

Integration and Identity among Refugee Children in  
Ethiopia: Dilemmas of Eritrean and Somali Students in  
Selected Primary Schools of Addis Ababa

By

Alebachew Kemisso Haybano

Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

April, 2016

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**By**

**Alebachew Kemisso Haybano**

**Principal Supervisor:** Teshome Nekatibeb (PhD/Associate Prof.)

**Co-supervisor:** Holger Daun (Professor Emeritus)

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

April, 2016

**Declaration**

The researcher hereby declares, that this dissertation, entitled “Integration and Identity among Refugee Children in Ethiopia: Dilemmas of Eritrean and Somali Students in Selected Primary Schools of Addis Ababa” is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials used in the dissertation have been dully acknowledged.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Candidate: Alebachew Kemisso

Reg. Number: 6723/03

This Dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as a principal supervisor.

Principal research supervisor’s name: Teshome Nekatibeb (PhD/Associate Professor)

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to analyze the practices and dilemmas of integration and preservation of identity of urban refugee children in Ethiopia. In this study, comparative case study design was employed. Two refugee communities in Addis Ababa, namely, Eritrean and Somali refugees, were selected as cases. Six primary schools in Addis Ababa accommodating Eritrean and Somali refugee students were selected as research sites. The major sources of data were refugee students, primary schools principals, primary schools teachers, refugee parents, urban refugee central committee members, host community representatives, and experts from ARRA, UNHCR, DICAC-RRAD, and JRS, and documents. Sample from target population was drawn purposefully using criteria for each target population. A total of 98 individuals were drawn as sample in this study. In addition, six classroom observations and six observations of refugee students in and around the six primary schools compounds were undertaken. Instruments of data collection used include interview, focus group discussion, observation and document analysis. Findings of this study revealed that refugee policy in Ethiopia has mixed characteristics of openness and restriction, and as a result, in Ethiopia, while quantity of asylum is acclaimed, quality of asylum can be criticized on grounds of legal reservations to and restrictions on the basic rights of refugees including movement, employment, and education. All letters, directives, and guidelines from MoE on refugee education in Ethiopia are mainly preoccupied with provisions for the recognition of prior learning of refugee students. Provisions regarding the processes of integration and the practices to preserve the identity of refugee students are totally missing in the letters, directives and guidelines. The actual roles that MoE and AACGBE are playing in urban refugee education in Addis Ababa are, at best, peripheral. ARRA is playing the major role in the provision of education to refugees. As the result of the interplay among various factors, in Addis Ababa, while Eritrean refugees and the host community have established positive relationship, the relationship between Somali refugees and the host community is fraught due to various misunderstandings. There are strong controversies between Eritrean and Somali refugees on the one hand, and UNHCR, ARRA and other NGOs working on urban refugee program in Addis Ababa on the adequacy of subsistence allowance and the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools. The overall experiences of integrating Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa suggest that integration, from the point of view of agencies and school authorities, is degenerated to just physical placement of refugee students into the schools together with local students, particularly through the phased transfer to government schools. There are no formal school based approaches to facilitate celebration and promotion of Eritrean and Somali refugee students' identity in the primary schools of Addis Ababa. Primary schools are striving to make refugees identify themselves with their Ethiopian co-ethnic groups. Hence, primary schools, due to lack of awareness and resources, are striving to form a contrived identity to refugee students. Due to their dispersed settlement, the preference for disguised existence, positive relationship and better degree of integration with host community due to cultural compatibility, Eritrean refugee parents are struggling to justify to their children how Eritrean identity is distinct, particularly, from that of Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans. The concentrated settlement of Somali refugees in visible communities in Addis Ababa and the practical utility of Somali religion, culture and language for their day-to-day life, left Somali refugees in Addis Ababa to be less integrated with the host community. In order to learn, maintain, and transmit their distinct identity, Somali refugees in Addis Ababa rely on the family, media, religious organizations (i.e., Koranic schools and Mosques), and private language schools, which are competing in many terms with the primary schools accommodating Somali refugee students. From the findings of this study several implications for policy and practice were suggested. Initiating comprehensive and explicit refugee policy in Ethiopia; designing arrangements that can facilitate synergy between the MoE's expertise in education and ARRA's expertise on refugee issues; facilitating forums and resources that can promote proper information flow among all stakeholders in urban refugee education; developing clear guidelines on the integration and preservation of identity of refugee children in Addis Ababa schools; developing capacity of agency personnel, refugee communities, school authorities, and teachers on the implementation of refugee students integration and identity; designing programs for the inclusion of refugee education in the teacher training programs and developing degree program on education in emergencies are the major implications of the findings.*

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## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

AABLSA: Addis Ababa Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs

AACGBE: Addis Ababa City Government Bureau of Education

ABE: Alternative Basic Education

ARRA: Authority for Refugee and Returnees Affairs

AU: African Union

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child

CSA: Central Statistics Authority

CSGR: Centre for Study of Globalization and Regionalization

DICAC: Development Inter-Church Aid Commission

EFA GMR: Education for All Global Monitoring Report

EiE: Education in Emergencies

EOC: Ethiopian Orthodox Church

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GER: Gross Enrollment Ratio

GPI: Gender Parity Index

HPG: Humanitarian Policy Group

IRC: International Rescue Committee

IUEF: International Universities Exchange Fund

JRS: Jesuit Refuge Service

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoEFA: Ministry of Education and Fine Arts

NER: Net Enrollment Ratio

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

OAU: Organization for African Unity

PRM: Population Refugees and Migration

PTSA: Parent-Teacher-Student Associations

SGBV: Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SNNPR: Southern Nations Nationalities Peoples Regional State

SPLM/A: Sudanese People Liberation Movement/Army

SPN: Support to Poor and Needy

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN: United Nation

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF: United Nations Children Emergency Fund

UPE: Universal Primary Education

WCC: World Council of Churches

WFP: World Food Program

WRC: Women's Refugee Commission

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter is organized into seven sections. The first section sets the background for the study. The second and third sections discuss the specific problems that triggered this study and the research questions raised as the result respectively. The fourth section of this chapter presents the general and specific objectives of this study. In the fifth section, the significance of this study is discussed. The sixth and seventh sections of this chapter discuss the delimitation and limitations of this study. In the eighth section of this chapter, organization of the study is outlined.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Forced displacement of people is listed among the most serious threats to peace, security, and sovereignty of nations, particularly in the post-cold war era (Bariagaber, 2006a). The magnitude of such displacement is not showing signs of decline, at least, in the years between 2003 and 2014. As United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) global trends report indicates, in 2014, 59.5 million individuals are forcibly displaced worldwide as the result of persecution, conflict, and human rights violation. Out of the total forcibly displaced population in 2014, the same report indicated that 14.4 million persons were refugees (UNHCR, 2014:9). From the total of the global refugee population in 2014, more than 3.7 million are refugees in Africa, and the East and Horn of Africa were hosts for 2.6 million of the African refugee population (UNHCR, 2014: 10).

The term refugee is defined at different levels of organizations (international, regional and national) differently where one of the major differences lies on the scope of issues taken into account to consider a person as a refugee (Bariagaber, 2006a).

A refugee is defined in the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees as:

a person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (Article 1 (2) of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention).

A central feature of this definition is its exclusive reference to individualized persecution. According to the 1951 UN Convention's definition, only persons who could demonstrate that they were individually victims of persecution could be recognized as refugees. Hence, this definition is considered narrow by various scholars (see for example, Bariagaber, 2006a; Veney, 2007; Milner 2009; and Betts and Loescher, 2011).

To complement the definition of refugee of the 1951 UN Convention and make it relevant to the African realities, the Organization for African Unity (OAU) which was renamed African Union (AU) in 2002 introduced additional definition of refugee through its refugee convention of 1969. Regarding the reality of Africa in the 1960s, Rankin (2005), Bariagaber (2006a), and Milner (2009) stated that there were massive refugee influxes across the borders of the newly independent African states. Therefore, African states faced difficulties of complying with the UN convention's definition of refugee which is based on individual refugee status determination, as the procedures in the UN definition were found to be too much resource and time intensive.

As a result, OAU, through its 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, introduced an additional definition of refugee as follows:

...every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality" (OAU Refugee Convention, Article 1 (2), 1969).

Through this definition, therefore, African states agreed to recognize the entire group of individuals as refugees on the basis of shared characteristics and common causes of flight (Milner, 2009).

As one of the major refugee hosting countries in the world, Ethiopia has introduced a refugee proclamation (i.e., proclamation number 409/2004) in June of 2004. By this proclamation, Ethiopia endorsed definitions of refugee of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention. Article 4, numbers 1, 2, and 3 of the 2004 refugee proclamation provide the following as criteria so as to consider a person as refugee in Ethiopia (FDRE Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2004: 2662-2663).

Any person shall be considered as refugee where:

- 1) owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion he is outside his country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling, to avail himself of the protection of that country;
- 2) not having a nationality and being outside of his former habitual residence, he is unable, or owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, he is unwilling to return to it; or
- 3) owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, he is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality, in case of refugees coming from Africa.

In this study, refugee definition provided by the Ethiopian refugee proclamation was used.

According to Betts and Loescher (2011), what makes refugees as people with special status is that the assumed relationship between state and citizen is broken down. Hence, it is not only the geographic movement of people *per se* to the territory of another state where they are not citizens that distinguishes refugees, but the inability or unwillingness of the country of their origin to ensure a citizen's protection and lack of legal membership to the national community as well.

The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1969 Organization of African Union Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation are premised on the protection of human rights of the refugees, assisting refugees in terms of providing their basic needs, and promoting durable solutions for refugees problems. Aleinikoff and Poellot (2012), and Azad and Jasmin (2013) contend that durable solutions, particularly to the protracted refugee situations, are expected to restore what refugees by definition lack, *i.e.*, legal membership in a national community. A durable solution for refugees, according to UNHCR (2005: 137), is one that ends the cycle of displacement by resolving their plight so that they can lead normal life. Durable solutions should result in the cessation of refugee status through the (re)attachment of a person to a political and social community in which one has full citizenship status and full membership rights. UNHCR promotes three durable solutions for protracted refugee situation: voluntary repatriation, in which refugees return in safety and dignity to their country of origin; local integration, in which the country of asylum provides



residency, and resettlement, in which refugees are transferred from the country of asylum to a third state willing to admit them on a permanent basis (UNHCR, 2005). In this framework, education, particularly basic education for refugees, is advocated as basic rights of refugees and as part of finding durable solutions to refugee problems (Watters, 2008 and UNHCR, 2011).

The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees states that hosting states should accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to primary education (Article 22: 1) as well as treatment as favorable as possible with respect to education other than elementary (UN, 1951). This article of the Convention suggests that it is the responsibility of signatory states to the Convention and its 1967 Protocol to provide public education for refugees.

All major international human rights instruments recognize access to education as basic human right. For example, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognized compulsory primary education as a universal entitlement (United Nations, 1948). The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) called for no discrimination in educational provision for men and women (United Nations, 1979), and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) affirmed the right of all children, regardless of status, to free and compulsory primary education, to available and accessible secondary education, and to higher education on the basis of capacity (United Nations, 1989, Article 28).

As Winthrop and Matsui (2013), and NRC and Save the Children Norway (2015) indicated education was recognized as one of the necessary emergency responses alongside food, shelter, and sanitation and health care very recently. Among factors that have contributed for such recognition, the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Child in 1989; the 1996 United Nations report written by Grac'a Machel which strongly criticized the international system for neglecting the needs of children living in the places affected by armed conflict; the changing nature of conflicts particularly since the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century where fighting between groups within countries which are protracted and in which the major casualties were civilians, specifically, women and children, became common; and the impact of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) movements can be mentioned (Machel, 1996; Sinclair, 2001; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Winthrop and Matsui, 2013; and NRC, and Save the Children Norway, 2015). Understanding towards education as part of humanitarian response was further

solidified with the establishment of Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in 2001 (Wintrop and Matsui, 2013; and NRC, and Save the Children Norway, 2015).

Education is one of the global priority strategies of UNHCR's operation. In the UNHCR 2012-2016 education strategy, under global priority strategy II which stands for improving the protection and wellbeing of persons of concern, promoting human potential through education and training is stated as one of the pillar strategic intervention areas (UNHCR, 2012a: 7). In order to achieve its strategies with regards to refugee education UNHCR introduced several policy documents and implementation guidelines (see, for example, UNHCR (1995), UNHCR (2003a), UNHCR (2006a), UNHCR (2007), UNHCR (2009a), UNHCR (2011), and UNHCR (2012a). In the review of humanitarian policies in education of 13 donors including Australia, Canada, Denmark, EU/EC, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the US, NRC and Save the Children Norway (2015: 72) concluded that "although donors do not have highly specific and rigid policies guiding education in emergencies, there is documented interest in supporting education in environments affected by disaster and conflict".

Somalia and Eritrea are among the top ten refugee origin countries in the world. In 2014, for example, Somali was the third largest refugee source country in the world with close to 1.11 million refugees (UNHCR, 2015d). With a total of 363,100 refugees at the end of 2014, Eritrea was the tenth largest refugee source country in the world (UNHCR, 2015d). As UNHCR Ethiopian country office monthly refugee and asylum seekers population update indicated, in December of 2014, there were 245,178 Somali and 123,747 Eritrean refugees hosted in Ethiopia. The same update indicated that Somali and Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia account for some 56% out of the total refugees hosted in the nation.

One of the Africa's new nations, Eritrea, gained formal independence from Ethiopia and international recognition only in 1993 (Tronvoll, 1999). It declared independence on 24 May 1993 and on 28 May, it joined the membership in United Nations Organization (UNO). Eritrea has nine major ethnic groups equally divided between Christians and Muslims with some animists, each with a distinct language and cultural characteristics (Kibreab, 2000 and Bariagaber, 2006b).

Eritrea had been colonized by the Italians (1889-1941), administrated by the British (1941-1952), federated with Ethiopia (1952-1962), and was finally annexed as a province of Ethiopia (1962-

1991) (Tronvoll, 1999; Kibreab, 2000; and Bariagaber, 2006b). Ethiopian annexation of Eritrea led to the long and bloody war between Eritrean liberation fighters and Ethiopian government forces (Bariagaber, 2006b). Since its formal independence in 1993, Eritrea fought border wars with all its neighboring states including the Sudan, Yemen, Djibouti, and Ethiopia (Tronvoll, 1999). The war with Ethiopia which took place from 1998-2000 was, according to Aregay (2014), puzzled many for its scale of destructiveness few years after the widely acclaimed relationship between the two countries.

National identity and the social cohesion among Eritreans, as Kibreab (2000) and Noronha (2004) explained, have developed in opposition to successive foreign rules by Italy, Britain, and Ethiopia. According to Kibreab (2000), Eritrean national identity is further enhanced, reinforced, and consolidated due to displacement during the thirty years war of national independence and the post 1998 displacement from Eritrea escaping from harsh political environment.

In Eritrea, National Service (NS) proclamation was enacted in 1991 which provides for several exceptions (Kibreab, 2009 and 2014). However, the 1991 proclamation was repealed and replaced by the 1995 proclamation which requires all Eritreans, except veterans of the 30 years' war of independence, and the physically and mentally unwell, to take part in NS (Kibreab, 2014). The aim of the Eritrean NS, according to Kibreab (2014) was:

to transmit the values of the liberation struggle to the present and future generations in order to build a strong defense and fighting capability with large pool of reserves but also to create a new breed of patriotic citizens who reject ethnic, religious and region-based allegiances and to particular identities in favor of national Eritrean secular identity (p: 2).

Cohorts of trainees who joined the Eritrean NS were demobilized after the 18 months service until 1998 (Kibreab, 2009). However, with the outbreak of the 1998 border war with Ethiopia, the Eritrean government remobilized the demobilized NS participants, and in 2000, the President of Eritrea extended NS for indefinite period of time under the new label Warsai-Yikaalo Development Campaign (WYDC) (Kibreab, 2009; Human rights Watch, 2009; and Riggan, 2013).

According to Bariagaber (2006b), Human Rights Watch (2009), Riggan (2013), and Kibreab (2009 and 2014), since 2002, the most important driver of forced migration from Eritrea has continued to be the open-ended NS and its concomitant, the WYDC, which is described as forced labor. Kibreab (2014) indicated that almost all post-independence Eritrean refugees to various countries

including Ethiopia were NS deserters and draft evaders; the latter include unaccompanied minors who flee even at an early age to avoid the menace of future conscription. The contrast in Eritrea, according to Riggan (2013), where the citizens inside Eritrean soil are expected to join NS for indefinite period of time, and the respected Eritrean diaspora enjoy full citizenship rights, is pushing Eritreans in Eritrea to risk their life to leave the country at the face of shoot-to-kill border control policy of the regime so as to come back to Eritrea as diaspora.

In Eritrea, since 2003, education system became militarized (Kibreab, 2014). In order to contain large number of school age children fleeing the country, in 2003, the Eritrean regime decided to extend the duration of secondary education by one year whereby the final year secondary level students are relocated to *Sawa* military training center where they engage in both military training and academic studies (Kibreab, 2014).

Somalia has often been presented as one of the exceptional examples in Africa of a state formed out of ethnically homogenous people (Griffiths, 1999). Griffiths (1999), Jinnah 2010, and Lambo (2012) reminded that any discussion of Somali identity needs to attend with great care to the complexity of the Somali heritage which takes into equation Islam as religion and the Arab alignment, Somali language, pastoral nomadism and mobility, clanship, and Somali nationalism among others. According to Kusow (1998, cited in Fangen, 2007), Somalis regard their identity as a natural, unconstructed category that is attached in the belief that they are descended from a single ancestor. This belief leads to the assertion by the Somali people that they are both biologically and culturally one ethnic group.

Beneath such a facade, however, as Griffiths (1999) argued, clan based factionalism was endemic to Somali society. Hammond (2014) posited that Somalia is often viewed as the scene of ceaseless violence and displacement since the collapse of the state in 1991. However, such depiction of the situation in Somali has a potential of overgeneralizing the fact and overlooking brief periods of peace. Somalia, which had never generated a large number of refugees until the late 1980s, became a major refugee generating country particularly after the overthrow of Barre's government in 1991, and the failure of the victorious forces to fill the vacuum (Waldron and Hasci, 1995; Bariagaber, 1999; Griffiths, 1999; Lindley and Haslai, 2011; Human Rights Watch, 2012; and Hammond, 2014).

The initial period of chaotic displacement after the fall of Siad Barre's regime in 1991, was followed by a relatively calm period that lasted from 1996-2005 (Lindley and Haslai, 2011; and Hammond, 2014). Such state of affairs were the result of establishment of autonomous administration in Somaliland and Puntland, and due to the active stabilizing role played by the customary law and Sharia courts in South-Central Somalia. The period since 2006, as Lindley and Haslai (2011) described, was a period of acute and massive displacement. The Western countries and regional hostility to the idea of a strong Islamist state in Somalia and the resultant Ethiopian military intervention dislodged the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) from Mogadishu, and instituted what Lindley and Haslai (2011), Human Rights Watch (2012), and Hammond (2014) said, the otherwise very weak internationally-sponsored Transitional Federal Government (TFG). This phenomenon, since early 2007, was followed by the deployment of an African Union peace-keeping mission to Somalia (AMISOM). The overthrow of ICU, according to Human Rights Watch (2012), intensified conflict in Somali. Al-Shabaab, which was an armed wing of ICU and strives to implement extreme interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law) across Somalia, become the major force against the TFG, AMISOM, Ethiopian and Kenyan troops in Somalia since after the ICU was dislodged from Mogadishu (Human Rights watch, 2012).

In 2011, the South Central parts of Somali were affected by serious drought which resulted in a worst famine the region had experienced in more than a quarter of a century (Hammond, 2014). The drought and the famine resulted in massive population displacement from Somalia into neighboring countries including Ethiopia (Human Rights Watch, 2012 and Hammond, 2014). As the result of unending instability in Somalia, particularly since 1991, Human Rights Watch (2012) reported that one-quarter of Somalia's estimated population of 7.5 million were either internally displaced or lived outside the country as refugees until December of 2011.

Children and their rights to education was severely affected in Somali as the result of indiscriminate attacks, constant insecurity, and direct attacks on schools, education personnel and pupils by Al-Shabaab; and in some areas, Al-Shabaab factions have also imposed restrictions on girls' access to education and on schools' curriculum (Amnesty International, 2011 and Human Rights watch, 2012).

This study explores integration and identity of refugee children in Ethiopia focusing on the dilemmas of Eritrean and Somali students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Integrating refugees into a new country and culture has generally been acknowledged as a stressful process involving several interacting cultural, social, political and economic factors (Frater-Mathieson, 2004: 21). For refugees, this process is compounded by experiences of trauma and loss, alongside multiple sources of stress such as financial problems, language problems, culture shock, unemployment, health problems, changes in family structure and roles, and different educational experience. School experiences of refugee children in the host country is frequently at odds with the their home environment and previous experience of school, where there may have been differences in discipline, school culture and processes of learning. This places additional pressure on a child who has already experienced multiple changes, trauma and loss. Integrating refugee children within the classroom may require clear policy framework and implementation guideline, extra resources in schools, and additional mechanisms for supporting teachers who are working with the refugee children. It is also essential to foster positive and culturally appropriate cooperation between schools and refugee families so as to contribute to the academic success of the refugee children.

Ethiopia is located in the middle of conflict affected countries which include South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and Northern Kenya. This situation made Ethiopia to stand as 5<sup>th</sup> largest refugee hosting nation in the world following Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon and Islamic Republic of Iran; and the largest refugee hosting nation in Africa in 2014. In 2014, there were 659,500 refugees in various refugee camps and urban areas of Ethiopia (UNHCR, 2014).

Ethiopia is party to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Organization of African Union Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. However, Ethiopia has placed reservations on some areas of rights provided for refugees by the international convention (Tesfaye, 2011 and UNHCR, 2011). These areas include, freedom of movement, wage earning employment and provision of public education. Camp based refugee assistance is the cornerstone of Ethiopia's refugee policy (UNHCR, 2012b). Although the legal provisions of Ethiopia require refugee to live in "designated places and

areas...at a reasonable distance from the boarder of their country of origin or of former habitual residence” as provided in FDRE Federal Negarit Gazeta (2004: 2671), there are conditions where refugees can be recognized to settle in Addis Ababa. As the result, there are thousands of refugees residing in urban areas of Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ababa.

Although Ethiopian refugee law has reservations towards extending rights to public funded education for refugees, hundreds of refugee children are attending education in primary schools of Addis Ababa integrated with children of the host country. According to Development Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC) Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department (RRAD) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) statistics, in 2013/2014 Ethiopian academic year alone, there were 806 urban refugee students attending classes in a total of 233 pre-primary, primary and secondary schools of Addis Ababa (DICAC, 2014). As DICAC (2014) statistics indicates there were 263 (111 female and 152 male) pre-primary, 479 (218 female and 261 male) primary, and 64 (28 female and 36 male) secondary level recognized refugee students in Addis Ababa. However, the legislative and policy guidelines used in order to admit Eritrean and Somali refugee children into the primary schools in Addis Ababa are not clearly understood and need careful investigation.

The UNHCR education strategy 2012-2016 strongly recommends integration of refugee learners within national education systems wherever possible and appropriate as a general approach (UNHCR, 2012a). Regarding urban refugee learners, UNHCR (2009b) argued that every effort should be made for urban refugees to participate in mainstream education along with local children. However, the actual practice of integrating refugee students into the host country education system can be complicated when there are multiple groups of refugees at any one time from different national origins. Refugee integration is a bidirectional process of relationship between refugees and the host community. The nature of relationship by and large determines the effectiveness of the integration. Along this line the nature of relationship between refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa, the attitude of host community towards the refugees and the *vice versa*, and the implication of this relationship to the primary schools in Addis Ababa accommodating refugee students alongside the local students requires critical investigation.

Taking into account the dilemmas of addressing challenges related to integration of refugees into national education system in situations where there are no clear prospects towards citizenship in the host nation, Waters and LeBlanc (2005: 130) stressed that “addressing the different learning

needs of refugees in national public education system usually presents a paradox". Such a situation raises questions of curriculum choice which has strong bearing on the identity of refugee students in the form of language of instruction, history, culture and values. Language problems and difficulties to adjust to national curriculum strongly affect the learning of refugee children. Even though it is one of such complex contexts where integration of refugees into the national education system requires taking into consideration their identity, much is not known about how primary education programs in Addis Ababa are being implemented in integrated classrooms where Eritrean and Somali refugee children are attending classes together with children of the host country.

Even if urban refugees can have right to access education, several administrative and pedagogical challenges interfere in the practical implementation of the rights and proper benefits from the access to education to the refugee children. UNESCO (2011) indicated that many refugees in urban areas face institutional barriers that have direct and indirect effects on the prospects of their children receiving education. UNHCR (2009) also asserted that there are a number of challenges associated with access, enrolment and quality of education that are particularly significant in urban environments for refugee children.

For example, official recognition of prior learning is an important yet widely ignored requirement for effective education of refugee children. In this regard what kind of procedures the Ethiopian education system has put in place to recognize prior learning of refugee students in order to ensure a smooth transfer to the national school system determines the worth of refugee education by and large. Refugees may also encounter lack of familiarity by local school authorities regarding the processes of admitting refugee children and procedures of recognizing their prior learning. Many schools might not enroll students if their age is more than two or three years above the class average and thus disrupts their education.

Once in the classroom, children who have experienced trauma or the psychological stress of relocation may also have trouble concentrating and keeping up with educational activities. Other challenges include weak or absence of participation of refugee communities in various school based decision making processes through, for example, membership in parent-teacher associations, and low awareness towards their roles and responsibilities as parents.



Another major challenge that hinders refugee children to properly benefit from their rights of accessing education in urban areas is that teachers are not sufficiently trained to deal with traumatized children such as refugees. As most urban refugees are integrated into existing schools, these difficulties may be magnified by the need to make adjustments to new pedagogical techniques and teacher expectations in the host country education system.

Much is not known about the above listed administrative and pedagogical challenges that can interfere against the Eritrean and Somali refugee children rights to access education and the benefits they can accrue from schooling. Hence, it is imperative to investigate the school practices in Addis Ababa where Eritrean and Somali refugee children are integrated into the national education system of Ethiopia.

Although many education systems including Ethiopian education system declared free primary education, UNHCR (2012a) argued that the additional costs associated with the “free” primary education including, for example, cost of books, uniforms, meal, and registration fee necessary to go to schools usually deter access to education for urban refugees. The reservation of Ethiopian refugee law towards wage earning employment for refugees can also have direct negative consequences on refugee children access to education. This is because, such reservation can expose refugee parents to financial constraints to cover additional costs of education. In addition, legal restriction on right to wage earning employment to refugees in urban areas, as UNESCO (2011) indicated, results in complete exclusion of refugees from labor market or illegal entry into low-paid informal work which directly reinforce household poverty.

In urban environment where there are several challenges, refugees do not remain as passive victims. Refugees are social actors who have the capacity to face challenges in urban environment and devise ways of coping with life. Anderson (2004) and Dryden-Peterson (2006) pointed out that urban refugees usually use whatever strengths and existing assets at their disposal to facilitate healthy integration into the host society, preserve identity of their country of origin and benefit from their stay in the host society. In this regard, what kind of existing strengths and assets Eritrean and Somali refugees in Addis Ababa are mobilizing so as to alleviate disadvantages as the result of several challenges their children confront in the integrated classrooms need in-depth investigation.

In Ethiopian context, regarding refugee education in general and urban refugee education in particular, there is no academic research work accessible to the researcher who is conducting this study. However, there are few academic research works conducted in different aspects of refugee problems in Addis Ababa. In his study entitled social networks, remittance and family migration decision among Somali immigrants in Addis Ababa, Kendie (2011) evaluated the contribution of social networks and remittances in Somali family migration decision. The researcher employed a survey research design and analyzed data quantitatively using logistic regression model. Kendie (2011) found that family network characteristics including family migration attitude, type of family network, family migration experience and size of family network as the major factor determining migration decision of Somali families in Addis Ababa. As compared to the role of networks, Kendie (2011) argued that the role of political upheavals in Somalia since 1991 for Somali migration decision is minimal.

Although Kendie (2011) discounted political upheavals in Somalia as an explanation to leaving Somalia, the fact, however, is that Somalia is a war torn country where state machineries were defunct and its citizens cannot get proper protection from the state. Although the Kendie's (2011) study indicated that migration to Addis Ababa facilitates in furthering secondary movement to the Developed World, and, as the result, another factor in Somalis migration decision, how moving to Addis Ababa specifically contributes to such an end is not discussed. Kendie (2011) failed to delineate Somali migrants with Somali refugees and did not properly justify how he identified Somalian Somalis as different from Ethiopian ethnic Somalis in the specific research setting in Addis Ababa where both share many things together.

Ali's (2014) study on the challenges of integration of urban refugee women from Great Lakes Region (GLR) in Addis Ababa found that failure to communicate in Amharic and cultural distance from the host community as the major factors impeded their integration with the host community. Ali (2014) further argued that GLR refugees who are in Addis Ababa are more disadvantaged socially compared to their counterparts in refugee camps in Ethiopia. The study used a qualitative approach and claimed as exploratory study. Ali (2014), however, discussed refugees from the GLR in Addis Ababa that include refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi as homogenous group although there are differences in their language, culture, national origin, and refugee experience.

Teshome (2014) in her study on predictors of social adjustment and psychological wellbeing of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugee in Addis Ababa has found that the refugees are experiencing better psycho-social adjustment. Employing multiple regression analysis to measure the significance of prediction of independent variables which in her study include refugee age, level of education, length of stay in Addis Ababa and Amharic language proficiency to dependent variables including psychological wellbeing and social adjustment of refugees, Teshome (2014) found that the independent variables have a weak contribution. However, Teshome (2014) argued that positive relation with the host community and proficiency in Amharic are positively correlated with the integration experience of the refugees. The major problem in Teshome (2014), however, is the use of Berry's model of acculturation strategies where she reported as the same refugee at a time is integrating, assimilating, separating, and marginalizing with/from the host community. Taking Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees as homogenous groups without taking into account the major differences between the two can also be taken as another problem in Teshome's (2014) study.

Outside Ethiopia, in different parts of Africa, however, there are several researches conducted on refugee education in the camps and in urban areas. For example, in the study entitled "The case of refugee education in Kenya: an analysis of Kakuma and Dadaab" Wright (2010) analyzed the extent of educational opportunities available to refugees living in Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps. The study further examined the challenges faced by the government of Kenya, United Nations agencies working on refugee education in Kenya, and other NGOs in provision of education for refugees. Wright (2010) argued that from the supply side, poor resources for refugee education, and from the demand side considering resettlement abroad as the only realistic goal by refugees, and understanding repatriation and local integration as impossible in Kenya are major factors affecting educational provision for refugees in Kenya. In the study entitled "Education for refugees: examining access to basic education in Dadaab refugee camps of Ifo, Hagadera, and Dagahaley, Kenya" Karambu (2013) argued that in-school and out-of-school factors greatly hampered the access to basic education in the schools for refugee children. Karambu (2013) employed a descriptive survey methodology for the study. Sithole (2012) employing a qualitative case study methodology studied child refugee rights in Cape Town focusing on the right to access education. The study used a right based approach to education to identify some of the factors that promote or hinder refugee children access to education. Sithole (2012) identified that refugee's

ability or inability to earn income, government education policies and legislative provisions, and refugee parents' knowledge of their children right to education as the most influential factors promoting or hindering refugee children accessing education in Cape Town, South Africa.

As indicated in the above discussed previous researches, refugee education has been treated from various angles and in different contexts. Local studies conducted as MA theses have confused migrants with refugees and none of them dealt with refugee education. Furthermore, those studies targeting more than one refugee community have taken all refugee communities as homogenous.

Studies dealt with refugee education in camp context have mainly emphasized access to education. In the study that focuses on refugee education in urban context, issues of law, policy, and implementation guidelines used by national governments to allow refugee children access to national education system are not addressed. In addition, in the studies on refugee education in urban context, refugee children integration and identity challenges as the result of attending classes together with children of the host countries and the corresponding administrative and pedagogical challenges are not explored. Most of the studies also lack a comparative perspective even though there are studies dealing with more than one refugee community. Although Wright (2010) conducted her study as partial fulfillment for the requirement of degree of MSc in Comparative and International Education in University of Oxford, the dissertation completely lacks a comparative dimension.

Therefore, although refugee education in general and urban refugee education in particular are research agendas in the context of major refugee hosting nations of Africa, it is one of the under studied areas in Ethiopia. Hence, this study is designed to analyze refugee education in Ethiopia focusing on the dilemmas of integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali urban refugee students in Addis Ababa primary schools where the refugees attend classes together with children of the host country from comparative perspective.

### **1.3 Basic Research Questions**

The following are the major research questions that guide this particular study.

- A. What major policy guidelines, legal provisions and administrative directives are used to provide access to integrated national education system for Eritrean and Somali refugee children in Addis Ababa?

- B. How do Eritrean and Somali refugees' subsistence allowance, relationship with the host community, and education support to the children in Addis Ababa affect integration and identity?
- C. How do primary schools in Addis Ababa integrate Eritrean and Somali refugee children?
- D. What identity challenges do Somali and Eritrean refugee students experience in Addis Ababa primary schools?
- E. What coping mechanisms do Eritrean and Somali refugee parents and children use to overcome challenges they confront in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa and maintain their identity?

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Research**

The general objective of this study was to analyze the practices and dilemmas of integration and preservation of identity among Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa Primary schools. The Specific Objectives of this study were:

- A. To identify the major policy guidelines, legal provisions and administrative directives used to provide access to Eritrean and Somali Refugee children to the primary schools of Addis Ababa.
- B. To explore the effects of subsistence allowance, relationship with the host community, and education support on the integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee children.
- C. To analyze the practices of primary schools in Addis Ababa in integrating Eritrean and Somali refugee students with the local students.
- D. To explore the experiences of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in preserving their identity in Addis Ababa primary schools.
- E. To investigate the major coping mechanisms Eritrean and Somali refugee parents use to overcome challenges their children confront in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa and to maintain their identity.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Currently Ethiopia ranks as the largest refugee hosting nation in Africa. Given the ongoing civil wars and tensions in the Horn of Africa region, this condition seems to continue for the foreseeable future. This study will contribute the knowledge and practical methodologies of how access to education for refugee children in a way it can contribute for their success in their future life can be

organized. This study, by exploring the dilemmas of refugee integration into the national education system and the demand for preserving identity of refugees, will provide a wealth of knowledge that would contribute to the improvement of practices related to refugee education in urban areas of Ethiopia.

The study's attempt of looking critically into the Ethiopian experiences with regards to refugee education in the integrated classrooms of Addis Ababa primary schools, will provide information that might be adopted or adapted in other similar urban contexts where refugees are integrated into national education system.

The study will also contribute a theoretical knowledge for the area of education in emergencies in general and refugee education in particular from the International and Comparative Education perspective.

It is hoped that this study can lay foundation for the future research on the area. The results of the study might also shed light on the degree to which UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies working on education in emergencies are successful in achieving their education goals.

## **1.6 Delimitation of the Study**

Some studies indicate that there are hundreds of thousands of unrecognized refugees residing in Addis Ababa. For example, Webster (2011) indicated that there are tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees residing illegally in Addis Ababa, and UNHCR and PRM (2012) reported that there are an estimated 180,000-200,000 Somali refugees residing in Addis Ababa. In 2014, however, only 3626 Eritrean refugees and 1171 Somali refugees were recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

Among recognized urban refugee population in Addis Ababa, in this study refugees of Eritrean and Somali national origins are included. This study is delimited to children of Eritrean and Somali refugees who are recognized in the urban refugees program in Addis Ababa and who are enrolled in government and private primary schools of Addis Ababa. The study is further delimited to Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa who are getting educational support in the form of school fee, book allowance, transportation allowance, and uniform allowance from UNHCR through DICAC. In this study, Eritrean and Somali refugee

students who were enrolled in the primary schools of Addis Ababa (government or private) on or before the 2013/2014 academic year were included.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

As the major objective of this study was to analyze the practices and dilemmas of integration and preservation of identity among Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa Primary schools, the findings of this study is limited only to Addis Ababa, and Eritrean and Somali refugee children.

In this study, refugee parents and urban refugees central committee members' inhibition to disclose some of the information which they consider sensitive to their situation and possibly affect their relationship, particularly with ARRA, has somehow affected the richness and quality of data. For example, parents and urban refugee central committee members were not willing to discuss such important issues as additional income sources they use to augment the subsistence allowance they receive from UNHCR. Such important data was indirectly solicited from the Eritrean and Somali refugee children in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

Complete dearth of information in the MoE, and Addis Ababa City Government Education Bureau, even regarding the letters, guidelines, and directives issued from the MoE itself on integration of refugee students into national education system hampered successful inclusion of the perspective of such important organizations into the analysis of this study. Failure to include the perspectives of higher level leadership in ARRA and UNHCR due to lack of access to such offices after repeated attempts of the researcher has denied opportunity for thick analysis on the refugee policy issues in this study.

This study has not examined the learning achievement of the refugee students in the integrated national education system due to lack of school based disaggregated data for refugee students. As there are no school based disaggregated data on refugee students, the study was not be able to analyze the dropout and repetition rates of urban refugee students in the integrated national education system.

Shortage of funds allocated to this PhD dissertation project has also strained the researcher's schedule because the researcher was forced to engage in additional activities that can contribute to

raising money which can support to cover the basic expenses for the research project. This put the researcher into unwarranted shortage of time and exposed to unexpected diversion of attention.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This study comprises ten chapters. The first chapter introduces the major issue of the study, discusses the problems and gaps this study addresses, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the delimitation and the major limitations of this study. The second chapter reviews empirical literature related to the subject of this study. In the third chapter of this study theories that informed this study are thoroughly reviewed. In this chapter the ecological systems theory and the social capital theory are reviewed and the relevance of these theories for this study is analyzed. Then a conceptual framework of the study is presented. The fourth chapter presents the research methodology and design of this study. The fifth chapter describes the national context in which this study took place. In this chapter the demography, economy, education of Ethiopia, and the refugee population, refugee policy and refugee law of Ethiopia are described. In the sixth chapter administrative directives and guidelines used for refugee education in Addis Ababa are presented. In the seventh chapter subsistence allowance, relationship with the host community, and educational support for Eritrean and Somali refugee in Addis Ababa are discussed. The eighth and ninth chapters present issues surrounding integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa. In the tenth chapter summary of the major findings of the study, conclusion, and implications of the study are presented.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Currently the world is experiencing the displacement of people in unprecedented scale due to wars, injustices, persecutions, and environmental challenges. The problem for the international community, however, is that such increasing trend of refugee population will continue unabated in the future. In this regard, UNHCR in its synthesis report on the state of world refugees in 2012 predicted that displacement of people will continue to increase in the coming decade, even taking new and different forms (UNHCR, 2012d). As contributing factors for the increasing displacement, UNHCR (2012d) listed rapid population growth and its potential of increasing conflict due to scarcity of resources; increasing urbanization due to population growth and rural-urban migration, and the resultant pressure on available food, housing and employment opportunities; and climate change and natural disasters. In addition to challenges related to the increasing number of refugees, the protracted nature of the current refugee situation remains another bottleneck for the international refugee regime. According to the UNHCR (2014) definition a protracted refugee situation is one in which more than 25,000 refugees are in exile for more than five years without any durable solution.

Africa is hard-hit both by the increasing number of refugees and the prevalence of large number of protracted refugee situations. Regarding the Africa situation in terms of refugee population Rutinwa (1999: 3) expressed that Africa is one of the main refugee generating and hosting continents in the world. Veney (2007) and Lucas (2013) outlined the trend in refugee population in Africa between 1960's and 1990's in such terms that in 1960's there were only about 300,000 refugees in the continent of Africa, and by 1989 this number had increased to 5 million and in 1994 African refugee population reached a record high level of 7 million. During the time from second half of 1990's to the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Africa experienced a fluctuating refugee population, however, with an overall declining trend (Bariagebir, 2006a; Veney, 2007; and Milner, 2009). The refugee population of Africa, however, had started to pick-up once again beginning from 2010. In order to deal with aforementioned types of situations, refugee hosting countries usually formulate refugee policies and laws. The next sections of this chapter discuss refugee as concept and factors shaping refugee law and policy making in Africa. The chapter also

discusses the urban refugee policy, integration and identity of refugees, refugee education, and opportunities and challenges related to education for urban refugees in the national education systems respectively.

## **2.2. Conceptualizing Refugee**

Migration encompasses both voluntary and forced movements of people from their places of residence to another place (Milner, 2009 and Veny, 2007). Based on the degree of choices available in the decision to leave home, migration is classified into voluntary and forced (Mason, 2000). Voluntary migrants exercise a maximum degree of choice with regards to when, where, and how to move out from their home. Mason (2000), Rwamatwara (2005), Veny (2007), and Milner (2009) call voluntary migrants as economic migrants who leave their respective residence and settle elsewhere in search of economic opportunities such as employment, business opportunities, and education.

Those categories of migrants who have no or little choice regarding when, where, and how to leave their home are forced migrants. Such migration can be caused by social, economic and political problems such as armed conflicts, human rights violations, development projects, environmental degradations, and natural disasters (Mason, 2000; Castles, 2004; Rwamatwara, 2005; and Betts and Loescher, 2011). During such cases forced migrants, commonly referred to as refugees, flee their places of residence for their physical security and to protect themselves from an imminent threat to their physical well-being. As Castles (2004) elucidated popular usages tend to call all forced migrants refugees, but in legal terms refugee is actually quite a narrow category. The majority of forced migrants flee for reasons not explicitly recognized by international refugee law, and many of them are displaced within their own countries of origin (Mason, 2000 and Castles, 2004).

Mason (2000), Turton (2003), and Ottonelli and Torresi (2013) strongly contested the dichotomy of migration into voluntary and forced, and argued that such approach is overly simplistic. This, according to Turton (2003), is because most migrants make their decision to move in response to a complex set of external constraints and predisposing events. However, the constraints and events that trigger decision to migrate can vary in their salience, significance and impact. Consequently in all migration decisions there are elements of both compulsion and choice, and hence, the

boundary between voluntary and forced migration remains fuzzy. In any case, however, refugees epitomize forced migration (Mason, 2000; Turton, 2003; Rwamatwara, 2005; Veny, 2007; and Milner, 2009).

The most important and historical factors that force people to leave their country of origin and seek refuge in another country are persecution by their own states or wars. Regarding this Betts and Loescher (2011) argued that from the Holocaust to the proxy conflicts of the Cold War, to the internal conflicts in the aftermath of the Cold War, to the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq in the context of the 'War on Terror', refugees have emerged from just about every significant historical conflict or despotic regime.

The bases for the current international refugee regime was laid following the end of the Second World War. During this period, according to Jaeger (2003), and Betts and Loescher (2011), a multilateral and institutionalized bases for international cooperation on refugee issues were formalized through the establishment of UNHCR in 1950 and the introduction of the 1951 UN Convention relating to Status of Refugees respectively. The 1951 UN Convention related to the Status of Refugees was entered into force on 22 April 1954, and according to Jaeger (2003), UNHCR (2010a), and Betts and Loescher (2011), it has been subjected to only one amendment in the form of the 1967 Protocol, which removed the geographic and temporal limits of the 1951 Convention. The 1951 Convention, as a post-Second World War instrument, was originally limited in scope to persons fleeing events occurring before 1 January 1951 and within Europe. The 1967 Protocol removed these limitations and thus gave the Convention universal coverage. Regarding the importance of the amendment on the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the introduction of the 1967 Protocol, Jaeger (2003: 13) said that as time went by, the reference “events occurring before January 1951” in the 1951 UN Refugee Convention became obsolete and was increasingly less relevant to refugees of the postwar period. Jaeger (2003) further noted that with the emergence of refugee situations in other continents, particularly in Africa, the restrictive declarations to “events occurring in Europe” became increasingly uncomfortable for coherent international action. According to UNHCR (2010a) the 1951 UN Refugee Convention is both a status and rights-based instrument and is underpinned by a number of fundamental principles, most notably non-discrimination, non-penalization and *non-refoulement*.

The 1951 UN convention, as Jaeger (2003) summarized, defines the term refugee; specifies the legal status of the refugee; takes into account the interests of contracting states; provides for cooperation between contracting states and UNHCR; and settles the relation between the convention and previous treaties. However, the 1951 refugee Convention, which relies on individual motives to make the determination of refugee status, was found narrow that cannot cover violence induced mass exodus like those in the Horn of Africa where individual refugee status determination is practically impossible (Bariageber, 2006a; Veney, 2007; and Milner, 2009). So as to mitigate the above indicated shortcoming, the OAU which is currently renamed AU, introduced the OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa in 1969 as an effective regional complement to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention (Jaeger, 2003; Bariageber, 2006a; Veney, 2007; and Milner, 2009). The development through the introduction of OAU Refugee Convention is that the entire group of people who are fleeing generalized violence in their country of origin were recognized as refugees on the basis of their shared characteristics and common causes of flight (Milner, 2009). This procedure, known as *prima facie* refugee status determination (Rutinwa, 2002), is currently the basis upon which the vast majority of refugees in Africa are recognized.

Consistent with the provision of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), UNHCR defines refugee child to be a person below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (UNHCR, 1993). According to UNHCR (1994), refugee children are children first and foremost, and as children, they need special attention; as refugees, they are particularly at risk with the uncertainty and unprecedented upheavals which are increasingly marking the post-Cold War era. UNHCR (1994), UNHCR (2012d) and Dryden-Peterson (2015) indicated that slightly more than half of any refugee population are children.

Veney (2007) argued that researchers on refugee issues have tried to develop explanatory models more directly focused on the dynamics of forced migration. Among the well-known models is that of Kunz (1981) who distinguishes between two types of refugees and three types of refugee movements. Based on their intentions of migration, there are what Kunz (1981) calls reactive fate groups and purpose groups. The reactive fate groups are refugees who flee their countries with no plans on how they will return, while the purpose groups are those who leave to use the countries

of asylum to organize resistance for an eventual return. Individuals in the reactive fate groups are characteristically refugees of war, sudden revolutionary changes, and/or expulsions. Kunz (1973, cited in Veney, 2007) classified refugee migratory movements into three: there are anticipatory movements characterized by individuals leaving their home country before conditions deteriorate; acute movements that occur when people flee from impending calamity; and intermediate movements that fall between the two. Petersen (1958, cited in Veney 2007) distinguished refugees into impelled and forced based on the relative choices the refugees have on their destinations. In this regard, while impelled refugees have relative opportunity to choose their destination, the forced refugees have no opportunity to choose their destination. Rogge (1979, cited in Veney, 2007) puts refugees who are pushed out of their country mainly by the governments into the forced category, while the impelled refugees have the opportunity to weigh the pros and cons of migration before they actually migrate out of their country.

### **2.3 Refugee Policies and Laws**

Refugee laws and policies formulated by refugee hosting nations vary greatly between states, and within the single state across time and among refugee groups hosted (Jacobsen, 1996). While states formulating a legal and policy responses to the refugee situation, three sets of questions must be addressed seriously. These, according to Jacobsen (1996) and Milner (2009) include, a) the legal-bureaucratic responses b) government responses to international refugee organizations, and c) admission and treatment of refugees.

The legal-bureaucratic responses in refugee policy and law decision making has to take into account such major issues as the position of the nation with regards to accession to international and regional refugee conventions, the legal status accorded to those individuals seeking asylum in that particular nation, the legal procedures adopted to determine refugee status in individual or group bases, and the allocation of responsibility for refugees within the state bureaucracy. Jacobsen (1996) argues that many of the legal-bureaucratic decisions affect subsequent refugee policy decisions of nations.

The nature and level of cooperation between the refugee hosting state and international refugee organizations which, according to Jacobsen (1996: 660) “include UNHCR and NGOs concerned with refugees” can take a form of granting permission to such organizations to involve in the management of refugee issues in the nation, or restriction or resistance in the involvement of

international refugee organizations. Hence, the policy decisions with regards to this set of policy question would range from complete rejection of the involvement of international refugee organizations such as the case of Soviet Union during the Cold War, as indicated in Elie (2007), to total abdication of responsibility of managing refugees to international refugee organizations as the case of Kenya in the time between 1991 and 2006 as discussed in Milner (2009). Within this range there are nations where international refugee organizations have restricted involvement in refugee issues. In such situations international refugee organizations are required to work in collaboration with the national authorities mandated to refugee issues.

Admission and treatment of refugees as question in refugee law and policy making should take into account a range of issues including decision on whether refugee status claimants are allowed to enter state territory, where and in what manner they are expected to settle, the rights of and restrictions on refugees while they are in exile, and decisions on issues related to refugee protection and durable solutions (Jacobsen, 1996 and Milner, 2009).

Jacbsen (1996), Rutinwa (1999), Crisp (2000), Bariagebir (2006a), Milner (2009), Betts and Loescher (2011), and Stern (2014) explained that various factors shape national refugee law and policy making. Stern (2014), for example, suggested that the self-image of the state in terms of how a particular state presents itself to the international community strongly shapes the text, if not the actual practice, of the states refugee laws and policies. In this regard, citing the text of refugee laws and policies in Western liberal democracies that strongly emphasize the importance of humanitarianism; the necessity of upholding the principles of human rights and international refugee law; and the actual practice of rejection of asylum applications, widespread use of detention, and restrictions on human rights of asylum seekers, Stern (2014:26-27) argued that “the situation has been described as a kind of schizophrenia, signifying that a generous refugee policy can only be seen to be so when it is not put to the test”.

Jacobsen (1996) identified four broad categories of factors shaping national refugee policy making including bureaucratic choice made by the state, international relations, the absorption capacity of the local host community, and national security considerations. The bureaucratic choice made by the state is concerned with the decision as to whom/what kind of national organization the responsibility for managing refugee issue should be allocated. Decision on the creation of such bureaucratic machinery, however, heavily depends on the status accorded to refugee issue in wider

national policy context. In this regard, Jacobsen (1996; 661) argued that a separate civilian state agency responsible for managing refugee issues is established in countries where refugee policy is not “high” policy, that is, part of national security or foreign policy agenda. In such situation the possibility of having favorable refugee policy is high as compared to the context where refugee policy is part of national security or foreign policy agenda in which the personnel might see refugees as extra-burden on their regular task.

Jacobsen (1996) indicated that states’ refugee policy is not only shaped by “domestic variables” but also by considerations related to international relations. In this regard Forsythe (2001) boldly argued that the mandate of UNHCR as an international organization is to engage in the struggle so as to influence the policies of nations on behalf of refugees in particular.

From the point of the view of international relations, the nature of relationship between refugee sending and refugee hosting countries has strong bearing in shaping the refugee policies of counties. Explaining how the nature of relationship between origin and host countries influence refugee policy, Bariagabir (2006a: 4-6) argued that refugee policy can be used to discredit an origin country with whom the host nation is at odds through inflating refugee numbers and formulating a refugee policy that attracts more refugees as the case of Somali in late 1970’s with Ethiopia; or to avoid escalation of discord with refugee home country through closing borders as the case of Tanzania with Burundi in 1995; or to prevent embracement of refugee origin country through delaying bestowal of refugee status as the case of Mozambican refugees in Zimbabwe.

Another factor that shapes refugee law and policy making is the host country domestic context which, according to Jacobsen (1996) is categorized mainly into local absorption capacity and the security concerns of the nation. The local absorption capacity of refugees in a given national context is determined by economic, social and cultural factors which affects the hosting community responses within the nation.

#### **2.4. Refugee Policies and Laws in Africa**

Focusing in the context of Africa Rutinwa (1999), Crisp (2000), Kibreab (2003), Bariagebir (2006a), Veney (2007), and Milner (2009) classify factors shaping refugee policies and laws in the post-independence Africa into two broad historical periods: the time between early 1960s and late 1980’s and the time after 1990. In Africa, the post-independence period, which essentially starts in 1960 was taken as landmark for the classification because, according to Milner (2009), the

emergence of modern refugee phenomenon in Africa is strongly linked with the anti-colonial struggle and the independence of most African states in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

The paradox in this classification, however, is opposition between the laws promulgated with regards to refugees and the policies implemented by the African states. Concerning this matter, Rutinwa (2002:57), analyzing the case of Southern African states, argued that while they have draconian legal provisions based on refugee control during the time between 1960's and 1980's Southern African countries implemented the most regarded open refugee policies. In the time after 1990 when they promulgated refugee laws based on protection and in par with international and regional refugee conventions, the actual practice of dealing with refugee issues become very restrictive. Such mismatch between legal provisions and the implemented policies are not surprising in refugee issues (Landau and Amit, 2014 and Stern, 2014). Landau and Amit (2014), for example, described such a practice saying that national legal provisions have little direct positive or negative bearing on the refugee protection outcomes.

#### **2.4.1 Refugee Policies in Africa**

During the time between early 1960's and late 1980's refugee policies of African countries were shaped by cultural, economic and political factors. Zariievski (1988) cited in Milner (2009) emphasized "tradition of hospitality" in Africa as a factors that shaped refugee policies of African newly independent states. Milner (2009), however, strongly contended that political factors such as pan-Africanism and ant-colonialism were much more significant in shaping refugee polices of African newly independent states. That was why refugees who were products of independence struggles and wars of national liberation from Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, South Africa and Namibia were welcomed and well treated by their host countries.

In addition, economic variables shaped African policy responses towards refugees in the time between early 1960's and 1990. Rutinwa (1999), for example, argued that the first two decades in post-independence Africa was the age of relative prosperity and the time when refugee population in the continent was modest. Hence, African countries had the capacity to shoulder the economic burden imposed due to the presence of refugees from other African countries. Economic capacity of African refugee hosting states during this period, according to Crisp (2000), was further



enhanced by the funds provided by donors to support the requirements of African refugee hosting states to provide food, shelter, education and health care to the refugees.

Hence, during the time between the early 1960's and late 1980's, African States adopted a positive refugee policy responses, which Rutinwa (1999: 4) acclaimed the period as "golden age" of asylum in Africa. This age, according to Crisp (2000) was characterized by the following practices:

..., governments allowed large numbers of refugees to enter and remain in their territory. Many refugees enjoyed reasonably secure living conditions and were able to benefit from a range of legal, social and economic rights. Considerable numbers of refugees were provided with land and encouraged to become self-sufficient. In some states, refugees were allowed to settle permanently and to become naturalized citizens. ...the principle of voluntary repatriation was broadly respected (p.4).

In the time after 1990's African refugee hosting states introduced new policy responses which are in stark opposition to the earlier period's refugee policy responses due to various reasons. These include, among others, the increasing size of refugee population; the changing characteristics of refugee population; low economic capacity and negative political development in African refugee hosting nations; decreasing international financial support; negative lesson learned from the practices of Western industrialized nation towards refugee hosting; and the bad legacies from the past decades refugee hosting experiences (Rutinwa, 1999; Crisp, 2000; Kibreab, 2003; Bariagebir, 2006a; Veney, 2007; and Milner, 2009).

In the years after 1990's African States experienced huge refugee influx of as high as 7 million in 1994 (Veney, 2007 and Lucas, 2013). At this critical juncture, according to Milner (2009), African States argued that the sheer number of refugees on their territories make the problem for them simply too big to deal with their limited resources and state capacity. Related to the characteristics of refugees in the time after 1990 who are coming from independent African states, the former African "tradition of hospitality" had started to wane and replaced with xenophobia from the local host population.

While African states were struggling with overwhelming burden of hosting large number of refugees for long period of time, particularly in the time after 1990, they complained absence of meaningful burden sharing from the international community. Regarding this situation, Betts (2005) argued that due to the "accident of geography" they are states of the Global South who are closer to the areas of conflict and human rights abusing regimes that have the responsibility of

hosting and protecting the overwhelming majority of world's refugees. The restrictive refugee policies of Western industrialized nations had, according to Rutinwa (1999), encouraged African states to follow the suites of the West. Taking statistics of 2003, Betts (2005: 4), in this regard, argued that the Western developed nations, allocating over USD 10 billion per year to their asylum system which focuses on border controls and detention of asylum seekers and less than USD 1 billion to UNHCR, choose to prioritize unilateral border control above comprehensive refugee protection. Hence, lack of burden sharing and the Western example of deterring refugees by any cost from entering their territories had influenced African states policy responses in the time after 1990. Crisp (2000) adds to this list of factors that shaped refugee policies of African states in the time after 1990, the legacies from hosting refugees in the past. In this regard, African states had remorse due to the feeling that their generosity has been too quickly forgotten by the international community and they are left with all the challenges of deforestation and soil erosion which were consequences of hosting refugees.

As the result of the above discussed factors, in the time after 1990, the policy responses of African refugee hosting states were characterized by strict encampment of refugees, containment of refugees in countries of origin over the grant of asylum (for example in Rwanda, Zaire, Somalia, Liberia), boarder closing for refugees, the *refoulement* of refugees, a disregard of basic rights of refugees, and a retreat from durable solutions other than repatriation (Rutinwa, 1999: 8).

In general, Milner (2009) classifies refugee policies into two categories- open refugee policy and restrictive refugee policy. A refugee policy is open when the refugee hosting state applies international and regional refugee protection standards, allows access to and cooperates with international organizations, and grants refugees the full range of social, economic and political rights contained in international refugee law, such as freedom of movement and the right to seek employment. If, by contrast, a state prevents or frustrates the arrival of refugees, does not apply international and regional refugee protection standards, does not cooperate with international organizations, and denies refugees the rights they are afforded by the 1951 Convention, they may be said to have adopted a restrictive refugee policy.

#### **2.4.2 Refugee Laws in African States**

Regarding refugee law in Sub-Saharan African countries, D'orsi (2013) argued that legal protection of refugees have increasingly been finding stronger base in the national constitutions of

the countries. D'orsi (2013) further noted that African states had passed Tunis declaration in 1994; the Addis Ababa recommendation in 1994; and the Khartoum declaration of OAU Ministerial meeting in 1998; so as to dedicate themselves to the enactment of national refugee legislation that can specify the provisions in their respective constitutions and facilitate effective implementation of the 1951 Refugees Convention, its 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspect of Refugees Problems in Africa.

In Africa, as Manby (2010) indicated, almost all countries are party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol with the exceptions of Madagascar, which is a party only to the 1951 Refugee Convention, while Cape Verde is only a party to the 1967 New York Protocol. The Sub-Saharan African countries that are not a party to either the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 protocol are Eritrea, and the archipelagos of Comoros and Mauritius. Until 2012, Majority of Sub-Saharan African countries who are members of the AU, signed and ratified the 1969 OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Until 2012, the only countries to have signed the Convention without ratifying it are Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Somalia and Namibia. In contrast, there are only two countries, which have neither ratified nor signed the convention- the archipelago of Sao Tomé and Príncipe and Eritrea. Except Chad and Eritrea, almost all Sub-Saharan African countries have adopted some kind of refugee legislation.

Although several countries of Africa have made declarations regarding their compliance with the 1951 Refugee Convention, some of them declared reservation in some aspects of the convention for various reasons (UNHCR, 2011a and D'orsi, 2013).

Among the African states that registered reservation to the 1951 Refugee Convention most of them declared reservation to article 17 providing for wage earning employment and article 26 providing for freedom of movement. Many countries had also registered reservation to article 22(1) (for example; Ethiopia, Egypt, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) providing for public education where the contracting states shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to primary education. Regarding the reservations African states declared on the 1951 refugee convention, Kagan (2011) argued that the reservations served as legal bases for African states to formulate very restrictive refugee policy. Kibreab (2003) also stressed that the

policies of nearly all refugee-hosting countries are designed to prevent rather than promote the integration of refugees.

## **2.5 Urban Refugee Policy**

UNHCR (2014), in its 2013 statistical year book argues that although very important in refugee context, it is not such easy to make clear distinction between rural and urban due to lack of internationally agreed definition and because countries definitions of the concepts are contextual often taking into account population size or density. However, most of the studies agree that urban refugees represent a refugee in all its manifestations except the location where they are residing (for example; UNHCR, 2009b; Ngumuta, 2009; and Church World Service, 2013).

Up until the introduction of 2009 UNHCR policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas, urban refugees, as asserted by Marfleet (2007), Landau (2011), and Buscher (2011) were considered in policy and practice as unacceptable to state authorities and international agencies who see them as irregular and illegitimate at worst, or self-sustaining few young men at best. Marfleet (2007: 37), however, contended that practice of governments and international organizations towards urban refugees for some three decades before the introduction of the 2009 urban refugee policy was “inconsistent with historic practice, for traditionally people recognized as refugees have been of urban origin and have found sanctuary in urban environments”.

UNHCR policy responses specific to urban refugees, according to Ward (2014), was a phenomenon started to buildup beginning from the mid 1990's. Regarding the evolution of UNHCR urban refugee policies, Crisp et al., (2009:7) commented that the policy had “long and troubled history” and it is cumulative result of various factors. As an outcome of the increasing refugee population in urban areas in the mid 1990's, UNHCR, as Crisp et al., (2009: 7) explained, was concerned about the growing cost of assisting refugees in urban areas, the magnetic effect of such assistance towards the urban centers, and a ‘culture of entitlement’ developing among urban refugees which manifested itself in the form of harassment and violence against UNHCR staff. So as to respond to such concerns, UNHCR introduced its 1997 comprehensive policy on urban refugees which, according to its critics, was blamed as a policy oriented towards containing refugees in camps against the principle of freedom of movement, failed to recognize urban refugees rights to international protection, and depicts urban refugees as trouble makers (see for

example, Human Rights Watch, 1997; Marfleet, 2007; Crisp et al., 2009; Buscher, 2011 and Ward, 2014).

Albeit UNHCR introduced the 1997 urban refugee policy, the growth of global urban refugee population continued unabated. For example, in the UNHCR statistical yearbook, UNHCR (2001) indicated that the urban refugees constitute 13 percent of the global refugee population. The 2002 and 2004 UNHCR statistical yearbooks indicated that urban refugee population become 16 percent and 18 percent respectively (UNHCR, 2002 and 2004). Out of the total 8.7 million refugees under UNHCR protection worldwide and for which location information was available by the end of 2008, 4.4 million or 50 percent live in urban areas (UNHCR, 2008a).

