Particularly female war veterans with disability are unable to leave behind the trauma in their attempt to adjust in to civil life. They are more marginalized than male war veterans with disability. War veterans with disability struggle with a variety of extremely severe problems that they and their families, friends and communities do not understand. Among these they found it difficult to cope with:

- Anxiety (such as restlessness, obsessive worries, compulsive rituals)
- Panic (such as a terrier of losing control, suffocating, or going crazy)
- Depression (such as hopelessness, loss all interests, suicidal impulses).

You can guess that how they faced psychosocial problems. Because at this time some of their former comrades are ministers, Ambassadors, Doctors, higher officials and they lead good life. But war veterans with disability let alone to lead good life even they may be in a problem to survive their life because of their disability.

Another important means of coping what which is linked to both processing and avoidance is social support (Turner and Marino, 1994). Social support is used in a variety of situations, from HIV sufferers (Mulder and Antoni, 1994) to sexual assault (Harvery, Orbach, Chawalsis and Garwood, 1991). There is a relationship between social support and well- being in a variety of situations including every day stressors (Michell .Billings and Moos, 1982).

When war veterans with disabilities returned to their home and got adequate social support, training and education they could lead their civilian life with confidence. If this is the case, did the Ethiopian society support war veterans with disability after they returned home? Does the government support war veterans with disability? Are the war veterans with disability got conducive environment to attend their studies at school? Do they get training after returning home?

Concerned bodies need to answer the above mentioned questions. In order to help war veterans with disability, first it is necessary to look closely at veterans themselves.

Some scholars including Daniel and Stefan (1998) conducted research in connection with demobilized and reintegration of about a half million ex-soldiers during the 1990s in Ethiopia. However, to the best of my knowledge none of the previous studies addressed the specific problems of war veterans with disability. Thus, this study aims at filling this research gap. In these days of civilian war, combatants lived in a community where comrades were willing to die to save their fellows let alone sharing food, water and personal problems. But during the post war their natural relationship and sense of comrades has been lost. So war veterans with disability particularly feel loneliness, mental illness and helplessness. Further more most of war veterans with disability come from rural areas. So, when they want to live in urban areas, they can face adjustment problems.

As mentioned before in the background study, psychosocial challenges of disability and coping mechanisms in the case of war veterans is the first important issue to the provision of necessary support of social, economic and educational services for war veterans with disability. With out the right perception, treatment and understanding of the society and government, it is difficult to improve the life situation of war veterans with disability. Therefore, the aim of this study will be to investigate what are the psychosocial challenges of war veterans with disabilities cope up with different problems at Axum and Adwa based on the following leading basic questions.

1. Do war veterans with disabilities face psychological problems? If so Why?
2. How do war veterans with disabilities lead their social life in the community?
3. How do war veterans with disabilities cope up with all the problems they are facing?

1.3. Significance of the Study

Since this study focuses on investigating the major problems of war veterans with disability, it seeks to identify their attitudes, feelings and their needs. The study has the following significance.

1. It could be important for war veterans with disability to become aware of their problem and possibly help towards mitigating their problems
2. It is believed that providing information to district administrators and other concerned bodies about the problem of war veterans with disability and render vital support
3. The findings of this study may also serve as stepping stone for further research.

1.4 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Before going to the specific review of the literature some of the terms used in this research study need to be clarified. Therefore, in this study:

Disability: - refers to some functional limitations of physical, visual and psychological activities among war veterans in Axum

War veterans: - refers to the former member of TPLF (Tigray Peoples Liberation Front) army who fought in the armed struggle between 1967 E.C and 1983 E.C and who were demobilized after the end of the struggle.

Psychosocial:- refers to intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics of war veterans with disability.

✦ **Psychological Problem:** refers to the emotions related to traumatic events of pre and post ware time and physical self- esteem of war veterans with disability.

✦ **Social Problems:** refers to interpersonal barriers for social relations particularly in the formation of friends, relation ship with their neighbors, and community with war veterans with disability.

Self esteem- refers to the judgments a person makes about the worthiness of his or her physical ability.

Coping: - refers to positive or negative ways coping mechanisms and how they can deal with it. It involves adopting environmental and personal problems.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Concept of Impairment, Disability and Handicap

Different people define it differently for the word Disability. There is no single, unified and accepted definition of disability. One definition of disability that fits all circumstances may not be possible or even desirable. Disability is difficult to define because it is a multi-dimensional concept with both objectives and subjective characteristics (Skrtic, 1995).

There are two opposing views in the concept of disability. These are if the problems of disability are concerned with the individual persons, while paying little or no attention to his(her) social or physical environment. This is referred to as the individual or medical model of disability. On the other hand if the disability results from the failure of the physical or social environment, this is referred to as social model (ILO, 2004).

The world program of Action for persons with disability and the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities emphasize that disability is a socially problem and not an attribute of an individual.

The United Nations (1980) cited in Alemayhu (2009) uses a definition of impairment, disability and handicap is as follows:

- Impairment: Any loss of abnormality of psychological or anatomical structure.
- Disability: Any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human being.)
- Handicap: A disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability, that limits or prevents the fulfillment of a role that is normal, depending on age, sex, social or cultural factors for that individual. Handicap is therefore, a function of the relationship between persons with disability and their environment. It occurs when they encounter cultural, physical or social barriers

which prevent their access to the various systems of society that are available to other citizens. Thus, handicap is the loss or commutation of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others "UNWPA 2000. However, according to Snow (2005) it is no longer used (charged) in any federal legislation because that evokes negative images.

According ILO's Article 1(1) of convention No 159 in Feruz (2006), the term person with disability means an individual whose prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognized physical or mental impairment. According to ICF 1994, cited in Wegayehu (2004) the major categories of classification are "body function and body structure activities, and participation and environmental factors.

Fulcher (1989:55) described that

people views disability from two perspectives. The first perspective positions people with disabilities as dependents who rely on the support of others, understandably persons with non-disabilities. The second perspective contrasts the first one and views people with disabilities as individuals with civil rights and emphasizes their rights to equity. Fulcher notes how disability has been an issue feared by society at large. The feared status of disability has for many years kept persons with disabilities from participating in the mainstream of society. One example of society's fear of people with disabilities is the decision and action which kept them in institutions. Equally harmful to persons with disability is the conceptualization of disability as a personal issue, an issue he or she is burdened to handle.

This misconception may equally appear in the Ethiopian context.

As Ethiopia is a country with diverse socio cultural dimensions and diverse languages, there are many proverbs or sayings used by the people that reflect their understanding and thought about issues related to disability. In Ethiopia there is a general tendency to think of persons with disabilities as weak, hopeless, dependent and unable to learn and the subject of charity (Tirussew, 2005). The misconceptions of causal attribution added to misunderstanding of the capabilities of persons with disabilities have resulted in a generally negative attitude and stereotyped approach towards them. Society's reactions

are by and large lucidly manifested in marginalized interpersonal relationships and participation at family, neighborhood and community levels.

According to Tirussew (2005) the definition of disability needs to be based on the environmental context in which the individual functions. That means, if the impairment does not impose or limit the daily activities of the person, it should not be considered as disability. Therefore, the quality of interpersonal relationships and scope of participation in socio-cultural activities which entail a degree of acceptance, love, care, and respects as well as the range of involvement in mainstream socio-cultural activities are very important for personal development.

2.2 Effects of War on the Individual war Veterans

What neither these veterans nor their families (nor even and doctors) know is the suffering they encounter from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

- Unwanted distressing memories or a feeling of reliving traumatic Vietnam experiences (flash backs)
- Bodily stress and tension, especially when reminded of traumatic Vietnam experiences
- Loss of interest in activities and difficulty concentrating on activities or projects
- Detachment or withdrawal from emotional involvement in relationships
- Difficulty telling or expressing emotions other than irritability or frustration
- Feeling like there is no future or their lives will be cut short by an untimely death
- Feeling jumpy, on edge and easily started
- Feeling constantly unsafe and unable to

(Department of health and human service in USA n.d)

2.3 Educational problems of war veterans with disabilities

Even though some War Veterans with disabilities (WVWD) have been reintegrated back into society more easily due to their high academic qualifications, many others lacked even basic education and skills for the purpose as a result of long devastating wars (Abushierif, 2008:30). The experience of Liberia is described in detail because of the great deal of similarity to the case in point here. Many people in Liberia considered formal education to be important for reintegration, even though there were some adult literacy programs (ALP) (Abushierif, 2008:30). More than 70% of the funding was used completely for reintegration. The available options for reintegration included:

- ❖ Formal education
- ❖ Agricultural and vocational skill training
- ❖ Apprenticeship (on-the-job training), and
- ❖ Parallel programs supported by the European Commission (EC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Ackerman, et al (2009) stated that for returned war veterans attending college requires financial support; but even when they get financial support, they are constantly reminded of their friends who were killed or injured which creates great difficulties for them. Although the experience of war is very bad; however, none of the participants expressed regret at having been in combat. (Ackerman, et al 2009).

Studies indicated that, for many, the transition from being a combatant to being a college student is the most difficult transition of all. This is because all campuses did not have programs to assist war veterans who have become students. In some campuses, the veteran's service offices either receive criticism or veterans in the campus were unaware of the services available to them. (Ackerman, et al 2009:8)

Even for those who had attended college prior to being deployed, there were adjustment problems upon their return. A major aspect of the adjustment problem was relearning study skills. Therefore, after having been away from school and formal classroom instruction, re-entry was difficult (Ackerman, et al 2009). So there was a need for a special orientation in college programs for veterans.

2.4. World War II Veteran Social Support and Veterans Association

2.4.1. Social Support

Recovery from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been linked to increase social support and less emotion focused coping Hunt and Robbins (2001) Increased social support in the form of a willing listener to the story of the traumatic episode has been shown to be beneficial in a variety of situation, such as sexual assault (Harvery, Orbach, Chawalsis and Garwood, 1991). Social support has been shown to predict long-term PTSD (Green and Leonard, 1990). Stretch (1991) found that Canadian Vietnam veterans suffered greater levels of psychiatric morbidity than US veterans, and proposed that this was partly because of prolonged isolation from other veterans.

Social support can play different roles in enabling a traumatized war veteran to come to terms with traumatic recollection. Most research focuses on the use of general psychometric measure of social support, which fails to bring out the nuances of the ways in which social support is used. The present study will explore the different roles that social support can play, both as a buffering and as monitoring mechanism, in World War II veterans; who are also experiencing the effects of aging, which itself complicates the coping strategies used.

2.4.2. Comradeship

Comradeship was very important to soldiers during war. Veterans described the comradeship they felt for their fellow soldiers, and how this often lasted into the post-war years. Hunt and Robbins (2001) Comradeship helped veterans cope with their war experience, and it is still preserved for many often in the form of veterans associations. While comradeship may be a source of social support, it can also function as a reminder of traumatic recollections, which conflicts with its social support role. Whichever function it provides, it is a bond that is difficult to break:

Comradeship is something very special, it arises out of wartime experiences, but he seems to expect that such bonds should exist in civilians' life and is disappointed by the fact that it does several veterans expressed this regret. Perhaps it is one reason why veterans associations remain popular-they are the only places where such comradeship remains.

For other comradeship is broader, something special relating not only to those who shared battle experiences, but to the whole generation that survived the war, it is something that cannot be shared with younger people

There is bitterness that what they had fought for has been lost, veterans described how they are unhappy at the way the country has treated them, the difficulties getting war pensions, the lack of respect shown to what they did. This in itself may create psychological difficulties.

Comradeship is still important for many veterans. While there are differences in the way that comradeship is perceived by different individuals, it is often seen as something that cannot be destroyed by time. Comradeship developed during the war years, initially in training, and then in battle. It has continued to be important for many veterans, and is seen as deeper than ordinary friendship, the depth of the relationship arising because of the shared hardship, the shared lives, and the sense of dependency for one's life on others. Many veterans are still dependent on their comrades.

2.4.3. Veterans' Association

For many veterans, associations are an important part of their lives. They have become more popular in recent years, perhaps coinciding with veterans reaching retirement age, though this is not possible to determine because there is no veterans register in the UK. Veterans associations are a means of retaining or regaining comradeship, and they provide practical help. They may not be entirely positive if they play a role of reminding the veteran about war, perhaps activating traumatic recollections, but these reminders mainly serve to help the veteran process any trauma-related information in a safe environment, to help them come to terms with their traumatic recollection (Hunt, 1997). Associations provide a means of remembering the war and comrades who were killed:

Why do so many veterans still wish to take part in such remembrance activities? There may be an effect of having more time after retirement. Meetings are generally regular, perhaps once a month, and veterans get together to have a drink and a chat – often about

the war: Hunt and Robbins (2001). Associations can serve as a means of socially developing narratives about the war. Veterans who discuss the war may develop a shared memory of particular events, a generally agreed story, or perhaps more realistically, a generally disagreed story, where the veterans constantly argue over details- thus avoiding the traumatic emotion. Alternatively, a comrade will act as someone who is worthy of listening to the veteran's story. Many veterans do not like to speak of their traumatic recollections to non veterans:

For some traumatic experiences can only be shared with others who have had similar experiences. Veterans association meetings can be traumatic for the veterans:

Sharing memories in this way is a form of narrative development, a way of processing traumatic recollections, of making them manageable. To discuss these matters in a social group is easier, as the group provided support, a means of social counseling. However, sometimes it is not very effective.

These veterans are not providing a support role. This demonstrates a difference between the comradeship of the war and the comradeship the veterans association. The latter does not consist of a cohesive group of men who all fought in the same actions; even if they all belong to the same regimes, it does not mean they experience similar events. Some veterans who find it difficult sharing their experience with friends and family also find it difficult sharing reminiscences with veterans who belonged to different units. The veterans do not only discuss the traumatic memories of the war, they also: "find that your remembering the good times you know, all the good things." Hunt and Robbins (2001)

Veterans' associations provide more than a venue to discuss the war and to think about dead comrades. They do not exist solely to relive the past. For many veterans who are no longer tried and perhaps in physical decline, they fulfill a practical support role, from the veteran who has lost contact with work friends after retirement and the veterans are:

To the practical help such organizations can provide in helping with pensions and benefits: Veterans' associations play a variety of roles. Other veterans may be the only

people a veteran can talk of because of the special relationship forged through shared wartime experiences. There are also places the veterans can make friends after the loss of work related social relationships after retirement. Finally, they provide practical help with advice on pensions and other matters, and monetary support. These factors explain their apparent resurgence in recent years.

2.4.4. Wives and Family

The support received by veterans from wives has rarely been officially acknowledged, may have taken a large role in the care of their husbands for many years, providing both practical assistance and emotional support. This role was important for some during the war, as well as after.

The early years were often difficult for veterans and their wives because of the psychological problem associated with the war. It is not only the wife who has taken on this caring role. After the war many veterans cared by their parents.

This veteran has little use of one arm, and a part from the physical difficulties, the veterans might have serious psychological difficulties in his interpersonal relations, begin very aggressive with others, often unjustifiably. The assistance from the family is largely physical, his wife and family know little about his experiences during the war.

Wives have not only provided the emotional support that veterans have needed in the post-war years, many have had to provide their husbands with practical help throughout marriage:

These veterans expressed a concern of may, that the state has failed in not providing any finical assistance for most veterans and careers, which adds to the difficulties they already have, and this can only become worse with increasing age, as exemplified here:

It is common for veterans to express the idea that the wife has been central in life. Problems can arise out of this if, as in this case, the wife has died:

If the veteran loses his partner, the person he has depended on, then it may be very difficult to cope if he has depended on her so much over the year. This is another reason why war memories may emerge. This becomes more likely to happen as the veteran gets older. If he has depended on his wife for emotional and/or practical support since the war, then the joint effects of losing wife and losing support can problems through the support of his family, but not all veterans have such a family.

2.5. Special Problems with Targeting Female War Veterans with Disabilities (FWVWD)

Female soldiers have existed in most parts of the world and at most times. In Africa for example women have served in guerilla armies and liberation movements in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa (Arthur,1998). Indeed, JanJinda Pittman, feminist and professor in international politics, goes as far as to task: "without women's activities wars would not be possible .Women are often as central to the roots and perpetuation of an armed conflict as men. Female soldiers who have broken ties with their families and participated in a war time in terms similar to those of men have very often been socialized out of their local settings. For many, the influence of military life has lasted over several years. They may have been very young at that time; usually they have had experiences in the field that will influence them in the future. The gap between socialization in the home community and socialization within the narrow restrictions of a military movement is great.

When male and female ex-soldiers return to civil society, they are not received in the same way. While men are perceived to have strengthened their gender role through military than before, female fighters are increasingly marginalized. When a war ends the female soldiers from the winning party of the conflict may at first receive gratitude from civil society. Gradually however women are pushed in the direction of a stereotypical gender role considered more acceptable for men in that particular society. This is characteristic of the situation of female soldiers all over the world. Conduct encouraged during the war is not encouraged in peace time (Enloe 2000)

The role of female war veterans with a disability varies greatly from place to place. In many places women have been fighting alongside men on the front lines. In other places and at other times Female War Veterans with Disability (FWVWD) have only been allowed to do support work, such as carrying ammunition, cooking, communication, nursing, all auxiliary functions. Often, men have been unwilling to share veterans status with women, especially where women have been denied participation in direct combat. Sometimes female veterans are recognized for their contribution, for example by the government and they receive an appropriate appraisal and female acknowledgement. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the women receive the same benefits as their male comrades.

