



**Exploring Women Refugees' Livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in
Gambella, Ethiopia**

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Gambella, Ethiopia**

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Muluemebet Semaw Wubu, entitled: Exploring Women Refugees' Livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia, and submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Social Anthropology complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Acronyms

AAU - Addis Ababa University
CRRF - Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DCA - Danish Church Aid
DRC - Danish Refugee Council
DRDIP - Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project
EOP - Economic Opportunities Program
FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD - Focus Group Discussion
GoE - Government of Ethiopia
GRF - Global Refugee Forum
GRS - Gambella Regional State
ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross
IMC - International Medical Corps
IMF - International Monetary Fund
IPs - Implementing Partners
KII - Key Respondent Interview
LWF - Lutheran World Federation
MCA - Mercy Corps Assistance
NCA - Norwegian Church Aid
NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations
NRC - Norwegian Refugee Council
OCP - Out-of-Camp Policy
PIE - Plan International Ethiopia
RRS - Refugees and Returnees Service
SHARPE - Strengthening Host and Refugee Populations in Ethiopia
SLM - Sustainable Land Management
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VIS - Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo
WASH - Water, sanitation, and hygiene
WFP - World Food Programme
ZOA - ZOA Refugee Care

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Abstract

This study examines the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, located in Gambella, Ethiopia, within the broader context of the Horn of Africa's complex humanitarian landscape, characterized by conflict, migration, and displacement. The research provides an in-depth exploration of the economic strategies employed by women refugees, highlighting the key factors that shape their livelihoods within the camp. By focusing on the female refugee population, the study identifies the diverse livelihood strategies adopted by these women while addressing the significant challenges and opportunities they encounter. A qualitative research approach was employed in which in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, field observations, life history narratives and document analysis were used to gather comprehensive data on the lived experiences of women refugees. Thematic analysis of the findings reveals a series of challenges that hinder the economic advancement of these women, including limited job opportunities, inadequate access to education, and persistent gender inequalities. Despite these constraints, women refugees demonstrate resilience through informal labor and mutual support networks, enabling them to navigate the difficult conditions of the camp. The study underscores the crucial role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international bodies, and government agencies in shaping the livelihood outcomes of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp. It highlights the importance of interventions aimed at enhancing sustainable livelihoods, focusing on skill development, gender-sensitive initiatives, entrepreneurial support, and strategic alliances. By advocating for long-term planning, the research emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to address gender disparities and foster socio-economic development, both within the camp and in the host communities. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the livelihood strategies of women refugees, offering valuable insights into the challenges they face. By recognizing these challenges, stakeholders can design more effective interventions to empower women refugees and improve their well-being within the refugee camp setting.

Keywords: Strategies, Gambella, Ethiopia, Jewi Refugee Camp, Refugee Livelihoods, Women Refugees

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The global refugee crisis is a major issue affecting millions of people worldwide. According to the United Nations, there were 117.3 million people forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2023, with 43.4 million of them being refugees (UNHCR, 2024). Conflict, economic hardship and poverty are also major causes of the global refugee crisis, with people fleeing their homes in search of safety and better economic opportunities (Malim, 2019).

The Horn of Africa; comprised of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, is faced with multifaceted problems such as famine, drought, civil war, conflict, and also migration and refugee crisis. Refugee families and communities encounter a range of vulnerabilities and insecurities in new environments where their livelihoods and social protection have been eroded or disappeared (Admasu, 2021). Furthermore, refugees do not have access to agricultural land within the camp (Cagoco-Guiam, 2013).

Ethiopia is one of the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world and home to the third-largest refugee population in Africa (UNHCR, 2020). Statistically, Ethiopia is hosting 1,071,860 refugees from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, Yemen, and the other Great Lakes region, as of 31 October 2024 (UNHCR, 2024). In the Horn of Africa, refugee movements have been driven by the conflict in South Sudan, the prevailing political environment in Eritrea, Sudan, and the conflict and drought in Somalia (UNHCR, 2024; World Bank Group & UNHCR, 2015). Gambella region hosts the largest refugee population in Ethiopia, which were about 396,262 as of 31 October 2024. The majority refugees are from South Sudan and live in seven (7) refugee camps with a few thousand in local settlements in the Gambella region (UNHCR, 2024).

Ethiopia has been in the process of reforming its policies toward refugees. For example, the country is signatory to the UN refugee convention of 1951. It had adapted the 2004 Ethiopian refugee proclamation and has a duty to provide protection and safety for refugees. Pledges at the 2016 Leaders' Summit on Refugees held in New York led to the adoption of a range of policies and administrative instruments, including the Refugee Proclamation of 2019 with significant

revision to country's existing national refugee law. The Ethiopian Refugee Proclamation of 2019, Article 26, grants refugees access to employment (Negarit Gazette, 2019). Specifically, Article 26(1) states: "Recognized refugees and asylum-seekers shall have the right to engage in wage-earning employment in the same circumstance as the most favorable treatment accorded to foreign nationals pursuant to relevant laws."

Jewi Refugee Camp is located in the Gambella Regional State of Ethiopia. It was established on 15 March 2015 to provide a safe and dignified settlement for refugees who initially fled to Ethiopia from South Sudan due to the ongoing civil war and violence that erupted in December 2013. These refugees first settled in Leitchour and Nip Nip camps; however, severe flooding in these locations left them homeless, prompting their relocation to Jewi Refugee Camp, where they could rebuild their lives in safety and stability (UNHCR, 2022). Like other refugee camps in Ethiopia, Jewi Refugee Camp is also affected by many challenges including livelihood issues cutting across the camp. Women refugees, in particular, face significant livelihood challenges while residing in the camp. Their experiences are shaped by unique vulnerabilities and obstacles that further complicate their ability to achieve economic stability and self-reliance. Therefore, this research was conducted to comprehensively investigate and document the major livelihoods of women refugees residing in the Jewi Refugee Camp situated in the Gambella regional state of Ethiopia.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Globally, the plight of refugees is one of the most pressing humanitarian issues, with millions displaced by conflict, persecution, and environmental disasters (UNHCR, 2022). The Horn of Africa, in particular, has been a significant source of refugee movements due to ongoing conflicts and political instability in countries like South Sudan and Somalia (World Bank Group & UNHCR, 2015). Women refugees face unique challenges in accessing livelihood opportunities due to gender-based discrimination, violence, and cultural norms (Lomazzi, 2023; Perrin et al., 2019).