In response to the criticisms from various angles against the 1997 comprehensive policy towards urban refugees and to deal with ever growing urban refugee population which has constituted the majority of refugees since 2008, UNHCR introduced a new and updated urban refugee policy in 2009. The new urban refugee policy was informed by various field-based and desk-based reviews of implementation of the previous comprehensive policy towards urban refugees at different urban centers which almost all the reviews concluded that the 1997 policy should be revised (Obi and Crisp, 2000 and 2001; Sperl, 2001; and Crisp et al., 2009).

The 2009 UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas has two overarching goals- ensuring that cities are recognized as legitimate places for refugees to reside and exercise the rights to which they are entitled, and maximizing the protection space available to urban refugees and the humanitarian organizations that support them (UNHCR, 2009b). The policy set key objectives it intends to attain, including, among others, facilitating access to education (UNHCR, 2009b; Edwards, 2010; and Morand et al., 2012).

UNHCR had conducted several review in various cities of the world on the implementation of its 2009 Policy on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas (Rosi et al., 2011; Riiskjaer and Bonnici, 2011; Campbell et al., 2011; Bottinick and Sianni, 2011; Crisp, Obi, and Umlas, 2012; Dubini et al., 2013; and Morand and Crisp, 2013). Reviews indicated that protection space for urban refugees is not expanding as expected in the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy (Bottinick and Sianni, 2011); urban refugees are facing untenable lives and limited opportunities (Morand and Crisp, 2013); the policy implementation is constrained by lesser role of national authorities in providing urban refugees with protection, solution and assistance, shortage of funds and skilled

man power, and very limited opportunity for durable solution (Crisp, Obi, and Umlas, 2012); and urban refugee policy is suffering from prioritization challenges of scarce resources between camp and urban refugees, inefficient bureaucracy in urban programs, and insecurity and lack of livelihood opportunities to refugees in urban areas (Campbell et al., 2011).

## **2.6 Refugee Integration and Identity**

### **2.6.1 Conceptualizing Integration**

Integration is a contested concept (Castles et al., 2002; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Strang and Ager, 2010; and Burnett, 2012). According to Bulcha (1988), Kuhlman (1991), and Phillimore and Goodson (2008), the concept has its roots in the works of classical sociologists, particularly that of Emile Durkheim, who discussed division of labor in the society and how society keeps itself together. The concept, according to Kuhlman (1991: 4), was further developed by Talcott Parsons who viewed integration as the compatibility of the components of the system and maintenance of the condition of distinctiveness of the system within its boundaries over against its environment. Such functionalist conception explains integration in terms of coordinating and maintaining viable interrelationship among the units in the social system. This conception was strongly criticized by the Marxists for promoting consensual and static vision of society by deemphasizing the major role of conflict in social relations. The Marxists, instead explained integration in the social system dialectically whereby the duality of stability and change, and consensus and conflict are its real manifestations (Dahrendorf, 1958 in Bulcha, 1988).

Kuhlman (1991) indicated that in the context of migration studies concepts such as acculturation, adaptation, assimilation and absorption were more prominent than integration, particularly until 1950s. In migrants context integration is achieved when the migrants become a working part of their adopted society, take on many of its attitudes and behavior patterns and participate freely in its activities, but at the same time retain a measure of their original cultural identity and ethnicity (Bernard, 1973 in Bulcha 1988 and Kuhlman, 1991). Bernard's definition of integration emphasis on functional inclusion of refugees into the system of the host society and explains integration as a process of mutual accommodation and recognition between the refugees and the host society. The definition clearly advances the notion that in the process of integration refugees maintain aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity. In this regard, Byrne (2013) emphasized the point that identity is inextricably linked with the notion of refugee integration. Hence, implicit in the

Bernard's definition is that the system in host society must be adjusted so as to accommodate the identity of the refugees in a way it can promote their active participation.

Berry (1988 cited in Kuhlman 1991), in his study of acculturation among immigrants into Canada and among Canadian Indians, identifies integration as one of the possible outcomes of the acculturation process and explained that when the immigrants maintained their identity while interacting with the host society integration takes place. Berry (1988 cited in Kuhlman 1991) also argues that integration occurs where individuals have an interest both in maintaining their original culture and in taking part in daily interactions with other groups. However, Berry (1988) definition of integration is criticized by Kuhlman (1991) for its failure to recognize how the degree of within group interaction with a tendency towards separation, and interaction with the host society with tendency towards assimilation are mutually exclusive, and argued for a continuum model of acculturation process in which integration takes place in the areas where the negative aspects of both separation and assimilation can be avoided.

### **2.6.2 Integration as Durable Solution**

Integration of refugees into the country of first asylum is considered by UNHCR as one of three possible durable solutions to refugee problems (Kuhlman, 1991). The other two durable solutions for refugee problems proposed by UNHCR are resettlement in the third country or repatriation to the country of origin. Meyer (2008) asserted that in addition to local integration, the remaining two durable solutions themselves imply a form of integration- repatriation implies reintegration into countries of origin; and resettlement implies a process of integration into a third country. Hence, integration is at the heart of all durable solutions for refugee problems.

Bulcha (1988) succinctly argued that in the context of Africa where the duration of refugee exile is usually considered temporary, and most of the African refugee hosting societies are multiethnic and heterogeneous, it is relevant to conceptualize the interrelationship between refugees and their host societies in terms of integration.

Explaining integration as a compromise between assimilation and separation, Kuhlman (1991) defined integration as

...a process of adaptation where [refugees] maintain their identity yet become part of the host society to the extent that host population and refugees can live together in an acceptable way (p. 7-8).

However, the concept “acceptable way” in Kuhlman (1991) definition of integration, as Kuhlman immediately admitted, is vague. So as to avoid value judgment and subjectivity with regards to the vague aspects of his definition of integration, Kuhlman (1991:8) provided a specific yardsticks to measuring integration of refugees that take into account the economic, social, cultural and security dimensions of integration and that imply two-way processes which require taking into consideration the situation of refugees and the host society.

Kuhlman’s (1991) definition and the specific yardstick for measuring integration are basically proposed in relation to his attempt to formulate theoretical framework for refugee integration in developing countries, particularly in Africa. Regarding the difference in refugee integration between developed countries and developing countries, Kuhlman (1991) argued that integration in developing countries of Africa takes place in the context where both the refugees and host nations are poor and the host nations have weak capacity to provide for the needs of the refugees while they are challenged to provide for the needs of their own citizen.

In protracted refugee situations, where there is no access to the durable solutions of full legal integration expressed in terms of formal status and rights, and through other forms of social, political and economic participation, recent discussions, as Lindley (2011) expressed, have focused on the notions of local integration. Meyer (2008) also stressed that protracted refugee situations have brought revitalized interest in local integration among researchers and practitioners as durable solution for refugee problems in developing countries. In this regard, Fielden and Crisp (2008:78) argued that “a combination of historical trends, the changing policies of governments and renewed efforts by UNHCR have all begun to strengthen the potential of local integration as a lasting solution for refugees”. However, Jacobson (2001) asserted that local integration as durable solution is already set out in Article 34 of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The notion of local integration is based on the assumption that refugees will remain indefinitely in their country of asylum and find a solution to their plight in that state (Jacobsen, 2001; UNHCR, 2002; Dryden-Peterson and Hovil, 2003; Crisp, 2004; Meyer, 2008; Banki, 2004; and Fielden, 2008). Ideally, but not necessarily, that will involve the acquisition of citizenship (UNHCR, 2002; Crisp, 2004 and Meyer, 2008).



UNHCR acknowledged that a significant proportion of the world's refugees are unable to repatriate safely due to ongoing conflict and that it has become equally clear that confining refugees to camps for years on end, deprived of the right to freedom of movement and without access to educational and income generating opportunities has many negative consequences (UNHCR, 2002). In addition, UNHCR realized that there were cases where local integration had the potential to succeed, where refugees shared a language, a culture or ethnic origin with the host community and were capable of settling peacefully and productively in countries where they found asylum (UNHCR, 2002 and Fielden, 2008). Local integration can also be successful in situation where refugees have established close economic, familial or social links to their country of asylum due to the long duration of stay (UNHCR, 2006b and Fielden, 2008).

With such background, UNHCR had engaged in series of policy level process that can revitalize local integration as durable solution including the Agenda for Protection (UNHCR, 2003b), the Framework for Durable Solutions (UNHCR, 2003c), and the Executive Committee Conclusion on Local integration (UNCHR, 2002).

According to Kibreab (1989), UNHCR (2002), Crisp (2004), UNHCR (2006b), Fielden (2008), and Meyer (2008), local integration as a durable solution combines three interrelated processes- the legal, economic and socio-cultural.

As legal process, in local integration, refugees are expected to be granted a progressively wider range of rights and entitlements by the host state that are broadly commensurate with those enjoyed by its citizens. As an economic process, in local integration, refugees are expected to become progressively less reliant on state aid or humanitarian assistance, attaining a growing degree of self-reliance and becoming able to pursue sustainable livelihoods, thus contributing to the economic life of the host country. Local integration as social and cultural process requires acclimatization by the refugees and accommodation by the local communities, that enables refugees to live amongst or alongside the host population, without discrimination or exploitation and contribute actively to the social life of their country of asylum.

Arguing that the protracted refugee situation had challenged the durable solution framework promoted by UNHCR, Banki (2004) proposed an alternative framework of understanding integration as an intermediate solution for refugees. Through her discussion, Banki (2004: 2)

defines intermediate integration as referring “to the ability of the refugee to participate with relative freedom in the economic and communal life of the host region”. Hence, in Banki’s (2004) assertion, integration as intermediate solution is something short of entitlement to naturalization to citizenship of the host society.

Polzer (2009) rejected the distinction between temporary and durable solutions, arguing that such distinctions are largely an institutional and policy construction which do not reflect the actual life experiences of refugees along various stages of their displacement. Fielden (2008) also contended that understanding local integration as durable solution only at the point when a refugee becomes a naturalized citizen of his or her asylum country is narrow conception of local integration; while the broader understanding of local integration suggests that it is possible for a refugee to locally integrate without actually being naturalized citizen of the host nation.

Polzer (2009), based on her study of integration of Mozambican refugees in the Republic of South Africa, stressed that many of the definitions of local integration reflect “thought-blinkers” of refugee studies academics. These, according to Polzer (2009: 74), is because authors such as Jackson (2001) and Crisp (2004) focus on the primacy of international and national law, and the refugee label while underemphasizing the social and political process of integration and the local actors involved in these processes. So as to overcome such shortcomings in defining local integration, Polzer (2009: 74) proposed the necessity of having “very broad, process-focused definition of integration”. Hence, local integration is defined as a process of negotiating access to local legitimacy and entitlement on the basis of a variety of value systems determined by local power holders in dialogue with refugees (Polzer, 2009).

Through this definition of local integration of refugees, Polzer (2009) gave primacy to role of local level politics, local power holders and local value systems over the international system of refugee protection and legal rights of refugees. Hence, the role of village level leaders, local government officials, NGO staff at local level as local actors who impact directly on local conditions; resources that refugees bring with them into the host society including material resources of exchange (financial resources, labor power and skills, trading relationships) or various forms of legitimacy claims (kinship, client-patron relationships, ideological affiliations); and specific strategies and tactics that refugee employ to negotiate access to resources and power such as day-to-day

invocation of shared history and capitalizing on the benefits of local host community due to the presence of refugees, are essential in the local integration process.

Hence, it is possible to contend that the process of integration is an interplay among various dimensions, and involves both the refugees and the host society and requires adaptation on the part of both parties (Castles et al. 2002; Banki, 2004; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Ager and Strang, 2008; Lomba, 2010; Strang and Ager, 2010; and Vreecer, 2010).

### **2.6.3 Conceptualizing Identity**

As with integration, social scientists and other scholars have offered several definitions of identity. Holt (2007) provides a synopsis of identity definitions, including that identity is the creation of an individual and his/her personal histories, but is also affected by place (e.g. an individual's relationship with specific features of a place). Social, cultural and political aspects as well as contextual situations, according to these definitions, play an important role in identity formation, and refugees are active in the reshaping of their identity (Ager and Strang, 2008).

The term "identity" first gained salience through the work of the psychologist Erikson. While Erikson associates identity as a definition of personhood with sameness or continuity of the self across time and space, other authors also emphasise uniqueness that is those characteristics that differentiate a person from other people or the whole of mankind (Rouse, 1995).

Although Erikson (1968, cited in Oyserman, Elmore, and Smith, 2012) theorised on identity from a psychoanalytic point of view, he also emphasises the role of the environment- particularly the social environment - in the development of identity. The prominent role of social groups in identity formation has furthermore been emphasised by the social psychologist Tajfel (1981) cited in Oyserman, Elmore, and Smith, 2012).

Cultural studies, on the other hand, focuses on the origin, history and culture of groups or communities. The term cultural identity has a twofold interpretation (Hall, 1996). It is firstly associated with a shared culture, a collective true self that is shared among people with a common history and ancestry. Thus, cultural identity reflects common historical experiences and shared cultural codes that serves to unify and to provide stable, continuous and unchanging frames of reference of meaning amidst social and political changes. This conceptualisation of identity is associated with the exploration of history in order to reveal "hidden continuities" and "hidden

roots". The second view not only emphasises similarity, but also recognises points of difference in the course of history in "what we are" and "what we have become". Thus the second conceptualisation emphasises cultural identity as an interactive process that involves "becoming" as well as "being" and belongs to the future as well as the past (Hall, 1996).

Refugee identities are complex and formed not only by internal feelings, beliefs, ethnic and cultural traditions, but also by external factors, such as resettlement practices, forced migration policies, cultural traditions and the economic, political and social conditions of his/her new host country (Hein 1993 and Holt 2007). Over time, refugees undergo a complicated process of identity reformulation as a result of displacement (Griffiths, 1999).

According to scholars, one of the main influences of a refugee's evolving identity is place (Hein, 1993; Brun, 2001; White, 2002; and Holt, 2007). This influence is partially due to the existing legal infrastructure in the host countries; different places respond to refugees in different ways leading to a range of consequences at the individual level. Oftentimes the admittance of refugees is tied to a states' foreign policy situations (Hein 1993). Additionally, forced migrants often cross internationally recognized borders through varying legal systems.

Scholars' conceptualization of the relationship between people, identity, and place are diverse at best or contradictory. There are scholars who argue that in the post-modern age due to forces of globalization, identity has more or less become deterritorialized which is characterized by a 'generalized condition of homelessness' (Said 1979 :18 cited in Malkki, 1992) where 'we are all refugees' (Warner 1992 cited in Kebede, 2010) or even 'tourists' (Warner 1994 cited in Kebede, 2010). This line of understanding, according to Kibreab (1999), asserts that people, regardless of their territorial origin, have become or are in the process of becoming citizens of a deterritorialized global world where concepts such as homeland, locality, territorially anchored national or collective identities have either become a thing of the past or lost much of their significance. The corollary of this conceptualization is that since there is no need for people to belong to a specific place, the idea of return 'home' or repatriation as constituting a durable solution to the problem of refugees is a misconception (Kibreab, 1999).

Kibreab (1999), however, argued that the age which is claimed as a period of deterritorialization of identity is a time when spaces are more territorialized than ever before, and hence to speak of

detritorialization of identity does not make sense. He presented 'Fortress Europe' as the culmination of the territorialization process which has been a major pre-occupation of most sovereign states in recent years, in which harmonization of refugee policies and co-ordination between member states have dramatically reduced the possibility of rejected asylum seekers in one member country trying elsewhere within the European Union.

In territorialized conception of people, place and identity the relationship between a territory and identity, not in terms of a link between a people and a soil, as such, but rather in terms of membership in a state occupying a given territory with the right to exclude others from that territory, is significant (Kibreab, 1999). In such context, refugees make every effort not only to maintain and develop their national collective identities and transmit them to their offspring, but also to eliminate the factors that prompted their displacement so that they can return to their country in safety and dignity (Kibreab, 1999). Hence, the only viable durable solution to the problems of refugees from the point of view of territorialization of identity is repatriation (Brun, 2001).

Between these two extremes are scholars who argue that it is wrong to completely reject the relevance of place on people's identity and caution against the essentialist understanding of the relationship between people, place and identity (Malkki, 1995; Brun, 2001; and Lambo, 2012).

Both extremes, as Lambo (2012) explained using the case of Somali refugees in Nairobi, fail to show how place and space are social constructions and are able to be inhabited and experienced from afar. Lambo's (2012) research shows that Somali refugees preserve their identity and attachment to home while in exile. The decisive factor in reterritorialising identities is an image of community, not necessarily the present territory in which the community lives. "This understanding means that refugees are not out of place, their place is defined by the particularity of their social interactions that intersect at the specific location where they are present" (Brun 2001:20).

Refugees also have to confront the new label of "refugee" that can affect the process of identity formation; a component that they previously did not have to consider while living in their country of origin. People that were formerly citizens of one country are now refugees in another, which can (and often does) have a profound effect on a person's identity. The label of refugee is influential not only for defining and categorizing people but also in the way the label impacts an

individual who must carry it (O'Neill and Spybey 2003). Refugees do not have a choice in having or not having the label imposed upon them, but they can decide how they want to perceive, accept and/or use the label. The label of refugee has a concrete political definition that has transformed throughout recent history. It also has a figurative meaning that changes based upon the individual, society and place ranging from those in camp situations to someone awaiting an asylum decision to refugees successfully integrated into their new host society (Hein 1993 and Kibreab 1999).

Contributing to a refugee's identity formation are the opinions and perspectives forced or imposed upon them by the host society due to their refugee status. The refugee label can carry contextual stigma with it (O'Neill and Spybey 2003). Oftentimes the stigmas are based on negative and/or misinformed viewpoints (frequently perpetuated by politicians, the media and the general public) that portray refugees as economic migrants who take jobs from native citizens, as uneducated migrants who are in the country to receive state aid and/or with xenophobic characterizations (Moore and Clifford 2007, Zetter 2007, and Bowes et al., 2009). A Congolese refugee living in the United Kingdom agreed with the notion that refugee as a label carries negative social connotations saying that "If you say it, they won't consider what you do –it's nothing, because of that word: 'refugee'" (Moore and Clifford 2007: 455). In addition, refugees have further labels attached to them, such as "outsider" and "other", which can work as a force of ostracism and exclusion from society.

Scholars studying refugee identity often mention the "us" and "them" aspect, being the "other" or feeling as outsiders in both their country of origin and destination country as impacting identity (O'Neill and Spybey 2003, Parker and Brassett 2005; and Zetter 2007). Refugees are a part of and also excluded from both their country of origin and host country (Zetter, 2007). Again this connects to the legal aspect of refugee studies as policy is often blamed for creating an "other" by putting people in a refugee category and labeling them as such (O'Neill and Spybey 2003, Zetter 2007). Zetter (2007) asserts that the refugee label underscores a sense of isolation for refugees.

Taking into consideration the above discussions on the refugee integration and identity, the next section focuses on how education can be provided for urban refugees in the integrated classrooms where refugees share everything of the school with the host community students.

## **2.7 Refugee Education: The Concept and Approaches**

Education has been recognized as a human right since the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 (Tomasevski, 2001 and UNICEF, 2007). Since then, Education, particularly primary education, becomes part of several international human rights treaties (see, for example, Tomasevski, 2001; Sinclair, 2001 and 2002; UNICEF, 2007; and Dryden-Peterson, 2011). The legally binding forces of international treaties with regards to human rights to education were further revitalized through series of global conferences on universalizing primary education (UNICEF, 2007). The human rights to education is characterized as an enabling right whereby the enjoyment of many civil, political, socio-economic, and cultural rights (for example; the freedom of information, freedom of expression, the right to vote and to be elected, the right to choose work, right to receive equal pay for equal work and many others) are mainly contingent upon a minimum level of education (Tomasevski, 2001 and Dryden-Peterson, 2011). All the treaties and conferences related to the human rights to education affirmed the rights of all children to quality education that recognize diversity and do not discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, national origin or the political affiliations of their parents (Kirk, 2009 and Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj, 2012).

The legal foundations for the provision of refugee education is articulated in Article 22 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which states that signatory states:

...shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education... [and] treatment as favorable as possible...with respect to education other than elementary education” (UNHCR, 2010).

Education for Refugees, according to Sinclair (2001) and Dryden-Peterson (2011), is progressively view as fourth pillar in humanitarian response, alongside the pillars of food, shelter and health care.

The Education for All Global Monitoring Report of 2011, however, lamented that the impact of conflict on education, which it calls “The Hidden Crises”, is one of most damaging but underreported problem (UNESCO, 2011). The magnitude of the problem, which according to UNESCO (2011: 125) “ought to outrage the conscience of mankind” was described by NRC and Save the Children Norway (2015), and UNESCO (2015) in such a way that globally, about 58 million primary school aged children are denied their right to education and about half of them,

(i.e., 28.5 million), live in conflict and crisis affected areas. Out of the total children denied their right to education due to conflict and crises, some 25 million live as refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (NRC and Save the Children Norway, 2015). Amidst such very bleak statistics, however, is the argument that parents, teachers and children affected by conflict demonstrate extraordinary level of ambition, innovation and courage to maintain access to education, whether they are in the conflict zones, live as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), or refugees (UNESCO, 2011).

Education for refugees, which is currently subsumed into education for children affected by emergencies, is defined by Sinclair (2002), as education that protects the well-being, fosters learning opportunities, and nurtures the overall development (social, emotional, cognitive, and physical) of children affected by conflict and disaster. The principal difference between education for refugees and other crises affected populations, for example IDPs, is that refugees are detached from their country of origin education system which has its own goals and curriculum, its own system of progression from one level of education to the next, and its own method of certification (Sinclair, 2001: 71).

With regards to provision of education for refugees, Dryden-Peterson (2011) indicated that schools for children affected by emergencies were set up even prior to World War II by organizations such as Save the Children. The large scale population displacements as the result of the World War II and the political dynamics of the Cold War era which also maintained a burgeoning refugee population the world over, further strengthened a belief and necessity of education for refugees. Regarding this, Sinclair (2001), Dryden-Peterson (2011), and Winthrop and Matsui (2013) pointed that the time from 1950's up to the mid 1990's was a period of diffusion of grassroots refugee education practices whereby refugees were active in developing their own schools and other informal learning programs. During this period, UNHCR devolved the responsibilities of establishing and running refugee education to the refugee communities and educational initiatives of the refugee communities of the period were often overtly political, with refugees' struggle for self-determination closely linked to the development of educational organizations (Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

In the 1990's UNHCR entered, what Dryden-Peterson (2011) calls, the age of transformation with regards to focus in refugee education. In this period, UNHCR had shifted its focus away from



educational scholarship support for individual refugees towards supporting education systems at the primary level. According to Dryden-Peterson (2011), the vast refugee influxes of 1980's and early 1990's and the institutionalization of refugee camps; the institutionalization of right based framework with the introduction of Convention on the Rights of Child in 1989; the EFA movements and the changing expectation for education; and the understanding in the UNHCR from the post-Cold War conflicts regarding the role of education in both exacerbating and mitigating conflicts and the necessity of serving populations rather than selected individuals; had contributed in shaping the system based approach to refugee education in the UNHCR. Since 2000, the field of refugee education has been subsumed into the broader field of education in emergencies (EiE), which includes not only education of refugees but also of IDPs, non-displaced children living in conflict and/or fragile settings, and children affected by natural disasters (Sinclair, 2002; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; and Talbot, 2013).

Refugee education and EiE more broadly are guided by three conceptual approaches (Burde, 2005 and Dryden-Peterson, 2011). These are, the humanitarian approach which views education for refugees as one component of a rapid response and as a stop-gap-measure designed to provide immediate protection and prevention of human rights violation of refugee children; the human rights approach which emphasizes that education is a human right to be realized irrespective of situation including conflict and views education as an enabling right; and the developmental approach which recognizes education as a long term social investment which in conflict situation contributes to curb backward development of societies. According to Dryden-Peterson (2011), the humanitarian approach to refugee education can explain the existing UNHCR practices towards refugee education, although the human rights approach to refugee education is consistent with the fundamental mandate of UNHCR but does not align with its current practice. In addition, the developmental approach to refugee education, which takes long-term view of education, is commonly desired by refugee parents and children who give priority to current access to quality education but always with a sense of future relevance toward individual livelihoods and societal advancement.

Taking into account the current profile of refugees in developing countries of the world and several new realities in refugee situation, UNESCO (2011) and Dryden-Peterson (2011) advised education

planners in refugee context to promote quality refugee education based on the human rights and developmental approaches to education. Among current realities in refugee situation, the protracted nature of displacement and the understanding that education for refugees can no more be stop-gap-measure; the increasing number of urban refugees and intensive advocacy to facilitate integration of refugee children into host country schools; and the recognition of the role of education in both mitigating and exacerbating conflicts are contributing for the reconceptualization of refugee education towards human rights and developmental approaches.

Sinclair (2002), Ferris and Winthrop (2010), Talbot (2013), NRC and Save the Children Norway (2015) argued that education has vital importance for refugees and in the context of emergencies in general. Among justifications for such importance, education for refugees saves lives and it is a major factor in protecting children against exploitation and harm, including abduction, recruitment of children into armed groups, sexual and gender-based violence, and avoidance from HIV and AIDS infection. Education for refugees not only saves lives, it also sustains life by giving children a sense of restoration to normality and familiar routine which are vital for mitigating the psychosocial impact of violence and displacement for individual refugees and the whole refugee communities. Good quality education provided to refugees can counter the underlying causes of violence, by fostering values of inclusion, tolerance, human rights and conflict resolution. Another vital importance of education for refugees is that it offers hope for a better future life and help children to rise above the difficulties of displacement in many ways. Education for refugees is also needed to prepare societies for eventual post-conflict reconstruction, and social and economic development. Sinclair (2001), Dryden-Peterson (2003), and Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj (2012) summarized the vital importance of education for refugee children arguing that it is human right, a tool of protection from exploitation and abuse, provides opportunities for refugee children to begin the trauma healing process, and promotes learning skills and values needed for a more peaceful future and self-reliance.

## **2.8 Education for Urban Refugees: Dilemmas of Integration and Identity**

Refugee education is representing a paradox for national education systems around the world (Waters and LeBlank, 2005; Pinston and Arnot, 2010; and Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj, 2012). In this regard, Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj (2012), asserted that refugee movements have led to

significant demographic changes in student population of the host nations and as a consequence, educators are facing strange needs in their classrooms, and ensuring all children's access to quality education has become a concern for education systems around the world. Concerning the educational consequence of hosting refugees in national education systems, Pinson and Arnot (2010) argued that schools are currently faced with the challenge of educating a diverse population not only in respect to their ethnic origin, but also in terms of their immigration status, that is whether they are documented or undocumented migrants, or refugees.

Identity of refugees is inextricably tied to the dimensions of local integration (Byrne, 2013). As Open Society Foundations (2015) argued how refugees identify themselves and the way in which they are identified by the host community are important for integration. As the result any discussion of refugee integration has to take into account issues of identity. Refugees, although are *defacto* stateless people due to crossing a national boarder seeking protection in another state, they continue identifying themselves with the nation they flee nor that they become people without an identity (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). However, for refugees, who by definition are relocated from their home and exposed to interact with another culture, issues of identity are particularly complex (Fincham, 2012). Added to the above complexity, as Kibreab (2003) indicated, in almost all developing countries of Africa, Asia and Central America, refugees do not have the opportunity to become either naturalized citizens or denizens. One of the peculiar characteristics of refugees is that, in the refugee context identification with the country of origin becomes far more consolidated usually focusing on the national identity to the previous local and ethnic affiliation (Kibreab, 2003 and Arnone, 2008).

Among the privileges refugees cannot enjoy due to their status, one is access to their national education system (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). In modern nation-states, national education systems are typically charged with the production and reproduction of the nation (Fincham, 2012). In the national education systems, schooling socializes the citizens of the state, reproducing the social relations within a society to give the state control over its citizens (Shabaneh, 2012). Schools in the national education systems are the prime arena within which the process of political socialization of the citizen towards the norms and values of the political system takes place (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989; Waters and LeBlanc, 2005; and Collet, 2007).

The role of education in the political socialization of the young generation is explained in such a way that schools are formally responsible institutions where younger generations learn about political philosophy, citizenship and the core ideology of the society in which they live; and the process of political socialization across national contexts intensively occur in primary and secondary school levels (Collet, 2007). Curricular choice in the national education system, as Waters and LeBlanc (2005: 129) posited are “inherently statements about what type of society the ‘we’ will have in the future. In other words, curricular choices are intended to help define those types of citizenship that are perceived as legitimate and those which are not”.

However, refugees, in particular, urban refugees, who were integrated into national education system, by necessity follow curricula of host countries, whether or not the most probable durable solution is local integration, resettlement or repatriation (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). In this connection, as refugee children are integrated into the national education system, as Bash (2005) argued, the primal grounds in which national identity takes root is supposed to be based in their host country education system. Collet (2007), however, contended that the actual processes of political socialization in the schools are far more complex than what the term ‘political socialization’ might convey on its own and students as active agents can also play a contesting role in some circumstances. Hence, as argued by Abbasi-Shavazi et al., (2008) refugees identity construction is characterized by multilayered, dynamic, and continuous processes in which previous life experiences in the home country intermingle with modes of being and believing in the host country in the creation of new visions of possibility for the future.

In urban refugee education, while integration and identity have such complex relationship, UNHCR (2011b) declared its main principle of education in urban areas in such terms that:

every effort should be made for urban refugees to participate in mainstream education along with local children and young people, with national authorities managing and coordinating the education response, supported by UNHCR and partners where needed (p: 4).

UNHCR (2011b) argues that integrating refugees within the national system ensures sustainability and supports peaceful co-existence of refugees within host communities both in the short and long term. UNHCR in its 2012-2016 education strategy further asserted this principle arguing that integration of refugee learners into the national systems of education where possible and appropriate is general approach to refugee education with the intension of providing protective

environment for the refugee children and investing its educational support on improving quality of existing national systems of education (UNHCR, 2012a).

So as to enhance integration of refugees into the national education system, UNHCR (2011b: 15-18) proposed practical steps to be taken including:

1. Working with local leaders and institutions so as to avoid the establishment of parallel structures and promote the integration of refugees into the national education system.
2. Mainstreaming into government services through advocating with partners for the needs of refugees to be included in national strategic education plans and donor proposals.
3. Alleviating the burden on government services through providing supplementary supports to increase the capacity of public schools and improve the quality of services. This should also consider education needs of the host community.
4. Living within host communities through pro-actively supporting refugee acceptance within the local community, enjoyment of the same rights and access to the same education opportunities as nationals. The goal is to increase “social cohesion” by using education as a vehicle for peaceful coexistence.

While promoting integration of refugee children into the national education system, UNHCR (2011b: 10) recommended ensuring that the integrated educational services are accessible to the diverse needs of refugees. This, according to UNHCR (2011b), is because the processes for integrating refugees within national education system should not detract from meeting the unique needs of refugees. In this regard UNHCR (2011b) proposed that while integrating, identifying and responding to the needs of refugees speaking different languages and of different cultures who may have difficulties in accessing an unfamiliar education system, including those who need support to catch up on missed schooling; and providing targeted support to refugees in need of information sessions, extra classes, induction trainings, language training, issuance of proper documentation for registration, and/or protection from the particular vulnerabilities of physical and sexual violence, as practical first steps. UNHCR (1994), for example, concretely proposed that maintenance of the mother tongue of refugee children is a critical factor in retaining their identity; and hence, in the contexts where refugee children attend national schools in the country of asylum, and if the language of instruction is different from the mother tongue, special provision may be necessary to enable them to retain, and become literate in, their mother tongue.

However, UNHCR (2011b: 8) asserted that refugees in urban areas face many barriers to accessing education services, emanating from economic, geographic, cultural, linguistic and administrative origins. For example, education services in cities may not be accessible to refugees because they are too expensive, too far away, or too costly to travel to daily; there might be a general lack of empathy with the cultural sensitivities of people from different ethnic groups; schools may not accommodate children who have missed out on schooling; and language barriers may prevent education access.

## **2.9. Urban Refugee Education: Challenges and Opportunities**

Refugees face manifold challenges to access education services in urban areas (Hamilton and Moore, 2004; Ferris and Winthrop, 2010; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; UNHCR, 2011b; Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj, 2012; and UNHCR, 2012a). Buckland (2011) listed barriers to refugee children's access to schooling in South Africa including physical access (lack of infrastructure); economic barriers (inability to cover educational costs), and regulatory barriers or inability to meet enrolment requirements (lack of documentation, birth certificates, immunization records, report cards). Meda, Sookrajh, and Maharaj (2012) indicated that refugee children face barriers in enrolling into public schools because of the lack of documents and their refugee status; and when they are in schools, they receive little or no support, particularly from government and schools. The geographical and cultural distance between the place of origin of the refugees and the host nation including skill in language of instruction of the host country are indicated as factors impacting refugees' access to education (Hamilton and Moore, 2004).

Access to education is generally more difficult in urban areas (Dryden-Peterson, 2001). For example, in Central African Republic (CAR), primary school enrolment is 96% in camps but 65% in urban settings, and in Uganda primary school enrolment is 73% in camps and 23% in the urban area (Dryden-Peterson, 2001). Research on refugee education in Nairobi, Kampala, Amman, and Damascus (Dryden-Peterson, 2006) identified that there are legal and policy barriers for refugees in urban areas, which make access to education more difficult.

Financial constraints on refugee families due to legal and policy restrictions combined with high costs of living in cities means that the direct and indirect costs of schools are even more prohibitive. Church World Service (2013) survey on refugees access to services in cities in Cameroon, Indonesia and Pakistan revealed that for the majority of refugees in Yaounde, Peshawar, and

Karachi (81.9%) and for 43.8% of refugees in Jakarta, the major reason for non-attendance of schools was cost. Regarding challenges related to certification and recognition of studies of refugees, Kirk (2009: 38) argued that the issue is a major gap in international education policy and practice.

Hamilton (2004), however, argued that integration of refugee children in the host nation education system can be facilitated if potential facilitating factors such as introductory orientation programs to the new country and school, and attitudes in the local population such as acceptance of diversity, inclusiveness, warmth and friendliness are available. According to Anderson et al., (2004) and Bourgonje (2010) social inclusion of refugee children often begins at school, and teachers play a central role in stimulating interaction between refugees and the host nation students, and acceptance of the refugee students, but many teachers are ill-equipped to work with children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and who have wide-ranging learning needs and abilities. Anderson et al., (2004) further noted that the extent to which a subset of the familiar social environment has come to the host environment with the refugee child intact (family, extended family, friends and neighbors) will clearly impact the child's ability to thrive within the new school environment.

As integration is mutual process of adaptation, the extent to which schools are adapting their policies, procedures, practices and teacher development programs to respond to the needs of refugees by and large determine the refugee children integration into the mainstream national education system (Anderson et al., 2004).

The following section focuses on the major factors that should be taken into account in the context where refugee children are attending education integrated with students of the host nation where the education system is supposed to accommodate and promote identity of refugee students.

### **2.9.1 Legal and Policy Environment**

Realization of the right to education of refugees depends on the laws, policies, and practices in place at different historical times and in each national context, even among the nations who are signatories to 1951 Refugee Convention. According to Hamilton and Moore (2004), success of integration and identity of refugees within schools require clear government policies and this aspect of the macrosystem determines the direction and viability of local level initiatives intended to enhance the education of the refugee child. However, the particular needs of refugee students

have been generally ignored by education policy-makers and researchers; and as the result there is vacuum of targeted policies and organizational frameworks to address the significant educational disadvantages confronting refugee youth (Taylor and Sidhu, 2012).

Taylor and Sidhu (2012) further contended that regardless of the presence of global frameworks that enshrine the rights of children to have access to education that is free of discrimination and responsive to their special educational and cultural needs, nations make it hard for refugees to attain education. This can take place in the form of reservations nations register while being party to the 1951 Refugee convention. For example, many countries of Africa had registered reservation to article 22(1) of 1951 Refugee Convention providing for public education where the contracting states shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to primary education (UNHCR, 2011a and D'orsi, 2013). Inconsistency in the national policies and legal provisions regarding refugees' access to public education is another factor making refugees access to education hard in some countries. According to Dryden-Peterson (2001), for example, as early as 1975, refugee children from Burundi, Rwanda, and Zaire in Tanzania were integrated into the national education system; however, they were later relocated into refugee camps and in Iran, Afghan refugees were able to exercise the right to education before voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan began in 2002; however, Afghans remaining in Iran are systematically denied access to education through discrimination and the levy of additional tuition fees.

In some instances the actual practices related to refugee education might not be congruent with the national legal and policy directions. According to Gozdziaik and Walter (2012), for example, in Cairo, Egypt, despite the fact that the Minister of Education granted all refugees the right to attend public primary schools in 2000, this right is not widely known or clearly understood by many local teachers, school administrators and even stakeholders and rarely implemented in schools for all urban refugee population.

Hamilton and Moore (2004) asserted that ensuring the possibility of success of school interventions for refugees heavily depends upon having a comprehensive national policy on refugee education. Such a policy, according to Hamilton and Moore (2004), should address issues of governance, coordination, and the financial support of services for newly arrived refugees. A national policy is expected to address issues of adapting the knowledge and understanding of



teachers, parents and communities to the needs of the refugee children. Language issues should occupy a central role in the development and content of a national policy on the education of refugee children. The national policy should also address ways to facilitate the collaboration of services across multiple service providers. In addition to the above, the nation policy on refugee education should take into account such issues as the development of curriculum, training of teachers and the employment of professionals to help schools in the education of refugee children.

### **2.9.2 Language of Instruction**

The language of instruction in schools is a political issue the world over which symbolizes the dominance of a group, a culture, an ideology while for refugees it represents an issue of access to education (Dryden-Peterson, 2003). Hence, language of instruction is one of the most important issues to focus on in terms of access to education for refugees. This is because, refugee children, in addition to entering an unfamiliar new education system that might not acknowledge their past education, they often also have to adjust to learning in a new language (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). According to McBrien (2005); UNHCR (2009a); Women Refugee Commission (2011); and Gozdzia and Walter (2012), language of instruction presents one of the formidable challenges for integrating refugees into the public education systems of the host nations.

According to Loewen (2004), refugees skill in the language of instruction in the host nation can be affected by refugees pre-migration educational experiences; the social and psychological distance between the refugees and their hosts; refugees possible or intended length of residence in the host nation; and the comparative social status between the refugees and their hosts. In these regard, Loewen (2004) explained that lack of previous educational experience makes the learning of a second language in the host nation all the more difficult for refugee children. For example, the Khmer in Australia (Boua, 1990 cited in Loewen, 2004) and the Somalis in New Zealand (Humpage, 1999 cited in Loewen, 2004) arrived with little formal education and no literacy skills in their first language and faced serious difficulties in learning English.

Regarding the social and psychological distance between refugee their hosts, Loewen (2004) argued that the greater the distance between the two groups, the lower the likelihood of learners acquiring the their hosts language. The social and Psychological distance between the refugees and their hosts is determined by the degree to which the two groups share the same social circles, the cohesiveness of the target language group, the congruence of the two cultures, and the attitudes

of the two groups towards each other. Another important factor is the comparative social status of the two groups; the best conditions for second language acquisition are when the host population and the refugees are of roughly equal social status, neither being dominant or subordinate. Loewen (2004) further noted that language acquisition by refugees may be affected by their perception of their status within their new society. If they wish to return to their homeland or move to the third country, they may be less motivated to learn the host country language. By contrast, if they see themselves as settling permanently in their new homeland, this will provide extra incentive for them in their language learning.

Taking the case of refugee children in Uganda where language of instruction is English, Dryden-Peterson (2003) explained the impact of language on refugee children education saying that refugee children must repeat classes, and they are often old socially for the level of education to which they find themselves limited by language. This situation, as Dryden-Peterson (2003) argues contributes negatively to the social development of refugee children and exposes to increased rates of school drop-out which ultimately subjected children to academic and social retardation. Goździak and Walter (2012) listed language barriers as one of the serious challenges hindering mainstreaming of refugee children into Egyptian public schools even for Iraqi refugees whose Arabic is different from the Egyptian dialect. In Lebanon, as UNHCR and REACH (2004) lamented, foreign language instruction is one of the major barriers to the educational integration of Syrian refugees in the public education system which is affecting both enrolment and retention of Syrian refugee children.

### **2.9.3 Cultural Compatibility and Host Community Attitude**

Culture can be defined as “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2002: 4). Cultural compatibility and attitude of host community towards the refugees are identified as major factors that can facilitate or hinder local integration of refugees with the host population (Fielden, 2008; Kanu, 2008; and Agbloti, 2011).

Fielden (2008) asserted that the degree of linguistic, ethnic, and cultural similarities between the host and refugee population is a significant factor in the initiation of a local integration process. Along this line, Kunz (1981: 46) posited that integration is primarily dependent on cultural

similarity and said “perhaps no other host factor has more influence on the satisfactory resettlement of the refugee than cultural compatibility between refugee background and host”. The recognition and protection of cultural diversity, as well as the support for cultural activities in which both migrants and the local community can express themselves and engage in intercultural dialogue and exchange is of utmost importance to facilitate local integration. According to Juzwiak, McGregor and Siegel (2014) celebration of cultural festivities, as well as the sharing of new experiences between local and migrant communities may also strengthen social ties, making co-habitation easier.

As Dryden-Peterson and Hovil (2003) note, while considering local integration as possible durable solution for refugee problems, it is important to include the voice of host community due to the crucial role they play in ensuring access to livelihood resources and services for refugees. In this regard, Agbloti (2011), for example, argued that local integration is highly dependent on a significant level of buy-in from the host population. It also requires host communities that are welcoming and responsive to refugees, and public institutions that are able to meet the needs of a diverse population. This point clearly demonstrates the role of host communities and refugee related institutions in the host country in successful integration of refugees, emphasizing the extent to which host communities and the relevant institutions in the host country are key stakeholders whose decisions carry a lot of weight. Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003) further noted that attitudes of the host societies, including the society’s level of discrimination, as well as a migrant’s access to institutions in the host society and the role of the media as important determinants of success of local integration.

As Maslowski (2001), and Hongboontri and Keawkhong (2014) argued, school cultures, which is defined as the basic assumptions, norms and values, and cultural artifacts that are shared by school members, and that are developed in long period of time, influence the functioning of its members at the school. They shape and re-shape what people do, think, and feel at the school.

Kanu (2008) identified cultural and ethnic difference between the refugees and the host community as one of the major barriers affecting education of refugee children, particularly in Western countries. Kanu (2008) study revealed that in integrated schools of Manitoba, Canada, due to cultural and ethnic differences, Africa refugee students were isolated, excluded, and lonely and hence depicted that at microsystem level the relationship between refugee children and the host

community children is cracked. The major reason for such relationship between the refugees and hosts in Canadian schools, as Kanu (2008) revealed, is strongly relate to the incompatibility between the culture of refugees and the school culture. Wagner (2013) explained the same issue in such terms that cultural compatibility between the refugees origin and host countries play a major role in a refugee child's sense of identity and integration and argued that the more closely the refugee home country's norms and values align with the host country, the higher is the chance that a refugee child will develop a sense of belonging and the easier is the possibility of integration. A study in Canada, for instance, found that Yugoslavian refugees who had experiences with Western educational systems had an easier time integrating and developing a sense of belonging than peers whose educational background was less like that of their resettlement country (Wilkinson, 2002).

#### **2.9.4 Education Related Costs**

Education related cost is the most cited factor that affects the ability of refugee families to educate their children (Dryden-Peterson, 2003; UNHCR, 2009a; Karanja, 2010; Women Refugee Commission, 2011; and Gozdziaik and Walter, 2012). In Cairo, Egypt, Gozdziaik and Walter (2012) explained that public and private schools have fees for books, uniforms and extra-curricular lessons and a refugee community advocate cited by the same authors said that some families are forced to enroll only one child in school while keeping the rest of their children at home, because they cannot afford the cost of private education.

Dryden-Peterson (2003) indicated that cost associated with education for refugees are more explicit in urban areas of Uganda and refugee families are required to pay school fees for their children to offset additional costs incurred in an urban setting, such as water, electricity, and increased teachers' salaries. As the result of such education related costs in Kampala, Women Refugee Commission (2011) lamented that more than half of the refugee school-age children (over six years old) are out of school. Regarding the impact of cost on refugee education in Kenya, Karanja (2010), asserted that refugee parents and guardians whose children access free primary education must shoulder the burden of providing school-related materials including notebooks, textbooks, uniforms, and, in some cases, a desk for one's child and even if access is available the precarious economic situations of refugees in Nairobi make it difficult for many of them to support their children education. Education related costs and its impacts on refugees in Kenya was further

explained by UNESCO (2011: 155) saying that “although primary schooling is meant to be free to all, some schools request an admission fee before enrolling refugee children” and this is “limiting their access to Education”. Based on its study on refugee education in urban settings taking the case of Nairobi, Kampala, Amman, and Damascus, UNHCR (2009a) emphasized that refugees’ financial constraints due to general poverty coupled with the lack of access to jobs or legal employment are leading refugee children to non-enrolment and non-completion of studies. Crush and Tawodzera (2011) discussed financial barriers as major impediments for Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa.

### **2.9.5 Certification and Recognition of Studies of Refugees**

Certification of documents ensure that refugee students are not barred from entry to education programs in the host nation and special provisions may be necessary to ensure that refugees and returnees students are not further harmed by their situation due to invalidity, real or perceived, of certificates obtained during displacement (Kirk, 2009). The long-term impact of even the best education programs for refugees or displaced students, Kirk (2009) argued, can be compromised when students are unable to officially prove their competencies with acceptable certificates and documentation. Sawade (2007) further contended that if not validated and certified, refugee students are receiving an education but have no proof that it is considered legitimate.

Sawade (2008) explained that refugees usually will have no certificates at all, due to having left them behind or lost them during their flight from danger. For those with certificates, showing that they have achieved certain standards of formal education is extremely difficult if their certificates are not recognized. Kirk (2009) indicated that validation of certificates and other documentation may take place in a new jurisdiction, such as when a refugee student is seeking entry to host community institutions or returning to the place of origin with ‘foreign’ certificates, issued by a different authority. A validation process, according to Kirk (2009), may be a cursory check that the document is not fake, or it may be a more complicated process of comparing syllabi and equivalencies to ensure a match with official requirements.

Regarding the importance of certification of documents to access education in Kenya, UNHCR (2009a) and Karanja (2010) asserted that refugees need school and birth certificates to access education opportunities and attaining refugee status is an important step to get access to education.

In an extensive study of certification issues for refugees and IDPs by UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Kirk (2009) provided a broad view of the ways in which education pursued by refugees can be recognized, as well as the major challenges to recognition in most situations. The main forms include cross-border examinations through which Southern Sudanese students living in Uganda, for example, have access to examinations from their home country; host country examinations through which refugees from Somalia, for example, access the national examinations in Kenya, their country of exile; and local certification boards such as the Inter-Regional Examinations Board initiated by Burundian and Congolese refugee educators in Tanzania in 2000.

#### **2.9.6 School Environment, Teachers and Parental Role for Refugee Education**

Facilitating refugee children's adaptation into a new and foreign school system is a complicated process that requires interventions at multiple levels including among others the school organization, teachers and students interaction, and parents and community involvement. This is because the way a school is organized, its relationship with parents and community, and how teachers interact and instruct students are all factors that can profoundly influence the success of students in general, and refugee children in particular (Hamilton, 2004). According to Wagner (2013), as schools are a place where refugee children build relationships and learn the norms of host society, the school environment must be both physically safe and ripe with cultural information. Block et al., (2014) also asserted that a school environment in which there is lack of appropriate support and responsiveness to the needs of refugee children, the impact on education and learning of refugees can be profound and in such environment refugee students may demonstrate lack of engagement, feelings of disempowerment, absenteeism, failure to establish and sustain healthy relationships, and dropping out from schools.

In order to facilitate learning of refugee students in the integrated classrooms of the host nation schools and the refugees themselves should play their respective roles. In this regard, one of the main tasks for refugee children within the school environment is to adapt and develop socialization skills in a new cultural and social context through incorporating and superimposing what is meaningful and functional from one culture to another (Hamilton, 2004).

Schools have a part to play in this process by helping refugee children to feel less invisible through creating a safe, validating environment where they feel supported and understood (Hamilton,

2004). This includes recognizing and understanding that trauma can impede short-term memory and can interfere with the attendance process of learning. The school's task may also be to orchestrate learning experiences within the school curriculum that include refugee children's experiences and which reinforce positive ways of handling problems.

Hamilton (2004) puts restoration of a sense of safety as a top priority for refugee children. The school needs to create a safe environment within the school and the individual classrooms. One approach within classrooms is the use of small groups, so children can learn from each other in an intimate and supportive environment. In addition, the implementation or strengthening of cross-cultural curricular topics and projects within schools could help increase levels of understanding, acceptance and mutual respect (Hamilton, 2004). Integrating a focus on human rights and refugees will additionally both inform mainstream students of the needs and experiences of the refugee children and validate the importance of the refugee children's experiences. Within this context, the development of extra-curricular activities would be of value, for instance through the development of after-school program for refugee youth who wished to participate. These groups could be places for the young refugees to express themselves through the traditional dancing or stories of their culture, or the groups could be used to address issues related to their experiences and to help rebuild a sense of the future for the young person.

In the context where refugee children are integrated into the classroom of mainstream host nation students the task of the teacher, as Hamilton (2004) argued can be a complicated one due to additional expectations. Additional challenges for the teacher include language difficulties, differences in learning styles and educational experiences, cultural differences and lack of resources amongst many refugee families. In this regard, Kronick (2013) study on teachers attitude towards refugee education in Nairobi demonstrated that language barrier, mental stress or psychological disorders, overage students, precarious economic status, and religious differences are key challenges that are making difficult teaching and learning in the refugee integrated classrooms. Integrating refugee children within the classroom may require both extra resources and additional mechanisms for supporting teachers as they develop their knowledge and expertise within this arena.

In such a context teachers are expected to develop cross-cultural competence. In order for teachers to develop cross-cultural competence, they need to become aware of their own cultural beliefs and

values, develop knowledge of information specific to the cultures that exist within their classroom and develop skills to engage in each culture (Hyder 1998 cited in Hamilton, 2004). According to Hyder (1998 cited in Hamilton, 2004), teachers can facilitate the development of cross-cultural competence in their own students by helping the students to note the similarities and differences in how children and adults look, speak, dress and so on, and to see differences as positive and not indicative of some type of deficit. Teachers also need to adopt ‘culturally-responsive teaching’ approaches. Culturally responsive teaching includes teachers acknowledging cultural diversity in classrooms, supporting this diversity in instruction by accepting and valuing differences, accommodating different learning styles and building on cultural backgrounds (Sparks, 1989 cited in Hamilton, 2004).

Although there is some controversy over the direct effects of teacher expectation on student achievement and development, there is clear evidence that teacher expectations influence teachers behavior within the classroom and their interactions with students (Hamilton, 2004). Of interest in the context of refugee education is the evidence that individual differences among teachers and also among students moderate expectancy effects. Given that refugees often come from very different cultures and possess different values and goals from those held by members of the country within which they are settling, the potential for conflicting stereotypes or biases to enter into teacher–student interactions is heightened. Consequently, initiatives that are aimed at influencing teacher views, knowledge and expectations related to the culture of the incoming refugee students need to be part of any attempt to have a significant impact on refugee education.

Hamilton (2004) further indicated that parental involvement is essential for the academic success of refugee children. Kanu (2008: 929) calls for “clearer dialog” between parents and teachers of refugee students to better understand “what the other party is equipped to provide to support the learning of African refugee students”. Limited proficiency in the language of instruction and the cultural differences were the key obstacles in preventing parents from being more involved in their children’s schooling. According to Kanu (2008) there are some personal barriers for refugee parents to involve in their children education, including among others, preoccupation with financial survival in host countries context where right to employment is prohibited.

Parental involvement in education has been found to have a positive influence on student performance and behavior in schools (Hamilton, 2004). Hence schools need to develop specific



policies and procedures that focus on ensuring the creation of a mutually adaptive relationship between the refugee child, his or her parents, schools, and surrounding community and helping services. These policies and procedures, according to Hamilton (2004), should promote and support the development of clear communication channels between the school and home; parental participation in school activities and the child's education; host country students' awareness of the refugee community and culture; teacher understanding and support for the needs and interests of the child, family, and culture; a safe school environment free from racism and bullying; and the integrated use of multiple service.

## **2.10 Summary**

Population displacements and refugee formations are becoming an ever increasing challenges to the international community. The direct impact of refugee influx due to accident of geography on the countries neighboring conflict affected countries, and the indirect influence of the same phenomenon on other countries due to secondary movement and burden sharing, made the issue an international concern. With regards to refugee phenomenon, Africa is an anomalous continent for it being, at the same time, the largest refugee generating and hosting continent; for its intractable conflicts which seems to continue in the foreseeable future with no tenable solution insight; and for the presence of large number of protracted refugee situations. The population migration experiences of Africa, manifested in terms of refugee hosting and generating, mainly fall into the rubric of forced migration.

To deal with the refugee phenomenon, African countries have developed and implemented various policies and laws. However, due to various reasons, the characteristics of refugee policies and laws demonstrated an extraordinary mismatch whereby in African nations generous refugee policies were implemented while there were draconian refugee laws and the vice versa, in the time from 1960's to the end of the 1980's and from 1990's up to the present, respectively.

To end refugeehood, UNHCR proposes three durable solutions; one of which is local integration. In African countries refugee policies, this solution is not favored. However, as part of international trend of refugees' urbanization, in Africa too, refugees are moving into urban centers in large numbers. So as to deal with an ever increasing urban refugees, UNHCR in 2009, introduced an urban refugee policy. This policy strongly promotes integration of refugees into the host country social services, including education. One of the common characteristics in the refugee laws of

many of the African nations is their reservation towards provision of primary education to refugees the same way they do for their citizen. While promoting integration of refugee children into the national education system, UNHCR requires all parties involved in the issue to make sure that identity of refugees is maintained. Although the dilemma between integrating refugee children into national education system and maintain their identity requires careful planning, providing access to education to refugee students by itself suffers from various challenges.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Given the diverse nature of refugees' experiences, the significance of home and host country environment on refugee children, and the need to impose some order on the wide array of contextual factors to be considered, this study will adapt the ecological systems theory and the social capital theory so as to understand the relationship among diverse factors. Hence, the first section of this chapter discusses the ecological systems theory. The second section focuses on the social capital theory, and finally the conceptual framework for this study is schematically presented.

#### **3.2 Ecological Systems Theory**

A systems approach is at the heart of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, in which he analyzed human beings' distant and proximal living environment or settings from the human development point of view (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). A system, according to Senge (2006) can be defined as an interrelated set of elements functioning as an operating unit. It is a deliberately designed unit that consists of a set of diverse, clearly discernable and interdependent components that interact, and are united according to some organizing idea, plan or control principle to accomplish the purpose for which they were designed.

Systems approach, according to Scott (2003), is the process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole. Systems approach is a set of habits or practices within a framework with an understanding that the component parts of a system can be captured in the context of relationship with each other and with other systems, rather than in isolation.

According to Lunenburg (2010) all schools are open systems that constantly interact with their environment. Open systems, according to Burrell and Morgan (1979: 59), are characterized by an exchange with their environment in which they engage in transactions with their environment, importing and exporting, and changing themselves in the process. Scott (2008) emphasized that, in fact, schools need to structure themselves to deal with forces in the world around them. Hence, it is very difficult to ignore the schools environment which consists of groups, organizations, other

institutions and even the global society outside the school, all of which influence schools functioning.

The ecological environment is conceived by Bronfenbrenner (1994: 39) as “a set of nested structures, each inside the other like a set of Russian dolls”. The ecological systems theory examines, as McBrain (2011) stressed, how distinct layers of identity and human functioning interconnect such that there are multiple contexts and mutual interactions among levels that affect people’s responses and sense of connection to their environment. Hence, Bronfenbrenner’s model separates aspects of the environment according to the immediacy with which they impact on the developing child, namely the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Andeson et al., 2004; Coughlan and Owns-Manley, 2006; Darling, 2007; Penn, 2008; Kanu 2008; and McBrain, 2011).

First there is the microsystem, which is defined as a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the person in a face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features, and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality and a system of belief. The microsystem thus describes the relationship between the individual child and the immediate settings which impact on the child. The interrelations between two or more microsystems in which the refugee child is actively involved comprises a mesosystem. The mesosystem, the second layer in the system, which is a series of microsystems, describes relationships between proximal settings in which the refugee child is directly involved.

The third layer, the exosystem, is comprised of settings that do not involve the refugee child as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the refugee child. For the refugee child, examples of this environmental system may include the rules established by local organizations supporting refugees, a parental income, or a variety of other indirect environments potentially affecting a child. Finally, the macrosystem constitutes the broad ideology, policy, laws and customs of a society that have effect on the refugee children integration and identity. The macrosystem is the overarching pattern of micro-, meso- and exosystems, which characterize a given culture, subculture, or broader social context. It is the level of cultural ideologies, macro-institutions, laws, and public policies that impinge on the refugee child including, for example, policies from ministries of education and UNHCR, national legal

provisions related to refugees, political or academic views on refugee integration and identity, and etc.

The impact of systems approach in the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is evident in its emphasis on interaction between proximal and distal environment and the human being. Systems are patterns of organization, the identity of which becomes more than simply the sum of their parts. Any individual person or situation can be thought of simultaneously as both a separate entity and part of different systems. The learner is, for example, is part of a family, a school system as well as a peer system, each of which system operates in stable and predictable ways that contribute to its continuity, yet retains the possibility of fluidity and change. The systems operate at different but interrelated levels in constant dynamic interaction. Change at one level has an inevitable, although not always predictable, effect on the other levels. At any particular level there are subsystems that also interact with each other and with other levels of the system.

A fundamental element in Bronfenbrenner's model is an appreciation that the environment does not merely impact on the child but that the child also actively partakes in his or her own development, and perception of context influences response to human and physical surroundings (Stewart, 2011). As the result, development is a process of mutual accommodation characterized by reciprocity where the person is not only influenced by his or her environment, but also influences the environment, and the environment of interest is not a single, immediate setting, but incorporates several settings and the interconnections between them. This theory is thus a tool for describing human development which takes into account the role that environment plays in the process. Regarding the interplay between environment and the developing child, Stewart (2011) argued that humans do not develop in isolation; rather, development is the result of interplay among various contexts or systems to which the individual belongs throughout their life.

Stewart (2011) reminded that educators working with refugees and war-affected learners need to be aware of the many factors involved in the personality development of the learners, as well as the factors involved in that learners' behavior and their successes or difficulties in school. According to Stewart (2011), successes or difficulties of refugee learners are not just the result of their personal characteristics and choices, but also the result of a number of factors including, but not limited to, the learners relationships in the classroom, school, and home; the economic situation

of their family; the appropriateness of the programming; the socio-economic status of the student and the students' family; and the status of the cultural or religious group to which the student belongs in the broader society.

While considering refugee education, the ecological systems theory, as Stewart (2011) suggested, allows to investigate not only the school environment (microsystem); the family, and other social environments (mesosystem); but also allows to consider how the exosystem and the macrosystem impact on the refugee learner. Bronfenbrenner's theory is consistent with the establishment of holistic, integrated educational support structure, acknowledging the important role that parents, teachers, education officials, peers, the extended family, the community and wider government structures can play in providing support, not only for individual learners, but also to all other systems that may impact on learning and development of the refugee child. This theory accentuates the need for educational support services to deal with all barriers to learning and development in a comprehensive and integrated approach, in order to ensure that quality support is provided at various levels of the system.

Regarding refugee children, Stewart (2011) stressed that uncertainties and crises are pervasive in their lives. This is because refugee children have atypical experience whereby expectations and experiences of their home country ecosystem interferes in their adjustment to the new ecosystem demands in the host country which usually presents a new language, culture, and education system (Anderson et al., 2004). Hence, the major task for the refugee child, the family and for the schools, and other service providers within the host country is to manage this transition as smoothly as possible, and establish a mutually beneficial and adaptive ecosystems.

In addition to role of the family, neighborhood, and school on the refugee children education, Watters (2008) emphasized macrosystem level factors in terms of policies and laws developed by international bodies and national governments, and exosystem level factors in terms of practice guidelines and directives, that impinge on the refugee children's education. Watters (2008) further stressed that, particularly at microsystem and mesosystem level, the roles of those who provide services to refugees, including school personnel, should not be seen as merely instrumental; but as actively involved in the interpretation and implementation of policies, guidelines, and directives within the institutional constraints imposed upon them. As Stewart (2011) pointed, investigation

into such complex experiences of refugee children and their educational needs requires a theoretical framework that is multidimensional and comprehensive which can capture the many factors that could potentially impact their development.

The ecological systems theory helps to explicate the refugee children experiences; past and present, which have significant impact in their process of adaptation to the new school environment in the host country. Not only is the refugee child be required to adapt to the new school environment; but schools, teachers, existing students, and policies and guidelines at various levels of administration are also expected to adapt to the refugee child circumstances. Concerning these, Anderson et al., (2004) argued that planning for the refugee children educational interventions need take into account not only the refugee child's adaptation as evidenced by changes in child behavior, learning, peer relations and health, but also on the school's adaptation as evidenced by changes in school policies, procedures, practices and teacher development.

Neal and Neal (2013) asserted that social connections and interactions in an environment are a key components of ecological systems theory. However, despite its explicit focus on social interactions, applications of ecological system theory typically has not focused its attention on patterns of social interactions, and does not clearly explicate how and with whom the connections and interactions takes place in an ecological environment, which is essential to the extent that human development is a social process (Neal and Neal, 2013). In this regard, Ager and Strag (2008) argued that the social capital theory is an influential perspective in informing assets associated with social connection. Hence, refugees, as 'social capitalists', as Zetter et al., (2006) argued, turn to one another to reconstruct their networks in host society, and to the host community as a means of support and to establish a meaningful sense of social life and identity. The social capital of refugees facilitate integration extending into the whole system of relationship between refugees and the host community.