2.5.1. Contribution not Recognized

Ex-combatants are considered a serious threat to the political stability of a state. Accordingly, this group is a prioritized target for reintegration support. While this is true, women combatants are not perceived as a threat to the same degree as men. As a result, it is not considered as important to target them (Baden, 1997; Watteville 2000). More than men, female ex-combatants are a challenge to traditional society. They are a challenge because, more than men, they resist returning to old gender relations. In postwar society, the experiences of female combatants suggest that even more than men, these women have become unsuited to their former civilian employment because the change in their pattern of life was more radical (Campbell, 1990)

Women are frequently dependent on men to speak on their behalf in order to confirm their veteran status (Watteville, 2000). Men are the ones responsible for affirming the women's rank as soldiers and how they have contributed. This places women in a weak position. Many women have not had their ranks confirmed formally. Their access to veteran status is dependent upon the goodwill of a supervisor and the inputs or intentions of those involved.

2.5.2. Factors that influence the Reintegration Process of Female Soldiers

The history of many revolutionary struggles suggests a widespread regression after the war when it comes to women's political representation. Why it is so difficult for women to translate their activism in wars and nationalist struggles on to citizenship rights and effective participation after the fighting is over? This raises a number of questions, including the possibility that armies may be more friendly to women than civilian regimes themselves are Pettman (1996)

Female ex-fighters have not learned to cope with basic problems of being civilian women. The knowledge they now need, such as how to function as a mother and wife and as an ex-fighter in a civil society, was not taught to them during the war. When they look to their mothers, they do not find women combining two different roles as they have to. In short role models do not exist. Many women have learned various skills apart from those of actually shooting and fighting.

The difficulties they (female fighters) may have experienced with the transition from "traditional" women to revolutionaries may have been a great deal easier than the transition women fighters experienced in their return to civilian life (Egensteiner, 1995)

Krug (1999) discussing ex-fighters, writes that the ex-fighters refuse to admit that they have serious problems today when they are in public sphere. When they are in the Women's Association, in an assembly or talking to government representatives they insist on maintaining the image of the "women fighter". They will not admit to being "weak women". It appears that taking on a male identity created the empowerment experienced during the struggle .Krug has done field work among female ex-fighters in Tigray in Ethiopia. She insists that the Women's Association in Tigray cannot focus on the problems of the ex-fighters because they are not aware of them. For this reason, many of the FWVWD (same women) do not want to join the local Women's Association. They say that the association does not meet their needs. Afterwards, the previously homogenous group of fighters found themselves situated within different classes in society. A few have found employment, but most have a hard time taking care of themselves.

Life in the field did not involve living in a family managing the household and child rearing were never part of the military training. Thus, the female ex-fighters are not able to reproduce the Tigrean society's expectations of proper women to negotiate their identity.

From the Ethiopian TPLF, where a member acknowledged that "being a fighter is such a liberation for them (peasant women) (Young 1997)

Peasant women refuse, to a greater degree than men, to return to their families after they have been combatants in a war (GDI, 1995). Krug's (1999) studies of Ethiopia explain how after the war there was ambivalence between the peasantry and the fighters. In her study (Krug argues that reintegration into the peasantry had most adverse appeal to many women. Their time in liberation army had distanced them from values associated with traditional rural life. These women, especially long term fighters, sought to live with their former comrades with whom they shared family like ties bonds, solidarity and connective identity.

2.6. Economical Reintegration Segment

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) decided that the ex-combatants required targeted social and economic reintegration assistance for two reasons. First, they were deemed to be a special needs population. Many of the WWWD had been entered to armed struggle at young age from peasant and poor families and had not been employed prior to their entry into the army. Many therefore, lacked marketable skills; moreover, some of the WWWD lacked information and job search skills. Second, reintegration of ex-combatants into civil society was important because they potentially posed a threat to security. To achieve this end, the commission adapted general and specific strategies. One of the general strategies is for the WWWD to be able to achieve the same social and economic status as average civilian Ethiopians had to be identified. This minimalist approach ensured that given limited resources, the maximum possible number of ex-combatants could be supported and one of the specific strategies is the demobilized ex-combatants to take up productive activities in their communities. In the long term, the commission intended to alleviate human suffering and facilitates social justice and economic development in the country (Commission for rehabilitation 1992)

2.6.1. Rural Reintegration Program

By and large rural reintegration was comparatively easier for several reasons. On the one hand many ex-combatants had rural background and were therefore, broadly familiar with the methods necessary for survival. Moreover, the WVWD had a land thought they were in the armed struggle. After the first harvest, most ex-combatants felt as if they were in the same or even better economic position than civilian Nat and Morkus (1996).

The objective of the rural reintegration program was to enable ex-combatants returning to rural areas to become productive and self supporting citizens. However WVWD would not receive the necessary technical and material support to engage in small scale agricultural production. This would not reduce the dependency on food aid for WVWD and their families in general community development activities. Indeed the WVWD had land for farming in rural areas. But, first they did not have plough materials second, particularly blind war veterans though they had land and ploughing materials they could not plough because of their disability. Therefore, they preferred to live in urban areas to lead their life by begging.

2.6.1.1. The Humera Resettlement Scheme

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) has started the demobilization of up to 30,000 soldiers (mainly TPLF fighters) as part of its ongoing restructuring of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF).

A significant proportion of these demobilized ENDF soldiers are encouraged to participate in the Humera Resettlement scheme for cotton growing. Instead of returning ex-combatants to their original communities, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) plans to settle a large proportion of the demobilized soldiers in new communities on sparsely populated land in Western Tigray. The commission and ministry of defense are jointly managing the program, and the TGE has recently approached donors for providing capital inputs. Nat. and Morkus (1996).

The TGE's official rationale for this concentrated resettlement approach is based on several arguments. First, the communities of origin of the former, TPLF fighters are

situated in an overpopulated, drought prone region that offers them few reintegration opportunities. In contrast, far fewer people reside in Humera, which, although potentially fertile, is lowland historically plagued by malaria and snakes. Nat and Morkus (1996).

Critics have been somewhat skeptical of the program for both technical and political reasons. For example questions have been raised about the sustainability of a single project at this scale. The ex-soldiers would also be concentrated in one group, conveniently close to the Sudanese border.

Moreover, the extension of the Derg/ Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)-reintegration program to the ENDF soldiers (a more 3-9 to 5-9 percent of all Derg and OLF ex-combatants is unlikely to add substantially to the overall DRP (Demobilization and Reintegration Program) costs (Nat and Morkus, 1996).

2.6.2. Urban Reintegration Program

The reintegration of the ex-combatants in the urban target group was more complex and difficult than that of the rural WVWD because of the diverse social and economic background of the ex-combatants.

Urban reintegration has been hampered by two factors. On the one hand ex-combatants even those with an urban background, often did not have the skills necessary to find gainful employment on the other hand, the labor market in urban Ethiopia is tight. In both problem areas, the commission facilitated economic education and the young have found jobs.

Additionally, the major reasons for the economic success is that those WVWD, if they have not been away from home for long period of time and in the eyes their employers know now to perform their jobs more efficiently. But the Blind and motor disorder war veterans, even if they have not been away from home for long period of time they could not have the chance to employ at different governmental and private employments because of their disability.

The only advantage in urban areas for WVWD particularly for Blind and Sever motor disorder is they can get money by bagging than living in rural areas.

2.7. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and its Effects

Many Vietnam veterans tended to be extremely isolated from relationships and community, primarily as a result of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Decades of haunting memories and overwhelming feelings leave the veteran suffering from PTSD feeling demobilized and alone. He may believe that as a man he must bear the burden of pain, fear, anger, shame, and guilt silently. He may believe that he has failed most precious loved ones and lost the respect of his community (Department of health and human service in USA, n.d.). He may feel helpless to conquer the habitual urge to drink alcohol. As a result it becomes almost impossible for him to enjoy life or relationships, and the harder he tries to fight the symptoms the more stressed he becomes! Yet, when family or friends see signs of the veteran's inner turmoil, they don't know why it is happening and often blame themselves (Department of health and human service in USA, n.d.).

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder plays a substantial role in these veterans' alcohol problems, but the discrimination, isolation and demoralization experienced by Vietnam veterans is also a factor.

Alcohol is attempting solution to post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms such as nightmares with "drink yourself into a dreamless stupor", un wanted memories and fears ("drink until your mind is blank") anger and tension ("drink to take away the edge") hopelessness and emotional numbness ("drink until you feel no pain"), and hyper vigilance ("drink until you don't care any more") unfortunately, excessive habitual use of alcohol causes a person to feel edgy, irritable, unable to concentrate and more demordized than ever.

American Indian Vietnam veterans reported the poorest physical health and the highest level of medical care use of any NVVRS or Matsunaga project group. This may be partly due to chronic alcohol overuse, which often is associated with smoking and poor health habits (Department of health and human service in USA, n.d.).

Physical illness more often results in sympathy and concern, while emotional distress may be mistakenly viewed (by the veteran, his family and community or the medical provider) as a sign of weakness or lack of character.

2.8. Coping Mechanisms

Lazarus (1966) sees coping as having three main features. First, it is a process: it is what the person actually thinks and does in a stressful encounter. Secondly, it is context dependent: coping is influenced by the particular appraisal that initiates it and by the resources available to manage that encounter. Coping as a process should be defined independently of outcome; that is, independently of whether or not it was successful. Moreover, Elizabeth & Matthew (1995) explained that coping has been used as an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of variables. It seems useful at the outset to distinguish at least three broad categories of coping variables: coping resources, coping styles, and coping efforts.

Coping resources are generalized attitudes and skills that are considered advantageous across many situations. They include attitudes about self esteem, ego, strength and attitude about the world (sense of coherence and belief in mastery), intellectual skills (cognitive flexibility and complexity, analytic abilities, and knowledge), and interpersonal skills (communication skills, competence and ease in interpersonal interaction).

The predictors of such coping resources as self esteem, mastery, coherence and analytic and interpersonal skills have generally stressed socio-economic and demographic variables. For example, George (1980) noted that education appears to foster a cognitive complexity that facilitates realistic stress perception and problem solving skills. Shanahan (1976) also found more education related to more positive self perceptions and greater readiness to deal with complexity and novelty. Kohn and Carmi (1978) found that more education and more autonomous occupations seem to increase intellectual flexibility for both men and women.

Worden (1978) reported that socioeconomic status was positively related to greater ego strength among their sample of cancer patients. In Pearlin (1981), being male, currently married, better educated and having a higher income were associated with higher self-esteem and a greater sense of personal mastery. Eron and Peterson (1982) suggested that low socioeconomic origins in childhood are associated with poor learning environment for acquiring resources, resulting in deficits in cognitive development and language skills.

Coping styles are generalized coping strategies, defined as typical habitual preferences for ways of approaching problems. For example, a tendency to withdraw from rather than move toward people, to deny rather than ruminate over difficulty, to be active rather than reactive or to blame others rather than one self. Such coping style typologies by definition assume some cross situational, relatively stable problem solving tendencies in individuals. Coping efforts are specific actions (covert or overt) taken in specific situations that are intended to reduce a given problem or stress (e.g. appraise the problem, express or inhibit emotions, begin a new activity, ask for help or refuse to think about it). Outcomes of coping depend on the criteria used for judging its effectiveness: to cope is to manage a stress successfully, and coping responses ought to show evidence of effectiveness. Assessments of coping effectiveness have used a wide array of possible outcome criteria. The three most common indicators are:

1. perceived helpfulness
2. reduction in emotional distress
3. reduction in problem level

Hirsh (1981) sees the task of coping as identifying specific criteria of social adaptation for particular subgroups and using these criteria to specify particular coping objectives, adaptive tasks and useful strategies and resources. Hirsh (1981) argues that coping objectives for WVWD attending college is to develop a repertoire of satisfying roles appropriate to their life circumstances; that is, to cultivate activities and relationships outside the family sphere (which has presumably been the base of their role identification up to this point.). With these objectives, Hirsh (1981) identifies such diverse resources as

values (Do they have independence from their families?) behavior setting (Do they foster friendship development?) and culture movements (Is there support for WWWD participation in school activities?). Clearly, these are not general adaptive resources, but ones that may aid adaptation for certain people in certain situation.

So to mitigate the problem one should have a sense of self as competent and valuable, a sense of life as meaningful and coherent, and a sense of social integration. Moos (1977) mentioned, the preservation of satisfactory self image, with a sense of competence and mastery and the preservation of relationship with family and friends, as general adaptive tasks.

2.8.1. The Effectiveness of Coping

When coping is assessed at different levels three key criteria for effectiveness emerge: reductions in emotional distress or upheaval, resolution of or reduction in problems, and maintenance of a sense of self as worthwhile and potent (Elizabeth, 1983). The core value of coping, as we commonly use the word is being accurate about one's self to one's self (self-insight in psychoanalytic theory), and about others to one's self. Pearlin (1981) asserted that coping was particularly effective in reducing economic problems, in maintaining self-esteem and in reducing depression for those who had suffered job description.

2.8.2. Coping Skills Training

Elisabet and Mathew (1995) stated that coping with skill training teaches you to relax away anxiety and stress reactions. It gives you more self-control in the particular situation that you find anxiety provoking. It is not necessary, just because you are in a stressful situation, to feel nervous and upset. You have merely learned to react that way. Coping skills training involves learning, instead to relax using progressive muscle relaxation, so that whenever you are experiencing stress, you can let go of the tension. To minimize this problem the first step is to construct a personal list of stressful situations and arrange the list vertically from the least anxiety provoking to the most anxiety provoking. Using your imagination, you can call up each of those situations and learn to relax away any stress

you feel. The second step is the creation of a private arsenal of stress coping remarks. These will be used to get you through the periods when you are saying to yourself, "I can't do this - - - I am not strong enough - - - They seem so much smarter than I am" and so on. Coping skill training provides rehearsal in imagination for real life events you find distressing. You learn to relax in the imagined scenes and are thereafter prepared to relax away tension when under fire, when facing deadlines, when solving problems.

2.8.3 Religion and Spirituality for Coping

The use of religion is a common coping strategy (e.g. Pargament et al 1990). Although some studies find that traumatic experiences may reinforce current religious belief (e.g. increased reliance on faith following a traumatic event) other research suggests that trauma may disrupt previously held religious beliefs (Falesetti, Resick, & Davis, 2003). Among African American men and women, spirituality appears to serve as source of strength and resilience (Newlin, Knafl & Melkus, 2002). African American Women demonstrate higher reliance on prayer and religious thoughts when coping with a chronic illness (Conway, 1985).

Religious coping is defined as the use of religious beliefs or behaviors (e.g. prayer, seeking strength from God) to facilitate problems solving and prevent or alleviate the negative emotional consequences of stressful life circumstances (Koenig, Pargament & Nielsen, 1998). Religious coping behaviors labeled positive include appraisal of God as benevolent, collaboration with God, seeking a connection with God, seeking support from church members and giving religious help to others.

2.9. Experience of Namibia Psychological Reintegration

People's Liberation army of Namibia (PLAN) ex-combatants know that they helped bring about the independence; they consider themselves the victors of the war. Still perhaps because of long years of reintegrated activity, many have little knowledge of how to give themselves a purpose in life or how to take initiatives toward self sufficiency. Net and Morkus (1996). In some cases, this was associated with the brutalizing effects of irregular war. On the losers side, South west African Territorial Force (SWATF) ex-

combatants bear the quilt of having fought for the vanquished oppressor. Often they are ashamed and shy and are bound to remain outsiders in many communities.

Evidence suggests that the incidence of mental stress among ex-combatant groups is higher than that present in the population at large. A clear sign in the high incidence of alcoholism, sometimes coupled with domestic violence.

Many ex-combatants are by now experiencing a dependency syndrome. And, have greater difficulty than stayers in coping with civilian life in an independent Namibia. Possibly the greatest contribution to ex-combatants dissatisfaction with government assistance is discrepancy between their expectations

2.9.1. Ex-combatants Cooperation

The South West African People Organization (SWAPO) veterans Trust was established in 1989 with the objective of

- a) Providing loans and grants to SWAPO veterans (over forty-five years of age), especially war veterans with disability.
- b) Organizing workshops and training courses
- c) Coordinating complaints and requests from the veterans' community and acting as an Ombudsman with the government.
- d) Assisting veterans to overcome psychological problems through the provision of a forum for sharing experiences and
- e) Publishing news letters.

2.9.2. Family Reintegration

Most ex-combatants were initially welcomed and supported by their families on their return. Family and relatives were, thus the main support mechanism for want of government assistance. Often, for instance, spouses contributed substantially to a family's survival through business established while the husbands were in the military.

