

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL
SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF SOUTH SUDANESE REFUGEES ON THE
HOST COMMUNITIES OF *ITANG WOREDA*: A CASE STUDY OF TIERKIDI
REFUGEE CAMP IN GAMBELLA REGIONAL STATE

BY
ENDALKACHEW GIRMA

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Acronyms

AJS	Acute Jaundice Syndrome
ARRA	Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs
ASMT	Area Security Management Team
CAR	Central African Republic
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EPRDF	Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERCS	Ethiopian Red Cross Society
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia
GPLM	Gambella People Liberation Movement
HOA	Horn of Africa
ICARA	International Conference on Assistance to Refugee in Africa
IMC	International Medical Corps
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MSF	Medecins San's Frontieres
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NRDEP	Natural Resource Development and Environmental Protection
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RAD	Refugee Aid and Development Theory
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SNNPRS	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State
SPLM/A	Sudanese People Liberation Movement/ Army
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
URTI	Upper Respiratory Tract Infections
WFP	World Food Program

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Abstract

With the core objective of analyzing the relationships between refugees and host communities, this study assesses the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the host communities of Itang special Woreda in Gambella region of Ethiopia. Attempts have also been made to point out the existing impacts of refugees on the host communities. The magnitude of refugee influx in Gambella region in recent years has generated alarm throughout the region. The unprecedented crisis have produced a mixture of humanitarian concern for thousands of people forced into exile and potential threat to the social, economical and political stability of host communities caused by its influxes. The refugees cannot return to their home due to the political instability and this produces diverse economic, socio-cultural and security impacts and potential threats on the host communities of Itang special Woreda.

The findings are more emphasized and analyzed qualitatively in light of primary sources gathered by interviewing of informants from refugees, host communities and officials from the camp and field observation. On the other hand, secondary sources were used in order to address the basic objectives of the research. To this end, the study used snowball sampling technique for collecting data from the study area. The refugee population in Gambella is significantly matches the size of the local host community which has brought many impacts on the host communities. The findings of this study indicate that the presence of refugees in the region has both negative and positive impacts. As the findings show, the presence of South Sudanese refugees are having negative environmental, health, sanitation, socio-cultural and security impacts on the host community. On the other hand, economic impacts have been positive such as new job opportunity, small business activity and availability of market for local farmers around the refugee camp. Finally, the study comes up with the conclusion that the negative impacts of refugees are found to be greater than its positive impacts and this put the region in unstable situation, and potential threat for the people of Gambella region of Ethiopia.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The phenomenon of migration lately tends to be seen as a new stream, usually evoking a negative attitude in people, who often associate it with illegal migrants, high rates of unemployment or overall dependence. This attitude is fairly wrong and migration nowise can be considered as a modern trend. Grinvald (2010:18) states that People migrated for different reasons: looking for a permanent source of water, pushed by weather conditions or running away from enemy tribes. Presently, reasons for migration have slightly changed, but the aim has stayed the same: a wish for a better tomorrow in places which have something to offer more job opportunities, higher salaries, better health care and so forth. On the other hand, UNHCR notes that there are people whose migration is often not of free will, who are forced to move due to their life in danger, ethnical conflict, wars and poverty (UNHCR, 2015:4).

The issues of refugees belong to the second group of migrants. As Grinvald, they leave their home places without knowing as if there is a bed waiting for them somewhere. They do not migrate to secure themselves or their families a better future; they migrate on purpose to secure a future (Grinvald, 2010:19). According to Article 1 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and its 1967 Protocol, a refugee is a person who *owing to a 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 to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...* (UNHCR, 2015:3). This is a legal definition, internationally recognized and used for determining whether a person fulfills the criteria for being a refugee. Grinvald further states that, a person recognized as a refugee, is provided with international refugee protection, which entitles one to certain rights, benefits, protection and assistance. It also binds them with specific obligations, defined by the host country of a refugee (Grinvald, 2010:19).

At the systemic level the world refugee problem is caused by a variety of reasons, factors and forces. Among other things these include massive violations of human rights, especially the practice of colonialism, direct and structural violence, war, internal conflicts, external aggression, ethnic and religious strife, direct political persecution, and economic and national disasters. The contemporary conflicts are mostly of an internal and inter-communal nature (Boamah-Gyau, 2008:1). As a result, the size of refugee flows in recent years has generated urgent global concern. Currently as of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimation, approximately there are 16 million refugees globally (UNHCR, 2015:4). However, there are uncertainties on the exact numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in the world as this is constantly changing and this does not include the internally displaced people.

The magnitude of refugee influx in African countries in recent years has generated concern throughout the world. Widely perceived as an unprecedented crisis, these flows have produced a mixture of humanitarian concern of the millions of people forced into exile and fear for the potential threat to the social, economic and political stability of host states caused by streams of unwanted newcomers (Atim, 2013:5).

The eruption of violence in South Sudan in December 2013 placed an additional burden on an already volatile region of eastern Africa, which continues to suffer from conflict and displacement (UNHCR, 2015:5). Between December 2013 and October 2014, nearly half million South Sudanese crossed borders to become refugees in neighboring countries. The countries hosting these refugees include Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan should be commended for keeping their borders open to people arriving from South Sudan despite the pressures that this inevitably places on their own populations, environment, and land and stretched public services (International Rescue Committee, 2014:19).

More than 128,000 refugees from South Sudan have arrived in Uganda since December 2013; UNHCR projects this number to increase to 150,000 refugees by the end of 2014. In 2012 approximately 20,000 refugees arrived in Kakuma from South Sudan. Since December 2013 there has been a further to 43,000 new arrivals from South Sudan, bringing the number of refugees in Kakuma to its current total of 177,000 people (International Rescue Committee, 2014:18-22).

The highest influx of South Sudanese refugees has been in Ethiopia. Currently there are 245,000 refugees in the Gambella region; more than 190,000 have arrived since December 2013. The size of the refugee population almost matches the size of the 300,000 strong host communities of Gambella region (International Rescue Committee, 2014:18-22).

Host communities are the most affected by the refugee influx having less access to services than refugees which in turn leads to tension and potential conflict between refugees and host communities (International Rescue Committee, 2014:20). Such conflict takes place for different reasons such as competition over natural resources or services accompanied by humanitarian agencies and others. However, the presence of refugees in the host communities has both positive and negative impacts on the socio-economic and politics of the host community. The positive impact of the refugees in the host communities makes the area as an important market place for the hosts and the refugees or the funding of various development projects by international aid organizations that have come to the area in response to the refugee emergency (Berry, 2008:1).

However, the influx and presence of refugees has also been shown at times to have negative impacts on individuals within a hosting community or even on the community as a whole particularly cause for environmental degradation and natural resource depletion (International Rescue Committee, 2014:25). The impacts of refugees on the lives of the host community as expressed above can be varying both positive and negative depending on many factors. The mass influx of refugees will influence and shape the relationship between the refugees and the hosts: the combination of factors differs greatly in each refugee situation.

Being relied on the above arguments, the focus of this study was to investigate how the influx of South Sudanese refugee impacts the host communities of *Itang special Woreda* in Gambella region. Therefore, this paper intended to assess the impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts on the host communities of *Itang special Woreda* in Gambella Region, with a particular reference to Tierkidi refugee camp.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In contemporary world refugees tend to impact adversely on the safety of various nation states. For this political violence and persecution are significant determinants of flights. It is widely accepted that influxes of refugees into an area can place considerable stresses on natural resources, leading to both environmental and social impacts (Martin, 2005:332). The problems associated with refugees may not be restricted to a particular border area but may have spillover effects on the internal security situation of a region. Refugee migration inflicts a significant economic burden on host countries. The Gambella Region of western Ethiopia provides such case (Kurimoto 2005:1).

As Atim stated s, refugees upset the ethnic balance in their host countries through what may be thought of as a demographic externality. Ethnic tensions may become especially pronounced when refugees possess ethnic ties with groups already present in the host society. In countries where ethnic cleavages are deeply entrenched, large unexpected migrant inflows may tilt the delicate ethnic balance in the host society and sparks inter group conflict (Atim 2013:6). Brown further argues that, the sudden influx of refugees can aggravate ethnic problems and changing the domestic balance of power (Brown, 1996:25). The same is true in Gambella Region the influx of refugees raises the issues of politics of numbers that has locked two of the region's major ethnic groups, the Anuak and the Nuer into conflict. For long time the Anuak has felt marginalized by the mass influx of Nuer refugees into the Gambella region. The continued influxes affect the power balance of the two groups, causing tension between the regional political leadership and the federal government institution (Dereje, 2014:2). The Ethiopian government is hosting the refugees with assistance from international organizations. However, the new refugee phenomenon in Gambella is viewed only from a humanitarian point of view, whilst it may have long term political consequence for the area.

In addition, besides refugee's flow affect the security and stability of the host country by contributing to organized armed conflict on the territory. The influxes from neighboring states significantly increase the risk of civil war. Along with the refugees themselves, foreign fighters, arms and ideologies that contribute to violence may also stream across the border, refugee's warrior communities as asserted by various scholars can expand rebel networks encompass the

host state when militants established bases on external territory and can form social ties with domestic opposition groups with similar ethnic or political orientation. Therefore, refugee inflows may lead to violent turmoil on the host country's territory (Atim, 2013:7).

The sense of exclusion and relative deprivation of local communities generated by provision of aid services to refugees is one of the major drivers of tension and conflict between refugees and host communities. This is so mainly because refugee camps are often established in the border areas that constitute the most marginal spaces such as Gambella, in the provision of basic services by their respective governments. With some exceptions, the focus of the humanitarian support has been on the refugees without paying attention to the host community (Dereje, 2014:3).

Cognizant to these all, the study chose to pursue an in depth case study on the impacts of refugees on the host communities of *Itang special Woreda*, a case of Tierkidi refugee camp, in Gambella Region. The study site was selected for several reasons. First, *Itang* is one of the special *woredas* in Gambella region and the home of two refugee camps. Second, according to Falge (1997:26) *Itang* is an important market place for Ethiopian and Sudanese [South Sudan] Anuak and Nuer. Third, the *Itang* area is very sensitive because of the ethnic mix of Nuer and Anuak people of both Ethiopian and Sudanese [South Sudan] origin in which some of them are refugees. These groups manipulate their connections to Ethiopia and Sudan [South Sudan] shifting identities as a strategy to promote their own interests Therefore, this paper sought to assess the impacts of South Sudan refugees on the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts on the host communities of *Itang special Woreda*.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study aims to address the following general and specific research objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the impacts of refugees' presence on the economic, socio-cultural and securities of the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*, case study of Tierkidi refugee camp.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

This research paper specifically aims to:

- ✓ Examine the type of relationships between the host communities and the refugees.
- ✓ Explain the role of local authorities and international organizations in creating friendly relationships between the refugees and host communities.
- ✓ Asses the positive impacts of refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*.
- ✓ Identify the negative impacts refugees on host communities of the *Itang Special Woreda*.
- ✓ Examine the security impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the host community of *Itang Special Woreda*.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 General Research Question

The core question of the study was does the presence of refugees have an impact on the economic, socio-cultural and security of the host communities of *Itang* people?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

The research is intended to address the following specific research questions.

- ✓ What kinds of relationships exist between the host communities and the refugee?
- ✓ What was the role of local authority and international organizations in maintaining good relationships between the refugee and the host communities?
- ✓ What are the roles of refugees for the local development of the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*?
- ✓ What are the negative impacts of refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*?
- ✓ What are the security impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*?

1.5 Methodology and Methods of Data Collection

1.5.1 Research Design

To answer the basic questions of this study, the researcher employed qualitative approach which is more descriptive. Because writers (e.g., Catherine, 2007:15; Bryman, 2005:112) assert that the qualitative research design is used to explore attitudes, experiences and an in-depth opinion from participants, and emphasis on the interpretation of observations in accordance with subjects' own understandings. More importantly Golafshani (2006:39) notes that this kind of research is conducted in the dynamic social environments where subjects of study are human beings and their interactions, the qualitative approach found to be more appropriate strategy to answer research inquiry. Taking the above ideas in to consideration the researcher used qualitative approach to grasp the attitude of respondents regarding the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of Tierkidi refugee camp and to analyze the data collected from respondents.

1.5.2 Sampling Techniques and Procedures

A snowball approach was adopted for the study: the approach being used to choose as a wide range of people as likely to provide the researcher further contacts and reduce selection bias. In order to understand the different impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the host community, initially identifying the people around the refugee camp who have information on the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of refugees after the establishment of the refugee camp. Lastly the researcher conducted observation to assess the representativeness of the responses of the respondents.

1.5.3 Methods of data collection and Source of Data

1.5.3.1 Source of Data

For the purpose of this research, the researcher employed both primary and secondary source of data. The primary sources mainly include empirical data to be gathered by in-depth interview from the study area of local government officials, host communities, refugees and refugee camp staffs. To supplement the primary data the researcher consulted secondary sources such as documents of various organizations, newspapers, magazines, conference papers, monographs and tertiary sources including books and journal articles.

1.5.3.2 Methods of Data Collection

In order to address the basic questions of the study the researcher carried out an in-depth interview, semi-structured interview and personal observation. Supporting my data gathering instrument Kalewongel (2008:12) indicates in-depth interview enable the researchers to gain insights about people`s opinion, feelings, emotions and experiences in detail. In light with my basic research questions, the researcher prepared semi-structured in-depth interview question to explore the views of the respondent by preparing some semi-structured questions which covered the major themes of the refugee camps economic, socio-cultural and security impacts in the study area.

1.5.4 Methods of Data Analysis

So as to finalize the research work, data analysis has an indispensable role. To do so, various methods of data analysis can be used. The data analysis begins in categorizing and putting data into theme-the data with regards to economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of refugees on the host communities. The researcher used discourse analysis method. It is useful to analyze the conversation done during the course of interview by the researcher with research participants. In addition, based on the thematic classification of data with regard to the variables of the subject under study, the researcher interpreted and put the data in the form of statements and arguments. Furthermore, the data obtained from different documents were analyzed in the form of narration. The data gained through interview was discussed and analyzed on how the participants experience on the phenomena under study. Finally, analytically write what the researcher experience during personal observation.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study deals with assessing the impacts of South Sudan refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*: case study of Tierkidi refugee camp in Gambella Region. Therefore, it has its own contribution to other researchers who are interested to study in similar area and it will serve as a spring board for further study in the area. Since there are scanty literatures, this study will contribute to fill the gap in the area under study and provides insights with regard to the overall impacts of refugees on the host communities. In addition, it may serve as a source of information for other readers who are interested on the issues of refugees.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to the impacts of South Sudan refugees on the economic, socio-cultural and security life of the host communities of *Itang* people.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher approached the research participants first by requesting their willingness to participate in the research. Then, the researcher introduced his/her name and where he was from and the informants were assured that the objective of the research is only for academic purpose and they will assure the protection of their identities and the guarantee of their safety of whatever information received in the course of the research. Moreover, the researcher valued and appreciated for knowledge of the issues. In all cases, names are kept confidential thus collective names like “discussants” and “informants” were used in the presentation and analysis of data. The researcher tried as much as possible not to be biased and avoided prejudice in the process of collecting and interpreting data.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

This research is aimed at assessing the impacts of South Sudanese refugees in Gambella regional state of Ethiopia, Tierkidi refugee camp in *Itang special Woreda*. It assessed the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of South Sudanese refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*.

One of the limitations of this study was lack of willingness from the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs in Western Zone Refugee Program Coordination Office of Gambella to give me permission and necessary information about the refugee camp. The officials addressed that they cannot give information because they ‘fear the security problem of the area and due to the late January 2016 ethnic conflict of the region. However, this problem forced me to search another option in order to obtain the necessary information about the camp for my research and the researcher was able to contact the workers of the camp personally by taking their phone numbers and they facilitated the conditions for me to visit the camp unofficially.

The other challenge that the researcher faced concerning the research was the attitude and the living conditions of the host community in the area. Conducting interview was very challenging. Most of the respondents wanted some incentives (money) in order to provide information. As a result this led the research to unexpected expenses and limited to collect adequate data as planned a head of time.

The other serious limitation that the researcher faced was the sensitivity and instability of the area because of conflict. Some of the respondents suspect to give information that one might be considering the researcher as intelligence worker for the government. They fear to give information about the problems of the area, crimes, and also try to hide information about the cause of the recent ethnic conflict in the region. The researcher promised the anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation of the respondents' for all participants in this research ensured that they are not harmed in any case during or after this research conducted.

Language problem is another key difficulty during conducting the study. Interpreting respondents' idea based on the interpreters interpretation rather than the actual words that are said can be a possibility. In fact the interpreter was working as a reporter of Gambella Radio in Gambella region

1.10 Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five major chapters. Chapter one is the introductory section, which deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, methodology and methods of data collection, scope of the study, significance of the study, ethical considerations, limitations of the study and organizations of the study. Chapter two focuses on conceptual framework, literature review and theoretical framework. Chapter three discusses the overview of Gambella Regional State and South Sudanese refugees. Chapter four assesses the impacts of refugees on the economic, socio-cultural and securities on the host communities of *Itang special Woreda* and followed by conclusion.

Chapter Two

2. Conceptual Framework, Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

In every work of academic research, theoretical understanding of the issue under study is very necessary to provide a good basis and sharper insight into the research agenda. This chapter therefore, employs an integrative conceptual framework with literature review and theoretical framework based on relevant previous research publications on refugee issues focusing on the impacts of refugees on the host communities. Doing so will help to understand and identify gaps on impacts of refugees on the economic, socio-cultural and security development of the host communities under study.