### **3.3 The Social Capital Theory**

Much of the concepts that explain social capital are apparent in the work of early thinkers of the modern period, including Durkheim, De Tocqueville and Marx (Portes, 1998; Lin, 2001; Bexley, Marginson and Wheelahan, 2007; and Tzanakis, 2013). The concept social capital become a focus

of sustained intellectual debate and research beginning from the 1970s and 1980s with the description of social networks used by elites to preserve their positions in the class system by Pierre Bourdieu (Portes, 1998; Lin, 2001; and Bexley, Marginson and Wheelahan, 2007). Cotemporary to Bourdieu was James Coleman who contributed to the development of the idea of social capital in the US through his work explaining why some children from disadvantaged backgrounds succeed at school while others, apparently equally placed, drop out of the system (Portes, 1998 and Lin, 2001). During the 1990s, Robert Putnam further popularized the concept of social capital through the work explaining differences in civic behavior in the north and south of Italy, and a research examining the decline of community in the US over the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Tzanakis, 2013).

As Bexley, Marginson and Wheelahan (2007) explained social capital is traditionally construed to include two factors: the networks of affiliation to which people belong (family groups, friendship ties, networks of professional colleagues and business contacts, membership of formal and informal associations and groups) and the informal behavioral norms individuals and groups rely upon in establishing, maintaining, and using those networks.

According to Bourdieu (1986), social capital is defined as the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition. For Bourdieu, social capital is related to the size of network and the volume of past accumulated social capital commanded by the agent (Bourdieu, 1986). He explains social capital as a means for the privileged to protect their place in the class system, and to reproduce the system itself by denying the entry of outsiders. That is the reason why Bourdieu (1986) argued as the actors' potential for accruing social profit and control of capital are differentially distributed. However, as Lin (2001) explicated, social capital in Bourdieu's explanation is a collective asset shared by members of a defined group, with clear boundaries, obligations of exchange, and mutual recognition.

Coleman (1988: S98) defines social capital as consisting of some aspect of social structure, and facilitates certain actions of actors - whether persons or corporate actors - within the structure. According to Bexley, Marginson and Wheelahan (2007) and Tzanakis (2013), Coleman adopts a middle line between two theoretical traditions. The first is a functionalist view of social action



which is conditioned by social structure and the second is rational theory which suggests that actors' goals are determined by utility-maximizing pursuit of his/her self-interest. Coleman (1988), while defining social capital as consisting of any social structural features or resources that are useful to individuals for specific actions, stresses social capital as a public good. Thus, in Coleman's conception of social capital, norms, trust, sanctions, authority, and other structural features become important in sustaining social capital (Lin, 2001).

For different reasons, (i.e., Bourdieu to maintain and reproduce group solidarity and preserve the group's dominant position, and Coleman to maintain and enhance trust, norms, authority, and sanctions among the network members), see dense or closed networks as the means by which collective capital can be maintained and reproduction of the group can be achieved (Lin, 2001).

Putnam (1995) defined social capital as it refers features of social organizations, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called civic virtue (Putnam, 1995). The difference, according to Andriani (2013), is that social capital draws attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a network of reciprocal social relations. Putnam (1995) underlines that a society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital. In Putnam's formulation, as Tzanakis (2013) contended, social capital is elevated from a feature of individuals and small groups in local communities to a feature of large population aggregates. As such, it can become a diagnostic tool for societal political and economic health.

Despite these differences in defining social capital, Lin (2001) and Woolcock (2001) argued that there is an emerging consensus in the literature explaining it in terms of the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures. In this conceptualization, social capital may be defined as the resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions. Thus, the concept has two important components: (1) it represents resources embedded in social relations rather than individuals, and (2) access and use of such resources reside with actors (Lin, 2001).

According to Lin (2001) the theory of social capital is framed in a set of assumptions about the macro-, meso-, and microstructures of society. For the macrostructure, the theory posits three assumptions. First, the theory begins with an image of the social structure, which consists of a set of positions that are rank-ordered according to certain normatively valued resources such as class,

authority, and status. Second, the theory assumes that while various valued resources form the bases of hierarchical structures and each valued resource defines a particular hierarchy, these hierarchies tend toward congruence and transferability. That is, there tends to be a correspondence among hierarchical positioning across resource dimensions. An occupant of a relatively high-standing position on one resource dimension also tends to occupy a relatively high position on another resource dimension. Third, the theory assumes that this hierarchical structure tends to be pyramidal, the upper levels having fewer occupants than the lower levels.

For the meso- and microstructures, as Lin (2001) asserted, the theory makes two assumptions about interactions and actions. First, it assumes that social interactions are more likely to take place among individuals at similar or adjacent hierarchical levels – the principle of homophilous interactions. Such interactions are usually dictated by the motivation of the actors to preserve and defend valued resources already at the individual's disposal and it has potential to promote the maintenance of identity. However, actors' action in network can also be dictated by desire to add valued resources not yet at the individual's disposal. Such an action, which Lin (2001) called instrumental, requires access to other social positions, especially those with more or better resources which can be achieved through the heterophilous principle of interactions.

Social capital does not inhere within a single individual but can only exist within a pattern of relationships. To benefit out of this relationship certain kinds of social structure are especially important (Coleman, 1988). Taking into account Cooley's (1909) cited in Woolcock (2001) notion of primary groups, and Granovetter's (1973) cited in Woolcock (2001) work on strong and weak ties, Putnam (2000), Woolcock (2001), and IRC and WRC (2013) classified social capital into bonding and bridging social capital.

According to Putnam (2000: 22) bonding capital is inward looking and tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups. These tight networks of kinship and intimate friendship can provide solidarity and support for their members but are also limited through their self-focus. Bridging capital on the other hand, is outward looking and refers to the weaker ties that connect people across social cleavages. According to Smyth et al. (2010) bonding social capital exists in the connections between individuals with similar characteristics and has value in the promotion of solidarity between people sharing the values while bridging social capital occurs when people from different groups come together. Woolcock (2001) explained that bonding social capital refers to

relations between family members, close friends, and neighbors, while the bridging social capital to more distant friends, associates, and colleagues. Bridging, as Woolcock (2001) indicated is essentially a horizontal metaphor, however, implying connections between people who share broadly similar characteristics. However, social capital has also a vertical dimension (Woolcock, 2001). Such a social capital is linking social capital which exists in the connections between individuals who have different amounts of power and is often associated with a move into a new social context (Smyth et al., 2010 and Woolcock, 2001).

Regarding the relative merits and demerits of bonding and bridging social capital, Lin (2001) argued that the outcome of network and the condition under which the network is beneficial should be given due consideration. In this regard, Lin (2001) posited that for preserving or maintaining resources (i.e., expressive actions), bonding social capital may have a relative advantage while for searching for and obtaining resources not presently possessed by the actors (i.e., instrumental actions), bridging social capital in the network might be more useful.

The idea of social capital is influential in the development of refugee integration strategies in the Western part of the globe in particular (Dimitriadou, 2010). According to Boateng (2009) social capital is of significant importance to groups like refugees because it can contribute to economic survival and success even though they may lack economic resources, such as skills, education, and financial capital. The refugees' social worlds, Willems (2003) explicated, include the sum of all the refugees' relationships and of the forces impinging on them at any moment and can be explored through the social networks of the refugees and the changes they undergo during the process of forced migration and adaptation to life in exile.

Explaining the importance of social capital of different kinds to refugees, Dimitriadou (2010) argued that the presence of an ethnic community network in the host society can potentially play an important role in refugees' reception and settlement as it can offer protection against external prejudice, and facilitates economic opportunities, group identity and a network of relationships and associations based on shared culture, ethnicity and language. On the other hand, acquisition of host community language and access to information may constitute valuable resources that can theoretically initiate the process of refugees' socio-economic participation in the host society. Major et al., (2013) also argued that in the refugee context there is strong and positive relationship between bonding and bridging capital in such a way that strong bonding capital within a refugee

community provides the emotional support, confidence and self-esteem that contribute to the development of bridging capital which helps refugees to better navigate their new environment.

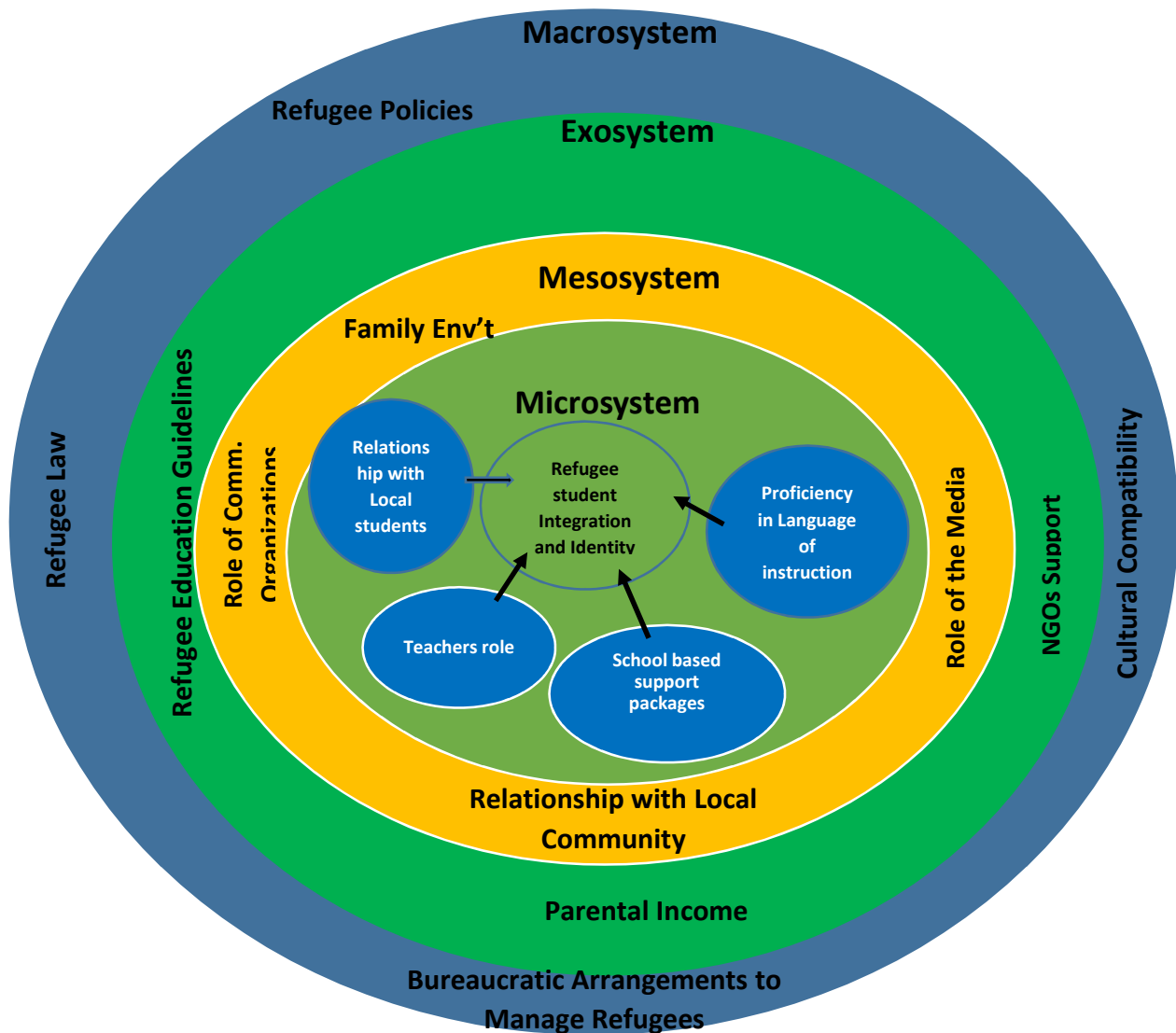
Regarding the peculiar challenges of refugee children in school context, Smyth et al., (2010) and Rutter (2006) asserted that refugee students are usually traumatized, transient and insecure with no choice and little support which other students regardless of ethnicity, culture or language might not suffer. According to Smyth et al., (2010), refugee students have special needs and problems in schools due to interrupted education in the country of origin; horrific experiences in their home countries and during their flight to the host country; families who experience a drop in their standard of living and status in the new society; loss of parents; families who do not know their legal and social rights in the host country and speaking little or no of the host community language. In this regard, Smyth et al., (2010) implied that schools have to adopt conscious strategies that can facilitate social connection of refugee students and build their social capital. Castles et al., (2002) also, in their review of the literature of refugee integration, argue that refugees should be supported in maintaining their cultural and social identities while establishing a relationship with their new external world and making social connections.

### **3.4 Conceptual Framework for Refugee Students Integration and Identity**

As can be inferred from the above discussions, the theories inform the mutual relationship between the refugee child as an individual and the environment in which the child is functioning as major arenas to analyze dilemmas of refugee integration and identity. Hence, in the theories discussed above the impact of personal and environmental factors on the development of refugee child in the integrated context are emphasized. The theories examined how different layers in the environment interconnect and mutually interact, and how the refugee child responds and connects to these layers of environment, while the refugee child gets into the host community environment as new actor. In this process of mutual relationship between the refugee child and his/her host community environment, the role of refugees' social capital as mediator or connecting tissue facilitating integration into the host community and preserving meaningful sense of identity is discussed. In this study such mutual interaction between the host community environment and the refugee child was explored at four interrelated levels of the system: macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem and microsystem.

Using the relevant theories discussed and taking into account major factors that come into play in the integration and identity of refugee children while refugee students are attending classes together with students of the host country, the following framework was adapted to conceptualize the relationship among various variables in different layers of a system. In this study, relationship among variables within the particular layer of the system and among different layers of the system were expected to take place.

**Figure 3.1** Conceptual Framework for this Study



**Source:** Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Andeson et al., 2004; Coughlan and Owns-Manley, 2006; Darling, 2007; Kanu 2008; Penn, 2008; and McBrain, 2010.

In this study, at the **macrosystem level**, the refugee policies of the UNHCR and Ethiopia, the refugee law of Ethiopia, bureaucratic set-up established to manage refugee issues, and cultural compatibility between refugees and host community are considered as factors affecting the integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students. The refugee policy of UNHCR and Ethiopia are examined specifically taking into consideration policies related to integration of

urban refugees into the national systems of education and Ethiopian cultural, economic, and political factors that have shaped the formulation and/or practice of the policy respectively. The refugee law of Ethiopia is explored from the point of view of basic definition of refugee; the cessation and exclusion clauses; the legal status, the rights and duties of refugees; and the procedure for refugee status determination *vis a vis* the standards in the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention on the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. The refugee law of Ethiopia is also explored from the point of view of its provisions to refugee education. The bureaucratic arrangements of Ethiopia for managing refugee issues is explored taking into consideration the legally mandated organizations in Ethiopia for refugees issues in general and organizations involving in refugee education in particular. Cultural compatibility is explored from the point of view of proximity in language, religion and cultural values between Eritrean and Somali refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa.

At the level of **exosystem** this study considers the role and contributions of various supports from NGOs working on refugee issues, the Ministry of Education (MoE) guidelines related to refugee education, and refugee parents income/employment status. NGOs roles and contributions were explored taking into account the package of supports they are providing for refugees including subsistence allowance, health related supports, education related allowances, and other psychosocial supports; the role of NGOs in refugee children access to integrated schools and enrollment; the arrangement of NGOs to support schools in Addis Ababa hosting refugee students; and NGOs practices of sensitizing host community in Addis Ababa towards refugee situation. Parental income takes into account the adequacy of subsistence allowance refugee receive in Addis Ababa and additional sources of income, if any, refugees relay so as to supplement the allowance they collect from UNHCR. The MoE educational guidelines explored taking into account guidelines, official letters and/or directives dealing with integration of refugee students with the host community students.

The **mesosystem** level in this study is explored taking into account the role of home environment in the integration of refugee children into the primary schools in Addis Ababa and in maintaining their identity in-terms of all rounded parents educational support, language used at home, cultural and religious practices promoted at home, future life orientation promoted by parents or guardians. Parental support is inferred from parents involvement in the education of their children in the form

of tutoring their children afterschool themselves or through paid tutors, involvement in school affairs as committee members, and availing educational materials for their children including school fee, registration fee, uniforms, textbooks, books, pens and pencils, bags, and some sporadic financial contributions requested by schools. At this level, interaction and relationship between refugees and the local host community is explored taking into consideration what refugee share together with their host community neighbors during major social circumstances such as major festivals, during wedding or morning ceremonies, and in various village development endeavors; how the local community neighbors perceive the effect of the presence of refugees in their neighborhood, and relationship between the refugee children and the host community children in the neighborhood taking into account their relationship in friendship preferences. At this level of the system, the role of community based organizations is explored taking into account the role of religious institutions (Churches or Mosques) and educational arrangements attached to or related to religious institutions (Church schools, Koran Schools outside Mosques, Mosque schools), and private non-formal language schools in the integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa primary schools. The role of media is explored in terms of how Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa primary schools use TV channels and internet resources for the purpose of integration with host community and identity preservation.

This study considers the **microsystem** as the immediate environment for the refugee child, i.e., the primary school, where the actual day to day practice of managing the dilemmas of integration and identity while supporting the refugee children learning and development takes place. From this vantage point, at this very proximal level to the refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa, the role of local students, proficiency in the language of instruction, the role of teachers, and contributions of school based academic support packages were emphasized. In this study the interrelationship between refugee students and the local students in school context was explored taking into account the language they use for interaction; academic resources they share; interaction among the students in the school play grounds, while coming to school and leaving the schools every day; within school friendship preferences; and the implication of such factors for the integration and identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students. Of particular importance for most refugees will be the development of appropriate skills on the language of instruction which is usually different from language spoken in the family of refugees. In this regard, this study explored the proficiency of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Amharic language, how they



learned/failed to learn Amharic, and the challenges they are facing as the result of Amharic medium of instruction. Teachers' role is examined taking into account preservice or in-service training they have taken regarding refugee education, and the mechanisms they use to identify and deal with refugee students, and the teaching methods they employ to support refugee students in their respective classrooms. School based academic support packages are explored taking into consideration afterschool tutorials, extracurricular activities, and students reading groups and how such arrangements are contributing for the integration and identity preservation of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. Research Methodology and Design**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology and the design of the investigation. The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section of the chapter presents the basic set of beliefs or the paradigmatic position for the study. In the second section the chapter discusses on comparative case study approach as the research design for this study. The sampling procedure employed to select research site and participants in the study is presented in the third section of this chapter. In the fourth section instruments of data collection employed for the study were thoroughly discussed. The fifth section of the chapter presented the data analysis techniques used in the study. The sixth and seventh sections of this chapter outlined criteria used to ensure the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations taken into account throughout the process of investigation respectively.

#### **4.2 Research Paradigm**

The basic set of belief (paradigm) which guided this research was constructivism. Constructivism asserts that different people construct meaning in different ways, even when experiencing the same event (Patton, 2002). In constructivist paradigm each individual constructs knowledge and his or her experience through social interaction. Constructivism as a paradigm argues that a researcher's understanding is co-constructed with that of the participants through their mutual interaction within the research setting and dialogic interaction through researcher-initiated data generation efforts such as interviewing. Constructivism strongly believes that all reality is socially constructed, and the culture in which people live shape the way they see things (Patton, 2002). Hence, constructivism is a world view which believes that individuals construct subjective meaning of reality based on their experiences which is often negotiated socially and historically. In terms of methods, the constructivist paradigm allows emphasize on observation and interviewing for data generation as the researcher aims to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it. This study engaged with the subjective world of the refugee children and their parents which is shaped by social and historical factors, and the host community environment in which they are living so as to understand reality constructed in the refugees context.

Ontologically this research embraced the belief that realities can only be understood from the point of view of participants and should be properly reported (Creswell, 2007 and Patton, 2002). So as to understand the subjective world of the participants, and reality from their point of view, during this study, the researcher became closer to the refugees and their environment by going to the field where the refugees live and work, and where their routine daily experiences happen. By doing this the researcher had immersed himself in naturally occurring complexities of daily life of the refugee students in particular so as to understand the inner perspectives of the refugees. Therefore, the epistemological assumption of qualitative approach where knowledge is believed to be subjective was upheld in this study.

Methodologically this research was qualitative and therefore inductive, emerging and shaped through the process of the research itself (Patton, 2002 and Creswell, 2007). As a result the researcher was guided by analytical principles rather than universal rules so that the research process was ended with creative synthesis of the whole complex of details. The data was emergent, as any qualitative research, because it was open to adapting its inquiries as understandings deepens, and new but relevant insights emerge, or as situations change during the research process.

In addition to the above indicated paradigmatic, ontological, epistemological, and methodological principles, this research followed a qualitative approach for several convincing reasons. A qualitative approach to research can be used when the purpose of the research is exploring the issue or problem (Creswell, 2007 and Stake, 1995). As the overall aim of this study was to explore how education for urban refugees in the integrated national education context is being implemented while taking into account the distinct identity of refugee students in selected primary schools of Addis Ababa, choosing a qualitative approach was convincingly relevant.

Creswell (2007) stressed that one can choose qualitative research approach if the intension of the study is to achieve complex and detailed understanding of the issue or problem. As the experiences of refugee children in the education environment designed for Ethiopian national context is complex and detail, and diverse among the refugee communities from different national origins, qualitative approach was followed to capture such a complex situation. In addition, this study intended to understand the educational experiences of urban refugee students in the actual school context where they were attending classes, in their home and community context, and in the context of their refugeehood.

Qualitative research questions often begin with how or what, so that the researcher can gain an in-depth understanding of what is going on relative to the topic of investigation (Patton, 2002). This study followed qualitative approach because the study raised how and what question so as to understand urban refugee education in Ethiopia. Qualitative approach emphasizes the researcher's role as active participant in the study (Creswell, 2005, and Patton, 2002). In this study, because, I, the researcher, was the key instrument in data collection and the interpretation of findings, qualitative approach was taken as the appropriate approach.

#### **4.3 Research Design: Comparative Case Study Approach**

This study used a qualitative case study design as strategy to approach the research problem taking into account the merits of the strategy. Stake (1995) defined case study methodology as a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in-depth a program, event, activity, process or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. In this regard Creswell (2007: 73) and Merriam (2009: 43) pointed that case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). Yin (2003) defined case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

Issues included in above definitions of case which characterize case study including in-depth inquiry of the issue or phenomenon; use of multiple sources of information; study of the issue or the phenomenon for extended period of time in its natural context; and producing thick description of the event or the phenomenon as report are all consistent with the paradigmatic and philosophical assumptions of qualitative research approach which this study followed.

Yin (2003) and Merriam (2009) proposed that case study can be an appropriate research strategy when the research poses “why”, “how” or “what” questions, when the researcher has little control over the issue under investigation, and when the focus of the research is on contemporary phenomenon within some real life context. As this study posed “how” and “what” questions, a case study strategy was the relevant strategy. Because this study took place in real-life context of

the research participants (i.e., the refugees) without any alteration or manipulation of the context, it is obvious that the researcher had no control over the issues under investigation, and therefore, case study strategy served the purpose of this research. This study focused on contemporary phenomenon while the phenomenon or issue unfolds (i.e., while the refugee children are attending schools in Ethiopian national context integrated with the citizen and education policies and guidelines related to refugee education are active), and hence, case study design was chosen as relevant strategy.

Yin (2003) and Merriam (2009) further indicated that case study design, unlike other qualitative research designs such as ethnography and grounded theory, allows the use of theoretical framework before data collection so as to have a sufficient blueprint that can guide the data collection and analysis process. As this study had such theoretical framework as foundation to examine or interpret the cases, it was found convincing to choose case study strategy among other qualitative research strategies.

Within the general framework of qualitative case study, this particular study will be designed as comparative case study. To compare, according to Crossley and Watson (2003) means to examine two or more entities by putting them side by side and looking for similarities and differences between or among them. In the field of education, this can apply both to comparisons between and within systems of education. Warwick and Osherson (1973:7) also defined comparison as the process of developing similarities and differences among phenomenon. The comparative case study, therefore, is the systematic comparison of two or more data points “cases” obtained through use of the case study method.

In this study the two selected refugee cases were compared against the following constructs.

1. The effect of the nature of relationship between refugees and host community on their integration and identity.
2. The practices of primary schools in Addis Ababa in integrating the refugee students.
3. The identity challenges refugee students are experiencing in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa.
4. The coping mechanisms refugee parents and children use to overcome the challenges they confront in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa and maintain their identity.

The above indicated terms of comparison (Manzon, 2007), or the constructs against which the two cases were compared (Steiner-Khamisi, 2002) are believed to have conceptual equivalence (Warwick and Osherson, 1973).

#### 4.4 Sampling Procedure

Conducting comparative case study requires, above all, selecting comparable cases. Regarding these problems, Steiner-Khamisi (2002: 60) emphasized that the issue of comparability is a key topic for any researcher who engages in comparative studies and suggested that unless the researcher identifies a commonality, or more accurately constructs, a specific dimension against which two or more cases can be compared, comparison is ruled out.

As statistical data obtained from Development Inter Church Aid Commission- Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department (DICAC-RRAD) indicated in 2013/2014 academic year of Ethiopia, there were refugee students from nine different national origins in Addis Ababa Primary schools attending classes integrated with the local students. The following table shows number of refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa from different national origins.

**Table 4.1** Refugee students from different origins in the primary schools Addis Ababa

| <b>National Origin</b> | <b>Somali</b> | <b>Eritrea</b> | <b>DRC</b> | <b>BDI</b> | <b>Dji.</b> | <b>Rwa.</b> | <b>Suds.</b> | <b>Yem.</b> | <b>Others</b> | <b>Grand Total</b> |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Total</b>           | 132           | 114            | 59         | 13         | 14          | 4           | 98           | 22          | 6             | <b>462</b>         |

**Source:** Statistical data obtained from Development Inter Church Aid Commission- Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department (DICAC-RRAD), June 2014.

In this study two levels of sampling were employed to select, first, the case refugee communities, and then, within the case sampling to select the actual participants (Merriam, 2009). The cases in this study are urban refugee students from different national origins who are attending classes in the primary schools of Addis Ababa integrated with local students. From the 462 refugee students in the primary schools Addis Ababa, as indicated in Table 4.1 who are from nine different national origins Eritrean and Somali urban refugee students were selected as cases purposefully. Refugee students from the two origins were selected purposively as typical cases. So as select the above two cases as typical cases the following criteria were used. The first is, as indicated in Table 4.1,

both urban refugee communities represent the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> largest primary school refugee student population respectively among the urban refugee students attending primary education in Addis Ababa in 2013/2014 Ethiopian academic year. Eritrean and Somali refugees also represent 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> largest refugee population respectively in the urban refugee program of Ethiopia. As UNHCR Ethiopian country office monthly refugee population statistical report indicated, in the December of 2014, there were 3626 Eritrean and 1171 Somali refugees recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa while all other nationalities recognized in the urban refugee program count at 1636 refugees. In addition, Eritrean and Somali refugees are considered comparable cases taking into account their opportunities of sharing some cultural elements with the host community in Addis Ababa. However, the two cases exhibit remarkable differences. Among the differences the language of their country of origin and the major reasons of flight from their country are identified. Hence, the two cases can be considered comparable and it is possible to establish equivalences between the cases as Manzoni (2007) and Phillips (2006) suggested.

As statistical data obtained from DICAC-RRAD revealed, in 2013/2014 Ethiopian academic year, Eritrean and Somali refugee students were enrolled in 71 and 22 primary schools in Addis Ababa respectively. In this study, however, six primary schools in Addis Ababa accommodating Eritrean and Somali refugee students were selected as research sites purposefully, using criterion sampling strategy. The major criteria used in this regard was selecting primary schools in which the largest number of Eritrean and Somali refugee students were accommodated. As the number of primary schools in which Eritrean and Somali refugee students were enrolled indicated, the actual distribution of the two case study refugee primary school students in Addis is quite different. In this regard while Eritrean refugee students were extremely scattered, Somali refugee students were relatively densely distributed. Taking into account this actual distribution, for the purpose of this study, from the primary schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students, those which have enrolled more than 5 students were selected; while in the case of primary schools accommodating Somali refugee students those schools enrolled more than 10 students were selected. Since there were no primary schools Addis Ababa (government or private) where both Eritrean and Somali refugee students were attending classes together, out of the six primary schools selected while three of them were accommodating Eritrean refugee students, the other three were accommodating Somali refugee students. In 2013/2014 academic year, the selected six primary schools were accommodating 105 Eritrean and Somali refugee students which account 40 percent from the total

of Eritrean and Somali refugee primary school students and 23 percent from the total of refugee primary school students in Addis Ababa.

For the purpose of this study, key informants refugee students from the six primary schools were selected for interview purposefully, using criteria. Among the Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the six sample schools, those who were enrolled in the second cycle primary grades were selected purposefully taking into consideration their relative age maturity and willingness to participate in the study, and a total of 20 students attending classes from grade 5-8 (i.e. 8 Eritrean and 12 Somali refugee students) were selected. The number of Somali refugee students participated in this study was higher than the Eritreans, parallel to the highest number of Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa primary schools.

The statistical data obtained from DICAC-RRAD on the refugee students in Addis Ababa schools in the 2013/2014 Ethiopian academic year revealed that Eritrean and Somali refugee students attending primary schools are from a total of 70 and 48 families respectively. In this study 8 parents of refugee primary school students (i.e. 4 Eritrean and 4 Somali origin) were selected purposefully, using convenience sampling. To identify refugee parents who are willing to participate in this study the researcher established contacts with the refugee parents by sending the telephone number of researcher through refugee students with whom the researcher met in the schools. Among those to whom phone number was sent, 8 refugee parents who were willing and agreed to participate in this research upon phone call were included in this study from the six schools.

Urban Refugees Central Committee (URCC) members who represent Eritrean and Somali refugees in Addis Ababa were also included in this study purposefully using criteria. In this regard 10 URCC members (5 Eritrean and 5 Somali) were selected to participate in FGD taking into account their position as committee members. While selecting URCC members for the FGD, convincing the committee members as their participation in the study is only for the purpose of dissertation was handled by staff from ARRA, DICAC-RRAD, and JRS.

Six school principals (one each from the six selected schools), one education expert from ARRA head office, four experts from NGOs working on urban refugee education in Addis Ababa (i.e., 2 from DICAC and 2 from JRS), and one UNHCR Ethiopian country office education experts were



included in this study purposefully using criterion, taking into account the relevance their official position for urban refugee education.

For the purpose of this study, six focus group discussion sessions of 6 participants each were organized with teachers who were purposefully selected in the six primary schools. Participants of the focus group discussion were selected using criteria including subject teachers who have refugee students in their classroom, homeroom teachers, and teachers who were teaching Amharic subject, and Civic and Ethical Education. These criteria were used taking into account the possibility of frequent contact and the responsibility of the teachers. Amharic language and Civic and Ethical Education teachers were included in the FGD to extract their unique experience due to the subjects they are teaching which are believed to be different and challenging subjects to the refugee students' former experiences.

For the purpose of this study, two FGD sessions of 6 participants each were organized with local host community representatives at two locations in Addis Ababa where Eritrean and Somali refugees were relatively densely settled and where some or all of the selected schools were located. To select local community representatives for the FGDs a purposive sampling strategy was used by setting criteria. The criteria employed for this purpose was including village level (*gox*) leaders in the FGD. Village (*gox*) are formally recognized organizational structures located below district (*woreda*) in Addis Ababa. These are structures which are very close to the community and responsible mainly to coordinate the community for various communal actions and meant to represent the village community in various governmental and other forums. The actual selection of local host community representatives for the FGDs was undertaken with the support of respective *woredas* education offices, and community organization and mobilization offices. In the case of Eritrean refugees, around the location in Addis Ababa where FGD with local host community representatives was organized, one of the school selected in this study was located; while in the case of Somali refugees, around the location where FGD with the local host community representatives was organized, all the three schools selected in this study were located.

In addition, classroom observations and observations in the compounds of the schools were organized in the six selected schools purposefully. Classroom observations were organized using criterion sampling where the observation took place in the first cycle primary classes of the six selected schools. From grade levels of first cycle primary one section with largest number refugee

students was selected for the observation. Hence, a total of six classroom observations were organized. Observations in the compounds of the selected schools were conducted for one full school day in each of the six selected schools beginning from the morning students' arrival hours to the schools up to the end of the school day and students' departure from schools including school tea and lunch break hours.

**Table 4.2** Summary of Sampling Procedures

| No. | Target Population                                                                                      | Sample                                                                         | Sampling Technique | Criteria Used                                                                                                                                              |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Urban Refugee students in A.A. from nine national origins                                              | Eritrean and Somali Refugee students                                           | Purposive          | Largest refugee community and largest refugee students population in Addis Ababa; opportunities to share some cultural elements with the host community.   |
| 2   | 93 primary schools hosting Eritrean and Somali refugee students (71 Eritrean and 22 Somali)            | Six primary schools (3 Eritrean and 3 Somali)                                  |                    | Schools with the largest Eritrean and Somali refugee students (Eritrean more than 5 students in the school and Somali more than 10 students in the school) |
| 3   | 105 Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the selected six primary schools                           | 20 students (8 Eritrean and 12 Somali) for interview                           |                    | Those who were enrolled in the second cycle primary grades; relative age maturity; and willingness to participate in the study.                            |
| 4   | Refugee parents of students in the six selected primary schools                                        | 8 refugee parents (4 Eritrean and 4 Somali)                                    |                    | Those parents who declared convenience upon phone call by the researcher and willing to participate in the study                                           |
| 5   | Principals of the six selected schools                                                                 | 6 school principals (one principal from each school)                           |                    | Relevance their official position for urban refugee education.                                                                                             |
| 6   | Experts from ARRA, UNHCR, DICAC-RRAD, JRS and UNHCR (organizations working on urban refugee education) | 6 experts (one each from ARRA and UNHCR, and two each from DICAC-RRAD and JRS) |                    | Relevance their official position for urban refugee education.                                                                                             |

|    |                                                               |                                                                                        |           |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7  | FGD with members of the Urban Refuge Central Committee (URCC) | 10 members (5 from Eritrean and 5 from Somali refugees) for FGD                        | Purposive | Relevance their official position for urban refugee education; and endorsement by ARRA, DICAC-RRAD, and JRS                                                        |
| 8  | FGD with the selected schools teachers                        | 36 participants in 6 FGDs of 6 participants each (one FGD in the six selected schools) |           | Subject teachers who have refugee students in their classroom; homeroom teachers; and teachers who were teaching Amharic subject, and Civic and Ethical Education. |
| 9  | FGD with local host community representatives                 | 12 participants in 2 FGDs for 6 participants each at two locations                     |           | Village level (gox) leaders.                                                                                                                                       |
| 10 | Classroom observations in the selected primary schools        | 6 classroom observation (3 Eritrean and 3 Somali)                                      |           | Primary first cycle classrooms accommodating largest number of refugee students                                                                                    |
| 11 | Observation of refugee students in and around school compound | 6 observation in the six selected primary schools                                      |           | During morning school arrival time; during schools tea and lunch breaks; and during students departure from schools                                                |

## **4.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

One of the major principles in case study data collection process is collecting evidences from multiple sources using multiple instruments of data collection (Creswell, 2007 and Yin, 2003). Among instruments of data collection for case study research, this particular study used the following ones.

### **4.5.1 Document analysis**

Documents which include proclamations, policy documents, directives, implementation guidelines, letters; administrative documents such as reports and records (Patton, 2002), were analyzed using document review as instrument of data collection. All international, national, regional and local level documents relevant to refugee education were collected and analyzed carefully. Documentation was mainly used to collect data regarding the official Ethiopian government, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations line of arrangements regarding refugee education in Ethiopia in general and urban refugee education in particular. In order to use the UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database and to access statistical data on the refugee population hosted in Ethiopia, a letter of request was submitted to the UNHCR Ethiopian country office. With this request, the researcher got authorization from UNHCR through email to use the indicated UNHCR statistical database; and one expert in the UNHCR Ethiopian country office was assigned to share the statistical reports specific to Ethiopia to the researcher. A hard copies and soft copies of various documents used in this study were also collected from UNHCR Ethiopian country office, ARRA, and DICAC. In addition, some documents, including proclamations, were extracted from the web, carefully verified for the authenticity with the concerned experts at ARRA and DICAC, and used in this study.

### **4.5.2 Interview**

In this study semi-structured interviews where the researcher had a list of specific questions or a list of topics to be discussed and taken to each key respondents to ensure continuity were used (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007; and Merriam, 2009). In this type of interview, the researcher's objective was to gather specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. To do this, the same questions need to be asked in each interview for the same category of research participants.

Such interviews were conducted with all key respondents of this study including refugee students, refugee parents, school principals, experts from NGOs working on urban refugees in Addis Ababa, ARRA officials, and UNHCR expert, so as to get important insights regarding the research question from the point of view of the research participants. The focus of semi-structured interview questions varied depending on the category of participants but mainly on the personal experiences, and professional and official reflections of key informants regarding urban refugee education in Ethiopia in general and in Addis Ababa primary schools in particular.

The actual practice of interviewing key informants was started with collecting letters of cooperation from the Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies (CCEPS) to all organizations in which the key informants were working or studying. However, as the researcher started contacting ARRA and NGOs working on urban refugee issues in Addis Ababa, he realized that intensive discussions with ARRA regarding whom and which organizations the researcher plans to contact and collect data was important. Without positive reception from ARRA on the research agenda and the research plan, the researcher learned that NGOs, refugee parents, refugee students, and URCC members would hesitate engaging in the interviews. Hence, the researcher first settled discussion with ARRA, and ARRA through its own channels cleared the way so that the researcher could access the above listed key informants.

To access school principals and refugee students in the schools and conduct interviews, the researcher deposited the letter of cooperation from CCEPS to Addis Ababa City Government Bureau of Education and requested a letter of cooperation from the Bureau to Sub-city education offices where the sample schools were located. The bureau wrote the requested letter by the researcher to the Sub-cities education offices and the Sub-cities education offices then wrote letter of cooperation to the six sample schools. It was through such long process that the researcher was able to access the key respondents for interview.

Interviews with school principals, experts from NGOs working on urban refugees in Addis Ababa, ARRA officials, and UNHCR expert were conducted in Amharic language. While some of the interviewees agreed to be tape recorded some rejected the tape recording and in such cases the researcher himself took hand written notes during the interview which were developed into full-fledged statements at the end of every interview. With refugee parents and refugee students, interviews were conducted in Amharic, English, Somali and Tigrigna languages depending on the

preferred language by the participant using interpreters as deemed necessary. All refugee students agreed to be tape recorded; however, only one refugee parent agreed to be tape recorded. With those who volunteered to be tape recorded the researcher had used Samsung Smartphone S5 model for voice recording, with which the interviewees were quite at ease and comfortable. In the case of interviews with interpreters, the interview were undertaken in a such a way that questions were raised by the researcher, then the message is conveyed to the refugee respondents by their national language by the interpreter, then the responses were interpreted to the researcher in Amharic. Hence, in the interviews in which interpreters were involved the researcher actively participated.

#### **4.5.3 Focus Group Discussion**

Focus groups may be called discussion groups or group interviews (Puchta and Potter, 2004). A group of people, according to Patton (2002), 6 to 10, are asked to come together to discuss a certain focused topic where responses of participants are expected to be focused. During the focus group discussion the researcher serves as a moderator or facilitator who introduces the topic, asks specific questions, controls digressions and stops break-away conversations (Bloor et.al, 2001). The major objective of organizing focus group discussion is to get high quality data in a social context where research participants can consider their own view in the context of the view of the others while making their original comments (patton, 2002). In this study focus group discussions were organized with teachers who have refugee students in their classrooms expecting that their experiences would be diverse depending on their level and nature of training, the type of subjects they are teaching, and the national origin of refugee students in their classrooms; with URCC members representing Eritrean and Somali refugee communities in Addis Ababa; and with the local community representatives. FGD sessions with URCC members and one of the two FGDs with local community representatives were tape recorded. During all the remaining FGDs hand written notes were used to capture the most important points raised by the participants. These notes were developed into full-fledged statements at end of each FGD session and used as data.

#### **4.5.4 Observation**

For the purpose of this study direct observation in which the researcher makes a field visit to case sites where some relevant behavior or environmental conditions were available for observation and data gathering were conducted (Yin, 2003). The observation was undertaken using observation protocol. Such an observation took place in the classrooms and in the compounds of sample

schools to this study. It was conducted to understand how refugee children are experiencing education in their respective schools in real time together with the context in which the experience is happening. In addition it also helped to gather data regarding educational experiences of minor (small kids) refugee students who are enrolled in lower primary grades of the sample schools.

For the classroom observations, sessions of homeroom teachers were selected because these teachers are responsible for many of things taking place in that particular classroom. The subjects observed and the time of observations were as diverse as the subjects the homeroom teachers were assigned to teach in the selected schools. As discussions with teachers while planning classroom observations revealed, students were used to various classroom observations by people who are not their classroom teachers, particularly school principals and department heads. As someone who is not subject teacher joins their classroom, the usual understanding of the students was that the subject teacher is under evaluation, not to purposefully observe what the students are doing in the classroom. Such understanding of students, somehow facilitated the observation sessions, although it was very much difficult to achieve completely natural behavior in the classroom. With regards to observations in and around the school compound, it took place after physically identifying who the refugee students are in the selected schools and after completing all other data collection processes in the schools. The researcher was complete observer as indicated in Merriam (2009), and what the researcher was doing was not known to the refugee students. To facilitate such a position of the researcher, in the schools, the researcher was accompanied by a teacher from the school with whom he established better rapport.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis Techniques**

Case study analysis consists of the making of detailed description of the case and its setting (Creswell, 2007). Case study analysis requires the researcher to attend to all the evidences, display and present the evidence separate from interpretations, and show adequate concern for exploring alternative interpretations (Yin, 2003). To achieve this end at the end of each document review, semi-structured interview and focus group discussion the research wrote analytical memo reflecting his understanding of the session as related to the research questions. Data from documents review, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions were also categorized and coded.



The coding process involves reviewing documents, transcripts of semi-structured interviews or field notes and giving labels or names to the component parts that seem to have significance for the research questions and/or parts that appear to be particularly relevant within the social world of the research participants. Through this process the data were categorized, compiled, and organized. The coding process took place at two stages. During the stage of initial coding a detailed and line by line review of data was made and codes were assigned to every paragraph of the data. This stage gave chance to the researcher to make sense of the data. This was complimented by the analytical memo of the researcher at the end every data collection session. The coding was done through writing notes on the line spaces left for this particular purpose during data transcription and the researcher gradually refined those notes into codes.

The second stage of coding was a focused coding when the researcher emphasized on the most common codes which are considered as most revealing about the data. Then, the researcher, through critically reviewing what the codes have in common combined the initial codes into higher-order and more abstract themes. This requires the researcher to reflect on the initial codes that have been generated and to gain a sense of the continuities and linkages between them. Through this process the researcher identified analytical themes and sub-themes that relates to the research question and the conceptual framework. The data analysis for this study was organized under the analytical themes and sub-themes which are relevant to the research questions and conceptual framework of this study.

Comparative data in this study was analyzed using the multiple-case analysis approach suggested by Yin (2003) and Merriam (2009). This approach requires applying two stages of analysis: within case analysis and between case analysis. At first, the data were separated and analyzed case by case to get a comprehensive idea of the contextual factors shaping each case and those connected with the theoretical framework. Then a cross-case analysis was applied by comparing major themes emerging from each case in relation to the constructs against which the cases were compared.

#### **4.7 Criteria for Trustworthiness**

As reliability and validity are vital concepts to ensuring quality of quantitative research, the equivalent concept in naturalistic inquiry is trustworthiness. To be acceptable, qualitative case

study research, like all empirical social studies, must meet the methodological criteria of trustworthiness. To establish the trustworthiness of a study, Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Creswell, 2007: 202) used unique terms, such as “credibility,” “authenticity,” “transferability,” “dependability,” and “conformability,” as “the naturalist’s equivalent for “internal validity,” “external validity,” “reliability,” and “objectivity”. Bassey (1999) stressed that trustworthiness illuminates the ethic of respect for truth in case study research. This study adhered to the major criteria to establish trustworthiness of case study research proposed by Bassey (1999) and Merriam (2009).

One of major issues considered to establish trustworthiness in this research was triangulation. In this regard the researcher employed triangulation through using multiple methods and multiple sources of data. With regards to employing triangulation through using multiple methods of data collection, in this study, data was collected using interview, FGD, observation and documents review. By these methods of data collection, the researcher triangulated a given data obtained by one of the methods against the same data obtained by other methods of data collection. In this study, triangulation through the use of multiple sources of data was employed by comparing and cross-checking data obtained on certain question across interview participants, observations, FGD participants, or documents in the same category.

Prolonged engagement with data sources was another mechanism employed to establish trustworthiness in this study. This is about spending enough time on a case in order to be immersed in its issues, build the trust of those who provide data and try to avoid misleading ideas. Furthermore, data collection process using the planned instruments was continued until achieving saturation.

The trustworthiness of this study was further enhanced through exposing the whole discussions of the dissertation including its findings for the challenge of a critical friend or peer review. This is someone who plays devil's advocate role in questioning the research processes and outcomes. In this regard the major players were the principal supervisor and co-supervisor of this study, who as a matter of requirement were assigned by CCEPS to critically examine the process and findings of this dissertation. The dissertation was also exposed for the review and critical comments of two

personnel friends of the researcher. In addition to the reviews by supervisors and friends, the first parts of dissertation, (i.e., up to theoretical framework), were publically presented at CCEPS seminars, commented by wider critical audience, and upgraded.

To further enhance the trustworthiness of the dissertation, the researcher provided sufficiently detailed account of the research or thick description, in order to give the readers confidence in the findings. The sampling techniques that the researcher used in this study were also believed to have added value in enhancing the trustworthiness of the study.

#### **4.8 Ethical Considerations**

In qualitative studies, Merriam (2009) asserted that ethical issues emerge during data collection and in the dissemination of the research findings. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argued, most of the ethical issues are similarly applied to social researches generally. Hence, this study took into consideration major ethical issues required from a social sciences researcher.

One of ethical issues considered in this study was negotiating informed consent with the research participants. This is because inquiries involving human subjects should be based on the freely given informed consent of subjects. During negotiating informed consent with the participants of this study the principle was to secure truthful and respectful exchanges between the researcher and the participants of the study. Before getting into the data collection process, the researcher thoroughly discussed the content of the consent form with refugee education expert in ARRA and got verbal approval from the expert. The consent form was also deposited in the ARRA in the office of the expert.

After contacting each participant of this study, prior to collecting data from each participant or a group of participants, either through interpreter or I explained the purpose of the study and my expectation from their participation. I also developed a consent form, and explained the content of the form to the participants. Through the consent, I guaranteed the research participants as they are not obligated to talk about anything with which they are not completely comfortable. I also guaranteed that their name or address will not be printed in any published materials including the dissertation itself and to use pseudonym for individual participants and schools.

I further guaranteed to the participants of this study to keep all the information they provide confidential by limiting access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location except allowing access to the dissertation supervisor and co-supervisor. I also explained the point that while every effort to maintain confidentiality will be made, it cannot be absolutely guaranteed. The researcher also guaranteed to the participants of this study to feel free to withdraw their participation at any point they feel uncomfortable with the process. Furthermore, the researcher used voice recorder during data collection after securing the consent of the participants. During the data collection process, I did not discuss any information that I received from prior participants nor did I mention anything about any of the respondents that were already contacted with other respondents and/or organizations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. National Context: Demography, Economy, Education, and Refugees**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the national context within which urban refugee children integration into the national education system is taking place. The chapter is organized into six sections. The first section discusses the Ethiopian demographic and economic context. The second and third sections discuss education in Ethiopia in general and in Addis Ababa respectively focusing only on the major developments. The fourth section focuses on the brief historical description of refugee hosting experience of Ethiopia that spans almost the long history of the nation itself. For the convenience of discussion, however, this section is classified into two parts where the first part highlights the antecedents in Ethiopian refugee hosting experience while the second part describes the times of mass refugee influxes into Ethiopia. The fifth section of this chapter discusses refugee policy and law in Ethiopia taking into account various rationales forwarded in different times to hosting refugees in Ethiopia and how refugees from various origins were treated in Ethiopia. This section has three sub-sections. In the first sub-section refugee policy of Ethiopia was discussed. The second sub-section discusses the bureaucratic set-ups established at different times to manage refugees in Ethiopia, and helps to explicate who is specifically in charge of refugee issues in Ethiopia and how the bureaucratic set-ups are related to the refugee policy of the nation. The third sub-section is devoted to the refugee law in Ethiopia focusing specifically on how the international and regional refugee Conventions to which Ethiopia is party are reflected in the national refugee proclamation. Documents were used as major sources of data for this chapter.

#### **5.2. Demography and Economy**

Ethiopia is a country located in the Horn of Africa. It shares border with the Sudan and South Sudan to the west, Eritrea to the north and north-east, Djibouti and Somaliland to the east, Somalia and Kenya to the south (MoFA, 2015). It is a landlocked country with a total area of 1,104,300 sq. kms (CIA, 2015 and MoFA, 2015). According to CIA World Fact Book, the diverse topography of the country generally features rugged mountains, flat-topped plateaus, deep river canyons, rolling plains and lowlands, and the elevation of the nation ranges from 4,533 meter above sea level at Ras Dashen to 125 meters below sea level at Danakil Depression (CIA, 2015).

According to the CSA (2013a) population projection of Ethiopia, the total population of country, in 2015 is 90,076,012 out of which 50.24% are male and 49.76% are female. With these number of population, Ethiopia is the second largest populated country in Africa next to Nigeria (CSA, 2013a). According to CSA (2013a), from the total population of the nation, 17,459,000 (19.38%) are urban dwellers in 2015.

Currently, Ethiopia has a federal system of government with the country divided into nine regional states and two city administration councils (FDRE, 1995 and Gebre-Egziabher, 2014). While all national regional states and Addis Ababa City Administration are established through the FDRE constitution of 1995, the Dire Dawa City administration is an exception in that it was established by Dire Dawa Administration Charter not by the FDRE constitution (Gebre-Egziabher, 2014). The national regional states and the two city administrative councils are further divided into some eight hundred *woredas* (districts) and around 15,000 *kebeles* (neighborhoods, the lowest level of elected administration) (MoFA, 2015). The government of Ethiopia is made up of two tiers of parliament: the House of the Peoples Representatives and the House of the Federation. Ethiopia is a country of more than 80 different nations, nationalities and peoples who, according to article 20 (5) of the 1995 FDRE constitution, are defined as:

a group of people who have or share a large measure of common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory (FDRE, 1995).

With regards to economy, Ethiopian has registered an impressive growth where the nation has experienced a decade of continuous expansion between 2003 and 2013 during which real GDP growth averaged more than 10 percent per annum (Wondifraw, Kibret, and Wakaiga, 2015). Joshi and Verspoor (2013) also expressed that the Ethiopian economy has been one of the fastest growing economies in Africa in recent years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) growth at or near double-digit levels since 2003. With such rate of economic growth, Ethiopia is the second fastest growing economy in Africa next to Angola (Deloitte, 2014).

According to UNDP's (2014) Ethiopian macroeconomic highlights, agriculture accounted for 43 percent of GDP in 2013 in contrast to 51 percent share in 2007 and the sector generates over 70 percent export values and employs 85 percent of the total labor force. The share of the service sector has been increasing in the past decade and reached 45 percent in 2013 from 39.8 percent in

2007 while industry's share remains low at around 12 percent in 2013. Per capita GDP (nominal), as UNDP (2014) indicated, reached \$550 in 2012/13, from \$142 in 2003/04. In the first four years performance report of Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of Ethiopia which runs from 2010/2011-2014/2015, the National Planning Commission of Ethiopia (NPCE) indicated that the average annual GDP growth for the four years was 10.1 percent (NPCE, 2015). The same report indicated that agriculture has contributed 40.2 percent, industry 14.3 percent and service 46.2 percent for the national GDP growth in 2013/2014, and per capita GDP has reached 631.5 USA Dollars in 2013/2014. Out of the total labor force of the nation which was estimated at 44.4 million in 2012/2013, agriculture absorbed 72.7 percent while the remaining are engaged in industry and service sector. In this regard, the NPCE (2015) asserted that in the time between 2006 and 2013, although the volume of labor force in Ethiopia has increased by around 10 million, labor force engaging in agriculture has dropped by 7.5 percent from 80.2 percent in 2006. The government of Ethiopia strongly argues that the rapid economic development which the Nation has registered in the last decade since 2003 was broad based and pro-poor (NPCE, 2015).

Regarding the performance of Ethiopian economy in the last decade since 2003, Rahmato (2014) argued that the narrative is overwhelmingly dominated by the government of Ethiopia and the international donor agencies. As the result, Rahmato (2014) proposed that there is need for independent voices who can promote a balanced public debate on Ethiopian economy. In this regard, for example, Ayenew (2014) and Fiseha (2014) observed that Ethiopia's adaptation of developmental state model which has given precedence for economic development over political democracy is like gambling a short-term economic dividend for long-term political consequences in-terms of national stability. Hence, as very diverse nation, Ethiopia should work to marry democratic governance with economic development (Ayenew, 2014). From the point of view of improving the livelihood of the people, promoting social equality, and enabling sustainability of natural resources, Rahmato (2014: xiii) warned, "the direction of the country's [Ethiopia] development endeavor is cause for serious concern".

### **5.3. Education in Ethiopia: An Overview**

In Ethiopia, the foundations for secular and western type of education was laid at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century particularly with the establishment of first public school by Emperor Menilik II in 1907 (Wagaw, 1979; Teshome, 2008; Joshi and Verspoor, 2013; and Balsvik, 2005). However,

the pace of expansion of modern education during the Imperial period was extremely slow (Teshome, 2008 and Balsvik, 2005). For example, in 1935, there were only 800 students enrolled in 20 public schools, and by 1952, a total of 60,000 students were enrolled in 400 primary schools, eleven secondary schools and three higher learning institutions awarding college diplomas (Teshome, 2008). By 1970, in the nation of about 30 million population, the total school enrollment was about 1.1 million out of the cohort of over ten million (Tekeste, 2006).

Balsvik (2005) succinctly explained access to education in Ethiopia during the Imperial period saying the following.

...in 1961, when the average enrollment in African primary schools was estimated at more than 40 percent, the Ethiopian figure was 3.8 percent; on the secondary level, estimates for the continent and Ethiopia was 3.5 percent and 0.5 percent respectively (p. 5).

The same year, (i.e., 1961), at the UNESCO-sponsored Addis Ababa Conference of African States, a goal was set to provide universal primary education by 1980 which, according to Bishaw and Lasser (2012), Ethiopia's prospect of achieving the target seemed unlikely at the time, given the extremely low performance of Ethiopian education on the base year.

While many evidences explain the problems related to access to education during the Imperial period, the Imperial regime in its 1973 educational report to UNESCO, however, described the success of the then education system saying that educational development has been very rapid since the end of the Fascist occupation of Ethiopia in 1941 and school enrolment have expanded at about 14 percent per year (UNESCO: IBE, 1974). However, the reality was that the education system of the Imperial period had several problems including but not limited to problems of relevance, quality, access and equity (Amdissa, 2008). Furthermore, Tefera (1996), in his review of major educational reforms in Ethiopia, depicted the Imperial period's education in Ethiopia as elitist, too much academic oriented, wasteful, inequitable, not relevant, rigid and highly bureaucratic.

In 1974, the Military which was called *Derg* took over power from Emperor Haileselassie. *Derg* strongly believed that Ethiopia which they inherited from thousands years of Imperial rule and feudal social system was at its backwards stage of development (Tekeste, 2006). Hence, as *Derg* came to power one of the most immediate measures taken was to deal with issues related to education. For example, on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1974 *Derg* proclaimed that “under the banner of



education for all, citizens shall have the right to free fundamental education” (PMAC, 1974 cited in Bishaw and Lasser, 2012).

In 1984, during the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the revolution, *Derg* reported a total enrollment of 3,376,000 students in its general secondary education (2,795,000 in primary level, 295,000 in junior secondary level and 286,000 senior secondary level). Based on this data, *Derg* in the introduction of its educational report to UNESCO: IBE, argued that education in Ethiopia has now been set on the course which will result in the creation of the learning society (UNESCO: IBE, 1984). During the *Derg* period the number of primary schools increased more than two fold from 3196 in 1974/75 to 7900 in 1985/86, due particularly to the participation of newly formed peasants associations and the targeted financial assistance from Swedish International Development Agency for elementary school building (Teshome, 2008 and Tekeste, 2006). However, education during the *Derg* period’s Ethiopia was marred with several problems, including but not limited to budget shortfalls, shortage of basic educational materials, and shortage of qualified teachers which cumulatively translated into problem of quality; and problems of access and equity (Tekeste, 2006; Teshome, 2008 and Bishaw and Lasser, 2012).

In the *Derg* period’s final report to UNESCO: IBE (1992), success in expanding access to education was emphasized, although failure to reach out the larger section of society was boldly admitted. For example, the report indicated that although the education system had achieved remarkable quantitative expansion, access to educational opportunities was limited to 34 percent of the age group in primary education. The falling *Derg* regime further admitted that since 1989 the primary education enrollment had shown declining trend. As it was indicated in the report (UNESCO: IBE, 1992) in 1989 total number of students in primary level were 2,855,130. This total had declined to 2,063,636 in 1991. World Bank (2005) indicated that enrollments in 1992/93 were 31 percent smaller than they were in 1988/89 and about the same as at the start of the 1980s. Such state of affairs in Ethiopian education around the end of the *Derg* regime was explained in terms of total militarization of the national economy where the share of military spending in recurrent expenditure showed a general upward trend, while the share of spending on education declined (Chole and Manyazewal, 2004 and World Bank, 2005).

In May 1991, *Derg* was defeated by Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Soon after the overthrow of *Derg*, EPRDF established a transitional government. It was in 1994,

during the lifetime of the transitional government that EPRDF introduced the current Education and Training Policy (ETP). This policy, according to Areaya (2007), is the first of its kind in Ethiopian history to happen as full-fledged education policy to be published and declared unlike the former practices of political and/or ideological statements that served as policies. Teshome (2008) also acclaimed the ETP as the most comprehensive of its kind that encompassing formal and non-formal education, levels of education from kindergarten to university education, and special education. However, looking at the general objectives of the 1994 ETP, it is possible to argue that the policy has put at the center the needs and potentials of individual student rather than societal challenges such as poverty that should be tackled through education (Tekeste, 2006).

The major changes introduced by this policy were related to the structure of the system, curriculum and medium of instruction, and decentralization of education (Teshome, 2008; Tekeste, 2006; and World Bank, 2005). In the line with the decentralized and federal government arrangement of Ethiopia, the national education system is vertically organized into five administrative structures: the federal, regional, zonal, woreda, and the school (Omar, 2009).

Tekeste (2006) and Joshi and Verspoor (2013) advanced that the landscape of Ethiopian education has changed dramatically since the introduction of ETP in 1994. From 1962 to 1994, the education system of Ethiopia had a 6-2-4 structure: six years of primary schooling, followed by two years of junior secondary education, and four years of senior secondary education (World Bank, 2005 and 2013; and Tekeste, 2006). Following the 1994 ETP, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia created a new structure that consists of an eight-year primary education cycle, which is itself divided into a first cycle primary education covering grades 1– 4, and a second cycle primary education covering grades 5–8, followed by two years of general secondary education covering grades 9–10, and two years of preparatory secondary education including grades 11–12 (MoE, 1994). According to World Bank (2005) the changeover to the 4-4-2-2 structure was motivated by a concern that the education system existing in 1994 was too similar to the models in developed countries and therefore unsuited to conditions in Ethiopia; and the education system was also perceived to be performing poorly in terms of access, equity, relevance, and quality in the pre-1994 period.

In line with Ethiopia's overall national development strategy of Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) and as a tool for the realization of goals of the 1994 ETP, education sector specific development strategies that are phased into five years lifetime has been introduced since 1997/98 under the name Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) (World Bank, 2013; and Martin, Oksanen and Takala, 2000). Until 2015, Ethiopia has implemented four ESDPs phased theoretically into five years each although ESDP II was planned only for three years from 2002/2003-2004/2005 (Joshi and Verspoor, 2013). The strong commitment of Government of Ethiopia to educational development since 1994 is reflected in budget allocations to the sector, which increased steadily to reach more than 23 percent of total government expenditures in 2009 and more than 25 percent in 2013 (MoE, 2015 and Joshi and Verspoor, 2013).

In the ESDP IV which was planned for the time between 2010/2011 and 2014/2015, FDRE Ministry of education argued that access at all levels of education system increased at rapid rate in line with a sharp increase in number of teachers and schools (MoE, 2010). During the Imperial period, in the school year 1970/1971 the total number of students enrolled in primary grades (Grades 1-8) were 728,548. After two decades, during the Derg period in the school year 1990/1991 the total number of students enrolled in primary grades increased to 2,871,325 just to climb to 7,274,121 students in 2000/2001 school year (World Bank, 2005). In the school year 2013/2014, Ethiopian MoE in its educational annual abstract reported that there were 18,139,200 students in the primary grades across the nation (MoE, 2015). With this figure the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) in Ethiopia for primary grades in 2013/2014 reached 101.3 percent and 92.6 percent respectively.

In 2000/2001 school year there were 649,221 students enrolled in secondary grades (grades 9-12) and 46,812 students enrolled in higher education institutions (World Bank, 2005). In the school year 2009/2010 total secondary enrollment has reached 1,695,930 and in the year 2013/2014 it reached 1,998,355. With this total enrollment Ethiopian secondary education Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in 2013/2014 become 39.3% for grades 9-10 and 10% for grades 11 and 12; while Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) in 2013/2014 for grades 9-10 stands at 19.6% and for grades 11 and 12 at 5.5% only. In 2008/2009 general secondary education GER was 38.1% (MoE, 2010). Higher education enrollment has also shown remarkable improvement with 593,574 students in all

undergraduate degree programs in 2013/2014 in public and private higher education institutions across the nation. As the result higher education GER in 2013/2014 reached 7.8% if we take into account only the three years degree programs or 5.7% if we include degree programs extending beyond three years (MoE, 2015).