In other cases, dependency of ex-combatants on the family structure becomes a burden, because so many ex-combatants failed to secure a job. Often tensions arose within a family, sometimes reversing the initial welcome.

2.10. Donor and NGO Involvement for WVWD in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia while external support was crucial for success, donor involvement more often than not complicated the planning and execution of the Ethiopian DRP (Demobilization and Reintegration program). Notwithstanding the emergency context, donors were initially not prepared to respond to the challenge of demobilization as rapidly or effectively as required. By September 1991, the donor group agreed to pledge funds to the amount of US \$ 154 million for a two-phase training oriented program. When the commission called on donors to honor their pledges in November 1991 the donors decided that the proposal was unrealistic. This decision led to further delays in donor support and forced the TGE to scale down DRP assistance Nat and Morkus (1996).

The quality of the relationship between the commission and Non Governmental Organization (NGOs) has varied widely. The commission claims that some NGOs have discriminated on the basis of ethnic and religious affiliation. Furthermore, the commission feels that some NGOs have provided inappropriate services at high administrative costs. On the other hand the NGOs accuse the commission of political bias and favoritism. NGOs also attribute the lack of coordination to the commission's institutional weakness, particularly in the early days of the DRP. Nevertheless the commission has repeatedly requested NGOs to support small projects, especially for its urban reintegration.

According the TGE many of ex-soldiers were encouraged to participate in group discussions organized to make farmer soldiers the cause of the war and prepare them for a post war civilian life commission for rehabilitation (1994).

The orientation in the centers included some general information for example, in deforestation and AIDS orientation of social economic issues that would have prepared Ex-combatants better for challenges civilian life.

2.10.1. Institutional Structure the Tehadiso Commission

A complex program like the Ethiopian DRP cannot be implemented successfully unless there is an implementation unit set up and directly responsible for operations. In particular, administrative coherence among the different government bodies directly or indirectly involved in such a large scale process was seen a key factor. The TGE established the Tehadiso commission.

The TGE entrusted the commission to reach the following objectives (commission for rehabilitees 1994)

- Facilitating the integration of ex-combatants into civilian life and enabling them to become self supporting and productive citizens.
- Providing Rehabilitation services and vocational training to injured and people with partially disabled war ex-combatants to facilitate their economic self sustainable in the medium term.
- Providing long term medical care to people with severely disability of war ex-combatants with injures that rendered them unable to become productive citizens.

2.10.2. The Tigrean Women in the TPLF's Insurgency

The remarkable success of the TPLF seems to be the dynamic involvement of women in its multidimensional struggle. Women fighters' determination for combat had its apparent contribution to more radical and militant order of the liberation movement. In this respect, TPLF might have benefited from the past experiences of the Eritrean liberation front (ELF) and Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF)

Like the ELF-EPLF the TPLF was initially reluctant to recruit women combatants and rather assigned females in secret urban operations in the areas of intelligence, fund raising and politicization of the Tigrean youth (Druce and Hamond, 1989). Generally

speaking, women are considered to be not violent compared to men. They tend to favour settlement Tigrean women's involvement in violence was, however, apparently induced by different factors. Among others, dramas, songs and cultural shows were by far the most vital instruments of mobilization through the period of TPLF's insurgency. One of the prominent songs of mobilization since 1975 runs

ትግራይ ዝዓደይ ኣይት-በክይለይ ኣይትንብዕለይ

ኣጊር ምንሽር በቲ ደጎል ደርብይለይ Tsegay (1999).

A rough rendering of the couplet goes like this:

Tigray my country

Do not shed tears

Do not weep

Hand me a gun through the back yard.

2.10.3. The Role of the Tigrean Women in the Armed Struggle

2.10.3.1. Women and Political Mobilization

"If mobilization is at the heart of revolutionary warfare, then motivation is its life blood without it there is only a rebellion or a coup de'etat" Hanriksen (1983:72).

Women were always the vanguard of the family system and rural production, which apparently provided economic basis of the insurgency. They were also needed for gathering information or intelligence. And under rare circumstances they were employed in different offices and had position for the foundations of a new social order, of a new state and of a new kind of nationalism but the tasks of mobilizing women were not easy. When we came to Tigrean women, initially it was difficult for the TPLF to attract women.

However, as time went things began to change for the better. Sharing the same environment, similar deprivation, eventually drew the peasantry and the guerrillas closer, women's mobilization constituted one of the most important political agenda of the TPLF (1988). Indeed, to borrow Lenins remarks, "one can't draw the masses into politics without drawing women (Lenin 1972).

For Tigrians the fact that women make up half of the world is not merely some romantic slogan, we are convinced that we, as women are just as important as are men to any kind of human development Bessrat (1987)

To mention the importance of women contribution for instance, while the more powerful EDU inflicted greater casualties on the TPLF in its infancy in 1976, there were exemplary women who as wives of some prominent EDU leaders sympathized for the TPLF Tsegaye (1999).

In November 1975, the first female combatant named Marta (kahu) joined the TPLF guerrillas after six months of the armed struggle (Mekonen, 1997:157-79, Druce and Hammond 1989). Women combatants did a noble task in the organization of functional women's association.

Women's role have never been symbolic in the TPLF but actually claimed" half of the struggle (Druce and Hammond 1989) they have contributed from the top to the bottom of the struggle. Women fighters even took part in combats, intelligence, teaching administration, politicization and propaganda activities simultaneously and practically in every sphere the liberation movement demanded. To put it more aptly their role was to share the organizations activities of its revolution, military, economic and political.

The process of politicization and mobilization of rural Tigray was dominated by the activities of local women cadres, the Shig woyenti, having trained at March 8 schools, they maintaining the pace of the rural insurgency by propagating the community at every village. The roles of shig woyenti were particularly prominent at the local administrative councils, the baitos. They even became role models to further attract other women in to TPLF's forums and expectation. Also, they had hectic responsibilities to politicize men and women about their equal rights and responsibilities.

Most of them worked hard to accomplish all these tasks with amazing sacrifices and even seen efficiency. Gradually they produced a number of fellowships ready to involve along their lines (Tsegay 1999).

They were seeing off the new TPLF conscripts by articulating various inspiring songs and slogans that called for their unwavering commitments. Women employed diverse strategies and techniques of mobilization one of the strategies was to provoke men to volunteer so as to defend their honour, pride and ego from women's critical attempts at embarrassing and disgracing them. For instance, Tigrean women were scaring their docile men counterparts to exchange trousers with skirts if they abstained from recruiting to fight the Derg (Tsegay, 1999)

This concept was aptly explained by the following poem

መናእሰይ ምግዳል እንካብ ኣበኹምና
እንኩ ቀምሽ ስሬኹም ሃቡና
ክንጋደለሉ ኢና።

A rough translation of the poem runs

Youngsters, If our insist against recruit men to the *TPLF*

Give us (women) your trousers

well women have the resolve to struggle

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

This study intends to describe the data about how war veterans with disability cope up with different problems. In order to meet this purpose, qualitative case study design will be used. There are two main rationales to apply this design of study, primarily, the absence of enough information about how war veterans cope up different problems in our country. Researchers (Stane 1999: Johnson et al 1998) reported in Muhit and Hartly (2003) that qualitative researcher is appropriate and effective when little or nothing is known about the situation. The other rational is qualitative methods are effective tools when target groups are vulnerable as is inevitably so, when focusing on people with disabilities (Muhit and Hartly 2003). After all, war veterans with disability are vulnerable to un-employment, psycho social problems, educational problems and health problems due to their disability. Thus an in depth qualitative study could better help to investigate individual perspective towards a given phenomena with in its real situation.

3.1. Source of the Data and Sampling Methods

There were two types of sources on this study. The first group consisted of 6 female and 6 male war veterans with disabilities currently living in Axum and Adwa. The second source of data is generated from detailed interviews with different officers. These are the coordinator of Tigray disabled veteran association (TDVA) at Axum, The administrator of small scale industry of war veterans and the mayor of the town.

Writers (Pall 1990: Miles and Huber man) as cited in Abebe (2007) states that sampling in qualitative study tends to be small number of people and studied in depth unlike quantitative studies which include large number of participants and need statistical work. The sampling technique for this data would be selected 12 war veterans with disabilities by taking in to consideration their sever disabilities (Blind and Motor disorder). Hence, the 6 participants (3 female and 3 male) would be used for interview and the other 6 participants (3 female and 3 male) would be selected for focus group discussion. Additionally, the official participants would be selected on their knowledge and

experience about war veterans with disabilities. After identified all these participants and I contacted and informed them whether they have time to be interviewed. I would make sure about willingness to participate in the study. Considering the above criteria the participants would be selected purposefully.

Axum and Adwa are chosen as a study area for three reasons.

- First war veterans with disabilities are found in Axum and Adwa, It is accessible and convenient to get a group of respondents
- Second- war veterans with disability have also an association which can provide sufficient information for my study.
- Third no research was so far conducted in relation to psychosocial challenges of disability and coping mechanisms with particular case of war veterans at Axum and Adwa.

3.2. Instrument of Data Collection

To obtain adequate information, I used two data collection instruments. These are unstructured and semi structured interview schedule and focus group discussion guide, unstructured and semi structured interview schedule was the central instrument of gathering data. The focus group discussion was used as supplementary instruments. The use of focus group discussion was not meant to replace individual interviewing, but it is mainly because it can provide another level of data gathering or a perspective on the research problem not available through individual interview. To make communication effective, the interview will translate each instrument into Tigrigna the local language at Axum and Adwa.

3.2.1. Semi- Structured Interview Schedule

This instrument was employed to gather information form study individual's war veterans with disability, the officials of representative TDVA (Tigray Disabled Veteran Association) manager of small scale industry and appropriate persons from district administration about possible variables of psychosocial challenges of disabilities and coping mechanisims in the case of war veterans. The questions are developing to get

answer in relation to the research objective. I was develop the instruments through extensive reading from literature related to the research topic.

I was be able to make the interview questions easy, suitable and understandable. Maximum efforts will be done to make an effective communication between interviewer and interviewees.

3.2.2. Focus group Discussion Guide

Fontana and Frey (1994) showed that focus group discussion is the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in formal or informal settings. It has the advantages of being inexpensive, in flexible data, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding and communicative and elaborative, over and above individual responses. Before conducting the discussion a team was be formed purposefully. The discussion team was composed to six war veterans with disability. The focus of the discussion was on the general situation and related variables of psychosocial challenges of disabilities and coping mechanisms in the case of war veterans at Adwa. Particularly, it was investigate aspects of psychosocial support, educational and employment opportunities and medical treatment. I was also identifying the extents of support that war veterans with disability received from the government. The guiding questions were similar to that semi-structure schedule. The aim of this focus group discussion guide is to strengthen the data obtained from respondents through interview. During the discussion eight question were provided this instrument had great significance to create interaction among the participants. The discussion was guides by me.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures and Analysis

Pilot Study- before I started my research work, I conducted a pilot study so as to create favorable condition for the main research activities. With this approach it was possible to assess the conditions of the problems. It helped me to adjust time and place arrangements to make the interviewing process as conducive as possible by creating friendship with respondents by chatting. Then

I tried to contact TDVA coordinator, administrator of the small scale industry of war veterans with disability and mayor of the town. These individuals helped me to get useful information about where the war veterans with disability and how they are organized. The participants of the focus group discussion selected from other convenient places to facilitate the research process. It was challenging and time consuming for me, to convince and reach on agreement in both individual interview and focus group discussion. Without officers cooperation it was difficult to conduct this research. Most of the participants were not willing to give information, after I told them that being I got permission from district administration to conduct the research and making friendship individually by chatting they become volunteer. I was personally handle the data collection process I was also informed the participants of the study all about the purposes, implications and the nature of the study and ask them whether they are willing to be interviewed and to participate in the focus group discussion. Each respondent was interviewed separately in a setting that secured her/his privacy. In conducting the focus group discussion, my role was one of facilitating appropriate place, date and time which is convenient to the participants.

The data collection took one and half months, including pilot study. During the data collection I gave due attention to gather relevant information systematically.

Data from interviews and focus group discussion was gathered using tape recorder by taking down notes. The data analyzed by describing case by case study and across case analysis method. The names which I used in the case studies are pseudonyms it is not their real name.

CHAPTER FOUR (RESULTS)

Case 1 (Netsanet)

Netsanet is 40 years old blind woman (40 kms distance away from Adwa. She has never attended school while she was living with her parents. Parents insisted her to marry since her early. However she becomes the member of the armed struggle in 1981 E.C. at the age of 19 years old, refusing the marriage she was asked for. There in the war front she got married and become a mother of three children. Unfortunately she divorced her when she lost her two eyes while fighting and become blind. Now she is living in a district called EDDAGA ARBI. However, she interrupted her schooling grade one while she was living with her parents. She had some opportunities to be literate at the war front she attended up to grade 5. After the end of the war she could not attend schooling. Because she delivered a child on May 20/1983 E.C. and her attention was rearing her child, to resume her education from grade five. However, Netsanet was very happy with a child. Because she assumed that her child can serve her as a sight guide, in the future, with such a hope she named her daughter መብርሃኑት (meaning light). Now, she has literacy skill in Braille and if she will continue her education.

Regarding economic condition, when Netsanet started civil life she said as follows

First we were intents. Then the government gave us 7000.00 birr and that was not enough for me to build a house. The house I built, using money I borrowed from REST collapsed and I had to borrow money and build it again.

Netsanet also further explained that, now she has 93.00 birr pension and 452.00 birr subsidy per month. This subsidy is temporary. But this income is not enough to lead her family. After she become blind she was not employed either she had no an intention to be employed at any organization. Because she assumed that she may not fit to any organization, since she is not completed high school.

With the amount of the money she earned she could not care own her families health. She disclosed that neither she is allowed for free medication nor she can afford. When I ask for bandages they think I am using it for decorating myself. The problem is more serious with female nurses, because they did not treat her well.

Concerning Tigray Disabled veteran Association (TDVA) she said as follows:

I feel bad because of the lack of support from the association and lack of provision of shelter. However, I am consoled. Because there are others who do not even have pension allowance. There is no similar treatment in Mekele, in Axum and in different districts. There was no equal treatment beginning from the rehabilitation. For example, children of some go to school by car; but no body seems to care about our kids. Those who are better than me are getting support. I don't want to mention names. Those in Axum, who are better than me, are provided with housing and other kinds of assistance. I am now in a very bad situation. I am feeling damage to my brain. Sometimes I fall unconscious. The association should therefore, must help me. The association does not make strict assessments to distinguish those who are the poorest, who are the middle, and who are better off.

She asked the regional head to help her; but said it can not be done now and left her. She felt bad very deeply. I said to my self "Is this I fought for, Am I going to leave my kids with out any support"?

Not only the TDVA, but also she had complained for the female association. She said that:

Except; four years ago that I was getting support 1000.00 birr from female association. I never knew get support with in this 20 years. Above all what I felt bad is that when credit was allowed to other people they did not allowed me to give credit. Because they believed that blind people could not work and return the money to organization. After that I asked them to take credit and to work by my children, but, again they could not give me. In sum, she said that both TDVA and TFA (Tigray Disabled veteran Association and Tigray Female Association did not give training, moral, and encouragement for WVWD.

When she compared the life of female war veteran with disabilities and male war veteran with Disabilities (FWVWDs and MWVWDs) after war time she responds that the life of FWVWD is sever than the life of MWVWD. For example she said that she know one FWVWD at Mekele with multiple disability (she has one hand, head injured and one leg but she is cooking injera to treat her children. So the contrary male war veterans with multiple disabilities they do not have burden life like FWVWD to rearing and treat their children.

Moreover, her social relation with the community is not good. She responds that she did not participate at Ekub, Edir, weeding ceremony, funeral ceremony . . . etc, while the

society invited her to be the part in her words she said *"If you do not dress well the society did not give you value and respect"*.) of course she does not totally ignore the community participation. Her children represent her and involve in social affairs. However she does not have enough money used she borrowed from people and sent her children to various ceremonies.

I asked her, "Do you discuss with other war veterans who have disability to help solve problems/concerns"? Netsanet explained that:

Before this time we were having periodic meetings (every month or less) and discussing. We were making evaluations. In the last three years we don't have discussion as we did before. They may call meetings in three months; they don't invite me and I don't go myself. In my second year they told me I had to go to the 6th organization (TPLF) on July 2001 and I went. Regarding the war veterans association, the issue was raised in the congress. The former fighters, both of those who have economic problems and those who do not have problems were complaining about lack of support. There are those who have no pension; there are those without support, there are those who have no shelter; these are those who were drivers and medical practitioners who have no work. Every body was talking about problems and we dispensed with out any agreement.