Ethiopia, as a key host country, has been at the forefront of addressing these challenges, embodying a commitment to progressive refugee policies as seen in its alignment with international frameworks like the Global Compact on Refugees (UNHCR, 2020). However, the

translation of these commitments into effective actions remains a challenge, exacerbated by the complex socio-political and economic landscape of the country (Pape et al., 2018).

Ethiopia has made several international commitments aimed at improving the lives of refugees (UNHCR, 2019). As of 2019, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) announced additional national commitments at the Global Refugee Forum, in the areas of jobs and livelihoods, education, protection and energy and the environment; building upon the nine pledges it made at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in New York in 2016 (UNHCR, 2020). Ethiopia's commitment to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) is demonstrated through a series of pledges designed to improve the lives of refugees. These pledges focus on expanding the Out-of-Camp Policy (OCP), facilitating access to work permits, and enhancing educational opportunities at all levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary). Recently, the government of Ethiopia is pledged for the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF) include climate action, human settlement, inclusion of refugees into existing national systems, private sector engagement, access to land and digital connectivity and access to documentations (RRS, 2024). The aim of these pledges is to provide refugees with access to irrigable land for cultivation, promote local integration in protracted displacement situations, reserve a portion of jobs within industrial parks for refugees, and grant them documentation for vital events, thereby improving their access to essential social services (UNHCR, 2020).

Despite these progressive legal frameworks, there is a significant gap in the actual implementation of these policies, especially in the Gambella region. Administrative inefficiencies, bureaucratic red tape, and local resistance often hinder the practical application of these laws. The result is a disconnection between the proclaimed rights and the actual experiences of refugees, particularly affecting women (Admasu, 2021; UNHCR, 2019). For instance, although the proclamation allows for the acquisition and lease of land, in practice, access to and utilization of this land by refugees are often hindered by logistical and regulatory challenges. Moreover, while the policy permits refugees to seek employment, the lack of job opportunities within and around refugee camps, coupled with insufficient support for entrepreneurial ventures and other legal issues or policy practices, means that many are unable to use these rights effectively (UNHCR, 2019). This gap between policy and practice not only undermines the autonomy and economic prospects of refugees but also contributes to ongoing dependency on aid.

In the Gambella Regional State of Ethiopia, the situation is notably critical (Abebe, 2018). This region hosts a substantial number of refugees from South Sudan, with the Jewi Refugee Camp being one of the largest such facilities (Pape et al., 2018). Despite Ethiopia's robust legal framework designed to facilitate better integration of refugees into society, including the right to work and access to land, practical implementation lags significantly behind. Gambella's context is further complicated by its relatively underdeveloped infrastructure, limited administrative capacity, and the socio-economic strain of supporting a refugee population that, at times, has outnumbered the local residents (Pape et al., 2018; Vemuru et al., 2020). This imbalance strains local resources and complicates efforts towards sustainable development and integration, presenting unique challenges that require targeted interventions to ensure that both refugees and host communities can thrive together.

Moreover, refugees in Gambella face livelihood limitations compared to those in other hosting regions (Admasu, 2021). This is evidenced by the restricted nature of their primary income-generating activities, which are limited to resource extraction like firewood and grass collection, production of local alcohol, and the resale of rationed goods (Vemuru et al., 2020). While the Ethiopian government's policy initiatives intend to provide refugees with opportunities for economic participation to sustain their livelihoods, the reality for many women residing in Gambella refugee camps is starkly different (Admasu, 2021). Furthermore, insecurity within the region acts as a further constraint, particularly impacting the mobility and economic opportunities available to female refugees (Admasu, 2021).

Given the above background and despite the fact that there have been research reports on refugee issues in general and the constraints faced by refugees in accessing livelihood opportunities (Admasu, 2021; Campbell et al., 2011; Hall, 2014; Jacobsen et al., 2012; Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016) in particular, there is no research studies specifically focusing on the women refugees and their livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia. Considering this critical knowledge gap, this study aims to examine the realities of women refugees' labor engagement in Jewi Refugee Camp. Understanding how women refugees participate in income-generating activities, the strategies employed by supporting organizations, and the challenges they face is crucial for developing targeted interventions that empower them and contribute to their overall well-being in the camp.

1.3. Research Questions

The objectives of the research have been designed to address the following research questions:

1. What are the key livelihood strategies employed by women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?
2. How do humanitarian aid organizations and government agencies, through their policies and interventions, support the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?
3. How do relationships between refugees-host community and conflict in Jewi Refugee Camp evolve, and what are the primary sources of conflict and conflict resolution mechanisms, if any, between these groups?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General objective

The general objective of the study is to investigate the livelihood of women refugees residing in Jewi Refugee Camp, Gambella Regional State, Ethiopia

1.4.2. Specific objectives

1. To explore the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp
2. To analyze the contributions of implementing partners (IPs) and the local government to the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp.
3. What are the impacts of refugee-host community relationships and conflict on the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the livelihoods of women refugees residing in the Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia. It examines the various livelihood strategies employed by these women, the challenges they encounter, and the opportunities available to them. It also investigates the roles of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies in supporting refugee livelihoods, as well as the dynamics between refugees and the host community. The study includes both primary and secondary data collection methods, with interviews, focus group discussions, life history and observations conducted among refugees and key stakeholders. By concentrating on women refugees, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of their unique experiences and contributions within the refugee camp setting.