Despite remarkable success scored in Ethiopian education since 1994, problems of access, equity, quality and relevance remain concerns into the final years of implementation of ESDP IV (World Bank, 2013). Dropout and repetition rates are very high, and completion rate to last grades is low which are suggesting that the Ethiopian education system is still plagued with serious problems of efficiency (MoE, 2015, MoFED, 2015, and ENPC, 2015).

#### **5.4. Education in Addis Ababa**

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, was founded in 1886 by Menelik II. In 2014 the city was home to 3.2 million people out of which 46.4% are male and 53.6% are female (CSA and AALSAB, 2014). The 2007 population and housing census estimated the annual population growth rate of Addis Ababa at 3.8% per annum, making it one of the fastest growing cities of the world (CSA, 2007). The city has a diverse population, accommodating people from almost all of the more than 80 nations, nationalities and peoples of the country. Furthermore, through hosting international agencies, such as the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa, as well as offices of a long list of bilateral, multilateral and international organizations, the city is often referred as the diplomatic capital of Africa (UN-Habitat, 2008).

Addis Ababa is granted the right to self-rule by the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia through proclamation number 87/1997 (FDRE, 1997). The city charter elaborates the power and duties of the City Government as well as its governance and administrative structures. The charter provides that the elected City Council is the highest legislative body of the City Government. The Council appoints a mayor who is the Chief Executive Officer. The city also has a City Manager responsible for municipal services and accountable to the Mayor. Currently the Executive branch of the city is organized into 17 sector bureaus. All sector bureaus have branch offices in all the 10 administrative divisions of the city that are known as Sub-Cities. The Sub-Cities are responsible for a wide range of service delivery functions implemented with annual budget transfer from the city.

With regards to education, the Addis Ababa City Government Education Bureau argues as it has been striving very hard to achieve the ESDP IV goals (CGAAEB, 2014). Compared to the base year 2008/2009, primary education in the city government has shown progresses in various measures. For example, number of primary schools have increased from 693 in 2008/2009 to 795 in 2013/2014. The city government primary school enrollment has risen from 485792 in 2008/2009 to 546516 in 2013/2014. According to MoE annual education statistical abstract, 91 percent primary school teachers in the city are certified by national standard to teach in the level they are assigned currently (MoE, 2014). The city administration bureau of education has 19057 primary school teachers in 2013/2014 increasing from the 2008/2009 figure of 15718 teachers. GER and NER of the city government for primary all cycles (grades 1-8) in 2013/2014 were 103.05 percent which is slightly more than the national average and 75.32 percent which is significantly less than the national average respectively.

## **5.5 Refugee Population in Ethiopia**

### **5.5.1 The Antecedents**

It is indicated in many sources that refugee protection and the right to asylum are not new phenomena of recent history to Ethiopia; rather the country has always been generous in granting a safe haven to people in need of refuge and protection irrespective of their nationality, religion or race since long time ago (see for example, ARRA, 2011; UNHCR, 2008 and 2014; Lemma, 1995; Erlich, 1994; Diress, 2011; Bariagaber, 2006a; and Assefa, 1992).

In this regard, Assefa (1992), traces Ethiopian experience of hosting refugees as far back as the time of Jewish immigration in the first half of 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., the coming of followers of Prophet Muhammad in the second half 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D., and the asylum of Armenian Christians in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Since the beginning of the First World War, Lemma (1995) added, quite a large number of refugees from Europe and even Asia had come to live in Ethiopia.

At African scale, as a significant African phenomenon, the African struggle against colonialism, as Lemma (1995) and Galaw (2007) indicated, was a factor which brought numerous African brothers to seek refuge in Ethiopia. The Horn of Africa, a region in which Ethiopia is located, is the most volatile and conflict ridden region (ARRA, 2011; Bariagaber, 2006a; and Assefa, 1992). The Horn of Africa has experienced major socio-political upheavals, which have triggered mass population displacements and forced migrations, particularly since 1950s.

One of the unique characteristics of refugee phenomenon of the Horn of Africa, as Bariagaber (2006a) asserted, is that each country of the Horn persisted simultaneously as refugee hosting and refugee generating for the last half a century. For example, in 1988, approximately 660,000 Ethiopian refugees (which included Eritreans) were exiled in Sudan and another 365,000 in Somalia (USCR, 1989). Ethiopia, at the same time, provided asylum to approximately 350,000 Sudanese refugees and to about an equal number of Somali refugees. Somalia also hosted Ethiopian refugees in the hundreds of thousands until the fall of Derg regime in 1991. In addition, Eritrean refugees are living in Sudan and Ethiopia, and recently few Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees have sought asylum in Eritrea.

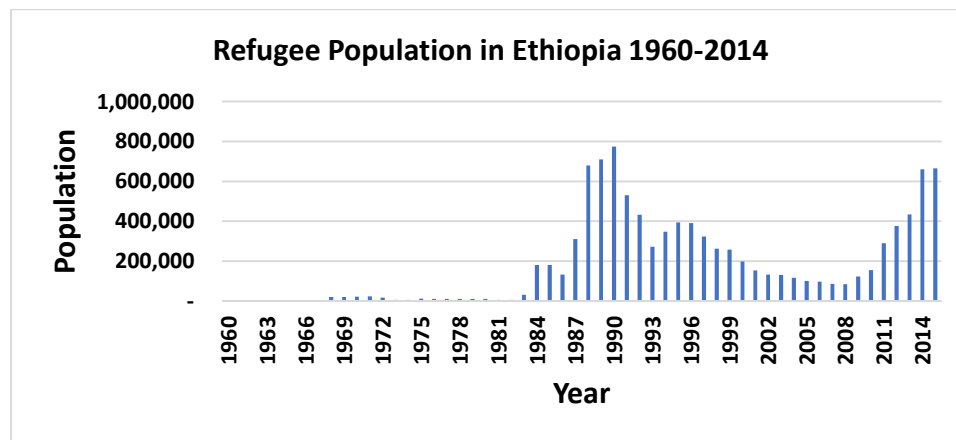
Another feature of nations in the Horn of Africa contributing to long aged refugee phenomenon of the region is the intractable nature of inter-state and intra-state warfare (Bariagebir, 2006a and Webster, 2011). In this regard, Bariagaber (2006a) indicated the North–South conflict in Sudan, which formally ended with the signing of the peace agreement in 2005 and the establishment of Republic of South Sudan in 2011. This conflict had begun in the early 1960s and was more than fifty years old. However, a new conflict started as a civil war erupted in 2013 in the newly independent state of the Republic of South Sudan. The conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia lasted thirty years, and ended with the independence of Eritrea in 1993, but only to lead to bloody inter-state war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998. The border conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia started when the latter became independent in 1960, and has not been resolved completely despite two wars; and Somalia’s internal conflict is almost thirty years old, and, so far, has defied many attempts at resolution. It was in this regional context that, Ethiopia, for many years had experienced a wave of refugee influx from its neighbors.

### **5.5.2 Mass Refugee Influxes into Ethiopia**

Situated at the core of the volatile Horn of Africa region, Ethiopia in the past six decades, beginning from late 1960’s, has witnessed the steady influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighboring Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and South Sudan into its borders (see UNHCR Population Statistics Online Data Base). The mass refugee influx into Ethiopia had started with the civil war in the Sudan and the crisis in Somalia in 1980’s and 1990’s (Lemma, 1995; Bariagaber, 2006a; and Assefa, 1992). The first refugee influx started with the crossing of Sudanese refugees into the Ethiopia’s Gambella Regional State in Southwest in 1968 and with the

mass influx of Somali refugees into Ethiopia's East Hararge region in 1987 (Assefa, 1992 and UNHCR, 2015d). Eritreans and South Sudanese as citizen of the respective young African nations joined the rank of refugee population hosted in Ethiopia since the outbreak of Ethio-Eritrean border war in 1998, and the outbreak of South Sudan civil war in 2013 respectively (Samuel-Hall Consulting, 2014 and UNHCR, 2015d). In addition to incessant war in Somalia, in 2010 and 2011 the Horn of Africa in general and Somalia in particular experienced severe drought. This situation, as IOM (2011), and AU (2011) described, triggered a massive influx of Somali refugees into Ethiopia. Figure 5.1 summarizes trajectories of refugee population in Ethiopia in the time from 1960s - 2014.

**Figure 5.1** Refugee population in Ethiopia from 1960-2014



**Source:** Adapted from UNHCR Population Statistics Online Data Base and Statistics from UNHCR Ethiopian Country Office.

As can be observed in figure 5.1, taking into account the trend of growth in total number of refugee population and the composition of major refugee producing countries into Ethiopia at different times, the period from 1968-2014 can roughly be classified into five sub-periods.

The period from 1968-1982 was the time when Ethiopia hosted the lowest total number of refugees in the last six decades refugee hosting experience of the nation. During this period the overwhelming majority of refugees were originated from Sudan which until 2011 included the today's Republic of South Sudan. The period from 1983-1990 experienced a staggering increase in total refugee population in Ethiopia due to political upheavals in Sudan and Somalia. The year 1991 was unique in the refugee hosting experience of Ethiopia. In this year, as indicated in UNHCR Population Statistics Online Data Base and Bariagaber (2006a), some 370,000 Sudanese

refugees underway un-notified repatriation to their homeland or seek asylum in other neighboring countries like Kenya and Uganda; mainly because the new Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) led government ordered the SPLM/A to cease all its political and military activities in Ethiopia in order to return favor for Sudan's earlier support to them (Bariagaber, 2006a and Assefa, 1992). According to Bariagaber (2006a) and Assefa (1992), there is no evidence, however, that the new EPRDF-led government had asked the refugees to leave. With regards to Somali refugees in Ethiopia, the year 1991 is unique because it was the time when the ever largest number of Somali refugees, (i.e., 513,950 refugees), were registered due mainly to the collapse of Barre's regime in Somalia (Bariagaber, 2006a and Assefa, 1992). The time from 1992-2008 is characterized by a general decline of total refugee population in Ethiopia. The period from 1992-2008 had also experienced a new composition of refugee population hosted in Ethiopia as the result of continuously increasing Eritrean refugee population in Northern Ethiopia. The time after 2009 is period of huge refugee influx into Ethiopia where the nation experienced another staggering increase in the number of refugees year after year.

With total refugee population of 659,500 in 2014, Ethiopia hosted the largest number of refugees in relation to its national economy from all countries of the world, hosting 440 refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita which indicates the highest contribution and effort the country has made relative to the capacity of national economy (UNHCR, 2015a and Amnesty International, 2015). UNHCR global trends report for 2014 further indicated that Ethiopia becoming the largest refugee hosting nation in Sub-Saharan Africa, and if refugees are evenly distributed throughout the country, it is a nation in which 7 refugees are registered for every 1000 citizen and 583 refugees are residing in every 1000 km<sup>2</sup> area (UNHCR, 2015a).

As UNHCR Ethiopian country office monthly refugee population statistical report of the December, 2014 indicated, out of the total refugee population in the nation, (i.e., 659,500), 363,363 (55 percent) are in the age range between 0-17 years. Hence, according to UNHCR (1993) definition, majority of refugees hosted in Ethiopia in 2014 were children. The same report indicated that from the total of refugee children population, 173,897 (48 percent) were in the age range between 5-11 years, and 86,895 (24 percent) were in the age range between 12 and 17 years.

In general, the total refugee population in Ethiopia had exhibited a dramatic fluctuation in the years from 1960s-2014. The fluctuation was the result of major socio-political developments in the



neighboring states of Ethiopia and within Ethiopia itself. The fluctuations in the refugee population hosted in Ethiopia is consistent with the general trend in refugee population growth in Africa as indicated in Veny (2007), Lucas (2013), Bariageber (2006a), and Milner (2009).

As can be observed in table 5.1, Ethiopia is hosting refugees in various camps and settlement sites in all geographic directions of the nation. Refugee camps in Ethiopia are established in all national regional states of Ethiopia, except in Amhara and Harari national regional states. In addition, there is no reported refugee presence in Dire Dawa City Administration of Ethiopia.

Among the regional states of Ethiopia, the Somali region is hosting the largest refugee population in its two major refugee concentration areas of Dollo Ado with total refugee population of 203,937 and Jigjiga with total refugee population of 40,070.

**Table 5.1** Refugee population in various camps of Ethiopia

| <b>Refugee Camps in Ethiopia (2014)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                           |                          |                   |                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Country of Origin</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Camp Location</b>      | <b>No. of Camps/Site</b> | <b>Population</b> | <b>% from total</b> |
| South Sudan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Western Eth.              | 12                       | 251,545           | 38.06               |
| Somalia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Southern and Eastern Eth. | 9                        | 245,178           | 37.09               |
| Eritrea                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Northern Eth.             | 9                        | 123,745           | 18.72               |
| Sudan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Western Eth.              | 6*                       | 35,779            | 5.41                |
| Various Origins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Addis Ababa               | 1                        | 6,033             | 0.91                |
| Kenya                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Southern Eth.             | 1                        | 3,107             | 0.47                |
| Various Origins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Western Eth.              | 8**                      | 729               | 0.11                |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                           | <b>32***</b>             | <b>660,987</b>    | <b>100</b>          |
| Note:<br>* The six Sudanese refugee camps are also inhabited South Sudanese refugees and therefore it is double counting<br>** These are refugees coming mainly from Great Lakes Region and the eight camps in which they are located are also inhabited by Sudanese and South Sudanese Refugees and therefor it is double counting<br>***The total is excluding any double counting |                           |                          |                   |                     |

**Source:** Adapted from UNHCR Ethiopia population update for December, 2014

The second largest refugee population in Ethiopia (i.e., 242,556) are hosted in Gambella regional state. The Tigray regional state is hosting the third largest refugee population in Ethiopia in 2014

counting at 91, 556 refugees. In Benshangul-Gumuz regional state of Ethiopia, the fourth largest refugee hosting region, 45,168 refugees were hosted. In Afar Regional State of Ethiopia, 28,565 Eritrean refugees were hosted. Addis Ababa hosted 6,033 recognized refugees from various national origins in 2014 although the majority are Eritreans and Somalis. The Okugo camp in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples regional state, and Moyale camp in Oromiya regional state are hosting 6,114 and 3,107 refugees from South Sudan and Kenya respectively.

## **5.6 Refugee Policy and Law in Ethiopia**

### **5.6.1 Refugee Policy**

Milner (2014) defines refugee policy as a formal statement of a problem relating to protection, solutions or assistance for refugees or other population of concern to the global refugee regime, and a proposed course of action to respond to that problem. However, informal accumulated practices related to refugee treatment within the refugee regime or other transnational policy networks can amount to refugee policy (Milner, 2014).

For many years, Ethiopia's refugee policy and the nation's course of action to respond to the problem of refugees has been explained in terms of the country's commitment to accede to the international and regional refugee Conventions (Khasiani, 1984; Assefa, 1992; and ARRA, 2011). From this point of view, Assefa (1992), for example, boldly argued that Ethiopia's policy towards refugees is governed by the principles and tenets enshrined in the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol to which it acceded in 1969, as well as the organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa which it ratified in 1973. Khasiani's (1984) review of refugee policies, programs and research in Somalia, Ethiopia and Tanzania discussed Ethiopian refugee policy as it simply amounts to the country's accession to the 1951 UN Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees, and to the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Hence, Ethiopia's accession to international and regional Conventions by itself, without having contextual national policy expression, was considered as policy by many. Such explanation to the refugee policies of nations is consistent with Stern (2014) who argues that national refugee policy can be shaped by the specific nation's legal obligation to international and regional refugee Conventions and other human rights treaties.

Soroos (1986) in Milner (2014), however, noted that expressions of global policy, like that of refugee policy, are often impressive documents that hold substantial promise for ameliorating the problems they address, but, serve as simple blueprints of strategies for tackling the problem in national contexts. In this view, Markos (1997) lamented that measures affecting refugees in Ethiopia hardly have any clear legal basis in national law but, nonetheless, have cumulatively amounted to national standards of treatment which did not exactly tally with the international standards due mainly to the reservations Ethiopia registered on some of the basic rights of refugees while acceding to the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, Khasiani (1984) indicated that Ethiopia had adopted national refugee regulation in 1963 (i.e., well before accession to the international and regional refugee conventions), defining the procedure for the acceptance of refugees. The regulation, according to Khasiani (1984), specifies that the refugee must register with the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission of the Ministry of Interior, handover their arms and undertake oath not to peruse any political activity in Ethiopia, while the government of Ethiopia was meant to provide emergency assistance to the refugees. However, how refugee is defined, the procedure for granting refugee status, and the rights and obligations of refugees are not discussed in Khasiani (1984) who mentioned the 1963 refugee regulation of Ethiopia.

With the coming to power of EPRDF in 1991, commitment to peace and security in the region through avoiding the long existing mistrust among the people neighboring Ethiopia was established as major tent of Ethiopian foreign relations and national security policy which was promulgated in 2002 (MoFA, 2015). The Foreign relations and national security policy of Ethiopia aims at strengthening people- to- people relations of the peoples of Ethiopia and its neighbors. Currently, refugee handling in Ethiopia is usually explained in terms of the policy of strengthening the people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and its neighbors referring the foreign relations and national security policy of Ethiopia (ARRA, 2011). Hence, beyond the international and regional Refugee Conventions, Ethiopian foreign relations and national security policy is currently cited as a policy framework to hosting and treating refugees in Ethiopia. The challenge in this regard, however, is that the text of Ethiopian foreign relations and national security policy published in 2002 does not even mention the word “refugee”.

Briagaber (2006a) cautioned strongly the use of the phrase “Ethiopian government national refugee policy” due to the fact that Ethiopia had no comprehensive refugee policy. As the result, the

implemented refugee policy of Ethiopia can be inferred from the practices of refugee reception and hosting in the country, which Markos (1997) stated as “national standards of refugee treatment”. Diress (2011) also argued that, during the long years when Ethiopia did not incorporate a right to asylum into a legally binding instrument, it has maintained a tradition in providing sanctuary to refugees from nations from far and near. Several sources also indicated that Ethiopia has provided safe sanctuary to asylum seekers throughout its long history (see for example, UNHCR, 2014; Assefa, 1992; and ARRA 2011).

In the long years of Ethiopia’s refugee hosting experience, as many sources explain, the country has maintained an open door policy towards refugees (see for example, Khasiani, 1984; Assefa, 1992; ARRA, 2011; and UNHCR, 2014). The open door refugee policy of Ethiopia, according to UNHCR (2014) is manifested in terms of continuous permission of the successive governments of Ethiopia of humanitarian access and protection to those seeking refuge in its territory. Some explain the open door refugee policy of Ethiopia with the age old tradition of hospitality where the nation had granted safety seekers protection and received refugee populations displaced by war and persecution even at the times the country was grappling with economic difficulties (Diress, 2011). Regarding the motivation of Ethiopia to pursuing an open door refugee policy, Assefa (1992) passionately argued that an innate humanitarian compassion for the suffering of refugees marked Ethiopian policy. Diress (2011) also explained that Ethiopian open door refugee policy is motivated only by liberal and humanitarian spirit, and implemented in full respect of the modern principle of non-refoulement

While the principle of non-refoulment is well respected throughout Ethiopian refugee hosting experience, the full claim Ethiopia makes of open door refugee policy should be taken carefully. This is because some of the restrictions Ethiopia imposed on refugees in its territory, emanating, basically from the reservations the nation had registered while acceding to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention makes the nation short of fulfilling Milner’s (2009) definition of open refugee policy. In its current manifestation, the open door policy Ethiopia is pursuing satisfies some of elements which Rutinwa (1999: 1) listed as African countries refugee policy in the time between 1960s-1990. Among these elements of open door policy of the then African countries, Ethiopia is currently readily admitting all those in search of security and safety, and there is no report of

rejecting refugees at the frontier or returning them to countries where they might face persecution or serious harm.

Hence, Ethiopian refugee hosting experience, as it is common to many countries in Africa, can be located in the continuum where the actual practice manifests the characteristics of both openness and restrictions. In refugee policy terms, Ethiopian refugee hosting experience can be best explained with Milner (2009: 164) classification, where it is possible to argue that Ethiopia can be praised for its quantity of asylum where physical access to its territory by refugees is open as compared to the quality of asylum where there are restrictions on some of the basic rights of refugees hosted in Ethiopia.

Explaining the motivations of Ethiopian refugee policy using such assertions as promoting people-to-people relations, Ethiopian age old tradition of hospitality, and Ethiopian innate humanitarian spirit are consistent with what Stern (2014) posited as presenting refugee policy in terms of positive self-image of states while the actual practice might not parallel the portrait. Bariagaber (2006a), Milner (2009), and Webster (2011), argued that although states insist as they approach refugee problem as humanitarian and base their refugee policy upon this, in reality they have never seen the refugee issue independent of politics.

From this vantage point, Ethiopian practice of hosting refugees, in addition to humanitarian spirit and maintaining tradition of hospitality, has manifested political calculations as well, in several occasions (Bariagaber, 2006a; Webster, 2011; and Yihun, 2013). This was particularly evident in the case of Sudanese refugees during the Imperial period and Derg regime (Bariagaber, 2006a and Yihun, 2013), and the Eritrean refugees in the current government (Webster, 2011 and Harmon-Gross, 2009). Regarding the relationship between politics and refugee handling in Ethiopia, Bariagaber (2006a) advanced the view that politics has always played an important role in Ethiopia's responses to refugee presence in its territory. While discussing the balance sheet between humanitarianism and political motivation in hosting refugees in Ethiopia, Bariagaber (2006a), however, concluded that humanitarianism outweigh political motivation in the post 1991 Ethiopia as compare to the Derg period.

In addition to political calculations in the refugee hosting experiences of Ethiopia, the over told tradition of hospitality reaches its limit when refugee hosting threatens the ethnic balance around the refugee hosting areas as the case of Gambella region's hostility between refugees and host

community demonstrated (Feyissa, 2014). The refugee policy and nature of refugee hosting practices of Ethiopia can further be explained through the bureaucratic set-up established for this purpose.

### **5.6.2 Bureaucratic Set-up for Refugee Management in Ethiopia**

Beginning from 1960's up until today, the organizational responsibility of managing refugees in Ethiopia is placed in the security apparatus of the nation. For example, the 1963 regulation defining the procedure for the acceptance of refugees which is mentioned in Khasiani (1984) indicated that refugee matters were managed by the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in the Ministry of Interior. In 1988, Derg established a government organ named Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) in the Ministry of Internal Affairs with a mandate of oversight and management of refugee issues, and provision of services to refugees in the country (ARRA, 2011).

In 1995, through proclamation number 6/1995, the Security, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority (SIRAA) was established as autonomous public institution of Federal Government of Ethiopia. The proclamation in its article 5(7) provided power and duty to the SIRAA to be responsible for matters relating to refugees stating that "in cooperation with the appropriate organs and international organizations, to be responsible for matters relating to refugees". SIRARA, as provided in article 2(2) of the proclamation number 6/1995 was made to report directly to the office of the Prime Minister. Administration for Refugees and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) has been established as a semi-autonomous body inside SIRAA, responsible for the implementation of all matters related to refugees and returnees.

With the establishment of SIRAA, the former Ministry of Internal Affairs was abolished. The 2004 refugee proclamation number 409/2004 of Ethiopia in its article 2(1) also provided authority on matters of refugees to SIRAA. In 2013, through proclamation number 804/2013, SIRAA's establishment proclamation of 1995 was repealed, and a National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) with a Ministerial portfolio was established in Ethiopia. By the 2013's NISS re-establishment proclamation, refugee matters were made to be handled within security powers and duties of NISS as it is provided in the article 9(2) of proclamation number 804/2013 which reads "NISS have security powers and duties to provide, in cooperation with other appropriate organs, the necessary services for refugees based on the refugee proclamation".

As can be inferred from bureaucratic set-up in which refugee issues in Ethiopia were managed, one can argue that refugee issues were handled as part of national security issue all the way since 1960's. While the names and status of government organizations hosting refugee issues had experienced changes with changes of governments, and even within the lifetime of single government, ARRA relatively has registered continued existence of more than quarter of century even if it has experienced relocations to successive newly organized security apparatuses of Ethiopia.

The national bureaucratic arrangement Ethiopia has established to manage refugee issues can reflect that the issues, as indicated in Jacobsen (1996: 661), is high policy agenda because it is treated as part of national security agenda. Ethiopia's handling of refugee matters as national security issue is consistent with Teitelbaum (1984 cited in Bariagaber, 2006a), who asserted that it is a common practice in many countries of world including the United States of America to treat refugee issues as part of national security agenda. The association between refugee and security has more pronounced particularly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist bombing in the United States of America (Milner, 2009; Kirui and Mwaruvie, 2012 and Milner, 2009). Spread of religious fundamentalism and ultra-nationalism are some of the security threats the government of Ethiopia fears and places its watchful eyes related to hosting refugees. In this regard, for example, Bariagaber (2006a) discussed the successive Ethiopia governments mistrust towards refugees in the Eastern borders of the nation.

The level of cooperation of Ethiopia with UNHCR and other non-governmental organizations concerned with refugees is another factor that can explain the position of Ethiopia in refugees' treatment. In this regard, there were times in history when Ethiopia rejected altogether, and times during which allowed extremely restricted UNHCR involvement in refugee issues. For example, in 1963 the Imperial regime of Ethiopia rejected the offer of assistance and service by the UNHCR with respect to Southern Sudan refugees in its territory so as to avoid being instrument in internationalization of the Southern Sudan problem and in order to safeguard Ethiopia's long existing friendly relations with the Sudan (Yihun, 2013). However, such face saving commitment of Emperor Haileselassie stayed, according to Yihun (2013), only until Ethiopia accorded the status of "first-rate-enemy" to Sudan after the coming to power of Nimeiri in 1969.

Bariagager (2006a) explained the pre and post-1991 involvement of UNHCR in the refugee camps hosting Southern Sudanese in Western Ethiopia in such a way that UNHCR had extremely restricted involvement before 1991 when SPLM/A was mandated by the government of Ethiopia to manage the Western Ethiopian refugee camps. However, such state of affairs become dramatically changed with coming to power of EPRDF in 1991 and UNHCR, since then, has started to play far greater role in the Western Ethiopian refugee camps hosting Sudanese refugees.

Since 1991, no major problem of cooperation is identified between UNHCR and the Government of Ethiopia; because, in Ethiopia, UNHCR enjoys access to refugee camps, airports and other border points, and it is entitled by the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation to observe the processing of individual asylum applications, among others. In this regard while ARRA and UNHCR jointly conduct registration, verification and validation of refugee status, ARRA is responsible to coordinating food and non-food assistance to refugees and camp administration including camp management. For refugee operations in Ethiopia, UNHCR is responsible to provide funds.

### **5.6.3 Refugee Law of Ethiopia**

As discussed in the preceding sections, Ethiopia had a national standard in refugee treatment emanating basically from the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa to which the country is party. Cognizant to the accession to the Conventions, the country has established a bureaucratic set-up that manages refugee matters.

While Ethiopia was acceding to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the country become party to the convention with reservations to its article 8 that obliges states to exempt refugees from measures which may be taken against the person, property or interests of nationals of a foreign state; article 9 that allows states, in time of war or other grave and exceptional circumstances, to take provisional measures which it considers to be essential to the national security in the case of a particular person, pending a determination by the Contracting state that, that person is in fact a refugee and that the continuance of such measures is necessary in his case in the interests of national security; article 17(2) that prohibits states to impose restrictive measures that may be imposed on aliens or the employment of aliens for the protection of the national labor market, to



refugees; and article 22 (1) that obliges states to accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education (UNHCR, 2011a and Admassu, 2009). Ethiopia's reservations to the aforementioned articles of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention is quite consistent with the practices of most of the African nations towards the same Convention (see, for example, D'orsi, 2013 and UNHCR, 2011a). However, the reservations listed are against the basic rights of refugees in general and refugee children in particular because it restricts right of refugees to engage in gainful employment, own and dispose property, and primary education.

The Constitution of the FDRE adopted in 1995, contains a clearly stated provision concerning the status of international instruments in Ethiopia. Article 9 (4) of the FDRE constitution states that "International agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the laws of the country". Hence, with this provision of the 1995 constitution, the Refugee Conventions were recognized as parts of the law of the country in Ethiopia.

Nevertheless, Lemma (1995) argued that in order for the Convention's provisions well-run in Ethiopia it is necessary that procedural rules be established which in a way will clarify matters and create awareness to the refugees in the exercise of their rights and the public at large. Lemma (1995) further asserted that the act of accession to international and regional Convention by itself does not mean that such a Convention automatically acquires the status of municipal law or that its provisions ought to be enforced by judicial organs of the state. In one way or the other, in order to be applicable in the territory of a given state, international instruments need to be incorporated or transformed in to the domestic law. D'orsi (2013) also argued that promotion of national refugee laws is considered essential to give effect to the principles contained in the international instruments.

Furthermore, African states were urged to introduce appropriate national refugee legislations through the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments declarations of Tunis in 1994 and Khartoum in 1998. In 1994, Recommendation 5, number iii of the Addis Ababa Document on Refugees and Forced Population Displacements in Africa also requested states to enact the necessary legislations and regulations so as to give effect nationally to the Convention and its principles.

It is to translate the international and regional Conventions into the national law that, Ethiopia, in 2004 introduced refugee proclamation under the proclamation number 409/2004. This reason for enacting the proclamation is stated in the preamble of the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation as:

...it is desirous to enact national legislation for the effective implementation of the...international legal instruments, establish a legislative and management framework for the reception of refugees, ensure their protection, and promote durable solutions whenever conditions permit (FDRE, 2004: 1).

The 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia is organized into five parts. The first part is sub-titled as general and includes short title for the proclamation and definitions. The second part is dedicated to general principles including articles on non-discrimination, the refugee criteria, exclusion from refugee status, withdrawal of recognition of refugees, cessation of refugee status, fundamental change of circumstances, non-refoulment, expulsion, temporary detention of a person whose expulsion has been ordered, and unity of the family. Articles in the third part of the proclamation contain provisions on application for recognition of refugee status and the detail procedures for determination of refugee status. The fourth part of the proclamation is dedicated to provision on rights and obligations of asylum seekers and refugees including articles on special protection to vulnerable groups and voluntary repatriation. The final part of the proclamation provides miscellaneous provisions.

In general, Ethiopian refugee proclamation incorporated refugee definitions both in the 1951 Convention and in the 1969 Convention Governing Specific Problems of Refugees in Africa verbatim. The fact that the Ethiopian Refugee proclamation incorporates the two definitions suggest, as Admassu (2009) commented, an enormous interest on the part of Ethiopia to be more accommodative and more open to the plights of refugees. However, refugee criteria in article 4 (3) exclusively provided for refugees coming from Africa only. It is also consistent with UNHCR (1992) which details recommendations of Executive Committee of High Commissioners Program on the procedures in refugee status determination.

Another salient feature of Ethiopian refugee proclamation is, unlike the 1951 Refugee Convention which allows for a possibility of detaining asylum seekers who are inside the country illegally, by its article 13 (5) prohibits both detention and criminal prosecution against a person who has applied or is about to apply for refugee status on the account of his/her illegal entry and presence in the country. This provision, according to Admassu (2009) is a step ahead, even in the standard of the

1951 Refugee Convention, as it categorically prohibits detention and prosecution of any sort for unlawful entry or presence. However, such provisions in African states might be related to their border controlling capacity. In this regard, Lucas (2013: 6), argued that it is “unthinkable” to African states to maintain degree of border control that allows them to practice discretion on the refugee law and policies they formulated given the length and porous nature of their borders, and the border controlling capacity of the states. Given such a situation, therefore, Ethiopia as one of the African nation which can be challenged to establish effective control of its very long borders where refugees might enter through any boarder point unnoticed, provided an article that saves such refugees from criminal persecution.

Although the refugee proclamation in its article 21 (d) reaffirmed refugees as they are entitled to the rights recognized under both the Refuge Convention and the OAU Refuge Convention, it, however, authorized the head of NISS in article 21 (2) to designate areas where refugees and asylum seekers must live, thereby imposing residential restrictions. Furthermore, the refugee proclamation of Ethiopia reflects all the reservations Ethiopia registered while acceding to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The Ethiopian refugee proclamation defines a refugee as child if he or she is below the age of eighteen and unmarried. In its article 22, the 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia has include refugee children in the list of vulnerable groups who need special protection and NISS is expected to ensure such special protection measures.

## **5.7 Summary**

During the last two decades, Education and economy in Ethiopia were a success stories. The nation has registered rapid economic growth and increase the number of teachers and schools in the last two decades. The disadvantage of emerging regions and marginalized groups in access to education has decreased and the gap was narrowed. Various efforts were made to make the content and organization of education relevant to the diversified needs of population through introduction of Alternative Basic Education (ABA) and mobile schools.

Fee free primary education was introduced with the adoption of the Education and Training Policy in 1994 as a major strategy towards achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals. More recently,

the introduction of mother-tongue instruction and a gender mainstreaming strategy, is intended to reduce the barriers to education for all, irrespective of location of birth or gender. Inclusive education and special support activities better-enable marginalized groups and children with special educational needs to enroll and complete primary and secondary education.

Notwithstanding major investments in improving the numbers and the qualifications of teachers and the availability of equipment, student achievement has not sufficiently improved. The gains in access are of little meaning if they are not accompanied by improved student learning. The challenge of quality is closely linked to the challenge of completion.

While there has been significant progress in access and improvements in some equity indicators (for example in the Gender Parity Index (GPI)) in primary education, which is now above 0.90 in primary school, participation levels at primary remain much lower in some of the emerging regions and among pastoralist and semi-pastoralist groups. Rural populations in general face serious accessibility constraints at secondary level. Alternative Basic Education has developed rapidly and has helped increase enrolment but problems of low quality and of transition between ABE and the formal school system remain. These problems need to be addressed in order for Ethiopia to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) and to work towards the universalization of secondary education, which are the foundation on which to build a competitive economy.

As has been discussed in this chapter, Ethiopia has a rich history of hosting refugees who seek safety from far and near and escaping diverse forms of persecution. Almost all major international, continental and regional upheavals including religious intolerances, World Wars, anti-colonial struggles, inter-state and intra-state wars have affected Ethiopia at least indirectly through exerting pressure to host refugees. Unlike the earliest experiences of hosting refugees in Ethiopia, beginning from the 1960's, Ethiopia become one of the major refugee hosting nations in Africa. In the period from 1960s to 2014, Ethiopia has experienced a dramatic fluctuation in the refugee population hosted in its territory. The fluctuation is the reflection of political developments in the Horn Africa where Ethiopia is located. The fluctuation in the refugee population in Ethiopia is essentially determined by political developments in Southern Sudan and Somalia, while Eritrean refugee population in Ethiopia had continued uninterrupted dramatic increase since 2000.

Taking into account Ethiopia's age old experience of hosting refugees, the nation claims an open door refugee policy. During the successive governments of Ethiopia, the Ministry of Interior of the Imperial period, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Derg period, SIRRA and NISS of the current government were entrusted with the powers and duties of handling matters related to refugees in Ethiopia. ARRA, since its establishment in 1988, has continued as specialized organ responsible for refugee matters in the security organizations of Ethiopia. As has been discussed in this chapter, for several years, the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and the positions provided to the Conventions in the Constitutions had served as national legal bases in refugee matters in Ethiopia. However, convinced with the importance of municipal law which can be enforced by the judicial organ of the nation for the effective implementation of the Conventions, in 2004 a refugee proclamation under proclamation number 409/2004 was enacted.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **6 Education for Refugees in Addis Ababa: Administrative Directives and Guidelines**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores the policy directions and legislative guidelines put in place in Ethiopia to provide integrated educational opportunities to refugee children in general and to those refugees recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa in particular. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section of this chapter discusses about urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, and its relationship with the refugee policy and law in Ethiopia. This section is sub-divided into three parts and starts with brief description on urban refugee population in Addis Ababa. Then the section discusses major mechanisms through which refugees join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. The last part of the section analyses the Out-of-Camp scheme specifically arranged to Eritrean refugees as one of the mechanism to join urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

The second section of the chapter has two sub-section, and starts with discussion of series of executive directives issued from the Ministry of Education (MoE) beginning from 1970 in the form of letters, directives, and guidelines regarding integration of refugees into the national education system of Ethiopia. The second sub-section in this part discusses accountability to the management of refugee education in Ethiopia and the role of MoE and regional education bureaus in this process.

Data discussed in this chapter are obtained from UNHCR population statistics online data base; policy and legal documents, and statistics from UNHCR Ethiopian country office and ARRA; and interview with experts in UNHCR, ARRA and DICAC. In addition refugee program reviews in Ethiopia, UNHCR and ARRA reports, and other pertinent research works on refugee policy and law in Ethiopia were extensively used.

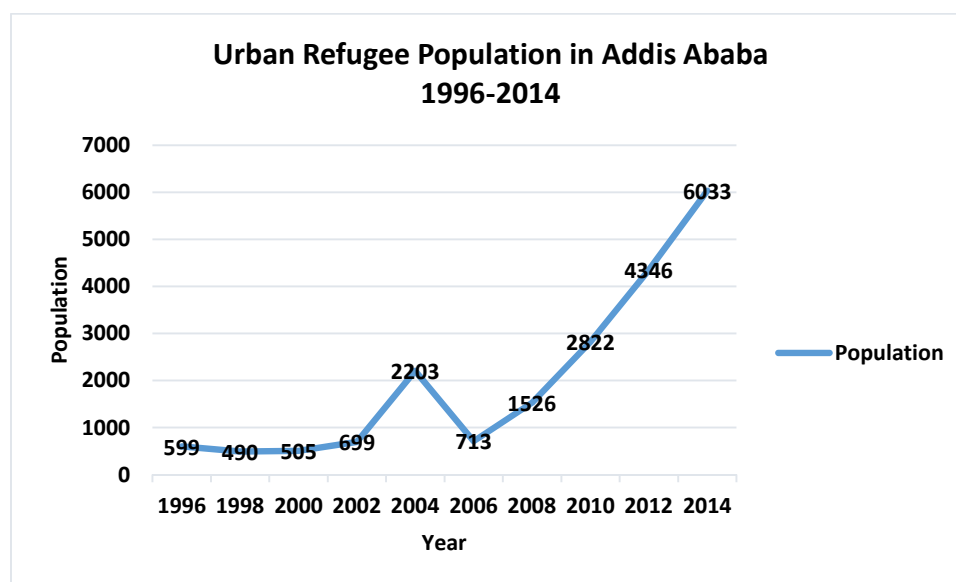
#### **6.2 The Urban Refugee Program in Addis Ababa**

##### **6.2.1 Refugee Population in Addis Ababa**

Whilst camp-based assistance is the cornerstone of Ethiopia's refugee policy where 99 percent of refugees were placed in designated camps near the borders to the country of origin to refugees, refugees have very slim possibility of residing in Addis Ababa integrated into the local community. In Ethiopia, UNHCR calls this arrangement "urban refugee program". The urban refugee program

in Addis Ababa is as old as the refugee hosting experience of the nation. Figure 6.1 shows the development of urban refugee population in Addis Ababa since 1996.

**Figure 6.1:** Urban Refugee Population in Addis Ababa from 1996-2014



**Source:** UNHCR population statistics online data base

As figure 6.1 shows urban refugee population in Addis Ababa have increased progressively year after year. The years from 2008-2014 are times when the rate of increase was very significant with an average annual growth in urban refugee population of 59 percent. Such increase in urban refugee population is consistent with the international trend of increasing refugee urbanization where UNHCR global trends for 2014 reported that six out of ten refugees are residing in urban areas in 2014, whereas the number was 50 percent few years back (UNHCR, 2015). The predominance of designated camp based residence for refugees in Ethiopia is also consistent with the Sub-Saharan African trend where most of the refugees are residing in planned camps (UNHCR, 2015).

The progressive increase in urban refugee population in Addis Ababa, as some of the participants in this study commented, is basically the result of general increase in the total refugees hosted in the nation in the time from 2008-2014. In this regard, for example, Expert F has the following to say.

Refugee population in Ethiopia is increasing very fast particularly of Eritrean and South Sudanese. As the total number increase, those with chronic problems forcing them to file request to join urban program are also increasing. The chronically sick

and those who are vulnerable to security risks are increasing. That is why refugee population in the urban program is swelling every time. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)

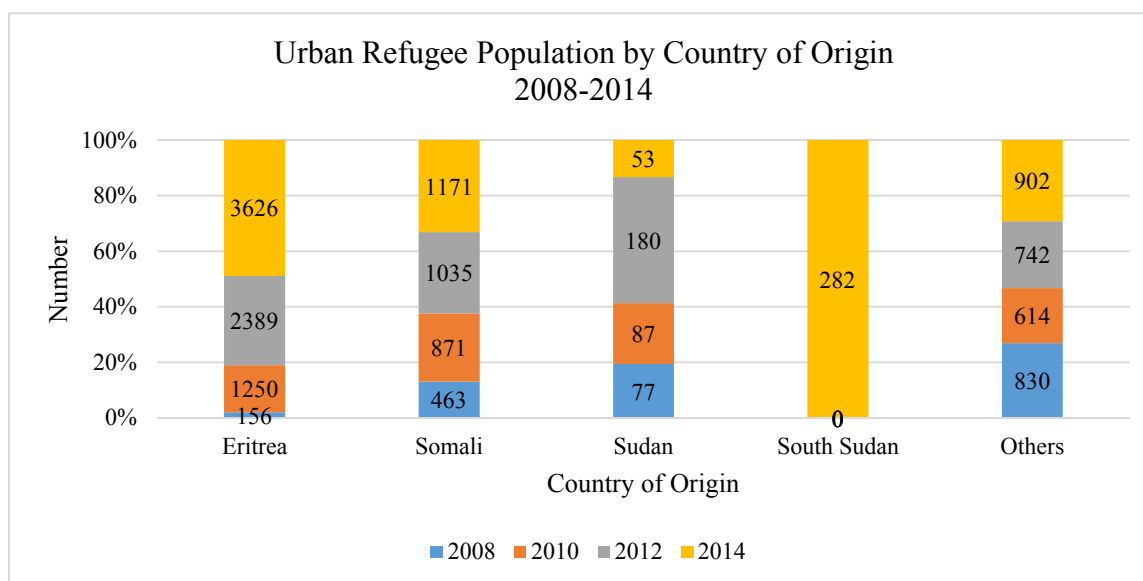
However, the relationship of parallel increase in refugee population residing in camps and in Addis Ababa do not show a corresponding trend in terms of proportion. In this regard, while the national refugee population in 2010, 2012 and 2014 have shown an increase of 53 percent, 200 percent, and 76 percent respectively, the growth of urban refugee population in the same period was 85 percent, 54 percent, and 39 percent respectively. Thus, the most dominant and convincing factor for increase in urban refugee population in Addis Ababa would be the Out-of-Camp scheme introduced in Ethiopia in 2008 for Eritrean refugees. The details about this scheme is discussed in section 6.2.3 in this chapter.

From the total urban refugee population in Addis Ababa in 2014 that counts at 6033 individuals, UNHCR Ethiopian country office refugee population statistical report for the month of December 2014 indicated that 2178 (36 percent) were children in the age range between 0-17 years. The same report indicated that 932 (15 percent) and 668 (11 percent) from the total were in the age range between 5-11 and 12-17 years respectively.

Compared to other African countries whose urban refugee population were reported for 2014, the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa has the least ratio from the national total refugee population (UNHCR, 2015d). This situation implies that Ethiopia follows very strict refugee encampment policy as compared to other African countries where urban residence in Ethiopia is an exception rather than norm. However, in terms of numbers of refugees hosted in urban areas in 2014, Ethiopian urban refugee program ranks tenth among African countries who have refugee encampment policy (UNHCR, 2015d). Hence, although the proportion of urban refugee population as compared to the huge pool of refugees hosted in Ethiopia is small, by itself, the sheer number of urban refugees in Addis Ababa is significant even in African scale.



**Figure 6.2** Refugee Population in Addis Ababa by Country of Origin from 2008-2014



**Source:** Adapted from UNHCR Ethiopian Country Office monthly statistical reports

As can be seen from figure 6.2, in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, the major refugee population are Eritrean, Somali, and Sudanese origin. South Sudanese refugees had joined the rank of urban case load in 2013 after the civil war in their nation. In-terms of number, Eritrean refugees in urban program represent 60 percent of refugee population in the program, followed by Somali refugees who represent 20 percent.

From figure 6.2 it is also possible to infer that in the years between 2012 and 2014, Eritrean refugees in the urban program have increased 51 percent in average while Somalis, as another major refugee group in urban program, has increased 13 percent in average. Hence, in terms of number and average rate of increase, Eritrean refugees over dominated the urban program of Ethiopia. However, if we compare the rate of increase from the proportion of total Eritrean refugees hosted in Ethiopia, (i.e., 62,996 in 2012 and 123,747 in 2014), the proportion of Eritrean origin refugees in the urban program has declined significantly from 7 percent in 2012 to 2.9 percent in 2014 while the total number of Eritrean refugees hosted in Ethiopia has increased by 96 percent in the same period. This clearly demonstrates that Eritrean refugees rate of joining urban program is not expanding relative to the total increase in Eritrean refugees hosted in Ethiopia even

if the government of Ethiopia has launched special Out-of-Camp scheme targeting Eritrean refugees.

In the case of Somali refugees, however, the proportion of refugees joining urban program in Ethiopia has shown a slight increase from 0.46 percent in 2012 to 0.48 percent in 2014 while the total Somali origin refugee population in Ethiopia, (i.e., 223,243 in 2012 and 245,178 in 2014), has increased by 9.8 percent in the same period.

Ethiopia is able to keep the largest proportion of refugees in refugee camps and able to enforce its strict encampment policy because there are well established reasons through which refugees are allowed to join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. The following section discusses the reasons through which the government of Ethiopia allows refugees to be recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

### **6.2.2 Reasons to Join Urban Refugee Program in Addis Ababa**

According to UNHCR and ARRA officers participated in this study, there are three main grounds upon which a refugee can be accepted in the urban program in Ethiopia. These are security reasons, medical reasons and humanitarian reasons. Serious medical cases which are beyond the capacity of medical centers run by ARRA in the camps, and if the same medical case compels longer time medical treatment, the refugee can be referred to the urban program. Refugees who come from countries which do not have an official camp, such as Yemen for example, are automatically registered in the urban refugee program in humanitarian grounds. Refugees who are highly susceptible to cross-border and/or within camp security risks can also be referred to the urban refugee program on the grounds of ensuring individual security. Reasons to joining the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa is explained by a research participant as follows.

Refugees are referred to urban program for two reasons. Of course still government wants them to settle in camps. They come to Addis Ababa and join the urban program for medical or protection reasons. Children in the levels of education below higher education can be registered in urban integrated schools only through the process of family union where family members are allowed to move to urban areas if one of their members is referred to urban program for longer period of time. This arrangement contributed not to leave children as unaccompanied minors in camps. Cases such as kidney dialysis for which there is no treatment in camps or even regional hospitals are usually referred to Addis Ababa. I mean we shouldn't let them die. With regards to protection, sometimes, asylum seekers happen to be

higher level officials in their country of origin. In the camp they are vulnerable to attacks and the camp setting is inconvenient to ensure security for such individuals. Because the assailants cannot simply penetrate and kidnap or kill the asylum seekers in Addis Ababa due to organized and heavy presence of security in the city, such people are usually moved to the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. However, majority of refugees in urban program in Addis Ababa have joined the program through medical referral. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

The above comment of Expert B reveals that urban refugee program in Ethiopia is just a contingency plan put in place to respond to compelling circumstances that force UNHCR and ARRA to move a refugee out of designated camp to a city. In most of the case, either as the result of medical referral or in protection/security grounds, urban refugee program is designed as a lifesaving mechanism that responds to life threatening cases. Based on such nature of the urban refugee program, some participants in this study argue that UNHCR and ARRA decision to allow a refugee to join an urban program in Addis Ababa is temporary pending change or improvement in the compelling circumstances that forced the decision. For example, one participant of this study has to say the following in this regard.

These people [refugees] currently in the urban program would return back to camps if the situations that forced them to move to urban program is changed/improved. All urban cases are under monthly joint review of ARRA, UNHCR and other implementing partners. It is based on the review result that whether or not the refugee has to stay in the urban refugee program is decided. Therefore, there is no permanent urban status in Ethiopia. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

However, others argue that although refugees stay in urban program is temporary and contingent upon the result of urban cases review process, in reality, refugees are not usually sent back to camps unless otherwise extraordinary decision is made. Thus, in normal circumstances, the temporariness of stay in urban program in Ethiopia for refugees is more theoretical than practical.

As the most dominant factors contributing to let refugees stay continuously in urban program once they moved to urban areas, some participants in this study indicated, the seriousness and relevance of the decision at the very beginning. Particularly, in medical cases the referral system is professional due to the fact that ARRA's medical centers in camps refer cases to nearby hospitals to the camp. If the case is beyond the capacity of the district hospitals nearby the camps, the refugee is then referred to regional hospitals, and then to Addis Ababa if the regional hospital cannot treat the case. Convincing change in the circumstances for those refugees joined urban program in

protection and humanitarian grounds are very rare. Furthermore, the joint urban cases review team takes into account the situation of the whole family, particularly children, who moved to Addis Ababa through family union. Hence, decision to send back a refugee in urban program to camp is expected to take into account the effect of the decision on the educational and social development of the children too. Consequently, refugees in the urban program in Addis Ababa are living in the situation of “constant temporariness”, to use (Ward, 2014: 8) expression for such refugee situations.

Taking into account the reasons through which refugees can join the urban refugee program and the temporariness of urban stay in Addis Ababa, some of the participants in this research argued that the 2009 UNHCR policy on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas has no significant and visible effect on the practices of the government of Ethiopia. Regarding this, Expert B and Expert A has said the following.

Policies made at Geneva might not fit the specific reality in Ethiopia. The continuous increase of refugees in urban program of Ethiopia is not the outcome of policy change following the introduction of pro-urban refugee policy by UNHCR in 2009. It is just due to compelling circumstances that refugees in the urban program of Ethiopia are increasing. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015).

While international policies are enacted they do not define context. Implementation context in Ethiopia is quite different from Kenya. As the result there might be some incongruences between national settings and the international policies provided by UNHCR. While national governments have their own different policies regarding refugees, a policy from Geneva might not be implemented. It is the national one that presides over the international and get implemented. As far as my understanding, the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy did not influence the attitude and practice of the government of Ethiopia towards refugees. Because, what is taking place in Ethiopia with regards to urban refugee program in post-2009 period is nothing different from the pre-2009 situation. We did not see difference. The current trend is a common trend in Ethiopia even before 2009. (Interview with Expert A, June 10, 2015)

As can be seen in the above responses, the effect of UNHCR urban policy on the practices of national governments is contingent upon the relevance of the policy for the real context of the nations. The responses also demonstrate how national policies play significant role in framing UNHCR approach in national context. The Ethiopian experience, as reflected in the above responses, is consistent with Milner’s (2014) assertion which says that as UNHCR policies

intersect with the dynamics in the national context they usually encounter a complex set of challenges that eventually condition its effectiveness. Buscher (2012), in this regard explicitly argued that implementation of the 2009 UNHCR urban policy is constrained in a national contexts due to the fact that host governments refugee legislations are not adjusted according to the provisions of UNHCR policy. Hoffstaedter (2015) also argued that developing a global framework to deal with regional and local refugee population movement has proven difficult and as the result there still exists a major disconnect between the UNHCR policy framework and the reality on the ground.

With regards to Ethiopian practice towards urban refugee program, the above responses also depict a picture of continuity of direction of government amidst changes in international policy orientation. In this regard, as one of the participants in this study commented, the government of Ethiopia is very conservative towards urban refugee program although many refugees hosted in Ethiopian camps want to move to urban areas.

High urban unemployment rate, low urban infrastructural development, and highly strained urban public service provision capacity in Ethiopia are some of the factors mentioned by the participants of this study as important in determining the current practices of government with regards to urban refugee program. In 2013, for example, Ethiopian CSA reported that in Addis Ababa the rate of unemployment was 24.2% (CSA, 2014). Given the actual socio-economic situation in Addis Ababa, as Buscher (2014) argued, the arrival of more refugees into the city is seen as contributing to over-burdening of public services, and competition for scarce jobs, housing and resources.

Ethiopia's current direction with regards to urban refugee program is also consistent with the practices of many African countries with exception of South Africa and Egypt (Marfleet, 2007), (Buscher, 2012), and Landau (2011). Ethiopia, as many of the African nations, is careful not to pull refugees into the cities because, the presence of refugees in urban areas, as Kibreab (2008) argued, can worsen the already fragile urban social and economic conditions. It is also possible to understand that with the current practice in the urban refugee program, Ethiopia is carefully striking a balance between the provisions of article 21 (2) of its 2004 refugees proclamation and its strict refugee encampment policy in one hand, and the objective reality in which individual or group of refugees are living on the other hand. Thus, the implementation of the 2009 UNHCR

urban refugee policy has to be seen, as Landau and Amit (2014) argued, in relation to other wide ranging social and economic policies in urban environment.

However, Expert C, a participant in this study, reflected a different view regarding the effect of the 2009 UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas on the practices in Ethiopia. She said,

Yes there are changes. The changes can be visibly evidenced through the opportunities the government of Ethiopia provided to Eritrean refugees through newly introduced Out-of-Camp scheme. The changes are quite evident. It is visible. (Interview with Expert C, June 4, 2015).

Although Expert C has viewed changes in the practices of the government of Ethiopia towards urban refugee program, she argued with an evidence which is not the result of 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy. The Out-of-Camp scheme in Ethiopia was introduced prior to the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy. It was introduced in 2008 as a pilot program with quite different justification to provide opportunity for family reunification to Eritrean refugees.

Hence, one can argue that the overarching goals of the UNHCR 2009 Policy on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas that reads “ensuring that cities are recognized as legitimate places for refugees to reside and exercise the right to which they are entitled, and maximizing the protection space available to urban refugees and humanitarian organizations that support them” (UNHCR, 2009: 5), is not as successful as aspired by UNHCR in Ethiopia, as the same is true in many countries of Africa. Similarly, the joint UNHCR and PRM review on urban refugee issues in Ethiopia concluded that much of the new approaches envisioned by the urban policy has yet to be fully adopted on the ground in Addis Ababa (UNHCR and PRM, 2012). The situation in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa is also consistent with many of the findings of reviews conducted by UNHCR on the implementation of its 2009 urban refugee policy (Rosi et al., 2011; Riiskjaer and Bonnici, 2011; Campbell et al., 2011; Bottinick and Sianni, 2011; Crisp, Obi, and Umlas, 2012; Morand et al., 2012; Dubini et al., 2013; and Morand and Crisp, 2013).

### **6.2.3 The Out-of-Camp Scheme to Eritrean Refugees**

The precursor to the current Out-of-Camp scheme to Eritrean refugees, which was formally declared in 2010, was the 2008 decision of government of Ethiopia to extend freedom of movement to members of nuclear family seeking family reunification with relatives outside of camps and

who are self-sufficient (UNHCR, 2012b). The Out-of-Camp scheme for Eritrean refugees was designed to run side-by-side with the urban refugee program of Ethiopia. That is why, UNHCR (2012b), called the beneficiaries of the Out-of-Camp scheme as “urban refugees without assistance”. This is because, the scheme allows Eritrean refugees to live outside camps in any part of the country of their volition, provided that they have reasonable means of supporting themselves, either through relatives or remittances, outside of camps. Assistance stops immediately in the camp as the Eritrean refugee is granted Out-of-Camp scheme beneficiary identity card, to the extent that the beneficiary is responsible to cover transportation and other related expenses to the elected destination outside the camp.

The main criterion regulating access to the scheme is whether the refugee can benefit from the guarantee of a sponsor in the city where they elected to dwell. As indicated in Samuel Hall Consulting (2014), ARRA requires the sponsor, who takes on responsibility for the living expenses of the Eritrean refugee once outside the camp, to be a relative of the refugee and Ethiopian citizen. However, Samuel Hall Consulting (2014) indicated that only 8.8 percent of the total Eritrean refugees have Ethiopian relatives in Ethiopia. ARRA undertakes checking of the sponsor so as to ascertain whether the relative will be able to support the refugee. There is, however, a certain degree of latitude on this aspect, as some Eritrean refugees could be allowed to settle in the city if they prove that they have enough support to survive from their family abroad, although their guarantee has no such a capacity. In addition, to be eligible to the Out-of-Camp scheme, the Eritrean refugee should have no criminal record and asylum seekers are ineligible to apply to the scheme.

An exclusive grant of the opportunity of Out-of-Camp scheme to Eritrean refugees is justified with the historical relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea as single nation for many years before 1991, strong cultural homogeneity between Ethiopians and Eritreans, and the need to fostering people-to-people relationship; the existence of personal networks that Eritrean refugees could use to sustain themselves in Ethiopian urban centers they wish to move; and the demography of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopian camps where majority are young between the age of 18 and 30 (55% in 2014), single (50%), and literate (89% in 2014) and the concomitant huge potential to secondary movement from camps (UNHCR, 2012b and Samuel Hall Consulting, 2014).

Regarding the Out-of-Camp scheme to Eritrean refugees, a participant in this research commented the following.

The scheme is exclusively granted only to Eritrean refugees. Some of the reasons for this seem even out of the scope of UNHCR. In rhetoric it is about people-to-people relation so as to make refugees ambassadors to Ethiopia. The issue of secondary movement connected to the demography of Eritrean refugees and the interest of donor countries to Ethiopia are another pressures towards the provision of the scheme. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015).

Although the scheme was applauded by many as policy shift in Ethiopia from strict encampment of refugees to allowing refugees to live where they wish in Ethiopia, UNHCR (2010b), Tekle (2010), and UNHCR (2012b), UNHCR's reasoning to praise the scheme from the point of view of reducing the costs of looking after refugees as those benefiting from the scheme will sustain themselves through family support mechanisms, critically reduces the vitality of scheme from refugees rights, and UNHCR and hosting states obligations point of view. As Expert D comment indicates, the donor pressure might be related to shifting the burden of providing to the survival of refugees to individual citizen of Ethiopia due to the fact that they sympathize the refugees as relatives or friends. The donor pressure might also be motivated by the will of Western developed countries to contain Eritrean refugees who are committed to move out of Africa and who are currently in the neighboring countries to Eritrea including Ethiopia. The scheme would better benefit the refugees if the donor pressure was capable to extend rights to gainful employment to the beneficiaries in Ethiopia rather than transferring the victims from institutional support which is sustainable and predictable to the support of social world of networks of family members and friends.

Regarding the untenable support of social world of networks for which Eritrean refugees livelihood is handed over through the Out-of-Camp scheme, Expert F, argued as follows.

Some of the Out-of-Camp scheme beneficiaries have Ethiopian guarantees who are not really supporting the refugees as they left the camps. They just sign the guarantee paper to let them out from the camp. Such refugees are in trouble. Regarding right to work to refugees, they are not allowed by refuge proclamation of Ethiopia. However, they are tolerated if they engage in informal jobs. The challenge for the government of Ethiopia to extend the rights to employment to refugees is unemployment of its own citizens. The government of Ethiopia recommends the informal sector to its own citizens as well, and there too, there is huge competition. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)



Expert B also said that:

If you bring this people [refugees] to Addis Ababa and leave them to their social networks of relatives and friends, eventually they will be burden to their relatives and the city itself. You must imagine what would happen as the result at the end of the day. From camp, through Ethiopian guarantee, ARRA allows the refugee to come to Addis Ababa. For how long can the relatives and friends support the refugee? Such prolonged responsibility can even worsen the relationship among blood relatives and friends across the two nations. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

Samuel Hall Consulting (2014) reported the following as some of possible scenarios within which the social world of networks in the form of relatives and friends as sponsors to Out-of-Camp scheme beneficiary Eritrean refugees would remain untenable.

The sponsorship system is vulnerable to external hazards, such as the decease or departure of the sponsor that can put the refugee in delicate situations, as they have to negotiate the trade-off between reporting their case to get potential protection and the risk of losing their Out-of-Camp status. A relative accepts to sponsor a refugee to get him out of the camp to Addis Ababa but they do not agree on providing for the refugee's daily living expenses, and some Out-of-Camp beneficiaries reported that their sponsors refused to see them or to be in contact with them once they arrived in the city (p: 40).

As the above argument of Expert F indicated urban unemployment, particularly in Addis Ababa, is very high and it makes securing even informal job for refugees very competitive. In this regard, a baseline survey on urban poverty in Ethiopia in 2010 noted that 50.6 percent of urban employment in the country is in the informal sector and that the number of people engaged in urban informal sector activities has increased by approximately 37 percent in the years from 1997-2003 (CCRDA, 2010). Hence, the structural urban employment environment in Addis Ababa complements the fear of some of the participants in this study with regards to leaving the refugees to the prolonged support of social world of networks.

Samuel Hall Consulting (2014) indicated that one of the key regulations once the Out-of-Camp opportunity is provided to Eritrean refugee is that the scheme does not come with freedom of movement. Refugees have to live in the city, which they registered as their place of residence with ARRA and any movement out of the city requires a specific authorization from ARRA. Furthermore, although the scheme says that the resettlement opportunity of refugees who are the

beneficiaries of the Out-of-Camp scheme is not affected, Out-of-Camp refugees are not trusting as they have fair chance of resettlement, and thus some are returning to camps with the hope of improving resettlement prospects (UNHCR and PRM, 2012).

Although no official statement exists to the knowledge of this researcher as to why the Out-of-Camp scheme is not extended to other refugee population in Ethiopia, Samuel Hall Consulting (2014) explained that the potential security risks that could come with opening the scheme to other caseloads, particularly to Somali, given current geopolitical and security contexts, is the reason. In general, although the Out-of-Camp scheme is continuing as part of urban refugee program in Ethiopia, the implementation mechanism of the scheme, as Samuel Hall Consulting (2014) commented, is fragile. Eritrean refugees, through this scheme, are forced to exchange one right to the other: the right to subsistence assistance to the right to settle in the out of camp environment. The scheme, with all the aforementioned shortcomings, suggests a policy of preferential treatment the government of Ethiopia has promoted to Eritrean refugees as compared to other refugee communities in the country.