In relation to her previous friends and neighbors she responds that, most of her friends are not in life. They passed. But those who are in life are far away from her. She has no contact and good relationship with them. For example, one of her former best friends does not visit her. If she appears around she refused to greet her, because she is blind. But, however her friend hides herself and refused to greet her she can identify her. In her own words she said: *"I identified her by her voice"*. She disclosed that others also refused to chat with her. Instead, simply pitted what surprised her most is the discouragements come to her, from some people. For example, as she quoted them, some people said "why you went to the war front? If you would not involve in the armed struggle you would have not been a blind. Such discouragements may develop despair in her life. Hence, she prefers not to listen to these people.

Comparing comradeship with her companions at war time and after war time she said in her own language as follows *"ኢህአዴግ አዲስ አበባ ምቁፅፅር ካብ ዝጀምር ብጻይነት*

ላከሊሁ እዩ። ቀደም ዓተር ፈጊኝና ንበልዕ ነይርና ለነ ክመውት ንስኻ ዕናኡ ንበሃሃል ነይርና ሸንቶም ሰትቶም ይማቀሉ ነይሮም”

This means

After Addis Ababa was taken over by the EPRDF comradeship has become weakened. Formerly we were sharing a single bean, we were saying to each other I have to die before you do we were even sharing our urine to drink.

Now a days there is no comradeship. Even those ex-fighters, who have no disability, would prefer to say they are the one's who deserve support not others. No one would say more or less I am better than others.

After social conditions I have tried to ask her psychological conditions. So, the first question, I have asked her why she joined the armed struggle. She has the following basic rational to join the army.

First, her two brothers were already in the armed struggle. Second, in 1973 E.C. members of the military regime (“banda”) came to her and harassed her while she was going to fetch water. Third her father was arrested; but was brave enough to escape form prison and joined to the army. Such incidents pushed her to join the struggle for class struggle and national oppression established by feudal system.

Regarding the experience she got at war time she said as follows:

I have seen when the Derg soldiers burnt fighters as well as civilians with NAPAL bombs, especially TPLF and ANDM fighters at the Dessie front. These events encouraged me to fight harder. Furthermore, the sacrifices paid by fighters like Gidey manjus and others who become war prisoners and refused to expose the organizational (TPLF) secrets, was also another boost for my fighting morale. While I was in the armed struggle, I became pregnant; but I aborted the pregnancy and continued fighting; because I felt so patriotic and bearing in delegation to accomplish the noble mission of my people. Hence, I was encouraged to fight more and more.

She also described some of the most shocking events she faced in 23/5/83 E.C. was when the Ethiopian people's revolutionary democratic front (EPRDF) fighters were intercepted by the Derg soldiers while they were sleeping. Some of her comrades' committed suicide, bombing them rather than surrender to the enemy. Another shocking event she faced was one of her comrades suddenly died while they were chatting (natural causes).

Regarding her disability she said as follows:

I was injured in GUGUF in Dessie front. I escaped from the place I was being treated and joined the battle. I was in a fighting mood because I could not forget how Teklay and Grum died in the trench. The reason why I escaped from hospital without getting permission from doctors is I felt far city. At about noon I was injured again. After I injured I spoke a slogan.

አሰር ስውኣት ተሽቲልና

ድፋዕ ማለሉት ከይነስብር ሕድሪ

This means

Let us follow the path of our martyrs and never allow the fortifications of MLLT to be broken

After she injured, she fell between the bodies of her fallen comrades and she stays the whole night among the dead body after word taken to hospital by her comrades. It was dark. The fighting was heavy. Even stones and soil blocks were used in the fighting. She describes what she felt of her injury by her own words.

When I injured I felt nothing. The only thing I felt was being separated from my comrades. Otherwise I am proud that I have played my part in the struggle. Of course, these days there are some discouraging things. However, in general I am happy that the people of Ethiopia have got peace and democracy.

How disability is nowadays affected her life? She replied “my living condition is not good. I live with subsistence life earning Birr 450.00 subsidy and 93.00 pensions only and the war post traumatic stress Disorder (PTSD) or bodily stress and tension, especially when reminded of traumatic war is disturbing me a lot.

Concerning her today’s feeling being the member of war WVWDs, described as follows:

Sometimes I feel bad. While I would deserve respect, values and loved, I am harassed by some people. Once a useless woman insulted me saying **ዕውርቲ** (it means blind). After a while she regret for generalization and complaining a single individual. She asked herself, saying: did I struggle only for the women insulted me? I think I am narrowed minded. I fought for the mass, people of Ethiopia.

Her perception of the community towards her is not good, because most of the people call her by the word “**ሓያል ኧያ**” (meaning she is energetic). She is not interested to be passive and all the time she works hard, though she can not see, she uses her sense of

touch (tactile movements) to paint the walls of her house, she sew. Though she is blind, she does not sit with her arms folded. She washes what ever is to be washed.

The other thing that she describes is, in this locality the possibility of integrating with the society is low if you don't run-around and have fun with them. She further explained

“In our society there is no support for people with disability. It is only the organization that support us”

Whenever she goes to church aged people better support her in sight guide than the youngsters; but the younger feel that blindness is communicable. For this reason she does not like chatting with females. Even the former fighters have become bad mannered. They have simply assimilated with the bad things in the society.

Netsanet further explained that her believes and commitment for the armed struggled and relations has had with companions in the struggle, she reflected her though as follows. “I still act and feel as I was a fighter in the war front. For example, whenever I want to swear I say ስጋ ብዳኑ (meaning vow by the name of sacrificed comrades. I don't use my father and hers unique, in her love for former fighters. She has developed this from the war front when everybody does this by the name of passed comrades. The scar of the war she went through and experienced may put her at stress (PTSD). Observing when her comrades die and buried at mountains and valleys she could develop PTSD.

When ever assistance comes to this district for those considered to be poor. They do not include us because they say we have support already. The society does not respect us. Whether we are haves or have-nots they do not feel that they have to respect us as heroes who were disabled for us. Every thing they do is for their won. I have my grievance so I keep distance.

I also asked her how you feel about your self now she said:

Until now I have been managing my family. But now, as a result of increase of my age and decrease of my physical strength I have developed fear on how to lead mine and my family's livelihood. Because, I am not receiving enough support for the scarifies I committed and become blind as a result.

Regarding coping mechanisms Netsanet described as follows:

When any thought creeps me in my mind which I can not entertain, I listen music. It makes me feel relaxed. I do not want to get pain both in body and soul. So to get relief by soul always I went to church and all my problems are solved. I am happy when I get priests and old people, because they respected me. Even they did not call me with my name (Netsanet) rather they call me by the word አምባሪተይ (it means Dear or Madam).

Case Study 2(Lieliti)

Lieliti is a 38 years old woman. She lives, with her husband and four children, in Axum town. She joined the armed struggle in 1976 E.C, at the age of 19, while she was a shepherd. She is with motor disorder.

The reason she gave for joining the armed struggle was to bring about liberty and democracy in the Country. She said “I have a lot of experience in the field. I feel for example that if anybody wants to achieve his/her/ goal he/she must pass through hardships like hunger and thirst”.

Lieliti was not in school when she joined the armed struggle. It was after she was demobilized that she reached grade four in the Adigrat center. She was unable to continue her education because she was working the whole day. Night school was impossible for her because she was on a wheel chair. At the beginning of demobilization Lieliti took training on weaving and tailoring in Addigrat because she was interested in that kind of training.

Regarding her economic conditions she describes that:

She started to live on her own after the training but she suffered a lot and felt hopeless because she had no money. Therefore, she said the following: In her own words:

በረካ ምንጭ ይህን ዝብል ኦተራሳስባ ሓሲባ ነይረ which means: “I was thinking that life in the armed struggle was better for us”. Living independently, paying house rent, was never in my mind. I recalled that life in the field was good although there was war, because we were eating together with our comrades; we had unity, and lived in happiness.

Currently she depends on the 450 Birr bonus for living. However, given the rising cost of living this amount of money is not enough. Although all WVWDs appealed to higher officials and concerned bodies about their bad economic situation they did not get good response from them. Regarding health service she said “it is not easy. Previously whenever I faced health problems I was treated freely in a hospital or in a health center. However, currently I get free medical service only at a health center level, not in a hospital”.

She is not happy about what the association is doing. Because she said "The Tigray Disabled Veteran Association is not actively accomplishing its objectives. A lot of assistance comes from different NGOs in the name of the WVWDs. However, the association does not give the WVWDs access to the assistance". Although her background is from rural areas she doesn't want to live in rural areas. She cannot get medical service there whenever she feels unhealthy.

It is not only the TDVA that does not give her any support. The women's association also is. The only thing the women's association does is to ask her to pay the membership fee every month regularly. She has a feeling of resentment on the association for this reason. She said the association does not give attention to FWVWDs let alone try to solve their problems. Some people give them WVWDs) bad names, calling them hyper-complainers. However, she said that they were not complaining for nothing. They were complaining because they have so many problems.

Comparing the lives of the FWVWDs and the MWVWD after the armed struggle, she said that

"The MWVWDs, unlike the FWVWDs do not have the burden of household chores. For this reason the MWVWD can continue their education, can get information when they chat with friends and from the society at large. To the contrary the FWVWD do not enjoy these advantages".

After economic conditions I have tried to ask her social conditions so the first questions I have ask her how is your relation ship with in the society? Like *edir*, *ekub* etc. she has the following relationships.

Her relationship with the society is very good. She participates in community mutual support groups like *Edir* and *Ekub*, and she also participates in social occasions like wedding and funeral ceremonies. She has good contact with her families although hey are living far away from her. They visit her once in a year on *Hidar* 21 (December 1) November when they come for the Saint Mary Day celebration.

She no more participates in meetings and holds political discussions with the rest of the WVWDs. This was possible when she was working at *Walta* industry in Axum. Many of her former friends and neighbors are not alive. Whenever she meets some of them she has good interaction with them. She has not yet met any of the older former neighbors of hers.

Concerning comradeship during the armed struggle and after it she had the following to say: “ሎሚ ብጻይነት የለን። አብ በረኻ ጠፊኡ ሎሚ ሐቂ የለን ብቴሌቪዥን ሙዚቃ እትርኢ ይስማዕኒ ቀደም እነ ክስዋእ ንስኻ ፅናሕ ነይሩ። ሎሚ ነናትካ እንጀራ እያ”.

Which means: “There is no comradeship now. It is lost in the battle field. There is no truth now. Whenever I watch TPLF songs on the TV I feel terrible. In the battle field everyone was eager to martyr before anybody else. Now, everyone thinks about his/her own bread.”

With regard to how she was able to integrate herself in the community she is living in now, she has the feeling that she is doing fine. She thinks she is successful in this regard because she has got experiences of how to integrate into the community when she was a fighter. However, she complains that information was not provided to the WVWDs by the government on how to integrate into the community.

She recalls that gender equality was real in the armed struggle. There was no discrimination. Female fighters could speak without any restraints in any forum like male fighters.

She was telling the story of how shocked she was when she first engaged in battle in the following words: “ታዕሊም ምስ ወደእኹ አብ ኪናት ምስተፍ እንትጅምር ደንገፀ ነይረ። ይኹን እንበር ተጋደልቲ ምስአተባብዑኒ ብዘይ ናይ ጓል አነስተይቲ ተሳትፎ ቃልስና ሽትኡ አይወቅዕን ዝብል ጭርሖ እውን ስለዝነበረ ፅንዓትን ሕራኒን ተሰሚዑኒ አብ ኪናት ባሩድ ይሸተኒ ነይሩ”.

This means: “I was shocked when I faced the first battle after I completed my military training. However; I was encouraged by the fighters and also by the slogan which says the struggle will not be successful without the participation of women, and then afterwards I was enjoying the smell of gun powder.

Her physical disability was caused first, by an injury in the battle of *Adidaero* (Tigray), where she lost one eye and second, by another injury in the battle of Addis Ababa where she lost one leg. She regrets that it was the carelessness of the doctors that she lost her leg. Her leg injury was not so serious. It could have been saved with proper treatment. What ever happened she had enough courage left in her to say the following: “ዝኾነ ኮይኑ ዓይነይ ይኹን እግረይ ንዕለማይ ተወቓዕዎ ኣለኹ” It means: “No matter, my leg and my eye are injured for a noble aim.” She admits that her life is affected by her disability because it is difficult to lead life on one leg. It is difficult to do housework. However, she consoles herself when she thinks of her comrades who died in battle. She feels she is better off because she was able to experience the victory of the struggle.

She feels that people have good attitudes towards her since the struggle was supported by the people. She also has good attitudes towards the community. These days she is having a low self esteem. One of the reasons is what other WVWDs are also suffering from. This is the bad life they are having as a result of the low bonus pay that is given to them. Regarding this she said the following: “እዚ ግና ናይቲ መንግስቲ ፀገም ኣይኮነን ናይ እቶም ኣብ ታሕቲ ዘለው ኣመሓደርቲ እዩ። ብፍላይ ናይ ማህበር ጉድኣት ኪናት ትግራይ” This means: “The problem is not caused by the government; but rather by the local administrators and specifically the TDVA.”

Lastly when I asked her what coping mechanisms do you use to minimize the problems you face? She said that:

My effort to cope is working because she tries to think positively avoiding negative thoughts. She understands that war the worst of all things. It can destroy human beings, animals and natural resources. She comforts herself by comparing what she experienced during the war, where she has faced more serious challenges, and what she is experiencing now. She says this gives her the vigor to tolerate any problem now. Her ability to cope also emanates from the unreserved support by her husband for whom she has a special respect.

Case Study Three (Tesfay)

Tesfay is living in Axum town, Tigray region, Northern Ethiopia. He is 39 years old and has three children (2 female and 1 male). He joined the armed struggle in 1977 E.C. at the age of 16 years. He is a blind person.

He was asked why he was involved in the armed struggle. He replied that his father was a TPLF fighter starting from 1972 E.C. Because of his father's involvement in the armed struggle supporters of the Derg did not have positive attitudes towards him. Thus, he accepted the principles of TPLF and joined the struggle.

He had not started schooling while he was in the field. He started it after he was injured (in 1984 E.C). He complained that education is difficult for the non-disabled let alone for the blind. Therefore, while he was learning he faced many challenges. For instance, he had lack of brail, lack of money to pay for his supporters (readers). For these reasons his academic performance was affected. He benefited from listening not from reading. He also said that some teachers, not all were trying to demoralize him. But he did not go down on his knees because of this. Even some people in the society, including his family were not happy about his going to school. They were wondering why he had to go to school in the first place. Nevertheless, he decided to ignore the challenges and tried hard to achieve his goal; and he did it. His eagerness helped him to work hard. He also recounted about the great challenges he faced while he was in the university. One of the major problems was he had no enough money to pay the typists who typed his assignments (term papers).

Regarding socialization, he said, university is better than high school. There is even similarity between socialization in the struggle and university. He thanks all students who came from different ethnic backgrounds of Ethiopia for treating him well. However, he was surprised that he could never get a quite place during examinations either in the university or high school. It was particularly headache for him, when teacher were assigned as invigilators their payment was high, and if students are assigned as his invigilators some instructors suspect that some blind students are helped in answering

questions by the students. Because of the latter he was losing confidence and feeling bad. Although it was not expected, he was hearing bad words from some instructors. They believed that blind people can not learn.

Concerning payment for invigilation, he appreciated what is done in high school because blind students were invigilated by students, and they were not paying for invigilation. The only problem there was there was a lot of noise while he was taking examinations. He got training in reading Braille in Sudan but not in the mobility skills. For this reason it is a challenge for him to move to new places.

Tesfay is now working as a high school teacher and his current economic condition could be considered as average in the society. Whenever he faces health problems he pays for his own treatment. With regard to his social life he said that it is good, because he is participating in all social affairs like *Edir*, *Ekub*, wedding ceremonies and funeral ceremonies. He has joined a neighborhood association which has 200 members. In his *Kebele* there are many WVWDs; but they are not discriminated by the society. Although he does not want to go into details there were bad conditions in 1987-88E.C. The relationship with his family, he said, is peaceful (good). He married when he was grade 8. So, starting from grade 8 up to now, he is living with his family in a good condition. He was paying for his family expenses from his pension (190.00) until he was employed in teaching.

When he was asked whether or not he communicates, discusses and tries solve his problem with other WVWDs, he replied "yes". He said, he participates in discussions, particularly with the 10 blind war veterans, whenever they face problems and try to solve it in consultation with the concerned bodies. Ten of us are like a family. For example, he said, when we were demobilized we were given land by the *Tehadisso* commission around the market place of the town in 1988E.C. to build houses for shops so that we can be self reliant. Unfortunately the land that was given to us by the *Tehadisso* commission was taken by the administration of the town a year before. When ten of us appealed to the administration of the town they promised to return the land and build on it for us. The

construction will be tendered on February 10, 2010. In general, he said that the harmony among us (the 10 blind war veterans) is very good and the community members envy it. With regard to his relationship with his previous friends and neighbors, he said that they are not around because he is originally from a rural area not from here.