1.6. Problems Encountered and Limitations of the Study

During the course of this study, several problems and limitations were encountered, which impacted the research process and outcomes. Security issues between the refugee and host communities posed significant challenges, as tensions occasionally limited access to certain areas and hindered the free movement of researchers and participants. Additionally, transportation access was a persistent obstacle, with limited availability of reliable transportation options, complicating the logistics of conducting fieldwork in remote areas of the camp. Budget limitations further constrained the study, affecting the scope of data collection and the extent of resources available for conducting comprehensive research. Despite these challenges, efforts were made to mitigate their effects through careful planning and collaboration with local partners and stakeholders. In this connection, the financial support from the NORHED Project by the Department of Social Anthropology at Addis Ababa University has a significant contribution to overcome the financial constraints and realize this anthropological fieldwork.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its prospective to contribute valuable insights into the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp and the broader context of refugee experiences in Ethiopia. By highlighting the specific challenges and opportunities faced by women refugees, this research offers a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing their livelihoods and empowerment within the camp. The study's findings can inform policy-making and program development by NGOs and government agencies, promoting more effective and targeted

interventions to support refugee populations. Additionally, the research contributes to the academic discourse on refugee studies, providing empirical evidence that can be utilized in comparative analyses and future investigations of the everyday life and livelihoods of women refugees in Ethiopia. Ultimately, this study aims to foster greater awareness and advocacy for the rights and well-being of women refugees, both within the camp and in the wider community.

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

The study is organized into six comprehensive chapters, each addressing critical aspects of the research on women refugees and their livelihoods in Jewi Refugee Camp. **Chapter One** provides a detailed introduction, including the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives. It also offers a description of the study area, the research design, sampling methods, data collection tools, ethical considerations, and outlines the organization of the study. **Chapter Two** presents the methodology section of the study whereas **Chapter Three** presents an extensive literature review, covering refugee livelihoods, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and the context of refugees in Ethiopia, with a specific focus on the Gambella Regional State. **Chapter Four** delves into the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, analyzing their roles within families, access to work, participation in labor activities, and the challenges they face, while proposing potential solutions. **Chapter Five** examines the role of non-governmental organizations and government agencies in supporting refugee livelihoods, assessing existing strategies, contributions, and the effectiveness of aid provided in Jewi Camp. **Chapter Six** explores the relationship between refugees and the host community, addressing cultural aspects and conflict management techniques. Finally, **Chapter Seven** concludes the study by summarizing the findings and offering recommendations for improving the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts among stakeholders.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Refugee Economy

Alexander Betts and his colleagues have been instrumental in conceptualizing refugee economies, emphasizing the complex and varied economic lives of refugees (Betts et al., 2017). Their research highlights refugees' entrepreneurial capacities and their integration into global economic networks, challenging the perception of refugees as a homogeneous group dependent on humanitarian aid. The economic behaviors of refugees is crucial for developing policies that support their self-reliance and contributions to host economies (Betts et al., 2017). Studies have documented the positive economic impacts of refugees on host communities (Betts et al., 2019). For instance, refugees in the United States have a positive effect on local labor markets, contributing to economic growth and job creation (Clemens & Hunt, 2019).

Ethiopia has a long-standing history of hosting refugees and maintains an open-door policy, allowing humanitarian access and protection to those seeking asylum. In recent years, Ethiopia has taken significant steps toward integrating refugees into its national economy. The government, in collaboration with international partners, has implemented policies aimed at enhancing refugees' self-reliance and economic participation. The World Bank's Economic Opportunities Program (EOP) supports Ethiopia's efforts to grant refugees the right to work and access social services, thereby promoting their economic inclusion. Despite these positive developments, challenges remain. Political barriers, such as unclear regulations and limited access to financial services, inhibit refugees' full economic integration. The Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS), Ethiopia's agency in charge of refugee management, faces disincentives to facilitating refugee economic inclusion, as doing so could negatively impact its relevance as an organization. The refugee economy in Ethiopia, particularly in the Šärqolle Refugee Camp in the Benišangul-Gumuz region, exemplifies the dynamic interactions between refugees and host communities. Sahledengil (2022), highlights how refugees actively engage in informal work, farming, petty trade, and cross-camp economic activities to sustain their livelihoods despite legal and regulatory constraints (Sahledengil & Aduigna, 2022). The study emphasizes the economic interdependence between refugees and local communities, where refugees often sell a portion of their aid rations to purchase non-aid items from locals (Sahledengil, 2022). Similarly, refugees rely on local resources, such as

purchasing charcoal, and engage in market activities that contribute to the local economy. Economic exchanges extend beyond the camp boundaries, with refugees traveling to nearby towns for trade, further integrating them into regional economic networks.

2.2. Refugee Livelihoods

The study of refugee livelihoods is a multifaceted field encompassing concepts, frameworks, and challenges that deeply affect the well-being and self-reliance of displaced populations worldwide. This literature review provides a comprehensive exploration of key themes related to refugee livelihoods, offering insights into the theoretical foundations, analytical frameworks, and persisting challenges that shape the lives of refugees. The focus is on understanding the unique experiences of refugees and their pursuit of sustainable livelihoods in the context of displacement.