2.2 Definition of Terms and Concepts

2.2.1 Refugee

The issue of refugee is a major and recurrent aspect of human migration to the extent that a discussion of human population movement is incomplete without paying serious attention to the problems of refugees. The world refugee problem and situation is a major issue confronting the contemporary international community. There are various definitions of refugees, but the most recognized and acceptable is the ones specified by the United Nations and the then Organization of African Unity. This definition is more comprehensive and adequate because it determines who qualifies for the protection, legal and physical, that national and international bodies have developed to deal with people pushed across borders by conflict and persecution.

The United Nations Conventions of the 1951 and 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees define a refugee as follows; any person who:

...owing to a 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 (UNHCR, 2015:2).

On the other hand, the regional bodies such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) developed agreements like the OAU convention of 1969, expanded the definition of refugees found in the 1951 Convention to include a more objectively based consideration (Krui, Peter and Mwaruvie, John, 2012:62). The 1951 definition was inadequate because of the growing number of refugees, especially in the Third World and did not take into account the realities of African politics and the nationalist struggle against colonialism and apartheid in the attempt of obtaining independence which led to the massive exodus of refugees running for their lives.

This forced the Organization to expand the refugee definition of the UN (Boamah-Gyau 2008:13). The OAU convention Article 1 sub-articles 2 states refugee as:

any person compelled to leave his/her country 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, 1969:3).

The decision of the OAU to make wider the refugee definition divulges the solidarity among African countries during struggles for independence in the period of decolonization (Lucie, 2012:12). The above definition of refugee by OAU considers the conditions of Africa and includes those people who displaced and forced to leave their country as a result of external aggression and colonialism, this creates good opportunity to address the issues of refugee in the continent (ibid, 2012:12). The essence of this turnings on the growing recognition of the masses of people who were fleeing from war or violence due to the upheavals in the continent as a result of the process of decolonization and establishment of new nation-states.

In general, a refugee is someone who has been dislocated for various reasons from his or her home country and fled to another country. There are usually different cogent reasons for fleeing ranging from civil war, conflict, or political violence to persecution or discrimination, including ethnic, social grouping, religious beliefs and political affiliation. Those genuine refugees who seek refuge and safety in another country by crossing international borders either officially or illicitly usually apply for political asylum on arrival in the host country (Dusenbury, 2013:9). Refugee status designation is a state level activity; however, in the absence of dignified national refugee status determination systems, UNHCR exercises its international mandate to assign

refugee status through its administered processes (ibid, 203:10). Therefore the definition of who a refugee is may vary in scope although the 1951 UN convention definition is normally taken as the standard for genuine refugee status.

For the purpose of this paper, the researcher will use the most standard and acceptable definition of refugee which is defined by the UN and OAU. The rationales for relying on these definition includes, first Ethiopia is a signatory state to the 1951 UN convention relating to the status of refugees and the 1969 OAU convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. Second, Ethiopia provides different provisions which are necessary to refugees with collaboration to the UNHCR and other charity organizations.

2.2.2 Kunz's Typology of Refugees

Kunz introduced Majority Identified, Event Related and Self Alienated Refugees as three most important typologies, derived from refugee's attitudes towards their displacement.

Majority Identified Refugees are those who oppose social and political events in their home country shared by their fellow citizens (Colin's, 1996:12). Good examples are refugees from Afghanistan and Pakistan, who because of the social and political unrest in these countries were forced to leave (George, 2009:34). In the African context, the Majority Identified category can be applied to refugees created in the period of anti-colonial wars. According to Stein, the Majority Identified Refugees had a strong attachment to their home nations and typically wanted to repatriate, and if they did return it would result in less of a burden on the host countries welfare system. Host countries often treat refugees based on the categories they belong to. The UNHCR gives higher priority to refugees leaving countries due to socio-political reasons (Stein, 1998:8).

Event Related Refugees are those who must leave because of active or latent discrimination against the particular group to which they belong and often outright violence feel that they are unwanted, or unsafe in their own homelands (George, 2009:34). Good examples are the refugees of Sir Lankan Tamil who faced oppression from the majority Sinhalese (George, 2009:44). Ethnic conflicts often lead to the creation of *Events Related* Refugees in Africa. An example of this type of migration is Burundi and Rwandans displaced to each other's country and to

Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire. The majority of these refugees were displaced by the ethnic conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi. Before the recent upheaval in these two states in 1994, little hope was seen for the thousands of refugees who had fled Burundi and Rwanda (Colin's, 1996:13).

The recent refugee migrations of South Sudan to neighboring countries tend to fit into Kunz's *Events Related* category. Refugees who have been subjected to discrimination and often outright violence feel that they are unwanted or unsafe in their own homelands. After become refugees, the desire to return home can only be aroused were there to be substantial change at home. These refugees displaced from their home because of ethnic and socio-political conflict between the supporters of ruling government and the opposition groups/parties. This conflict often leads to the creation of *Events Related* Refugees in Africa in general and South Sudan in particular.

Self Alienated Refugees are those who have to leave their home country due to a variety of individual's reasons, including physical and sexual assault or by some personal philosophy. In Africa, *Self-Alienated* Refugees have played only a minor role in the larger scale refugee picture (George, 2009:34). For example Many Ethiopian intellectuals who fled the tyranny of the Mengistu regime could also be classified as *Self-Alienated* Refugees (Colin's, 1996:13).

2.2.3 The Host Communities/Nations

Various writers and analysts defined host communities/nations in different ways. According to Sanjutta (2002:3) host community can be defined as any sovereign nation which whether through proactive choice or through the inability to act, receives asylum seekers and actively allows them to reside within their borders on a long-term basis or acknowledges their existence. Abey (2013: xi) confirmed this definition the host is any person who provides hospitality. Hospitality is the relationship between guest and host, or the act or practice of being hospitable.

According to Sanjutta, the host community is faced with a threefold choice in its response to an influx of refugees (Sanjutta, 2002:3-4). First, it can react positively, providing support and work according to the guiding principles of the UNHCR and fulfill its responsibility in international law. According to Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) (2011:34) , they are living in harmony with their guests and are generous and often willing to share resources like land for shelter, wood for energy and construction and grass for fodder, fencing and roofing

purposes. Second, a host community can do nothing about an influx of refugees which appears at its borders or it lacks the capability for action. This is phenomenon increasingly within the developing world, thereby leaving asylum seekers to fend for themselves and settle independently without official assistance or recognition from the government and international agencies. Third, the host community can respond negatively toward refugees, sometimes suggesting it holds a fear that refugees might pose a threat to national security (Sanjugta, 2002:4). Generally in the case of this research the word host will be used to refer to the *Itang* communities that were hospitable to the South Sudanese refugees.

2.2.4 The Difference between Refugees and Economic Migrants

People choose to migrate for a variety of reasons and under different circumstances, as a result migrants cannot be treated as a homogenous group of individuals. The difference between refugees and economic migrants are obvious to experts working in the field, but unfortunately, a great number of people who are not involved in the topic, would not be able to define the difference. When we talk about refugee it is essential to understand what migration means and what their differences are.

Migration is a global phenomenon caused not only by economic factors, but also by social, political, cultural, environmental, health, education and transportation factors. It usually takes place because of the push factor of fewer opportunities in the socio-economic situation and also because of pull factors that exist in more developed areas (Thet, 2009:1).

Push factors are concepts that make people migrate out of a country due to overpopulation, religious persecution, lack of job opportunities, agricultural decline, conflict, political persecution, natural hazards, limits of personal freedom and environmental degradation. Whereas, Pull factors are concepts that make people want to migrate to a particular country owing to religion, economic opportunity, land availability, political freedom, ethnic, and family ties and arable land (Parkins, 2011:12).

Economic migrants primarily motivated by pull factors and they allure people to voluntarily move to places where a better life is waiting for them. On the other hand, there are people whose migration is often not of free will, who are forced to move due to ethnical and religious

intolerance, lack of job opportunities, wars and poverty. Their unwillingly movement is caused by push factors and does not promise them a bright future (Grinvald, 2010:17). McKay attests that refugees responding to push factors of persecution and thus deserving of protection while, economic migrants primarily influenced by the pull factors of attractions present in receiving state, therefore undeserving protection of needs to be challenged (McKay, 2008:14). It is significant to differentiate refugees from economic migrants based on their motivation, characteristics of their movement, and their contact with homeland.

According to Cortes, while economic migrant is a person who makes a conscious choice to leave their country to seek a better life elsewhere. They have a plan to travel, take their belongings with them and say goodbye to the important people in their lives. They are free to return home at any time if things don't work out as they had hoped or if they get home sick or if they wish to visit family members and friends left behind. Refugee is forced to leave home due to a fear of persecution and often a life threatening fear of persecution, and thus must make life in the country that gives them refugee (Cortes, 2004:3; Mamer, 2010:16). Similarly Mooney explained that, refugees are forced to leave their country because they are at risk of, or have experienced persecution. The concerns of refugees are human rights and safety, not economic advantage. They leave behind their homes, most or all of their belongings, family members and friends. Some are forced to flee with no warning and many have experienced significant trauma or been tortured or otherwise ill-treated. The journey to safety is fraught with hazard and many refugees risk their lives in search of protection. They cannot return unless the situation that forced them to leave improves (Mooney, 2005:14).

According to (Perera and Traverse, 2013:77; Basok, 1993: xiv), economic migrants are not forced to leave their domiciles and move to the city and makes decision to leave based on an analysis of the costs and benefits of the move Refugees on the other hand, have no other choice rather than forced to abandon her/his homeland. The moral obligation of government to provide for them is thus much greater than it is for an ordinary economic migrant from the village.

The observable difference between these two migrant groups is that refugees are likely to have less social contacts with their home country through return vacations. In contrast economic migrants are able to make journeys to see family members, relatives and friends they left behind.

The purpose of economic migrants are to earn money and then return home to buy land ,build a house, support immediate and extended family members, and retire in their homeland.

However, there is a complex distinction between refugees and economic migrants in today's world. The UN definition of refugees excludes those who move not as a result of persecution, other than as a consequence of natural disasters such as drought, floods, environmental factors and famine. It also rejects people who move primarily for economic reasons. Even when they are leaving conditions of extreme poverty, they fall under the rubric of economic migrants.

Economic migrant is generally refers to the unskilled and skilled individuals from the impoverished countries. They are not eligible for asylum under the 1951 UN convention of refugees. It is not a legal categorization, but rather an umbrella term for a wide array of people that move from one country to another to advance their economic and professional prospects. Thus, distinguishing between economic migrants and refugee is a challenging task for the agency.

Cognizant to the above complex peculiarities between refugee and economic migrants have got debate in today's world. A refugee has already received a positive decision from the authorities on his or her asylum claim. So, firmly speaking the migrants in Gambella are refugees from a UN convention legal perspective. The South Sudanese are seeking refugee outside the border of their native country because of prolonged civil war, violence between various populations along ethnic and political lines and also the people away from their natural residence by powers beyond their control and without the migrants will/consent.

2.2.5 The Distribution of Burdens and Benefits among Local Hosts

The burdens and benefits associated with the presence of refugee are not distributed evenly among local hosts. Some host communities benefited significantly from the presence of refugees and international relief agencies to a large extent, while others struggled to maintain access to even the most basic resources (Whitaker, 2002:339).

As per his observation the extent to which hosts were able to benefit from the refugee presence depended on a number of factors including gender, age, and socio-economic class.

According to Whitaker writes:

The host experiences can also be different from one area to another depending on settlement patterns, existing socio-economic conditions, and nature of the host-refugee relations. In the end, hosts who already had access to resources, education, or power better poised to benefit from the refugee presence, while those who were already disadvantaged in the local context became further marginalized (Whitaker, 2002:339).

According to Harrell-Bond, the sudden presence of refugees and relief resources changed social and economic opportunities for host communities in both positive and negative ways (Harrell-Bond, 1986:124). The positive impact of refugees was access to transnational resources provided by other refugees or co-nationals living abroad, which includes social network. While, the demand for food and other commodities will increase, this will lead to price rises in the host state market. The rise of price will somewhat affect the local citizens (Madanat, 2013:3). On the other hand, this distribution of burdens and benefits was not uniform throughout the host communities. The refugee presence created the opportunity for some but not all host to benefit, others actually worse off (Harrell-Bond, 1986:124).

Whitaker (2002:347) substantiate this idea, the changing dynamics associated with the refugee presence also created different opportunities for local hosts depending on their age and physical health. Young adults were most able to take advantage of the business and job opportunities while the elderly and the disabled are likely to suffer. He also stated that the host experiences with the refugee situation vary depending on socio economic class. To end with he concludes that with respect to the overall economic development the refugee presence opened both positive and negative opportunities for the local host communities (ibid, 2002:349).

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Impacts of Refugees on Host Communities

One of the fundamental objectives of this study is to assess the impacts of refugees on the host communities in general. According to Maystadt and Verwimp, the mass influxes of refugees have diverse impact on the socio-cultural, environmental, economic, and political and security of the host communities. The extent to which the refugees impact on the host communities depend on various factors such as demography, existing socio-economic patterns of the host, nature of the host-refugee relations and others. The known thing is the refugee camps are commonly established in remote areas of poor and underdeveloped conditions where often host populations are struggling to sustain their livelihoods (Maystadt and Verwimp, 2009:1-2). This implies that the mass influx of refugee will have an impact on the lives of the people living in the area.

The intellectual contributions of some of these writers will be considered as part of the literature review for the study. Literature will not only be reviewed in light of what the impacts of hosting refugees have been, will also include the magnitude of refugee flow in Africa, the positive and negative impacts of hosting refugees, and problems associated with refugee assistance. Case studies of specific refugee situations and their impact on host communities are reviewed and applied in the context of the host communities of *Itang Special woreda* in Gambella Region.

2.3.2 Economic Impacts of Refugees on Host Communities

One of the impacts that refugees have on the host country is economic impact. The extent, to which refugees supply the economy is relative to how much they take from it, is one of the most contested issues surrounding asylum policy. The economic impacts that refugees have on the host communities have both positive and negative.

Most of the time refugees not only migrate to places of safety and security, but also to countries of relative stability, wealth and an appreciable level of economic development. From a socio-economic perspective several governments and citizens alike are concerned that refugees and other migrants-skilled or unskilled, may take jobs and other benefits from the local population, thereby increasing the extent of state sponsored and supported welfare activities and services (Omeokachie, 2013:27). According to (Alix-Garcia and Saah, 2009:166-167; Chambers,

1986:245-48) discussed in the World Bank economic review the economic impacts of refugee camps on host communities has both positive and negative impacts. New market opportunities for host communities to sell local products may have a positive impact for some, while at the same time competition over already scarce resources may bring challenges for others.

Whitaker also added that experiences from refugee camps in Tanzania between 1993-1996 shows that hosts with farming opportunities experienced positive economic impacts through increased food demand from refugees while non-farming hosts suffered from increasing food prices (Whitaker, 2002:339-45). Abey examined the refugees in the Middle East situation and observed the arrival of Iraqi refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria caused significant increases in food and fuel prices and placed new pressures on the housing market and public services (Abey, 2013:6). Kobia and Cranfield (2009:6) shared this view the refugees became a threat to the host state by imposing a burden on the welfare of the host economic life of interaction. This is evidenced by the intrinsic problems of employment: If refugees are not employed, they are burden to the state, while if they are employed; they are taking jobs from the local community, which is equally unacceptable to host governments.

In contrary to this idea (Washoma, 2003:6; Whitaker, 2002:350; OECD, 2001:151) argued that the influx of refugees and relief resources into any country significantly altered economic opportunities for host communities. They observed that, some refugees in Tanzania use their purchasing power to buy local goods increasing the local market and this automatically led to unexpected upsurge in business, especially trade and real estate, owing to increased demand and disposable income conducted by both local hosts and refugees. Abey (2013:7) added that refugees in Uganda, entrepreneurs from around the country also flocked to the area where the refugees were settled. Commercial centers developed in the refugee camps with daily markets and countless shops and restaurants. In the Ugandan case, refugees were perceived as better at doing business than their local hosts. While in Uganda refugee successfully impacted on the local communities through better entrepreneurial skills.

Werker (2007:463) observed that refugee's at kyangwali refugee camp economy in Uganda has more choice on their settlement relative to many other countries in Africa. He stated that refugees in Uganda can be found both in camps as well as self-settled was one of the least

problematic from an economic perspective, possessing ample land and a suitable climate for agriculture. This implies that whatever distortions affect the economy in Kyangwali should be augmented in more typical refugee camps. He also argued that the economy in the settlement is fairly complex. Incomes are produced through a different means. Most of the refugees are engaged either in agricultural production or in receiving food rations from charity. Some refugees have businesses in the settlement, ranging from small stalls at the weekly market to shops or tea houses in the main trading centre.

According to Sesay, the development process depends on a complex socio-economic variables population, resources, infrastructure, capital formation, trade, political stability, skill level, work ethic and etc. It is expected that the impacts of refugees on a country's economy will partly be determined by its stage and rate of economic development (Sesay 2004:58-59). However, Blavo's (1999) argued as cited in Sesay, refugees produce negative effects on the economy since African countries which host refugees are among the poorest and least developed countries in the world, they have fragile agricultural economies and insufficiently developed resources and infrastructure. It is, therefore, interesting to note that almost all of Africa is involved each country either producing or receiving refugees insignificantly.

Sesay (2004:61; OECD, 2001:151) writes the refugee problem in Africa has engendered significant economic and social misery and interruption, resulted untold human suffering. It is also one of the most complex and agonizing of Africa's problem. Major refugee influxes have severely disrupted the normal development activities of Sudan, Tanzania and Somalia. The presence of large number of refugees leads to over exploitation of the common property resources such as water, pasture wood and charcoal. According to Rogge (1987) view as cited in Sesay (2004:62) the main constraints on refugee related development are the numbers of refugees, limited land and resources. As a result, increasing competition and conflict between communities over limited resources such as land and water can aggravate the potential for crises (Deikun and Zetter, 2010:6). Generally speaking, business men and capital owners have the potential to profit from the refugees' consumption of goods and services in the local economy, which increases demand and drives up profits. In contrast, poorer hosts can lose from the competition for food, work, wages, services, and common property resources as a result of the refugees' presence.