Comparing comradeship during the struggle and now, Tesfay said, in his own language as follows: “ናይ በረካ ብጻይነት እዙይ እዩ ኢልካ ክትገልፃ ኣይትክልን” meaning “*you can't have words to express the comradeship that existed in the armed struggle.*” The relations now are based on the kind of disability. For example blind with blind, motor disorder with motor disorder... etc. He attributed the reason why there is no good comradeship now as it was before now to the selfishness of individuals. For example, he said, some of them are working in the National Parliament, some of them in the Regional government, and others at zonal and district levels. Whatever problems we have they do not support us. He said that this does not mean they are enemies. It is natural during war time, where there is no private property, for everybody to think only about when they are going to die or be injured rather than be individualistic.

Regarding integration into the community, he said, the only chance he was given was to choose a town to live in. Some groups of WVWD were promised by the government to be given land at good site which could be used for opening shops. Otherwise, he did not get any formal guidance by the government about how to integrate into the community. However, it was not a serious challenge for him. Because the struggle was supported by the people and he also knew how to integrate into the communities while he was a fighter.

After social conditions I have tried to ask him psychological conditions. So the first question I have asked him what experience you might remember, he describe as follows:

The experience I got during war time has taught me that if somebody has the strength and the vision he/she can solve problems and achieve his/her goals. For example, he said, in 1982 E.C when Derg soldiers encircled us in a critical battle in Kobo and we were fighting hard, but some of our comrades left us in groups. Interestingly, in the end, we succeed to win

the battle because we fought bravely. We hailed the slogan; “**ሐደ ተጋደላይ ን ዐስርተ ወታደራት**” meaning “one fighter for ten soldiers”. When narrating dramatic events during the armed struggle he said the following: the first is when the people of Tigray were migrating to Sudan in 1977 E.C because of drought, the fighters were helping the people by carrying children on their shoulder, though they themselves were hungry and thirsty. The second is in 1978 E.C when TPLF started to lose strength while it was establishing the Marxist Leninist League of Tigray (MLLT). The reason for this weakness was that former leaders of TPLF left the organization and were replaced by new leaders. The those days there was one saying:

ዝኸኸለ ይገዮ

ዝደኸመ ይሳለ

ዘይከኸለ ይተኸለ

This mean

He who is able should run

He who is weak should walk

He who is not bale should leave

The third is, when the town of Hawzen was bombarded by Derg fighter aircraft. It was impossible to forget the thousands of people and animals that died and were buried in one grave. The fourth is the great challenge for the TPLF when the Derg evacuated from Tigray. The TPLF fighters were not interested to fight beyond the borders of Tigray. However, thanks to the good leadership and the culture of **ገምጋም** (evaluation) in the TPLF the problem was solved.

He told the story of how and in what situation he was injured and what he felt afterwards. He explains this as follows:

I was assigned in a special contingent. The main task of this group was political mobilization for EPRDF of the people while the war was being conducted. It was a crucial battle at Karameshig, I recall, starting from morning up to night time, where I was injured in my eyes at 10 o'clock in the evening in November 1982 E.C. After my injury I do not remember any event or what happened. My memory loss continued for about three months.

When he was asked whether his disability has affected his life he did not like to talk about it. He said generally, that everybody, whether people with or without disability, can live by themselves if they decide to live independently. For example, he said that he himself did not expect any thing from individuals and government. He has BA degree in History and He teaches civics in grade 10.

He was also asked about how he felt being a WVWD. He responded by comparing himself with his comrades who died in the armed struggle. Sometimes he felt bad because of different reasons. First, when he sees the elderly parents of his dead comrades without any support. Some of these parents have lost two or more children in the armed struggle. He does not understand why the government does not support these parents. Second, the life of some of WVWDs is bad. They could not feed themselves because of their disabilities. Third, he hears that some people speak unnecessary words or criticize TPLF's policy. For example, in the election of 1977 E.C there was one slogan: ትግራ ወደ መቀሌ እቃው ወደ ቀበሌ meaning, "Tigreans to Mekele, their furniture to Kebele." He feels that, the people of Tigray with other people of Ethiopia struggled to bring about peace and democracy in Ethiopia. He suggested that although there are some who fight against the EPRDF government, the people should support the government at every place where he live.

Commenting on the perceptions of the community towards him, he said that it is generally good; but he doesn't feel good when some people criticize the government by saying that it does not support the WVWD. However, the government /EPRDF/ struggled for the benefit of the masses rather than for the benefit of WVWD. He also said that when he was a student some people were trying to demoralize him for going to school. They were doing this because they felt that it was not possible for a blind person like him to get a job when the non disabled people are not getting employment opportunity. Even in present condition, some people do not believe that blind teachers can teach well. But some others said that blind teachers are better.

His own attitude to the community is good. For example he never discriminates people as those coming from urban or rural areas, rich or poor, etc. He wants to be a model for other WVWDs. Telling his feelings about himself now; he said that he can lead him self with confidence though he is blind. He has a plan to upgrade his qualification to MA degree. He does not want support from the government for this.

Regarding coping mechanism he describe as follows:

I became self-counselor and decided to change myself. When ever I feel something inside me, I tell myself to be strong. I am working with endless positive qualities. Hence, I feel good. I also chat with my fiends. It makes me feel relaxed and confident. I believe it will enable me to get love and acceptance from the society. My dream now is to be a more successful person. One proof is that I got a BA degree.

Case- Four (Hiluf)

Hiluf is living in Axum town, Tigray region, northern Ethiopia. His is 50 years old. He has two children (female and male). He joined to the armed struggle 1980 E.C. at the age of 31. He is now a blind person.

The reason he gave for joining the armed struggle is because he wanted to bring down the dictatorial military government.

Hiluf had just started going to school in grade one before joining the armed struggle. But when he thought of joining armed struggle he stopped going to school. After demobilization, while he was at the WVWD camp of Adigrat, he started to go to school again and reached grade 5. But, he interrupted it in 1989 E.C because he left the Adigrat camp to live by himself. For the third time, in 1991 E.C. he started going to school again and joined grade 6 in the regular class. He completed grade 10 in 1995 E.C. He recalls the many challenges he had in the school. For example, he had economic problems to pursue his education; he did not have skill on Braille. Despite it was difficult to have brail skills; primarily he solved the problem of brail skills with continuous training. After he completed grade ten, he passed the entrance to Temben Teacher Education College, but he did not join it. This was because he was not feeling healthy and was scared of being infected with malaria in *Temben*. As a result he felt hopeless; but in 1999 E.C. thanks to both TDVA and TPLF who made arrangements with Axum Business College for 15 of the WVWD he was able to continue his education. He graduated with a diploma in law.

Regarding economic condition when Hiluf started civil life he described as follows:

When the government decided to rehabilitate the WVWDs at Deberezeit and in different zones of Tigray in 1988 E.C., I got 7,600.00 birr for rehabilitation and decided to live in Axum, Tigray. I was given land, with a group, in the market place on which he can build for a shop. I built my residence my self. I also got land for residential house with out my turn and two beds. I started my life depending on pension and agriculture on share-cropping arrangement.

Now Hiluf has 160.00 birr pension permanently from the government, and starting from 2001 E.C. he gets 452.00 birr bonus from the TPLF, not from the government. It is not known whether or not the bonus will continue to be paid because it depends on the

income of the organization (TPLF). The bonus may be discontinued if the organization does not get enough money. He complained that even both the pension and the bonus are not enough to cover the expenses of his family because these days everything is expensive.

Regarding employment he said that, although he got a diploma in law he did not get any job. Whenever he applies for a job in different offices, the response he gets is that for the time being there is no new hiring (employment) because of Business Processing Re-engineering (BPR). So, he is waiting until new procedures about employment are designed by BPR. He said he could work as a manager, Lawyer, etc in his own business, but he does not have the economic strength. He needs financial support for house rent for office, office furniture, manpower, etc. Such kind of support was the duty of the government, but the government could not help me.

He talked about health problems and who pays for treatment. He said he gets free Medicare. However, in the past two years the free Medicare is restricted only to health center. We are not allowed to get treatment in hospitals. If I am referred to the hospital by the health center I get free bed only. He said “ናይ ባዕሉም ሲስተም ኣለዎም” which means “they have their own system”. You get the high level medicine from expensive private pharmacies inside the hospital. You must buy it from them. Giving the reason why he preferred to live in town, he said it was for follow up about his health and to get treatment, since he is severely injured. Otherwise it was economically nice for him to live in rural areas.

He said their organization is helping them but not fully. Whenever any WVWD faces problems they appeal to TDVA branch at Axum. But representative of TDVA at Axum may not report our problems to top officials. They do this because they want to improve their own lives by not telling higher officials about our problems. Instead they speak soft words to us as if they sympathize with us. For example WVWD had a problem and they appealed to their representative of WVWDs, but they could not get sufficient response. After that they appealed to the TPLF office and they got decision after a year.

After economic conditions I have tried to ask him social conditions. So the first question I have asked him how is your relationship with in the society Hiluf said as follows:

I feel that my life in society is very good. I participate in all ceremonies like Edir, Ekub, Funeral ceremony, wedding ceremony, etc. I took some gift to all ceremonies, like injera, Tella, money, etc. In the area where he lives, there are many WVWD and all have good relations. Regarding his relationship with his family he said he has good relationship with his wife and children, but he does not have good relationship with his brother and sisters. The reason for this disagreement is, he said, there is no respect if somebody loses his parents. Another reason for his disagreement with his brothers and sisters is he could not give money (support) to them. He is not helping them because he does not have enough economic capacity. He is raising children and he said that it is natural that priority is given to ones own children.

With regard consultation with each other for mutual support to solve their common problems, he said, that:

We were demobilized at different time. It is impossible to talk about all WVWDs. For example, some of them work at Walta industry, and I , with other nine blind WVWDs had shops at the market place of the town. One of our friends is dead and another one is living in Addis Ababa. Now we are eight in number here and we discuss and understood each other.

Their discussion is usually about their feeling for the organization (TPLF) and about how to improve their life. They are convinced that if they can get support and encouragement as a group from the organization they can improve their life. To facilitate this they established an association and contributed 150 birr each. The association has got recognition by the department of social affairs. The main objective of the association is to seek support for WVWD from donors through the department of social affairs. The head offices of the donors are in Addis Ababa. The donor can help us if we can prepare a good project proposal and submit it to them. Now, we have already submitted our project proposal to donors. If our project proposal is accepted by the donors, they may give us 10,000 birr.

Talking about his former friends and neighbors, he said that, *“most my former friends have been martyred in the struggle. I still grieve about them. One of my best friends was a namesake. Now I have only a few friends”*. He was unable to meet his friends who were living in Sudan. Whenever, he meets some of his friends they chat about the different kinds of games they used to play when they were children.

He claims to have got a lot of experiences in the armed struggle. For example, he said, *“I am convinced that everybody can succeed if he/she has commitment; resolve conflicts by discussion and democratic process; and improve weakness by evaluation”*.

He does not remember any shocking event during the war. He said how anything can be shocking for him because he was devoted /ready/ to sacrifice his life from the very beginning. Whether missile or air bombardment comes nothing was shocking about it. he also added as follows:

My vision was to sacrifice my life for the sake of the people and to establish peace and democracy in the Country. I knew very well that for TPLF’s mission to succeed he had to struggle bravely. I was not shocked when I became blind because i saw many WWWDs when i was in Sudan. I had the mental readiness for anything. I feel happy that got the chance to experience the result of the success of struggle.

Describing how he was injured, in what situation and what he felt afterwards, he said, he was injured in February 12/ 1981 E.C shire ENDASILASE (Western Tigray). The battle took place from December 21 to February 12; it was a heavy battle. He thanked god for sparing his life. My parents celebrate that day every year. After he was injured he did not feel that he was injured. Later on, when he knew that he has become blind, he felt sorry, and said: *“መስዋእት ምላሽ”* meaning *“Martyrdom was better”*. He said this not because he regretted his struggle in the TPLF. It was just preference of death to blindness. However, whenever he remembers his dead comrades he is consoled. He wished that his comrades became blind like me than dead. Immediately after he was injured his friends took his weapon to prevent him from committing suicide. When in 1981 E.C. the armed struggle was fully supported by the people the main task of the fighters was limited only to shooting at enemy. Other tasks like caring for injured fighters and taking them to areas which were controlled by TPLF were done by the people.

His injury was also on his hand, nose, chest and head. He said he was unconscious. He further said as follows: *"If it were now I may not have been treated well. At that time we (fighters) had strong comradeship and the organization (TPLF) had positive attitude to the fighters. For this reason they treated me well and saved my life. He admitted that his disability has affected his life;"* because before the war he was running here and there as he wanted, but now most of his activities are done by support from other individuals.

He said he feels positively about his being a WVWD because he is injured for the sake of his country, not for nothing. Now female and male have the same right to elect and to be elected, every nation is getting the chance to learn by its own language, there are different colleges, universities and industries in Tigray. He said some people lose their life for nothing or in worthless places. Hence, he felt nothing except pride. However he has some negative feelings. He was given land by the town administration based on the instructions of Federal government. The land that he was given to him was around the market. It was for building shops in groups. After all, we did not apply to get land at the market place. The administration of the town just gave it to us there by its own decision. After several years the administration of the town changes its mind and took the land away from us and decided to give us land in another place. We disagreed with the decision and we told them that we not anti government or anti development. We argued a lot with them. Finally the administration of the town promised to return the land to us, but until now the administration neither returned nor builds on the land.

Regarding the perception of the community towards him, he said *"in general it is very good. But he commented that there are some people who do not have good attitudes towards WVWD"*. This is probably because the land given to WVWD for residence was previously used by farmers for agriculture. However, individually, he convinced the people who do not have good perceptions of WVWD through discussions, and they felt happy. He has good attitudes towards the community. One example of how he expressed his good attitudes to the community is: There were many Eucalyptus trees on the land which was given to him for building his residence by the administration he did not take that land; rather he changed it for another by telling the administration of the town. The reason why

he changed it is that the trees on the land were not his own trees and should not be used by him. He said in Tigrigna: “ቆልዓን ተኸልን ሐደ አየፎ” which means “*Child and tree are the same*”.

Speaking honestly about his feelings about himself, on the one hand Hiluf compares himself with other people with no disabilities, that he cannot produce more, that he does not have a good well furnished residential house he feels economic inferiority. On the other hand, he felt happiness, because he struggled to bring peace and democracy in the country and succeeded. This makes him feel proud.

In sum, Hiluf uses a Tigrigna saying: “ሐቅያ ዘረባሰ ምስሕ አቦይዝጊ” which means, “*speaking the truth is the lunch for God*”. Therefore, he said that he cannot say that he does not have other feelings.

Regarding his coping mechanism Hiluf describe that:

Whenever I feel gloomy I listen to the radio or play with my children. I am consoled by the realization that I am not alone. I keep in mind that there are many comrades who are blind and have other disabilities. I understand that I can not change anything by being continuously distressed and isolated.

He feels that he should try hard to get a job in governmental offices. He left the question, whether or not he can really cope with his problems and make use of the time to make his dreams true, for time to answer.

Case 5(Letay)

Letay is living in Axum town, Tigray region, Northern Ethiopia. She is 48 old. She joined the armed struggle in 77 E.C, at the age of 23. She now has a motor disorder. The reason she gave for joining the armed struggle is to bring peace and stability in the country. She did not start schooling before she joined the armed struggle. She started to go to school in 1981 E.C; however, she dropped out because she had to go to Sudan. After she returned from Sudan she started to go to school again in Adigrat; but she could not continue because she had to take care of her children and also because of her own carelessness. Based on her interest she took training for about 3 months in dressmaking.

Regarding economic condition when Letay started civil life a WVWD, she said as follows:

I was employed at walta industry with 200.00 birr per month. However, 3 months ago I was fired from Walta industry with compensation money of 10,000 birr. Independent life did not frustrate me because I know very well that life is full of ups and downs and full hardship. I understand that a human being can live good life if he/she works hard. That is why I continued to work with a group distributing cement to the people of the town. However, this could not be profitable because most of the merchants are engaged in this business and I and my group could not compete with the rich merchants.

Now she has no income source. She and others with her have asked the TDVA for support because they have an economic problem. The association is promising them that it will solve their problem. She said they are waiting to see what they will do.

With regards to her problems, she said that she pays for her own Medicare. Although in principle medical service is free for WVWD it is not done in practice. Moreover, she is not happy about what the Women's Association is doing in the last 19 years. She never gets any support from them.

After economic condition I have tried to ask her social conditions. So I have ask her how is your relation ship with in the society, she has the following relation ships

My social life in the community is good. I am participating in all social affairs like wedding ceremonies, equb, edir, and funeral ceremonies. My relationship with my family is also good. She said, being female does not make me inferior or superior to my husband. My husband was a fighter and I discussed things with him all the time. I also discuss with other WVWD to solve common problems and we also evaluate each other all the time.

When comparing comradeship at during the struggle and after, Letay said it is incomparable. During the struggle every body was eager to die first before his/her comrades. But now “አድራጅ ሰብ ነፍብ ድራፍ እዩ ዝሓሰብ” meaning, “*every body thinks about ones own supper*”. Again when she compares the life of FWVWD and MWVWD after demobilization, she said that most of MWVWD got the opportunity to continue education; but most FWVWD did not. She regretted that if she were educated she could have got job opportunity. So, she has a bad feeling about it.