Concepts of Refugee Livelihoods

Refugee livelihoods refer to the capabilities, activities, and assets required for refugees to live and sustain themselves (UNHCR, 2023). Providing livelihood opportunities can enable refugees to become self-reliant, build useful skills, and contribute to local economies in their host countries, while reducing pressure on humanitarian assistance programs and host community resources (UNHCR, 2022). Refugee livelihoods encompass a range of economic and social activities pursued by displaced individuals and communities to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life (Wake & Cheung, 2016). At its core, livelihood refers to the capabilities, assets, and activities that enable individuals to secure the necessities of life, including food, shelter, and income (Horst, 2006). For refugees, livelihoods go beyond mere survival; they represent the means by which displaced individuals seek to restore their dignity, self-reliance, and agency in the face of adversity (Carney, 1998).

Key Concepts

The definitions provided for the following terms are operational definitions, specifically tailored to the context and scope of this study. They are intended to provide clarity and consistency in the interpretation of key concepts as they pertain to the research objectives and methodology

Incentive Work Program (Formal Work): This type of employment provides refugees at the Jewi Refugee Camp with structured work opportunities in exchange for financial or non-financial incentives. It promotes self-reliance, skill development, and community contribution while offering income and support.

Refugee: In Ethiopia, the term "refugee" is defined by the Refugees Proclamation No. 1110/2019, which aligns with both international and regional frameworks. A person who as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

Livelihood: It is a means of securing the necessities of life. The ways in which a refugee who live in Jewi refugee camp meets his/her basic necessities of life in addition to the aid.

Refugee women: A female who is 15 years and above, registered as a refugee by the UNHCR, and who lives in the Jewi Refugee Camp, Gambella Regional State, Ethiopia.

Livelihood strategies: The means in which a refugee who lives in Jewi Refugee Camp meets his or her basic necessities of life, beyond the aid provided.

Challenges in Refugee Livelihoods

Refugees face manifold challenges to their livelihoods, including legal frameworks governing refugees' right to work, prevailing cultural, social, or political norms or attitudes, and capacity, incentives, and influence of actors to include all targeted refugees (UNHCR, 2023). To address these challenges, the UNHCR has developed a framework to approach livelihoods and economic inclusion programs for refugees, which includes partnering with and convening expert entities, conducting consultations with different types of stakeholders, completing an institutional mapping exercise, and engaging in advocacy to enhance the enabling environment such that refugees have legal access to work (UNHCR, 2023). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has also developed a guide to market-based livelihood interventions for refugees, which includes addressing legal frameworks governing refugees' right to work and related issues (IOM, 2020).

Refugees encounter many challenges in their pursuit of livelihoods, many of which are exacerbated by their forced displacement. These challenges often revolve around limited access to resources, services, and opportunities. Refugees often confront legal and policy restrictions that hinder their ability to work, access education, and own property in host countries (Lomazzi, 2023). Navigating complex legal frameworks can be particularly challenging for refugees seeking to establish sustainable livelihoods. Many refugees are excluded from formal labor markets due to legal constraints and discrimination, pushing them into low-paying and exploitative informal work (Bloch, 2008). Limited access to employment opportunities constrains refugees' income-earning potential. Disruption of education and skill development in conflict-affected regions can leave refugees with inadequate qualifications and skills for economic integration (Naseh et al., 2024). This education and skills gap poses a significant obstacle to sustainable livelihoods.

Refugees often face social and cultural barriers in host communities, including discrimination and social exclusion (Betts & Loescher, 2011). These barriers affect their ability to establish social networks and access resources. Some refugees are forced to live in environmentally fragile regions, making them vulnerable to climate-related challenges (Foresight, 2011). Droughts, floods, and resource scarcity can disrupt livelihood activities. Gender disparities are also prevalent in refugee contexts, with women often experiencing greater vulnerabilities and limited decision-making power (Schiele, 2024). Addressing gender-specific challenges is crucial for promoting equitable livelihood opportunities.

2.3. Livelihood Strategies

The livelihood issue is relatively new within the UNHCR and in refugee studies, but it has a longer history among development practitioners who focus on the "actions and strategies" of individuals who are attempting to earn a living in challenging conditions (Kaag, 2004). A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living (Horst, 2006). A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Ashley & Carney, 1999; Carney, 1998). In addition to addressing the complexity and diversity of individual livelihoods, scholars also discuss the social and environmental sustainability of livelihoods in general (Horst, 2006). They suggest a measure of 'net sustainable livelihoods', which encompasses 'the number of environmentally and socially

sustainable livelihoods that provide a living in a context less their negative effects on the benefits and sustainability of the totality of other livelihoods everywhere' (Omata, 2012).

Sustainable livelihoods are about getting institutional and organizational settings appropriately (Scoones, 1998). The definition of livelihoods, adopted by Carney and others, suggests the need to understand the livelihood strategies and vulnerability of the poor as the starting point in a livelihoods analysis (Carney, 1998). Another scholar stated that, the definition of a livelihood, has placed more emphasis on the access to assets and activities that are influenced by social relations such as gender, class, kin, belief systems and institutions (Ellis, 2000). Depending on the assets people have, and the structures and processes that influence them and the vulnerability context under which they operate, people make a choice as to what livelihood strategies will best provide them with livelihood outcomes. Livelihood strategies are composed of activities that generate the means of household survival (Ellis, 2000).

There are many livelihood frameworks that have been developed to set out the factors in a sustainable livelihoods system, and to represent relationships between these factors. The most well-known livelihood framework has been documented by the Department for International Development (DFID). Similarly, researchers have developed various analytical frameworks to better understand the complexities of refugee livelihoods. One prominent framework is the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA), which considers the various assets and strategies that refugees employ in their pursuit of sustainable livelihoods (Dfid, 1999). The SLA identifies five key asset categories: human, social, financial, physical, and natural, highlighting their role in shaping livelihood opportunities (Carney, 1998; Scoones, 1998). This approach underscores the importance of a holistic understanding of livelihoods, emphasizing that refugees' capabilities and vulnerabilities are interconnected.