2.3.3 Socio- Cultural and Environmental Impacts of Refugees on Host Communities

The presence of refugees in hosting countries has potential social impacts on the ethnic balance of hosting areas, social conflict and delivering of social services. Moreover, according to Betts in refugee-affected and hosting areas, there may be inequalities between refugees and non-refugees that give rise to social tension (Betts, 2009:9). This section of literature outlines both positive and negative impacts of refugees on host nation. The mass influxes of refugees have added to security problems on the social life of a host community in general and crime rates, theft, murder in particular. Along with other social problems such as prostitution and alcoholism are also claimed to rise in the refugee areas.

On the other hand, enforced idleness and poverty within a refugee camp may cause an escalation of such tendencies, particularly if there are groups of young men who are not meaningfully occupied (UNHCR, 1997:5). Gomez and Christensen *et al* also adds that refugees impacted the social problem such as gender- based dominance and violence often increase during conflict and in displaced setting. This is particularly the case of women's vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation, domestic violence and trafficking (Gomez and Christensen *et al*, 2010:11).

According to Sanjugta, the refugee in Tanzania and Pakistan has impacted the socio-cultural aspects of the host communities. She explored the issues of social or relational as well as religious, linguistic and ethnic impacts of refugees in relation to communities within the nations of Pakistan and Tanzania - two of the main refugee hosting nations in the world. Tanzania hosts around 600,000 refugees has generously hosted from her bordering nations since its inception as an independent state (Sanjugta, 2002:2-3). She investigated that many hosting communities often face forms of socio-cultural change, including a disputed sense of identity and the increased visibility of ethnic, religious, racial, linguistic or ideological conflicts between refugees and hosts apart from economic and security problems. The socio-cultural impact of refugees on the receiving community can occur simply through their presence. As Sanjugta observed that the host did not blame the refugees for those specific changes in the social dynamics, rather observe them as a predictable result of the extreme population increase in the area.

The expression of individual responsibility for capitalizing on educational opportunities covers the implications of the systemic inequalities of educational access. The individual's ability to maximize life chances through school education is determined by various qualities and in part by personal cognitive and socio-economic characteristics (Peterson and Hovil, 2003:12-16). Most refugee seekers themselves initiate educational activities, before host governments or agencies have come to think about its delivery. In many cases, there is no obligation to provide academic secondary schooling and host governments do what they can to discourage it (Boamah- Gyau, 2008:22). However, they acknowledged that most commonly it is vocational education, which constitutes the principal form of post primary instruction.

On the other hand, Collier (2003) argued as cited in Atim (2013:6) the refugees can be a source of negative public health with adverse consequences for their host countries. Refugee camps are often crowded and unsanitary, creating conditions ripe for infectious diseases; refugee inflows stretch domestic medical resource thin; divert health resource away from normal care; and refugees may have specific health needs related to war trauma that overwhelm the host. In addition different studies have also shown that refugees have contributed to the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and diarrhea among other infectious diseases.

In contrast, refugees can bring assets to the hosting locals. Refugees undeniably bring skills and knowledge with them that can be utilized to the benefit of host people. These skills may vary, but those of the more educated refugees such as health professionals and teachers, even if who limited numbers, can make a significant role in remote areas of host. For example, Refugees in Nepal have introduced new techniques of cultivating cardamom, an important cash crop in the south-east of the country (UNHCR, 1997:6; Gomez and Christensen *et al*, 2010:8).

In terms of the environmental impacts of refugee's influx on host community, intensify normal green environmental problems linked with over-exploitation of rural natural resources due to poverty, rising populations, weak property rights and inappropriate management. According to Shepherd, in Africa refugees settled in semi-arid agriculturally marginal areas, near national parks or forest reserves. Refugee camps tend to be large for both logistical and political reasons. These large camps have more negative impact on the environment. Moreover, refugees often

have to stay in their countries of asylum for extended periods and the impact on the environment around camps may be prolonged (Shepherd, 1995:1).

Omeokachi (2013:46) added that the mass influx of refugees extensively degrades the environment by way of polluting water resources, cutting down trees, creation of rubbish and refuse dumps, and other destructive environmental practices. Such squalid living conditions in slum areas constitute a serious health hazard because slum dwellers in the rural areas and informal settlements by the nature of their existence, are prone to disease, suffer from malnutrition and hunger are more vulnerable to natural disasters. Many of the slum dwellers in squatter communities are unable to access basic social services such as potable water, sanitation, energy supply, and health and education facilities.

According to Jacobsen, Cultivation of land through camp development resulting in exploitation of grazing land, trees, firewood, food and water are some of the outcomes in the equation. In the areas of limited natural resources the host will feel like losing out to the common property resources and possibly become a source of hostility towards the refugee population (Jacobsen, 2003:11). The conflict between hosts and refugees over common property resources have been experienced especially in the Sudan, Uganda and Kenya border region. In the areas where land and natural resources are scarce, refugees can increase tension over these resources for host communities as experienced in refugee camps in the Horn of Africa (Jacobsen 2002:10-11).

Specifically, Martin (2005:336) in his study of Bonga camp in Ethiopia argues that the most obvious environmental impact of the refugee camp is deforestation, although this problem was already occurring before the refugees arrived in 1993 but it has increased because of the expansion of slash and burn agriculture into the nearby hillsides, mainly for growing sorghum. He noted that both refugee and host people also rely on wood for fuel and construction, and there are high levels of hunting with traditional weapons and dogs. Martin has also observed that the host communities were strongly outnumbered by the refugees. Martin (2005:336-337) added that the lack of benefits accompanying the refugee camp was a specific source of dissatisfaction. When the camp was located there, UNHCR had apparently promised a number of benefits, including a new school in the village. These never materialized, and this may be the reason that the locals were made victims and the refugees being at advantage.

2.3.4 Political Impacts of Refugees on Host Communities

The other effect that refugees have on the host country is political impact. Numerous studies show that the political and security impacts of refugees tend to be negative and pose considerable political and security risks for the host governments (Gomez and Christensen *et al*, 2010:13). They are a political force for their country of residence and the way they react to the politics of host country. Besides, their political relationship with their indigenous country, have become important factors in influencing the relations between the sending and receiving countries (Madanat, 2013:3).

In political terms, some of the refugees, especially high profile political refugees engage in political activities sometimes against the interests of their home and host countries, to the detriment of the host countries internal politics and the diplomatic relations between the two countries (Omeokachie, 2013:43). Similarly Salehyan and Gleditsch (2006:340) argue that refugees sometimes can pose a security and political threat to the host country; and this in turn can create tensions in bilateral relations between neighboring countries. For instance, include the involvement of Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda in the removal of the Milton Obote administration (1980-1985). This brings the host countries and home countries of the refugees into collusion. The problems associated with refugees may not be restricted to a particular border area but may have spillover effects on the internal security situation of a region. The influx of refugee's facilitating the spread of arms, ideologies and organizational structures conducive to environment. This may directly/indirectly affect the security and stability of the host country by contributing to organized armed conflict on the host territory.

According to (Atim, 2013:67; Sealyham and Gleditsch, 2006:5) refugee inflows from neighboring states significantly increase the risk of civil war. Along with the refugees themselves, foreign fighters, arms and ideologies that contribute to violence may also stream across the border refugees warrior communities can expand rebel networks to encompass the host state when militants established bases on external territory and can form social ties with domestic opposition groups with a similar ethnic or political orientation. Gomez and Christensen *et al* also added that refugee camps near to the boundary of the country origin can provide sanctuary to rebel groups and a base from which to carry out operations and fertile grounds for

recruitment. For instance, in Rwanda the rebel group made up of mainly Uganda based Tutsi refugees from Rwanda, which in October 1990 formed the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) and invaded northern Rwanda (Gomez and Christensen *et al*, 2010:13). Therefore extreme refugee influx may lead to violent turmoil on the host country's territory.

Washoma (2003:6) stated that the influx of refugees has an impact on local governance and administration, especially those related to security, consumes up to 50% of local government officials' time and energy and the increase in population and attendant crime has placed additional pressure on the police and judiciary. UNHCR (1997:2) also added that the host country national and regional authorities divert considerable resources and manpower from the pressing demands of their own development to the urgent task of keeping refugees alive, alleviating their sufferings and ensuring the security of the whole community.

More specifically the other literature, Orhan (2015:17) assessed the impacts of Syrian refugees on the host communities of Turkey. He observed that the rapid change and constant flow of Syrian refugees tends to cause feelings of insecurity among the local host community. This sentiment so prominent in citizens living in cities like Kilis, Hatay, Sanliurfa and Gaziantep suffer from a feeling of insecurity in tangible manner. As Orhan, the biggest fears of the locals are the feeling of being vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Some local believe that some individuals among the Syrian refugees has a link with Assad, ISIS or the PKK, and there are people might want to punish Turkey (Orhan, 2015:19-20). This creates frustrations among the host communities of Turkey. Rutinwa (2003:15) shared the ideas of Orhan by explaining refugees have been connected with the proliferation of arms, thus causing an increase in armed robbery. For all these reasons refugees are generally contained and restricted for the safety of the wider community and for themselves.

According to Abraham (2002:4) the conflict between the government of Sudan and Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLM/A) has caused for the influx of large numbers of Nuer refugees to cross borders and settles in Gambella region of Ethiopia. The spillover effect of the Sudan civil war has massive impact on the social and political development of the neighboring country of Gambella region. The mass influx of Nuer refugees into Anuak settlements of Gambelle region led to violent conflict between Nuer and Anuak ethnic groups (Dereje, 2014:2).

The above literature clarifies that the socio-cultural, environmental, economic and political impacts of refugees on the host communities of the world in general. In light of this, it will be very important to study the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda* of Gambella region in particular.

Chapter Three

3. An Overview of Gambella Regional State and Refugees in Ethiopia

3.1 The Study Area: Brief Background of the People of Gambella

The Gambella regional state is one of the nine member states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). The region is located in South west Ethiopia between the geographical coordinates 6028'38" to 8034' North Latitude and 330 to 35011'11" East Longitude, which covers an area of about 34,063 km² which accounts 3% of the nation (Tesfay *et al*, 2011:3). The region is bordered by Benishangul Gumuz and Oromia regional state from the North, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State (SNNPRS) and Republic of South Sudan from the South, Oromia and SNNPRS to the east and the Republic of South Sudan from the west (Abreham, 2002:1).

According to the 2007 Population and Housing Census, the total population of the region is estimated to be about 307,096, consisting of 159,787 men and 147,309 women (CSA, 2007:12). The region is home to five indigenous ethnic groups, namely the Anuak, the Nuer, the Majang, the Opo, and the Komo. Even though these groups are all of Nilo-Saharan linguistic origin, they do not form a homogenous ethnic identity. Ethnic boundaries among these groups are mainly constructed along linguistic lines, distinct cultural and political traditions and different subsistence economic systems (Tesfay, *et al*, 2011:4).

In addition to the indigenous groups, since the 1980s Gambella has also witnessed a huge influx of diverse ethnic groups from the central/highland parts of the country. This wave of migration has introduced a new category of people in Gambella known as 'highlanders.' The category 'highlanders' is generally used to collectively refer to other Ethiopians in the region who do not belong to the five indigenous groups of the region (Gatwech, 2002:23).

The identity boundary between the five 'indigenous ethnic groups' versus the 'highlanders' is constructed along: linguistic origins, the highlanders being mainly from 'Semitic and Cushitic' linguistic origin while the indigenous groups are from the 'Nilo-Saharan' linguistic origin (Dereje, 2011:2-3). These ethnic groups are marked by distinct socio-cultural, linguistic,

economical, political and territorial communities as well as different livelihood strategies, which will be discussed in detail below.

3.1.1 Socio-cultural Aspects

Over the years, there was a socio-cultural conflict between the Anuak and the Nuer ethnic groups mostly related with sedentary and pastoral resources (Medhane, 2007:6). These two main Neolithic speaking groups of the Gambella region were traditional enemies. The historical root of the conflict is traced back to the eastward expansion of the eastern Jikany Nuer groups- Gaajak, Gaajok and Gaagwang who were forced by the Shilluk to abandon the Sobat River shortly before 19th c. The Gaajok Nuer lived on both sides of Sudan and Ethiopian border. Then, fighting in Southern Sudan during the civil war had accelerated their migration into the Gambella region of Ethiopia, which intensified their occupation of the Anuak territories (Regassa, 2010:49).

According to Dereje, the initial encounter between the Nuer and the Anuak dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century, resulting in the Nuer conquest of a large area of Anuak territories. Hence the 20th century began dramatic expansion, organized Nuer territorial expansion halted and various Nuer clans entered into peaceful exchanges with Anuak villages. This expansion has largely occurred through micro-demographic processes: inter-ethnic marriages and friendship networks using as a means of pursuing their aims (Dereje, 2006:249-50).

In terms of other cultural interaction, the Anuak and the Nuer largely have no common standard in the modes of ethnic identity formation that introduce a certain degree of cultural opposition. For the agrarian Anuak, villages are the centre of their social identification (Dereje, 2006:249). Each village consists of families and localized lineage of the fourteen principal clans. The ideal of the average Anuak is a life-long identification with a certain village. Even when they leave their village, the Anuak keep the name of their former village (ibid, 2006:249). Thus land acquisition for Anuak people is not only related to an economic resource rather it is related to their social, political and cultural features.

The Nuer culture, social behavior, traditional institutions and customs are intimately linked with cattle. Particularly in marriage, cattle play an important role as bride wealth given by the parents of the husband to the parents of the wife. It is because of this exchange of cattle that the children automatically became part of the husband's family and his line of ancestry (Ojulu, 2013:111). In addition to this, the social and territorial mobility's of Nuer are partially motivated by economic imperatives, especially the inconsistent distribution of natural resources that support the pastoral economy (Dereje, 2006:249).

Regassa, posited that the Nuer used inter-ethnic marriage as an economic strategy to strengthen their resource base and some of them used Anuak villages during the dry season for pasture, which also involved grain for milk exchanges which benefited both communities (Regassa, 2010:52). Similarly, Medhane puts in that the Anuak and the Nuer of the Sobat, Baro and Pibor lived in varying levels of cooperation and confrontation: the Nuer married Anuak girls; Anuak boys were given Nuer initiation marks on their skin; the Anuak lived in Nuer villages; and milk and grain were exchanged, which benefited both groups. This paves the way for the massive expansion of the Nuer to permanently live on the Anuak land of Gambella region (Medhane, 2007:6). These exchanges, however, involve a certain asymmetry that favors the Nuer, flexibility in ethnic recruitment, economic clout (cattle wealth) and numerical predominance have enabled the Nuer to expand continually in to Anuak territory (Dereje, 2010:316).

At the initial time the marriage relationship benefited both groups. For the Nuer, it is inexpensive to marry an Anuak whose bride wealth payment is lower; and for the Anuak, the marriage ensures the flow of cattle wealth. But these gradually come to serve as a heart for more immigrants and, due to this, the immigrants outnumbered the Anuak, who are then left with the two option of joining the Nuer kinship and political structures or leaving their villages in order to maintain their identity (Dereje, 2006:250). According to Dereje, children of the inter-ethnic marriages identify with the Nuer because the Anuak identity concept is strongly informed by an ideology of ethnic purity that makes it difficult for them to safely claim Anuak ethnic identity whereas the Nuer conspicuously encourage cultural/racial integration (Dereje, 2010:316). Thus, historically conflict and cooperation had cultural dimensions, which are linked to the way of life and socio-cultural organization of the two ethnic groups.

3.1.2 Natural Resources

The region is endowed with varieties of natural resource, diverse climatic conditions, fairly adequate annual rainfall, fertile soil, savannah grasslands, and hot spring waterfalls, major seasonal and potential rivers (Bizuneh, 2006:88). The majority of the people in the Gambella region make a living from three key natural resources: cultivation of land, grazing land and fish. The availability, quality and distributive pattern of these natural resources are regulated by the major rivers that flow through the region (Dereje, 2006:245).

The Gambella region contains 129,014 hectares of cultivable land but only 2.4 percent of this is being cultivated (Gambella State Council, 2010:7). Cultivation in the region involves three farming systems: sedentary rain-fed cultivation, moisture cultivation and shifting cultivation. Of the total cultivable land, 65% is savannah, 30% forest land, and 4.5% marshland. In this fertile land, the Anuak and the Nuer harvest maize and sorghum twice a year (Dereje, 2006:246).

Grazing land is another important key resource in the region. The plains of Gambella are one of the most suitable areas for cattle production. Major sources of livestock feed are the open woodlands, riverine forest and woodland during the wet season and the savanna grass land during the dry season. No other food supplement is provided to livestock. The relatively scarce pasture type is the savanna grassland which provides the main source of animal feed during the dry season. Livestock production is sustained by transhumance between wet season villages and dry season camps. Depending on the availability of grazing lands, the movement might also entail a third temporary dry season site in some parts of the region (Dereje, 2006:246).

Fish is another important source of food particularly at the height of the dry season when cereal and dairy food sources are in short supply. In some parts of Gambella, there is commercial fishing in the form of sun-dried fishes. Gambella is one of the main riverine fishing regions of the country, next to the Rift Valley lakes. The availability of fish in the river and the various lagoons created by the overflow of the rivers is one of the pull factors for the seasonal population movements in the region (ibid, 2006:246).