Because of the experience she got during the armed struggle, she could express her ideas freely and feels no difference between male and female.

Regarding shocking events that she might have encountered during the war, Letay said that

I did not face any shocking event that can be exaggerated, while I was in the war. She added that she was not a coward; she said I was a hero. When I was involved in the war, I knew that there is sacrifice. However, I admitted that I was shocked when the reality came, i.e. when I was injured. She was injured by artillery fire in 1980 E.C in AXUM town. After I was injured I felt bad and she lost interest in life with such a disability. I thought deeply that it was not possible to live with physical disability, particularly for female. However, I got consolation after I saw many fighters with different disability.

In spite of this, her disability is affecting her life. She said it is worse for female because she has to rear children and do the entire household work, which is impossible without support.

Letay does not feel much about her being WVWD, because she said that “*Although I am with motor disorder I am still ready to struggle for my country*”. She has the feeling of economic insecurity because she is poor. Hence, if she can get credit individually or in group she is ready to work.

Concerning the attitude of the community towards her, Letay said that “*community has good attitude towards me*”. Even some people appreciated her when she works with her physical disability. She also has good attitudes towards the community.

Regarding coping mechanism Letay said that:

I did well next time I will not have to worry because I contributed my role to my country. Now I did not give attention to my disability. I got the chance to see the victory

Case-Six (Haben)

Haben is living in Axum town, Tigray region, northern Ethiopia. His is 49 years old. He has five children (4 female and 1 male). He joined the armed struggle in 1973 E.C. at the age of 20. He has motor disorder.

The reason he gave for joining the armed struggle was because the former government of Ethiopia was oppressor and fascist. In our country the ex-government killed many educated people in urban areas and farmers in rural areas by the principle of Red Terror. So TPLF members were agitating the people in the rural areas of Tigray about how criminal, unjust and dictatorial the *Derg* was. He understood how undemocratic the *Derg* was. Thus, he joined the armed struggle to overthrow the *Derg* and replace it by a democratic government.

Haben had not started to go to school neither before and nor while in the armed struggle. He started schooling after he was injured. That was, when the WVWD were organized in *Wukro, kilteawlaelo* in 1983 E.C. When he, with the other WVWDs, was transferred from Wukro to Adigrat he failed in grade 7. After the general rehabilitation started for WVWD by TDVA at Axum and Mekele, he went to Axum and continued his education up to grade 8. He also added that:

While I was in grade 8 the Eritrean government invaded Ethiopia and started war with the Ethiopian government in 1991 E.C. I became busy preparing uniform for military at Walta industry during day time. It was not convenient for me attend evening school. Besides, my motor disorder made going to school a big challenge for me. I took grade 8 examination as a private candidate two times, but i could not pass. Finally I quit the idea of going to school. He now has a bad feeling that he has not completed high school.

His comrades are now employed because they have completed high school education and beyond.

After demobilization he took was trained in printing and was employed in *Walta* industry. His training was based on his interest. He has got a certificate in printing. After he left *Walta* industry he is doing printing privately.

He earns 201.00 birr pension and 452.00 birr bonus monthly. But he thinks that this is not enough to cover the expenses of his family. So, to alleviate his economic problem he is working on printing privately and he is selling his printed products in Adwa and Axum. He never tried to get a job because he knows that he could not compete with those who have diplomas and degrees.

Concerning his health, he said that he gets free medical care. He also said that WVWDs were getting help through the effort of TDVA. For example, since the TDVA appealed to concerned bodies about our economic problems we are earning bonuses.

His relationship with the community he said is good. He participates in social unions like *edir*, *ekub*, wedding ceremonies, and funeral ceremonies. He also has good relationship with his family. Sometimes there may be some disagreement, but it is not so basic.

He used to discuss with his fellow workers when he was working at *Walta* industry in order to try to solve their problems. Now, he and his friends do not meet and discuss every day as before. When he compared comradeship during wartime and after, he remembers that everybody was saying "I want to die before my comrades". It is unthinkable to compare comradeship during the war and now." ሕጻ. ሕድ-ሕድ ሰብ ንባዕሉ እዮ ዘኾድም meaning: "Now everyone prioritizes himself". Though there is still friendship among former-fighters it is dominated by individualism. It seems unbelievable when one speaks about the comradeship that existed during wartime.

Most of his former friends and neighbors became fighters. Some of them have returned home with him and some of them died in the struggle. Sometimes when he meets his old friends he chats with them. He feels sadness whenever he meets families of his dead former friends or comrades. It is tragic that in many cases two or more from a single family have not returned.

In wartime he got many experiences. For instance, he got awareness about education, law, development, contributing his own ability to the struggle and be a model for the young generation.

Regarding whether or not he experienced any shocking event while he was in the armed struggle, he said it was the drought in 1977 E.C. It was a time when most people migrated to Sudan and some of them went to the towns of Tigray under the control of the *Derg*. We in the TPLF were anxious that the people may not return to their villages. On top of that, the leadership of the TPLF split. For example, Gidey Zeraatsion and others left the struggle at the time of the establishment of Marxist Leninist League Tigray (MLLT). Another shocking event for him was another split in the TPLF after the Ethio-Eritrean war. It became shocking for him because he could not bear to see such a split after a bitter struggle and victory.

He remembers how he was injured, when and what he felt after that. It happened in *Wadladelanta*, Wello in 1982 E.C. when the *Derg*'s stronghold was broken by fighters. He felt nothing after he was injured because he was ready to sacrifice his life for his country from the very beginning. The main concern in the minds of all fighters was not about disability but about whether or not we would succeed. He said the disability has not much affected his life. Initially, he was frustrated. He was thinking how it was possible to manage life with disability. However, when TPLF encouraged the WVWD he started to calm down. Now he pension and bonus and my life is not affected seriously. Though he is using prosthesis for movement he did not stop working. He is still working on his printing business for survival.

Expressing his feelings about his being a WVWD he said, “ሱቕ አልካውን ደፊንካ ክትከይድ አይትኻእልን” meaning “It is impossible to hide everything and pretend you have no feelings”. For example, he feels bad when he sees that his former comrades live higher and luxurious lives, whereas he is living at this lower level. He then thinks more deeply and becomes philosophical that he has to forget the difference because it is not good to be emotional. He said, if somebody is emotional it is danger for his life. When he sees those

who are living at higher level, he feels inferior, but when he sees for those who live at lower levels he feels superior. Moreover, he thinks that it is only if the TPLF exists that I can live and be healthy.

Regarding the attitude of the community towards him, he said that at this time the attitude of the community towards him is good. No one perceives him negatively; rather all his neighbors treat him well. There may be disagreements with individuals but generally the society encourages him respecting him and giving him moral. He also has good attitudes towards the society.

4.1. Cross case Analysis of war Veterans with Disability Background

Information of War Veterans with Disability

No	Name	Sex	Age	Grade level	Year entered into the army	Type of disability	No of children	Income	
								Bonus	Pension
1	Netsanet	F	40	5	1981 E.C.	Blind	3	452.00	93.00
2	Lielti	F	38	4	1976 E.C.	Motor disorder	3	452.00	93.00
3	Tesfay	M	39	BA	1977 E.C.	Blind	3	452.00	93.00
4	Hiluf	M	50	Diploma	1980 E.C.	Blind	2	452.00	160.00
5	Letay	F	48	2	1977 E.C.	Motor Disorder	4	-	93.00
6	Haben	M	49	8	1973 E.C.	Motor disorder	5	452.00	201

All of the above individuals are participated in the semi-structured individual interviews as key informants about the problems under study. The result of focus group discussion with war veterans seem to similar to the result of the interview. Hence, this cross-case analysis result from interview and focus group discussion will be integrated. All of the respondents were born and grown up in rural areas, from where they involve in the arm struggle. The respondents have similar rationale for their involvement in the armed struggle, against the Derg regime. Derge was oppressing and killing many people that have strike and helped the establish struggle leading party, TPLF. To fight Derg the TPLF fighters move to and mobilized the rural people of Tigray. In support to this idea one of the participant of the focus group discussion said:

The reason why I involved in the armed struggle for two reasons: First, I saw three children killed by Derg at Wukro /Easter Tigray/ and they buried in one burrow and then eaten by dog. The parents were not allowed to bury within given cultural funeral ceremony which includes, cry emotions accompanied by drops tears. This situation tormenting me at large Second, in 1971 E.C. I saw 7 youngsters killed by Derg Red Terror at Axum town. Because of all these things I distressed and decided to fight against the Derg at the war field.

Some of the respondents interviewed and the participants of focus group discussion also agreed that, though they did not have detail TPLF's political philosophy and

understandings, they were involved in the army by TPLF's songs music and dramas about the life situation of peasant.

Regarding their educational back ground, 2 males and 1 female enrolled in grade one before they joined the army, whereas 1 male and 2 females begun grade one after they joined the army. From these six veterans, only two male blind war veterans manage to join and graduate from tertiary level education and received bachelor and Diploma respectively. The remaining four could not further their education. Particularly FWVWDs, couldn't continue after lower primary due to various barriers they encountered such time of pregnancy, deliver, rearing the born child and the disability it self.

On this issue one of the blind female participants in focus group discussion said:

I was attending grade 6 before I joined the army, I was also continuing schooling up to grade 8 while I was in the army, in the organized school in each division of the army. After the end of the war, they took me to Mekele school for the to continue education. Unfortunately, since I can not live far away from my children and the absence of support to provide care and the absence of guardian, who look after them, inhibited me to continue my education after grade eight.

Another participant in focus group discussion said that I was attending school up to grade 4 in Eritrea, while I was in military training. But I could not continue to manage both my education and my family, simultaneously. Those two blind men who attended tertiary level become successful passing through various challenges and got their degree and diploma. One of the challenges was inability to read ink print on one hand and Braille on the other hand. Tertiary level education is demanding and requires much library works, reading ink prints. One of the participants of this research described that his secondary education was also full of challenges. Unlike when he was at ADIGRAT center, his grade twelve experiences were bad with lack of support from the school community. At ADIGRAT, since the members the center were comrades and members of WVWD, he was cared and supported. Lack of good Tigigna speakers were one of the problem. Sometimes, Amharic speaker was assigned to read Tigigna during examination and read wrongly, with imperfect pronunciation.

Exclusive of blind persons, war veterans with motor disorder received skills in vocational training at Adigrat rehabilitation center. For example Lielty and Letay are trained in weaving and tailor respectively, and Haben is trained in printing technology. For blind war veterans training in financial management was arranged.

Regarding their income, all of the respondents have retirement fund and a place for Agriculture. Their pension is different based on their disability (severity). Particularly blind female war veterans are in sever economic problems. For example, Netsanet and another blind lady are divorced and they do not have support from other people. They were not working to earn additional income. Usually they stay at home and spend their time in household activities such as baking injera, washing clothes and others.

Contrary to the above female women war veterans, two blind male war veterans are supported by their sited wives. For example Gebre and Getachew described their support respectively like this:

Though I have retirement fund, my wife's salary is better than my salary. She is a nurse at hospital earning good salary that helps us to manage our life.

Gebre also described the support of his wife as follows:

I have retirement fund. But my pension is not enough to manage my family. My wife is working at Almeda textile industry, earning salary better than me, which reduce our financial problem to lead our life.

The financial support for WVWDs were started in July 2000 E.C. From 1983 E.C. to 1999 E.C. their life were depended only on retirement fund. The financial backing is not for all WVWD. For example, in Adwa town only eight WVWDs are receiving the financial support from TDVA depends on the severity of their disability. The financial support from TDVA is not satisfactory to live independent life.

On the other hand, other social services, such as medication is free of charge at health center, whereas, in hospitals except bed, examination, drugs and the like are not free of charge. Contrary to these, participants in focus group discussion confirmed that they get free medication at health center and hospital. Concerning their social life except Netsanet,

who is all respondent of the interview and participants of focus group discussion have good relationship with the society. They participate in social organizations such as Edir Ekub, weeding and funeral ceremony. For example Hiluf reported the following:

In this locality there are many WVWDs living. The WVWDs, established Association and the members meet every month. Besides, we also meet people who are not WVWDs and establish good relationship.

All war veterans are participating in all ceremonies, but some blind female veterans may not travel distance places. For example, due to inaccessibility of landscape for blind people difficult to go far away to attend funeral ceremony. Their social relations are with their family members are also except Netsanet whose social relationship was depressed when she divorced. Her husband divorced her immediately when she becomes blind. There is also good relationship among war veterans, old members of the armed struggle and neighborhoods, being accompanied by frequent meetings and discussions. Friends and neighbors were also supporting in farming such as during harvest.

Comparing life during the war and post war time most the respondents and focus participants of group discussion replied that similar. Most of them said that during the war time fighters the commitment was so high to the level of scarifying their life. They had excellent relationship and experiences sharing all what they have. However, during the post war time their natural relationship and sense of comradeship has been loosening.

To achieve their goal they went through various challenges such as thirsty, hungry, sometime conflict. However, all the problems solved through discussion, and evaluations. These were due to high level commitment among the armed struggle to resolve conflicts and existing problems.

The armed struggle of TPLF was started by few individuals and gradually reached hundred thousands and achieved the peace we are now living in, passing through the pains and stockings.

Most of the respondents have relatively similar shocking experiences, but the shocking experiences of female fighters were worst compared to the men. For some shocking often

happened in war when injury happened that could have significant impairment that may cause severe disability such as inability to lead life. One participant in focus group discussion described that when he was injured he lost his consciousness seems dead for sometimes. Then, his comrades would have buried him until the doctor arrived detected he is alive and inhibited them not to bury him. After sometimes He was told that, he looks dead and would have been buried. This was a shocking history for this individual. All the war veterans agreed that the impairment has significantly affected their life and they need support. For example, participants in the focus group discussion stated the effects of disability on their daily as follows:

For the involvement in the armed struggle, there is no regret, but they feel that disability has affected them to lead their life independently. Arriving a place they have intended, reading books and doing many other things are challenges. Living with Blindness is very demanding in terms of all kinds of support, including financial support.

The WVWDs have feelings of pride for their involvement in the armed struggle. Their pride was emanated from the commitment and sacrifices for the freedom of their nation. Their negative feelings have come from their existing undesirable living conditions. For example, among the participants of this study, Hiluf described both positive and negative feelings. He was sad when he was injured for the wellbeing of his country and feels proud. However, when he compares himself with non-disabled persons, he is neither productive nor earn sufficient money that could cover his living without creating additional stress and frustration. One of the sources of such negative feeling is their observing non-disabled former comrades live in better life.

To the contrary of the above idea, the participants of focus group discussion feel nothing, except proud of their involvement in the armed struggle and impaired.

4.2. Result of Officers

Background of Officials who were interviewed in Axum town about WVWD

No	Name	Age	Educational Level	Responsibility	Year of Joining the Armed Struggle
1	Alem	43	BA	Mayor of the town	1973 E.C
2	Goitom	34	BA	Administrator of Walta industry	1974 E.C
3	Nigusse	40	BA	Representative of WVWD	1973 E.C

- The officials were asked whether or not orientation (information) given by the government to society when WVWD returned home (demobilized) and what the attitude of the communities is towards the WVWD. The answer given by all was affirmative.

The Administrator of the *Walta* industry said that, the *WVWDs* have struggled for the masses. When the *WVWD* were demobilized the society was happy and prepared welcoming ceremonies. They did this because war veterans are their children. Moreover, when *WVWD* started to work at *Walta* industry as part of the rehabilitation program, the people of Axum were buying different products from *Walta* industry to help and encourage the *WVWD* rather than buying from other sellers. The people called the *WVWDs* their heroes and gave them due respect. The representative of *WVWD* also shared the view of the manager and said that, *the society is giving love and respect to WVWD because they tasted the bitterness of the long struggle for the sake of their people.* He added that even now they are contributing for the development of their country by participating in different social affairs. The society calls them our teachers and models for liberation and work. Thus, the *WVWDs* cannot be separated from the struggle until they die.

The mayor of the town also said that *99% of the society has good attitude towards the WVWDs. Few people may not have good attitudes to the WVWDs.* When the *WVWDs* joined the struggle some of their friends stayed at home and they continued to work and go to school. Now they are living a better life, whereas the *WVWDs* may not be having good life as their

friends. The WVWDs have mixed feelings about this. On the one hand they feel happy about joining the struggle though their friends are having a good life. On the other hand some WVWDs feel bad and become depressed when their old and rich friends do not treat them well. They regret that they spent their productive years in the struggle. Except for this the mayor observed that most of the people have good attitudes towards WVWD. People even go to the extent of criticizing the government and the organization (TPLF) for not treating and supporting the WVWDs well.

- Another question to the officials was whether or not guidance and counseling was given to WVWD about how to they can reintegrate into the community. The answer given by all was affirmative.