Another framework gaining traction is the Vulnerability and Resilience Framework (VRF), which examines how refugees' vulnerabilities to external shocks, such as conflict or environmental disasters, are mitigated through resilience-building strategies (O'brien et al., 2007). Resilience, in this context, refers to the capacity to absorb, adapt, and transform in response to stressors (Cutter et al., 2010). The VRF recognizes that refugees often face persistent vulnerabilities but can also develop resilience through adaptive livelihood strategies and external support mechanisms.

2.3.1. Theoretical framework of livelihood strategies: an anthropological perspective

Theoretical frameworks of livelihood strategies according to anthropological theories have been explored in various studies, which have highlighted the importance of understanding the daily lives and agency of poor people in developing sustainable livelihoods. The livelihood approach, with its explicit focus on agency, poor people's daily lives, and bottom-up, participatory poverty alleviation, has become a key framework for academic research and in policy circles (De Haan, 2012). The sustainable livelihoods approach has also become a key framework for academic research and in policy circles, emphasizing the importance of coping with and recovering from stresses and shocks and maintaining or improving capabilities and assets (Natarajan et al., 2022).

The sustainable livelihood approach posits that a sustainable livelihood is based on assets, capabilities, activities, and access to these elements, which are the fundamental components of livelihoods (Morse & McNamara, 2013). Livelihood sovereignty is a holistic ethical alternative solution that consists of five inter-relative rights, including the right to land, forest, and water (SPERI, 2019). Ethnographic livelihood studies have also been used to examine household economic strategies and the use of microcredit and microfinance loans, providing an in-depth, contextualized understanding of the choices made by household members as they struggle to make ends meet (Kurlanska, 2011).

Anthropological theories provide valuable insights into the diverse livelihood strategies adopted by communities, including refugees, in their pursuit of sustainable and adaptive ways of life. One prominent theoretical framework is the concept of "cultural ecology," which posits that livelihood strategies are intricately linked to the cultural and environmental contexts in which communities reside (Netting, 1995). This theory underscores the dynamic interaction between human societies and their environments, emphasizing how cultural norms, practices, and beliefs influence resource utilization and decision-making. Applied to refugee contexts, cultural ecology highlights that the livelihood strategies of refugee women in the Jewi Refugee Camp, for instance, are shaped by their cultural backgrounds and the specific environmental conditions of the camp.

Another relevant theoretical lens is "resilience theory," which explores how communities, including refugees, adapt and recover from adversity (Adger, 2000). Resilience theory posits that livelihood strategies are a response to external shocks and stressors, such as conflict and displacement. In the context of the Jewi Refugee Camp, this theory can illuminate how refugee

women develop adaptive strategies to cope with the challenges of displacement, including the pursuit of alternative livelihoods when the former ones become untenable.

Furthermore, "social capital theory" offers insights into the role of social networks, relationships, and support systems in shaping livelihood strategies (Bourdieu, 1986). Within the camp, refugee women's access to resources, information, and opportunities may be influenced by their social capital, highlighting the importance of kinship and community ties in their pursuit of livelihoods. Bourdieu's anthropological theory has been used to re-energize livelihoods research and critique the sustainable livelihoods framework (SLF) (Sakdapolrak, 2014). The SLF and Pierre Bourdieu's anthropological theory are distinct theoretical frameworks used in different fields of development studies and sociology, respectively. While they can be applied to the same contexts, they have different focuses and concepts. Accordingly, the SLF emphasizes the importance of different types of capital, such as human, social, natural, physical, and financial capital, in supporting livelihoods. Whereas, Bourdieu's theory includes the concept of cultural capital, which can be considered a subset of human capital. Cultural capital refers to knowledge, skills, education, and cultural resources that individuals possess. It can influence their social mobility and access to opportunities (De Haan, 2012).

Overall, the literature on theoretical frameworks of livelihood strategies according to anthropological theories highlights the importance of understanding the daily lives and agency of poor people in developing sustainable livelihoods. The livelihood approach and sustainable livelihoods approach have become key frameworks for academic research and in policy circles, emphasizing the importance of coping with and recovering from stresses and shocks and maintaining or improving capabilities and assets. Livelihood sovereignty and ethnographic livelihood studies have also been used to examine household economic strategies and the use of microcredit and microfinance loans, providing an in-depth, contextualized understanding of the choices made by household members as they struggle to make ends meet. Incorporating these anthropological theories into the study of refugee livelihoods not only deepens the understanding of the intricate dynamics at play but also informs more effective interventions and policies that consider the cultural, social, and environmental contexts in which these strategies are developed and enacted.

2.3.2. Conceptual framework of refugee women livelihood strategies

Based on the research topic, objective and reviewed literatures, I have investigated livelihood strategies of refugees who are living in the Jewi refugee camp. As clearly stated in the following framework, I have broken down the livelihood strategies refugee women's in three main categories:

- i. **Relief Seeking from aid organizations** such as UNHCR and other donors (ZOA, VIS, SHARPE, Mercy Corps, LWF etc)
- ii. **Informal jobs** e.g. hair dressing, road side selling of dried fish, raw meat, vegetables and fruits, selling grasses for roof covering and fencing, fire wood, small retailing shopping, selling hot drinks (tea and coffee shopping), sex worker, local restaurant, exchanging aid item of foods into another consumable product, pottery, handicraft, lace work and making traditional baby curt
- iii. **Formal jobs** in the community or NGOsc such working in the form incentive worker such as elementary school teacher, social worker and cleaner

The key factor here is the policy and attitude of the host government and community. A related intervening factor is the availability of local trade or employment opportunities. An enterprising refugee may start providing goods and services. This will lead to a profitable and long term livelihood activity. Another factor which may influence the refugee's livelihood strategy is education. If a refugee women is a professional, she may find it easier to seek a work permit and apply for job vacancies. Local attitudes are important in determining the livelihood strategy of a refugee. If the local host community is friendly and receptive, refugees will easily mix and find opportunities of every kind.