Additionally, Gambella has rich potential for cotton, groundnut, sesame, oil seeds; mining and construction materials are other important areas of natural resources for investment. The region also has vast water resources like Baro, Alwero, Akobo and Gilo rivers which flow throughout the year (Ethiopia Country Study Guide, 2009:93). Despite the presence of immense exploitable natural resources in the region, it has not been fully assessed and documented in a way to attract the potential investors. As a result of lack of information on the availability of resources and other factors the participation of private investment has not been encouraging (Gambella Regional State Council, 2010:8).

3.1.3 Modes of Livelihoods

Ninety percent of the population of Gambella is rural and most of them engaging in subsistence farming, selling some of their production to local markets. Other economic activities include coffee cultivation, exploration for gold in Dimma Wereda, continued work on the remaining state farms primarily cotton in Alwero-Peno Wereda, and exploration for oil by Malaysian and Chinese companies (UNICEF, 2006:13). The means of securing the necessities of life in the region based on subsistence agriculture, herding, hunting, fishing, forestry, mining and beekeeping for local consumption and exchange. (Cascao, 2013:155). Pastoralism and agro-pastoralism are among the Nuer while sedentary cultivation are among the Anuak are the leading preoccupations of the people. Cultivation of sorghum, sesame, mango, banana and vegetables are also produced for livelihoods of the people (Fanta, 1998:26).

The economic activities of the central and lower parts the Gambella region, which covers *woredas* of Dimma, Gog, Abobo, Itang and Gambella their livelihood mainly based on mixed agricultural systems (crops and livestock), with some fishing, mining and wild food collection. Maize, sorghum, rice and sweet potato are crops grown for consumption and sale. Cattle, goats and sheep are the main livestock reared in the region (Tesfay, *et al*, 2011:6).

The Anuak people lived along the Baro, Gilo and Akobo River and economically practicing hoe farming and producing maize, sorghum, and other crops on the river banks (Cascao, 2013:155; Abraham, 2002:2). The remaining other groups live in settlement areas practice sedentary agriculture. However, many highlanders reside in the Gambella district as traders, civil servants and farmers since the early twentieth century (Young, 1999:26).

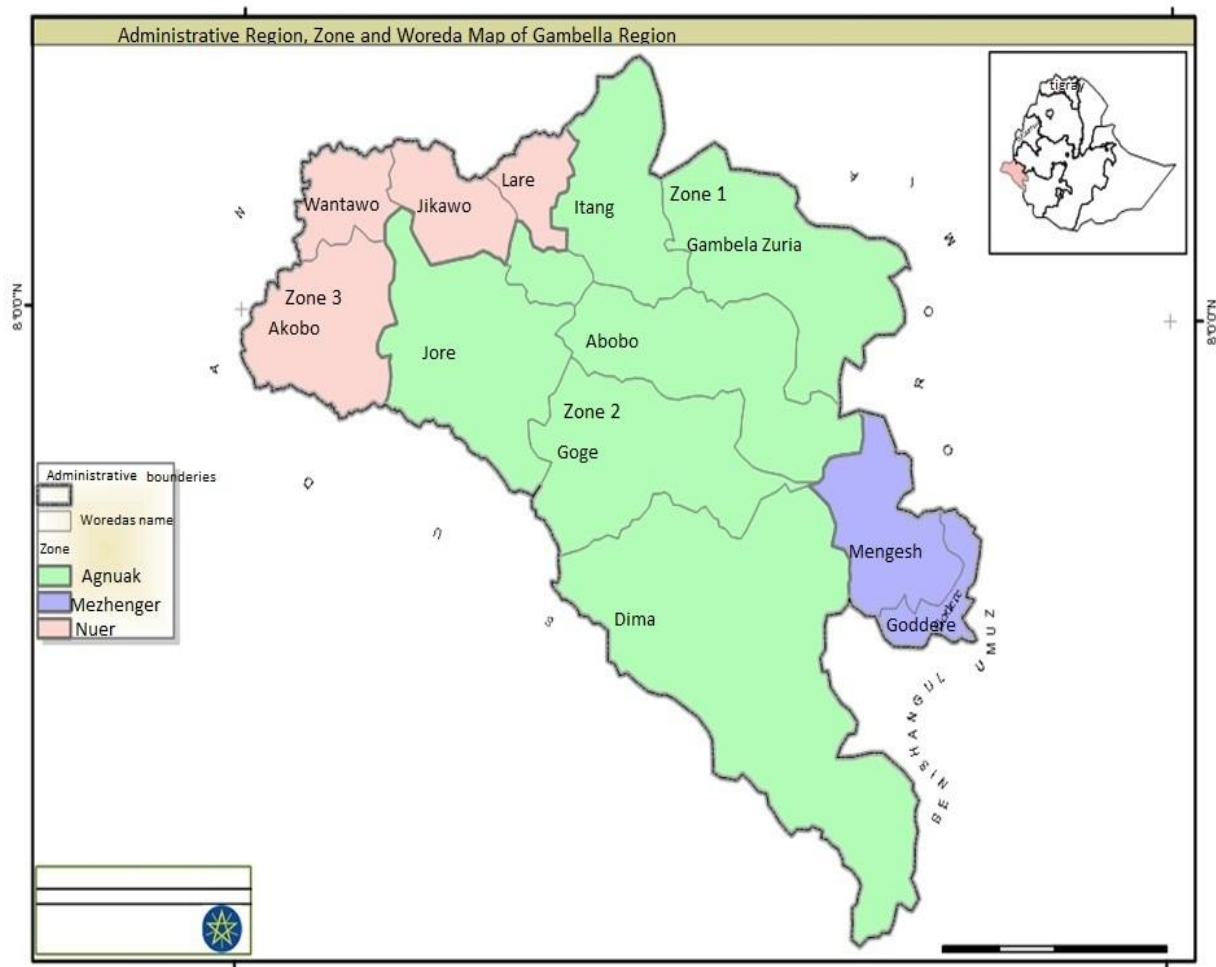
The South western part of the Gambella region, which encompasses Godere and Mengesh-Mejenger *woredas* are mainly producing coffee, honey and cereal are serves as one of the livelihood systems of the area. Mixed agriculture is the mainstay dominated by coffee production particularly for settlers but the indigenous are more involved in honey production in the forests and followed by livestock production. The major economic activities of the areas are cultivation of maize, sorghum and *enset* for consumption, coffee and honey for cash (Tesfay, *et al*, 2011:6-7). According to Abreham, the majority of the Mezenger ethnic group dependent on hunting and gathering economy with shifting cultivation based on a slash and burn and harvesting of wild honey for their livelihood (Abreham, 2002:2).

The western part of the region which covers Lare, Akobo, Jikawo, Wantowa and Jor *woredas* are agro-pastoral livelihood zone of the region. The major economic activities are livestock rearing mainly cattle, goats and sheep. The main food sources are crops, livestock products supplemented by wild fruits, fish and meat. The Nuer is largely livestock dependent and mostly found in Akobo, Jikawo and parts of Itang *woredas* (Abreham, 2002:2). Economically the semi-pastoralist Nuer grazed their cattle in the Gambella plains and engaged in simple cultivation on the river bank in the dry season from November to May, moved back to territories along the Sobat River during Ethiopia's rainy season from June to October (Regassa, 2010: 49). Generally speaking the people of Gambella region practice all types of socio- economic activities such as, sedentary agriculture, pastoralism, hunting, gathering and fishing.

3.1.4 Political Structures of Gambella Region

Administratively, Gambella Regional State is divided into three zones along the three major ethnic groups: Anuak zone, Mezenger zone and Nuer zone. These three zones are further divided into twelve *woredas*: five under Anuak zone, four under Nuer zone and two under Mezenger zone and one special *woreda* that is directly accountable to the regional state council. The special *woreda* goes to Itang *woreda* because of its mingled inhabitants of Nuer and Anuak communities. The Gambella town falls to the category of city administration (Ojulu, 2013:105).

Fig. 1: Administrative region, zone and woreda map of Gambella region



Source: Disaster Management and Food Security Sector Information Management 2004 E.C

Various Nilotic-speaking communities dwelling in Gambella also exhibit under different modes of traditional political governance (Medhane, 2007:6). Politically, the Anuak traditional political system, there are two types of leaders, the Nyiya (kings), who used to control the South –West Anuak villages of Gambela, and the kwaro (headmen), who controlled village states (ibid). According to Ojulu, the king or headman takes care of all the affairs of village life through different structures from food production to conflict resolution and ensures security for villagers either through peaceful relations or wars with neighboring villages and ethnic groups (Ojulu, 2013:110).

Whereas, the agro-pastoralist Nuer political organization and structure could be categorized as a confederation of independent and autonomous sections and clans. Each clan has its own elected leader. Below the clan structure, the sub-clans also have chiefs and sub-chiefs elected on various justifications (Ojulu, 2013:112). The traditional Mezenger, Komo and Opo political system is described as predominantly egalitarian with no authoritative political positions or leaders. The only people who seem to exercise some sort of authority are the spiritual leaders, who perform rituals, explain mysteries and foretell events (Regassa, 2010:197; Ojulu, 2013:114).

During the reign of Emperor Haile Sillasie, Gambella was one of the most marginalized and backward regions, in Ethiopia. However, the Derg regime had made some practical measures to redress such imbalance between the center and periphery and designed to incorporate the peripheral regions into the structures of control (Regassa, 2010:53). The Derg regime strongly favored the Nuer who was incorporated into the local administration in Gambella region (Johnson, 2003:87; Medhane, 2007:7). This made the Anuak feel as although they were becoming a minority in their own land. According to Medhane, Since the Derg regime, the expansion of Nuer has continued up to Gambella town, until they established their major settlement in Itang woreda (Medhane, 2007:7). Nonetheless the reform has nothing to change the peoples of the region.

Conversely, since 1990s the Gambella region brought impressive political changes. After the Derg was overthrown by the EPRDF government in 1991, a new federal government was established with nine regional states. In the time after the EPRDF government took power, it handed control over Gambella Regional government to the Gambella Peoples Liberation Movement (GPLM), an Anuak dominated group that had allied itself with the EPRDF in its war against Derg (Dereje, 2011:21).

Political power in Gambella region remained firmly in Anuak hands until December 2003, but federal officials and many within Gambella, including significant numbers of Anuak community leaders continually accused Anuak regional authorities of corruption and incompetence. Most glaringly, regional officials did almost nothing to resolve Anuak Nuer tensions or conflict (Gagnon, 2005:35).

Following the May 2005 elections, the region has recently appointed Anuak President, supported by a Nuer Vice-President. Other key posts in the regional political development are distributed amongst the indigenous groups depending upon their relative population size (UNICEF, 2006:12). As a result, the post-1991 political process in the region has been shaped by social interaction and political relations between the Anuak and the Nuer and also by the way in which both related to the EPRDF and the Highlanders (Dereje, 2011:21).

3.2 Overview of Refugees in Ethiopia

Refugee influx to Ethiopia is not a recent phenomenon. Its history dates back to at least 615 AD when Prophet Muhammad's earliest disciples and of course with his daughter Makiya, have sought refuge in Ethiopia (Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, 2011:10; Wondwosen, 1995:7). According to Wondwosen, since the beginning of the world war first quite a number of refugees from Europe and even Asia have come to live in Ethiopia. The African struggle against colonialism was also another factor which drove numerous refugees to Ethiopia (Wondwosen, 1995:7). The crisis in Somalia and the civil war in the South Sudan are also the very recent factors which caused Ethiopia to become a sanctuary for hundreds of thousands of refugees (Momodu *et al*, 2014:3; UNHCR, 2015:16).

Ethiopia has a long history of receiving people displaced by cross-border movements due to droughts, conflicts, political events and civil wars in neighboring countries including Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Liberia, Djibouti, Uganda and Yemen. However, refugees from Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Eritrea make up the majority (Bezait, 2003:17). This is mainly conditioned by the fact that Ethiopia is bordered by the most volatile and conflict ridden countries (South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea) in the region Horn of Africa (Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, 2011:10).

Ethiopia is also known for mixed migration flows and has continued to be the primary country of origin for economic migrants as well as a transit country for Eritreans, Somalis and other nationalities seeking new opportunities using the north-western and eastern migrant routes (Danish Refugee Council, 2014:28). Ethiopia has hosting refugees in different parts of the country's border villages, urban refugees are also found in major towns from different neighboring countries.

Eritrean refugees continue to arrive in Ethiopia increasing in numbers from time to time. The influx of Eritrean refugees increased from 1,000 per month to 5,000 per month during the last quarter of 2014. At the end of January 2015, there were 126,363 Eritrean refugees residing in Shire refugee camps (Shimelba, Mai Aini, Hitsats and Adi Harush) Tigray Region and in Aysaita and Barahle refugee camps and within host community in Erebti, Ayne Deeb and Dalol in Afar Region with a number of urban refugees in Addis Ababa and Mekelle (UNICEF, 2015:2).

Somali refugees began arriving in Ethiopia following the Ogaden war of 1977–78 and again after the fall of the Siyad Barre government in Somalia in 1991. The refugees mainly settled amongst their clan members in Ethiopia–Somali land since clan territories span the border between Ethiopia and Somalia. Since 1997, the eastern programs have mainly focused on repatriation. So far six Somali refugee camps – Hartishiek B, Teferi Ber, Darwonaji, Daror, Rabasso and Camaboker have been closed with the successful repatriation of 222,033 people (Bezait, 2003:18). Somali refugees living in Aw-barre, Kebribeyah, Shedder, Bokolmany, Melkadida, Kobe, Hilaweyn and Buramino camps and a small number in Addis Ababa, who sought protection in Ethiopia due to insecurity in Somalia or arrived as a result of the famine in Somalia in 2011 (UNHCR progress, 2016:1).

According to Bezait (2003:19) most of the Sudanese refugees arrived in Ethiopia in the early 1980s. Sudanese refugees fleeing fighting between the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North and the Sudanese Armed Forces in Blue Nile State of Sudan who live in three camps in the Assosa area in Benishangul Gumuz region and South Sudanese refugees in the Gambella region or in host communities most of whom fled from Jonglei State to escape inter-ethnic conflict (UNHCR Global Appeal, 2014-15:2). New arrivals continue to flow into the country due to continued conflict in their country.

Generally, Ethiopia currently hosts more than 732, 709 refugees from neighboring countries including Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen and other nationalities. This country is faced with a significant influx of refugees, mainly from South Sudan (283,007), Eritrea (153,531), Somalia (251,049), and Sudan (38,535) and also from Other Nationalities (5,178) (UNHCR progress, 2016:1).

The country has been kind in granting to people in need of refugee and protection irrespective of their nationality, religion or race. The government has been allocating land for the 18 existing camps, including in Somalia, Tigray, Afar, Assosa and Gambella, and for new camps to be opened as the majority of existing camps have reached their maximum capacity. In addition, the Government provides police forces in the camps and facilitated customs clearance for internationally procured items (UNHCR Global Appeal, 2014-15:1).

Table 1: Total Population of Refugee and Asylum seeker in Ethiopia as of February 26, 2016.

Total Refugee and Asylum Seeker in Ethiopia								
Camp/ Site	South Sudan	Somali	Eretria	Sudan	Yemen	Others	Total	Camp/ Site (%)
Addis Ababa	407	804	4, 813	83	1, 409	922	8, 438	1.15%
Mai-Aini			10, 437				10, 437	1.42%
Adi Harush			8, 100				8, 100	1.11%
Shimelba			5, 432				5, 432	0.74%
Hitsats			11, 323				11, 323	1.55%
Tigray			458				458	0.06%
Aysaita			10, 325				10, 325	1.41%
Barahle			9, 135				9, 135	1.25%
Erebt*			542				542	0.07%
Dalool*			7, 446				7, 446	1.02%
Ayne Deeb*			4,442				4, 442	0.61%
Pugnido	62, 925			50		14	62, 989	8.60%
Kule	48, 451			15		2	48, 468	6.61%
Pugnido II	16, 506			1		2	16, 509	2.25%
Okugo	7, 700			1			7, 701	1.05%
Tierkidi	53, 384					4	53, 388	7.29%
Jewi	48, 486					3	48, 489	6.62%
Gambella Main Entry Points**	29, 903						29, 903	4.08%
Other Location Gambella*	3, 122						3, 122	0.43%
Sherkolle	4, 723			6, 083		675	11, 481	1.57%
Bambasi	20			15, 454			15, 474	2.11%
Gizan/Ad- Damazin	7			2, 573			2, 580	0.35%
Tongo	1, 259			10, 435			11, 694	1.60%
Tsore/ Arusha	6, 114			3, 840			9, 954	1.36%
Ken- Borena						3, 556	3, 556	0.49%
Aw- barre		12, 391					12, 391	1.69%
Kebribeyah		13, 536					13, 536	1.85%
Shedder		12, 090					12, 090	1.65%
Bokolmanyoo		42, 474					42, 474	5.80%
Melkadida		45, 039					45, 039	6.15%
Kobe		43, 025					43, 025	5.87%
Hilaweyn		42, 715					42, 715	5.83%
Buramino		38, 975					38, 975	5.32%
Dollo Ado								0.00%
Eritreans Spontaneously Settled In Ethiopia			81, 078				81, 078	11.07%
Total	283, 007	251, 049	153, 531	38, 535	1, 409	5,178	732, 709	100.00%
%	38.62%	34.26%	20.95%	5.26%	0.19%	0.71%	100.00%	

Notes: * Refugees living within host communities.