Table 6.1 compares and summaries Eritrean and Somali refugees in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa taking into account the major characteristics discussed in this section.

**Table 6.1** Eritrean and Somali refugee population in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                                                                              | <b>Eritrean</b>                                      | <b>Somali</b>                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Percentage from total urban case load in 2014                                                                       | 60 percent                                           | 20 percent                                             |
| Rate of increase in the urban program 2008-2014                                                                     | 51 percent                                           | 13 percent                                             |
| Possibility to join urban program compared to the total increase of refugees from the country of origin (2008-2014) | Declining                                            | Slightly increasing                                    |
| Reasons to join urban refuge program                                                                                | Medical, Security, and Out-of-Camp scheme            | Medical and Security                                   |
| Out-of-Camp Scheme                                                                                                  | Extended due to age old historical and cultural ties | So far denied due to fear of “potential security risk” |
| Preferential treatment in joining urban program                                                                     | Yes, through Out-of-Camp scheme                      | No special arrangement                                 |

## **6.3 Education for Refugees in Addis Ababa**

### **6.3.1 Executive Directives, Guidelines, and Letter**

Education is the major, or even the only hope for decent future to refugees (Sinclair, 2002). As the testimonies of those affected by forced displacement express, education is the most important possession for them because it is the only possession that they proved as it cannot be taken away during chaotic displacement (Talbot, 2013).

Ethiopia has registered reservation and recognized only as recommendation, and not as legally binding obligation the provision in the article 22 (1) of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention which reads “the contracting states shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education”. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia’s constitution in its article 41 (3) provided right of access to public funded social services, including education, for Ethiopian citizen only (FDRE, 1995: 14). Hence, refugee children are not entitled to access public funded social services including education. With regards to education for refugee children, the 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia in its article 21 (3) provided that:

...every recognized refugee, and family members thereof shall in respect to ...education, be entitled to the same rights and be subjected to the same restrictions as are conferred or imposed generally by the relevant laws on persons who are not citizens of Ethiopia (FDRE, 2004: p. 2671).

Through this provision, therefore, the 2004 refugee proclamation endorsed the reservation Ethiopia registered with regards to the provision of primary education to refugee children while acceding to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.

The UNHCR Ethiopian country office monthly refugee population statistical report for the December of 2014 indicated that, there were 363,363 refugee children in Ethiopia who are in the age range between 0-17 years. From this total of refugee children in Ethiopia in 2014, the same report indicated that 173,897 were in the age range between 5-11 years and 260,792 were in the age range between 5-17 years. Notwithstanding the reservations to the Refugee Convention, the provision in the FDRE Constitution, and the provision of the 2004 refugee proclamation, as ARRA (2014) refugee education gross enrollment data as of December 2014 indicated, a total of 137,230 refugees were enrolled in early childhood care and education (ECCE), primary education,

secondary education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education, and in the non-formal education programs in Ethiopia at different locations.

From the total refugee students population in Ethiopia, ARRA (2014) education report has shown that 86,453 (63 percent) were enrolled in primary level from grade 1-8, and 67,153 (49 percent) were enrolled in primary first cycle (i.e., grade 1-4). As ARRA (2014) refugee education report indicated, from the total of primary level refugee students in Ethiopia 34,180 (40 percent) were Somali refugees, while 5320 (6 percent) were Eritreans. ARRA's (2014) report indicated that the refugee student population in the secondary level of education that comprises grades from 9-12, represent 3,482 (2.5 percent) from the total refugee students population in Ethiopia. From the total of refugee students enrolled in the secondary level in Ethiopia, ARRA (2014) report indicated that 1879 (51 percent) were Somalis and 784 (23 percent) were Eritrean refugees. In higher education level, as ARRA (2014) report has shown, 1740 refugee students were enrolled out of which 1270 (73 percent) were Eritrean refugees while 348 (20 percent) were Somali refugees.

In the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa in which there were 2176 refugee children below the age of eighteen, ARRA (2014) education report indicated that a total of 1519 refugee students were enrolled in all levels of education in 2014. However, those urban refugee students enrolled in ECCE, primary education, and secondary education were 737 (49 percent), and 7 students (0.5 percent) were enrolled in higher education, while the remaining were enrolled in technical and vocational education (ARRA, 2014). Although age information of refugee students enrolled in different levels of education is missing from ARRA's (2014) report, based on the children population in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa in 2014 and assuming that urban refugee students at different levels represent the appropriate age cohort, which is a less probable assumption, it is possible to understand that only 34 percent of the relevant age cohort from refugee children were enrolled in the level of education including ECCE, primary and secondary.

Since 1970, provision of education to refugees integrated into the national education system of Ethiopia was regulated through successive letters, directives and guidelines from the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE). The following sections discuss these provisions from MoE.

### **6.3.1.1 The 1970 Letter on Refugee Education**

In Ethiopia, providing education to refugees can roughly be traced as far back as 1950's and 1960's when freedom fighters from various African nations used to come to Ethiopia and seek refuge (ARRA, 2010). During the 1960's and the earliest years of 1970's, since there were no refugee camps in the nation, refugees were mainly hosted in Addis Ababa. During 1960's and 1970's the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC), as state religion of the Imperial period Ethiopia, was active in providing to the basic needs of refugees and in organizing provision of essential services to refugees.

Regarding earliest practices of the EOC, Expert A commented the following.

The time before 1964 was the period of colonialism in Africa. Ethiopia was an independent nation in Africa. In one way or the other freedom fighters used to come to Ethiopia from African countries. During that time the Ethiopian Orthodox religion was state religion. Hence, on behalf of government, the church used to undertake some responsibilities. One of the responsibilities was taking care of refugees, and arranging educational opportunities and providing counselling service to refugees. During that time, the current Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department of EOC-DICAC was called Refugee Counseling Service (RCS). Even before the RCS there was an ad hoc committee in the Church responsible for refugee issues. It was through such organizational arrangement that the EOC worked to facilitate educational access to refugees from primary level to higher education in Addis Ababa. (Interview with Expert A, June 10, 2015)

The involvement and concern of the EOC towards refugee education in Ethiopia can also be inferred from the letter of directive written by the Imperial Ethiopia's Ministry of Education and Fine Arts (MoEFA) on January 1, 1970 to the then fourteen administrative regions regarding refugee education. By this letter, the MoEFA gave response to the issues related to national examinations of refugee students towards which the EOC's Christian Relief and Refugee Service Committee had requested the Ministry explanation through its letter dated December 24, 1970. This letter is the oldest letter in which the MoE of Ethiopia had explained how refugee students in Ethiopia should be admitted to government and private schools of the country. In the letter it was stated that:

These refugees, majority of them are South Sudanese, while their academic competence is above grade seven and due to the fact that they left their country without carrying the necessary educational documents, as much as possible they should be placed in the grade level their competence deserves. (Letter from Ministry of Education and Fine Arts Number 21/1-3096/2796/16 and dated January 1, 1970).

Although the detail procedures of recognizing prior learning of refugees were not indicated, the letter clearly indicates that prior learning of refugees in their country of origin was recognized and students were placed in the appropriate grade level to their competence. In same letter, the MoE had given clear directive as to how refugee students can sit for grade twelve national examination in Ethiopia saying:

Those refugee students who were placed in the appropriate grade level to their competence and continued their education in Ethiopia and if they took Ethiopian grade eight leaving national examination, they are expected to produce all the required documents as any Ethiopian student to sit for the grade twelve national examination. However, if the refugees joined education in Ethiopia in one of the secondary education grades, they should only be requested to produce certificates starting from the grade level they joined secondary education in Ethiopia to sit for grade twelve national examination. (Letter from Ministry of Education and Fine Arts Number 21/1-3096/2796/16 and dated January 1, 1970).

Thus, the letter indicates how the EOC Refugee and Returnee Affairs Committee had advocated and facilitated access to Ethiopian national education system to refugee students from South Sudan and other countries. This move of the EOC Refugee and Returnee Affairs Committee is consistent with what Kirk (2009) indicated as NGOs and UN agencies advocacy measures with MoEs to ensure entry into education system through lifting documentation requirement for refugee students.

#### **6.3.1.2 The 2009 Executive Directive**

Due to change of governments and as time elapsed, citing the 1970 letter as old, as DICAC-RRAD in its letter dated October 13, 2009 indicated, schools in Ethiopia had started to resist admission of refugee students and specifically those refugee students who have no documents attesting their prior learning. Another persistent concern of schools and regional education bureaus was that the MoE letter of 1970 had no detailed procedure of implementation regarding how to recognize the prior learning of refugee students. Citing the above concerns, the EOC DICAC-RRAD wrote a letter on October 28, 2008 to the FDRE MoE requesting a new directive replacing the 1970 directive and a detailed implementation guideline as to how Ethiopian schools have to accommodate refugee students integrated with local students. As DICAC-RRAD letter dated October 13, 2009 announcing to UNHCR and ARRA the response of MoE indicates:

Based on our request and continuous consultation with the higher officials, the Federal Ministry of Education wrote a letter of standing instruction and guideline

to all regional Education bureaus as to how to admit refugee students in government schools.

The letter of standing instruction and the attached detail executive directive dispatched from Federal MoE to the Regional States Education Bureaus and the Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa City Governments education bureaus on February 3, 2009, as DICAC-RRAD claims, was the result of its continuous advocacy of the issue to the government. In its letter, the Federal MoE acknowledged as DICAC-RRAD had requested a directive allowing refugee students from Somalia and hosted in refugee camps in Ethiopian Somali regional state to attend nearby government secondary schools at Kebribeya and Ayuwole. In addition, in the same letter the MoE expressed as it has learned the regional education bureaus are having difficulties with regards to admitting refugee students due to lack of executive directive regarding the matter. Hence, in addition to DICAC-RRAD advocacy, the MoE had claimed as it has knowledge and concern towards refugee education through its own channels.

The 2009 executive directive from the FDRE MoE has four major parts. In its first part the directive defines refugee student saying that “*a foreign national displaced from his country of residency due to natural or manmade disasters and sought asylum in another country*”. However, this definition is quit simplistic and fails to reflect the refugee and refugee child definition in the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation.

The executive directive in its second part discusses about conditions for directly accommodating refugee students in government schools. In this regard, the directive stated that the applicant refugee students must be one who is residing in a designated camp, requests the student to produce a document that proves a refugee status from relevant authority in Ethiopia, and request the students to produce proper educational certificate attesting their prior learning. If these requirements are in place, refugee students can directly be admitted and placed in the appropriate grade level as per their document. The provision in the second part of the directive would mitigate the shortcomings in the definition of refugee student of MoE in the first part of the directive because in this part the directive requests the refugee student to attain a refugee status from relevant authority in the first place, for which one must fulfill the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation’s refugee definition.

In its third part, the directive details procedures as to how to admit and place refugee students who cannot produce educational credentials attesting their prior learning. To be admitted and placed in government schools integrated with the local students, such students must first submit application letter detailing reasons for failure to produce educational credentials and the grade level they completed in their country of origin to regional education bureau. After verifying the application of the refugee student, the regional education bureau prepares placement examination in all subjects based on Ethiopian curriculum for the grade level the refugee student claimed as he/she has completed. In the placement examination, those refugee students who scored a passing grade decided to the local students of the region would be given a letter of testimony from the regional education bureau to be placed in appropriate grade to their aptitude. For those refugee students who failed to score a passing grade in the placement examination, the regional education bureau decides the appropriate grade level in which they should be placed.

Part three and part four of the executive directive discusses about the condition by which refugee students would be eligible to sit for grade ten and grade twelve national examinations in Ethiopia. As part three of the executive directive provides those refugees who started their education in Ethiopia in grade nine or ten are waived from producing grade eight leaving examination certificate to sit for grade ten national examination. However, those refugee students who started their education in Ethiopia at grade eight or below grade eight are expected to produce grade eight leaving examination certificate to sit for grade ten national examination.

In its fourth, the directive guarantees refugee students right to join technical and vocational education and training institutions or higher education institutions if they fulfill all the academic requirements for the specified levels of higher levels of education in Ethiopia. The 2009 directive makes Ethiopian grade ten national examination certificate mandatory to refugees to progress to technical and vocational education and training program or to preparatory program for higher education. In other words, refugees cannot claim recognition of prior learning which they have accomplished in their country of origin or somewhere outside Ethiopia beyond grade ten.

Hence, the FDRE MoE, through its 2009 directive, provided an extended opportunity to refugee students to progress through all levels of education in the nation. Since the 2009 MoE executive directive on how to accommodate refugee students in Ethiopia is dispatched to all Regional States



and City Governments including Addis Ababa City Government Education Bureau, its provisions were expected to be implemented in the urban refugee program of Addis Ababa.

The provisions in 2009 executive directive on refugee education in Ethiopia differs from practices of countries that accommodate refugees from similar national origin to Ethiopia. For example, unlike the provisions of the 2009 executive directive on refugee education in Ethiopia, in Kenya, all refugee students from Somalia, whether they have educational certificates or not from their country of origin, are required to sit for examination to be placed in an appropriate grade level (Kirk, 2009). A decision in Kenya not to accept educational certificates of Somali refugee students at face value in Dadaab refugee camp school is due to the fact that there is no centralized education authority in Somalia that can attest quality of educational institutions, and due to fear of forged certificates from Somalia. Thus, the Ethiopian 2009 executive directive regarding accommodation of refugee students in government schools of the nation is, at best, more relaxed than the Kenyan requirements to accommodating Somali refugee students in Dadaab refugee camp schools or a bit careless.

#### **6.3.1.3 The 2010 Implementation Guideline**

With the formal declaration of the Out-of-Camp scheme to Eritrean refugees in 2010, the FDRE MoE dispatched implementation guideline for accommodating Eritrean refugee students in urban schools of the nation integrated with local students through its letter with ref.no. 1/1-2320/23296/B dated October 26, 2010. Regarding the goal of extending educational opportunity to Eritrean Out-of-Camp refugees, the guideline argued that the opportunity is provided to contribute to future better life to refugees using knowledge and skill they will gain during their stay as refugees in Ethiopia and to strengthen people-to-people relations.

The basic provisions of the 2010 guideline for accommodating Eritrean Refugee students in urban integrated schools are similar with the 2009 executive directive. The 2010 guideline, just like its predecessor, maintained placement test at different levels as mechanism to recognize prior learning of Eritrean refugee students who cannot produce educational credentials. However, the 2010 guideline introduced provisions on how to admit university dropout students from Eritrea seeking to continue their education in Ethiopia from the year they dropped out and left Eritrea. In addition, the guideline details the roles and responsibilities of regional education bureaus, technical and

vocational education and training institutions, public higher education institutions and ARRA in the process of accommodating Eritrean refugee students in different levels of education.

As an annex to the guideline, education policy objectives, levels of the organization of education systems, issues of language of instruction at different levels of education, required teachers professional training for different levels, and issues related to national examinations at various levels of the education systems of Ethiopia and Eritrea are attached.

#### **6.3.1.4 The 2013 Letter**

The most recent letter regarding refugee education from the Ethiopian MoE was issued on May 21, 2013. This letter was a response to ARRA's request to the MoE through its letter dated May 18, 2013 to mainstream refugee education into the education sector development program of the country and to consider refugee teachers, school leaders and supervisors in the teachers and educational leaders professional development plan of the MoE. In the same letter, ARRA also request the MoE to facilitate purchase of newly published textbooks, teachers' guides and other relevant inputs to refugee camp schools and mainstream refugee educational services in the educational surveys conducted by National Educational Assessment and Examination Agency, and Regional Education Bureaus in Ethiopia.

As rational to request mainstreaming refugee educational services into the Ethiopian MoE plans and strategies, ARRA in its letter to the MoE indicated that "as governmental organization mandated to deal with refugee issues, ARRA is providing pre-primary, primary, and adult and non-formal education based on Ethiopian education and training policy and national curricular standards". The MoE welcomed the request from ARRA and issued a letter of instruction to all the agencies, directorates, and regional education bureaus to seriously consider the request of ARRA and mainstream refugee education in their plans and services. The 2013 letter of instruction regarding refugee education, however, deals only about general education provided by ARRA in the refugee camps.

In the 1970 letter, 2009 executive directive, 2010 guideline, or 2013 letter from MoE on integrating refugees into the national education system in Ethiopia, no mechanism is indicated as how to retain the identity of refugee students while they were integrated into host community schools. Concepts that allude consideration of refugee children country of origin identity such as their language,

culture, or history are totally missing from the provisions. Rather, the provisions require refugee students who cannot produce certificate of their prior learning to sit for placement examination prepared based on the curriculum of the region in Ethiopia where they will be integrated with local students. For the urban refugee children in Addis Ababa who missed certificate of their prior learning, as expert B explained in this study, placement examinations were prepared based on the curriculum of the city administration education bureau.

The principal difference between education for refugees and other displaced people is that refugees are separated from the education system of their own country which has its own curriculum, its own assessment and examination procedures, its own system of progression from one level of education to the next, and its own approaches to teacher training and certification (Sinclair, 2002). It is possible to understand from the above discussed official letters, executive directives, and guidelines from the Ministry of Education since 1970 that the government of Ethiopia has taken seriously the importance of official recognition of refugee students' prior learning. Through all the provisions, however, the identity of refugee children is overlooked and refugee children were made to learn the host country curriculum. As Ferris and Winthrop (2010) asserted, the official responses to such serious issues related to education for refugees are part of policies of the host country government although they have important implications for long-term recognition of student learning.

Factors such as the relationship between the host country and the home country with respect to language, ethnicity, and national identity are keys in deciding which curriculum (i.e., the country of origin or host country), should be pursued in refugee education, and how previous educational attainment of refugee students has to be recognized. In this regard Ferris and Winthrop (2010) argued that as the social and cultural ties between the country of origin and the host country are closer the process of recognition of prior learning and certification, and curriculum choice become easier. In cases where differences are significant, the process to develop an appropriate education system for refugees becomes much more complex.

The size and make-up of the refugee population and the length of displacement also impact the development of a suitable education program to refugees. As the size of refugee population hosted is large, while refugees are from diverse national, linguistic and cultural origins, and when there

is protracted refugee situation the decisions as to how to establish appropriate refugee education program become very complex (Ferris and Winthrop, 2010).

In countries like Ethiopia where the opportunity to local integration is non-existent and right to participate in gainful employment is legally prohibited to refugees, the benefits of investing in education for refugee families and individual refugee students is always a question. As the result, in such contexts the use of the curriculum of the country of origin could have justified the value of refugee education because education for repatriation, as Sinclair (2002) argued, would help the refugee learners to re-enter schools and engage in labor market after repatriation.

Regarding the curricular choice and benefits of education for refugees in Ethiopia *vis-a-vis* refugees' right to participate in gainful employment in the country, an expert who participated in this research has argued as follows.

In Ethiopia, we use the national education policy and the national curriculum framework for refugee education. It is very difficult to use country of origin curriculum, for example, of Somalia because there is no viable national education system there. In the case of Eritrea, there is no reliable access to their curriculum and no scientific research available regarding their curriculum. South Sudan is a new nation where education policy and curricular developments are at infant stage. We also have witnessed how far formerly repatriated South Sudanese refugees who were educated in Ethiopia with Ethiopian curriculum contributed for the reconstruction of their nation. We feel that we had contributed in building the capacity of the South Sudan through our refugee education program. In Addis Ababa, it is virtually impossible to establish separate schools for the various refugee communities in the city due to cost, settlement pattern of refugees, and UNHCR policy of integration. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)

The above argument of Expert F is consistent with Ferris and Winthrop (2010), and Nicolai and Triplehorn (2003) argument regarding investment in refugee education saying that its value extends far beyond the time of displacement and in some contexts directly contribute to post-conflict stabilization and recovery of their home country. The above argument of the expert also explains the complex regional context and the situation of the countries of origin of refugees that contributed to the Ethiopia's decision to adopt the national curriculum to educate refugees hosted in its soil. The argument of the expert F further tells that the role of education in retaining refugee children country of origin identity in Ethiopia, where local integration is an almost impossible durable solution, is out of agenda. Hence, for refugees providing education relevant to preserve

their identity and directly transferable to their country origin context during the time of their eventual repatriation is compromised.

UNHCR proposals with regards to curriculum choice in refugee settings has evolved through time from adoption of curriculum of country of origin (Dryden-Peterson, 2006) to a curriculum that faces both sides (UNHCR, 2003), and to adoption of host country curriculum (UNHCR, 2015c). Essentially, Ethiopia's decision to use the host country curriculum for refugee education is consistent with UNHCR current policy on curriculum in refugee settings which encourages the early adoption and/or transition to the host country curriculum (UNHCR, 2015c). The mainstreaming of refugee students into the host country curriculum, according to UNHCR can be implemented through integrating refugee students into the national education system like the cases of Cameroon, Lebanon, Uganda, Iran and Yemen or through providing education for refugees in camp setting using the host country national curriculum like the case of Kenya, Rwanda and Malaysia (UNHCR, 2015c). In Ethiopia both forms of mainstreaming are practiced whereby refugees in camps are learning using national curriculum through the medium of instruction in the region they are located, and refugees in the urban program in Addis Ababa are integrated into the public and private schools in the city.

At policy level, UNHCR (2015c) foresees the dilemmas of integration and identity in refugee education and argues curriculum choice as one of the most controversial and difficult issues in refugee education as follows.

Curriculum choice is challenging for a number of reasons. It can be a highly politicized and emotive issue for host governments and refugee communities, provoking sensitivities around identity, culture and ties to country of origin. In particular, curriculum decisions as they relate to access to examinations and certification have far-reaching implications for refugee children and their protection, including future educational and livelihood opportunities. These issues also present significant technical and planning challenges for education providers and require the development of strong partnerships between national authorities and refugee education partners (p. 1).

UNHCR in its curriculum policy document in refugee setting strongly argues that the advantages of using host country curriculum outweigh its disadvantages. Use of country of asylum curriculum, according to UNHCR (2015c) provides access to accredited, supervised and accountable education services; and it is generally the most sustainable and protective option in the medium to long term,

ensuring safe access to examinations and certification, access to teaching and learning materials, quality assurance and improved access to national education services including options to continue education at higher levels. Its disadvantage, however, includes perceived loss of language, culture, and identity by the refugee community.

### **6.3.2 Accountability to the Management of Refugee Education in Addis Ababa**

UNHCR and ARRA (2015) accountability matrix for operations in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa indicated that facilitating the provision of formal education to refugees in Addis Ababa from pre-primary to tertiary levels is the responsibility of DICAC-RRAD. As can be learned from the same accountability matrix, except in the Eritrean refugee camps of Shimelba and Mai-Aini where International Rescue Committee (IRC) and South Sudanese refugee camps of Kule and Pugnido II in which Plan International involves in provision of primary education together with ARRA, and Dillo and Megado refugee camps hosting Kenyan refugees where Support to the Poor and Needy (SPN) together with ARRA is responsible to providing primary education, in all the other refugee camps ARRA is the sole provider of primary education to refugees. The responsibility of managing secondary education for refugees in all refugee camps in Ethiopia, according to the 2015 UNHCR and ARRA accountability matrix, is entrusted to DICAC-RRAD and/or ARRA, except in the refugee camps hosting Kenyan refugees in Southern Ethiopia where SPN is accountable to fully manage secondary education. The same matrix also indicated that ARRA is responsible to managing the provision of tertiary education to refugees in Ethiopia except for Kenyan refugee in Dillo and Megado refugee camps to which SPN is responsible and the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa to which DICAC-RRAD is accountable.

Although various international organization are involving in refugee operation in Ethiopia, the provision of formal education from primary level up to higher education seems the prerogative of national organization, (i.e., ARRA, DICAC-RRAD and SPN). A participant in this research has commented that ARRA has plan to fully take over even the management of refugee primary education provision from the involvement of IRC and Plan International as joint providers with ARRA.

Regarding the strong participation of DICAC-RRAD as national organization in the provision of education to refugees in Addis Ababa, an expert who participated in this study argued that it is due

to the organization's proven excellence in refugee education services in several years that the organization is entrusted with this responsibility. The participant said the following regarding the matter.

It is not just because DICAC-RRAD is national organization that it is entrusted with the responsibility of providing secondary education to refugees in all refugee camps in Ethiopia and facilitating education for refugees in the urban program. It is the track record that the organization registered in several years of refugee education services in general and urban refugee education in Addis Ababa in particular, and the quality of the service that DICAC-RRAD demonstrated that made the organization to be selected for this responsibility. (Interview with Expert A, June 10, 2015)

In the management of refugee education in Ethiopia, as compared to the role played by ARRA and DICAC-RRAD as front line providers of refugee education, the Federal MoE and regional education bureaus in Ethiopia have quite marginal participation. Regarding the active role of ARRA in refugee education in Ethiopia and the attitude of MoE and regional education bureaus towards ARRA's role, a participant in this study commented that:

Regional education bureaus take the active role of ARRA in refugee education positively. Sometimes conflict on mandate arises between ARRA and MoE. Such problems are always solved through bilateral discussions. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)

Another participant in this study explained how MoE and regional education bureaus participate in refugee education as follows.

We do not have any formal and direct relationship with Bureau of Education in Addis Ababa. We contact Addis Ababa bureau of education only when we need some information. There is no role specified to Addis Ababa bureau of education in our urban refugee education projects and hence we do not have even a project agreement with the bureau. However, in camps where we are accountable to educational services we have project agreements with regional education bureaus. We also sign a memorandum of understanding with regional education bureaus specifying the role of each stakeholder in our camp operations. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

Another participant in this study has also explained the role of ARRA, and the participation of MoE and regional education bureaus as follows.

ARRA is responsible to all refugee matters including education in Ethiopia. So UNHCR deals with ARRA. But currently UNHCR is pushing ARRA to use expertise in the MoE. As the result, currently we have joint projects of ARRA, UNHCR and MoE on Education Management Information System (EMIS) and National Examinations in addition to the Ministry's role in recognizing prior

learning of refugee students. Regional bureaus of education participate in recognizing prior learning of refugees, in joint education meetings, visit and monitor refugee camp schools, and licensing new schools constructed in refugee camps. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015)

Thus, concerning education for refugees in Ethiopia, it is possible to understand that the role and participation of MoE does not commensurate with its national mandate for education and its age old expertise in the area. The minimum participation of regional education bureaus indicated in the above quotation gets totally absent in the case of Addis Ababa Bureau of Education with regards to urban refugees' education. ARRA, as Harmon-Gross (2009) described, plays monumental function in many of refugee services in Ethiopia including education. Regarding the role of ARRA in Ethiopia, Webster (2011) commented that unlike many of the other African countries, ARRA of Ethiopia performs most of the functions that UNHCR does in the rest of Africa and comparatively UNHCR plays minor role in Ethiopia focusing on advocacy and supporting ARRA in its functions, and facilitating resettlement for those refugees who are eligible. Harmon-Gross (2009) argued that the relationship between UNHCR and ARRA in Ethiopia is paradoxical where ARRA at the same time acts as regulatory agency to refugee serves including UNHCR's operations while itself providing several basic services, including education to refugees using funds from UNHCR.

ARRA's upper hand in refugee education in Ethiopia is consistent with Talbot (2013) assertion where one of the common characteristics of refugee education is securitization of responsibility for Education. In such situation, according to Talbot (2013), the national MoE and UN agencies are deliberately marginalized from provision of education due to the desire of refugee hosting states to control refugee population and the transmission of knowledge, ideas and values to the refugee children, and as part of a wider strategy of seeking political and military dominance. Hence, provision of educational services in refugee context, in addition to imparting knowledge, skill and attitude, would serve a security purpose of surveillance and control.

## **6.4 Summary**

As discussions in this chapter revealed, refugees in Ethiopia can be admitted to the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa through medical, security, or humanitarian reasons. In Ethiopia, the urban refugee program is contingency arrangement that admits refugees when there are no alternatives to keep them in camps and during life threatening circumstances as lifesaving measure. It is, at least



theoretically, temporary in which refugees are expected to return back to camps as the situation compelled decision to admit them in the urban refugee program improves.

However, due to increase in compelling reasons that necessitate decision to admit refugees into the urban program with increase in the total refugee population in the country and due to the Out-of-Camp scheme specifically targeting Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, population in the urban refugee program in Ethiopia is swelling year after year. In the urban refugee program of Addis Ababa, Eritreans are dominant in terms of number refugees joining the urban program and in terms of percentage of increase in the urban refugee population in successive years. However, from the point of the view of the increasing proportion of total Eritrean refugee population in the successive years, Eritrean refugees chance of joining urban refugee program in Addis Ababa is declining year after year while Somali refugees chance has improved slightly.

Discussions in this chapter have also revealed that despite Ethiopia's reservation to the provision of article 22 (1) of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention which is further endorsed by the provision in article 21 (3) of the 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia, the country is providing education at different levels, in different forms and at different locations for thousands of refugees. While camp based refugee education is the main location where refugee education is organized in Ethiopia, integration of refugees into the national education system in Ethiopia was guided by the 1970 letter, the 2009 executive directive, the 2010 guideline on the education of Out-of-Camp Eritrean refugees and the 2013 letter, all from the MoE. For the refugee education in Ethiopia, the national curriculum was implemented throughout history and at all locations where refugees have access to education.

ARRA and two local NGOs, (i.e., DICAC-RRAD and SPN), are involved in the provision of refugee education in Ethiopia. ARRA has almost monopolized the role of provider of education at primary level in refugee camps. In Addis Ababa, DICAC-RRAD facilitates educational provision to refugee students who are recognized in the urban refugee program. In Ethiopia refugee education, particularly in refugee camps, is undertaken by funds mainly from UNHCR.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **7. Eritrean and Somali Refugees in Addis Ababa: Subsistence Allowance, Relationship with the Host Community, and Educational Support**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the livelihood of refugees and the relationship between refugees and host community in Addis Ababa, and how the relationship is shaped by the livelihood of the refugees. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the livelihood of refugees in Addis Ababa, focusing particularly on the subsistence allowance provided to refugees. The second section discusses the attitude of the host community towards refugees from Eritrea and Somalia in Addis Ababa taking into account the major interfaces of relationship. The third section specifically focuses on the refugee students in urban program in Addis Ababa; and explicates educational assistance to refugee students and the recently introduced phased transfer of refugee students to government schools in Addis Ababa. Data for this chapter were generated from various documents, interviews, and FGDs.

#### **7.2 Subsistence Allowance to Eritrean and Somali Refugees in Addis Ababa**

The life of urban refugees in Ethiopia is heavily dependent on monthly substance allowance and other supports provided by UNHCR through various implementing partners due to the fact that refugees in Ethiopia are not legally allowed to work and there are no possibilities to gain Ethiopian citizenship. In order to provide services and assistance to refugees in Ethiopia in orderly and coordinated manner, UNHCR and ARRA release annual accountability matrix for all implementing partners involving in refugee issues in refugee camps and the urban program. The matrix is a binding document that details who is responsible for what services and where, and it is released and distributed to implementing partners with joint seal of UNHCR and ARRA. Accordingly, in the 2015 accountability matrix, for the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, DICAC-RRAD, JRS, ARRA and UNHCR are indicated as responsible to provide different services (UNHCR and ARRA, 2015).

In 2015, in the urban refugee program of Ethiopia, DICAC-RRAD, according to the accountability matrix, is responsible for distribution of core relief items including subsistence allowance, education at all levels, health care, and SGBV and FGM prevention and response. In addition, DICAC-RRAD is responsible to provide an ambulance service to refugees, has a 24 hour refugee

helpline, special nourishment for some of the seriously sick refugees, and one time extra clothing assistance to all urban refugees whose cases are active including their dependents.

According to Gelaw (2007), DICAC-RRAD was established in 1972 following a tripartite agreement between the UNHCR, the International University Exchange Fund (IUEF), the World Council of Churches (WCC) as well as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC). Today the Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department (RRAD) is under the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC).

The amount of the allowance that UNHCR provides to refugees in the urban program of Ethiopia through DICAC depends on the family size of refugees and is provided to cover food, housing, clothes and other needs of refugees. In addition to assistance and services that refugees in the urban program of Ethiopia receive through DICAC, another faith based NGO called Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) involves in assistance and service provision to refugees in Addis Ababa. JRS had started working on refugee issues in Ethiopia in 1981 (Turene, 2015). Currently JRS runs a refugee community center that offers daycare, cultural and sports activities, a library, internet access, vocational skills training and psychosocial support programs. All urban refugees, including the Out-of-Camp Eritreans, can take advantage of these facilities. The above lists of facilities that JRS has organized to refugees in urban program in Ethiopia are indicated in 2015 accountability matrix released by UNHCR and ARRA as non-formal education for which JRS is responsible (UNHCR and ARRA, 2015).

Regarding the adequacy of monthly subsistence allowance to refugees in Addis Ababa, there are contradictory explanations from participants of this study. Expert D argued that the allowance is adequate, and explained the adequacy of allowance as follows.

It is never enough. There is no enough amount as it is. Here in Addis we have the life of those very low income Ethiopians. The mystery of their survival always catches me with surprise. The refugee earns a base allowance of 1500 birr (approximately \$75) per month and an additional 300 birr (approximately \$15) for each dependent up to the ceiling of ten dependents. The allowance is tax free. They are also entitled to free medical care and free education provided by UNHCR and the government of Ethiopia. Although the amount of allowance is not enough, given the Ethiopian standard of life, we feel it is appropriate. Given the Ethiopian standard of life, the question is can't a refugee survives with this money in Addis Ababa? If refugees are enjoying life far better than the standard of life of the local people,

such would lead to conflict between refugees and the local community. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015)

Regarding the amount of subsistence allowance, another research participant argued that:

Refugees are not underprivileged due to the allowance, even if there are areas that require further assessment. DICAC always complains as the amount is inadequate and requests improvement. However, the support provided to refugees in Addis Ababa should not make them underprivileged or overprivileged from the local host community. On the other hand, UNHCR's area based refugee subsistence allowance scheme is contributing for secondary movement to areas with better allowance scale. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)

Issues such as standard of life in the host community and avoiding undue conflict between refugees and the host community are critical factors considered by UNHCR and ARRA in discussing the amount of subsistence allowance to refugees in urban program in Addis Ababa. The standard of life in the host community can be inferred from the citizens' income from paid employment. Regarding income of paid employees, the employment survey of Addis Ababa conducted in 2013 revealed that the mean income from paid employment in the city was 1921 birr (approximately \$96) and the median income was 1229 (approximately \$61) (CSA and AALSAD, 2014). Furthermore, the same survey report indicated that with increase in family size the mean and median income of paid employees in Addis Ababa had declined to 1445 (approximately \$72) and 1202 (approximately \$60) respectively (CSA and AALSAD, 2014). Thus, from the point of view of income of paid employees in Addis Ababa, the amount of monthly subsistence allowance refugees receiving from UNHCR seems fairly appropriate. Subsistence allowance refugees receive in Addis Ababa is slightly better than the scale in some of the African cities. According to Salem (2013), for example, in Cairo, Egypt, "the financial assistance which refugees receive from the UNHCR and Caritas ranges from 400 EGP to 1200 EGP per month which is the equivalent to 58\$ to 174\$ and the range differs depending on the number of family members" (p: 20).

Some Eritrean refugees had a view that the monthly subsistence allowance provided by UNHCR through DICAC is adequate if refugees manage their income properly. For example, parent A, an Eritrean refugee, had the following to say.

I sustain my family by the money I collect from DICAC. Except this I do not get support from any other source. Some of my friends get remittance from their relatives abroad. In my family the major struggle is to plan as to how to use the money for the basic household demands of the month. In a purchase plan priority is given to flour, oil, sugar and fuel and I immediately purchase these as I collect

the money. At least our table will not be empty and my children will not sleep with empty belly. UNHCR fully covers our medical bill. (Interview with Parent A, May 05, 2015)

However, Somali refugee parents, members of the Urban Refugee Central Committee (URCC) who took part in FGD, and participants in this study from JRS and DICAC vehemently argued that the monthly subsistence allowance is inadequate. The following quotations allude the view of Somali refugees regarding the inadequacy of the allowance.

Ten families receive only 4000 birr. Do you think it is enough? It is not enough. Everything is high here. The price of goods is high, house rent is high. We move in a month from this place to another place. We have also a problem because one family could have even ten members. In Ethiopia it is very difficult to rent house because the house owners ask how many of are you? If you say ten they say no we do not want ten families. You see it is difficult. You see the solution is that if UNHCR increases the money. We worry about our children not ourselves. Even up to now there is no cloth allowance. Because we receive cloth allowance every year. Last year a single person 300 birr. Can you buy shoe, or trouser for 300 birr? Everything is high in Addis. They say [UNHCR and ARRA] we receive higher budget. (FGD, URCC member from Somali refugees, May 26, 2015).

The good solution for this problem is the addition of assistance. Why I am saying this? If you are three or four half of the assistance like 2300 birr only is provided. The rent of the house takes most of it 1500. Only the remaining is for other things. Even there is children needs like cloth and shoes. If I am ill I need transportation from the home to the hospital. Even there is school fee which is 300 or 400 birr that we take from other expenses. All this money is taken from the allowance. What I am saying is we cannot eat meat even in one month or two months. We want them add the allowance to help us. Even if the addition is 100 birr it is enough. (FGD, URCC member from Somali refugees, May 26, 2015).

Refugees, as seen in the above comments, are arguing the inadequacy of allowance with the purchasing power of the allowance they are receiving and the cost of living in Addis Ababa. The most critical expense which is draining the income of urban refugees is house rent. While large family size entitles to higher subsistence allowance for refugees in Addis Ababa, it is exposing the refugees to higher rental prices and even rejection by landlords due to the fact that the landlords consider larger family would damage their infrastructure more. The one time annual cloth allowance was highly criticized by the refugees not only for its being small in amount which cannot afford buying a single item of cloth but also for the unpredictable payment schedule of DICAC. Furthermore, the responses of refugees reveal that there is either lack of awareness or disinterest towards the medical services provided to them free of any charge by UNHCR through DICAC.

From the above comments of the refugees it is possible to understand that urban refugees want every support, including services which UNHCR has arranged to be provided free of any charge, to be calculated and converted into the form of cash assistance.

Due to the inadequacy of the subsistence allowance provided to the Eritrean and Somali refugees in Addis Ababa, they allocate the available money for the lifesaving and essential expenses first and education of children is usually in the waiting list. A Somali refugee parent said the following regarding this matter.

Most Somali families have large family size. Maybe ten or eleven persons in the house. Most of them do not send some of their children to school and such families divide their children into two. Those who go to formal schools and those who go to Koran school because there is no enough money to afford formal education to all of them. (Interview with parent H, June 16, 2015)

Implications of the inadequacy of the subsistence allowance on refugee children education in Addis Ababa are very serious even on those refugee children who are fortunate to get enrolled in schools. The comment of one Somali member of URCC in this study revealingly tells this situation as follows.

Now because we do not have enough food at home when they [children] go to school the school administration chase their food out. The question they ask is the type and quality of food our children pack to school is not comparable to the food majority of Ethiopian children bring to the school. So teachers at school said to me that as long as you are a parent you have to give your children different types of food, not one food every day. This causes problem. It is undermining the activities of the children. Moreover, sometimes children go to school hungry. They are physically in a class but absent in mind. They are unable to write and study. When they came home you ask them the day's lesson and they say I do not know. They have also problem of cloth. They use cloth that has been used last year for this year too. They have problem of shoes. They walk with sandals that belongs to the tyre of the car. (FGD, URCC member from Somali refugees, May 26, 2015)

Regarding the living condition of refugees and the perception of local host community towards refugees in Addis Ababa, one research participant has reflected the following from the experience of working with urban refugees.

While we go to refugees' residence for home visit what we see is in a small room some ten people might live together. They usually share a single blanket during night times. This is because the allowance is not adequate. It should take into account the living cost in today's Addis Ababa. One thing which should be emphasized is that the landlords of Addis Ababa see the refugees as diplomats. As the result refugees pay the greatest portion from their allowance for house rent.

House rent should be separately treated in the amount of allowance decision to urban refugees by UNHCR. House rent takes more than half of their allowance. (Interview with Expert C, June 04, 2015)

The above comment from Expert C also suggests that implementing agencies themselves are not successful in sensitizing local community towards the plights of refugees and the true picture of refugeehood as compared to foreign diplomats.

From the above discussions it is possible to understand that some Eritrean refugees use their personal wisdom to overcome some of the challenges resulting from the inadequacy of subsistence allowance. However, Somali refugees expect solution for the problems related to the inadequacy of subsistence allowance from UNHCR in the form of increase in the amount of allowance. As the result of inadequacy of subsistence allowance, particularly some of the Somali refugee children in Addis Ababa, are not enrolled in formal schools, and those enrolled are marginalized, poorly feed, and vulnerable to low achievement and dropping out.

Although conflicting arguments towards the adequacy of urban refugees' subsistence allowance were forwarded, UNHCR (2012a) admits that the financial assistance provided to urban refugees is not adequate to meet the real needs of refugees in several urban centers of developing countries, including Addis Ababa due to budget constraints. UNHCR further admits that the assistance tables have not been updated to reflect increases in the cost of living in various urban centers where refugees are residing (UNHCR, 2012a).

### **7.3 Eritrean and Somali Refugees and Host Community Relationship in Addis Ababa**

Discussions of refugee integration and identity must be premised on the clear conception of host and guest communities (Landau, 2012). In urban context, Campbell (2006), Landau (2012) and Church World Service (2012) argued that defining the concept of host community is problematic due to the fact that the established host communities in urban areas neither host the refugees in any direct sense, nor do they really constitute a recognizably coherent community. UNHCR (2008) defines community as a group of people that recognizes itself or is recognized by outsiders as sharing common cultural, religious or other social features, backgrounds and interests, and that forms a collective identity with shared goals. However, what is externally perceived as a community in urban context might in fact be an entity with many sub-groups or communities. Church World Service (2012) defines the concept of a host-community in urban areas with

reference to the histories, social and cultural identities and other defining characteristics that people draw on to assert their status as citizens and the rights that they feel this entitles them to.

Refugee integration is a bidirectional process of relationship between refugees and the host community. The nature of relationship by and large determines the effectiveness of the integration. Cultural compatibility between refugees and the host community in terms of similarity in language, life style, value system, and ethnicity, and the attitude of host community towards refugees due to the benefits and/or burden the host community has experienced due to the presence of refugees are among the major factors that determine the effectiveness of the integration (Fielden, 2008; Kanu, 2008; and Agbloti, 2011).

In Addis Ababa, the general perception of local community towards refugees is somehow different from their refugee community specific perceptions. While local community representatives were invited to comment on their general perception of refugees in Addis Ababa they described refugees as they are privileged in their life and enjoying better standard of life in the city than the local people.

The following quotation from the comment of local community representative who introduced himself as veteran of Ogaden War would illuminate the extreme perspective of local community, which should be taken cautiously.

These people [refugees] are blessed from their mothers' womb. I am sure they can never live such a life by their own sweat if they are given a chance here. Because many local inhabitants in this quarter of the city are not living the standard of life refugees are enjoying. They work nothing but they afford many things. While they get ill they call the ambulance from UN. If the ambulance is little late, they take taxi for rent and stop it for payment at the gate of UN office. That is it. That is life (FGD with local community representatives, June 18, 2015)

Hence, as can be understood from the above comments, grossly, refugees in Addis Ababa are considered as better off and as a group of people who can afford a standard of living better than the local poor. The responses also suggest that the information local community have regarding the subsistence allowance refugees are receiving from UNHCR is flawed and exaggerated. It seems that the local poor envy the life of refugees, exaggerating the amount of assistance the refugees are entitled with their perception of UN capacity. The above responses can also suggest



that the local community has no awareness regarding refugees' legal prohibition from engagement in gainful employment in Ethiopia. The local community response alludes an understanding that refugees have adequate income that they collect from UN and that is why they are not locally employed. Such understanding of local community towards the situation of refugees validates Kuhlman (1991) assertion that refugee integration in Africa should be understood differently from the developed countries of the world. In Africa, both the refugees and the host society are poor and host countries have weak capacity to respond to the needs of refugees while they are challenged to provide to the needs of their own citizen (Kuhlman, 1991).

In his study of social integration process of urban refugee women from Great Lakes Region (GLR) in Addis Ababa, Ali (2014) confirmed that the host community in Addis Ababa has no proper information to distinguish refugees from the non-refugees. Ali (2014) in this regard said that:

They [refugees from the GLR] are used to the perceptions of the local people who often confuse them with other African residents of the city who stay as expatriate workers and/or business people. The confusion has often to do with little or no information about the plight of refugees from the GLR living in Addis Ababa (p: 46).

However, refugee community specific perception of the host community in Addis Ababa do not perfectly tally with their general understanding towards all refugee communities as discussed above. The perception of local community in Addis Ababa towards Eritrean and Somali refugees and the relationship between the refugees and the host community is distinct to the two refugee communities due to various factors. The following sections discusses Eritrean and Somali refugees' relationship with the host community and discerns the most important factors determining the relationship.

### **7.3.1 Eritrean Refugees and the Host Community: Disguised Relationship**

Eritrean refugees officially join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa through two avenues: through the joint decision of UNHCR and ARRA due to medical or security reasons, or by ARRA's decision through the Out-of-Camp scheme. Eritreans represent the majority of the legally recognized refugees in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. In 2014, there were 3626 Eritrean refugees in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. However, according to some estimates the actual number of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa is far greater than the official

numbers reported by UNHCR and ARRA. For example, Webster (2011) indicated that there are tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees residing illegally in Addis Ababa.

#### **7.3.1.1 Access to housing and settlement pattern of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa**

Refugees joining urban program in Ethiopia are automatically entitled to reside in integration with the local community in any part of the city upon their decision. As the result the first encounter in the relationship between refugees and the host community manifest, as Church World Service (2013) explained, in the refugees struggle to identify and retain access to reasonable and affordable housing through tenant-landlord arrangements.

The initial decision of Eritrean refugees in the urban program to reside in the given part of Addis Ababa is mainly influenced by the social network of the refugees including other Eritrean refugees, Eritreans illegal residents in Addis Ababa or Ethiopians in the city; the amount of money they have at the moment; their prior knowledge about the city; and proficiency in Amharic as language of communication in the city. Among Eritrean refugees participating in this study, those who have friends or relatives recounted positive initial experience of settlement in Addis Ababa. One Eritrean refugee, for example, has recounted his initial experience of settling in Addis Ababa as soon as he was admitted into urban refugee program as follows.

I was admitted into the urban refugee program some four years back. I have six children. First we were accommodated by ARRA. Then ARRA gave me money and I found a house for rent. I rented the house around Gofa area of Addis Ababa because there was a woman Eritrean refugee who knew my family and who joined urban program earlier than me. She helped me very much in finding the first house for rent in Addis Ababa. (Interview with parent A, May 05, 2015)

However, for others it was very difficult to settle in the city as soon as they have been accepted into the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa due to lack of acquaintances and difficulty of communicating in Amharic, the *lingua franca* in Addis Ababa.

For first I come as urban refugee from refugee camp to Addis Ababa. It was very difficult for anybody who comes for the first time for many reasons. One is he does not know the location. Maybe he does not know the language. Maybe he does not have members of his community he can contact. For example, me, I stayed two months in a church until I get a house. It is not easy to get house for rent for the beginners. (Interview with parent B, May 9, 2015)

Experiences of initial settlement of Eritrean refugees in this study illustrates that they were very much dependent on individual networks in the form of prior personal friendship or blood ties rather than a network of community of Eritreans. For some, their personal exploration of the city after they are dropped in the city explains their initial settlement experience. In Addis Ababa, except some quarters of the city which were known as residence or business areas of Eritreans before the secession of Eritrea in 1993, and the Ethio-Eritrean war and the deportation of Eritreans of 1998, currently it is quite difficult to find a quarter of Addis Ababa resided by a visible and large number of Eritrean refugee community. Rather, Eritrean refugees are extremely dispersed all over the city. For example, the 114 Eritrean refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa in 2013/2014 Ethiopian academic year are registered in 71 schools located in all the Sub-Cities of Addis Ababa and the students are from 70 different Eritrean families.

#### **7.3.1.2 Relationship between Eritrean refugees and the host community**

The dispersed settlement of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa and their invisibility as community in any part of the city might suggest, as Polzer (2008) argued, successful social integration of Eritreans refugees into the host community. Eritrean refugees who are living in Addis Ababa have very positive reflection regarding their relationship with the host community. Such relationship, according to the participants of this study, is the result of similarity in the culture and religion between Eritrean refugees and the host community. The refugees have also commented that they are active in all major social affairs in the host community they are living with. Regarding their relationship with the host community they have commented the following.

We easily communicate with the host community because we share the same religion and culture. Cultural similarity has contributed a lot for our positive relationship. We are not like Ugandan or DRC refugees. Our culture is more than 90 percent similar to Ethiopian culture. As the result, we did not face serious problem here. So far I did not see anything bad. Today in the next home to my residence a person has deceased. My wife spent the whole day and the night with other neighbors participating in the preparation to the funeral ceremony. (Interview with parent A, May 05, 2015).

My neighbors are very excellent people whose character is constant so far. I have an old aged women who has many children as my neighbor. We love each other very much. If there is something different in their home we are immediately there. The same if there is something different in my home. Because we cannot serve special things, we just prepare coffee and share together with my neighbors. My neighbors are Oromos in ethnic origin. They are very nice to me. I will never leave my current residence because of my neighbors. I am also very concerned to my

neighbors. We look our neighbors just as our own family. (Interview with parent C, May 25, 2015)

Representatives of local community in some quarters of Addis Ababa with relatively greater concentration of Eritrean refugees have varied reflection regarding the presence of Eritrean refugees amongst them. Some of the participants have commented that they did not know their status as refugees and even their being Eritreans. They just consider them as individuals from Ethiopian ethnic Tigrean group and some got surprised while they learnt that they have Eritrean refugees as their neighbors. Participants in this study confirmed that most Ethiopians in fact assumed Eritrean refugees as Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans without asking. Webster (2011) also experienced similar emotional reaction of host community in Addis Ababa while they learnt that there are Eritrean refugees in their neighborhood saying that they “seemed genuinely shocked”. However, those host community members who knew the presence of Eritrean refugees as their neighbors reflected that Eritrean refugees are disciplined neighbors who actively participate in all social affairs of the neighborhood including wedding ceremonies and mourning ceremonies.

All local community representatives who participated in this study commented that they could not articulate the benefit or burden in their neighborhood due to the presence of Eritrean refugees simply because the number of Eritrean refugees in their neighborhood is small. The dispersed settlement of Eritreans in Addis Ababa resulted in very small number of Eritreans in a specific village of the city. As the result, Eritrean refugees are not visible as community to the local population. Thus, the relationship between Eritrean refugees and the host community is shaped by social and cultural proximity and familiarity at the individual or household level. In other words the presence of Eritrean refugees in a given neighborhood is not felt at Eritrean community level, rather perceived as the presence of individuals or households of Eritrean origin if they are known as Eritreans after all.

Both Eritrean refugees and the local community representatives commented that Eritrean refugees are treated by the landlords in similar way as the Ethiopians. As they are not known as refugees in the first place for the landlords and because it is very much difficult to identify Eritreans based on physical stature and complexion, they are treated the same way as other Ethiopians. As participants in this research commented, the value system to the infrastructure of landlords such as water and electricity; the life style of Eritrean refugees in terms of their preferred diet, dressing style, and even tone of their voice; and their household income management style made them very much

regarded by the landlord in Addis Ababa. Many of the Eritrean refugee parents who participated in this study further commented that they were used to landlords and tenancy while they were in Eritrea and as they know the rule of the game very well.

The dispersal of Eritrean refugees, although marks successful social integration due to similarity in culture and religion, some research participants argued that it is the result of mistrust of Eritreans towards the local community and even among themselves. According to the comment of parent C, for example, Eritrean refugees developed the sense of mistrust due to the political culture of repression from which they escaped, and the suspicion of presence of Eritrean refugees and people of Eritrean decent in Ethiopia who allegedly support and oppose the incumbent in Eritrea. Hence, they are dispersed all across Addis Ababa city to disguise themselves from the local community and other Eritrean refugees. IRC and WRC (2013) along this line noted that mistrust among urban refugee is, to some extent, rooted in the reasons for their flight. The dispersal in the city, therefore, is a mechanism employed by Eritrean refugees to make themselves invisible, often by disassociating themselves to some degree from the Eritrean refugee community.

Webster (2011) similarly asserted that Eritrean refugees in Addis dilute their Eritrean-ness by living dispersed throughout the city rather than in a defined and obvious community. Regarding the dispersal of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa and their mechanisms of diluting Eritrean-ness, Harmon-Gross (2009) has said that in Addis Ababa, the Amiches (i.e., those Eritrean refugees who were born in Ethiopia to Eritrean parents and deported to Eritrea with their families as the Ethio-Eritrean border war began in 1998), know the city, and they speak Amharic with no discernable accent. They can interact with Ethiopians without revealing their identity as outsiders. Most of them use their ability to appear as if they are from Addis Ababa to their advantage, not having to answer questions or indicate that they are refugees.

Eritrean refugees mechanism of avoiding living in a community is contrary to the findings of most of the other studies on urban refugees which show the importance urban refugees place on living in a community setting, which provides various types of security, social, financial, and other benefits in the urban environment where refugees are new entrants (for example, see Church World Service, 2013; Lombo, 2010; and Jinnah, 2010). However, for those Eritrean refugees who are admitted to the urban refugee program legally, it is quite difficult to disguise at least their presence

in the city from fellow refugees because they all collect their subsistence allowance from the same organization and in similar schedule.

Some local community representatives bring forth the unanimous vote of Eritreans in favor of secession from Ethiopia during the 1993 referendum and commented Eritreans as opportunists and as people who are paying the price of their decision. In this regard one local community representative had the following to say.

We lived together as a single nation for generations. We share the same culture and religion. They denied us and declared themselves as Eritreans. They were the most privileged in Ethiopia. But the 1998 war practically torn the two nations apart and Eritreans realized the benefits of Ethiopia. Now they are paying by their life to come back to Ethiopia just as refugees not as citizen. However, we extremely sympathize Eritrean people because they are our brothers, they are our blood.  
(FGD, local community representative, June 23, 2015)

Thus, although Eritreans refugees represent the overwhelming majority of refugees in the urban program in Addis Ababa, they are very much invisible as community in any quarter of the city and have developed a disguised relationship with the local community at individual and household level. They are extremely dispersed in the city, intentionally devise mechanisms to keep themselves invisible and socially integrated with the host community. In most of the cases they are not known as refugees in the neighborhoods they are living. They are very much akin to the culture and religion of the local community, and those Eritrean refugee who were deported from Ethiopia can speak Amharic fluently. The local community has no articulate sense of benefit or burden due to the presence of Eritrean refugees in their neighborhood.

### **7.3.2 Somali Refugees and the Host Community: Who is the host and who is the guest?**

In Addis Ababa, in addition to the 1171 recognized Somali refugees in the urban program in 2014, the joint UNHCR and PRM mission to review urban refugee issues in Uganda and Ethiopia in 2012 reported that there are an estimated 180,000-200,000 Somalis residing in Addis Ababa (UNHCR and PRM, 2012). The same report further commented that the exact origins and composition of this group of Somalis, particularly in Bole Michael area of Addis Ababa which by some is called “little Mogadishu” remain unclear; but it appears to include both Ethiopian ethnic Somalis and Somalis from Somalia. With respect to those originating from Somalia, their presence is evidently tolerated by the authorities, because the overwhelming majority of them are unrecognized in UNHCR’s refugee statistics and ARRA’s urban refugee program in Addis Ababa (Alemayehu, Mengesha and Gulelat, 2010, and UNHCR and PRM, 2012).

### **7.3.2.1 Access to housing and settlement pattern of Somali refugees in Addis Ababa**

Somali refugees who are joining urban refugee program in Addis Ababa have no difficulties in getting accommodation during their initial stage of settlement in the city. Most often than not, for Somali refugees newly joining the urban refugee program, they have the biggest Somali community occupying an identifiable locations in Addis Ababa to get in. These communities are very visible to the host community. Within the biggest Somali community, as Somali refugee participants in this study commented, the specific neighborhood for their prolonged settlement follows clan lines and blood relations. A Somali refugee participant in this study commented the following regarding the role of Somali community network in accommodating and finding place for prolonged settlement to the new comers.

We Somalis are one and different at the same time. We speak the same language, profess the same religion, and practice the same culture. We help each other and share whatever we have with other Somalis who need help just by virtue of being Somali. But at the same time we belong to different clans who sometimes compete each other. If somebody is coming to Addis Ababa for longer stay and want to rent home, then, that is usually handled by members of the clan to whom he/she belongs. We know each other which clan is living in which neighborhood of Addis Ababa. (Interview with parent F, June 12, 2015)

Clan affiliation and the informal support system thereof, which Somali refugees in the urban program depend on during their initial period of settlement in Addis Ababa, as Al-Sharmani (2004) asserted, is used elsewhere by the Somali refugees as a supplement to the support of nuclear and extended family relations which they missed due to forced displacement. Jinnah's (2010) study in Johannesburg also revealed that Somali refugees rely on family and clan links to secure means of passage, settle in host countries and maintain contact with home. The presence of Somali refugees community enclaves in Addis Ababa parallels with how Somalis refugees contact their co-ethnic groups and their clan members, for example, at Mayfair district in Johannesburg (Jinnah, 2010), at Eastleigh in Nairobi (Lindley, 2007; and Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano, 2010), and at Hai al-Masarwi and Jebel Amman in Jordan (Calhoun, 2010).

Somali refugees in Addis Ababa live with their clan members and heavily rely on the physical and social protection of their clan network. Probably, as a result, Somali refugees are very much confident in Addis Ababa, because they feel at home away from their original homeland. The findings of Lindley (2007) and Hough (2013) study in Nairobi, and Jinnah (2007) study in

Johannesburg also indicate that Somali refugees were widely acknowledged to have the strongest levels of community support to each other.

### **7.3.2.2 Relationship between Somali refugees and the host community**

The relationship between Somali refugees in Addis Ababa and the host community is wrought by difference in culture and life style, and the perception of benefit and burden towards each other. A Somali refugee in this study reflected how far it is difficult to adapt to the multicultural context of Addis Ababa where different things are existing side by side- religion, language, color, and culture as follows.

In Addis Ababa we face difficulty. One must adapt to the new climate. People speak various languages here. Also we face a cultural shock as we come to Addis Ababa because there are various cultures. In addition, people with different religions live in the same compound. I say that because in Somalia everything is one- language, color, culture, religion. There is no mixed thing. So when we came here we see many different things in one platform. Then the adaption is difficult. (FGD with URCC, Somali participant, June 26, 2015)

Somali refugees in Addis Ababa complain the multicultural nature of the city as compared to their mono-cultural experience in their country of origin or in the Somali refugee camps in Ethiopia. For Somali refugees, adapting the host community environment gets difficult due to social dissimilarity with the host community. According to Banki (2004) host population attitudes toward refugees strongly influence refugees' ability to integrate, and many of these attitudes are colored by the presence or absence of social similarity. Most of the local community representatives in this study have different understandings towards Somali refugees' difficulty of adapting to the culture and life style of the host community. The following comments from the research participants can clearly elucidate the view of local community in this regard.

They are very much biased towards their own culture. There are few refugees who respect others culture. Even those Somali refugee children who were born in Addis Ababa, they cannot speak Amharic properly. They are not positive towards our culture. Rather we are more influenced by their culture. As strategy of attracting more Somali customers, merchants of this neighborhood are currently speaking Somali language. Ethiopians like Somali language. We really strive to learn their language. (FGD, local community representative, June 18, 2015)

I mean they are very much concerned for their people, for other Somalis and even for Muslims. Even they prefer to give alms for Muslims than for Christians. They think that Muslims are poor and dominated in Addis Ababa. They think that Habesha, (i.e., Ethiopians), have home to rent. They also think that Habesha usually



give priority for another Habesha than a Somali. They claim equal treatment with the Habesha. (FGD, local community representative, June 18, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above comments, Somali refugees' ability and willingness to speak host community language is taken as measure of integration by the local community. Although the local community claim that they are striving to learn the Somali language, as the interview with the local community representatives validate, the motivation to learning is instrumental.

The local community representatives pronounced Somali refugees reluctance to learn the language of host community, and argued that Somali refugees are not positive towards the local culture citing the inability to speak Amharic of those Somali refugee children who were born in Addis Ababa. The ability or inability of refugees to speak the *lingua franca* of the host community affects the attitude of local community towards refugees. For example, Jaji's (2009) study in Nairobi indicated that refugees that are fluent in Kiswahili are viewed as more appreciative of the Kenyan way of life and willing to integrate.

Somali refugees' inability to speak the language of host community in Addis Ababa and their preference to Somali culture can be related to the settlement pattern of the Somalis where they live in their ethnic enclaves. In such context refugee children who are born even in the host community are exposed first to the refugee community to which they belong and have opportunity to learn the language and culture of their home country from their family and neighborhood. In this regard, Jaji's (2009) and Lambo's (2012) findings on Somali refugees integration with the local people in Nairobi parallels with the situation of Somali refugees and host community relationship in Addis Ababa. Jaji (2009) argued that residential concentration of Somali refugees in Eastleigh neighborhood of Nairobi had reduced their interaction with the local community and made it very difficult to speak Kiswahili.

Such community enclaves where majority of Somali refugees were concentrated can create, according to Jaji (209), cultural misunderstanding between local community and the Somali refugees. It is clear from the above comments of the Somali refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa that as the result of residential concentration of Somali refugees in large numbers in few neighborhoods and their restricted communication with local community due to inability to speak the host community language, there seems to exist cultural misunderstanding. Such

relationship, as Ager and Strang (2004) argued can lead to reduced chances of social and cultural integration.