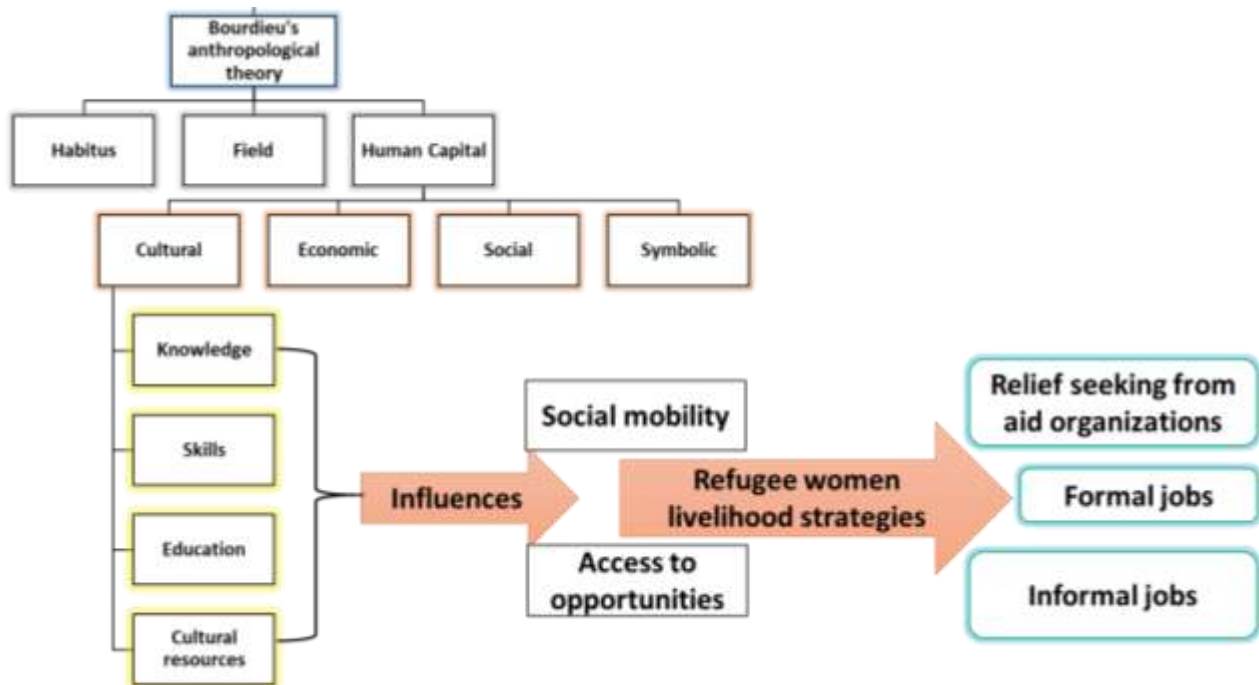


Figure 1: Conceptual livelihoods framework of women refugees lived in Jewi Refugee Camp adapted from Bourdieu's anthropological theory of human capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

2.4. Refugees in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has a long-standing history of hosting refugees. The country maintains an open-door policy for refugee inflows into the country and allows humanitarian access and protection to those seeking asylum on its territory. In 2004, a national Refugee Proclamation was enacted based on the international and regional refugee conventions to which Ethiopia is a party (1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees). Refugee protection in the country is provided within the framework of these international and national refugee laws as well as the core international human rights treaties that have been ratified by the country (UNHCR, 2022). Continual conflict and violations of human rights inside neighboring governments, as well as disagreement over the distribution of limited natural resources and food insecurity due to drought, have led to ongoing refugee migrations. Primarily, refugees hosted in Ethiopia are identified as being Eritreans, South Sudanese, Sudanese, Yemenis, and Somalis from South and Central Somalia.

Ethiopia is one of the largest refugee asylum countries world-wide, and the third largest in Africa, reflecting the ongoing fragility and conflict in the region. Ethiopia provides protection to refugees from some 19 countries. Among the principal factors leading to this situation are predominantly

the conflict in South Sudan, ongoing political instability in Eritrea, together with conflict and draught in Somalia (UNHCR, 2022, 2023).

The Ethiopian Government Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS) and UNHCR have registered 844,589 refugees as of March 31, 2022. The majority of refugees live in the regional states of Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Tigray, Somali and in capital Addis Ababa. Refugees residing in Ethiopia originate from South Sudan (46%), Somalia (28%), Eritrea (19%), and Sudan (6%), with an additional small number of other nationalities (1%) (UNHCR, 2022).

The Gambella Regional State (GRS) is one of the nine (9) federal regions of Ethiopia. Gambella region hosts the largest refugee population in Ethiopia: 308,978 as of 31 December 2019. Most refugees are from South Sudan and live in seven (7) refugee camps in Gambella with a few thousand in local settlements in the region. As the region is generally not self-sufficient in cereals, alternative income sources, such as fishing, are important sources of nutrition. Wild food consumption is part of the daily dietary intake given the natural forest resources in the region (UNHCR, 2019).

In November 2017, the Government of Ethiopia formally launched the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Ethiopia, effectively paving the way for the implementation of the nine pledges it made at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in September 2016 in New York. Through the pledges, which serve as a vehicle for implementing the CRRF in the country, Ethiopia seeks to: expand its out-of-camp policy; provide work permits to refugees; increase enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education; provide access to irrigable land for crop cultivation; facilitate local integration in instances of protracted displacement; earmark a percentage of jobs within industrial parks to refugees; and provide access to vital events documentation to facilitate increased access to basic and essential social services (UNHCR, 2019).