** Refugees at entry points.

Source: UNHCR proGress as of 29 February 2016. Available at: mutueran@unhcr.org

The Government of Ethiopia is generally maintains open borders for refugees seeking protection in the country and is a signatory to the 1951 UN refugee convention and its 1967 Protocol, and is also a signatory to the refugee convention endorsed in 1969 by the then OAU (Danish Refugee Council, 2014:28). The protection of Refugees is being implemented in accordance with the provisions put in the Ethiopian refugee proclamation in 2004 (proclamation number 409/1996) and the core international human rights treaties that have been ratified by Ethiopia guides its operation in relation to refuges and its partners (UNHCR, 2012:1).

The main objectives of refugee operations in Ethiopia are:

- ✓ Protection and provision of care and maintenance assistance
- ✓ Promotion of voluntary repatriation: and
- ✓ Recovery programs including school feeding and environment-focused food-for-work programs (ARRA, 2011:12).

United Nations Higher Commissions for Refugee (UNHCR) has the main office in Ethiopia as well as sub and field office located in five regional states in charge of coordination of assistance in the various camps (UNHCR Factsheet, 2015:1). UNHCR continues to maintain and strengthen its relationship with the Government of Ethiopia mainly through its counterpart, the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) to ensure the preservation of a favorable protection environment that allows asylum seekers to continue to gain access to the Ethiopian territory on a prima facie basis (UNHCR, 2016:17).

The Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), an institution established by the Ethiopian government and part of the Ministry of Home Affairs, is the main implementing partner of UNHCR. ARRA is in charge of food distribution, security issues in the camps and other programs on health, education and other provision of social services etc. Through its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation Project number 6180 (operational since 1 April 2000), World Food Programs (WFP) provides general food rations to refugees (UNHCR, 2012:2).

3.2.1 Brief History of South Sudanese Refugees in Gambella Regional State

The violent civil war in South Sudan erupted in December 2013 which seriously affected East Africa, which continuously suffer from conflict and displacement. For the local and international humanitarian community, as well as the Ethiopian Government providing protection to those seeking refuge on its territory, the overwhelming volume and speed of the migration of refugees to Gambella region would be continued (The Lutheran World Federation, 2014:20). According to UNHCR, Ethiopia will continue to receive asylum seekers from neighboring countries struggling with droughts, political events and civil wars due to its geographical proximity, as well as environmental and geo-political developments in the region. The country is also likely to continue to receive asylum seekers from neighboring countries in 2014 and 2015 (UNHCR Global Appeal, 2014-2015:1). Some of the arrivals are third generation asylum seekers, repeating a tragic cycle that began already in the 1960's (The Lutheran World Federation, 2014: 25).

The first Sudanese civil war began in 1955, and after just 11 years of peace, the second one ranged from 1983 until the peace deal in 2005, paving the way to South Sudan's independence in 2011 (The Lutheran World Federation, 2014: 25). During the first civil war of Sudan the Gambella region of Ethiopia hosted several thousands of Southern Sudanese refugees and served as military training base for guerillas, the spillover of the conflict in Southern Sudan was a considerable impact on the Gambella region of Ethiopia (Shin *et al*, 2013:183). The region has been shelter for several hundreds of thousands of the South Sudanese refugees and insurgents fleeing from the devastating civil wars that affected the Southern Sudan for decades (Regassa, 2010:47).

The Southern Sudanese refugees fleeing to Gambella region in 1969 settled in the area, with successive influxes following in 1983, 1987 and early 1990's (Borchgrevink *et al*, 2009: 57). By the 1969s, there were 172,000 Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries. These refugees distributed in Ethiopia 20,000, Central Africa Republic (CAR) 19,500, and Congo (DRC) 66,000 and Uganda 71,500. Since the most war affected region was the area nearby to Uganda and Congo (DRC), these countries received large number of Sudanese refugees (Assefaw, 2006:59).

By the late 1980s, it reached about 350,000 out of 450,000 Sudanese refugees fled to Ethiopia. Most of them settled in camps in western Ethiopia, especially in the Gambella region of Illubabor, where they had earlier settled during the first Sudanese civil war (Markakis, 2011:222). This is not only because of the support to SPLM/A by Ethiopian government but also because of the area where the rebellion started in Sudan and most affected by the civil war was close to Ethiopian border (Regassa, 2010:169). By early 1985, about 72,000 refugees from South Sudan had sought asylum in Ethiopia (Assefaw, 2006:58).

In the early 1990s the number of refugees peaked, with the UNHCR and Government of Ethiopia hosting about 550,000 Sudanese refugees, who outnumbered the local community by a ratio of about 3:1. This became a critical challenge for the host society, particularly since the refugees altered the multiethnic composition of Gambella: the majority of arrivals were Nuer, along with a considerable portion of Anuak refugees, along with Dinka and Shiluk, amongst others (Borchgrevink *et al*, 2009:58).

By late 1991 most of the refugees had fled back to the Sudan owing to the political changes taking place in Ethiopia at that time (Mengistu, 2005:71). In 1991 government change in Ethiopia, the Itang camp was evacuated and refugees returned to Sudan under difficult conditions (Borchgrevink *et al*, 2009:58). In July 1995 the number of refugees had reached 57,225. They settled in Bonga, Fugnido and Dimma with their respective populations of 15,469, 31,704 and 10,052 (Mengistu, 2005:71). This was a result of two factors. The first factor was the civil war in the northern Congo that forced tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees to return in to Sudan. The second factor was the strength of the SPLM/A. The military capacity of the SPLM/A grows stronger and was able to provide protection for many civilian in large areas (Assefaw, 2006:63).

Following the end of the civil war in 2005, most of the refugees returned home. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) indicates the conclusion of the agreement between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A. One of the provisions of the CPA is the repatriation and resettlement of the Southern Sudanese refugees displaced during the long civil war (Shin *et al*, 2013:183). On February 27, 2006 the government of Ethiopia, Sudan and the UNHCR signed an important tripartite agreement to facilitate the returns of over 70,000 Southern Sudanese refugees from western Ethiopia to the devastated regions of Sudan (Regassa, 2010:212). After the signing

of the CPA, the UNHCR, in cooperation with ARRA and International Agencies repatriated more than 20, 815 Southern Sudanese refugees willingly to their homeland between March 31, 2006 to March 2007. These included Uduk, Nuer and Dinka from the three refugee camps in Gambella, amongst them 10,065 from Bonga, 5, 257 from Dimma and 5, 493 refugees from Pugnido (Regassa, 2010:213).

By late 2007 and early 2008 many refugees from Dimma , Bonga and Pugnido returned to their home land in an organized repatriation assisted by the government of Ethiopia and Sudan as well as UNHCR, IOM and other international agencies (Regassa, 2010:214). There are at least two critical challenges to the ongoing voluntary repatriation program: one relates to uncertainty regarding what to expect, the other to citizenship. Most of the refugees have lived the major parts of their lives in refugee camps, some even their whole lives. Leaving a life as refugees, they are now anxious as to what to expect upon return, and if the CPA of 2005 has brought lasting peace to Sudan. However, having lived in Gambella camps for decades there is a concern over how the situation is in their home community—indeed, if the community even exists (Borchgrevink *et al*, 2009:59).

The other challenge is the issue of citizenship, provides a challenge for repatriation as there have been reports that some Ethiopian Nuer have ‘enrolled’ in the refugee camps by claiming Sudanese citizenship. By claiming refugee status, these persons try to gain access to the services and resources provided in the refugee camps, seen as better than what is available in the local communities. Both these challenges show that the camps are seen by refugees and locals alike as relatively peaceful havens that offer better services than do their home communities in Ethiopia or Sudan (ibid, 2009:60).

Following South Sudan’s independence from Sudan in July 2011, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of South Sudanese refugees most of whom had been living in refuge in Ethiopia for about two decades. Since the mid December 2013 the influx from South Sudan started after President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, his former vice president, fell out. The fighting broke out on ethnic lines between the Dinka ethnic group of President Salva Kiir and the Nuer ethnic group of his former ally (Momodu *et al*, 2014:7).

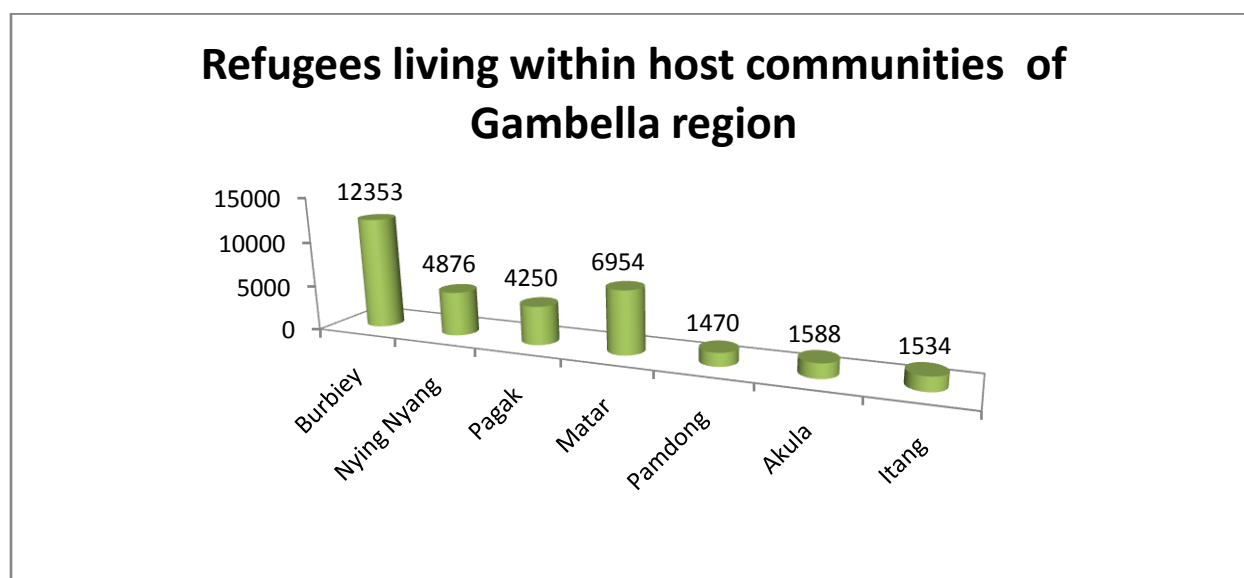
By December 15, 2013, more than 218,700 South Sudanese refugees have crossed into Ethiopia's Gambella region. So far in August, 3,448 new arrivals have been registered. In July, more than 7,200 South Sudanese arrived in Gambella; an increase from the 2,500 arrivals in June. People are fleeing generalized violence and food insecurity in South Sudan. More than 90% of refugees are women and children; arrive in Gambella Regional State in Western Ethiopia in need of protection and humanitarian assistance, with alarming nutritional conditions (UNHCR Global Appeal Update 2015:2). Capacities of camps receiving refugees are overstretched. More than 13,000 new arrivals are awaiting transfer to a new camp that is being developed (UNHCR b-caps note, 2015:1).

Table 2: South Sudanese Refugee Population in Gambella Region

Camp Names	Children (ages<18 years)		Adult (age>=18 years)		Total	%
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Pugnido	20,907	19,678	7,268	15,111	62,964	27%
Tierkidi	18,661	18,027	4,341	12,355	53,384	22%
Kule	15,566	14,891	6,399	11,595	48,451	20%
Okugo	2,358	2,191	1,028	2,123	7,700	3%
Jewi	17,892	17,199	2,607	10,788	48,486	20%
Pugnido II	5,848	5,436	3,844	3,844	16,506	7%
Total	81,232	77,422	23,021	55,816	237,491	100%
	158,654		78,837			
%	67%		33%			

Source: UNHCR Gambella, Ethiopia: 04 March 2016

Table 3: Refugees Living Within Host Communities of Gambella Region



*The total refugees living within the host communities of Gambella are 33, 025.

Source: UNHCR Gambella, Ethiopia: 04 March 2016

The government of Ethiopia reaffirms its commitment to continue availing the necessary protection to refugees and is dedicated to the implementation of the internationally set refugee protection and assistance principles and other provisions as per standards. Gambella Regional State of Ethiopia is exemplary in its efforts to share the burden of the refugees –not of, but with the refugees, who have paid the ultimate price of the conflict with lives, belongings and potentially, a future of one generation, lost along the way to safety (The Lutheran World Federation, 2014: 21).

3.2.2 The Itang Woreda and its Refugee Camp

Gambella region is divided into three zones and one special *Woreda* (administrative unit). *Itang* is the special *Woreda* which is located in Gambella region with its capital *Itang* town (CSA, 2007:35-41). *The Itang Special Woreda* encompasses 21 kebeles among which 95% are situated in the flood plain zones of Baro river basin (Alemseged *et al*, 2014:2). This special *woreda* covers an area of 2,188 km² with a total population size of about 35, 686. According to the Central Statistical Agency, there are 22, 824 Nuer, 9, 175 Anuak. Besides, there are considerable numbers of people from other parts of the country inhabiting in the region (CSA, 2007:35-41).

Geographically, the Itang town and most of other villages are located in the left and right banks of the river which provides ecological importance and sources of livelihood to the inhabitants. Cereals crops (sorghum and maize) vegetables, animal herding and fishing are the mainstays of the population in the woreda (Alemseged *et al*, 2014:2).

The largest refugee camp in Ethiopia was established in *Itang woreda* to receive the refugees who came from Sudan as a result of Sudanese civil war (UNICEF operation lifeline Sudan, 1991:3). Though the first informal refugee camp in *Itang*, Bethe Hook (Nuer; place of cows), was established near the river by those Gajook and Luo-Nuer tribes displaced by the re-emerging war in the Sudan in 1982-1983 (Boll, 2005:180), the *Itang* camp was officially opened by the government of Ethiopia and UNHCR in June 1983 to accommodate the needs of the victims of Sudan's ongoing civil war (UNICEF operation lifeline Sudan, 1991:3). It was mainly inhabited by SPLA leaders with their families –a Dinka majority as well as western Nuer (Boll, 2005:180). The camp was run by an administration drawn from the refugee community and assisted by ARA, the administration for refugee affairs, a department of the Ethiopian government. Provision of supplies provided by WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF and by some International NGOs (UNICEF operation lifeline Sudan, 1991:3).

According to UNHCR report in July 1991, 242,093 refugees were claiming relief in *Itang* Camp in the Gambella region of western Ethiopia and 280,000 by January 1991. The Camp was situated in Gaajak Nuer country a group whose territory straddles the Ethiopia / Sudan border in the Baro river basin. So the majority of refugees in the Camp, being Luo- Nuer were related through linguistic ties with indigenous local population (UNICEF operation lifeline Sudan, 1991:5). However, according to UNHCR report that on May 26, 1991 the *Itang* refugee camp was evacuated and some 150,000 permanent residents of the camp crossed back into Sudan, the majority heading for their areas of origin (ibid, 1991:2).

The sudden evacuation of thousands of Southern Sudanese refugees from *Itang* created a new humanitarian crisis in the border region. While the evacuation of the camp, the mass return of refugees to the Sudan appeared to be unplanned, it was completely unpredicted by the international aid officials. The SPLA authorities apprehensive of the political atmosphere in Ethiopia, and were already engaged in debates at *Itang* in 1990, before EPRDF seized power in

Addis Ababa about whether or not the refugees should move back home. In 1991 the SPLA escorted several hundred thousand refugees back to the Sudan in a most difficult trek across rivers during rainy season (Regassa, 2010:170).

Tierkidi refugee camp was opened in *Itang* woreda for South Sudanese refugees. The area has yet again the centre of a major humanitarian operation for South Sudanese refugees (The Lutheran World Federation, 2014:25). As the refugee camps in Gambella quickly reached their capacity, the camp was officially opened on 26 February 2014 to receive the new arrivals, transiting mainly from Akobo, Pagak and Burbiey entry points. On 23 July 2014 the regional president of Gambella also informed UNHCR that Kule 2 is to be renamed Tierkidi Refugee Camp.

The camp is located in the Gambella region, Ethiopia; around 50 km from the border to South Sudan. The population areas of origin are primarily comprised of refugees from South Sudanese Units, Upper Nile and Jonglei States (UNHCR, 2014:1). The large majorities are women and children who have walked for days to reach the border, often without having had the time or the possibility to bring along food for journey. Surviving on foliage and roots in the forest; they arrive in Gambella in critical condition. The cultural backgrounds of these refugees are predominantly ethnic Luo-Nuer and their main occupations are primarily farmers and pastoralists (UNHCR, 2014:1). According to UNHCR as of 18 December 2015 about 53,384 refugees had arrived to Tierkidi refugee camp from South Sudan since May, 2014 (UNHCR, 2015:1).