The above interview with the local community representatives revealed that as the result of living in ethnic enclaves in Addis Ababa, Somali refugees are able to preserve their identity in a way which is visible to the host community. The Somali refugees speak their own language, share social life with fellow Somali refugees, practice Islam and show religious solidarity even with Ethiopian Muslims, and practice their own dressing and food culture in Addis Ababa. For someone who happens to visit “Little Mogadishu” in Addis Ababa, it is very easy to ascertain the fact that Somali identity is very much noticeable in the area. The practices of Somali refugees in Addis Ababa parallels in greater degree with the findings of Lambo (2012) about the identity preservation mechanisms of Somali refugees in Nairobi.

Lombo (2012) argued that the concentration in small geographic areas and the notion of the Somali as ‘the other’ have contributed in the preservation of Somali identity intact in the land of exile. In Addis Ababa, all research participants from the Somali refugee community including community representatives, parents, and students, discuss the whole of the host community as what they call “Habesha”, and “the other” are the Somali refugees. Although what is in their notion of “Habesha” requires further investigation, the Somali refugees are very successful in transmitting the distinction between “them” and the “Habesha” even to small kids from their community in primary schools. The tendency to self-suffice as it is manifested among the Somali refugees in Johannesburg due to concentration in a given quarter of a city as indicated in Jinnah (2010) might have contributed to Somali refugees’ lower motivation to integration in Addis Ababa.

Somali refugees comment as “Habesha” discriminate Somali refugees is basically evidenced by landlords’ treatment of the Somali refugees. The Somali refugees believe that the landlords discriminate between the Somali and “Habesha” tenants.

If you go and you do not know Amharic the Habesha if you look for the house they say 4000 or 5000 birr. For the Habesha the cost might be lower by 1000 birr. Because they communicate in Amharic. If you say no you leave on the road immediately. So it is not good. (FGD, URCC member from Somali refugee community, June 26, 2015)

The landlords when we are renting their house they do not treat us as they do for Habesha tenants. The electricity is set off on time. We cannot set any time. Water

is also the same. When we use water more and more they do not allow. To us as we are Muslims we use more water, we wash more and take shower to be clean but we are not allowed to use water as we wish. If we try to talk about the money we pay (i.e., the rent), they tell us to change the house and rent another. As we are Somalis we need each other to visit. May be you have someone around and when they see three or four of us they say no why they come more and more and they tell us change the house and chase us. (FGD, URCC member from Somali refugee community, June 26, 2015)

Local community representatives in this study admitted that house rent in Somali refugee concentrated areas is very high. However, local community representatives argued that it is not because the landlords have intention to rent their homes for higher rental prices targeting only Somalis that the house rent is high, particularly, in “little Mogadishu”. They are the Somali refugees themselves who pushed up the rental prices due mainly to the competition among the refugees themselves to secure home in the Somali refugee community enclaves. This situation parallels with Eastleigh in Nairobi where increased demand from Somalis raised the cost of accommodation and pushed many Kenyans tenants out into other areas of Eastlands, while the refugees often lived in over-crowded conditions, sharing and sub-letting homes (Campbell 2005; and Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano, 2010).

In addition, local community representatives in this study commented that through experience the landlords have learned that Somali refugees have the financial capacity to afford paying higher rental prices.

Somali refugees have better income and we do not have equal capacity to pay. They get money from remittance and the UN. Our people live with what they earn from arduous paid employment. House rent is expensive. Goods are very expensive. Living cost is very high here. They usually pay more and shopkeepers usually prefer Somalis. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

The higher rental prices that the landlords in Addis Ababa request Somali refugees can also be related to Somali refugees’ value as tenants towards the infrastructure of the landlords and their mannerism towards non-Somali neighbors who are not used to their culture and way of life. Local community representatives in this study commented that the rental price becomes high for Somali refugees due to the landlord plan to offset damaged infrastructure in the rented home and very high water and electricity bill usually incurred. Regarding this, one participant argued that:

They are in continuous conflict with landlords because they do not care for others’ property, particularly our property. They enjoy wasting water and electricity of landlords. They sometimes open water pipes and leave it the whole night. They

destroy infrastructure of the local people, sometimes intentionally. So there must be ways to compensate these. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

In addition, Somali refugees usually live in larger family groups in a single compound and if there is a single group of Somali refugees in a compound, as local community representatives have commented, due to their chaotic life style and high tone of voice it is difficult to arrange tenancy for Ethiopians in the same compound. With such understanding, Somali refugees are usually expected to share a compound among themselves. If Ethiopian tenants are sharing the same compound with Somali refugees, conflict is common over the tone of voice which, according to the participants of this study, will continue even beyond the mid night and their chaotic lifestyle. Regarding these the following point was raised by the participant of this research.

Of course we have Somali neighbors. One thing that disappoints us very much is the tone of their voice. They shout very much even during mid-night. While we ask them to tone down their voice, they even shout more. They are also aggressive, impolite and disobedient. That is bad. Because, we are somehow shy and reserved. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

Church World Service's (2013) study also came up with a similar complaint of the host community in Jakarta, Indonesia saying that:

Somali refugees tend to engage in conversation late into the night, when Indonesians tended to be asleep. The noise generated by these conversations was experienced as disturbing to some locals that lived in close proximity. Others also questioned why social activities were occurring so late into the night (p. 64).

Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano (2010) also indicated that in Nairobi the host community describe Somali refugees as noisy.

Some of the local community representatives commented that the presence of Somali refugees in their neighborhood has benefits although it resulted in various unbearable burdens. The participants indicated improved income for landlords from house rent as one of the areas the host community benefited. Petty traders and shopkeepers in the Somali refugee concentrated neighborhoods of Addis Ababa are cited as beneficiaries of the refugees presence because the Somalis are willing to pay better price for their goods and purchase more frequently as compared to local community. However, what is listed as benefits due to the presence of Somali refugees by the local community representatives was immediately dismissed because, as the local community representatives argued, they are at the expense of poor from the local community who were pushed

out from the neighborhood and forced to pay expensive prices for goods. One local community representative said the following in this regard.

The benefits due to the presence of refugee are that in our neighborhood due to remittance there is huge money circulation and brisk trade activity. For the landlords, because the Somalis pay more they are benefiting more. Landlords, as the result, prefer Somali tenants. Shopkeepers and petty traders are also benefiting very much from the presence of Somali refugees because they pay more without much negotiation. But the poor, elderly, and public servants in our neighborhood are not affording the higher prices. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

The local community representatives who participated in this study explained that the host community bitterly resent the presence of Somali refugees in their neighborhood due to the intensification of local youth drug and *Khat* addiction with the coming of Somali refugees. Furthermore, the participants reflected that host community youth religious zeal and motivation to migrate have heightened with the increasing concentration of Somali refugees in their neighborhood. One local community representative grudgingly remarked the following.

With the coming of Somali refugees into our neighborhood, *Khat* addiction has intensified. Cost of living become very high in our neighborhood. During the time when the Somali refugees were not concentrated in our neighborhood, local Muslims were not dressing Hijab. Now Muslim women dress veiled Hijab and walk along the road covering their face. Currently we cannot identify people in our village. Their Islamic fervor have increased. The Somalis explain to us that wearing Hijab is part of Somali culture whereby Somali Women are expected to cover their face. However, our people complain that with the coming of Somali refugees the local youth had started wearing Hijab. Smoking cigarette and “Shisha” has also intensified in our village. Our village is now called DC (Dirty Corner). At noon you cannot see even a single Somali without chewing *Khat*. In the compounds they are living as tenants they were red-handed growing drug plants. I do not know, Cannabis or Marijuana, probably. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

Some of the local community representatives who participated in this study commented that as the result of increasing youth addiction in their neighborhood, disagreements and even open conflicts between the Somali refugees and the host community is increasing from time to time. During the disagreements and conflicts, the participants noted that Somali refugees engage as a group against the host community members and usually inflict damage on the host community members. The participants also added that because the local community have no such a culture of engaging in

fighting as group they are usually losers. The local police, according to the comments of the participants, is always supporting the Somali refugees even if the refugees are inflicting damage on the local people. One participant has put the matter in the following terms.

Their character is quite unique to us. As they chew Khat and smoke the thing they used to, they get insane. They shout too much. If we tell them to tone down their voice, all the Somalis in the compound would get out and start fighting. They are not emotionally stable. While they are the ones who are responsible for the problem created in the neighborhood, Ethiopian police always penalize our children. While I am beaten by Somali refugees in my own personal home and bleeding, for unknown reason, local police always stand at their side. They support the Somali refugees. No one is censuring the refugees. They never consider themselves as they are in foreign land. They always instigate fighting. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

Another participant who was irritated by the behavior of local police reiterated his plea saying that:

If there is some kind of disagreement with the Somali refugees, the local or federal policy are not investigating the matter properly. They forgranted support the case of Somali refugees. Police is abusing the local people in favor of the Somali refugees. In the name of refugee protection we should not be abused by the police. Still, although we are abused, we are not responding. During night times various things are happening. This is dangerous for all of us. We might not inform to police what is happening in the neighborhood if it is related to Somali refugees because we might be victimized by the police. This should be taken seriously. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

The complaint of host community as they are abused by local police in favor of the refugees is contrary to the findings in other cities of Africa where refugees are regularly abused by the local police (see for example, Lindstrom, 2003; Jaji (2009); Jinnah, 2010; Pavanello, Elhawary and Pantuliano, 2010; Gozdziaik and Walter, 2012; and Kirui and Mwaruvie, 2012).

Some of the local community representatives further commented that Somali refugees are not contributing for the neighborhood renovation initiatives which are mainly implemented by the contribution of the residents. However, as the some of the local community representatives commented, Somali refugees use all the public institutions in the neighborhood. They use public schools, health centers, youth centers, library, internet café, and sport facilities without any discrimination.

Citing the privileges that the Somali refugees are enjoying due to police protection, the disadvantages of the poor in the their neighborhood as the result of the presence of Somali

refugees, and the social and cultural consequences of hosting Somali refugees, most of the local community representatives who participated in this study question their *de facto* reversed position as guests while the refugees are living as hosts. The participants argued that they are getting used to the Somalis way of life and living according to the terms of Somali refugees. One participant explained this in the following way.

I think, in their mind [Somali refugees] there is no such concept called refugee. I think our people, the citizen, as the result of our poverty, we are renting the living room to the Somali refugees and moving back to kitchen with our family or leaving the neighborhood altogether. To get better rent and support our life we are now living in kitchen. To me the citizen is the real refugee, not the Somalis. There is nothing more than this. We are not fairly treated by our own police force in our neighborhood. We are dominated. (FGD, local community representative in Somali refugee area, June 18, 2015)

In general, there seems to be huge misunderstanding between the Somali refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa. Church World Service (2012) defines positive refugee and host community relationship in terms of refugees' access to services and resources in the host community and the resultant improvements in the lives of refugees that contributes to minimizing the negative impacts of displacement on the refugees. The role the local police force is playing in this relationship is to a disappointment of the host community. In the case of relationship between Somali refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa, although refugees are entitled to access social and legal services available to the host community "without discrimination", both sides are complaining about the relationship.

The Somali refugees' relative economic strength and their concentrated presence as a community in neighborhood *vis-a-vis* local community poverty and comparable lack of voice in local institutions like the police force, impelled the host community to question who is refugee in their neighborhood. For the host community, the lived experience matters more than the legal status in determining citizenship and refugeehood. Regarding the host and guest relationship, Perumal (2015) argues that the identities of host and guest are not fixed due to circular nature of power which emanates and resides in different sources at different times. As a result Perumal (2015) advises that conceptions of what it means to be a host should not be reduced to having sovereignty of a fixed geographic space but need to be expanded to include the understanding that refugees who are assumed to be guest can be host to ideas, skills, talents and resources.

Discussions with the local community representatives revealed that the host community considers all Somalis, for example, in the Bole Michael area as refugees and as they are from Somalia. In the settings like Bole Michael where there is concentration of Somalis who are Ethiopian ethnic Somalis and Somalians, the concept of host community is usually contested. In this area, for example, it seems the majority are the Somalis. Hence, Somalis in that particular neighborhood, are practically hosting other Somalis. This situation parallels with experiences of Pashto-speaking refugees in Karachi and Peshawar of Pakistan where the refugees were incorporated directly into local Pashto-speaking neighborhoods and social structures. In such settings, World Church Service (2012) argued that the locality of neighborhood plays a more direct role in shaping the local ties between refugees and hosts and in defining their identity on the urban landscape. Religious, cultural or economic, collective participation are a potentially important mechanisms for inculcating a sense of common purpose and forging the social connections necessary to imbue the host community and the refugees with shared perspectives, values and ethics. In its absence, as Landau (2012) argued, it becomes difficult to speak of integration.

Taking into consideration some of defining characteristics discussed in this section, the following table compares and summarizes Eritrean and Somali refugees' relationship with the host community in Addis Ababa.

**Table 7.1** Eritrean Somali refugees' relationship with the host community in Addis Ababa

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                                        | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                                                                                       | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Initial experience of getting accommodation in Addis Ababa                 | Commonly difficult                                                                                             | Commonly easy                                              |
| 2. Factors determined selection of specific location in Addis Ababa to settle | Social network of friends and family ties; money; prior knowledge of the city; proficiency in Amharic language | Social network based on clan lines and blood relationships |
| 3. Settlement structure                                                       | Dispersed and not visible as community                                                                         | Concentrated and highly visible as community               |
| 4. Strategy to secure protection, safety and support                          | Disguised existence                                                                                            | Living with clan members as <i>defacto</i> citizen         |



|                                                                                |                                                                   |                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. Level of integration with the host community                                | Very high                                                         | Low                                                                |
| 6. Local community knowledge regarding refugee status of the group             | Poor                                                              | Very high                                                          |
| 7. Refugees knowledge and practice towards host community culture and religion | Very high                                                         | Low                                                                |
| 8. Proficiency in Amharic                                                      | High                                                              | Low                                                                |
| 9. Host community sense of benefit and/or burden due to refugees presence      | Not well articulated                                              | Well-articulated                                                   |
| 10. Host community dominant categorization of the refugees                     | With Ethiopian ethnic Tigrians and perceived as insiders (locals) | With Ethiopian ethnic Somalis, and both are identified as refugees |
| 11. General nature of relationship between refugees and the host community     | Amicable and positive                                             | Strained and negative                                              |

#### **7.4 Educational Assistance and Phased Transfer to Government Schools**

The major principle of UNHCR in urban refugee education is to make every effort for urban refugees to participate in mainstream education along with local children and young people, with national authorities managing and coordinating the education response, supported by UNHCR and partners where needed (UNHCR, 2011). In Ethiopia, refugees used to be admitted to and attending classes alongside the nationals in private schools for several years. Thus, it is possible to understand that integrating refugee children into the national education system in Addis Ababa has started in the 1950's and 1960's and continued throughout the subsequent periods of refugee hosting experience of Ethiopia.

Expert B in this study commented that for several years most of the urban refugee children were attending education in private schools of Addis Ababa. During those long years all refugee children in the urban program who were enrolled in private schools were entitled to education assistance including school fee, uniform allowance, book/supplies allowance, and transportation allowance.

According to experts participated in this study, beginning from 2011/2012 academic year, in the urban refugee program of Addis Ababa, a phased transfer of all refugee students into government schools was started. This decision, according to Expert F, was made in response to the 2009 UNHCR Policy on Protection and Solution to Urban Refugees, although consultations on the issue with urban refugee community in Addis Ababa had started in 2007. Expert F, further noted that the early consultations with the urban refugee community on the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools was undertaken in view of increasing urban refugee population in Ethiopia and an ever increasing tuition fee in private schools of Addis Ababa. This situation, according to the same expert, was expected to exert huge pressure on the available budget for the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. So, the transfer to government schools was planned to accommodate more urban refugee students with the limited resources that UNHCR has been availing for the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

The transfer arrangement was explained by expert B in such a way that all new entrant urban refugee students to grade one in primary education level and grade nine in secondary education level beginning from the 2011/2012 Ethiopian academic year were required to enroll in government schools and continue their subsequent grades in the government schools. This decision is technically enforced through eliminating tuition fee from the list of educational assistance to refugee students in Addis Ababa who are supposed to join and continue education in government schools. However, if a refugee opts to enroll in private school he/she is allowed to do so given that tuition fee is fully covered from own sources. Such refugees are entitled to receive other education assistances provided to refugee students enrolled at government schools.

Those refugee students in the urban program in Addis Ababa who have already started their education in private schools prior to 2011/2012 academic year were allowed to continue where they are until they complete the primary level. According to expert D, such decision was made to avoid interruption in the middle of a given level of education where transfer of students from private schools to government schools without their will would harm their social and intellectual developments.

As document obtained from DICAC-RRAD office in March 2015 revealed, the total amount of educational assistance refugee students are entitled to receive from UNHCR through DICAC for the whole academic year of 2014/2015 was 3954 birr (approximately \$198) including tuition fee;

or 1954 birr (approximately \$98) without tuition fee. Hence, tuition fee constitutes 50% of the educational assistance to refugees in Addis Ababa. From the total assistance 504 birr (approximately \$25), 650 birr (approximately \$32.5), 800 birr (approximately \$40), and 2000 birr (approximately \$100) were allocated for books/supplies allowance, school uniform, local transportation and tuition fee respectively.

The phased transfer of refugee students in Addis Ababa to government schools is hailed as great success by participants in this research from UNHCR, ARRA, and DICAC in terms of significantly reducing budget required for educational assistance for urban refugees. As a result of removing tuition fee from the list of education assistance provided to refugees students in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa due to transferring the students to government schools, UNHCR saved about 50% of money from individual refugee student since 2011/2012 Ethiopian academic year. Furthermore, from the point of view of participants from UNHCR, ARRA and DICAC, the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools is an added advantage to the refugees in Addis Ababa because it can contribute in alleviating Amharic language deficiencies of the refugee families. In this regard, Expert D expounded the following.

The transfer had already achieved observable results in solving Amharic language problems of refugees in their day to day life because the children who were exposed to Amharic language in government schools are assisting their families as interpreters and even tutoring Amharic to other family members. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015)

However, almost all the Somali and Eritrean refugee parents and Urban Refugee Central Committee (URCC) members who participated in this study are discontented with the decision of phased transfer of their children to government schools in Addis Ababa and the resultant reduction of tuition fee from educational assistance. Among reasons for the dissatisfaction with the decision, Somali refugees emphasized the extreme difficulties they are facing to write Amharic using the Latin script, the perceived threat of losing their identity due to integration of their children into Amharic medium government schools, and the doubts on relevance of learning Amharic for the future life of their children. The lecture dominated teaching methods and poor quality of education in government schools and problems of accessibility of public schools in Addis Ababa are among the major reasons for discontent among the Eritrean refugees. However, for both refugee communities, durable solutions available for them in Ethiopia is a crucial factor for the dissatisfaction. In this regard, lack of opportunity for local integration in Ethiopia, and refugees'

obsession with resettlement expectation and the related interest of exposing their children to English medium of instruction dominated private schools are at the heart of the dissatisfaction.

Thus, most of the refugee parents push their children to be exposed to English medium of instruction in private schools of Addis Ababa as much as possible. For example, one Somali refugee parent forcefully expressed his resentment towards the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools as follows.

Another problem is we refugees need our children be educated in private schools. Because we need them to learn English. Because when we go back to our home lands we use it and we apply and get jobs. In the private schools the most part is English while learning Amharic subject and Civics with Amharic. The rest is in English. So we need our children to be educated in private schools. (Interview with parent F, June 12, 2015)

Somali refugee parents and URCC members from Somali refugee community in this study argued that learning how to write in Amharic is particularly difficult for their children. Some Somali refugee parents consider Amharic language medium of instruction and the phased transfer of their children to government schools in Addis Ababa as threat to the continuity of Somali identity and language and expressed their intentional inhibition of efforts to learning Amharic. The following comment from, parent H, a Somali refugee parent would give an idea as to why Somali refugees are not happy with Amharic as a language of communication and medium of instruction.

The Amharic language is different from other languages. Because its writing is not normal. That made it so difficult. If its writing is easy the speech will be so easy. So such long time without language. Secondly I try to keep my Arabic and Somali languages. If I am perfect in Amharic I will lose these languages. So I tried to speak these languages. (Interview with parent H, June 16, 2015)

According to parent G, a Somali refugee parent who participated in this study, those Somali refugee parents who cannot afford sending their children to private schools are in “trouble” to the extent of keeping their children at home rather than sending them to government schools where the medium of instruction is Amharic. Parent G explained Somali refugee parents’ decision as follows.

Sometimes there is trouble. Kids in KGs and in grade one and two have much problems. They do not know the language. They cannot communicate with students. Mostly they are victims in the classes until they adapt with the language. So a lot of Somali people avoid government schools and send their children to

traditional schools, the Koran schools. I know half of the families they do not send children to government schools. (Interview with parent G, June 16, 2015)

For majority of Eritrean refugees the major concern due to the transfer to the government schools is lower quality of education which, parent C, for example, explained in term of “*no good teaching and teachers lecture all the time*”. However, classroom observations conducted for the purpose of this study revealed that lesson presentation in both private and government schools are mainly teacher dominated. An Eritrean refugee parent who has four children in private school explained his decision to enroll his children in private school saying that education in government schools in Addis Ababa is equivalent to “*wasting the time of children*”. He said:

In the school where my children are enrolled I pay 430 birr per child per month (approximately \$22). I have four children in this school. However, I do not pay for three of them. I pay fee for only one of my children. I have a friend in USA. He paid the annual tuition fee for the three of my children at once. He decided to support me to save my children from wasting their time going to government schools which are lesser in quality. (Interview with parent C, May 25, 2015)

Another Eritrean refugee parent resented the phased transfer to government schools from the point of view of accessibility of government schools in closer distances to their residence. He said:

One point I would like to bring to the attention of UNHCR for further consideration with regards to the transfer of students to government schools is that most of the refugee children from grade one to three are very small kids. It is good if school fee is paid for this category of children. Because nearby our residence it is difficult to find government schools with grades from one to four. For example, in the neighborhood I am living there is no government school. To enroll small kids in government schools we are sometimes forced to change our neighborhood and home. So it is not because we simply prefer private schools that we pay tuition fee from our own sources. This is extremely challenging for refugees. (Interview with parent D, June 02, 2015)

One Eritrean refugee parent precisely analyzed the advantages in government schools in Addis Ababa and as the result enrolled some of his children in a government school. According to his analysis, government and private schools in Addis Ababa were compared as follows.

Personally I prefer government schools to my children. I have my elder daughter in private school. I prefer government schools because they provide education relevant to the grade level of the learners. There is no unnecessary burden on the students. Private schools try to make students successful in learning through making education complex beyond the age and grade level of the students. They teach grade nine lesson for grade four students. It is not relevant to small kids’ level of comprehension. They do not follow the national curriculum. They do not follow textbooks of the specific grade level. Government schools respect law. Now I have

three children in government school. The problem with government schools is that they do not try to make lessons concrete. While they have chair in the classroom to show to their students they draw chair on the blackboard and teach the drawing. (Interview with parent A, May 05, 2015)

Hence, Eritrean refugee parents' dissatisfaction towards the phase transfer is mainly based on the quality of education and accessibility of primary schools in Addis Ababa. Issues of language, culture, and fear of losing identity due to their children phased transfer to government schools were not central in the Eritrean refugees' dissatisfaction. Unlike Somali refugees who make such severe measures as keeping children at home or sending to Koran schools in the villages to deal with the challenges posed due to the phased transfer to government schools, Eritrean refugees try to find financial resources from family members and friends abroad to pay tuition fee to primary schools in Addis Ababa. In exceptional circumstances, Eritrean refugee parents rationalize the advantages of sending their children to government schools and accept the transfer positively.

Although refugees list several reasons for the discontent with the phased transfer of their children to government schools in Addis Ababa, experts from UNHCR and DICAC argue that some of the reason refugees present are "misconceptions". Expert B explained the refugees complaints related to the phased transfer as a paradox to his office and continued his reflection as follows.

Whatever they raise as problem is simply to pressure us to accept the demand of enrolling their children in private schools and the continuation of tuition fee. We understand that they have language problem. The solution we put in place for language problem is assigning refugee students starting from early grades in government schools where medium of instruction is Amharic. Then they learn Amharic very fast and very well. While some parents insist with their complaint of language problem what we do is we request such parents to bring the child to our office and start conversation with the child in Amharic in front of the parents. Usually we prove to the parents as their children can speak Amharic. We also explain as it is impossible to change the medium of instruction in Addis Ababa for the sake of refugees. The major problem with refugee parents is their attitude towards government schools. Because they are foreigners they tend to distance their children from Amharic medium instruction and national curriculum. They misconceive private schools as international schools just looking at the imported textbooks private schools use and their English language emphasis. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

Expert B's reflection on refugees tendency to distance their children "from the Amharic medium of instruction and national curriculum" seems validating the concerns of refugees on the relevance of education available to their children in Addis Ababa in view of repatriation and resettlement as

the only possible durable solutions in Ethiopia. Expert D explained the complaints refugees have towards the phased transfer as a reflection of general parental bias for private schools in Addis Ababa due to perceived better quality of education. Expert A argued that refugees in Addis Ababa are not denied learning English because in the government schools in Addis Ababa refugees have opportunity to learn English as subject starting from grade one.

Expert E, however, argued that the concerns of the refugee parents with regards to language of instruction difficulties of their children in government schools of Addis Ababa in most of the cases is realistic and should be seriously considered. As reflections of school principals and teachers who participated in this study revealed and as conversations with refugee students during interview for this study has shown, most of the Somali refugee students have real problem in speaking, reading, and writing Amharic.

Somali refugees' concerns related to difficulty of the medium of instruction, the relevance of learning in Amharic medium of instruction in view of possible durable solutions to refugees in Ethiopia, and issues of identity due to transfer of their children to government schools are among challenges expected with curriculum choice in refugee context. UNHCR (2015d) in this regard argued that mainstreaming refugee children into national curriculum usually invites emotive issue for refugee communities, provoking sensitivities around identity, culture and ties to country of origin. It seems that Somali refugees open demand to enrolling their children in private schools where the major medium of instruction is English emanates from their clear understanding of lack of opportunity for local integration in Ethiopia and/or their everyday plan for resettlement to the third country. Furthermore, Somali refugees' concern of possible loss of their language and identity due to transfer to government schools in Addis Ababa is consistent with Kruizenga's (2010) finding which Somali refugees in the United States of America associate the possible loss of their Somali language due to English medium of instruction to loss of their culture, family ties, and ultimately the identity of the Somali people.

The worry of Somali refugee parents as to what purpose Amharic language instruction will serve for the future of their children parallels with Dryden-Peterson (2006) discussion on disappointment of Congolese refugee parents in Uganda whose children are exposed to host country medium of instruction. Congolese refugee parents in Uganda were worried about connection between the available educational opportunities in the host country and their thoughts about the future. As

indicated by Dryden-Peterson (2006) the concerns of Somali refugees related to the transfer of their children to government schools affirm the centrality of language of instruction in refugee setting. Thus, the Amharic medium of instruction if seen from the point of view of the Somali refugees' protracted existence in Ethiopia, can be taken as an opportunity to the refugees, as UNHCR, ARRA, and DICAC argues. However, from the vantage point of lack of opportunity for local integration in Ethiopia and refugees strong resettlement expectation, which Dryden-Peterson (2006) calls the uncertain future, the Amharic medium of instruction is considered by the refugees as barrier.

In the situations like Eritrean and Somali refugee primary school students find themselves in Addis Ababa, where national and refugee pupils are integrated in the same schools, and where medium of instruction has political and logistical necessity, as Dryden-Peterson (2006) argued, using the language of the host country as medium of instruction is feasible for all practical reasons. Mendenhall et al. (2015) also argued that when refugee students are integrated into national systems, they are supposed to follow the curriculum and language of instruction of the host country which in some cases can be similar to their own, as with Iraqi refugees in Jordan, or dramatically different, as with Congolese refugees in Uganda.

For Eritrean refugees, Amharic medium of instruction in government schools in Addis Ababa does not seem the major reason for discontent on the phased transfer of their children to government schools. Eritrean refugees are concerned with the lower quality of education they perceive to be provided in government schools which is expressed in terms of teacher dominated methods of teaching. Eritrean refugee parents' concern with regards to comparative quality of education in private and government schools parallels with the account of Azubuike (2015) analysis on impact of different types of schooling (private and government) on students achievement in Ethiopia. Azubuike (2015) findings revealed that without controlling for other characteristics of the pupils, those who attend privately owned schools perform better in both mathematics and literacy tests than their colleagues in non-private schools in Ethiopia.

In general the UNHCR and ARRA decision in Ethiopia, beginning from 2011, to introduce phased transfer of refugee students in the urban program in Addis Ababa to government schools and the accompanied reduction of tuition fee from education assistance have created controversy between refugees and implementing agencies in urban program. Through this decision UNHCR has shifted



significantly its burden of assisting refugee education to the government of Ethiopia and refugee parents. As the result Eritrean and Somali refugee parents are struggling to cope up with the educational expenses of their children.

To cope up with educational expenses which, according to the participants of this study can never be covered with the meager educational assistance from UNHCR, and for some refugees, includes tuition fee for private schools, refugee parents use various mechanisms. Engagement in illegal informal sector livelihood activities, remittances from relatives and friends from abroad and support from well-off fellow refugees in Addis Ababa are the major mechanisms that Eritrean and Somali refugees use to cope up with educational expenses of their children. Almost all refugees resort to one or a combination of the above mechanisms to secure additional income and keep their children in schools in Addis Ababa. However, expectedly, almost all refugee parents and URCC members were reluctant to discuss their engagement in illegal informal sector livelihood activities in Addis Ababa. They were refugee student participants who disclosed their parents' participation in illegal informal sector livelihood activities.

For example, a Somali refugee student who is grade seven explained how his mother is managing to pay his educational expenses as follows.

My mother is the one who is covering my educational expenses. They contribute [UNHCR/DICAC] only 200 birr for tuition fee. However, the tuition fee is 500 birr. My mother pays the remaining 300 birr. At the beginning of the school year they [UNHCR/DICAC] give us some money. That money affords buying only school uniform. I need clothes other than the school uniform, food, and additional books. That is the responsibility of my mother. We use the substance allowance from them [UNHCR/DICAC] for house rent. My mother has a site where she works. She works there. She supports household income from that work. She has a small shop. (Interview with S2S, June 11, 2015)

Another Somali refugee students who is in grade six discussed how her mother is affording her educational expenses saying that:

You know DICAC. They give us 2900 birr every month. They also give us money for school uniform and bag. They help us. But the money they give is not enough. Because my brother is diabetic and he needs milk. The remaining money we pay it for house rent. We just try to have the money until the end of the month. We have some relatives who are Somali refugees in Addis Ababa who give us some money. That is how my mom tries to cover my educational expenses. (Interview with S5S, May 08, 2015)

Regarding how parents cover educational expenses, an Eritrean refugee student who is attending grade five remarked that:

My brother brings some money from the shop we have. My father brings some money from ARRA. They pay my educational expenses. (Interview with S2E, May 18, 2015)

Another Eritrean refugee student who is in grade seven explained how his parents are covering the educational expenses as follows.

We have some educational assistance from an organization that supports our family. In addition we have relatives. They support us financially. Because we are nine children in a single family the support from the organization is not enough. Our relatives fill the gap for our educational expenses. Because my parents are sick they cannot go out and work. (Interview with S8E, May 04, 2015)

In general, one can understand that the educational assistance that UNHCR is providing to refugee students in the urban program is generally inadequate. Even if refugee students were transferred to government schools which are tuition fee free, parents are expected to cover the day to day cost of education for their children including food and clothes other than school uniforms. This situation supports Williams, Abbott, and Mupenzi's (2015) argument based on evidence from Rwanda which pointed out that fee-free education policy must not imply that children's education is free.

The following table compares and summarizes Eritrean and Somali urban refugees' reaction towards the phased transfer of refugee students in Addis Ababa to government schools; Eritrean and Somali refugees differences and commonalities in justifying the reactions; strategies both refugee communities in Addis Ababa employed to deal with challenges posed due to the phased transfer; and mechanisms Eritrean and Somali refugees use to cover educational expenses of their children in Addis Ababa.

**Table 7.2** Eritrean and Somali refugees' reactions to phase transfer of their children to government schools

| Characteristics                                                      | Eritrean Refugees                                                                         | Somali Refugees                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Attitude towards the decision of phased transfer                  | Dissatisfaction                                                                           |                                                                                                        |
| 2. Differing reasons for the dissatisfaction towards phased transfer | Lecture dominated method of teaching and poor quality of education in government schools; | Difficulties to learn in Amharic medium; threat to losing identity; doubts on the relevance government |

|                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                   | problem of accessibility of government schools                                                                                                                     | schools education for future life                                                                                                                   |
| 3. Common reasons for the dissatisfaction towards phased transfer | Lack of opportunity for local integration in Ethiopia; refugees resettlement expectation and interest to expose their children to English medium dominated schools |                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4. Strategies to deal with the challenges of phased transfer      | Keeping children at home; sending children to Koran schools in the villages                                                                                        | Seeking financial assistance from friends and family members to pay private school tuition fees; rationalizing the advantages in government schools |
| 5. Mechanisms used to cover additional educational expenses       | Engagement in illegal informal livelihood activities; remittances; support from better-off fellow refugees in Addis Ababa                                          |                                                                                                                                                     |

## 7.5 Summary

Discussions in this chapter have revealed that generally refugees are perceived as privileged in their life because they are seen as diplomats or employees in international organizations. Regarding the adequacy of allowances to refugees, UNHCR and ARRA argued that the allowance to urban refugees in Addis Ababa is adequate if seen from the point of view of living standard of local poor in Addis Ababa.

However, counter arguments from DICAC, JRS, and the refugees themselves pronounced the inadequacy of the allowances if seen from the purchasing power of money at the face of ever increasing living cost in Addis Ababa, and the local community misperception of refugees as diplomats and as foreigners who are privileged to get financial assistance from well-paying UN. In the arguments regarding the adequacy of the subsistence allowance in Addis Ababa, some Eritrean refugees emphasized household income management practice as decisive factor and argued that if refugees manage their income properly they can sustain their life in Addis Ababa without much inconveniences. However, household income management practices are very much culture specific.

Discussions in this chapter have also revealed that local host community attitude towards specific refugee communities is different from their general perception to refugees as a whole. Eritrean refugees settled dispersed allover Addis Ababa. To settle in Addis Ababa, Eritrean refugees mainly

depend on the personal networks of Eritrean friends and family members not in the network of Eritrean refugee community in Addis Ababa.

The multicultural practice of local host community as opposed to the monocultural experience of Somali refugees in their home country and during their stay in refugee camps have contributed its fair share in promoting misunderstandings between the two. Both accuse each other as one has no positive attitude towards the other. Somali refugees feel as they are discriminated by the local host community because they perceive the Habesha as they always unfairly favor fellow Habesha, and as they are unnecessarily exploited by Habesha landlords. Local host community on the other hand blame Somali refugees as unwilling and disinterested to speak the local language, disrespectful to local cultural norms, and extremely biased to their co-ethnic and co-religious groups.

A new policy in the refugee education in Ethiopia which is quite controversial is the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools introduced in 2011/2012 academic year. The policy is being enforced through eliminating tuition fee from the list of education assistance to refugees. While the phased transfer of refugees to government schools in Addis Ababa is hailed as successful and as it has contributed positively to the refugees by UNHCR, ARRA and DICAC, it is strongly resented by the Eritrean and Somali refugees. UNHCR, ARRA and DICAC grossly underestimate refugees resentments related to the phased transfer to public schools as simple misconceptions.

It is also evident from discussions in this chapter that in the contexts where refugees are integrated into the national education system, due to political and logistical reasons, using the host country curriculum is accepted practice as it is happening in Addis Ababa both in government and private schools.

Even if general education is declared free in Ethiopia, as testimonies of refugees in this chapter have shown, there are various additional costs of education which refugee parents are expected to cover. To raise money so as to cover additional costs of schooling such as school meal and clothes refugee parents in Addis Ababa engage in illegal informal sector activities, depend on remittances from friends and relatives from abroad and/or use support from well-off fellow refugees in Addis Ababa.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **8. Eritrean and Somali Refugee Students in the Integrated Primary Schools of Addis Ababa**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The major focus of this chapter is examining how integration of Eritrean and Somali refugee students is happening in the government and private primary schools of Addis Ababa in which refugee students attend classes together with local students. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section explores how refugee students practically access primary schools in Addis Ababa and what factors determine their actual enrollment into the primary schools of Addis Ababa. The second section discusses the encounters of refugee children as they get into the integrated classrooms focusing on how they get introduced to the teachers and other students and how they adapt to the new school environment. In the third section how refugee children are coping-up with the medium of instruction, their relationship with local students, and refugee parents' involvement in the education of their children were discussed. Data for discussions in this chapter were generated from interviews, FGDs, and classroom and school environment observations.

#### **8.2 Access to and Enrollment of Eritrean and Somali Refugee Students in the Integrated Primary Schools of Addis Ababa**

Often there are legal and policy barriers for refugees in urban areas, which make access to education more difficult (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). In Ethiopia, however, access to education for refugees in urban program integrated into the government school system is provided through the successive letters and implementation guidelines from the MoE at different times. In the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, access to education is open to all refugee communities. Related to education, the major issues in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, as discussed in the preceding chapter, was the transfer of refugees to government schools, the resultant elimination of tuition fee from education assistance to refugees, and the associated challenges that refugees are encountering due to Amharic medium of instruction and the perceived low quality of education. Regarding refugees' access to education in Ethiopia, expert D has attested that:

In Ethiopia access to education for refugees is open at all levels. Although the government of Ethiopia has not lifted its reservation to article 22 (2) of the 1951

UN Refugee Convention, through various letters and guidelines the government has relaxed refugees access to government schools in urban areas and their integration with the local students. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015)

The mechanisms through which Eritrean and Somali refugees join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa contributes the biggest share to their open access to education in Addis Ababa. The urban refugee program in Addis Ababa is referral based from refugee camps whereby Eritrean and Somali refugees can be recognized to stay in Addis Ababa if ARRA and UNHCR are convinced that there are compelling medical, humanitarian or security reasons that force the refugee to leave camp. In Ethiopia, throughout the refugee camps, education is provided using the national curriculum and ARRA is working to mainstream refugee education in the camps into the national education sector development program and strategies. One research participant explained how Eritrean and Somali refugee students can be enrolled in the primary schools in Addis Ababa as follows.

To be enrolled in primary schools in Addis Ababa, for those who already started education in Ethiopia, probably in one of the refugee camps, there is no problem because procedures of students' admission applicable to any Ethiopian will be executed. This is the major avenue through which Eritrean and Somali refugee students in urban program in Addis Ababa are admitted to schools. However, in some cases refugees without educational certificates would apply for enrollment in urban program. In rare cases some refugees intentionally report as they lost their documents. For Eritrean and Somali refugees who apply for enrollment in schools without documents, the first thing we do is we ask them to sign letter of attestation or consent stating the grade level they claimed as they completed and arrange administration of placement test. If they pass the test they will be assigned in the grade level they claimed. If they fail they would be assigned to lower grade than the grade they claimed. (Interview with Expert F, May 07, 2015)

Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa primary schools are either those who started their schooling in refugee camp schools in Ethiopia or who altogether started their education in Addis Ababa beginning from grade one. In either of the above two scenarios the only documents refugees are expected to produce so as to enroll in government or private schools in Addis Ababa are an identity card that can attest their refugee status and a letter of witness from DICAC as they are recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. The following comment of expert B explains how refugee students' enrollment in primary schools in Addis Ababa is facilitated.

Our role is to write a letter of witness to schools that affirms the individual applicant for enrollment in a particular school is refugee. This is for those refugees who have certificates of their prior learning. For those who lost their educational documents

there is detailed implementation guideline whereby placement test is administered to check whether refugees fit the claimed level of education through their letter of application. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

Most of the Somali and Eritrean refugee parents and URCC members who participated in this study agree that there is no challenge to enroll their children in primary schools in Addis Ababa as long as they have certificates and letter from DICAC. Parent B, an Eritrean refugee parent in this study, for example, commented that there is no problem related to registration of refugee children in primary schools and that they are treated like citizen during registration by school authorities.

Enrollment in private schools, according to refugee parents and URCC members, is easier than in government schools. This, as the refugee participants explained, is because private schools try to attract more students due to their profit motive. Parent E, a Somali refugee parent, shared his experience of enrolling his children in private school in Addis Ababa saying that:

Private school is business. To enroll there you do not need anything to the coordinator of school. The only things they need are ID of UNHCR, family guarantee and DICAC letter. (Interview with parent G, June 12, 2015)

Parent H, another Somali parent, however, complained that government schools enroll refugee students only if they have prior information regarding refugees' right to attend government schools and if they know the role of DICAC. If not, they reject refugee students' registration application and DICAC letter of witness. According to parent H, such lack of understanding between DICAC and government schools push refugee students to miss schools' registration deadlines and/or school spaces. As a result, sometimes, refugee students would be compelled to go too far away government schools from their neighborhood or to pay expensive tuition fee to private schools in their neighborhood. Parent G, a Somali refugee parent, added the following remark regarding the above situation.

Registration, there is problem in the government schools. There is no problems in the private schools because private schools would like to attract the students and the families. But there are problems in government schools. When the year starts, government schools have limited capacity and accept local people. When the family go to school some time they say we do not have any relationship with DICAC. When family moving around the school in our neighborhood would be full. Then parents come to DICAC and DICAC contact schools. May be they will get far away from the neighborhood. Instead mostly they leave the registration in government schools and go to private schools which is very difficult to pay expensive tuition fee. (Interview with parent G, June 16, 2015)

In all the case study schools, the detail provisions in the series of letters and guidelines from the MoE regarding refugee education are not known and the documents are not available. However, all the case study schools seem to understand the general direction of government of Ethiopia towards refugee education. Expert F also argued that evidences of the recent past, particularly from the 2009 letter of MoE on refugee education onwards, suggest that there is general understanding in schools of Addis Ababa as refugees students are permitted to enroll in schools integrated with the nationals.

Reflections of the school principals who participated in this study from the government schools indicated that certificate of prior learning is the most important document for registration and it is a requirement for any new applicant: refugee or citizen. A principal from school S1 forwarded the following idea regarding enrollment of Somali refugee students in his school.

In our school for any new applicant for enrollment we request certificate. Those refugees who have national certificate we simply enroll them for the next grade level. In this neighborhood there are Ethiopian Somalis and Somalis from Somalia. Somali refugees, if they do not have certificate, they bring with them a letter from Ethiopian refugee organization. The document specifies the grade level in which the refugee can be enrolled. We accommodate refugees with this document from refugee organization and enroll in the specified grade level. Some Somalis simply apply for registration in certain grade level without having certificate, or a document from refugee organization or Ethiopian Orthodox Church. We never accommodate such students. (Interview with Principal of school S1, April 29, 2015)

Principal of school E1 commented the following regarding enrollment of Eritrean refugee students in his school.

During registration we request applicants' certificate of prior learning as the main document. We request certificate of the grade level the applicants have completed. If the applicants do not have certificate of prior learning, we request them to produce another official document that can attest their prior learning. In any case we very much expect documents from applicants for registration. (Interview with the principal of school E1, April 30, 2015)

As the above ideas of the school principals suggest, government schools have opportunity to identify refugee students upon registration only if they do not have certificate of prior learning; and from the DICAC letter of witness for such students specifying the grade level in which the refugee child has to be enrolled. All government and private primary school principals in this study reflected that the schools have no role and information as to how DICAC decides and writes a letter of witness specifying a grade level in which refugee students who missed their certificate



should be enrolled. Thus, in the government schools, the principals were observed lacking full information as to who is a refugee student, how many refugee students they have in the school and the detailed procedures through which refugee students' access to education is guaranteed in Ethiopia.

The experiences of registration in the private schools accommodating Eritrean or Somali refugee students are similar. This experience, for example, is reflected in the following comment of principal of school E3.

For any new applicant for registration in our school, in addition to requesting certificate of prior learning, we also administer placement test to ascertain the applicants' competence for the grade level they are applying. The placement test is prepared from the grade level the applicants have completed and gives special emphasis for proficiency in English language. We set 50 percent in the placement test as pass mark. If the applicants score below the pass mark we place them in one grade level lower than the grade level they applied. (Interview with the principal of school E3, May 15, 2015)

As the above comment of principal of school E3 indicates in the private schools in this study, refugee students, in addition to certificate of their prior learning, are expected to pass placement test. Hence, there are more requirements for refugee students to get registered in private schools than government schools. However, such strong requirements the private schools principals claimed to register refugee students, somehow, contradicts with the reflections of refugee parents who emphasized that registration of children in private schools is easy as compared to government schools.

In general, although Eritrean and Somali refugees have easy access to education in Addis Ababa, the above discussion reveals, school level authorities' unfamiliarity towards the processes of admitting refugee children and the actual mechanisms of recognizing prior learning. Meda, Sookrajh and Maharaj (2012) also reported similar findings in South Africa where principals reject refugee children in government and private schools due to lack of understanding towards refugee children's rights to education or because they believe that admitting such students is illegal. As Talbot (2013) cautioned, lack of awareness on the part of school authorities towards the processes of admitting refugee children and mechanisms of recognizing prior learning would result in potentially exploitative and *ad hoc* decision making by individual schools and school authorities. The contribution of mechanisms through which Somali and Eritrean refugees join the urban

program in Addis Ababa and the use of national curriculum in refugee camp schools in both cases in easing access to education for the refugee children in Addis Ababa is noteworthy.

The following sections present enrollment experiences of Eritrean and Somali refugee students.

### **8.2.1 Enrollment Experiences of Eritrean Refugee Students**

Although access to primary schools is easy for Eritrean refugee students in Addis Ababa, most of the students interviewed reported that they were actually placed in lower grades than the grade level indicated in their certificate of prior learning. Hence, almost all refugee students interviewed were overaged to the grade level they were placed in. For example, an Eritrean refugee boy who reported his age as seventeen was attending grade seven at school E2. Another Eritrean refugee girl who reported her age as 12 was attending grade two at school E3.

Many of the Eritrean refugee students in this study reported that they were placed in lower grades than the grade level specified in the certificate of their prior learning. The following are examples of testimonies of Eritrean refugee students that can attest this fact.

I started grade three in Addis Ababa. I were grade five student while I come to Addis Ababa. I were demoted to grade three because I were not proficient in Amharic. (Interview with student S1E, April 30, 2015)

While I were in Eritrea I completed grade three and promoted to grade four. We come to Ethiopia while I were preparing to be enrolled in grade four. In Addis Ababa, however, I were enrolled in grade two because I wanted to learn Amharic starting from lower grade. (Interview with student S4E, May 15, 2015)

I completed grade six and promoted to grade seven in Eritrea. In Addis Ababa my father decided to enroll me in grade four so as to expose me to learn Amharic. Here I started class from grade four and learning Amharic. (Interview with student S8E, May 04, 2015)

The decision of Eritrean refugee students to enroll in lower grades than the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning might be related to the perceived value Eritrean refugees attach to education in general, and their understanding of the importance of proficiency in Amharic for their academic success and in their day to day life. All the Eritrean refugee students who have both of their parents, also reported that their fathers are fluent speakers of Amharic. For example student S5E said the following.

My father is proficient in Amharic. He advises us to speak perfect Amharic and perfect Tigrigna. He gets angry while we mix languages. (Interview with student S5E, April 30, 2015)

My father is proficient in Amharic. He was born and spent many years in Addis Ababa. (Interview with student S8E, May 04, 2015)

From decisions of Eritrean refugee parents to demote their children to lower grades and their own active participation in school affairs, it is possible to understand that Eritrean refugees, who are more integrated with the host community due to their dispersed settlement in Addis Ababa and who did not complain about Amharic language as medium of instruction as the major barrier to learning in Addis Ababa, seem to have the will to expose their children to better Amharic proficiency.

### **8.2.2 Enrollment Experiences of Somali Refugee Students**

Although access to primary schools is easy for Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa, some students reported missed years of learning during journey from their country of origin to Ethiopia and then during their transfer from camp to urban program in Addis Ababa. Hence, almost all refugee students interviewed were overaged to the grade level they were placed in. For example, a Somali refugee girl who reported her age is seventeen was enrolled in grade five at school S2. Another Somali refugee student who reported his age is fourteen was enrolled in grade five at school S1.

Most of Somali refugees in this study reported that they are not negotiating placement in lower grades than the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning. This might be because most of them started education in Addis Ababa. For example, student S3S, Somali refugee student who is seventeen years of age and grade five students testified that she started education in Addis Ababa. She said *“I started education in Addis Ababa. Because there was war in Somalia. There was no peace”*. The only students who recounted as he started education in Somali was student S7S and he reported that he was enrolled in the grade level specified in his certificate of prior learning in Addis Ababa.

However, during interviews and the classroom observations, it was noted that Somali refugee students were more challenged with the Amharic medium of instruction as compared to Eritreans. All Somali refugee students interviewed reported that their parents cannot speak Amharic. The following are some of reports of Somali refugee students in this regard.

I communicate with my mother using Somali language. Because she cannot speak any other language including Amharic. (Interview with student S7S, May 5, 2015)

I use Somali language at home. Because my Mom cannot speak English or Amharic. (Interview with student S6S, May 11, 2015)

The fact that Somali parents and URCC members from the Somali refugee community who participated in FGD are not proficient in Amharic was proved during the interview and FGD which were undertaken using interpreters.

The complaints of Somali refugee parents towards the Amharic medium of instruction, their concern to Somali identity and their settlement pattern in the Somali community enclaves where the importance of Amharic is minimal in their day to day life might explain why Somali refugees are not negotiating placement in lower grades. Furthermore, most of the Somali refugee students in this study, were observed already overaged for the grade levels they were assigned without moving down to lower grades.

Taking into account major characteristics, the following table compares and summarizes Eritrean and Somali refugees' experiences of access to primary education and actual enrolment in Addis Ababa.

Table 8.1 Eritrean and Somali refugees experience of access to and enrollment in Addis Ababa primary schools

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                    | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                                                                                 | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Access to primary schools                              | Easy                                                                                                     | Easy                                                                                    |
| 2. Requirement for enrollment                             | Certificate and DICAC letter                                                                             | Certificate and DICAC letter                                                            |
| 3. Placement decision in specific grade level             | Usually demoted to lower grades                                                                          | Enroll in the grade level specified in the certificate                                  |
| 4. Reason for the specific grade level placement decision | Started school in Eritrea or refugee camp; to improve proficiency in Amharic; and value formal education | Most started school in Addis Ababa; and not committed to improve proficiency in Amharic |
| 5. Age relevance for the grade                            | Overaged                                                                                                 | Overaged                                                                                |
| 6. Reasons for being overaged                             | Demotion and missed years of schooling                                                                   | Late beginning of school and missed years of schooling                                  |
| 7. Reported parents proficiency in Amharic                | Most of the fathers are proficient                                                                       | All are not proficient in Amharic                                                       |

From the discussion in this section it is possible to deduce that UNHCR's (2009) concern where schools may not enroll students if they are more than two or three years above the class average and thus disrupt their education is not happening in Addis Ababa. However, in government or private schools, among other problems, teachers are confronted with Eritrean or Somali students who are overaged and who have low proficiency in the medium of instruction. Placement of overaged refugee students in lower grades or in the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning is the only available solution that parents and schools are perusing currently to deal with problems of refugee students. There are no special arrangements such as accelerated learning program as proposed by Nicholson (2006), Shah (2015), and UNHCR (2015c and 2011) or bridging or catch-up programs as proposed by Shah (2015) and UNHCR (2011), for overaged Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa. While integrating refugee students into the national schools, UNHCR (2015c) proposes prior assessment of refugee community concerns and proper planning to mitigate the legitimate concerns of the refugee communities. In Addis Ababa, however, the total burden of struggling with overaged refugee students who have low proficiency in the medium of instruction are left mainly to the classroom teachers.

Bacakova (2011), Kanu (2008), and Wilkinson (2002) have discussed inappropriate grade placement of refugee students in the Czech Republic and Canada and pointed out that insufficient proficiency in the language of instruction as a common rational given by schools for such placement. The reason given by schools in Addis Ababa for placing refugee students in lower grades is much similar to the experiences in the two countries mentioned. Students who are inappropriately placed in low grades or high grades experience frustration, social humiliation and fail to realize their full academic potential (Bacakova, 2011). Bacakova (2011) argued that schools in the Czech Republic usually tend to confuse temporary limited language proficiency with lack of cognitive ability and fail to arrange other remedial measures than placing students in inappropriate grade level. Wilkinson (2002) argued that inappropriate grade placement of refugees students does appear to have an effect on their educational performance.

While refugee students were enrolled in the integrated government or private schools in Addis Ababa where there are no special arrangements to deal with their poor proficiency in the medium of instruction and other social and emotional problems, what is happening in the classrooms

deserves closer examination. The next sections discuss the experiences of refugee students in the integrated classrooms in the primary schools in Addis Ababa.

### **8.3 Eritrean and Somali Refugee Children in the Integrated Classroom: Left to Swim or Sink?**

Among the major challenges refugee children face when they arrive in a new country, Hamilton (2004) stated that adapting to a new school environment as the most critical. This is because schools have little or no support mechanisms and do not have enough resources that can promote adaptation of refugee students (Meda, Sookrajh and Maharaj, 2012). School environment is critical to refugee children because schools facilitate contact with members of local communities, reintroduce a sense of normality and routine, provide a safe environment, increase self-reliance and empowerment, and foster social, psychological and intellectual development (Bacakova, 2011).

Among the factors facilitating integration of refugee students into the host country education system alongside the national students, Hamilton (2004) identified introductory programs in the new schools as the starting point. As refugee integration is a mutual process of adaptation, the extent to which schools are adapting their policies, procedures, practices and teacher development programs to respond to the needs of refugees by and large determine the refugee children's integration into the mainstream national education system (Anderson et al., 2004).

In Addis Ababa, for Eritrean and Somali refugee students, there is no formal introductory program to the new school environment organized by agencies involved in the urban refugee program. This fact was expounded by Expert D as follows.

For the urban refugee students there is no induction or introduction program to the new school environment. I think this is one of the major gaps that should be recognized. We are not organizing academic readiness program to urban refugee students. (Interview with Expert D, May 14, 2015)

As the above comment indicates UNHCR recognizes the importance of introductory program for Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa that can orient newly enrolled refugee students to the school environment where they are expected to learn integrated with national students. DICAC explains the challenges of introducing Eritrean and Somali refugee students to the new school environment in Addis Ababa from the logistics point of view and argues that it is unmanageable, although it is desirable. In this connection, Expert B has the following comment.

In Addis Ababa, refugee students are dispersed all over the city. This year refugee students are registered in 263 schools. They are the parents who choose the school convenient to their children. Refugee students are usually enrolled in schools closer to their residence. We are not responsible to choose school for the Eritrean and Somali refugee students. Furthermore, they are not stable and change school every time. They shift to neighborhoods in Addis Ababa where house rent is relatively cheap. So introducing refugee students with each and every school is very much unmanageable and beyond our human and financial capacity. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015).

As all school principals in this study reported refugee students, after they had been enrolled and placed in a given grade level in government and private schools in Addis Ababa, there are no school based formal mechanisms of introducing them to the school environment. They are not introduced to the teachers in the classrooms where they are placed. In all the case study schools to this research the responsibility of identifying refugee students in the classroom and supporting them as much as possible is totally left to the classroom teachers. School principals in this study have explained this as follows.

After the refugee children are placed to specific grade and classroom there is no established mechanism of introducing them to the classroom teachers and the community in the school. However, teachers identify them through their casual teaching and learning process. While teachers raise questions, because they cannot speak Amharic, refugee students usually fail to answer. Such incidents open the way for the teachers to further investigate the background of the students. Refugee students can also be identified in the classroom during their participation in the permanent study groups comprised of five members. The members report to the teachers those students who cannot speak Amharic. (Interview with principal of school S1, April 29, 2015)

Because Somalis represent 40 percent of our student population they have always friends and family members in our school. In any classroom there are Somali refugee students with problem of proficiency in Amharic. However, we do not have formal mechanisms of introducing refugee students to classroom teachers. They are treated as all other Somali students in the school. (Interview with the principal of school S2, May 12, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above comments of school principals refugee students' identification processes are incident based and very much depends on the curiosity of individual teachers. This is common to government and private schools included in this study and similar in the case of Eritrean and Somali refugee students. Within the schools there are no formal mechanisms of information transfer between the school administration and classroom teachers regarding refugee

students. During FGD at school E1, a teacher expressed her resentment with lack of information regarding refugee students in their classrooms saying:

Upon their registration, classroom teachers must have given clear information regarding these students. We must have been informed about the national origin of students at the very beginning. We did not have such information. If we had orientation at the beginning of school year and if we were told the background of these students we could have helped these students better. We knew them after long time through various means probably because these students have different behavior in the classroom. Otherwise there is no information from the school administration. Yes, there is information gap. (FGD, School E1, May 06, 2015)

Such state of affairs can be considered as a major deficiency in the context where refugee students are integrated into the mainstream national education system (Bacakova, 2011).

For principals and teachers in this study, proficiency in Amharic which is the major indicator to locate refugee students in the classroom, is also a common problem for many new students who come from Regional States of Ethiopia with medium of instruction other than Amharic. Due to such generalized grouping, as many of the school principals and teachers in this study reported, they approach the problem of refugee students the same way as they do for new students, for example, from Oromiya, Tigray, or SNNPR who are not proficient in Amharic. This, according to the participants of this research, is because they have a similar problem. Such generalized grouping of refugee students with other Ethiopian students with similar problem of proficiency in Amharic is consistent with the findings of Szilassy and Arendas (2007) in Hungarian integrated schools where refugees are automatically grouped with Roma students. This gross generalization confounds the basic differences between refugees and citizens with quite different backgrounds and differing sources of disadvantages, although the observed difficulties of both are the same (Szilassy and Arendas, 2007).

All teachers in this study from the schools where there are Somali refugee students commented that it is very easy to identify Somali students in the classroom. However, all the teachers from schools accommodating Somali refugee students indicated that it is extremely difficult to differentiate between Somali refugee students and Ethiopian ethnic Somalis in their classrooms. For example during FGD in school S2, one teacher remarked that:

It is quite easy to identify Somali students in our school. I mean they are very visible. Students identify among themselves as Somali and Habesha. The dressing style of the Somali students is little bit different. Those who can speak Amharic



Speak it in different accent. I mean there are many Somali students in this school. But if you ask me who is Somali refugee and who is Ethiopian Ethnic Somali, I cannot differentiate. (FGD, School S2, May 13, 2015).

As compared to Somali refugee students, most of the Eritrean refugee students were identified lately by teachers in the schools accommodating Eritreans. In some of the schools some teachers learned that they have Eritrean refugee students in their classroom during the data collection process for this research. Some of teachers in this study have started to associate the difficulties they have been observing on the students with their refugee status after they realized that the students are Eritrean refugees. However, there are Eritrean refugee students who were immediately identified by the classroom teachers due to their clear difficulties such as being extremely overaged to the grade level they were assigned, cannot speak Amharic, or behavioral difficulties. The following remarks from teachers in the schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students illustrate how teachers identify Eritrean refugee students in their classrooms.

I have no such information until today. She was my student beginning from last year. I have even contact with her father. He never informed me. She speaks fluent Amharic. She has confidence. I heard as she is refugee just today. (Teacher participant in FGD, School E1, May 06, 2015)

I have two Eritrean students in my classroom. Nobody introduced me as they are refugees. I knew that they are refugee after several months. I knew the female student that she is Eritrean refugee very recently. I asked students randomly to answer a question and unfortunately I called her number. She resisted to participate. At that moment her classmates informed me that she cannot speak Amharic. Look, the whole year I did not have this information. (Teacher participant in FGD, School E3, May 17, 2015)

I learned as I have refugee students in my classroom after you [the researcher] come to our school. I know started to realize that they have difficulties speaking in Amharic. I did not focus on this so far. Even they told me as they can speak Tigrigna. But I did not associate this with their refugee background. (Teacher participant in FGD, School E2, May 02, 2015)

As can be observed from the above discussions, there is no formal mechanism of information transfer between agencies working on urban refugee education and schools enrolling refugee students regarding basic academic problems that refugee students are facing including problem of proficiency in the medium of instruction.

The following table summarizes and compares the most important experiences of primary schools and teachers in Addis Ababa in identifying and supporting Eritrean and Somali refugee students who are enrolled in the specific grade levels.

Table 8.2 Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the integrated classrooms

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                     | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                           | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Introduction to new school environment by agencies      | No                                                 | No                                                                                           |
| 2. Major reason for lack of introduction by agencies       | Logistical /resource constraint                    | Logistical /resource constraint                                                              |
| 3. School based introduction arrangement                   | No                                                 | No                                                                                           |
| 4. Responsibility to identify and support refugee students | Classroom teachers                                 | Classroom teachers                                                                           |
| 5. Classroom teachers methods of identification            | Incidental and individual teachers curiosity based | Incidental and individual teachers curiosity based                                           |
| 6. Indicators for identification used by teacher           | Proficiency in Amharic; age; behavior              | Proficiency in Amharic; age; behavior; color and complexion; and grouping among the students |
| 7. Teachers experiences of identification process          | Difficult and some are identified very late        | Easy, however, not differentiated from Ethiopian ethnic Somalis                              |

In general, discussion in this section gives the impression that all case study school principals, teachers and refugee students in this study reported that they are facing various challenges due to the integration of refugee students into the mainstream national education system in Addis Ababa. All principals and teachers in this study reflected that they were not exposed to specific issues of refugee education during their university or college education, or through short term training of any type. As Miller, Windle and Yazdanpanah, (2014) pointed out integrating refugee students within the national system of education invites a wide range of challenges to schools because refugee background students bring an exceptionally wide range of linguistic, academic, emotional, and social needs to the classroom which can extremely challenge teachers' notions of established curriculum and pedagogy. The next section discusses the specific challenges Eritrean and Somali

refugee student and their teachers are facing in the integrated primary schools classrooms in Addis Ababa.