The mayor of the town said that *information, guidance and counseling were given to WVWD based on their physical capability, though it was not sufficient*. They were differentiated as: those veterans who have no disability were assigned to the Ministry of Defense, those WV who have moderate disability and who preferred to work individually left the army, and those WV with sever disability and who showed interest to work in group they were sent to rehabilitation centers in Adigrat, Axum and Mekele. For example, *Walta* industry was established through the cooperation of donors and government to rehabilitate WVWD.

The mayor said

there is something that cannot be denied. When the *Walta* industry was established it did not take the physical capability of the disabled veterans into consideration. The kind of work in the industry is fit for the people with non-disability and thus, it was not conducive for the war veterans with disability. This is even more so when the age of the war veterans with disability increases. As the disabled veterans grow older they cannot do the work in the industry properly.

The administrator of *Walta* industry also agreed with the mayor in that when the WVWD started to live independently information was given to about how to reintegrate into the community. In addition they were assigned to work at *Walta* industry and live at a medium economic level in the society. All WVWD agreed to this idea and they were trained in different skills that could enable them to work at *Walta* industry. Until they started work at

the *Walta* industry they were given 190.00 birr from *Tehadsso* commission. After the *Tehadsso* commission was terminated the WVWD started to work at *Walta* industry and live independently.

The representative of Axum branch of WVWD recalls that when the WVWDs were in the rehabilitation camps of Adigrat in 1985 E.C., the government thought that this approach was useless for the WVWDs because they should not be segregated from the society in these camps. The government was convinced that if the WVWDs do not participate in different social activities they could not be productive for the society and for themselves. Hence, the government discussed the matter with WVWDs and agreement was reached on the WVWDs to live by their own choice.

- The officials were asked questions regarding whether or not government provided vocational skill training based on the educational level and interest of WVWDs.

All the officials gave an affirmative answer to the question. The representative of WVWDs said that the government decided that the WVWDs be given different skill training like metalwork, woodwork, weaving, tailor and printing for 6 months based on their interest and educational level.

The manager of *Walta* industry agreed to the fact that the WVWDs were given skill training, but disagreed that the training was based on not on interest but on what the government thought was appropriate to the nature of disability of the WVWDs. For example, veterans with one healthy eye were not allowed to take training in metalwork because of the fear for their safety.

The mayor of the town also said *there was both vocational and academic training given to WVWD although it was not sufficient*. He was of the opinion that the WVWD are less competent in the productive jobs compared to other people who have no disability. Their disability does not allow them to work for eight or more hours at the industry. Another problem the mayor of the town mentioned is that the WVWDs, who were working at *Walta*

industry, did not have training in management and accounting. For this reason, they were using part-timers from outside for instance, for auditing activities. It was impossible to work effectively in the industry without well trained manpower. Because of all these reasons the *Walta* industry could not be functional. Almost all of the WVWD, who were employed at the *Walta* industry left willingly.

- Regarding whether or not the government tried to link WVWDs to other organization to help them get support-

The mayor of the town said that *there are no links with NGOs*. There may be a link with the Tigray Development Association (TDA); but the problem is the TDA has relations with regions not with zones or districts. The manager of *Walta* industry also added that the industry does not have direct link with NGOs. There is a link of WVWDs with NGOs is Mekele. For example, whenever, WVWDs have spinal problems they are provided with artificial support from TDVA and whenever WVWDs have serious problem for movement TDVA provides transport service to hospital. All this support is given by government and NGOs. However, the support is not restricted only to WVWDs, it is also given to all other people with disability.

The representative of WVWDs does not share the views of the two officials. The main objective of the TDVA is to change the socio-economic conditions of the 26,000 WVWDs by getting support from government, NGOs and the TPLF. Accordingly, the TDVA has links with NGOs and is giving training to build the capacity of WVWDs.

- The officials were asked whether it was in the urban or in the rural that reintegration was more complicated.

The respondents gave different answers. The mayor of the town said that

reintegration in rural was more complicated, because it was difficult for those with blindness and severe motor disorder to engage in agricultural activities. The government distributed land for agriculture to 30,000 WVWDs in Humera (Dansha) in Western Tigray. But, most of them did not live there. The reasons they gave were malaria problem, distance from their families, etc. So, they went to urban areas. Of course, those few WVWD, who decided to stay in Dansha are now living a better life.

So, reintegration in urban areas was comparatively better than it was in rural areas. However, reintegration in urban areas had also its own problems. Many WVWDs did not have sufficient skills to work in urban areas like in trade, education, etc. For this reason some have returned to rural areas after they started to live in urban areas.

The representative of WVWD in Axum disagreed with the distinction. He said there is no difference in the degree of complication of reintegration. The association gave equal focus to reintegration both in urban and rural areas. For example, in rural areas the association focused on irrigation, animal production and the use of natural resources. In urban areas the association gave training in weaving, metalwork, wood work, etc. Some of the WVWDs started gain-mill business in group. First the government gave them one mill; now they have six mills. The administrator of *Walta* industry said he does not have enough information to comment on the issue.

- The other question to officials was whether or not they receive complaints from WVWD about their life situation; if they do, how they try to solve their problems.

All of the officials answered the first part of the question in the affirmative. The administrator of *Walta* industry said, whenever the WVWD have complaints they are first discussed with their immediate bosses. If the problems could not be solved, the discipline committee took the responsibility to look into the details and give the final verdict.

The representative of WVWD also said that, whenever WVWDs have complaints, they have no reservations, they always go them. For example, those war veterans who have sever and multiple disabilities were applying to the association to get support in addition to their pension. Based on these applications 430 WVWDs are now getting 452.00 birr bonus in Tigray. He and his association believe that this is not enough. So, to raise the bonus from 452.00 birr to 1000.00, the association has planned to discuss the matter with concerned bodies. He said, in Mekele, some WVWDs have started to get one quintal of *teff* for a family every 3 months in addition to the 452.00 bonus. This is not the case in all zones. All of the above mentioned benefits are given to the WVWDs not only as long as they are alive, but also they are transferred to their children. All WVWDs are getting a place for

residence without the need to wait for their turn. Allover Tigray 9000 WVWDs have built their own residence.

The mayor of the town said, the WVWD generally have the following complaints: lack of residential house, inability to get bonuses, insufficient pension, and lack of employment opportunity. He said that, though the town administration could not give satisfactory response to all WVWD's applications it is trying as much as possible to fulfill their needs. For instance, in Axum town there are 800 WVWDs, out of which 400 of them were given land for building residence.

- The officials were asked to give the reason why the WVWDs left the *Walta* industry. The response of all the officials was similar.

The mayor of the town said that, there were three reasons why the *Walta* industry could not retain the WVWDs are employees. First, it was not conducive to work in the industry with disabilities. Second, the industry did not have trained manpower in management and accounting; as a result could not have records of their incomes and expense, and this had to be done by external part-timers. Third, the industry could not be profitable and the WVWDs were suffering as a result. Hence, the government decided to give 10,000.00 birr to each WVWD worker to help them work individually or in groups outside the industry.

The administrator of *Walta* industry and the representative of WVWD both said, At the beginning 145 WVWDs were employed at *Walta* industry; but gradually the numbers decreased because, the industry could not be profitable for the following reasons: First, at the beginning, the government thought that if the WVWDs work hard day and night to provide service for Axum, Shire and Adwa. However, the WVWDs did not have enough strength to work 8 hours or more than 8 or more hour a day. Second, the location of *Walta* industry was too far away from the town center. So the people preferred to buy from other sellers in the center of the town. Third, more than 50 WVWDs left the industry after completing high school and were employed in other governmental offices. So, the government decided to give 452.00 bonus for those war veterans who have sever and

multiple disability; to give 10,000 each to 32 war veterans who have moderate disabilities to help them open business in groups, like: distributing cement, milk production and grain-milling. The representative of war veterans added that, when the government established the industry its motive was not as permanent but as immediate solution. Another problem was the government did not consider that the WVWDs will grow old.

- Regarding female war veterans with disability the officials gave different responses-

The mayor of the town said that, during the armed struggle there were 30% female fighters. They were participating in the political, social, military and economic life of the country. However, after the war ended they were not economically strong enough. The main obstacle for their life is, their educational background. Although they are participating in small-scale business, they could not compete with the former male fighters. When the people see the miserable life of FWVWD, they criticize the government. The mayor does not agree with the attitude of the people in this regard. He feels that the people should not use the life of FWVWDs as the main measure. The measure should be the life of Tigray or Ethiopian people. The life of Ethiopian women is totally changed whatever the life of the FWVWD is. The administrator of *Walta* industry said that, there is no unique treatment for FWVWDs. They are getting equal pay with the males. The representative of WVWD in Axum said that, though male and female fighters are injured in battle the females are facing worse life conditions than males after the war ended. Therefore, to minimize their problems the TDVA in collaboration with NGOs gave trainings to FWVWD. He said the association is helping all WVWD in general and the FWVWD in particular, at the 6th congress of the association.

4.3. Summary of the Major findings

The main purpose of this study was to identify the challenges of psychosocial disability and coping mechanism a case of war veterans at Axum and Adwa

This study focused on the challenges of psychological, social, educational, economic and coping mechanism of war veterans with disability.

To this end the following basic questions were formulated

- Do war veterans with disabilities face psychological problems? Why?
- How do the war veterans with disabilities lead their social life in the community?
- How do war veterans with disabilities cope up with all the problems they are facing

To find the challenges semi-structured inter view and focus group discussion was conducted with war veteran with disabilities and officials.

At the end the following major finding were concluded

- Most of war veterans with disabilities have psychological problem of post traumatic stress disorder about their dead comrades
- Most of them are not reach to tertiary levels, so they are not employed and they have economic problem
- Most war veterans with disabilities have acceptance from the society so they have not social problem
- Most of war veterans they cope of their problem by chatting with their friends, families and tries to relax by listening music

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1. Discussion

In this part of the study different data gathered from participants are discussed based on the basic research questions, literatures and research findings. The main concern of this study is to find out the challenges of psychosocial aspects of disability and their coping mechanisms in the case of war veterans at Axum and Adwa. Thus, in this discussion part, the findings obtained from six participants as key informants, through semi-structured interview, researchers observation and focus group discussions are considered to verify and complement the findings obtained through interviews.

The participants of this study joined the armed struggle, due to several reasons as it was reported in chapter four case analyses. One case join the armed struggle to resisting early marriage and escaped from home; the other attracted by the TPLF music and drama; the remaining joined the armed struggle to resist oppression and the then, undemocratic government, Derg. The data obtained from FGD also confirms the reason mentioned above. One the oppression of the Derg Government was killing ("Red Terror") those who claim their democratic right. Regarding this issue, Jenny Hammond (1990) reported that Red terror drove thousands of new recruits from the towns to fight on the side of TPLF in the country side. On the other hand, as reported by Tsegay (1999) music had significantly attracted the young generation to fight the Derg Regime began on the side of TPLF. The contents of the song as mentioned by the same author, was very much used to mobilize the generation of the time, which is described below:

We see three-foot prints in the dust.
Did they pass by joust children?
The soured of distant firing of three guns
And we must follow
Be strong our children!
We are bringing food and drink to you
Can the needle sew without thread?
Can children fight with out mothers support?

This songs and other music of the member of the armed struggle attracted many youngsters from villages and schools to fight the Derg regime. Most of them left their education to restart or resume after freedom.

Most of the participants of this study started their formal education at the war front and some others after the end of the war. From these two blind male attended tertiary level educations while one blind man attended 10+2, with sever challenges. The challenges include inaccessibility of social and physical environment and lack of education materials such as Braille. Ackeman et al. (2009) stated that attending college for people with disability is demanding and requires intensive support from the community, including financial support.

The remaining WVWD participants of this study where the majority are female could not continue further education. Those with motor disorder took different vocational training skills like tailor, weaving, printing, wood work land metal work, which was designed according to their interest and they were certified.

Regarding this issue Scott (2005) stated the US experience in rehabilitating war veterans:

Other things being equal WVWDs should be granted their first choice of training program provided they were capable of caring it successfully. The act of 1918 empowered Federal Board Vocational Education (FBVE) advisors to deny any course requested by a veteran if they deemed the course of study to be "non-feasible" not employment.

On the other hand, Tewolde (1988) described the Eritrean experiences as follows:

In Eritrea the fighters were involved in public administration, industry, transportation health construction at the front line. These qualifications remained uncertified due to the equalitarian principles fostering cohesiveness in the army. Every body shared the conditions of the war and work and rank. After words the qualifications of ex-fighters who do not have an education out side of the army have not been accepted by civil society.

This qualification may be helpful for the fighters when they become veteran to lead and sustain successful life in the society, being integrated economically, and socially, if it is practically implemented by existing government.

The participants of this study seem to suffer a lot when they started civil life. Some compare and prefer their life in armed struggle, living in the Bush fighting Enemy, than their current civil life. For example, Lielti said: the following in her own words "በረካ ምንባር ይሐሸና ዝብል ኦተሃሳስባ ሐሲብ ነይረ" which means "I was thinking that life in the armed struggle was better for us". Similarly a study Funk (1999) quoted the statement of

a fighter as follows: “for me it has been striking to interview ex-fighter women in Eritria and hear them express the view that the years of war were preferable to the time that came afterwards” This could be due to lack of employment that help the economically and socially lead their life with out traumatic stress.

Most of the participants of this study except one blind male war veteran were not employed in any institute which could be due to lack s skill or low level educational back ground. Study by Nat and Morkus(1996) identified that ex-combatants even with an urban back ground often did not hove the skills necessary to find gainful employment. On the other hand the labor market in urban Ethiopia is tight. Unemployment may affect the life of people in various ways such physical and mental health problems. Fortunately the health services are free of charge for war veterans in health centers, but not in hospitals.

Enloe (2000) in his study describe similar events as follows:

After war, the physical and mental costs for soldiers particularly for female soldiers are often very high. War related disability and mental health problems are direct consequences of a long lasting armed conflict. In addition to accidents occurring during a battle, health problems increase as a consequence of lack of satisfactory healthy services and poor diets.

These war veterans need intensive support for their health, psychological, social and economic problems they have faced. They established Associations to be support at the time of crises. One of the associations is Tigray Disabled Veteran Association, established for the above purpose. However, some of the participants of this study replied that though it is not satisfactory they get some help from their association, which subsidize their living. In relation to this, Hunt (1997) said:

For many veterans association are an important part of their lives. Veterans associations are the means of retaining or regaining comradeship and they provide practical help. They may not be entirely positive if they play a role of reminding the veterans about war. Perhaps activating traumatic recollections, but these reminders mainly serve to help the veteran process any trauma – related information in a safe environment.

There is also another association established by female war veterans with disabilities (FWVD) with aim of rehabilitating female war veterans with disabilities. Unfortunately, the participants of this study confirmed that the association is not in a position to help them. No women association give due concern for female war veterans in the region.

Krug (1999) stated that the women's association in Tigray can not focus on the problem of the ex-fighters because they are not aware of them. For this reason, many of the same women do not want to join the local women's association. They feel that the association does not meet their needs.

The origin for most of the war veterans is rural areas before they join armed struggle. After the end of the war they want to stay in towns where they can be accessible to important things for their life such as health centers. Particularly female war veterans more refuse to a greater degree than men, to return to their families after they have been combatants in a war. On the other hand, Krug (1999) stated that both men and women find it difficult to return, as there are few opportunities for an alternative existence among the rural population. The women coming from peasant back ground and not returning often face a difficult existence in urban areas. Most of the peasant women recruited did not return to their home surroundings after demobilization reintegration into the peasantry had the most adverse appeal to many women. Their time in the liberation army had distanced them from values associated with traditional rural life. This may adversely affect their social life. This study revealed that the social relationship of participants in Ider, Ekub... etc is very good. Contrary to this idea Tirussew (2005) stated that *People with disability generally the range of their participation in community affairs such as local community organization; festivals, weddings, funeral and other social occasions are highly limited.*

But this can not be compared while they were in the armed struggle. They love their time in the armed struggle. “ናይ በረካ ብላይነት እዘይ እዩ ኢልካ ክትገልጽ ኢይትክእልን” meaning “you can't have words to express the comradeship that existed in the armed struggle” was a statement by one of the participants. The other one also said during the struggle every body was eager to die first before/his/her comrades but now “ሕድ ሕድ ሰብ ነፍብ ድራፋ እዩ ዝሓሰብ” meaning “every body thinks about ones own supper.” Supporting this idea one ex-fighter interviewee in Eritria said “During the struggle as fighters as being among equals and of belonging to a community. Being in the field – it was as if we all came from the same womb(Barth,2002).

Supporting this idea (Funck ,1999) stated that:

War's irony is that, besides being the most brutal experience, it also provides the most intense human experiences in a positive sense. It allows the individual to increase his or her social status honor and heroism comradeship and feeling of community are some examples of the attraction.