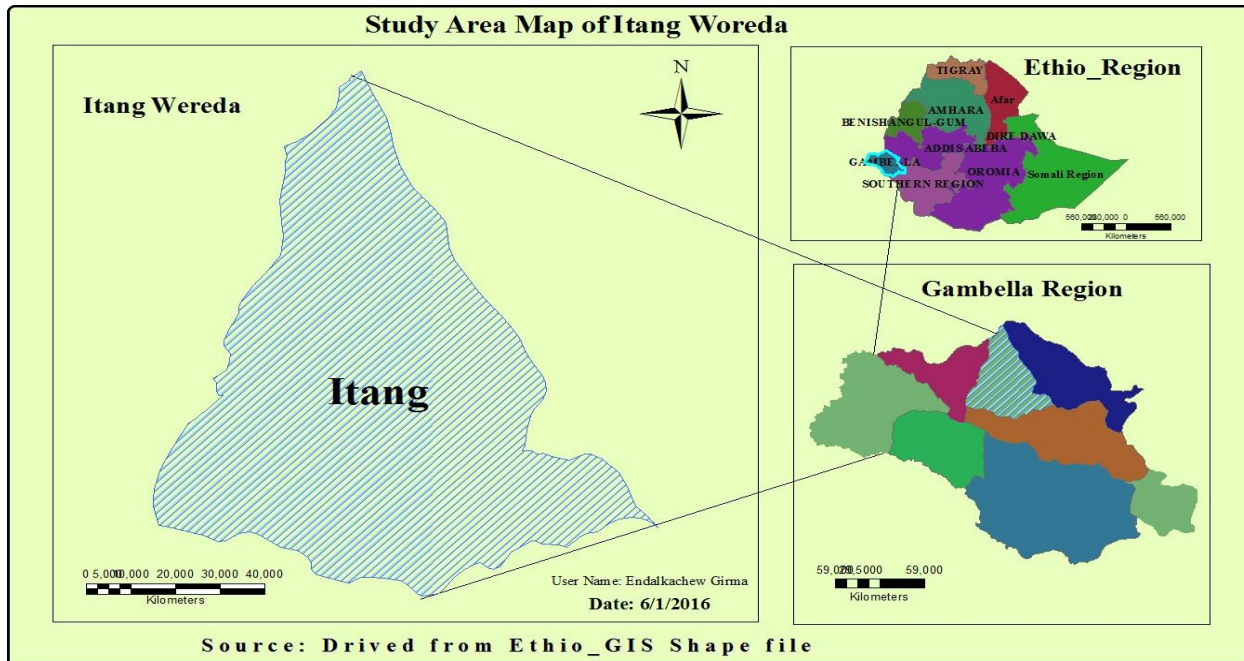


Fig 2. Map of the Study Area

Source: Drive from Ethio-GIS shape file

3.2.3 Administrative Structure of Tierkidi Refugee Camp

The camp management is conducted by Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) which represented by the Ethiopian government in order to manage all refugee camps in Ethiopia with support from UNHCR. ARRA is responsible for primary health care and distribution of food and core relief items while, UNHCR are also provides protection, community services logistics and monitors delivery of services (UNHCR, 2014:1).

According to UNHCR, there are thirteen operating partners organizations which provides support for the camp, which include health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection and community services, shelter, education, core relief items, logistics and site planning, environment and food. All these activities are managed and coordinated by ARRA and UNHCR work together with partners to ensure proper and coordinated delivery of protection and assistance to refugees (UNHCR, 2014:1).

As stated by the UNHCR Ethiopia factsheet, camp coordination meetings generally happen between different organizations are held weekly between ARRA, UNHCR and other partners both at zonal and camp level. In addition, technical working groups also meet regularly on different issues (UNHCR Ethiopia factsheet, 2015:3). As of UNHCR 23 April 2015, in Tierkidi camp, the planned expansion zone demarcation and tent pitching for the new arrivals was continued by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the site survey commenced by the UNHCR team for the possible additional expansion site which ARRA scheduled for further negotiation at zone level.

3.2.4 The Relationships between Refugee and the Host Community

The relationship between the refugee and hosting communities is characterized by both peaceful and conflictual interactions which are caused by different factors. Their interactions are mostly peaceful; however, the issue of ethnicity is highly sensitive and brings conflict between the refugee and the host community. When the refugees take side with the Nuer ethnic group, they become threat for the remaining ethnic groups in the region. As Kurimoto (2005:2) noted that the relationships between refugees and the host community are very complex and determined by local, national and international factors. Their relations have been influenced by civil war and the relation between the Sudan People Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the Ethiopian government, inter-ethnic relations between the local hosts, refugees and the local hosts perception of the situation.

Some of the South Sudanese refugees are living outside of the Tierkidi refugee camp and have been unofficially living in the host community peacefully. During the observation made by the researcher around the camp and the host community, the local market in Terfam town showed that how peaceful coexistence is existed between the host community and the refugees. The interview made with one of the refugee coordinator addressed as:

The existing relation between the host local communities and refugees are both peaceful and conflictual, which are determined by different factors. Even though there are some local people in the community who opposed the coming of South Sudanese refugees, there is a peaceful socio- cultural relationship between the refugees and the host communities.¹

¹ Interview with refugees coordinator at the camp, 04 February 2016.

There is no wonder if someone looks the children and youths together playing different kids' games and some sport activities around the camp. But, there are problems that exist in the area, especially when the Nuer and Anuak ethnic groups clash each other. At this time, the problem will be highly intensified and aggravated. As clearly stated one of the interviewees, there are times of clashes between the two groups because of petty issues like stealing, insulting and other minor activities.²

The relationship between refugee and the host community is characterized by uncertainty. They have experienced both situations of conflict and peaceful relations. As some of refugees stated that their personal relationship is good, but conflict situations between hosts and refugees are still taking place uncertainly. The conflictual relationship is attributed by violent interactions between the host communities which spillover effect on the refugees. These conflicts usually take place on the public road and areas close to the refugee camp. Conflict situations can easily escalated from petty issues between refugees and host communities into big disagreements. It can start from issues such as sexual assault, rape, drunkenness and theft.³ On the other hand, they have relations with refugees at market places and health service center. The respondents confirm that they are in normal contact with people from the refugees. Generally the interactions between hosts and refugees have become peaceful; however, there are still some problems in their relationships.⁴

3.2.5 The Response of UNHCR, ARRA and Host Communities to Refugee Crisis in Gambella

The civil war of South Sudan flooded thousands of refugees to Gambella region and this created humanitarian crisis. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Administrations for Refugee and Returnee Affairs and its partner organizations such as IOM, OCHA, WFP, NRC, IRC, MSF, ERCS and others began to provide support for refugees since 2014. From the entry point to the refugee camp, UNHCR and its partner organizations provide different aids for refugees like food, water, health, transport service and aid card / ration card since the arrival of refugees. In addition to this, UNHCR co-led with ARRA, DRC,IMC and UNICEF provided

² Interview with refugees, 29 February 2016, at 11:00am.

³ Ibid

⁴ Interview with camp security officer, 25 february2016, at 10:40pm.

workshop from 20-26 June 2015 on the law of the country and the area, the rights and responsibilities of refugees, basic concepts of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and working to create people-to-people relations between refugees and the host community.⁵ One of the refugees explained his feeling about the role of UNHCR, ARRA and host communities as follows:

I was greatly impressed and happy by the way we were welcomed that is accommodated by the government of Ethiopia, the host communities and UNHCR. It is extremely charitable and impressive of the government to follow an open border policy which has welcomed the refugees in Ethiopia, and also I want to say, I am so happy and I think am safe and I am living peaceful life than before now.⁶

One can conclude that life in Tierkidi refugee camp is relatively good since there is good relationship between the local people and refugees, in addition to the social interaction in the area there is also a favorable climatic condition which is an opportunity for refugees to grow crops.

During summer time, the refugees in their camp grow mainly maize in their backyard, which is great nutritional supplement and that helps to diversify their diet. However, according to the camp security officer of ARRA from Tierkidi refugee camp, there are a number of problems during their operation. Among these, most of the time the expectation of the refugees are beyond the realities on the ground, which in turn affect their day to day operation.

The official added that the refugees could not differentiate their rights and responsibilities which was great obstacle during operation to run it smoothly in their day to day activities.⁷ The presence of different organizations has enabled the refugees to develop well organized system in the refugee camp. This puts them in an advantage position compared to the host community. The next chapter of this paper will be focused to assess the impacts of the South Sudan refugee's presence in Tierkidi refugee camp on the economic, socio-cultural and security of the host communities in *Itang*.

⁵UNHCR Ethiopia: South Sudan Situation Operational Update 20-26 June 2015. pp, 3

⁶Interview with refugees, 29 February 2016, at 11:00am.

⁷ Interview with camp security officer, 25 February 2016, at 10:40am.

Chapter Four

4. The Economic, Socio-Cultural and Security Impacts of South Sudanese Refugees on the Host Communities of *Itang*, in Gambella Regional State

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and presents the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda*. The paper focused on the impacts in terms of economic, socio-cultural and security aspects. The analysis and findings are presented on the basis of the above features. The interaction between the refugee and host community has brought a tremendous impact on the hosting community.

4.2 Economic Impacts of Refugees

According to UNHCR (1997:2), the refugees compete with the local citizens over the scarce resources such as land, water, housing, food and medical services. These significantly change the flow of goods and services within the society as a whole and their presence impacted the host country's balance of payment and price of different services, which may cause inflationary pressures on prices and depress wages. The local host communities responded the case as follows during the interview:

The presence of international aid agencies drive up the price of house rent, accommodation for office and residential purposes for locally engaged staff workers, increasing price of restaurants, demand for food and other commodities rise in the market which stimulated the local economic activity and the price of some products beyond capacity of the local people.⁸

The refugee has contributed for the increased number of aid agencies operating in the camp which in turn leads to the increment of the price of local commodities. At the same time the demand for goods and services which desired by the refugees is increased. Contrary to the burden placed on the local poor host community with regards to price increase of food items, crop food farmers on the other hand are benefited positively from the increment of food items price. However this price situation has a negative impact on the majority of poor local hosts.

⁸ Interview with local host woman, at Terfam town, 07 March 2016, at 2:40pm.

Generally speaking the presence of refugees changed the availability of goods and services on the market. The presences of refugees seriously affected the livelihood systems of the local farmers. Some of the farmers continuously sell their products to the refugees and drink alcohol. This consequently exposes the farmers to hunger, family and community problems at large in which a number of people continuously rely on aid for food stuffs. One of the community service officials of ARRA has mentioned the case as:

Even though the refugees are receiving rations from the international relief agencies, they continued to depend on local crops and livestock. In order to diversify their diets, refugees sought other types of food, including meats, vegetables and grains. This pushed up prices of commodities, encouraged farmers to sell even more of their crops, and thus created famine within the local communities. Both food and non-food aids are traded in the local markets of *Terfam* town and expanding consumer markets for local goods and justifying increased foreign aid.⁹

The refugee settlements in Gambella are endowed with vast areas of fertile land. As stated in chapter three, the study area is an agricultural based area and the land is mainly used for farming and grazing activities. However, other people also acquired land for other purposes such as construction of houses and market places for sale of different items. The refugees used vast areas of land. As one of my respondents from the host community explained, the local host people lost some of their ownership of land because of:

The government takes our land for the setting of refugee camp. The host community left without any compensation and do not have access to sufficient relief programs. Most of the local people claim that the presences of refugees are irrelevant to the local people without refugees relocated from our land. The presence of different international and national organizations gives high emphasis for refugee and would not seem to reflect the consideration of the host community rather than the local people malnourished.¹⁰

In the area of the study, loss of land has a negative impact on the host community due to the presence of South Sudanese refugees. Most of the local people claimed that many people lost their villages and grazing lands that were used for their cattle, because of the influx of refugees and as a result the local people relocated from their home to other areas for the purpose of refugee camp settings.

⁹Interview with community service official of ARRA, 01 March 2016, at 3:15pm.

¹⁰Interview with local host individual at Terfam town, 05 March 2016, at 10:20am.

According to UNHCR (1997:3), the economic impact of refugees on the host community is not necessarily negative. Different national and international organizations like ARRA, UNHCR closely cooperates with sister agencies such as IOM, OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, NRC, Regional Health Bureau, Plan International, Help Age International, IRC, MSF, Save the Children, DRC and ERCS to improve the living standards of refugees in Gambella region and in this case, the South Sudanese refugees living in Tierkidi refugee camp as well as the surrounding community are also beneficiaries from the aid.

As explained in chapter three, UNHCR provides a wide range of community based support through its implementing partners in the areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection and community services, shelter, education, core relief items, logistics and site planning, environment and food. The presence of refugees brings economic stimulus for the host community. This stimulus takes place among other things, local purchase of food, non-food items, shelter materials supplied by relief agencies, payments made by aid workers, the assets brought by refugees themselves as well as employment and income added to local population directly or indirectly through assistance project for refugees. Accordingly the community service officer at Tierkidi refugee camp stated that:

The refugee camp has its own contribution for the development of the communities by providing different services to the people such as involving in small business which is conducted by both refugees and host communities, any social services provided by UNHCR and sister organizations provide extra services, 25% for the host community and 75% for refugees respectively. But, when we look at the case practically there is no limitation on the host community especially in the areas of health service.¹¹

Based on the field observation and interviews made, some of the South Sudanese refugees were participating in small business activities. As a result they created a market for pursuing their livelihood by selling of firewood's and other items. These created businesses and income generating opportunities for themselves in particular and for the host communities in general. According to the local people and traders, it is estimated that hundreds of small businesses were created including retail shops, bakeries/*Sambussa* and tea rooms and others have been

¹¹Interview with community service officer of ARRA, 01 March 2016, at 3:15pm.

established since the beginning of the refugees' arrival. ¹²According to UNHCR (2015:3) report, on the last week of June, 2015 the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) distributed cash to 400 beneficiaries in Tierkidi refugee camp to improve their livelihood and business, each of ten groups of 20 people received 4000,00 Birr (US\$ 200). NRC also distributed woods and nails to 150 beneficiaries to construct their business area and the distributions are ongoing.¹³

On the basis of field observation, the influx of huge number of South Sudanese refugees concentrated on small areas of land has the effect of stimulating local demand for consumable and non-consumable resources. Within and around the refugee camp small businesses are flourished. These include restaurant, groceries, shops and tea rooms. Also there are increasing of second hand clothing and services such as Bajaj and shoe repair services are also some of the expanding small businesses in the area.

The small marginalized region of Ethiopia (Gambella region) is hosting thousands of South Sudanese refugees has earned an international reputation as generous and hospitable host people. According to the data gained from one of my informants the presence of international agencies put the name of *Itang* in the air corridor of international arena. In day to day, different researchers, visitors and NGOs from different parts of the world come to *Itang* for different purposes.¹⁴

According to UNHCR (1997:4) the presence of refugees attract the development agencies to the host areas. While infrastructure is developed in the initial stage primarily to facilitate the work of host governments, UNHCR and its implementing partners in the refugee affected areas, believe that it can also serve as a catalyst to 'open up' the host region to development efforts that would otherwise never reach these 'marginal' areas. As of the field observation the UNHCR and different Non Governmental Organizations provided support for the host community of *Itang woreda* by constructing different social services such as school, health center, constructing road from refugee camp to *Itang* town and within the refugee camp. As one of the reporters of Gambella radio informants addressed the issue:

¹²Interview with local people, 13 March 2016, at 4:00pm

¹³ UNHCR Ethiopia: South Sudan Situation Operational Update, 20-26 June 2015. The UN Refugee Agency.

¹⁴Interview with local teacher, 03 March 2016, at 9:15am.

The UNHCR constructed road from refugee camp to *Itang* town and within the refugee camp, school from grade 1-8 and boarding school for kids. ARRA coordinated with different local officials constructed different social services for the community in order to create smooth relationship between refugees and the host communities.¹⁵

According to Plan international of Ethiopia refugees has positively impacted the host communities by facilitated the establishment of permanent nurseries, primary schools in the refugee settlements. There is therefore evidence that there are many refugee students in primary cycles of education in Gambella region in general and Tierkidi refugee camp in particular. Some of the teachers who teach in these schools are refugees themselves. UNHCR and Plan International Ethiopia assisted for the establishment of these schools in the camp and hence provide logistics.¹⁶ Accordingly, one of the respondents explained that, sometimes International refugee agencies deliberately make relief assistance available to local people so as to increase the receptiveness of the host community to refugees. This is intended so as to reduce tension between refugee and local communities.¹⁷

According to Kurimoto (2005:9) the aid food includes maize, beans, rice, wheat flour, biscuits, cooking oil, sugar and several types of tinned foods which became available at local market at very cheap prices. The refugees sell the surplus of the aid food items in exchange for cloth, vegetable and different services. Trading in and around the refugee camp attracted many small business owners in to the area. Gambella and other small towns like Abobo, Itang and Pugnido expanded and became trade centers. In these towns there were small kiosks, butcheries, tea and coffee shops, bars and restaurants and hotels of mud walls. The same issue was raised and discussed with the local communities. Farmers who have been producing sorghum, maize, vegetables and others found it difficult to find market for their products. However, now the refugee presence in the area has created market opportunities and new jobs for the host communities.

¹⁵ Interview with local reporter, 04 March 2016, at 11:20am.

¹⁶ Tuach Samuel, Plan International Ethiopia South Sudan Response Kule 2

¹⁷ Interview with local people, 12 March 2016, at 11:00am.

Even though most of the people at the local *Terfam* market are highlanders¹⁸, the few local people are taking the opportunities for making a living by the camp market and elsewhere around the camp. For the purpose of market interaction both refugees and host communities are highly interdependent to each other.¹⁹

Kurimoto (2005:9) noted that the refugees sell some of their aid food to the market. They choose sorghum and maize than wheat which they get from international aid agencies. So they barter their wheat with the local's sorghum and maize. They also sell cattle and buy poultry. The refugees also buy different necessities from market like cloth, vegetables, fruits, etc. According to the resident informants many highlanders from different parts coming to the area after the establishment of the camp and settle around the camp especially in *Terfam* town in search of market. The same issues were explained by the local merchant in *Terfam* town:

The Anuak ethnic group produces different products to the local market such as mango and tomato while the Nuer ethnic group produces and sells items like cattle, milk and maize. Similarly the refugees sell blankets, cooking oils, salt, sugar, UNHCR tents, wheat flour and soaps which are obtained from the international aid agencies. In the refugee camp some women are weaving mats and baskets that they sell on the local market. Small trading is very common in Tierkidi camp. The income that they generate helps the refugee community to improve their food consumption and diversification of their nutrition system.²⁰

On basis of field observation and information gathered from the local host community, some host local communities and the highlanders took advantages from the presence of refugees to commercialize their different goods and services with refugees. Local people benefited from their products such as mango, tomato, milk, maize and other products which were highly in need and they made money out of it. Farmers are now earning extra income from their commercial products in the research sites due to the presence of refugees.