#### **8.4 Language of Instruction, Relationship with Local Students and Parental Involvement**

For refugees, language of instruction epitomizes the practical access to learning in the host community schools. This is because language of instruction is the avenue through which students access the content of education (Dryden-Peterson, 2015). Language can be the major barrier to learning until refugee children become competent in speaking, reading, and writing the language of instruction in the integrated classrooms (McBrien, 2005). If refugee students have problem in the language of instruction, these problems go beyond language to include placement in lower classes as an attempt to have them learn the language of instruction, contributes negatively to the social development of refugee children, and usually leads to increased rate of school drop-out (Dryden-Peterson, 2003 and 2006, and Ahmadzadeh et al., 2014). Proficiency of refugees in the language can also determine the level of parental involvement in the education of their children and refugees relationship with local students. In short, for refugee students, problems in the language instruction exposes them to academic and social retardation. In the integrated classrooms of Addis Ababa where refugee students are accommodated alongside the local students, Eritrean and Somali refugee students, and their teachers are employing diverse mechanisms to deal with the problem in Amharic.

##### **8.4.1 Experiences of Eritrean Refugee Students**

All Eritrean refugee students in this study have reported that they had difficulties with Amharic as medium of instruction when they first joined the integrated classrooms with local students in Addis Ababa. However, all of them commented that they were able to learn how to speak, read and write in Amharic in a short period of time. As major mechanism to learn Amharic, Eritrean refugees used placement in lower grades than the grade level indicated in the certificates of their prior learning. Furthermore, as classroom observation revealed, Eritrean refugee students who are placed from grade one to four and whose age is reportedly appropriate to grade level, are observed to have no difficulty to communicate in Amharic with their teachers and peers. Most of the Eritrean refugee students interviewed in this research also remarked that they have friends from the host community members and family members (in most cases fathers) with whom they can

communicate in Amharic. The following comments from Eritrean refugee students can show their current state in using Amharic as medium of instruction and how they learned the language.

I learned Amharic in a very short period of time after we arrived here. Immediately as I arrived I were enrolled in school and learned Amharic with all its difficulties in short time. Probably in four or five months. However, my father is proficient in Amharic. He was born in Addis Ababa. He purchased several Amharic reference books. I read those books. Most of our relatives are here in Addis Ababa. So we communicate with them in Amharic. I can perfectly write and read in Amharic now. I were grade seven student while I were in Asmara. Then my father decided to enroll me in grade four. That was decided to help me learn Amharic. I regret missing many grades due to language. (Interview with S8E, May 04, 2015)

I learned Amharic after I get to school. I were in school while I were in Eritrea. I were grade seven students in Eritrea. Here I started from grade two. My parents decided this. It was because of language. Now I can read, write, and communicate in Amharic. We have neighbors with whom I speak Amharic. They taught me how to speak in Amharic. I learned reading and writing in Amharic here in the school. (Interview with S6E, April 30, 2015)

As one can understand from the above comments, Eritrean refugee students were demoted many grades just to catch-up with Amharic as language instruction. In addition to schools, Eritrean refugees have opportunities to learn Amharic in their own family and in the neighborhoods they are residing. This is related to the settlement pattern of the Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa, the cultural and linguistic compatibility between Eritrean refugees and the host community in Addis Ababa, and the extent of integration of Eritrean refugees in to the host society. Factors that contributed to the Eritrean refugee students' fast learning of Amharic in Addis Ababa classrooms are consistent with Loewen's (2004) assertion. Among other factors, Loewen (2004) indicated that refugee skill in the language of instruction in the host nation can be affected by the social and psychological distance between the refugees and their hosts. This distance is determined by the degree to which the two groups share some compatible values, the cohesiveness of the target language groups, and the attitudes of the two groups towards each other.

Eritrean refugee students who were demoted significant grade levels due to language difficulties regret their decision. This might be because given the overall opportunities they have to learn Amharic and the progress they made in very short period, they realized that they wasted unnecessary years of schooling in lower grades. The decision to demote Eritrean refugee students to lower grades was made without seriously taking into account the role of earlier formal education experience, as Loewen's (2004) argued, in facilitating the learning of host country language in

short period of time. For example, student S8E reported that he learned Amharic in four to five months period of time. However, he was demoted three grade levels with the reason of catching-up Amharic. Thus, it is obvious from the above discussions that schools and refugee parents are not taking into account the overall opportunities that can contribute to learning Amharic in short period of time for Eritrean refugee students while making decision to demote them to lower grades.

Although some Eritrean refugees students mentioned resettlement as their aspiration, for majority of them their orientation towards the possibility of long stay in Ethiopia has contributed its own share in facilitating fast learning of Amharic. Regarding possibility of long stay in Ethiopia, an Eritrean refugee parent in this study explained that he orients his children as they permanently live in Ethiopia and get employment if they are good in their education. He said the following in this regard.

I tell to my children as they will be employed and as they will be assigned to work alongside their school friends in Ethiopia after graduation. I never mention that they will be repatriated to their country of origin or resettle to another country. What I tell them is that after learning together in the same school, growing up together, living together, and working together as they have the same destiny as local students. I also tell them to understand friendship as lifelong. It is not good to tell for small children as Ethiopia is our temporary home and that they will leave their friends here tomorrow. (Interview with parent C, May 25, 2015)

Such orientation of Eritrean refugee students parallels with Loewen's (2004) argument whereby refugees' possible or intended length of residence in the host nation can influence their motivation to learn the host country language.

Teachers in this research from schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students remarked that Amharic language problem of Eritrean refugee students would be persistent for longer period of time in some students who have multiple challenges. In this regard a teacher who participated in FGD at school E3 has reflected on her experience as follows.

This year I have one student in grade two. She is overaged to the grade level. She is tallest in the classroom. She cannot communicate in Amharic. She sit at the back seat in the classroom. At home, her mother cannot speak Amharic. She told me that all the residents in the compound she is living speak Tigrigna. As the result she avoids communication with other people in the school. She is not socializing with other students. She never answers questions. For local students the refugee students in the classroom are very big and overaged. Local students usually discriminate the refugees who cannot speak Amharic. You read regret from their face because they are placed in lower grade level with small kids. They speak their mother tongue at

home and shift to Amharic in school. The biggest problem is language. If they are not proficient in Amharic, whatever effort teachers made it is useless. (Teacher participant in FGD, School E3, May 17, 2015)

As the above reflection of the teacher indicates, while refugee students who cannot speak Amharic are placed in the grade level very low to their age and if they happen to be the tallest and/or the biggest in the classroom their participation in the classroom activities become low. This situation was observed as very severe, as one teacher commented, on those refugee students who are visibly the tallest or the biggest student with no approximate physical match in the classroom. As teachers who participated in this research commented such students usually refrain from playing. Their classroom participation become low. In the FGD with teachers in school E3, a teacher reflected her experience that sometimes while being overaged and unable to communicate in Amharic, if their height is similar with that of other students in the classroom they have better confidence to socialize with other students and learn Amharic faster.

In the schools where Eritrean refugee students were accommodated, the school principals have commented that there is no plan at school level regarding how to support refugee students with language or other difficulties. Refugee students, according to the comments of the principals, are expected to benefit from the general support packages put in place for any students with academic problems. Such supports include the students' permanent reading group which is called "one-in-five" and teachers mandatory after school tutorial sessions. School principal of school E3 has explained how her school is struggling with the problems of Eritrean refugee students as follows.

Yes, teachers report complaints to the administration. However, we understand the situation refugee students are in. Teachers also understand their problems. How can we expect everything from the refugee students who just sit 45 minutes in the classroom without listening what is said in Amharic by the teacher? It is very difficult for the private schools. These days teachers, if we are not taking maximum care, would leave the school as anything. If we require teachers to give extra support for refugee students they would leave the school. What we promote in school is including Eritrean refugee students in various school based programs such as extracurricular activities, after school tutorials and in the students' permanent reading groups, and promoting their participation. However, we have teachers who are supporting Eritrean refugee students with multiple challenges voluntarily. (Interview with Principal, School E3, May 15, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above comment of the school principal, private schools are concerned more with keeping teachers in their schools for longer period of time without exerting additional pressure on their already busy workload. As profit making organizations, it seems that the schools

are careful not to incur any additional cost due to the presence of Eritrean refugee students. The school principal's comment can further note that understanding their situation and being sympathetic are some of the extra supports the schools can render to refugee students. Such treatment of refugee students in integrated schools is consistent with what Keddie (2012) laments as low expectation and low demand in schools through overstating the vulnerabilities and helplessness of refugee students. As Keddie (2012) argued such emphasis on the deficiencies of the refugee students underexploit the strength and resilience that refugee students bring into the classrooms.

In the case of government school, where Eritrean refugee students were accommodated, teachers are held responsible for the academic problems of their students and academic support in the form of after school tutorials, something which counts in the performance evaluation of teachers. All principals from schools accommodating Eritrean refugees, however, argued that the motivation of most of the Eritrean refugee students to learning and their positive relationship with local students as major factor contributing to their progress in education.

Some teachers in this research have commented that Eritrean refugee students mistrust all other students who are not their family members in the classroom. They particularly avoid close friendship with other Eritrean refugee students in the school who are not their family members or blood relatives. As teachers in this study reported some of the Eritrean refugee students are extremely organized and very careful and, in some cases, act as adults while attending grade two. They manifest anxiety not to make any mistake. A teacher in FGD at school E1 said the following regarding the behavior of Eritrean refugee students in her classroom.

They change their desk every time. They do not like sitting in permanent place. Of course [name of the student] prefers being alone. He never trusts leaving his school bag on the desk. Wherever he goes in the school compound he carries his school bag with himself. He has big lock for his bag. That much he is careful about his bag. In my class there are three Eritrean refugee students. I have not seen three of them as friends. (Teacher participant in FGD, School E1, May 06, 2015)

A principal of school E3 also said that:

They do not trust people around them. Those from the same family, wherever they go they travel together as a convoy. Even they do not trust other Eritreans from their neighborhood. They are extremely attached with their family members only. (Interview with the principal of school E3, May 15, 2015)

Another teacher in FGD at school E2 commented the following regarding a different behavior she observed on Eritrean refugee student in her classroom.

I have one Eritrean student in grade two. She is little bit aggressive. She does not like permanent seat. Sometimes she prefers to be alone. She withdraw herself from the classmates sometimes. She is so much organized and careful beyond her age. While I give task to students she is extremely committed to accomplish the task on time and to my expectation. I mean she is little bit different. Other students always avoid her during play. (FGD, School E2, May 02, 2015)

Most of the Eritrean refugee students who were interviewed commented that their closest friends are their family members in the school. For example student S4E said that “*my friend in this school is my brother*”. In the cases where Eritrean refugee students do not have their family members and blood relatives in the school, they reported that they prefer students from the local community for friendship. Student S7E, for example, remarked the following about his relationship with other Eritrean refugee students in his classroom.

Of course there are two Eritreans in my classroom. They do not have good attitude towards me. I do not like to be with them. My close friends [name of students]. They are not Eritreans. (Interview with S7E, May 01, 2015)

Eritrean students’ behavior of mistrust towards other Eritrean refugee students in the same school is the reflection of Eritrean refugee community characteristics in Addis Ababa where the community generally strive to disguise themselves, particularly from other Eritreans. The behavior of some students who were too much organized and careful beyond their age level might be related to the influence of school culture in Eritrea which Eritrean refugee parents are probably enforcing on their children. All students who have started primary education in Eritrea have reported that school discipline in Eritrea was very strict and based on corporal punishment. For example, the following reflection from student S7E elucidates the severity of school discipline in Eritrea.

In Eritrean school teachers beat us every time. They do not care for us. ...If we are late for few minutes from school they punish us severely. I must be at school gate 7 clock in the morning. Otherwise they punish us or dismiss from the school altogether. Sometimes teachers crush students head with the classroom wall for very simple reason, probably because you do not have pencil. Here it is 100 percent better. (Interview with S7E, May 01, 2015)

As interviews with school principals and FGDs with teachers indicated, Eritrean refugee parents actively involve themselves in the education of their children. Some of the Eritrean refugee parents also involve themselves in the school committees where their children are accommodated and



regularly follow-up the progress of their children. For example principal of school E3 forwarded the following idea regarding participation Eritrean refugee parents in school affairs.

They are very active people. They frequently visit the school and check the academic progress of their children. They also openly comment whatever they observe, i.e., positive and negative, in the school. Particularly fathers are active participants in school affairs. However, they are not represented in the parent teachers association (PTA) because they were not elected by the parents' assembly. (Interview with the principal of school E3, May 15, 2015)

Another principal from school E2 has also said the following regarding the participation of Eritrean refugee parents in school matters.

He is (name of refugee parent) member of PTA. He was member starting from 2013. He has very critical opinion regarding education and the practices of our school. He participates actively in school affairs. To the extent, he even updates the school management with information he gets from the media. (Interview with principal of school E2, April 28, 2015)

Such parental support is probably facilitated because, as it was ascertained during interview with Eritrean parents and students, most of the Eritrean parents, particularly the fathers, are educated and almost all can speak, read, and write in Amharic.

In general, Eritrean refugee students' performance in learning Amharic language very fast which is the medium of instruction in Addis Ababa primary school is facilitated more by the wider environmental factors than the support they are getting from schools and teachers. However, opportunities in the wider environment are not exploited to the benefits of Eritrean refugee students very well. Focusing on their initial deficiencies in Amharic language, without critically analyzing the possibilities that Eritrean refugee students can learn Amharic language faster, they were exposed to unwarranted academic and social retardation. While Eritrean refugees dispersed settlement and integration into the host community which has contributed for their disguised existence have potential to facilitate Amharic language learning for Eritrean refugee students, it carries with the students a sense of mistrust and extreme suspicion towards other students.

#### **8.4.2 Experiences of Somali Refugee Students**

Somali refugee students in this study have expressed their resentment that Amharic as medium of instruction is one of the difficulties they are struggling to cope-up in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa. Some Somali refugee students who are able to properly exploit opportunities in

the wider environment are able to learn Amharic better than others. In this regard those Somali refugee students who have family members (usually brother or sister) who can speak Amharic and those who have Habesha friends in their neighborhood have reported that they can communicate in Amharic. For example, students S9S and S5S remarked the following regarding how they learned Amharic.

I can listen, speak, read and write in Amharic. I learnt Amharic at school called Mustaqbul. I have friends who speak Amharic in the school and in the neighborhood. Most of my friends in the neighborhood speak Amharic. My sisters can also speak Amharic. My mother can also speak Amharic. (Interview with S9S, June 11, 2015)

May be I am Somali and Amharic is so difficult to me. I try to learn the best I can. Now I can read and write in Amharic. But it is very difficult. When I come to school I do not know any Amharic. Now I try. I learned the basic rules in Amharic. There are teachers and students who are helping me to learn Amharic. When I go home my little brother can speak, read and write in Amharic. He always reads to me. That is how I learn. When writing I might make mistakes. I am not perfect in writing. May be I make mistakes while reading. (Interview with S5S, May 08, 2015)

However, there are some Somali refugee students who reported that they were born and raised in Ethiopia, but cannot speak, read and write in Amharic although they can understand the spoken Amharic somehow. Such students are mainly enrolled in private schools. For example, S6S, a Somali refugee student who was born in Ethiopia, had lived in Addis Ababa for nine years and started school here, remarked the following regarding her Amharic proficiency.

I can speak Amharic little bit. I do not know that much. Speaking is hard. I can hear but I cannot answer. The subject Amharic is also difficult. I can hear what the teacher is talking but I cannot answer. My grades in Amharic are, to me, good. My English mark is better than Amharic. (Interview with S6S, May 11, 2015)

Almost all Somali refugee students who were interviewed in this research are overaged for the grade level they are enrolled in. However, none of them reported demotion to lower grades with the intension of learning Amharic although some reported that they missed some years of schooling during flight from Somalia and during transfer from refugee camps to Addis Ababa. Finding overaged Somali students in schools is consistent with Kronick's (2013) argument that Somali students have a tradition of entering school at later age due to religious and cultural reasons where some Somali families do not allow their children to enroll in formal schools until they have completed basic religious education in the Mosques. Thus, enrollment in lower grades than the

level indicated in their certificate of prior learning is not pursued by Somali refugee students to catch-up with the Amharic proficiency level expected in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

In the case study schools of this research accommodating Somali refugee students, Somali students' population is relatively large. As a result, most of the Somali refugee students in this study have reported that their closest friends in the schools are Somalis. Among the reasons that Somali refugee students mentioned that they prefer Somali friends, age and cultural difference with local students, and Amharic language problem were listed as the major ones. For example S3S who is seventeen years old and grade five student reported that she has Somali friends in the school because "*Habesha students in the classroom are small kids with whom I cannot be friended*". Regarding friendship in school, S5S, another Somali refugee student remarked that:

In the classroom I do not have friend. I have one Somalian girl who is my friend in grade five. She is like me. She cannot speak Amharic. She is refugee. When she comes to me we are interested to chat in Somali. (Interview with S5S, May 08, 2015)

The friendship preference of Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa schools is consistent with the findings of Ayoub (2014) about Somali elementary school students in Canada, who, due to language problem, always prefer fellow Somali students for friendship in school.

During the school environment observation for this study, in the schools accommodating Somali refugee students, Somali refugee students were observed playing in their own groups visibly separate from local students. In all the three schools it was observed that the play grounds were dominated by Somali student groups who were physically bigger and older in age than the local students.

According to the teachers who participated in FGD, Somali refugee students are not motivated to learn Amharic because of their obsession to resettlement. The following comments from teacher participants would illuminate the extent of the problem.

I teach language and I am homeroom teacher for grade six. One of the problems with Somali refugee students is they cannot communicate in Amharic. They always score lowest grade in Amharic. They do not give due attention to Amharic. Some speak very poor Amharic. Even while I say standup in Amharic, their friends translate it to Somali language. (FGD, School S3, June 15, 2015)

I am Physical Education teacher. Among the students there is clear distinction. They call each other as Somali and Habesha. They prefer playing in separate

groups. This is because the Somali students are overaged and aggressive. The major problem with Somali students is lack of motivation to learn. If they were motivated they can learn the language. All of them are processing resettlement. They do not think as they have future life in Ethiopia. They come to school as an alternative to staying at home, not with real purpose of learning. (FGD, School S2, May 13, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above accounts of the teachers, it appears that resettlement is the most preferred durable solution by Somali refugees in Ethiopia. Expert B has commented that almost all refugees in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa have applied for resettlement in third country. Expert B further noted that for refugees who have already joined the urban program through, for example, medical referral, the next logical referral if their health problem is beyond the capacity of health institutions in Addis Ababa, are developed countries in the West. In its 2010-2011 global appeal UNHCR also indicated that it will prioritize refugees with serious medical needs in its resettlement program and hence medical referral is one of means to secure resettlement.

In the case of Somali refugees in Ethiopia those who are from long standing refugee camps such as Kebribeyah have priority chance to resettlement (Durable Solutions, 2013). Most of the Somali refugee students in this study have reported that they moved from Kebribeyah refugee camp to Addis Ababa. Another interesting point is that as long as refugees secured resettlement in a third country, as school principals and refugee students who participated in this study have remarked, the educational certificate from Addis Ababa schools has no value for grade placement in the developed countries they would move to. As school principals commented, the evidence for such assertion is that Somali students usually do not request schools in Addis Ababa their certificate of prior learning when they are guaranteed resettlement. They simply leave the schools. The principals commented that they were informed that refugee students in their country of resettlement are usually placed not in the grade level indicated in the Ethiopian certificate, rather in a grade level relevant to their age. Thus, the resettlement dream coupled with the low value of Ethiopian education certificate in the third country have contributed to lower motivation of Somali refugee students towards education in general and learning Amharic in particular.

The influence of resettlement expectation on Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa is consistent with the findings of Horst (2006) where Somali refugees in Dadaab refugee camp neglect all local opportunities and constraints in favor of hope for resettlement. Somali refugees are well informed about resettlement and every day expect that they will start life after resettlement. Furthermore, Horst (2006) posited that the extreme intensity of resettlement dream of Somali refugees should

be understood in historical context whereby migration is a vital aspect of Somali lives, and has been for many centuries. In other words, Somali refugees plan to encroach phase by phase into Europe and North America, even if resettlement application through UNHCR does not work in their favor.

It is also noteworthy that Somalis self-contained settlement pattern in an enclave in Addis Ababa where they rely on Somali language for most of their day to day activities might have contributed to the Somali students' apathy towards learning Amharic and demotivation towards education in general. Such attitude is manifested among Somali refugees in Cairo where considerable number of refugees say that they live with Somalis in Somali-concentrated areas, and network and socialize with Somalis and hence have very little incentive to interact and build relationships with Egyptians (Al-Sharmani, 2003). Ethiopia's reservation on refugees' right to employment, which is resulting in refugees exclusion from labor market or their illegal entry into low-paid, informal work might have contributed its own share for Somali refugees lower motivation towards education in Addis Ababa. In this regard, UNESCO (2011) pointed out that host government restrictions on refugees right to gainful employment can reduce incentives for refugee children to engage in education.

In the case study schools where Somali refugee students were accommodated, school principals reported that they promote academic support schemes put in place for all students who have some kind of academic problems for Somali students too. These usually include students' permanent reading groups and teachers after school tutorial sessions. Teachers who participated in this research, however, commented that Somali students are not interested to participate and benefit from such school based academic support packages. According to the comments of teachers and Somali refugee students themselves in this study, the refugee students have scheduled the time after the school hours for religious education and prayer at Mosques which they never want to forgo.

All case study schools that accommodated Somali refugee students have reported that Somali parents are not willing to come to schools to discuss on their children academic problems even if they were invited through letters from teachers, nor do participate in school based committees. Furthermore, almost none of Somali refugee parents participated in this study is proficient in Amharic and most of them are reported illiterate.

Due to the interplay of aforementioned host of factors hindering Somali refugee students from learning Amharic, teachers in the case study schools have devised strategies to transmit the basic messages from their lessons to Somali students. In this regard, using student interpreters who can communicate in Amharic for those Somali refugee students who cannot understand this language is a common practice in all the case study schools. Using student interpreters in the integrated classroom where refugee students attend lessons alongside local students is also employed in Nairobi (Kronick, 2013) and Kampala (Dryden-Petreson, 2006). The problem with using a student as an interpreter, as Kronick (2013) indicated is that the teacher has no way to ascertain that the interpreter is conveying the right message. As a result, many teachers are not always sure if their pupils are learning correctly until they see the examination results of the refugee students.

However in school S2, where 40 percent of the students population was reported Somali, the principal reported that the school organizes weekend Amharic tutorial sessions and distributes Amharic alphabets to Somali refugee students. The principal of this school also indicated employing teachers who can speak Somali, Amharic and English as another mechanism to deal with the language problem of Somali students, although the school had no such teacher in the 2014/2015 academic year.

Almost all principals and teachers who participated in this study complained about some kind of behavioral problems that they observed among Somali refugee students. Principals and teachers complained that Somali refugee students usually form a group of their own in the school and try to form the Somali group even for classroom group tasks. They reported that Somali refugee students always discriminate themselves from local students as much as possible. Principals and teachers also commented that Somali students are very aggressive and ready for conflict with local students. Academically, teachers described Somali refugee students as careless and not willing to do homework and assignments. They are described as dishonest by private school principals. A school principal interviewed and a teacher who participated in FGD commented in the following ways regarding the behavior of Somali refugee students in their schools.

They are not honest. While they have a plan to move to another school or go abroad through resettlement program they intentionally delay tuition fee and leave the school without settling the payments. The behavior of Somali students is different from local students. They are careless. They do not know school discipline. They are aggressive. (Interview with principal of school S2, May 12, 2015)

During group discussions in the classroom they want to form their own Somali group and do not engage in the task. Rather they chat something else during group work. The most difficult issue with Somali students is their behavior. They disturb the class. They do not respect teachers. Usually they are ready for conflict. They are extremely sensitive. All Somalis cooperate during conflict. They are unfairly biased towards each other. They always want to instigate conflict and inflict damage on local students. If a single Somali student quarrels with a local student, all Somalis from all grade levels gather together and attempt to attack all other Ethiopian students. They do not work on their homework. I think there is no one at home that checks their progress in Education. (Teacher participant in FGD, School S3, June 15, 2015)

The above reported behavior of Somali refugee students seems to be reflection of the relationship between Somali refugees and host community in Addis Ababa. Taking into account the behavior of Somali refugee students in his school, a teacher who participated in FGD in school S2 raised the same question local community representatives raised saying:

Who is the refugee? I do not think the Somalis are refugees. They live very relaxed life. The situation of Somalis in Addis Ababa is quite different from what we learnt about refugees from media. Look, they controlled one village of Addis Ababa, Bole Michael. They have more confidence than the locals. (Teacher participant in FGD, School S2, May 13, 2015)

As major reasons to Somali refugee students' failure to accomplish homework and assignments, teachers in this research argued that they have language problem and lack parental support for their education at home. Some of the behavioral problems observed in Somali refugee students are ascribed to their being Somali in nationality by some of the teachers in this study. Ascribing behavioral difference that schools observe on Somali refugee students to national origin and refugee status is parallel with a practice in Nairobi schools where refugees were integrated with the local students (Dryden-Peterson, 2015). While schools are expected to understand the underlying causes of Somali refugee students which might be related to their age and motivation to learning, as Dryden-Peterson (2015) argued, the approach of the schools and teachers in Addis Ababa is usually to try to tame the Somali refugee students towards their expectation. Rather than the taming approach, Kronick (2013) advised schools to be considerate and understanding of individual difference among the refugee students and the general tendency among refugee youth to be aggressive because violence is what they were exposed to as mechanism of resolving conflict. Block et al., (2014) also asserted that in the school environment where there is lack of appropriate support and responsiveness to the needs of refugee children, the impact on education and learning

on refugees can be profound, and in such an environment refugee students may demonstrate lack of engagement, feelings of disempowerment, absenteeism, failure to establish and sustain healthy relationships, and dropping out from schools.

The experiences of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the integrated classroom of Addis Ababa primary schools with regards to language of instruction, relationship with local students, and parental involvement in the children education are compared and summarized in the following table.

Table 8.3 Eritrean Somali refugee students' experiences in language of instruction, relationship with local students, and parental involvement

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                                     | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Initial experience with Amharic medium of instruction                      | Difficult                                                                                                                                                                                      | Difficult                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Motivation and pace of learning Amharic                                    | High and fast                                                                                                                                                                                  | Strong resentment to learning Amharic, and slow                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Facilitators to learning Amharic                                           | Placement in lower grades; dispersed settlement pattern in Addis Ababa; friends from local community; family members who are proficient in Amharic; and orientation of longer stay in Ethiopia | Some students learned from brothers and sisters; Some learned from Habesha friends                                                                                                                                    |
| Factors contributed for persistent problem in Amharic                      | Multiple challenges including language problem, overaged, tallest and biggest in the classroom; prohibition from employment opportunity in Ethiopia.                                           | Obsession for resettlement; failure to see value of education in Ethiopia; concentrated settlement pattern and lesser relevance of Amharic for day-to-day life ; prohibition from employment opportunity in Ethiopia. |
| School based targeted support to the language problems of refugee students | No; expected to benefit from general support package for students with academic problems                                                                                                       | No; expected to benefit from general support package for students with academic problems                                                                                                                              |
| Interest to benefit from school based support                              | High                                                                                                                                                                                           | Very low                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Mechanisms teachers use to convey important messages                       | Not mentioned                                                                                                                                                                                  | Using student interpreters                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Academic expectation and demand of schools from refugee students           | Low                                                                                                                                                                                            | Low                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



|                                                    |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Some behavioral problems observed in the students  | Mistrust, particularly other Eritreans; and anxiety not to make mistake               | Forming separate Somali groups; being aggressive and conflict with local students; carelessness and lack of motivation to engage in school tasks; and being dishonest |
| Friendship preference in the school                | Local students if there are no family members                                         | Other Somalis- refugee or Ethiopian ethnic Somali                                                                                                                     |
| Reason for the friendship preference in the school | Mistrust of other Eritreans outside family members; reflection of disguised existence | Age difference; cultural difference; Amharic language difficulty                                                                                                      |
| Relationship with local students                   | Positive                                                                              | Mainly negative                                                                                                                                                       |
| Parents participation in school matters            | Active                                                                                | Almost non existent                                                                                                                                                   |

## 8.5 Summary

This chapter has shown that access to the integrated national education system to refugee is open and easy. Except physically placing Eritrea and Somali refugee students in the integrate primary schools classrooms in Addis Ababa, as discussions in this chapter revealed, there were no support arrangement at any stage of their existence in school that can promote real integration between refugees and the host community students. Eritrean and Somali refugee students' access and enrollment in the government and private primary schools by itself seems wrongly taken as an end to achieve integration. As discussions in this chapter shown, access and enrolment of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis are not basically facilitated by UNHCR or DICAC. As refugees join the urban program through the joint UNHCR and ARRA referral upon compelling circumstances, the principle of unity of the family is maintained. Through this process, therefore, refugee children who started education in Ethiopian refugee camps in Ethiopian national curriculum and holding Ethiopian certificates of prior learning apply for enrollment in the government or private schools of Addis Ababa. Hence, enrollment, particularly in private schools is easier to refugees. In some government schools, due to lack of information about the MoE provision on refugees access to national education system, refugee students might be rejected. Due to lack of information, particularly in government schools, schools do not have data about who are refugees in their schools and how many refugee students they have.

The actual placement of refugee students at a certain grade level, however, differs between Eritrean and Somali refugees. Most of the Eritrean refugee students are placed in lower grades than the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning. However, Somali refugee students are placed in the grade level specified in the certificate of prior learning.

UNHCR and DICAC acknowledge the desirability of introductory program to refugees who newly join the integrated government or private schools in Addis Ababa although it is absent at the moment for various reasons. As discussions in this chapter revealed, teachers in their respective classrooms are at the forefront of struggling to deliver education to refugee students who are overaged, tallest and/or biggest, and poorly proficient in medium of instruction. Eritrean refugee students cannot be easily identified from the local student by their color, complexion, or accent and are identified lately than the Somali students. This study has also revealed that schools accommodating refugee students are confronted with diverse behavioral problems of refugee students.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **9. Eritrean and Somali Refugee Students and Identity in Addis Ababa Primary Schools**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is examining how issues of identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the integrated national education context is conceptualized and approached. Regarding the identity of these students there are divergent understandings and approaches among agencies working with them, schools accommodating refugee students, and the refugees themselves. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section examines the conceptualization and approaches of agencies towards identity of refugee students integrated into national education system. In this regard, the approaches of DICAC and JRS, the two frontline agencies providing various services to refugees as per the accountability matrix, are specifically discussed. The second section explicates how primary schools in Addis Ababa are conceptualizing and approaching identity of refugee students they have accommodated. In the third section of this chapter the role of family, media, and religious institutions in maintaining identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students were examined.

#### **9.2 Preserving Eritrean and Somali Refugee Children Identity: Who is Responsible?**

It has been indicated in the preceding discussions that DICAC and JRS have different understandings towards refugee children challenges as the result of Amharic language as medium of instruction. As a corollary to such understanding, DICAC argues that the responsibility to maintain refugee children identity should be left to the family and the refugee community; and discounts the refugees quest for education that can reflect their national identity on the grounds of UNHCR policy that promotes integration into the national education system and the dispersed settlement pattern of refugees in Addis Ababa. Integration of refugee students into the national education system “wherever possible and desirable” seems misinterpreted by DICAC as just physically putting refugee students together with local students in the government schools of Addis Ababa which can be achieved through the phased transfer. As the comment of expert B in this study indicates, possibilities to respond to the identity of the refugees are seen only in the parallel refugee communities’ formal schools, which the government of Ethiopia and UNHCR consider as a wrong option. Hence, it seems that, the essence of integration where services provided to refugees

including education are expected to take into account refugee identity is not properly conceptualized. Regarding these matters expert A remarked that:

While they join the urban refugee program they settle dispersed all over the city. As the result it is difficult to organize uniform service for all the Eritrean and Somali refugees from single center. Another point is that UNHCR and Ethiopian government believe that establishing parallel refugee services in Addis Ababa is wrong option. One thing that must be acknowledged is that refugee children spend more than half of their time at home with their family and in the neighborhood with the community. They stay in school for not more than six hours per day. At home they have all the opportunities to practice their language and culture. At home no one denies them their right to speak their own language, practice their own culture, and prepare their cultural food. As the result of integration, in terms of language, they will be bilingual which is advantage for them, because no one knows how long they will live here. (Interview with Expert A, June 10, 2015).

As can be inferred from the above comment, the expert's conceptualization of the role of national system of education in shaping identity is not refined. As discussed in Fagerlind and Saha (1989), Waters and LeBlank (2005), Collet (2007) and Fincham (2012) national systems of education are designed in a way that they can shape the young generation to ethos of citizenship, national political philosophy, and the social relationships in the society in the formal and organized setting using carefully selected curricular materials and professional teachers. While the family can contribute its own share in maintaining and transmitting markers of identity across generations, expecting refugee families to fully shoulder the responsibility for issues related to identity, as suggested in the above comment of expert A, trivializes the essence of identity which is the major preoccupation of national systems of education. From the above comment of expert A, it seems that refugee identity is understood as it is equivalent to the daily routines of the refugees which they perform using the language and culture of their country of origin.

Furthermore, expert B has a view that integration of Eritrean and Somali refugee students into the national education system should not disturb the *status quo* in any guise. Hence, in the integrated primary schools, Eritrean and Somali refugee students' cultural practices as manifestations of their identity can take place if the practices do not attract negative reaction from the local students. However, no orientation or induction programs to the refugee students integrated into the national education system is organized by any agency working on urban refugee program in Addis Ababa and the whole burden of functioning in the integrated schools without disturbing the *status quo* in the school is left to the refugee students.

The presence of refugee students by default is an anomaly to the schools accommodating them, and as Abbasi-Shavazi *et al.*, (2008) argued taking into account the case of Afgan refugee students in Iranian schools and Oikonomidoy (2009) argued taking into consideration the experiences of Somali refugee students in United States schools, challenges the pre-existing social configuration of schools. What is proposed by expert B as an acceptable manner of identity expression by Eritrean and Somali refugees in the schools in Addis Ababa is consistent with Stachel's (2012) observation regarding Somali refugee students in Canadian schools where acceptable refugee students are those who emphasize their similarities with the host country students and hide their differences to make themselves more like the citizens.

From the above discussions it seems Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the integrated classrooms in Addis Ababa primary schools are expected to be as much similar to the local students as possible. Such an expectation signifies the power relationship between the refugees and the local students in the national education context in Addis Ababa. From this perspective, as Kebede (2010: 12) posited, refugee students are supposed to act taking into account “the expectations of powerful others” and expected to manage themselves so as to fit into the values of local host community through actions that can create the right impression.

Expert B also argues that refugee children have opportunities to express their identity during annual events organized by the agencies and in the schools. Hence, according to expert B, the approach towards refugees' public expression of identity is occasions based although it acknowledges that the refugee family and the community strive to maintain their identity through their indoor day-to-day practices. The following remark from Expert B can further explain how refugees are expected to practice their identity in the schools they are integrated with the local students.

Regarding the cultural difference between refugees and local students in the integrated school settings, there is no one who can abuse refugees' culture. They can maintain their own culture and express it during, for example, World Refugee Day celebration. We are usually invited to parents' days in schools where we have refugee students during the academic year closure. During the parents day ceremonies we have observed while refugees are performing their own cultural dances and music. The point is, as long as the refugee children are in peace with the Habesha [local] students no one prohibits them from practicing their own culture in the school. (Interview with Expert B, June 17, 2015)

Expert F, however, believes that the identity aspect of refugee students is overlooked while integrating them into the national education system and argued that refugees music and dance performances during occasions such as World Refugee Days are not organized with the well-intended objective of fostering their identity. It is organized mainly to make the occasions entertaining and relevant to the audience. Expert E explained the following in this regard.

In our compound we organize various community services to refugees. While mothers join one of the services here, we have a day care center established to their children. In the compound, refugees meet together and they usually tell us that they are comfortable here. We take responsibility of organizing World Refugee Day every next year. Refugees from various origins are encouraged to show their cultural music and dance. It is just to make the occasion entertaining and relevant to the audience that we organize refugee community cultural music performances. (Interview with Expert E, June 28 2015)

According to Expert E, a refugee community center is established in Addis Ababa to provide non-formal education including computer and English language trainings. In the JRS refugee community center various in-door game facilities, volleyball pitch and library are available to refugees, and open the whole week. For those refugee parents who participate in the non-formal education, a day care center is established in the community center for their children. As Expert C commented, the non-formal education programs and the entertainment facilities are known and used by a limited number of refugees whose residences are in closer proximity to the location of JRS community center. As Expert C commented, the community center is not frequented by Somali and Eritrean refugees because its location is far from the enclaves where Somali refugees are residing and are not even known to most of the Eritrean refugees. What JRS has designed as non-formal education program, library, sport facility and day care center, although they might give comfort to refugees to practice their identity, can also serve as an obstacle to integration. Refugee children who spend long hours in the refugee community center might develop lack of confidence to confront the integrated national education environment where they can get accredited educational certificate. In addition, they might spend their time in the confront zone to their identity where they can speak their own language and practice their own culture at the expense of time that should be spent in the integrated schools from where they get recognized educational certification.

In general, both DICAC and JRS have no formal school based approach to provide for the identity of the refugee students who were integrated into the national education system in Addis Ababa. A

research participant from DICAC, however, remarked that they organize annual workshop for principals from schools hosting large number of refugee students in Addis Ababa in which issues regarding refugees' rights and refugees' relationship with the host community are emphasized. However, none of the principals and teachers participating in this research reported that they took part in DICAC organized workshop to discuss issues of refugee students. Except facilitating access to education integrated with the local students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa and providing some educational supports to individual refugee student, as school principals participating in this study commented, agencies working with urban refugees in Addis Ababa are not supporting schools and teachers in making education relevant and meaningful to refugee students.

It is in such an environment that one can understand the challenges schools accommodating refugee students in Addis Ababa are facing and the roles they are playing to promote the identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students.

### **9.3 Celebrating Eritrean and Somali Refugee Students Identity: Practices in the Primary Schools**

In the schools where refugees students are attending classes integrated with local students, all school principals in this study explained how their respective schools are celebrating the identity of refugee students from the point of the view of school based diversity management practices. Taking into account language, religion and culture as markers of identity, school principals in this study commented that Eritrean and Somali refugee students' identity in the schools is promoted merged with ethnic communities in Ethiopia with whom they share similarities in language, religion and culture.

#### **9.3.1 Practices in the Primary Schools Accommodating Eritrean Refugee Students**

In the primary schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students, the identity of refugees is commonly identified with Ethiopian ethnic Tigrins identity. While schools are celebrating the Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day and in the schools culture clubs, for example, Eritrean refugee students are expected to participate alongside Ethiopian ethnic Tigrean students. Principal of school E3 made the following comments with regards to how Eritrean refugee students' identity is promoted in her school.

To start with, to me, Eritreans are Tigreans and Tigreans are Eritreans. Therefore, all are Ethiopians. I do not see any difference. In all school based events such as Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Day celebration; March 8 celebration; Sport day; and in school clubs we put Eritrean refugees and Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans in the same group. No, there is no such thing in our mind. (Interview with Principal of school E3, May 15, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above comments of the principal, schools accommodating refugee students are not focusing on the national identity and distinct citizenship of refugees and refugee students are managed just as part of one of the Ethiopian ethnic groups in the schools. Such understanding and approach of the schools towards the identity of refugee students might be due to lack of awareness as to what refugeehood entails from the point of view of national identity and citizenship. In the schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students, schools are striving to promote refugee students to identify themselves with Ethiopian co-ethnic groups, to develop feeling of Ethiopian citizenship, and to downplay their distinct national identity. The following reflections of principal of school E2 can indicate such understanding and approach of primary schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students in Addis Ababa.

In our school we do not discriminate in any service between Ethiopians and Eritreans. Even there is no such thinking. There is no effort to promote Eritrean identity in the school. My fear is if we promote Eritrean identity in the school the Eritrean refugee students' current relationship with the local students would be constrained. You know why? Children are exposed to the media message regarding the conflicting relationship between Ethiopian and Eritrean governments. Currently you cannot distinguish Eritrean refugee students from the local students. They are extremely integrated with the local students. (Interview with principal of school E2, April 28, 2015)

As the above comment of principal of school E2 confirm, schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students are also worried about the impact of media message regarding the negative relationship between governments on the micro-level school based relationship between refugee and host community students if the national identity of refugee students is promoted in the school. Expert F in this study also shares the worry of the schools saying that:

Even conducting ARRA led school based assessment on the situation refugee students in the primary school of Addis Ababa is problematic because of the fear that it might invite discrimination on the refugee students. (Interview with expert F, May 07, 2015)



Teachers who participated in the FGD from the school accommodating Eritrean refugee students commented that they do not have awareness regarding the benefits of incorporating issues that can reflect the identity of the refugees. FGD participant teachers in the schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students also commented that there is no room in the curriculum that allows accommodating refugee identity during the classroom lessons. Above all Eritrean refugee students in the classrooms are invisible and highly integrated with the local students and hence in such cases a different identity become out of the agenda of schools and teachers.

### **9.3.2 Practices in the Primary Schools Accommodating Somali Refugee Students**

With regards to Somali refugee students', their identity in the primary schools in this study is celebrated merged with the Ethiopian ethnic Somali students. The following comment of principal of school S1 vividly illuminates this fact.

Somali refugees in our school join the Ethiopian Somali cultural group and perform the music and dance of Somali during the Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day celebration. They are the same. In addition to the annual cultural celebration, in the school, refugees can also participate in the arts club voluntarily. If you take their religion, we have Ethiopian Muslims. If you take language, there are Ethiopian ethnic Somalis in our school. We are equally serving all religions and languages. There is no discrimination. Refugees observe how our school is striving to serve all its students equally irrespective of their background. They share many similarities with the Ethiopian Somalis. Their dressing style and staple food is almost similar. They feel at home because there are Ethiopian Somalis with whom the refugee Somali students share the same language, culture, and religion. (Interview with Principal of school S1, April 29, 2015)

The comment of the principal of school S1 shows that schools accommodating Somali refugee students, like schools accommodating Eritrean refugee students, are not taking into account national identity and distinct citizenship of Somali refugees. Identity of Somali refugee students, as indicated in the comment of the principal of school S1 is managed just as part of the Ethiopian ethnic Somalis in the schools. The practice of promoting refugee students to identify themselves with Ethiopian co-ethnic groups, to develop feeling of Ethiopian citizenship, and to downplay their distinct national identity is also common in the schools in this study accommodating Somali refugee students. For example, the following comment of the principal of school S1 shows the existence of such a practice.

Within the diversity management system of Ethiopia, refugees are participating and expressing their culture. As they participate with the Ethiopian Somalis, they feel

as Ethiopian citizen. This, I think, can contribute to refugee students to consider Ethiopia as their home. (Interview with Principal of school S1, April 29, 2015)

Teachers who participated in FGD from the schools accommodating Somali refugee students commented that Somali students are distinct and visible in the classrooms and in school compounds. Regarding observable difference between Somali refugee students and local students in school, a teacher who participated in FGD has commented that:

There is big cultural difference between Somali students and local students. There are differences in dressing style, tone of voice, manner of eating and favorite food, and ideal holidays. While Somali students eat their meal all of them join together and eat on single plate. It is not common to see local students sharing meal with the Somali students. Most of the Somali students use hot meal for their lunch while local students bring their lunch in the morning. There is also religious difference between the Somali students and local students. (Teacher participant in FGD, School S3, June 15, 2015)

As the comment of the principal of school S3 indicated Somali refugee students are easily identified in the classrooms and school compounds because they are not proficient in Amharic; they usually join a Somali group in the school compound and in the classroom; they eat school meal in larger Somali students groups in a single plate; and their dressing style and complexion is different from local students.

The following table compares and summaries some of major practices of celebrating Eritrean and Somali refugee students' identity in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

**Table 9.1** School practices of celebrating Eritrean and Somali refugee students' identity

| <b>Practices</b>                                                         | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                          | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Refugees identity management framework                                | Ethiopian national diversity management framework | Ethiopian national diversity management framework |
| 2. Approach to celebrating refugee students identity                     | Merged with Ethiopian ethnic Tigrans              | Merged with Ethiopian ethnic Somalis              |
| 3. Teachers awareness on celebrating refugees distinct national identity | Low                                               | Low                                               |
| 4. Curricular space to accommodate refugees distinct national identity   | Not reported by teachers                          | Not reported by teachers                          |
| 5. Ease for distinction and visibility of refugee students in school     | Disguised and less visible                        | Distinct and highly visible                       |

As can be seen in table 9.1 primary schools practices of celebrating identity of refugee students is similar in the schools accommodating Eritrean or Somali refugee students. Although Somali refugee students were very visible and clearly distinct from the local students as compared to Eritrean refugee students, this characteristics could not make any difference between the two refugee communities in terms of celebrating their identity in schools. In general, all schools understand refugee students from Eritrea or Somalia as single and homogeneous group in one hand, and squeeze and merge them into an ethnic group in Ethiopia with whom they mainly relate. Hence, primary schools in Addis Ababa have formed a contrived identity for refugee students they are accommodating taking into account the Ethnic diversity management framework in Ethiopia.

#### **9.4 Family, Media, Religious Institutions, and the Identity of Eritrean and Somali Refugee Students: Cooperating or Competing with the School Environment?**

Outside the formal schools, family, media and religious institutions are the most important arenas where refugee children acquire their national identity and learn national symbols, country of origin language and culture. Eritrean and Somali refugee students in this study have reported that they are proficient in their country of origin language and that they practice their home country culture in the family. The students also reported that they learned the national symbols of their country of origin, their home country language and culture in the family, from the media, and in the religious institutions. The following sections discuss the experiences of Somali and Eritrean refugee students in this regard, and the cooperation or competition among these institutions and the school environment.

##### **9.4.1 Somali Refugees Students Identity: Primary Schools as Difficult and Alien**

For the Somali community representatives in the URCC in Addis Ababa, Somali parents, and Somali refugee students in this research, Somali identity is an interesting issue they would like to discuss. A Somali refugee in this study who is member of URCC commented that discussion on the Somali identity is “*a good question for Somali*”. For Somali refugees aspects of their identity expected to be reflected in Addis Ababa schools incorporates Islam as religion, the Somali and Arabic languages, and syncretism between formal education and their religion. In this regard, a Somali parent in this study said that:

Somalis are so sensitive about their identity. Somalis are Muslims and have their own languages. They flee from Amharic schools because it is difficult. In Somalia

schools have Arabic as one subject. In addition there are religious elements in the schools. Before school they [children] go to traditional Koran schools. When they [children] come here they face cultural shock. So, mostly, half of them, they do not send children to school. They send to Koran schools and language schools with Somali and English languages. The school is morning time. Those who are attending school go to Koran school after the morning school hours and in the weekends. Sometimes we hire tutors for Koran, Arabic and English at home. After that Somali also use Mosque to pray and learn so as to keep their culture. (Interview with parent H, June 16, 2015)

As can be seen in the above comment, for Somali refugees, primary schools in Addis Ababa lack many of the elements which are relevant to their identity, and provide something “difficult” and alien to their culture. Hence, although access to the integrated national education system is open to the Somali refugee students, because Somali refugee students miss the major markers of their identity in primary schools, they experience a cultural shock and opt for other organizations providing lessons relevant to their identity.

In this respect Koranic schools, language schools, and Mosques located in the Somali enclaves in Addis Ababa are the community organizations preferred by Somali refugee children. As the above comment of parent H indicates some refugee families avoid the national education system in Addis Ababa altogether and send their children to Koranic schools where they learn Islam; language schools where there are lessons on Somali language, Arabic and English; and to Mosques where they practice their religion and socialize with the Somali culture. Somali refugee students who are attending classes in the primary schools of Addis Ababa integrated with the local students also attend Koranic and language schools in the mornings, after the formal school hours and/or in the weekends. The above practice of Somali refugees in Addis Ababa is consistent with Kebede’s (2010) findings regarding the mechanisms that Ethiopian asylum seekers and refugees use to maintain their identity in North America where Ethiopians use Churches and Ethiopian community organizations to promote their identity.

The above comment of parent H can also suggest how Somali identity is inextricably linked with the religion of Islam. This is consistent with Collet’s (2007) finding in Toronto, Canada where Somali students identify Islam as the primary characteristics of a Somali national identity, and expect schools in “multicultural” Canada to accommodate this essential marker of their identity. As corollary to their religion of Islam, Somali refugees, as indicated in the above comment of

parent H, are also interested in learning the Arabic language through which they read Koran and, as Stachel (2012) indicated, communicate with the wider Islamic *umma* envisioned as larger than Somalia as a nation.

In order to further strengthen their identity in the land of exile, Somali refugees usually live in their community enclaves in which they can practice their religion, language and culture. Concerning this, one research participant who is member of URCC representing Somali refugees commented that:

We Somali refugees use to live in one village unlike Eritrean and Sudanese who are dispersed all over Addis Ababa. We live in one area. This allowed us to keep our language which is difficult for others. We live in one area and keep practicing our religion, food, culture, cloth, and meat. We also tried to keep our traditional schools inside the community. (FGD with URCC member from Somali refugee community, June 26, 2015)

The above comment can elucidate Somali refugees' strategy of maintaining their identity at the community level. In addition to the responsibility of individual families in maintaining Somali identity, the collective existence of Somali refugees in the self-contained community in Addis Ababa makes Somali language, culture and religion vital to benefit from the community' social capital. As Open Society Foundations (2015) study on Somalis in European cities indicated, retaining and developing a Somali identity is considered as priority by Somalis, and to achieve this, many Somalis in European cities value living in larger cities with a significant Somali community, as this provides the space and opportunities for maintaining and developing their Somali identity. Open Society Foundations (2015) also expounded that the Somalis in European cities view fluency in the Somali language as a key prerequisite for retaining Somali identity. Kebede (2010) asserted that language is a great connector with identity and added that language plays an important role in a person's sense of self and belonging. Parallel to Kebede (2010) and Open Society Foundation (2015) assertions regarding language and identity, Somali refugees in Addis Ababa are committed to maintaining the Somali language.

As a result of the above indicated roles of the family, the community, and religious organizations in maintaining the identity, all Somali refugee students who were interviewed in this study reported that they can speak, read and write in the Somali language. The report of most of the Somali refugee students who were interviewed indicated that their after school hours schedule is

exclusively committed to activities that can reinforce their identity. For example, student S1S has the following schedule after he departs from the school.

After school I go to Koran school. Then I go to Mosque and join the prayer. Before I go to sleep I read Koran and then sleep. I learn at Koran school Somali language, English, and the Koran (i.e. the scripture). Some of my friends also go to Perfect Language School and learn Somali and English languages. (Interview with S1S, May 08, 2015)

Engagement of Somali refugee student during the after school hours in activities that can strengthen their identity and reinforce the Somali network is a common mechanism through which Somali refugees mitigate the deficiencies in the formal education in the land of exile. For example, in the United States and Canada, Somali refugee communities have responded to the perceived risk of their youth, particularly to their perceived identity crisis, through establishing community educational spaces. This was achieved through the establishment of *Dugsia* (Koranic schools) and/or educational spaces in the Mosques to raise awareness on Somali history, language, and cultural life, and to facilitate communal network and support among the Somalis (Stachel, 2012).

In addition to the role of the family, the community, and the Koranic schools and Mosques, TV channels broadcasted in Somali language, the internet sources and private language schools in the Somali enclaves in Addis Ababa are additional venues where Somali refugee students learn about their identity. The following two remarks can show how Somali refugee students are keen to learn about their home country and their strong sense of Somali identity.

I can speak, read and write in Somali language. I learned it at home and from other Somalis in our village. Every night, my father, before he passed away, used to teach me how to write in Somali language. I identify Somali map and Somali national flag. Although I am refugee it is essential to know about my home country. I lived in Ethiopia for many years. I know Ethiopian heritage sites from the school subjects. I must also know the Somalian heritage sites. While I grew up and after completing my education it is inevitable to return to my country and therefore I must know about my country. I mainly learned about Somalia from the internet. Using YouTube I also compare the past and the present situation of Somalia. I feel very happy while I see people dancing and playing Somali music. While your nation is mentioned somewhere you feel happy. (Interview with S2S, June 11, 2015).

We speak Somali language at home, because my family do not know any other language except Somali. It would have been very nice if we use Arabic. I like Arabic. To encourage us to keep Somali language, culture, and values, my family advise us to speak Somali language. We also watch Somali TV channels. They also

show us Somali culture at home. I know Somali culture because I was born there. At home we cook Somali food and celebrate Somali festivals. I can speak Somali language very well. I show Somali dance sometimes during occasions because I learned Somali dance from TV. (Interview with S3S, May 11, 2015).

Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa have formed a strong sense of Somali identity just because they were born to Somali family and raised in the Somali community in Addis Ababa. The situation of Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa is also consistent with the findings of Oikonomidou (2009) who studied the identities of Somali female high school students in the United States. As Oikonomidou's (2009) study revealed, Somali female high school students are connected to each other in the school even though they attend different classes, and their aspiration to succeed academically in United States of America derives from their sense of identity as Somalis and sense of obligation to contribute to the betterment of their community in the home land. Furthermore, all Somali refugee students identify Somalia national flag and most of them identify the map of Somalia. This might suggest that Somali refugees in Addis Ababa have a strong feeling to their national symbols. That Somali refugee students report that they identify and embrace visible national symbols such as national flag is consistent with the finding of Chacko (2005) which indicates that Ethiopian youth in United States are fond of the Ethiopian national flag as a visible sign of their identity.

Furthermore, the personal commitment of Somali refugee students to learn Somali identity and practice it in their day to day life reinforced Somali identity and kept it alive as an essential element in their life. In this regard, Somali refugee students use internet and Somali TV channels to update their understanding about Somalia. Such practice of Somali refugees in Addis Ababa is similar to the practices of Somali refugees in Eastleigh, Nairobi (Lambo, 2012) and the second-generation Afghan refugees in Iran (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2008) who rely on mass media including TV channels and Radio, and the internet to learn about their home countries.

All Somali refugee students in this study were assertive while reporting their attitude towards Somali language, culture and religion. During the interviews, Somali refugee students used such statements as *"I like Somali language very much"*; *"Somali language is my mother tongue"*; *"I feel very happy while I see people dancing and playing Somali"*; *"I have Somali flag at home"*; and *"I can read and write in Somali perfectly"*, to express their attitude towards their Somali identity. Through such statements Somali refugee students expressed strong sense of nostalgia for

Somalia. Such construction, imagination, and preservation of Somali identity both collectively as a community in exile as well as individually even among those Somali youth in Addis Ababa who never physically visited Somalia is consistent with findings of Lambo's (2012) research on the Somali refugees in Eastleigh, Nairobi, and Kebede's (2010) study on the identities Ethiopian asylum seekers and refugees in North America.

Some Somali refugee students also understand the limits of their rights as refugees in Ethiopia with regards to naturalized citizenship and such understanding seems to have contributed its own share in focusing the attention of Somali refugees on activities that can strengthen their identity. These students clearly articulated that local integration is not durable solution in Ethiopia. S2S, a 13 years old Somali refugee student said the following in this regard.

Some Somali refugee students who stayed for long time in Addis Ababa feel as if they become Ethiopian citizen. As long as you do not have the citizenship you must understand that you will leave Ethiopia one day. (Interview with S2S, June 11, 2015)

Although S2S is worried about the feeling of some long stayed Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa who mistakenly consider themselves as citizen of Ethiopia, none of the Somali refugee students interviewed in this research have commented that they have future plan to remain in Ethiopia. The life path that all Somali refugee students interviewed in this study, would like to progress is almost uniform. All of them reported first to resettle in developed countries, attain better standard of living there and then return to Somali and help the Somali people with various professions they are aspiring to become. Hence, for all of them, their future aspiration is explained with ultimate successful return to what they call "*my country*", "*my people*", and "*Somalia*". The following remarks would illuminate the life trajectories Somali refugee primary school students aspire so as to achieve successful return to their home country at some point in their life.

I want to go to America. I want to be politician. Because I do not want to see my country torn apart. If Somalia become many countries until I grow up and could not help my country I do not know what to do. (Interview with S2S, June 11, 2015)

When I grow up I want to be Doctor. I want to help my country. I want to build a different building in Somalia if I get money and I am going to call that building my name. (Interview with S5S, May 08, 2015)



I would like to be lawyer. I like to help my people, Somali people. I like to see my country be in peace. (Interview with S7S, May 08, 2015)

As can be inferred from the comments of the above students it is clear that resettlement to the developed countries of the world is a prerequisite to the ultimate return to home for Somali refugee students. The above remarks of the students indicate a strong sense of obligation which Somali refugee students have developed to contribute to what they affectionately call “*my country and my people*”. However, consistent with what Lambo (2012) succinctly expressed, the means to their ultimate dream of successful return to Somali which can be achieved through improvement of their life during their years of exile, can only be materialized upon resettlement where there are opportunities to improve.

All Somali refugees in this study expressed a feeling that when a refugee in Ethiopia is admitted to the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa, it is like getting a step closer to resettlement as compared to those in the refugee camp. As a result, Somalis in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa have keen desire to leave Ethiopia so as “*to start enjoying life*” in one of the resettlement countries, as one Somali refugee parent in this research said. Due to such feelings related to resettlement opportunity, Somali refugee students consider their stay in the integrated national education system in Addis Ababa as temporary, and invest much of their time and energy preparing for resettlement through, for example, English language training, and on activities that can reinforce their identity in the Koranic schools, in the Mosques and learning Somali language.

Another major aspect of identity which all Somali refugee students loath is the refugee label. The following two comments can demonstrate the bitter feeling Somali refugee students have towards the refugee label.

I feel ashamed. That word I feel ashamed. Because only poor people they were. We are a kind of poor. That is why everybody is ashamed of the word. I do not like it. But I am. What shall I do? (Interview with S3S, May 11, 2015)

I feel so bad. If my country is peace at this time I will not be around. I want to get rid of this word. Because, you know, everyone is using to say when I am going along the road Al-Shabab. They used to say that and I get so bad. (Interview with S8S, May 11, 2015)

As can be inferred from the above comments of Somali refugee students, they have a clear understanding that their relationship as citizen with their country of origin is detached. Somali refugee children are also confronting the new refugee label; a new component in their identity and as Burnett (2013) asserted, a component that they previously did not have to consider while living in their country of origin. Being a refugee can (and often does) have a profound effect on the identity of the individuals (Burnett, 2013 and Zetter, 2007). The ill feeling that Somali refugee students expressed due to the refugee label is consistent with the findings of Kumsa (2006: 242) in which young Oromo refugees in Toronto, Canada, loath the refugee label and even reject the label because the local people in Canada equate the refugee label with being “stupid, misfits, ignorant, poor and uncivilized”. Kebede (2010) also argued that labels such as “refugee” affect the way people perceive themselves, and that being identified as belonging to category such as a ‘refugee’ may hinder the authentic and unbiased view people have of themselves. Ludwig’s (2013) study on Liberian refugees in United States of America argued that the refugee label not only implies having nothing and being dependent on assistance, but it also imaginatively regresses the refugees back to the former places of war and agony. Ludwig’s (2013) finding can also corroborate the feeling of Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa.

While Somali refugee students describe their feeling due to refugee label as degrading and shameful, and perceive that it is understood by others as marker of poverty and terrorism, their teachers, however, understand refugees in Addis Ababa as economic migrants. Teachers specifically describe Somali refugees in Addis Ababa as favored, overconfident and economically well-to-do. A teacher who participated in the FGD explained his understanding of refugeehood positively as follow.

It is good if we are able to work in our own country. However, if there are better opportunities in the country you immigrate, it is not bad to be a refugee. I think Somalis are living better life in Ethiopia. (Teacher participant in FGD, School S2, May 13, 2015)

Except associating Somali refugees in Addis Ababa with security threat, contrary to negative stigma attached with the refugee label as indicated in, for example, Zetter (1991) and Kebede (2010), as can be inferred from the above remark of the teacher, the local community in Addis Ababa does not attach negative stigma such as powerlessness and hopelessness with refugee label. Such an attitude of local community in Addis Ababa towards refugeehood might be related to the

common Amharic word “*Sidetegna*” used to denote refugee which does not distinguish between economic migrants and refugees, and the strong international migration motive among Ethiopian youth to different parts of the world. It might also be the result of media influence in Ethiopia that presents the only location where refugees are residing are camps which are located along the borders of Ethiopia. This is also consistent with Castles (2004) assertion that in many of the vernacular languages and in local usages the term refuge has broader meaning than its legal meaning.

#### **9.4.2 Eritrean Refugee Students’ Identity: Some Aspects Reflected in the School Curriculum**

Eritrean refugee community representatives who are members of URCC, Eritrean refugee parents and Eritrean refugee students in this research commented that integration into the national education system in Addis Ababa should not contribute to disregarding their Eritrean identity. URCC members representing Eritrean refugees and Eritrean refugee parents positively accept DICAC’s proposal that family has to play a role of inculcating sense of national identity in their children. They argue that the family is the best school to learn Eritrean language, culture and history. As the reports of the Eritrean refugee parents and URCC indicated, Eritrean refugee families are successful in maintaining Eritrean identity in the form teaching their children to speak Tigrigna, tutoring Eritrean history, and transmitting Eritrean culture. In this regard, an Eritrean refugee parent remarked that:

My children, including those who were born in Addis Ababa, are proficient in Tigrigna. Looking at the proficiency of my children who were born in Addis Ababa, some people argue as they learned the language in Eritrea. At home it is strictly prohibited for all of us to speak Amharic. Their Tigrigna is not a kind of Mekele Tigrigna. They speak the Eritrean Tigrigna. A Tigrigna of our country. For a child, home is another school. Home is the major school. We are responsible to inculcate the desirable values and teach their home country language. Parents must be committed for that. I feel very sad while I see some children who used to speak Tigrigna in Eritrea, but forgot it totally after they were exiled to Ethiopia. My children also speak perfect Amharic. They are not even mixing Tigrigna and Amharic. This is how we are training our children. (Interview with parent C, May 25, 2015)

Eritrean refugee students are exposed to learning Amharic due to the dispersed settlement pattern of Eritrean refugee community in Addis Ababa and in most cases because Eritrean refugee parents (particularly fathers) can speak Amharic. As it has been discussed in the preceding sections most of the Eritrean refugee students can speak Amharic. The major challenge for Eritrean refugee

community in their efforts to maintain Eritrean identity is the exposure of their children to Amharic language and what they call “Ethiopian culture” which is very much similar to the culture they claim as Eritrean. Regarding the linguistic and cultural similarities, Tronvoll (1999) commented that the peoples on the frontiers of Ethiopia and Eritrea are connected by kinship and intermarriage, and as a result the Tigrinya-speaking people of Eritrea and Ethiopia have strong commonness and call each other cousins across borders. As a result, Eritrean identity is more distinct as territorial identity than cultural and linguistic identity (Tronvoll, 1999). Hoyle (2001) also asserted that territorial identity is very strong in Eritrea and such identity is reinforced through markers such as Eritrean map and Eritrean national flag. As Tronvol (1999) and Riggan (2011) suggested, in addition to demarcating physical boundary, Eritrean government went to war with all its neighboring states and with Ethiopia in particular because it needed to erect a psychological boundary between members of the same ethnic groups residing across national borders. Such state of affairs was succinctly expressed by Huntington (1996: 20) saying that “for people seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential”.