2.5. South Sudan Refugees in Ethiopia

As of 31 Oct 2022 the Government Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS) and UNHCR have registered 878,027 refugees (UNHCR, 2022). Of these, the country hosted 375,932 South Sudanese refugees of whom 362,281 were sheltered in seven camps in the Gambella Regional State. This includes 111,408 refugees in Nguenyiyiel camp, 70,925 refugees in Tierkidi camp, 66,776 in Jewi camp, 51,708 refugees in Kule camp, 48,957 and 10,590 refugees in Pugnido1 and

2 camps and 13, 651 refugees in Okugo Camp. A further 1,917 refugees are accommodated with the host community in Akula (RRS & UNHCR, 2022). The newly re-opened Pagak Reception Centre in Gambella is now hosting more than 8,800 refugees from South Sudan. There is limited accommodation and services are overstretched for the increasing number of new asylum seekers, which remains a concern. UNHCR is also involved in the IDP response in Gambella (UNHCR, 2019, 2022).

2.6. Refugee Livelihood in Gambella Regional State, Ethiopia

Refugees have various issues with their means of subsistence including discrimination in employment, language and assimilation, high cost of living, conflict and security challenges, legal and policy related issues, lack of permission to work, employment protections and lack of access to business licenses (Brown et al., 2018). Besides, the new refugee proclamation No. 1110/2019 has given refugees more option to increase their independence and promote self-reliant and sustainable development on the life of the refugees in general. Some of the new refugee proclamation privileges for refugees are access to education, access to health services, the right to work, right to association, freedom of movement, right to acquisition and transfer of property, driver's qualification certification license, access to banking services, access to telecommunication services, rationing and vital events registration (Negarit Gazetta, 2019).

Livelihood of refugees and host communities in Gambella have been explored in various studies, which have highlighted the need for livelihood diversification and agricultural commercialization. The World Bank Group conducted a study to examine the livelihood impacts of refugees on host communities in Gambella (World Bank Group, 2022). The study found that the inflow of refugees to Gambella created opportunities for livelihood diversification and agricultural commercialization. However, the study also highlighted the need for policies and programs that promote the integration of refugees into the local economy and address the challenges faced by host communities.

The main livelihood activities in Gambella are pastoralism and agro-pastoralism (Wondwosen, 2017). Opportunities for petty trading, such as selling grains, also exist. However, the most consistent challenge facing all local populations in the areas of Gambella is the lack of reliable sources of income and low agricultural productivity (Carver et al., 2020). The study by the Danish

Refugee Council found that the lack of reliable sources of income was a significant challenge for all local populations in the areas of Gambella visited for the study. The study also highlighted the need for policies and programs that promote livelihood diversification and agricultural commercialization to address the challenges faced by local populations in Gambella (Carver et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the literature on livelihood challenges and opportunities in Gambella highlights the need for policies and programs that promote livelihood diversification and agricultural commercialization to address the challenges faced by local populations. The inflow of refugees to Gambella has created opportunities for livelihood diversification and agricultural commercialization, but policies and programs that promote the integration of refugees into the local economy and address the challenges faced by host communities are needed to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of livelihood interventions.

2.7. Ethiopia's Response to the Refugee Situation

The Refugee Proclamation of 2019 with major revisions to the current national refugee law was adopted as a result of commitments made at the New York, Leaders' Summit on Refugees in 2016, which resulted in the adoption of a number of policy and administrative instruments. The new Refugee Proclamation provides refugees the right to work and reside out of camp, open and register business in their own name, access social and financial services, and register births and marriages. However, it remains the case that refugees in Ethiopia still have limited rights as the implementation has been slow (UNHCR, 2020).

In addition, the existence of discriminatory work permit provisions, limited access to sexual and reproductive health services, low participation of women in community-based leadership structures, and a significant decline in the enrollment of girls in primary school are all examples of specific gender-related barriers that exist in terms of policies and/or their implementation in terms of gaining access to services and economic opportunities (UNHCR, 2020). Additionally, the lack of developed markets around camps reduces the opportunity for refugees to generate income (Dempster et al., 2019; Vemuru et al., 2020). This is further exacerbated by the fact that refugees are largely located in poor areas of Ethiopia where poverty rates are high and livelihood opportunities are limited.

In the Ethiopian refugee context, there are policies and legal frameworks that aim to protect and provide for refugees. Among the legal frameworks, the country has been implementing The Refugee Policy Review Framework (RPRF) aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the laws, policies, and practices relevant to refugees in different sectors (UNHCR, 2023). The RPRF is intended to measure the extent to which Ethiopia's refugee policies align with international standards and best practices. The Ethiopian government has passed laws that provide refugees with the right to work and reside outside of camps, access social and financial services, and register life events. In 2019, Ethiopia passed a historic new refugee law that allows refugees to obtain work permits (Negarit Gazette, 2019). Furthermore, at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, the Ethiopian government made policy commitments to further improve the institutional framework at the national level to support refugees (UNHCR, 2022). The Federal Negarit Gazette has also outlines the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in Ethiopia, including access to education and training (Negarit Gazette, 2019). A study published in the Ethiopian Journal of Human Rights (EJHR) examines the implications of Ethiopia's refugee policy overhaul on the rights of refugees, including their rights to residence, movement, and education (Tsegaye, 2019). Overall, Ethiopia has made significant strides in improving its policies and legal frameworks to support refugees. However, there are still challenges and gaps that need to be addressed to ensure that refugees have access to their rights and can live in dignity.