¹⁸ The term highlander applied in the area collectively for different people who came from different parts of Ethiopian highland for different purpose.

¹⁹ Interview with local elders, at Itang, 08 March 2016, at 3:15pm.

²⁰ Interview with local merchant, Terfam town, 06 March 2016, at 2:30pm.



Fig.3 The pictures shows market interactions between the refugee and local community at the local town of Terfam. A photo captured by the researcher during field work, 06 March 2016.

In addition to the above mentioned positive impacts, the presence of South Sudanese refugees created many temporary job opportunities for local communities like temporary employment opportunity to assist and reach refugees. Local people hired as medical assistant, camp administration, relief administrators, watchmen, project supervisors, extension staff, car drivers, teachers and construction workers in different areas like roads and small houses constructions.²¹ Generally, the refugees made impact on the economy positively while brought some negative impacts on the lives of the host community.

²¹Interview with local individual, 02 March 2016, at 10:50am.

4.3 Environmental Impacts of Refugees

The presence of large influxes of refugees has also been associated with environmental impacts on land, water, natural resources and slum growth. Various studies provide examples of different types of environmental impacts related to the influx of refugees and their long term presence (Kurimoto, 2005; Martin, 2005; Regassa, 2010 and UNHCR, 1997).

The refugee presence in Gambella region has affected the availability and access to local environmental resources of the region. As refugee presence increases the population in the host communities, it would consequently place intolerable pressure on and competition for the environmental resources such as land, water and fuel wood as these would be shared. According to Regassa (2010:140) refugees in any areas use the forest nearby to fulfill their timber and firewood consumption. These deforested a forest around the camp and cause a serious environmental degradation. According to the UNHCR (1997:7) the addition of an extensive groups of refugees to an existing population creates a sudden and massive demand for scarce natural resources such as land, fuel, water, food and shelter materials with long-term implications on their sustainable re-generation.

According to Martin (2005:336) the refugees in Bonga camp of Gambella region, natural resources such as land, forest and wild life have now much scarcer than before and they blamed the refugees for this situations. They also complained about refugees stealing their crops, water, destroying their irrigation channels, using illegal fishing methods and spoiling their traditional grazing lands. The same issue was raised and explained by the local host community like this:

Our forests are highly depleted due to tented camps were converted into refugee villages, household consumption and refugees high competition with our local communities for scarce resource such as land, jobs and environmental resources. Many local people are brought domestic animals which grazed near the refugee camp, this adding the problems of over grazing and acceleration of soil erosion in the area.²²

As Kurimoto (2005:8) mentioned, the sudden change to the human environment also had a profound impact on the local wild life. Hunting had long been an important economic activity for the Anuak in particular and the Gambella region of Ethiopia in general. After the 1983s onwards,

²²Interview with local host, 06 March 2016, at 11:25am.

the rich abundance of the region wild life was almost exhausted and the Anuak lost their primary source of dietary meat. As the local community explained, the presence of South Sudanese refugees affected the natural resources of the area such as land, fuel, water, food and shelter materials and considered the refugees as leftovers their land for erosion and decreased their soil fertility. Their production highly deteriorated due to the increased of land grabbing from the host community for the purpose of refugee camp.²³

According to the information gathered from the local farmers, since most of refugees relied on firewood for cooking, the cutting of trees had intensified causing deforestation. As information I heard from the area, cutting of trees long before the arrival of the refugees to the host community. This indicates that they should not totally blame the refugees for the situation of deforestation in the community. The deforestation caused by the increased population in size and the prevalence of agricultural investment land in the area.

According to land rent contractual agreement made between Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Karuturi Agro Products Plc indicates that the government provided the land measuring of 42,088 hectares of land in *Itang special district* to the Karuturi Agro Products Plc for the development of palm, cereals and pulses farm. During the field study I was able to observe the extent of deforestation caused by agricultural investment land and refugees. For me it is difficult to quantify the deforested land but there was able to see large area of forest land was cleared from the refugee camp to *Itang* and the forest along the road from *Itang* district to Gambella town. This significantly contributed for the deforestation of the natural resources of the area.

²³Interview with the local people, 07March 2016, at 3:00pm.



Fig. 4 The picture describes firing or destroying the forest for the purpose of agricultural investment near the refugee camp by the Karuturi Agro Products Plc, Indian investor. (A photograph captured by the researcher during field work, 09 March 2016).

In the Gambella region of Ethiopia just as in most African countries fuel wood and charcoal is the affordable source of energy and hence dependable source of fuel by most residents. Refugee Presence certainly increases the population resulting in a significant increase in the use of these environmental resources. One charcoal seller in the *Terfam* town whom I communicate during field observation and talked to with regards to the environmental resources use in the area stated the case. The refugee influx has increased the population in the area as well as the demand for fuel wood and charcoal. This serves as a means of income for the refugees and the local people.²⁴

²⁴ Interview with Charcoal Seller, at Terfam town, 09 March 2016, at 3:30pm.

As observed around the Tierkidi refugee camp and interviewed refugees highly rely on natural resources for the purpose of economic activities like charcoal making, collecting firewood and selling of a grass for roof covering can overburden water supplies and local people show antipathy towards this use of resources. The natural resources of the area were managed by the Gambella Regional State Agricultural and Rural Development Bureau. But there is no adequate mechanism of controlling fire wood collectors and charcoal makers of the area.

Another key observation in the refugee camp is that, shelter service coverage remains inadequate. This also has an impact on the environment, as refugee cut indigenous trees to construct and maintain their houses. In addition to inadequate shelter, the traditional three-stone fire using firewood is the most commonly used cooking method in the camp and result in the loss of significant amounts of wood energy. Rapid deforestation is occurring in and around the camp. Accordingly, one of the refugee explained this issue as the energy saving stove that have been distributed by UNHCR partners in the camp are inadequate, at the same time the size of the stoves is not fit to cook meals for a large family. Conflict over natural resource is the main source of tensions between the refugees and host communities. There is a threatening conflict with the host communities on the areas of land, sharing water points, school facilities and toilets.²⁵



Fig. 5 The picture depicts the refugee's shelter and traditional three stone fire using firewood for most commonly used for cooking. (A photo captured by the researcher during field work, 11 March 2016).

²⁵Interview with refugee women, Tierkidi Camp, 07 March 2016, at 3:15pm.

However, according to one of the workers of ARRA, in Tierkidi refugee camp there is an environmental protection program which is remarkable since the arrival of refugees to make the point of keeping the natural resources of the area and using them as a shade and shelter. The program is Natural Resource Development and Environmental Protection (NRDEP) which is launched by UNHCR, ARRA and other organizations to conduct the rehabilitation program to save the natural resources of the area. The NRDEP planned to conserve and protect the forest from destruction during the presence of refugees and after the releasing of refugees from the camp up to 10 years with collaboration to ARRA. However the program could not shoulder their responsibility in a proper manner due to this the natural resources of the area has seriously destroyed by the refugees without any limitations from the concerned body.²⁶

4.4 Refugees Impact on the Health and Sanitation of Host Community

The influxes of South Sudanese refugees possess a big threat on the health sector since there is an increase in number of population size. The refugee themselves have departed through traumatic and difficult environment without requiring specialized medical services including psychosocial support, which is already living in a dire condition. The health conditions reported by the UNHCR which includes high mortality rate due to medical complication of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), diarrheal as well as high case load malaria, Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI) and the outbreak of E- virus hepatitis in the refugee camp mostly.²⁷

As it was reported by the UNHCR at the Itang health center, diseases like hepatitis' E- virus (HEV) in January 2015 a total of 1,117 suspected cases of HEV 21(1.9%) deaths were reported among three refugee camps residing in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. Of these 211(18.9%) occurred in Tierkidi refugee camp. This disease killed one malnourished boy aged one year (1 yr.) who residing in Tierkidi refugee camp. Within the local health centers, there is no enough capacity for provision of adequate public health interventions to handle this increasing influx of disease.²⁸ By mid-June, an additional 50 Acute Jaundice Syndrome (AJS) defined as yellow discoloration of the eyes; cases were reported across three refugee camps in the Gambella region,

²⁶ Interview with official of ARRA, 02 March 2016, at 11:15am.

²⁷ WHO Mission to Refugee Camps in Gambella Region. WHO Ethiopia Country Office. 21-26 April 2014

²⁸ CDC, Hepatitis E Outbreak among Refugees from South Sudan — Gambella, Ethiopia, April 2014–January 2015. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2014-15; 1-2.

Kule, Leitchuor, and Tierkidi refugee camp.²⁹ The poor health nutrition status aggravated by existing poor sanitary conditions in and around the camp which pose a big public health risk including potential communicable diseases outbreaks among the refugees and hosting communities.

Due to the health impact of the refugees' situation in Gambella region, national and international resources had to be channeled into medical care services. The Ethiopian government, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and other humanitarian agencies quickly established a joint multi-sector's response including active AJS case detection, passive AJS surveillance, soap distribution, water quality monitoring and outbreak response training.³⁰ Accordingly, one of the health personnel at the *Itang* town explained the case, up on their capacity expanded their health care services to treat the ailing host population in addition to the refugees. Different staff workers often overworked to treat the most vulnerable groups such as women, children and the aged ones who arrived in a poor health condition.³¹ The overcrowding of refugees within and around the Tierkidi camp caused for various diseases such as cholera, respiratory diseases, skin infections and malaria are among others.

Researchers' observation of the refugee camp show that the evidence of unsafe environment due to the disposal of human and other solid wastes in the refugee camp. As a result large concentration of population as a result of the refugee presence produced large quantities of human excreta and other waste which has seriously affected sanitation around the refugee-host communities. This disposal contaminated the local ground water and caused spread of diseases. In addition to this, the researcher observed that there was no effective and feasible way of dealing with pit latrines once they were filled to capacity with human excreta. Other wastes that were seen disposed indiscriminately in the refugee camp area included plastic bags, dry cell batteries, empty tins and packaging, scrap from metal works and latrine slabs. As a consequence the host communities are faced with a serious problem of diseases. Generally speaking the areas are overcrowded and sanitation is very poor.

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ Interview with local health personnel, 04 March 2016, at 11:40am.

As the observation of the refugee camp indicates and gathered information from the refugees, the available communal latrines are inadequate and access stands at one toilet for 26-30 people in the refugee camp. The constructed latrines lack safety and privacy due to loose soil formation and poor construction, which led to poor sanitary conditions. This is favorable for the breeding of vectors like flies and mosquitoes in the camp and there is no adequate hand washing facilities with existing latrines that resulted for certain communicable diseases.



Fig.6 The picture shows solid wastes dumped between Terfam town and Tierkidi refugee camp. (A photo captured by the researcher during field work, 09 March 2016).

According to different documents such as UNHCR the presence of refugees has not only negative impacts on the host community but also it has its own positive impacts. Social services like health institution have grown in *Itang Woreda* due to the influx of different humanitarian agencies accompanying the refugee's presence. These services are equally accessible to the local community, free of charges which have been a positive impact for the host community. As respondents stated free medical service at clinics in the camp provided by humanitarian organizations are accessible to host communities.³²

³²Interview with local people, 11 March 2016, 8:30am.

4.5 The Socio-Cultural Impacts of Refugees on the Host Community

According to the UNHCR (1997:7) the refugees who are from the same cultural and linguistic groups with the local populations, there is often identification with and sympathy for their situation. According to Falge (1997:8) the majority of refugees in *Itang* camp being Gajaak Nuer were related through linguistic ties with local population. As a result they deserve special respect and treatment by the host which is always threat for the Anuaks. According to the local community's explanation, there are many refugees who are living within the host communities sharing food and resources. Some of the refugees have been housed with family/ friend in the *Itang woreda* from the refugee camp for the purpose of proximity to their cattle and homestead. Most of the time, it is difficult to identify refugees from the host communities due to the similarities that exist between them. This social tie seriously affected the social security's of the community and helps the refugees to attack their enemies in the form of group outside the camp.³³

As Kurimoto (2005:13) noted that a number of Nuer ethnic group migrated to Gambella region from Sudan. Some were registered as refugees, but others settled in different places along the Baro River and became Ethiopian citizens. The coming of Nuer refugees, the Anuak saw as a deliberate strategy by the Ethiopian Nuer officials to dominate the Anuak and take over their land. As one local host community explained:

Some groups of the host community believe that they are governed by the South Sudanese officials not by Ethiopians. Especially, Anuak and Opos strongly complain the presence of refugees in Tierkidi and Kule1 refugee camps have been highly affecting the ethnic balance within the local populations. It also they complain the coming of refugees may aggravate conflict which can affects the securities of the host community because of the refugees distinguished by crimes such as theft, murder, rape, looting and sometimes loss of civilian life. Additionally, the refugees affected the socio-cultural aspects of our communities by involving in different illegal activities such as indirect prostitution, alcoholism and hide out criminals are also claimed to rise after refugee camp established.³⁴

³³ Interview with local people, 10 March 2016, at 1:40pm.

³⁴ Interview with local elders, 01 March 2016, at 3:40pm.

The other social problem that affected the life of host community due to the presence of refugees is socio-cultural aspects. Some of the female refugees in the camp are highly eager to get married and give birth as to their husbands died in the civil war of South Sudan. This can affect the health of the host community by contributing its part for sexually transmitted disease. According to my local informants:

The refugees are highly in need to have a number of children as of their husbands were died during the civil war in the South Sudan. Even some of refugee's women are not voluntary to use contraceptive methods such as condoms, pills or three month injectables or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases which aid by the UNHCR. Girls are also becoming bold enough to say no in using family planning; this exposed the refugees for different sexually transmitted diseases among the refugees themselves and the host community in general. Such acts directly or indirectly affects the socio-cultural life of the host communities at large.³⁵

The data gathered show that the presence of refugees affected the Social relations between the refugees and host communities. Some individuals from the local community disappeared into the town for several days without any work. One of the informants explained the case, as some individuals tended to disappear into *Terfam*³⁶ and *Itang* towns and did not return to their home villages for several days. As a result the towns are also associated with social problems such as drunkenness, prostitution, sexual promiscuity and mischief. Women have been complaining that the fear of losing their husbands as disappearance into towns for many days without any reason, which contributed as serious family problem among the host community.³⁷

According to some of the local people: one the means of earning income for the refugee girls or ladies to survive is engaging into sexual relationships, either indirect commercial prostitution or through forms of receiving goods and gifts from a regular sexual partners.³⁸ Accordingly, the refugee women are particularly susceptible for dependency on sexual relationships so as to sustain their life financially and for luxury items.

³⁵ Interview with local people, 08 March 2016, at 4:00pm.

³⁶ Terfam is a new town which is found in between Itang and Tierkidi refugee camp and a market place for refugees and local peoples of the area.

³⁷ Interview with Local Woman, 04 March 2016, at 10:20am.

³⁸ Interview with Local People, 13 March 2016, at 4:50pm.

As a result unwanted pregnancies sometimes happen even to youngster.³⁹ A number of refugee women in the Gambella refugee camps in general and at *Itang* particularly are indirect prostitution which serves as the easiest means of earning income. As collected data show drug abuse by refugee youth is quite rampant in the refugee camp and has serious impact in the host communities. The community members are unhappy with this attitudes and behaviors since it is against public moral, traditional values and spiritual life of the local community.

According to UNHCR (1997:6) the large number of refugees have a negative impact on the social security's of the host community in different ways like crimes, theft, murder and others. Additionally, prostitution and alcoholism can be mentioned as the major social problems of the refugee camp. On the other hand, poverty and idleness in the refugee camps are contributing factors for the prevalence of such tendencies, particularly the case is serious when there are groups of young men who are idle. Informants confirmed that: most of the time the problems which bring conflict between the refugee and the host community are due to the gender insult, sexual harassment, drinking alcohol are the main causes for the outbreak of conflict between the refugee and the host communities.⁴⁰ An informant explained, the recent happening in Tierkidi refugee camp as a refugee whose name called Dor from the Nuer ethnic group was died in Mettu Karl Referral Hospital and some are injured due to Araki intoxication and conflict took place around and within the refugee camp.⁴¹ One can infer that the presence of South Sudanese refugees affect the social security's of the host communities, which may endanger the security of the region and the camp as well as instability of the area.

According to women's refugee commissions (2009:5) women's are highly affected by their increasing involvement of income generating activities which can in turn affects not only the distributions of resources but also traditional roles of family structures.⁴² Based on the observation and information gathered by interviews the social problems such as gender based dominance or violence often increases during conflict.

³⁹Interview with Teacher informant, 06 March 2016, at 10:45am.

⁴⁰ Interview with Teacher informant, 06 March 2016, at 10:45am.

⁴¹Interview with local people, 04 March 2016, at 9:35am.

⁴²Women's Refugee Commission.2009, *Peril or Protection: The link between livelihoods and gender based violence in displacement settings*. New York, USA. Available at womensrefugeecommission.org/

This is particularly the case with regards to women's vulnerability to sexual abuses, exploitation, domestic violence and trafficking. In the camp the majorities of the refugees are women and children which are depend on incomes earned by female's family members. As a result, women are increasingly participating in different informal activities to support their family members including petty trading in market, collecting fire woods, provision of seeds and others.

4.6 Refugees Impact on the Security of the Host Community

The presence of large number of refugees in different parts of Gambella region, both in urban and rural areas who were mixed freely with the local inhabitants, are shown to have had adverse security impacts in certain cases. Several refugees are being involved in domestic politics, leading to political tensions, violence and attacks against others ethnic groups. With the political instability of South Sudanese resulted a lot of insecurity in the area is more prevalent. A lot of resources have been diverted to attending refugees and in stalking the problem of insecurity. Complicated weaponry have found their way into the area promoting banditry, cattle rustling and violence in the area is more common.