Unlike Somali refugees in Addis Ababa who embrace Ethiopian Somalis as part of Somalia and share similar sense of identity, Eritrean refugees, as indicated in the above remark of the refugee parent, labor a lot to justify the difference between Eritreans and Ethiopian ethnic Tigrins. For example, to explain the difference between Eritrean Tigrigna and the Ethiopian Tigrigna to their children who have friends in schools and in their neighborhood who speak “Tigray/Mekele Tigrigna”, parents describe for their children that Eritrean Tigrigna is “perfect” and “plain”. Due to such slim differences claimed in the languages used between the Eritreans and Ethiopians from Tigray regional state, Eritrean parents enforce the use of Tigrigna at home by rule of prohibition to use Ethiopian languages, i.e., Amharic or Mekele Tigrigna.

Eritrean refugee parents and URCC members in this study remarked that they have realistic expectations from the schools in terms of addressing Eritrean identity in their lessons. They explained that Ethiopian national education system should not be demanded to accommodate Eritrean identity as one might expect in developed countries because Ethiopia as a nation is supporting refugees to the extent its capacity allows. As a result of such expectation from schools in Addis Ababa, Eritrean refugee parents expressed that family should play the leading role in

inculcating Eritrean identity in the children. An Eritrean refugee parent said the following in this regard.

While we are at home we mainly use Tigrigna. While there are two languages competing, it is difficult to be perfect in any one of them. Hence, I always advice and support my children not to mix-up Amharic and Tigrigna languages and to be proficient in both of the languages. While they are with their mother they always speak in Tigrigna. I always advise my children not to forget and neglect their culture, language, and religion. That I teach them from their childhood. We do not expect the responsibility of transferring Eritrean culture, language and tradition from Ethiopian government and schools. We ourselves must take care of this. The current capacity of Ethiopia is not like Europe and America, and we do not expect everything from Ethiopia. Ethiopia is helping us up to her capacity. (Interview with parent A, May 05, 2015)

However, Eritrean refugee parents' expectation from schools with regards to accommodating and promoting Eritrean identity, although realistic, it might also allude their commitment to the disguised existence in Addis Ababa. In addition to the role of family in maintaining and reinforcing Eritrean identity, Eritrean refugee parents expressed that they expose their children to watch Eritrean TV channel so that they easily learn Eritrean national symbols such as national map, national flag, national heroes and national heritages, and the geography and people of Eritrea. Most of the Eritrean refugees in this study have commented that they watch selected programs in Eritrean TV channel. Except the family and the Eritrean TV channel, as Eritrean refugee students have reported, they do not have any organization where they learn Eritrean language, culture and history.

All Eritrean refugee students in this study reported that they can speak, read and write in Tigrigna. They learned these skills from the family, from the school while they were in refugee camp or during their time in Eritrea. All Eritrean refugee students in this research confirmed that they use Tigrigna language at home. According to the comments of most of the students, the main reason to use Tigrigna at home is related to their parents' decision not to let them lose language of their home country.

As remarks of some of the Eritrean refugee students in this research indicate they feel that Eritrea and Eritrean history are incorporated in the primary school curriculum. It seems that some of the Eritrean refugee students were satisfied with the way Eritrea and Eritrean history are presented in the primary school curriculum saying that:

Particularly Social Studies books teach about various rulers of Ethiopia. They also have content regarding Ethio-Eritrean relationship. I appreciate the way the textbooks are prepared. The books raise about the root causes of Ethio-Eritrean wars. The textbooks also teach about strengthening the relationship between Ethiopian and Eritrean people and as the disagreement between the governments will be solved one day. I am satisfied with the knowledge I gained from the school in this regard. (Interview with student S8E, May 04, 2015)

Eritrean refugee students reported as they are comfortable with the way Eritrea and Eritrean history are presented in primary school textbooks of Ethiopia, probably because the textbooks depict Eritrean government the way Eritrean refugees wanted it to be depicted. As the above comment of the student indicates, refugee students seem pleased with the positive message in the text book regarding the relationship between the people of two nations.

Unlike Somali refugee students who have strong ill feeling towards the refugee label, most of the Eritrean refugee students did not articulate any feeling attached to the refugee label. This might be due to the disguised existence of Eritrean refugees integrated with the local community in Addis Ababa.

With regards to their future return to Eritrea, some students have a clear idea about their temporary stay in Ethiopia and plan to ultimately return to their country. Just like Somali refugee students, such Eritrean refugee students mentioned that they will return to their home country after resettlement, and explained the importance of maintaining Eritrean identity with their intension of ultimate return to Eritrea as follows.

As you know our stay in Addis Ababa is temporary. We have resettlement opportunity to foreign countries. It is obvious that after being educated and earning good income, at the end we must return to our country. To this end our parents advise us not to lose Eritrean culture and language. So we use Tigrigna at home. At home my mother teaches to my sisters how to prepare Eritrean cultural food. My mother always tells us that Eritrean culture is different from others. (Interview with S8E, May 04, 2015)

There were some Eritrean refugee students in this study who understood that their resettlement to developed countries will take place sometime in the near future and aspire ultimate return to Eritrea, but at the same time aspire to pay to the favor Ethiopia has done to them. However, one

Eritrean refugee student in this study expressed his interest to live a successful life in Ethiopia in the future if the situation in Eritrea will not improve.

The following table compares and summarizes the role of family, media, and religious institutions in maintaining identity of Somali and Eritrean students in Addis Ababa primary schools.

**Table 9.2** Role of family, media, and religious institutions in Somali and Eritrean refugee students' identity

| <b>Characteristics</b>                                               | <b>Somali Refugees</b>                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Eritrean Refugees</b>                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Contribution of settlement pattern for identity                      | Validated the vital importance of Somali identity                                                                                                                          | Challenged the importance Eritrean language                                                                                                                                    |
| Proficiency in the country of origin language                        | Students can speak, read and write                                                                                                                                         | Students can speak, read and write                                                                                                                                             |
| Expect schools to reflect identity                                   | Yes                                                                                                                                                                        | No, rather family is expected to be responsible                                                                                                                                |
| Major elements of identity expected to be reflected in education     | Islam; Somali and Arabic languages; practice of Islam in the formal schools                                                                                                | No articulate expectation mentioned                                                                                                                                            |
| Education in primary schools from refugees perspective               | Difficult and alien to Somali identity                                                                                                                                     | Incorporates some aspects of Eritrean identity                                                                                                                                 |
| Mechanisms to deal with identity issues missing in primary education | Teaching in the family; Koran schools; language schools; Mosques; and the media                                                                                            | Teaching in the family; and the media                                                                                                                                          |
| Arrangements to deal with integration and identity                   | Some avoid integrated schools altogether; some schedule early morning hours, afterschool hours, and weekends to go to Koran schools, language schools, and/or Mosques      | No other formally scheduled learning institutions other than integrated schools.                                                                                               |
| Family mechanisms of maintaining identity                            | Communication at home in Somali language; teaching children how to read and write in Somali language; cooking cultural food at home; and teaching cultural dance and music | Communication at home in Tigrigna language; teaching children how to read and write in Tigrigna language; cooking cultural food at home; and teaching cultural dance and music |

|                                                             |                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Major lessons from media (TV channels and internet)         | National symbols including national flag, map, and national heritage                                                       | National symbols including flag, map, national heroes, national heritage; and geography and people |
| Major lesson in religious institutions and language schools | Koran the scripture; Somali, Arabic and English languages; practice of Islam and socialization with Somali cultural values | Not applicable                                                                                     |
| Feeling towards refugee label                               | Strongly loath                                                                                                             | No articulate feeling                                                                              |

As can be inferred from table 9.2 Somali refugees, due to the day-to-day practice of their language, culture and religion as community and in the family using the opportunity of their settlement pattern in Addis Ababa, strongly expect schools to incorporate specific aspects of their identity in the education. However, Eritrean refugees, who are settled dispersed in Addis Ababa to ensure their disguised existence, do not openly expressed their expectation from schools to incorporate their identity in the lessons. The feeling that some aspects of Eritrean identity are incorporated in the primary education curriculum of Addis Ababa might have contributed to such an expectation of Eritrean refugees.

As can be inferred from table 9.2, in the context of Somali refugee students', competition is observed between integrated primary schools which are not reflecting their identity, and the role played by family, media, Koranic schools, Mosques, and language schools which mainly provide to their identity in terms of preference, scheduling, family resource allocation, and deciding the future life course. Some of the Somali refugee parents are confronting the dilemma of integration and identity in the form of either/or (i.e., avoiding formal schools altogether and sending children to other community based institutions where issues of identity are prominent). For Eritrean refugees, however, the dilemma seems, explaining distinct Eritrean identity in the form that can be practiced in everyday life including language, religion and/or culture to their children at the face of their dispersed settlement and in the host community context where they share high level of cultural compatibility. Furthermore, Eritrean refugees do not have institutions other than the family and media where they send their children to promote identity of their country of origin.



In general Somali refugee students have well-articulated feeling towards refugee label, plan resettlement to achieve the ultimate successful return to Somali, and as the result consider education in the primary schools of Addis Ababa as temporary exercise with no real future value. As the result, those Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa seem more committed to lessons focusing on their identity delivered in institutions other than the formal primary schools. Eritrean refugee students on the other hand have no clearly articulated feeling towards the refugee label and consider education in the primary schools of Addis Ababa as it can really contribute to their future life.

### **9.5 Summary**

Discussions in this chapter have revealed that conceptualizations and approaches of agencies working on refugees and primary schools accommodated refugee students towards promoting refugee students identity while integrating them into the national education system is problematic. Some agencies understand that responding to the distinct identity of refugees can be possible through establishing parallel system of education to different refugee communities.

As has been discussed in this chapter, although formal education is the key site for the reproduction of national histories, the languages, religions, cultures and social hierarchies in society, refugees also construct their national identity through their informal, mundane, everyday practices performed in the family, in the neighborhood and community, in religious institutions, and from the media. Hence, refugee children identity construction and reconstruction can be understood taking into consideration the role of both formal education and their informal daily life experiences.

Primary schools in Addis Ababa in which refugee students are integrated with local students argue that they are accommodating and promoting identity of refugee students. In this regard discussions in this chapter have shown that Eritrean refugees are usually considered as similar with Ethiopian ethnic Tigrins and Somali refugees with Ethiopian ethnic Somalis.

In cooperation or with competition to the primary schools, however, Somali and Eritrean refugees are very active and committed to maintain their identity. In this regard the role of the family, religious organizations, private language schools and the media is significant. While family and media are common arenas in promoting identity for Somali and Eritrean refugees, religious

organizations (i.e., Koranic schools and Mosques), and private language schools are very important organizations to Somali refugees to learn, maintain, and transmit Somali identity.

The concentrated settlement pattern of Somali refugees in visible communities in Addis Ababa has contributed in validating the practical utility of Somali religion, culture and language for day-to-day life. However, the dispersed settlement of Eritrean refugees and their preference to disguised existence in Addis Ababa have required Eritrean refugee parents to labor more to maintain Eritrean identity and left them with meager possibility to validate the practical utility of Eritrean identity for day-to-day life in Addis Ababa. Unlike Somali refugees who recognize Ethiopian ethnic Somalis as part of their identity, Eritrean refugees struggle to justify to their children how Eritreans are different from Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans. Although it seems more complex to Eritrean refugees to maintain identity, just like Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa who are proficient in Somali language, Eritrean refugee students can also speak, read, and write in Tigrigna language.

Eritrean refugee students who are more integrated due to their settlement pattern in Addis Ababa exhibit less articulate feeling towards the refugee label as compared to Somali refugees. Some Eritrean refugee students see that Eritrean identity is somehow entertained in the primary education curriculum in Addis Ababa schools.

For Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa, while Islam as religion is one of the major markers of their identity, religious organizations further serve as arenas to promote language and culture of Somali. In the Somali community enclaves of Addis Ababa, Koranic schools that teach scriptures, and Somali and Arabic languages; private language schools where Somali refugees attend classes on Somali, Arabic and English languages; and Mosques where Somali refugees practice Islam and socialize with Somali culture, are acting in some cases as rival organizations to formal schools vying to attract Somali refugee students.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **10. Summary, Conclusion and Implications**

#### **10.1 Introduction**

The general objective of this study was to analyze the practices and dilemmas of integration and preservation of identity among Eritrean and Somali refugee students in Addis Ababa Primary schools. To be able to address the above general objective, this study has investigated five specific research questions. This chapter is composed of three major sections. In the first section of this chapter summary of empirical findings and conclusions of this study are presented organized under the research questions investigated. In the second section of the chapter brief reflections on the theories and the conceptual framework used in this study are discussed. The third section of this chapter is devoted to the discussion on the implications of the findings of this study for policy and practice.

#### **10.2 Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

##### **10.2.1 Refugee policy and law in Ethiopia: mixed characteristics of openness and restriction**

Findings of this study have revealed that beginning from 1960's Ethiopia continued as one of the major refugee hosting nations in Africa due mainly to "accident of geography". Since 1991, the relative stability of the country in the volatile Horn of Africa region has also contributed in attracting refugees who seek safety and protection from neighboring countries. As reflection to the political developments in the Horn of Africa region, in the period from 1960s to 2014, Ethiopia has experienced a dramatic fluctuation in the refugee population hosted in its territory. Throughout these long years of refugee hosting experience, the security apparatus of the successive governments were in charge of refugee issues in Ethiopia. ARRA has experienced a relative continuity as specialized organization responsible to refugee issues in Ethiopia.

The 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia essentially reflects the major principles contained in the international and regional refugee Conventions to which Ethiopia is party and upholds the recommendations of the Executive Committee of High Commissioners Program on the procedures in refugee status determination. The refugee law of Ethiopia, however, reaffirmed all the restrictions Ethiopia imposed on refugees through its reservations during accession to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.

Ethiopia has opened its borders to refugees from near and far throughout its long history. To explain why Ethiopia is pursuing open door refugee policy, various rationales are evoked. These include Ethiopia's accession to international and regional refugee Conventions and the commitment of the nation to the principles contained in the Conventions; the age old Ethiopian tradition of hospitality; an innate humanitarian spirit of Ethiopians; and strengthening people-to-people relations using refugees as future ambassadors of Ethiopia upon return to their home country.

The findings obtained in this study, however, revealed that taking into account the practices of preferential treatment among the refugee communities hosted in Ethiopia (i.e., Eritrean refugees and others); the bureaucratic set-up established to manage refugee issues in the nation which has always been in the security apparatus; the 2004 refugee proclamation of Ethiopia which maintained all the reservations Ethiopia registered while acceding to 1951 UN Refugee Convention; and the strict refugee encampment policy, Ethiopian refugee policy has mixed characteristics of openness and restriction. As a result, as can be inferred from the practices, in Ethiopia, while quantity of asylum is acclaimed, quality of asylum can be criticized on several grounds. Political calculations are always evident in the refugee policy of Ethiopia in the name of, for example, supporting liberation movements, promoting people-to-people relations, combating terrorism and ultra-nationalism. The effects of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy on national practices are negligible. Above all, there is no comprehensive refugee policy in Ethiopia. Hence one can understand the refugee policy of Ethiopia mainly from the practices.

#### **10.2.2 Provisions from MoE: pre-occupied with recognition of prior learning of refugee students**

In Ethiopia, an epitome to restrictive refugee policy implemented through the strict refugee encampment is the urban refugee program. There is no permanent urban refugee status in Ethiopia and urban areas are considered as temporary places of residence to refugees although the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy promotes urban areas to be legitimate places of residence to refugees. The majority of refugees recognized in the urban program in Addis Ababa are Eritreans while Somalis rank the second largest refugee population in Addis Ababa. Through the Out-of-Camp scheme, which is exclusively provided to Eritrean refugees, at least as it is taking place

currently, the untenable social networks in the form of families and friends were instituted as dependable livelihood support mechanisms to Eritrean refugees.

In Ethiopia integration of refugee students into the national education system was guided through successive letters, directives and guidelines from the MoE which become more refined, detailed and accommodating through time. Integration of refugee students with the local students outside refugee camps is a practice that started with the major refugee influxes into the nation. For refugee education, both in the refugee camps and urban areas in Ethiopia, the host country curriculum is implemented with the rationale that countries of major refugee origins (Somalia, South Sudan, and Eritrea) have no dependable curriculum that can replace Ethiopian curriculum, and based on UNHCR policy that encourages early adoption of host country curriculum to refugee education.

Consistent with the Ethiopia's policy of handling refugee matters in the national security policy framework, ARRA plays the regulatory role of the provision of educational services to refugees. ARRA is also the main provider of education to refugees in Ethiopia. The profile of organizations participating in the provision of refugee education in Ethiopia suggests that involvement in this particular service is reserved for national organizations. As the findings of this study revealed MoE and regional education bureaus have peripheral role in refugee education in Ethiopia that cannot commensurate with their mandate and expertise. Furthermore, all the letters, directive, and guideline are mainly preoccupied with provision for the recognition of prior learning of refugee students than on the processes of integration and mechanisms of preservation of identity of refugee students in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

In general, in Ethiopia, irrespective of changes of governments, approaches towards refugee issues exhibited continuity. Refugee issues, including refugee education, have continued to be handled as one of the security issues since the 1960s.

### **10.2.3 Supports from UNHCR and relationship with the host community: bones of contention**

The findings of this study have demonstrated that subsistence allowance refugees receive from UNHCR through DICAC is playing a significant role in shaping the relationship between refugees and the host community. Local community lack relevant information regarding the amount of substance allowance refugees are entitled and the prohibition of refugees to engage in gainful employment in Addis Ababa. As a result, local community have exaggerated perception towards

the subsistence allowance refugees are receiving. However, towards the adequacy of subsistence allowance provided to refugees in Addis Ababa, there are diverse understandings. UNHCR and ARRA argue that it is adequate if evaluated from the point of view of living standard of local poor. Some refugees argued in favor of the adequacy of the subsistence allowance emphasizing that the household income management practices matter most. Most of the refugees, and experts from DICAC and JRS in this study forcefully argued that the allowance is not adequate to support the rising living cost and increasing house rent in Addis Ababa.

To settle in Addis Ababa, Eritrean refugees mainly depend on the personal networks of Eritrean friends and relatives because there is no visible Eritrean refugee community concentrated in a certain neighborhood in Addis Ababa. Hence, Eritrean refugees settled dispersed all over Addis Ababa. Eritrean refugees significantly share culture, language and religion with the local host community and identified usually with Ethiopian ethnic Tigrrians. Eritrean refugees utilized their dispersed settlement in Addis Ababa, and the cultural and religious similarities they share with the local host community for their intentional disguised existence in Addis Ababa due to mistrust among themselves. In Addis Ababa, the local community do not feel benefit or burden due to the presence of Eritrean refugees amongst them, mainly, as the result of their dispersed settlement. The settlement pattern of Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa has facilitated a degree integration between Eritrean refugees and the local host community. Due to the combination of above listed factors Eritrean refugees and local host community have positive relationship.

Contrary to the experiences of Eritrean refugees, Somali refugees in Addis Ababa are settled in visible community occupying identifiable neighborhoods, and formed viable community that support each other through the clan networks and committed to fend Somali culture, language, and religion. As the result of such settlement structure, Somali refugees have developed tendency of “self-suffice” to the extent of identifiable distinction between “us” and “them” *i.e.*, the Somali and Habesha. Unlike Eritrean refugees who are usually identified with Ethiopian ethnic Tigrrians, Ethiopian ethnic Somalis living in Somali refugees concentrated enclaves of Addis Ababa are usually identified with Somali refugees.

As findings of this study have shown the relationship between Somali refugees and the local host community in Addis Ababa is fraught due to various misunderstandings. Although local host

community mention some benefits they gain due to presence of Somali refugees in their neighborhoods, they argue that the presence of Somali refugees made more harm than good to their neighborhood. Higher living cost, intensification of youth addiction, enhanced motivation of local youth to migration, group conflicts, and unexpected police brutality against the host community are some of challenges the local host community have mentioned as they are experiencing due to the presence of Somali refugees in their neighborhoods. Due to the above listed challenges, the local host community in Somali refugees dominated neighborhoods resentfully question their position as hosts and the refugees' position as guest.

Therefore, the relationship between refugees and the local host community, the attitude of local community towards specific refugee community and the prospect for integration of refugees, are determined mainly by settlement pattern of the refugee communities, the perceived cultural and religious similarities, and feeling of benefit and burden due to the presence of refugees in specific neighborhoods of the city.

Since 2011/12, with the introduction of the policy of phased transfer of refugee students in the urban program in Addis Ababa to government schools, integration of refugees into the national education system in Ethiopia has taken a new narrow meaning as transferring refugees to government schools. UNHCR, ARRA and DICAC argued that the phased transfer is an appropriate policy decision because it has contributed to easing financial demands to run an ever increasing urban refugee population in Ethiopia, exposed refugees to the opportunities of learning local language and facilitated integration.

Eritrean and Somali refugees in the urban program in Addis Ababa, however, bitterly resent the policy. Among the major reasons for resentment, Somali refugees emphasis on the difficulties of coping with Amharic medium of instruction, challenges of preserving Somali identity in Amharic medium government schools, and the irrelevance of education in government schools to the possible durable solutions available to refugees in Ethiopia. Eritrean refugees, however, were mainly worried about the poor quality of education in government schools and the physical accessibility of government schools in the neighborhoods they are residing.

The findings of this study have revealed that the substantive difference between refugees and agencies, in this regard lies on their basic concerns. Refugees are concerned mainly for the future of their children who are ultimately supposed to repatriate to their country of origin or resettle to developed countries, while agencies are concerned mainly with the current running cost of urban refugee program in Addis Ababa. As the result of a phased transfer of refugee students in the urban program in Addis Ababa, UNHCR shifted a significant portion of its educational cost to the government of Ethiopia and refugee parents.

In general, subsistence allowance, relationship between refugees and the host community, education assistance have attracted controversies between refugees and the agencies, and refugees and the host community. Positive or negative understandings emerging out of the controversy, particularly on the part of refugees and the host community, have effect on the integration and identity of refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

#### **10.2.4 Integration: degenerates to physical placement**

Findings of this study have revealed that refugees' access to integrated national education system is facilitated through the directives, guidelines, and letters from MoE. However, the mechanisms through which refugees join the urban refugee program have contributed very much to easing refugees' access to government and private schools in Addis Ababa. To enroll in specific government or private school in Addis Ababa, refugees are expected to show certificate of their prior learning or letter from DICAC that attests the grade level they attained, refugee ID card from ARRA and UNHCR, and letter from DICAC that attests as the applicant student is member of the family recognized in the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa.

This study, however, has revealed that schools in Addis Ababa accommodating Eritrean and Somali refugee students have no documents and even information regarding the MoE directive, letters and guidelines on integrating refugee students. None of the schools included in this study have knowledge about the procedures through which prior learning of those Eritrean and Somali refugee students who lost their certificate is recognized. As the findings of this study have indicated such state of affairs implies a danger of reducing a decision to admit refugee students in the government or private schools of Addis Ababa to the discretion of specific school authorities.



With the intension of exposing their children to better proficiency in Amharic which is the medium of instruction in Addis Ababa primary schools, Eritrean parents negotiate placement of their children in lower grades than the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning. However, given Eritrean refugees settlement pattern in Addis Ababa, positive relationship they established with the host community, Eritrean refugee children orientation towards their possible length of stay in Ethiopia, the proximity between Amharic and their home country language, and proficiency of Eritrean refugee parents in Amharic, Eritrean refugee children learn Amharic very fast. Due to failure to analyze such environmental factors contributing to learning Amharic, Eritrean refugee students regret their initial decision to be demoted many grades than the grade level they already attained. As a result of this decision, Eritrean refugee students continue as overaged and sometimes the tallest and/or the biggest student for the grade level they are attending. This exposes Eritrean refugee students to academic and social retardation. Findings of this study have also indicated that Eritrean refugee parents are actively involved in the education of their children. In some schools, Eritrean refugee parents are also involved in school committees such as parent-teacher-student associations (PTSA).

Somali refugee parents, on the contrary, do not negotiate placement of their children in lower grades than the grade level specified in the certificate of their prior learning although they experience severe problem in Amharic language. This might be because Somali refugee students are already overaged to the grade level specified in their certificate of prior learning. In addition, Somali refugees settlement pattern in Addis Ababa, their strained relationship with the local host community, Somali refugees orientation towards resettlement, the perceived distance between Somali language and Amharic, and Somali refugees strong commitment to maintain their language as embodiment of their identity have contributed to the above decision. Somali refugee parents are poorly proficient in Amharic and are not participating in the education of their children and in school committees.

There are no formally established mechanisms to introduce refugee students to the school environment, to the teachers and local students, and nor any school based specific arrangement to support refugee students. Identifying and supporting refugees in the schools is left to personal concern and curiosity of individual teachers. The findings of this study have revealed that primary school teachers strive to support refugee students with academic problems within the general

school based framework in which local students with similar problems are supported without taking into account the difference in the sources of disadvantage. During extreme circumstances, where refugee students cannot listen basic messages in Amharic, classroom teachers in Addis Ababa primary schools accommodating Somali refugee students use student interpreters from the refugees to convey messages. Teachers in the integrated primary schools in Addis Ababa where refugees and local students attend classes together did not get pre-service or in-service trainings related to refugee education. Lack of information about refugee students, lack of awareness of the different sources of disadvantage of refugee students, and lack of specialized resources that can contribute to supporting refugee students are some of the challenges primary schools in Addis Ababa accommodated refugee students are facing.

Findings of this study have revealed that poor proficiency in the language of instruction is at the core of many of the problems refugee students in the integrated classrooms are facing. For example, it determines refugee students placement decision in a given grade level, participation in the classrooms, relationship with local students, and parental involvement in the education of their children. The findings of this study have also shown that resettlement expectation is complicating education and integration of Somali refugee students.

As the findings of this study demonstrated schools accommodating Eritrean and Somali refugee students are encountering diverse and opposite behavioral challenges from the refugee students. While Eritrean refugee students mistrust other Eritrean refugee students outside their family members and blood relatives, and avoid friendship with fellow Eritrean refugees, Somali refugees are very much committed to form a Somali group for all activities in the school and prefer friendship with other Somali students. While Eritrean refugee students are extremely careful and too much committed to education, even sometimes beyond their age level, most of the Somali refugee students are careless and demotivated to learning. Somali refugee students are also described as aggressive and instigating group conflicts in schools while such behavior is not raised related to Eritrean refugees. Such behavioral problems that refugee students demonstrate in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa can be related to the motivation of the students to learning which is affected by their age, proficiency in the language of instruction, and resettlement expectation; violence they experienced during displacement; and schools approach to respond to the needs of refugee students challenges including their identity.

In general the overall experiences of integrating Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa suggest that integration, from the point of view of agencies and school authorities, is degenerated to just physical placement of refugee students into the schools together with local students. Understanding integration as equivalent to transferring phase by phase Eritrean and Somali refugee students to government schools was also reflected in this study.

#### **10.2.5 Identity: celebrated through forming contrived identity**

Findings of this study have also revealed that agencies facilitating Eritrean and Somali refugee education in Addis Ababa understand integration and identity of refugees as both are mutually exclusive and as the two have to take place at different arenas, i.e., integration in the formal schools and identity in the family and inside the refugee community. As the result, the agencies have no formal school based approaches to facilitate celebration and promotion of Eritrean and Somali refugee students' identity in the integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa.

As the findings of this study have shown, the case study primary schools in Addis Ababa are promoting identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students within the diversity management framework in Ethiopian schools. Identity of Eritrean and Somali refugee students is promoted merged with their Ethiopian co-ethnic groups. Distinct national identity and citizenship of Eritrean and Somali refugee students are not given currency in the primary schools' efforts related to promoting refugee students identity.

In the case study integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa, as the findings of this study revealed, the acceptable behavior from the Eritrean and Somali refugee students is to act as much as possible as local students. Towards this end, refugee students are supposed to manage themselves so as to fit into the value system of local host community through actions that can create the right impression. Consequently identity expressions of Eritrean and Somali refugee students in the case study primary schools of Addis Ababa, if any, are not expected to disturb the *status quo*.

As the findings of this study shown Eritrean and refugee parents utilize various mechanisms to preserve their country of origin identity. In this regard the role of the family, media, religious institutions, village non-formal language schools is significant. In general, in the studied integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa, Eritrean and Somali refugee students are mainly left to swim or sink by themselves. Primary schools are striving to make refugees identify themselves with Ethiopian co-ethnic groups, develop feeling of Ethiopian citizenship, and downplay their distinct

national identity. Through their endeavors of accommodating and promoting identity of refugee students, as it happens currently, the studied primary schools in Addis Ababa are striving to form contrived identity to refugee students.

#### **10.2.6 Dealing with the Dilemma: refugees strengths and assets**

This study has revealed that the initial challenge Eritrean refugees' encounter while they join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa is a sense of mistrust towards fellow Eritrean refugees. This is basically rooted in the political culture of repression from which they escaped, and the suspicion of presence of Eritrean refugees and people of Eritrean decent in Ethiopia who allegedly support and oppose the existing regime in Eritrea. To deal with this challenge Eritrean refugees devised a mechanism of dispersed settlement in Addis Ababa through which they can keep themselves invisible and dissociated to some degree from other Eritrean refugees. While dispersed in the city of Addis Ababa, Eritrean refugees dilute their Eritrean-ness through a degree of integration with the host community using their similarities in culture and religion and their proficiency in Amharic language.

The above strategy employed by Eritrean refugees to manage mistrust towards fellow Eritrean refugees has resulted in another challenge in their efforts to maintain their distinct Eritrean identity. The dispersed settlement of Eritrean refugees and their preference to disguised existence in Addis Ababa have left them with meager possibility to validate the practical utility of Eritrean identity for day-to-day life in Addis Ababa. Added to this, Eritrean refugee parents orient their children as they will share the same destiny with their school friends from the local community and as they permanently live in Ethiopia. Primary school teachers also identify Eritrean refugee students with Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans and consider them as insiders. Consequently, Eritrean refugee students demonstrated less articulate feeling towards the refugee label. As a result, as the findings of this study revealed, Eritrean refugee parents struggle to justify to their children how Eritreans are distinct from Ethiopian ethnic Tigreans.

Due to the fact that Tigrigna language, culture, and religion cannot strongly justify the distinct Eritrean identity to Eritrean refugee children in Addis Ababa, Eritrean refugee parents emphasis on reinforcing territorial identity through markers such as Eritrean map, Eritrean national flag, national heroes, Eritrean history and geography. In addition to emphasizing on the territorial identity, Eritrean refugee parents use mechanism of enforcing the use of Tigrigna at home by rule

of prohibition to use Ethiopian languages, i.e., Amharic or Ethiopian Tigrigna. As a consequence of these mechanisms, although language as a marker of identity is not strong, Eritrean refugee students can speak, read, and write in Tigrigna language.

Another challenge that Eritrean refugee students face in the integrated national education system of Ethiopia is proficiency in Amharic as medium of instruction. So as to alleviate this challenge, Eritrean refugee parents negotiate placement of their children in lower grades than the grade levels indicated in the certificate of prior learning of the children.

As the findings of this study revealed, Eritrean refugees mitigate financial challenges they are encountering through a range of strategies. These include augmenting the subsistence allowance by the remittance they receive from family members and friends living in one of the developed countries of the World, engagement in the illegal informal sector income generating activities, and/or through employing efficient household income management strategies.

With regards to the Somali refugees, as the findings of this study revealed, the initial challenge they usually encounter is adjusting to the multicultural environment of Addis Ababa which is in stark opposite to their monocultural experience in Somalia or in one of the Somali refugee camps in Ethiopia. To deal with this challenge and to benefit from the strong network of Somali community and clans in Addis Ababa, Somali refugees are settled concentrated in visible communities in identifiable neighborhoods of Addis Ababa. The concentrated settlement pattern of Somali refugees in visible communities in Addis Ababa, although contributed in validating the practical utility of Somali religion, culture and language for day-to-day life, it left Somali refugees to be less integrated with the local host community. In order to learn, maintain, and transmit their distinct identity, Somali refugees in Addis Ababa relay on the family, media, religious organizations (i.e., Koranic schools and Mosques), and private language schools, which are competing in many terms with the primary schools accommodating Somali refugee students.

Somali refugees describe primary schools in Addis Ababa as they are difficult, due to the requirements to cope-up with Amharic as medium of instruction, and alien to their culture, probably due to Ethiopian schools' secular and multicultural character. In addition, Somali refugee students are highly influenced by the resettlement expectation and do not see real value of education in Addis Ababa. They have well-articulated feeling towards the refugee label. Due to such challenges, Somali refugees always aspire to leave government schools where the medium of

instruction is Amharic and join private schools where the major medium of instruction is English. Somali refugee students enrolled in the studied integrated primary schools of Addis Ababa have also scheduled their time outside the school hours and the weekends to attend religion, language, and culture relevant to their identity in the organization established in the Somali community enclaves in Addis Ababa.

As the findings of this study revealed Somali refugees manage the financial problems they encounter in Addis Ababa through engagement in illegal informal sector income generating activities, by the remittances they receive from family members and friends, and by the financial support they get from well-off fellow refugees in Addis Ababa.

### **10.3 Theoretical Reflections**

The overall investigation in this research was informed by the Ecological Systems and the Social Capital theories. The conceptual framework developed for this study, based on the basic concepts and assumptions of these theories and the relevant literatures reviewed on refugee education, have contributed to capture the major factors involved in understanding the dilemmas of refugee integration into the national education system and the demand for maintaining identity of urban refugees in the primary schools of Addis Ababa.

Based on Bronfenbrenner (1979), in this study four systems were considered as components of the ecological systems model. These are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. At the closest level of the hierarchy to the focal individual, (i.e., refugee student), microsystems are settings where the refugee student plays a direct role, has direct experiences, and has direct social interactions with others. Mesosystems, within which microsystems are nested, include social interactions between two or more of the focal individual's settings. Exosystems, within which mesosystems are nested, include settings that influence the focal individual but in which the focal individual does not directly participate. Finally, macrosystems, within which all other systems are nested, include broader policies, ideologies, and laws that can encompass and influence all the other levels of the system.

As the findings of this study have shown at the macrosystem level refugee policy of the government of Ethiopia; the 2009 urban refugee policy and subsequent guidelines on the integration of refugee students into the national education system from UNHCR; the Ethiopian refugee law; cultural compatibility and its corollaries including promoting people-to-people

relation, conceptions of shared history and culture were discussed. Within the macrosystem level, this study has indicated that ideologies, policies, and law are directly related in such a way that ideologies shape policies, and law is shaped by the policies.

Absence of urban refugee status and the reasons through which refugees join the urban refugee program in Addis Ababa; lack of local integration opportunity and refugees prohibition from engagement in gainful employment; preferential treatment among the refugee communities which is manifested through the Out-of-Camp scheme to Eritrean refugees; cultural compatibility between refugees and the host community in terms of shared language, value system and beliefs; all which are located in the refugee policies, law, ideologies, and culture, have direct influence on other lower level systems to the macrosystem.

At the exosystem level, refugee education guidelines providing for integration of refugees into the national education system, NGOs education support to urban refugee students, and refugee parents income, are found to play a decisive role in determining refugee children integration and identity. Elements in this level of the system are very crucial in determining the school choice of refugee students, (i.e., government or private school). Understanding the interrelationship among elements within the exosystem is found very complex. However, it is possible to understand that most of the elements in the exosystem level facilitated the physical placement of refugee students in the primary schools of Addis Ababa together with the local students. In this level of the system, the identity dimension in the education of refugee students is not given due emphasis. Refugees' experiences at the exosystem level, however, are directly influenced by the macrosystem level factors.

The mesosystem in the refugee children integration into the national education system and their identity is composed of family environment that takes into account parents' proficiency in the language of instruction, parents level of education, parents' involvement in school committees, and family role in promoting integration with the host community and maintaining home country identity; refugees relationship with the host community; the media including TV channels and internet; and the role of refugee community based organizations including Koranic schools, Mosques, and private language schools. As this study has revealed, in all the elements listed at the mesosystem level, the refugee children have firsthand experience and participate actively. As one can understand from this study, among various elements within the mesosystem, there is direct

and positive relationship whereby experience of the refugee child in one of the elements, for example, family, is reinforced by the experiences in the other elements.

The microsystem in this study encompasses those primary schools level factors that contribute to the integration and identity of refugee students in Addis Ababa. In this regard school based academic support packages including tutorial sessions and students permanent reading groups; teachers' role including identification and supporting refugee students in their classrooms; refugee students proficiency in Amharic as medium of instruction; and refugee students relationship with the local students are considered crucial. As has been seen in this study there is weak relationship between microsystem and other levels of the system and the microsystem lacks most of the basic information and resources regarding refugee students integration and identity. For example, the relationship between the microsystem, and the refugees' family environment, the media for which refugees are exposed, relationship with the local community and community based organization in the mesosystem is not direct, particularly in the case of Somali refugees. In the case of Eritrean refugees, however, it is possible to discern positive relationship between microsystem and mesosystem.

In this study the Ecological Systems Theory's conceptualization which argues that development occurs within an environment and as it is a process that involves interactions both within and across settings in the environment is corroborated. The study further validated the Ecological Systems Theory's assertion that development is a process of mutual accommodation characterized by reciprocity where the person is not only influenced by his/her environment, but influences the environment too. Such relationship between the environment and the refugees in Addis Ababa can be evidenced through, for example, the ways in which refugees are carefully handling their illegal involvement in the informal sector income generating activities, Somali refugees influence on local police and how they are using such relationship with the local police to balance their strained relationship with the host community, the use of interpreters from the refugee students to convey important messages in schools accommodating Somali refugee students; and various mechanisms refugees are employing to maintain their country of origin identity.

As the findings of this study revealed social capital in the form of networks of family members and relatives, and supports that refugees can get from such a network is formally recognized and



instituted as one of the important elements at macrosystem level. This is particularly evident in the Out-of-Camp scheme provided to Eritrean refugees.

This study has also shown the role of refugee community networks in the host society in refugees' reception and settlement, and in promoting group identity and associations based on shared culture, ethnicity and language. In Addis Ababa, Somali refugees have strong bonding social capital due to the fact that they live as community in a compact geographic area, have a strong culture of mutual support, and many of Somali refugees do not speak Amharic language well. Somali refugees in Addis Ababa have also relatively well positioned linking social capital particularly if this social capital of Somali refugees is seen from their allegedly relative influence on the local police in Addis Ababa.

Eritrean refugees on the other hand have demonstrated weak bonding social capital, due mainly to their preference of disguised existence in Addis Ababa. On the contrary, they are active in establishing bridging social capital through which they are able to obtain new resources that can help them navigate in the new environment. As a result of their bridging social capital, for example, Eritrean refugees were able to learn Amharic language very fast and established positive relationship with the local host community.

As the findings of this study revealed the strong bonding social capital of Somali refugees has contributed to the development of their confidence. However, it left Somali refugees to develop a sense of self-suffice, made them extremely inward looking, and reinforced exclusive identity. Contrary to what is expected in the social capital theory, the strong bonding social capital of Somali refugees is not contributing to the development of strong bridging social capital. As a result, the expected strong relationship between bonding and bridging social capitals is not evident in the case of Somali refugees in Addis Ababa.

#### **10.4 Implications of the Findings**

The findings of this study have suggested several policy and practice issues which have implications for the successful integration of refugee students into the national education system while accommodating and promoting their distinct identity. This study has implied that initiating comprehensive and explicit refugee policy for Ethiopia at this point in time has to be considered. The policy initiative has to take into account the nations' long years of refugee hosting experience, the current geopolitical context in which Ethiopia is located, existing progress of the nation in

maintaining internal peace and stability, and the recent years' social and economic progress in the nation.

The government of Ethiopia and UNHCR have to work together to improve policy and legal provisions that can affect quality of asylum in Ethiopia. In the case of refugees in the urban program in Addis Ababa, prohibition of refugees from involving in gainful employment and refugees lack of opportunity to local integration can be major areas of policy considerations. For example, rather than tolerating refugees illegal involvement in informal sector income generating activities in Addis Ababa, the government of Ethiopian can be supported and encouraged by the UNHCR and other international actors to legalize such activities of refugees. In this effort, the government of Ethiopia needs to first focus on identifying the informal sectors in which refugees have proved their expertise and relevance in the local economy and develop frameworks to the refugees' involvement in such sectors. In order to ensure and maximize the benefits of such targeted legal involvement of refugees in the local economy to the nation as well as the refugees, skill trainings to the refugees involving in the informal sectors has to be considered. The possibilities to local integration of refugees as policy agenda can take into account the positive relationship established between Eritrean refugees and local community in Addis Ababa as an entry point.

In Ethiopia, institutional arrangements that can facilitate synergy between the MoE and regional education bureaus' expertise in education, on the one hand, and the security concerns and mandate of ARRA on all refugee issues, on the other hand, needs to be in place. Ways to independently report and include refugee students' statistics in the MoE and regional education bureaus' statistical abstracts have to be considered. Such arrangements can allow to explicitly figure out contributions of the government of Ethiopia in the education of refugees in the integrated national education system and to evaluate the success of the refugee students' integration policy itself.

With regards to the phased transfer of refugee students to government schools and the differing concerns surrounding the decision, initiating a policy dialogue on the mechanisms of reconciling the different concerns of agencies and refugees can contribute a lot. Through such dialogue a low cost and sustainable solution that can address the long term concerns of refugee parents can be identified and implemented.

Sensitization of local community towards the very fact of the presence of refugees in urban areas and the livelihood situation of urban refugees has to be considered as one of the programmatic activities in the ARRA, UNHCR, and other implementing partners working on urban refugee issues. Organizing life-skill and household income management skill trainings and experience sharing forums for urban refugees in Addis Ababa can sustainably mitigate refugees problems related to the adequacy of the subsistence allowance. Organizing information dissemination and awareness raising programs to refugees synchronized with other refugee services in the refugee community centers on such issues as markets, housing, schools, and other social services can also ease refugees' financial pressure and initial inconveniences. In addition, particularly in the case of Somali refugees, establishing refugee community center in Addis Ababa in the neighborhoods closer to the Somali refugee community enclaves and devising mechanisms to align or integrate refugee community center services with the services in the woredas' youth recreation centers in Addis Ababa can foster integration and mutual understandings between Somali refugees and the local community.

Attention given and efforts made with regards to education for refugee students in urban program should progress in parallel with the increasing number of urban refugees. Providing opportunities to the school authorities and teachers in the primary schools accommodating refugee students to participate in planning process of UNHCR, ARRA and other implementing partners on the integration of refugee students into the national education system can result in unity of purpose. All relevant letters, directives and guidelines from MoE related to integration of refugees into the national education system should be available in the schools. Involving school authorities in the processes of recognizing prior learning of refugee students can contribute to schools to access information and enhance schools contributions in this particular matter. Organizing periodic school authorities, teachers, and agencies personnel familiarization workshops on the letters, guidelines, and directives from the MoE on the integration of refugee students can facilitate information exchange among various players in the refugee education in urban areas. Such efforts can also result in uniform institutional services provision in all the schools accommodating refugee students in Addis Ababa.

Agencies working on the urban refugee education should consider establishing refugees academic decisions support units within the agencies, or organize trainings to woreda level or school level

experts and linking refugees to get the same support from the woredas or schools. Such units can analyze the situation of the newly coming refugee students and propose placement decision to the parents, students and schools.

Facilitating training programs on Amharic as foreign language to refugees; preparing hands-on supplemental reading and practice materials on Amharic as foreign language; disseminating such materials to primary schools; and reserving the materials in the libraries of the schools can be considered as a strategy to alleviate refugee students challenges related to Amharic as medium of instruction. Alongside the materials, organizing trainings for primary school teachers on how to use the materials and how to teach Amharic as foreign language to refugees can have a complementary effect for fast learning of Amharic.

Planning and organizing in-service short-term trainings to school authorities and teachers on refugee education focusing on the integration, and mechanisms of accommodating and promoting refugee students distinct identity has to be given priority. Considering school based or clusters of schools based psychosocial support mechanisms to refugee students through assigning experts or through organizing specialized trainings to already existing school based students councilors can also contribute in managing behavioral problems of refugee students.

Another major problems schools accommodating refugees and refugee students themselves are facing is the age of refugee students for the grade level they are placed. In order to deal with challenges related to overaged students, UNHCR, ARRA and other implementing partners working on urban refugees education has to initiate advocacy with the MoE for the introduction of accelerated learning opportunities for refugee students. UNHCR, ARRA and other implementing partners should devise mechanisms that can create realistic and time bound resettlement expectation on urban refugees, particularly on Somali refugees. Initiating open consultations and regular advisory services with refugee parents and students who are aspiring for resettlement on the relevance of education for the future life can contribute to creating realistic resettlement expectation. Otherwise, resettlement, particularly for Somali refugee students, will contribute as durable problem than solution.

Focused trainings to agency level experts working on urban refugee education seems desirable on the essence of refugee students' integration and issues of identity. Agencies should develop and disseminate manuals and guidelines which are relevant to the Ethiopian policy and legal context

that can contribute for proper understanding and implementation of refugee students' integration and identity in the national education system of Ethiopia.

Mainstreaming education in emergencies in general and refugee education in particular into the teacher education system of Ethiopia at different levels has to be initiated. Designing and launching specialized degree programs in international and comparative education on education in emergencies in general and refugee education in particular has to be considered early on. This can contribute in producing professionals who can handle courses while mainstreaming education in emergencies or refugee education specifically in the teacher education, and serve as relevant pool of professionals to work in various organization concerned with refugee issues.

This study has revealed that refugee communities' preferences, experiences and coping strategies in the integrated national education context are diverse depending on home country and host country related factors. Hence, solutions and interventions to refugees has to be tailored to the specific conditions of refugee communities in Ethiopia. A one-size-fits-all approach which is taking place currently in the agencies has to be reconsidered.

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## Annex 1: Instruments of Data Collection

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES**  
**CENTER FOR COMPARATIVE EDUCATION AND POLICY STUDIES**  
**Informed Consent Form**

**Title of the Dissertation: Educating Refugees in Ethiopia and the Dilemmas of Integration and Identity:  
A Case of Eritrean and Somali Students in Selected Primary Schools of Addis Ababa**

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by **Alebachew Kemisso Haybano**, a PhD student in Addis Ababa University (AAU), Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies (CCEPS), Ethiopia. The main supervisor for this study is **Dr. Teshome Nekatibeb (Associate Professor)** from AAU, CCEPS and the co-supervisor is **Professor Holger Daun** from Stockholm University, Institute of International Education. The major objective of this research is to explore the dilemmas of refugee integration into the national education system and the demand for maintaining identity of urban refugees in selected primary schools of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia focusing on Eritrean and Somali Urban Refugees.

This research will provide a wealth of knowledge that would contribute for improvement of practices related to urban refugee education in Ethiopia. The study will also contribute a theoretical knowledge for the area of education in emergencies in general and refugee education in particular from the International and Comparative Education perspective. The results of this study might also shed light on the contribution of government of Ethiopia for educating refugees and the degree to which UNHCR and other stakeholders are successful in achieving their education goals.

While the study does ask questions about your country of origin and your current experiences in Ethiopia in terms of integration and identity, you are not obligated to talk about anything with which you are not completely comfortable. Your name or address will not be printed in any published materials. I will keep all the information you provide confidential by limiting access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. My dissertation supervisor and co-supervisor are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. However, while every effort to maintain confidentiality will be made, it cannot be absolutely guaranteed.

You should feel free to refuse to answer any question with which you are not entirely comfortable. You are also free to withdraw at any time. I may use a voice and/or video recorder during this interview so that I may transcribe the interview later. Your photograph and video images will not appear as part of the research report. If you are uncomfortable with such a recording, I will limit our interview to handwritten notes.

The entire interview will take about 90 minutes but I may ask you if I can contact you again with additional questions. Permission to conduct this research has already been granted by the Center for Comparative Education and Policy Studies of Addis Ababa University. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

**Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study.**

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Consent to audio/Video recording (participant): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



8. Average class size in 2014/2015.

| Grade                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Primary<br>Av. |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Av.<br>Class<br>size |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                |

9. Number of Refugee students (2014/2015)

| Grade                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | Total |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| No. of<br>Refugees              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |       |
| % from<br>the local<br>students |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |       |

**B. National Context (Document Review)**

1. Refugee law and policies of Ethiopia.
2. Basic profile of refugees in Ethiopia including origin and location.
3. Are there refugee origin specific policies in Ethiopia?
4. What were/are the major criteria used and the decision making procedures to grant refugee status in Ethiopia? What were restriction imposed on refugees in Ethiopia? Is/was there possibility for permanent residence/citizenship for refugees in Ethiopia?
5. Who is the responsible government organ to manage refugee issues in Ethiopia?
6. What are the legislative and policy guidelines used to admit refugees into the primary schools of Addis Ababa?
  - Are there policy statements at federal government level regarding urban refugee education?
  - Are there memorandum of understanding between the FDRE government and UNHCR regarding urban refugee education?



- Are there FDRE government circulars/directives regarding urban refugee education?
- Are there project agreement/s between the FDRE government and project implementing International or nation organization regarding urban refugee education?
- Are there policy statements/memorandum of understandings/circular or directives/project agreements at Addis Ababa City Administration council or its bureaus level regarding urban refugee education?

**C. Interview Questions for Organizations Working on Refugee Education ARRA, UNHCR and NGOs Working on Urban Refugee Education**

1. Organization\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the role of your organization in urban refugee education?
3. What policy guidelines and administrative directives are used to provide access to education for urban refugees in Addis Ababa?
4. What is expected from a refugee child to register in primary schools of Addis Ababa? (Documentation, parent Identity card, age requirement, fee, educational supplies etc.)
5. How is Ethiopia national and local authorities involved in planning, implementing and monitoring of educational activities for urban refugee children in Addis Ababa?
6. How are UNHCR and other Implementing Partners of refugee education assisting government of Ethiopia or Ministry of Education to enable public schools in Addis Ababa to accommodate refugee children in areas where there are high concentration of refugee students? (Expanding classrooms, rehabilitating school buildings, supporting teacher training, management support to build capacity etc.)
7. What are the mechanisms of recognizing or/not of refugee children previously obtained educational certificates before arriving to Addis Ababa?
8. What kind of education supports are provided for refugee children? Do you think the educational support provided by UNHCR is sufficient? If not, how do you think is refugee parents covering the extra educational expenses for their children?
9. What is your assessment of schools in terms of identifying and responding refugee students?

10. How do you support schools (financial, capacity building and material) to organize targeted support to refugee students including information sessions, extra classes, induction training, language training, issuance of proper documentation, protection from vulnerability and violence etc?)
11. How are refugee community centers promoting the integration and identity of refugees?
12. What do you think are the major challenges that refugee children are facing in the integrated educational setting in Addis Ababa? How do you think such challenges can be mitigated?
13. How do you describe the effect of 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy in Ethiopia? What new development have you observed in Ethiopian operation as related to urban refugees since the enactment of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy? What are the most significant challenges you are facing in your promotion of the implementation of the 2009 UNHCR urban refugee policy in Ethiopia?

#### **D. Interview Questions for Refugee Parents**

1. Are you registered with ARRA as urban refugee in Addis Ababa?
2. How many children do you have?
3. When you came to Addis Ababa, who and what helped to settle? Did you have some saving? Did you get accommodation through UNHCR? Did you get support from friends and relatives who themselves are refugees in Addis Ababa? Any other response?
4. What challenges did you face while settling in Addis Ababa?
5. What is your major source of livelihood? How do you earn your living in Addis Ababa?
6. Describe your experiences when looking for a place of residence in Addis Ababa. What did you consider?
7. What challenges do you face when you want to send your children to school? (Identity cards, documentation, age of the child, etc)
8. Why have you enrolled your children in the particular school they are attending education now?
9. Describe your children experiences of adjusting to Ethiopian school system?
10. Do you assist your children do their homework and other educational activities at home? If yes how? If no why?

11. What language do you usually speak at home and why?
12. What do you do to help your children to learn/retain their home language and culture in Ethiopia? Why? How?
13. What are the challenges that you face in Addis Ababa as parent, especially with respect to providing for your children educational expenses including school fee/registration fee, transportation cost, book costs, other school supplies, school meal etc?
14. What are the financial sources you depend to cover those education expenses of your children?
15. How do you feel in your neighborhood? Do you feel welcome in your neighborhood or in the community where you live now? In your new life in Addis Ababa, do you feel integrated with Ethiopian society? How would you describe this feeling? How is such integration noticeable to you?

#### **E. Interview Questions for Refugee Students**

1. Gender: Male:\_\_\_\_\_ Female:\_\_\_\_\_ Year of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many members do your family count? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are your parents alive?
4. Who are you living with? With both of my parents; with one of the parents; with brothers or sisters; with relatives; any other?
5. Please tell me about yourself. What do you like to do in your free time? What things are you good at? Anything else?
6. Can you speak/read/write using Amharic language? If you can, where did you learn the skill? If you cannot, how are you doing your lessons in Amharic in your school?
7. What language do you usually speak at home and why?
8. What is your daily academic schedule?
9. What are some of the differences between your school experience in the Addis Ababa and your school experience in previous schools?
10. How do you describe your relationship with other students, teachers, and administrative staff in your school? Do you feel comfortable with other students at your school? Do you have friends at school? Are some of your friends Ethiopian? Describe how people at school make you feel, like teachers and administrators.

11. Are your family, care-takers or friends helping you with your homework? How?
12. How are you treated in school? Have you ever felt that you are being treated worse than non-refugee students in school?
13. Who is treating you like this in the school? (Classmates, teacher, school principal, school guards, unit leaders, homeroom teacher etc.)
14. Can you specify how you are being mistreated in such circumstances? Give some examples:
15. Who is usually providing you with the exercise books, pencils, books, backpack, school uniforms etc.)? (Parents, school, relatives, donor organization etc.)
16. Are there cultural events such as drama, theatre, dance and sporting sessions in your school? If yes, do you participate in such events? If yes in what kind of performances you participate? If you do not participate, why? Do you have any suggestion to your school regarding cultural events and sporting sessions?
17. Describe your neighborhood. Do you feel safe to play outside? Do you know your neighbors? Do you have friends in your neighborhood? Who are your neighbors?

#### **F. Interview questions for School principals**

1. How do you identify refugee children during registration application?
2. How do you admit refugee children into your school? What document do you require for registration? If they do not fulfill your requirements what next measure you take?
3. How do you introduce to teachers in your school the refugee students in their classrooms? What do you expect from the teachers with regards to working with refugee students?
4. What procedures do have in your school to recognize prior learning of refugee students in your school?
5. Are refugee parents represented in PTA and other school based educational committees? What are their different concerns and expectation from the school?
6. Is there any differential treatment arranged for refugee students in your school? (Different fee scale, Information session, induction training, language training, protection measures from vulnerability and violence, extra classes etc.)

7. Are there academic assistance provided to refugee children who have missed out on their schooling to catch-up with their peers such as catch-up classes, additional support after school, accelerated learning programs?
8. How do you promote cultural practices of refugees in your school? Do your school organizes sport sessions and cultural events such as drama, theatre, and dance that can promote interaction, tolerance, cooperation between refugee students and the Ethiopian students? Do refugee students get chance to perform sport and culture of their country of origin during such sessions?
9. What kind of extra supports your school is getting to enable you accommodate and properly serve refugee students? (Expanding classrooms, rehabilitating school buildings, supporting teacher training, management support to build capacity etc.)
10. What are the major challenges your school is facing to respond to educational needs of refugee students?
11. How do you describe the experiences of your schools in terms of promoting integration of refugee children while respecting the needs of refugee children to maintain their identity?

#### **G. FGD guiding questions for local community leaders**

1. How do you describe your relationship with the refugee neighbors you have? Do you have friend from refugee community members in your neighborhood?
2. What things do you share with your refugee neighbors?
3. Are your refugee neighbors included in social issues of the neighborhood such as iddir, wedding ceremony, morning ceremony, etc?
4. How do you interact with refugees in your neighborhood? In whose language you usually interact each other? In your language or the language of the refugees?
5. What cultural practices of refugees you observed as different? Are you comfortable with such cultural practices of the refugees? How do you explain the impact of different cultural practices of the refugees on the local culture of your community?
6. How is the presence of refugees contributing to or affecting your neighborhood? Economically, socially, and politically.

7. How do you describe the relationship between local children of your neighborhood and the refugee children? Do they play together? Learn in the same school and share educational resources?
8. Are there any governmental or non-governmental organizations promoting integration of refugees into the local community in your neighborhood? If there are, how are they promoting? What major issues are raised in promotion events? What mechanisms are used to promote integration?
9. How do explain the participation of refugees in the affairs of the neighborhood?

#### **H. FGD Guiding Question with Teachers**

1. Are there professional training opportunities (pre-service or in-service) on issues related to refugee education? (Dealing with traumatized children, child-centered pedagogy, reflective practitioner, refugee rights, multicultural education etc.) If not how are you dealing with refugee students in your classrooms?
2. How do you identify and respond to refugee students speaking different language and practicing different culture in your classroom?
3. What different characteristics are most frequently observed from refugee students in your classroom? (Shyness, hyperactivity, avoidance of working in groups and pairs, failure to complete home works, language difficulty, fear, etc.) How are you dealing with such students?
4. What kind of mechanisms do you use to promote participation of refugee students in your classroom?
5. What kind of teaching methods and classroom arrangement you find beneficial for the learning needs and integration of refugee students during your lessons?
6. Can you share your experiences, if any, of promoting the identity of refugee students in your classroom? (Using examples, stories, pictures from the refugees country of origin; encouraging refugee students to narrate their culture and practices; encouraging refugee students to speak their language in the classroom; organizing in-the-classroom cultural events etc.)
7. What are the major challenges you are facing to respond to educational needs of refugee students?

8. How do you describe your experiences in terms of promoting integration of refugee children while respecting the needs of refugee children to maintain their identity?

**I. Classroom Observation Checklist**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Describe teaching method being used in the classroom. What kind of teaching is taking place? Is it lecture, discussion, or some other activity?                                                                 |  |
| How are refugee students participating in classroom lesson? Raising hands, names calling, etc. How frequently are they participating in the lesson?                                                             |  |
| How were groups formed? Are refugee children integrated with Ethiopian students?                                                                                                                                |  |
| Do refugee students interact with Ethiopian students? Describe.                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| Observe refugee students working in a group and determine which language they are using with their classmates.                                                                                                  |  |
| List all the discipline problems that arose during the lesson from refugee students (e.g. A student was talking). What did the teacher do? What did he/she say to keep students on task? How did he/she say it? |  |
| What classroom management techniques did the teacher use to avoid problems before they could have arisen? How effective are they?                                                                               |  |

**J. Refugee students' observation protocol in the school compound**

|                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Arrival to school in the morning</b><br>Whom do they meet? How do they greet each other? What do they do until the flag ceremony starts?                                   |  |
| <b>During Breaks</b><br>What do they do during break time? If they play, with whom do they play? What do they play during break? What language do they use during break time? |  |
| <b>After the end of school day</b><br>With whom do they depart from school? Any other relevant issues observed during the day?                                                |  |



## Annex 2: Information of Case Study Schools

| Name of the school                                                 |             | School S1     | School S2     | School S3     | School E1                 | School E2               | School E3     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Type of the school                                                 |             | Government    | Private       | Private       | Government                | Private                 | Private       |
| Year of Establishment                                              |             | 1976          | 1998          | 2006          | 2013                      | 1995                    | 2007          |
| Location of the school in Addis                                    |             | Bole Sub-city | Bole Sub-city | Bole Sub-city | Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city | Kolfe Keraniyo Sub-city | Yeka Sub-city |
| Students Population                                                | 2014/2015   | 1509          | -             | 286           | 628                       | 372                     | 286           |
|                                                                    | 2013/2014   | 1791          | -             | 318           | -                         | 337                     | 259           |
| Teachers                                                           | Untrained   | -             | -             | -             | -                         | -                       | -             |
|                                                                    | Certificate | -             | -             | -             | -                         | -                       | 1             |
|                                                                    | Diploma     | 25            | 4             | 7             | 31                        | 5                       | 8             |
|                                                                    | BA/BSc      | 5             | 30            | 5             | 9                         | 11                      | 5             |
|                                                                    | MA/MSc      |               | 4             | -             | -                         | -                       | -             |
|                                                                    | Total       | 30            | 38            | 11            | 40                        | 16                      | 14            |
| Students Teachers Ratio 2014/2015                                  |             | 24:1          | -             | 24:1          | 17:1                      | 24:1                    | 21:1          |
| Average Class Size 2014/2015                                       |             | 65            | -             | 33            | 39                        | 47                      | 31            |
| Number of Refugee Students Recognized in the Urban Refugee Program |             | 34            | 24            | 19            | 15                        | 7                       | 6             |