Their relationship with their family also found to be good. Of course two blind female WWWDs divorced after they became blind. To the contrary, two blind male WWWDs are more supported by their wives salary. In Eritrea female ex-fighters are largely married to ex-fighters but most male ex-fighters are married to civilian women, while female ex-fighters are hardly ever married to civilian men. Only 3.2% the women fighters are married to civilian, compared to 96.4% of the men (GDI 1995). Moreover Abu Habib (1997)stated that women with disability are generally considered to experience more difficulties than men with disability.

Concerning their feeling being they are WWWDs all individual respondents and focus group participants felt proud /pride/ but they have some how feeling about economic insecurity and developed PTSD about dead comrades.

Regarding this issue, Department of health and human service in USA (n.d) stated that veterans suffer from post Traumatic **Stress** (Disorder such as: Feeling constantly unsafe and unable to, difficult to telling or expressing emotions other than irritability or frustration, bodily stress and tension especially when they reminded of traumatic Vietnam experiences etc, which require coping mechanism, such as positive thinking, chatting with friends, Attention to work, going to church etc. . Coping mechanism suggested by Lazarus (1966) argued that,

People should combine task and emotion focused coping strategies. Task focused strategies attempt some form of action directly targeted on dealing with the source of stress adaptation of the environment-where as emotion focused strategy attempt to attenuate the emotional experience associated with that stress adaptation to the environment.

Moreover, Dewe (1987) in Cox (1989) identified the following coping strategies: postponing action by relaxation and destructing attention, developing a greater ability to deal with the problem, rationalizing the problem and drawing support through spiritual commitment.

Concerning the link WVWD two NGO most officials and participants agreed that WVWDs did not have direct linkage with NGOs. Regarding this idea, Nat. & Morkus (1996) stated that a number of local and international NGOs have initiated projects in support demobilized ex combatants, most important the ICRC/ERCS & CRS while these bodies have co-ordinate their intervention with the commissions program. So this study revealed that WVWDs did not have any linkage with NGOs.

Regarding female WVWDs most officials respond that there is no unique treatment after the war for female WVWDs the female War Veterans with Disabilities also agreed that they do not get any special treatment after the end of the War. Regarding this issue Tsegay (1999) stated that:

Most studies appreciate the dynamic (transformation) appraisal of women's roles, skills, and assertiveness in times of war. However, men and women did not equally share the psychological and social cost of war. Many of the latter suffered from gender, specific depression where their chances of marriage and mother hood have been lost in war. For instance, at the end of hostilities, many TPLF female fighters appeared too old to return to civil life. This becomes even more heart breaking when women are bodily wounded and handicapped. Men have fewer problems when compared with women. They can get married and would likely find wives who could take care of them. So this information reveals that although female fighters faced worst life than males after the end of the war they did not get especial treatment from any concerned bodies.

5.1.1 Limitation

Focus group discussion was not appropriate as the participants could not get privacy to express their feeling openly because participants could be blamed and criticized by other participants of the group after the end of discussion. Hence, the study should be conducted using interview and questionnaire.

5.2. Conclusions

The following two fold of information reveled through semi- structure interview and focus group discussion obtained from WVWDs and officials form the base of the drawing of some conclusions.

Most of the participants were born in rural villages and grown with out formal education. They missed schooling at their appropriate age and couldn't attend further education that

may help them to create sustainable life for themselves. However, they couldn't create better life and forced to depend mainly on the income of pension and other charity sources. Being war veteran and living in poverty may put them in social and psychosocial crises. However they have pride of participating in the war, they have also developed PTSD, due to the war trauma and their poor living status that they have after the war as a person with disability. Unless these conditions changed for war veterans with disability and protect the icons from any incoming undesirable phenomenon, it would be bad experience for the present and the coming generation.

5.3 Implication

On the basis of the finding and conclusions drawn we can imply that:

- War veterans with disabilities usually require moral support to overcome the unnecessary war trauma. Thus, district and regional administration should work in collaboration with government to respond for the various difficulties they face. Through communicating their actual psychological and economic problems and needed reaction.
- Absence of psychosocial support strategies which can help actual moral encouragement had diminished war veterans opportunities to improve their life situation. The complementation of such strategies requires knowledge, commitment and motivation on the part of government.

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Appendix A

Introduction

This interview guide is aimed at gathering information on what psychosocial challenges of disabilities and coping mechanisms. A case of war veterans at Axum and Adwa This interview guide attempts to elicit data on psychological, social, educational and economic problems of war veterans with disabilities. Therefore, your genuine and accurate response is highly required

Thank you in advance!

Name _____ Education level _____

Years service in military _____ Age when you entered to fight _____

Interview Guide for war veterans

1. Why you involve in the war?
2. Did you have any schooling before you join the war?
3. If you joined to school after demobilization did you face any challenges?
4. Did you receive any training skills after demobilization? If Yes – was the training based on your education level and interest?
5. Do you have certificate for achieving training skills after demobilization? If yes- has you been able to use these to gain employment?
6. After war how you started life economically?
7. Do you receive salary? If yes-is it enough (If no how do you manage financially)?
8. Have you had any employment opportunities by different employers? If no why not?
9. Have you any health problems? If yes who pays for medication
10. Has your association helped you
11. How is your relationship with in the society? Like Edir, Ekube,etc?
12. How are the relationships with your family?
13. Do you continue to have good relationships with your former friends and neighbors? If “yes” have relationships changed? If no why not?
14. Do you discuss with other war veterans who have disability to help solve problems/concerns? If your answer is “yes” how and what do you discuss? If no why not

15. How do you compare comradeship at war time and after wartime?
16. What experience you might remember?
17. Was there any shocking events? What are they?
18. In what content you were injured? What have you felt after words
19. Do you think these have affected your life? In what aspect
20. How do you feel about being a war veteran with disability?
21. What is your perception of the community towards you? Give example
22. What is your perception towards the community?
23. How do you feel about yourself now?
24. If you came from rural area, why don't you return there instead of living in the town?
25. What coping mechanisms do you use to minimize the problems you face

Additional Questions for female war veterans

1. Did you experience equality of opportunity compared to male war veterans with disability after?
2. Do you think that the time you spent in the military affected your life compared to male veterans?
3. Has the female association helped you?

Appendix B

Introduction

This interview guide is aimed at gathering information on what psychosocial challenges of disabilities and coping mechanisms a case of war veterans at Axum and Adwa. This interview guide attempts to elicit data on social, psychological, educational (vocational), and economic challenges of war veterans with disabilities.

Therefore, your genuine and accurate response is highly required

Thank you in advance

Name _____ Education level _____

Years service in military _____ responsibility _____

Interview guide for officers

1. Do you think that any on orientation (information) given by the government to society when WVWD returned home (demobilized)? if yes how? If no why?
2. Was guidance and counseling given to war veterans with disabilities about how to they reintegrate in to the community? If yes-how? If no why?
3. Does the government provide vocational training skills based on their educational level and interest? If yes, how? If no why?
4. Has the government tried to link war veterans with disabilities to other NGOs top get support? If yes, with whom? How? If no why?
5. Which was more complicated, reintegrating at rural or urban area, why?
6. Have there been complaints from war veterans with disabilities about their life situations? If yes-how have you solved their problems?
7. Why war veterans disperse from walta industry?
8. Do you think that the life of Female War Veterans Disabilities and Male War Veterans with Disabilities are the same after the end of the War? If your answer is yes how? If no did you give special treatment?

Appendixes A

መጠቀሚያ

ቀንዲ ዕላማ እዚ ሓባሪ/መራሒ/ ቃለመጠቀሚያ ጉድገት ኩናት ኣብ ከይዲ መነባብር ኣምስኒ ኣእምራውን ማህበራዊ፣ ትምህርታውን ቁጠባዊን ፀገማት ብኸመይ ከምዝገወርዎምን ሓበሬታ ንምእካብ እዩ። እዚ መፅናእቲ እዚ ድማ ብውሑዳት ውልቀሰባት /Case Study) ኣብ ከተማ ኣኸሱምን ከተማ ዓድዋን ዝግበር መፅናዕቲ እዩ። ስለዚ ናታትኩም ቅንዕናን ትክክለኛ መልስን ኣዘዩ ኣድላዩ ስለዝኾነ ብጥንቓቕን ብተገዳስነትን ንኸትምልሱለይ እላቦ።

ኣቶ ዲ.መ.የ.መስግን!!

ሽም _____ ደረጃ ትምህርቲ _____
ኣብ ምግዳል ዘሕለፍካዮ/ክዮ ዓመት _____ ናብ ምግዳል እንትኣትው/ዊ ዝነበረካ/ኪ ዕድመ _____

መራሒ ቃለመጠቀሚያ ንጉዳይ ኩናት

1. ስለምንታይ ናብ ምግዳል ኣቲኻ?
2. ቅድሚ ምግዳልካ/ኪ ናብ ትምህርቲ ኣቲኻ/ኺ ዶ ነይርካ/ኺ?
3. ድሕሪ ምግዳል ናብ ትምህርቲ እንተኣቲኻ/ኺ ፀገማት ኣጋጠሙካ/ኪ ዶ? እንተኣጋጠሙካ/ኪ እንታይን እንታይን?
4. ካብ ኩናት ምስተመለስካ/ኪ ክእለትካ/ኪ እተማዕብለሉ ስልጠና ረኺብካ/ኪ ዶ ነይርካ/ኪ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ እቲ ዝተወሃበ ስልጠና ብድልዩትካን/ክን ትምህርቲ ደረጃኻን/ኸን ዝምጥን ድዩ?
5. ነቲ ዝሰልጠንካሉ/ክሉ ስልጠና ዝምልከት ወረቐት ምስክር ተዋሂቡካ/ኪ ዶ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ ስራሕ ንሙቁፃር ፈቲንካሉ/ክሉ ዶ ትፈልጥ/ጡ?
6. ድሕሪ ኩናት ብቁጠባዊ መዳይ ሂወትካ/ኪ ንምምራሕ ብኸመይ ጀሚርካዮ/ክዮ?
7. እቶት/መሃይ/ ኣለካ/ኪ ዶ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ ብቁዕ ድዩ? መልስኻ/ኺ ኣይፋል እንተኾይኑ ብቁጠባዊ መዳይ ብኸመይ ትመሓደር/ሪ?
8. ብዝተፈላለዩ ቆፀርቲ ስራሕ ናይ ሙቁፃር ዕድል ኣጋጠሙካ/ኪ ዶ ይፈልጥ? መልስኻ/ኪ ኣይፋል እንተኾይኑ ንምንታይ?

9. ፀገም ጥዕና አጋጢሙካ/ኪ ዶ ይፍልጥ? መልስኻ/ኸ “እው” እንተኾይኑ ንመሐከሚ መን ይኸፍለልካ/ኪ?
10. ማህበር ጉድኣት ኩናት ትግራይ ሓገዝ ይገብረልካ/ኪ ዶ?
11. ኣብ መርዓ፣ እቁብ፣ ቀብሪ ወዘተ ምስቲ ሕብረተሰብ ዘለካ/ኪ ርክብ ከመይ እዩ?
12. ምስ ቤተሰብካ/ኪ ዘሎ ርክብ ከመይ እዩ?
13. ምስ ናይ ቀደም ኣዕርኽትኻ/ኸን ኅረባብትኻን/ኸን ዝነበረካ/ኪ ርክብ ይቅፅል ዶ ኣሎ? መልስኻ/ኸ “እው” እንተኾይኑ እቲ ርክብኩም ከም ናይ ቀደሙ ድዩ ወይስ ተለዊጡ? ብኸመይ?
14. ፀገም እንተጋጥም ንምቅላል ምስካልኦት ናይ ኣካል ጉዳኣት ኩናት ትመያየጡ ዶ? መልስኻ/ ኸ/ እው እንተኾይኑ ብኸመይን እንታይን ትመያየጡ መልስኻ/ኸ/ ኣይፋል እንተኾይኑ ስለምንታይ?
15. ብፃይነት ኣብ እዋን ኩናትን ድሕሪ ኩናትን ከመይ ተወዳድሮ/ርዮ?
16. ኣብ ምግዳል እንታይ ተሞክሮታት ረኺብካ/ኸ?
17. ኣብ ኩናት ዘደንግፁ ክስተታት ነይሮም ዶ? እንታይን እንታይን?
18. ኣብ እንታይ ኩነታት እንዳሃለኻ/ኸ መቁሰልቲ በፂሒካ/ኪ ምስ ቆሰልካ/ኪ እንትይ ተሰሚዑካ/ኪ?
19. ኣብዚ ዝበፅሐካ/ኪ መጉዳእቲ ኣብ ሂወትካ/ኪ ፅልዋ ኣምፂኡ ኢልካ/ኪ ዶ ትሓስብ/ቢ? ብኸመይ?
20. ጉዳእ ኩናት ብሙካን/ኪ እንታይ ይስመዐካ/ኪ?
21. እቲ ሕብረተሰብ ኣባኻ/ኸ እንታይ ዘለዎ ኣረዳድኣ እንታይ ይመስል? ኣብነት ሃብ/ቢ?
22. ንስኻ/ኸ ኸ ኣብቲ ሕብረተሰብ ዘለካ/ኪ ኣረዳድኣ እንታይ ይመስል?
23. ኣብዚ ሕዚ እዋን ብዛዕባኻ/ኸ ዘለካ/ኪ ኣረዳእኣ እንታይ ይመስል?
24. ኣብ ገፀር ዝተወለድካ/ኪ እንተኮይንካ/ኪ ኣብ ከተማ ካብ ምንባር ስለምንታይ ኣብ ገፀር ዘይትነብር?
25. ዘጋጥሙኻ/ኸ ፀገማት ንምቅናስ/ንምቅላል/ እንታይ ዓይነት ሚላ ትጥቀም?

ተወሳኝ መራሒ ቃለ መጠይቅ ንጉድኣት ኩናት ደቂ ኣንስትዮ

1. ድሕሪ ምግዳል/ገደሊ ምስ ጉድኣት ኩናት ደቂ ተባዕትዮ እንትትወዳደሪ ማዕረ ዕድል ደ ኣጋጢሙኪ? መልስኪ ኣይፋል እንተኾይኑ ንምንታይ?
2. ምስ ጉድኣት ኩናት ተባዕትዮ እንትትወዳደሪ ኣብ ምግዳል ዘሕለፍኻሉ ጊዜ ኣብ ሂወትኪ ፅልዋ ኣምጺኡ ደ ትብሊ?
3. ማሕበር ጉዳይ ደቂ ኣንስትዮ ሓገዝ ይገብራልኪ ደ ?

Appendixes B

መለተዊ

ቀንዲ ዕላማ እዚ ሓባሪ/መራሒ/ ቃለመሕትት ጉድኣት ኩናት ኣብ ከይዲ መነባብሮኦም ስነ ኣእምራውን ማህበራዊ፣ ትምህርታውን ቁጠባዊን ፀገማት ብኸመይ ከምዝገወርዎምን ሓበሬታ ንምእካብ እዩ። እዚ መፅናእቲ እዚ ድማ ብውሑዳት ውልቀሰባት /Case Study) ኣብ ከተማ ኣኸሱምን ከተማ ዓድዋን ዝገበር መፅናዕቲ እዩ። ስለዚ ናታትኩም ቅንዕናን ትክክለኛ መልስን ኣዝዩ ኣድላዩ ስለዝኾነ ብጥንቓቕን ብተገዳስነትን ንኸትምልሱለይ እላዎ።

ኣቕዲመ የመስግን!!

ኸም _____ ደረጃ ትምህርቲ _____
ኣብ ምግዳል ዘሕለፍካዮ/ክዮ ዓመት _____ ናብ _____ ምግዳል
እንትኣትው/ዊ ዝነበረካ/ኪ ዕድመ _____ ናይ ሕዚ ለካ/ኪ ሓላፍነት

ንሰራሕተኛታት ቤት ፅሕፈት ዝምልከት መራሒ ቃለ መሕትት

1. ጉድኣት ኩናት ናብ መረበቶም እንትምለሱ ብመንግስቲ ኣቢሉ ነቲ ሕብረተሰብ ሓበሬታ ተዋሂቡዎ ዶ ነይሩ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ ብኸመይ? መልስኻ/ኪ “ኣይፋል” እንተኾይኑ ንምንታይ?
2. ጉድኣት ኩናት ሕብረተሰብ ከምለሱ እንተለው ምስቲ ሕብረተሰብ ከመይ ተወሃሂዶም ክነብሩ ከምዘለዎም ምኽርን ኣመራርሓን /ሓበሬታ/ ተዋሂቡዎም ዶ ነይሩ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ ብኸመይ? መልስኻ/ኺ “ኣይፋል” እንተኾይኑ ድማ ንምንታይ?
3. መንግስቲ ድልዎቶምን ደረጃ ትምህርቶምን መሰረት ዝገበረ ሞያ ተንክፍ ስልጠና ንኩናት ጉዳኣት ሂቡዎም ዶ ነይሩ? መልስኻ/ኺ “እወ” እንተኾይኑ ብኸመይ? መልስኻ/ኺ “ኣይፋል” እንተኾይኑ ንምንታይ?