According to Selam reported in HOA affairs, the Gambella region of Ethiopia is facing renewed ethnic conflict along its western border. Since late January 2016, what began as a dispute over land rights between Nuer and Anuak ethnic groups has spread, claiming dozens of lives. As she reported the clash is, in part a result of influx of thousands of ethnic Nuer South Sudanese refugees who have been displaced in the civil war in South Sudan and were forced to move into the Gambella region of Ethiopia.⁴³ As information gathered from the local people, the conflict that arises between the Anuak and the Nuer ethnic groups at Gambella expanded to its surrounding and to the Tierkidi refugee camp. This conflict highly affected the innocent women, children and the aged at the refugee camp and also affected other people outside of the camp. This is highly intensifying the security and stability of the camp and also affected the security and safeties of the small size refugees of Anuak people in the camp and the surrounding areas. These complexities have resulted in higher than the usual police presence in town, revision at check points, restriction on UN staff travel and accompanying travels.⁴⁴

⁴³Selam Solomon is a Journalist and a Web Producer at VOAs HOA Affairs, February 18, 2016 at 9:14 pm.

⁴⁴ Interview with Local people, 01 March 2016, at 9:00am.

According to Regasa (2010:134) after the mid 1980s hostility towards the refugees/SPLA grow among the Anuak due to the arrogant behaviors of SPLM/A refugees. There were military activity of SPLM/A, its soldiers atrocities against the host community, the facilities that build for refugees. This creates a sense of jealousy. As some informants explained: The presence of refugees is a source of tensions in their day to day relations between the Anuak and Nuer ethnic groups. Due to the suspicion from the refugees organized by the Nuer host communities and providing support for attacking other groups of people. Some local people agreed that refugees pose security threat for the host community.⁴⁵ Respondents explained that, some local officials use refugees as a political force as a country of their residence and react equally with other people as a native citizens of Ethiopia.⁴⁶

Most of the informants were clarified that the security impacts of refugees are negative on the host community. They are a political force for their country of residence and the way they react to the politics of the host country and poses insecurity risks on the local administrative structure. According to some of informants' explanations, in the recent conflict that took place in Gambella region some of the refugees in Lare on the border of *Itang woreda*, were waving the South Sudanese flag and expressed their sense of belongingness to their home country of South Sudan.⁴⁷

As Dereje (2014:2) tried to explain some of the refugees didn't settle in the refugee camp and they are started life with Ethiopian Nuers and some Nuer political elites are using the refugees to gain political advantage by issuing Ethiopian ID cards to Nuer refugees. The same issue was explained and raised by the local people indicates that some of the refugees who lived in Gambella region, take identity card from the local officials indirectly and this pave the way for acquiring dual citizenship. This helps the refugee to have equal right to get job opportunity with host community, because they know each other and most of the refugees are communicate in one language across the Gambella region of Ethiopia. Additionally, the majority of refugees are Nuer

⁴⁵ Interview with Local Woman, 02 March 2016, at 11:00am.

⁴⁶ Interview with local women, 02 March 2016, at 11:00am.

⁴⁷ Interview with Teacher informant, 09 March 2016, at 2:10pm.

ethnic group and it has strong ties with the host communities and some residents live in the refugee camp for the purpose of obtaining aid from the donor organization.⁴⁸

The other informants were also explained that, the political problem in the area is manifested in terms of ethnic groups. In the area there is manipulation of ethnicity by those in a position of government power was seen refugee as a tool for holding government office.⁴⁹ An informant described the way in which some local officials use refugee as a primary tool to hold government office by facilitating different conditions for refugees.⁵⁰

The security situations in Gambella region continue to deteriorate both in camps and in different locations across the region. Inadequate border security also poses a big security threat on the host communities of Gambelle region. According to the informant's explanations, insecurity is widely spread among the refugee population, which obviously had a significant spillover effect in the host communities. As the local people explained there are cases of refugees coming with arms and army uniform to the area. Sometimes there is inter- ethnic tensions which are being witnessed and the recent clashes have left a number of people dead and injured. Movements and presences of illegal weapons have been observed in and out of camps, with shooting incidents being witnessed in different areas.⁵¹

According to the information obtained from the Southern Sudanese refugees, small and medium size arms in the possession of refugees were used, but it was for 'self-protection' against their coworker refugee enemies. Even some refugees often consider each other belonging to different warring factions or political groupings back in their home countries based on the conflict that provoked their mass departure.⁵² According to the security officer of the camp, the presence of some armed refugees flow creating serious security threats for refugees, host communities, local authorities and humanitarian workers. The task of identifying rebel refugees within a mass influx of refugee is made difficult by the humanitarian workers. As per the official, some rebel's refugee groups rarely identify themselves, and often hide their weapons in order to mix together

⁴⁸ Interview with Local People, 10 March 2016, at 8:40am.

⁴⁹ Interview with Local People, 10 March 2016, at 8:40am.

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Interview with Local People, 11 March 2016, at 11:15am.

⁵² Interview with Refugee, Tierkidi Camp, 07 March 2016, 3:15pm.

in with the host population. As per the officials explanations: the main difficulties are separating the honest/ real refugees and war displaced people from combatants and criminals means that rebel forces or criminal often live among refugees. In addition other difficulties in the camp are crimes go unpunished because there is no officially appointed body to back up what rule of law does say.⁵³

The other security problems of the area are the majority of those refugees are women and children. As refugees explained, most residents of this refugee camp are women and children so who are at risk in defending themselves and there is no adequate police or military personnel there to minimize the threat and take any action whenever necessary.⁵⁴ As UNHCR (2014:2) report that the *Itang* detainees do not have access to legal counsel, there is no division between the men's and women's areas, and there is no secure area for private counseling. According to the report indicated, 17 refugees were detained, the majority of whom had been detained for fighting and disorderly conduct on a public road. Among the 17 refugees, four (4) of them are detained for theft at a store in Tierkidi refugee camp.⁵⁵

According to UNHCR (1997:7) the presence of a large number of refugee populations in host communities inevitably also means a strain on the local administration. Host country, national and regional authorities divert considerable resources and manpower from the pressing demands of their own development to the urgent task of keeping refugees alive, alleviating their sufferings and ensuring the security of the whole community. As one of the camp watchmen explained, the UNHCR and its key partners have established the Area Security Management Team (ASMT) structure and recruit some refugees from the camp and provided training in order to serve as “*Chursa*”⁵⁶ (Community Police) in the refugee camp to protect the securities of the camp and its surrounding from different illegal acts such as thief, insult, sexual harassment, stolen of ration card, handle incidents of gender-based violence and identify the refugees from non-refugees by their identity card.⁵⁷ The role of “*Chursa*” is providing immediate medical care, psychosocial

⁵³ Interview with security officer of the camp, 08 March 2016, at 8:50am.

⁵⁴ Interview with Refugee Women, 06 March 2016, at 1:30pm.

⁵⁵ Ethiopia: UNHCR Operational Update, 26 September-1 October 2014. Available at www.unhcr.org

⁵⁶ *Chursa* (community police) is the Nuer language of South Sudanese refugees which is called militia/police who handle different problem within and around the refugee camp

⁵⁷ Interview with watchmen of the camp, 04 March 2016, at 10:50am.

support and legal counseling not to isolate themselves from others, if a woman is raped by other refugees.

Generally speaking conflict occurred between refugees and their hosts as well as among refugees themselves. Refugee-host conflict arises as a result of competition over resources as well as from socio-cultural disparities among the Nuer and Anuak ethnic groups. Conflict among refugees tends to cause anxiety and insecurity in the refugee camp as well as the host communities. The attitude and behaviors of refugees whilst in camp mostly reveal a relationships to the warring factions even though they lived within the same camp as refugees. Insecurity therefore, played a negative role in the psychology of the local host community.

Conclusion

The study was carried out with broader objective of assessing the economic, socio-cultural and security impacts of massive presence of South Sudanese refugees on the host communities of *Itang Special Woreda* by focusing on a case of Tierkidi Refugee Camp in Gambella region. One of the peripheral regions of Ethiopia, Gambella, has been predominantly characterized by presence of large but also ever increasing number of refugees from South Sudan. As a result of these unstoppable exoduses of the refugees from South Sudan for whatever reason resulted in socio-economic, political and security complex. The study area of the host communities in Gambella region of Ethiopia has been characterized by various socio-political implications which can be expressed in terms of fierce competition over already scarce economic resources like grazing and clean water supply and several related issues as well discussed in this research paper. The overall findings in this research paper leads to draw a general conclusion that the massive presence of refugees from South Sudan are having more of negative implications than positive gains on the host communities of *Itang*.

Economically, the presences of refugees have both positive and negative impacts on the host communities of *Itang*. The research finding reveals a number of positive outcomes of the presence of refugees. Some of the positive economic impacts for the host communities included creation of new employment opportunities to the host communities, diversification of production and commercialization of local goods, and services sector and infrastructural development by the aid agencies involved in hosting refugees from South Sudan. Nonetheless, the research findings also helped to conclude that the presence of refugees is having negative economic consequences too on the host communities. Some of these negative economic consequences include diminishing land holdings, environmental degradation and escalation of the prices of local products. The overall conclusion in the economic dimension therefore is the host community of *Itang Woreda* is having more positive economic implications than negative ones.

The health and sanitation issues were great concern to the host communities due to the overcrowded and limited availability of treatment and medication services. Worst of all, skin infections, cholera, malaria, respiratory diseases and hepatitis E-virus constitute a serious threat on the health of host communities due to their contact with refugees. Nongovernmental and humanitarian organizations have been exerted their utmost effort to mitigate the problem through the provision of free medical service at different clinics both for the host communities and the refugees and increased the size of staffs to control such diseases. However, there is dissatisfaction with regard to the quality of health care service provided by these institutions. Additionally, the refugees equally produced huge amount of garbage with host communities, as a result of this the tonnage of waste highly increased around the refugee camp. In effect, the unsafe disposal of waste highly affected the health of host communities by attracting insects and mosquitoes and spreading unpleasant smells due to the waste indiscriminately disposed everywhere. The overall conclusion in the health and sanitation aspect therefore in that the gigantic presence of refugees from South Sudan are having negative health and sanitation impacts on the host communities of *Itang Woreda*.

The study also reveals that the socio-cultural interaction between the refugees and the host communities is more of conflictual than cooperative relationships. The host communities commonly complained that the refugees have added socio-cultural problems in the area. There is a firm belief on the side of host community that the refugee is a source for criminal acts like theft, rape and murder and the like. Concomitantly, other social problems such as alcoholism and indirect prostitutions increased at an alarming rate in the areas of the refugee camp. This has been aggravated by many acts of criminality attributed to the presence of the South Sudanese refugees and makes the area unsafe for human habitation. The majority of host community members are also unhappy because such acts severely affected the public morality, traditional values and spiritual life of the host communities. Based on the research findings it can be concluded that the whole socio-cultural impacts of refugees were negative on the host communities of *Itang*.

The evidence from a voluminous body of sources indicated that the presence of large number of refugees in *Itang* has negatively affected the securities of host communities. The majority of host communities in the study area felt that the security impacts of refugees significantly varied. The number of refugees in *Itang* area were informally mixed with local people, are witnessed to have adverse security consequences in certain areas. Additionally, the refugees have been manipulated by the local political officials for electoral and partisan purposes by issuing identity card indirectly on the basis of their ethnic similarities. Some of the refugees have involved in local politics, leading to tensions, violence and attacks against other groups. The favoring of one group over another group is the allegation that they engage in criminal activities and contribute to aggravating the security situation of the region.

The study revealed that the frequent border insecurity of the area have gravely affected the lives of the host community in Gambella region. On the other hand the presences of illegal guns on the hands of refugees have been increasing the violence around the refugee camp which seriously affected the stability of the host community in *Itang Woreda*. The porous nature of the border is caused for the insecurity and instability of the area. The presence of massive South Sudanese refugees in *Itang* inevitably also meant to strain on the local administration. The local and national government diverted extensive resources and police force away from the normal activities to the task of keeping refugees and ensuring the security of the host community.

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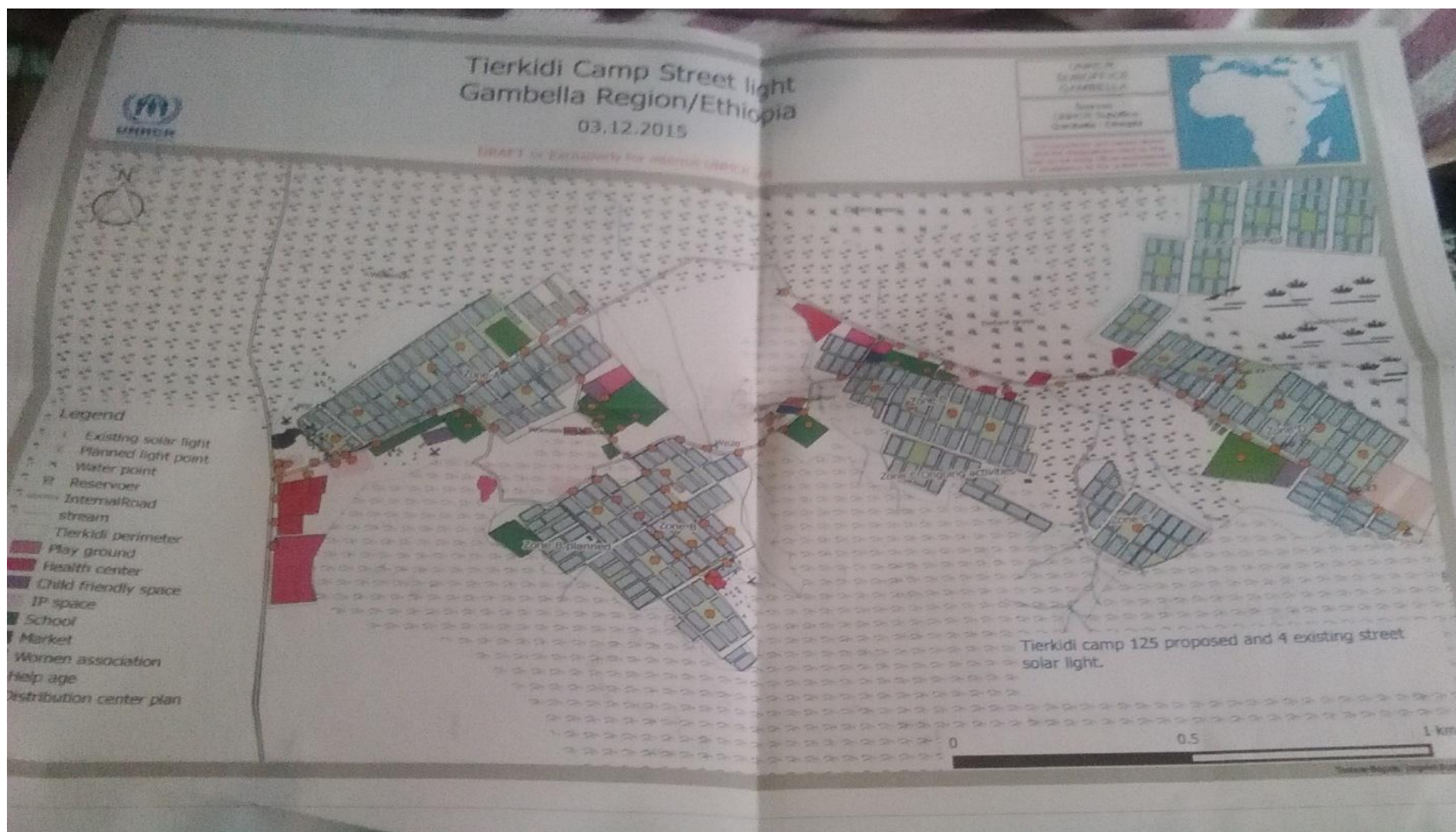
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Appendix -1: Overview of Respondents

Resp. No.	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Nationality	Sex
1	Tierkidi Camp	04 March, 2016	South Sudan	M
2	Tierkidi Camp	30 Feb, 2016	South Sudan	F
3	Terfam Town	29 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
4	Terfam Town	05 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
5	Terfam Town	13 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
6	Terfam Town	12 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
7	Itang Town	07 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
8	Terfam Town	06 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
9	Itang Town	02 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
10	Terfam Town	06 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
11	Itang Town	07 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
12	Terfam Town	09 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
13	Terfam Town	07 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
14	Itang Town	04 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
15	Terfam Town	11 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
16	Tierkidi Camp	10 March 2016	South Sudanese	F
17	Terfam Town	01 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
18	Itang Town	08 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
19	Terfam Town	04 March 2016	Ethiopian	F

20	Terfam Town	13 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
21	Itang Town	04 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
22	Terfam Town	02 March 2016	Ethiopian	F
23	Terfam Town	02 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
24	Itang Town	09 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
25	Tefam Town	10 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
26	Terfam Town	11 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
27	Tierkidi camp	07 March 2016	South Sudan	M
28	Tierkidi Camp	06 March 2016	South Sudan	F
29	Tierkidi Camp	04 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
30	Tierkidi Camp	04 March 2016 M	Ethiopian	M
No.	Place Of Interview	Date Of Interview	Nationality	Sex
1	Itang Town	04 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
2	Itang Town	03&06 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
3	Tierkidi Camp	01&08 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
4	Tierkidi camp	02 March 2016	Ethiopian	M
5				

Appendix 2: Map of Tierkidi Refugee Camp



Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Endalkachew Girma

May 2016

This thesis is submitted for examination with my approval as an advisor of the candidate.

Demeke Achiso (PhD)

May 2016