2.8. Review of Empirical Study on Livelihood Strategies of Women Refugees

The livelihood strategies of women refugees have been explored in various studies, which have highlighted the challenges and coping mechanisms of women refugees in different contexts. Another study has been also conducted to explore the livelihoods, coping strategies, and access to healthcare among Syrian refugees in the Beqaa region in Lebanon based on their gender and life cycle (Nabulsi et al., 2020). The study found that women refugees faced significant challenges in accessing healthcare and had limited livelihood opportunities, which affected their ability to provide for their families. Similarly, another scholar examined the livelihood strategies of Liberian women refugees in Ghana and found that women refugees engaged in a range of livelihood activities, including petty trading, farming, and hairdressing (Addo, 2008). However, they faced challenges such as limited access to capital and markets, which affected their ability to sustain their livelihoods. Another researcher explored the challenges and livelihood strategies of Darfurian

refugees living in Kampala, Uganda, and found that women refugees faced challenges such as limited access to education and healthcare, and discrimination in the labor market (Lucia, 2012). Women refugees engaged in a range of livelihood activities, including petty trading and domestic work, to support themselves and their families.

The study found that UNHCR's livelihood programs had a positive impact on the livelihoods of refugees, including women refugees (UNHCR, 2020). However, the study also highlighted the need for UNHCR to strengthen its partnerships with other organizations and to improve its monitoring and evaluation systems. For instance, the livelihood strategies of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia and found that women refugees faced challenges such as limited access to education and healthcare, and discrimination in the labor market (Wake & Cheung, 2016). Women refugees engaged in a range of livelihood activities, including petty trading and domestic work, to support themselves and their families. Overall, the literature on the livelihood strategies of women refugees highlights the challenges and coping mechanisms of women refugees in different contexts. Women refugees engage in a range of livelihood activities to support themselves and their families, but they face significant challenges such as limited access to education, healthcare, and markets.

In refugee contexts, women employ various livelihood strategies to navigate the challenges of displacement. Research shows that women refugees often turn to informal labor and self-employment as key livelihood strategies (Sorensen, 1999). This includes activities like small-scale trade, craftwork, and agricultural initiatives. Women's entrepreneurship can foster economic independence and resilience (ILO, 2013). Furthermore, access to education and skills development programs, as underlined by UNHCR, equips refugee women with the knowledge and competencies needed to access formal employment opportunities, thereby bolstering their economic prospects (Schweitzer et al., 2006; UNHCR, 2019). Complementing these strategies are microfinance programs and savings groups championed by UNHCR (UNHCR, 2019). These initiatives empower women to invest in income-generating activities and provide them with not only financial resources but also invaluable support networks to navigate economic challenges (Sebstad & Cohen, 2003).

2.8.1. Challenges faced by women refugees

Women refugees encounter a multitude of challenges as they strive to establish sustainable livelihoods within host countries. Legal barriers, as highlighted by UNHCR (2020), often restrict the rights of refugee women to engage in gainful employment and own businesses. These constraints not only hinder economic independence but can also perpetuate dependency on humanitarian aid (Jordans et al., 2012). Additionally, gender-based violence remains a pervasive and pressing concern, with UN Women emphasizing that women frequently face threats and violence while pursuing their livelihoods (UN Women, 2019). This alarming reality is further substantiated by Elkorashy, who underline how insecurity in refugee contexts can deter women from engaging in income-generating activities (Elkorashy, 2013). Moreover, the lack of access to essential resources, such as credit, land, and productive assets, serves as a substantial impediment to women's livelihood opportunities. Addressing these resource disparities is of utmost importance in enhancing women's economic agency and their overall well-being (Kanyagui et al., 2024).

2.8.2. Opportunities and empowerment

Despite challenges, many women refugees demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptability in pursuing livelihoods, as highlighted by the Women's Refugee Commission in 2016. They demonstrate the ability to diversify their income sources and develop innovative strategies to overcome obstacles, a testament to their unwavering determination (Betts & Bloom, 2014). Moreover, it is noteworthy that women often establish social networks and support systems within refugee communities (Mosedale, 2016). These networks not only provide a sense of community but also facilitate resource-sharing, knowledge exchange, and collective action, thus offering a valuable foundation for improving their livelihoods (Shin & Park, 2023).

2.9. Collaborative Approaches of NGOs and Government Agencies in Enhancing Refugee Livelihoods

The literature on the role of NGOs and government agencies in supporting refugee livelihoods emphasizes the importance of collaboration, policy frameworks, and the implementation of practical support systems. NGOs such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) provide essential services such as food, shelter, and healthcare during the initial phases of displacement (Betts & Loescher, 2011). These

organizations also focus on vocational training, skill development, and microfinance initiatives, which empower refugees to achieve economic self-reliance and contribute to host communities (Elkorashy, 2013; UNHCR, 2020). Moreover, NGOs play a significant role in promoting gender equality in livelihood programs, ensuring that women refugees are supported in accessing education and employment opportunities.

Government agencies are responsible for establishing legal and policy frameworks that shape refugees' access to livelihoods, either facilitating or restricting their economic integration (Fonseca et al., 2019). Some governments work closely with NGOs to provide refugees with education, skills development, and access to formal labor markets, fostering self-sufficiency and contributing to the host economy (ILO, 2013; UNHCR, 2019). However, resource limitations and restrictive policies often impede the effectiveness of these initiatives, leading to disparities in support and access (DRC, 2015; Elkorashy, 2013). Despite these challenges, well-designed programs by NGOs and governments have demonstrated positive outcomes, including enhanced refugee self-reliance and strengthened social cohesion between refugees and host communities ((Betts & Loescher, 2011; Fonseca et al., 2019).

2.10. Host Community Relations: Impacts on Refugee Livelihoods

Host community relations can have a significant impact on refugee women's livelihoods. Studies have explored the relationship between refugee-host interaction and host community attitudes towards refugees in East Africa (Betts et al., 2014). The study found that positive inter-group interaction between refugees and host communities can lead to more favorable attitudes towards refugees. Addressing integration challenges among migrant women is essential for host countries, as poor integration outcomes among migrant women not only have long-term consequences for the women themselves but also for their families and communities (OECD, 2023). Preventing isolation of refugee women is a precondition to allow them to enjoy policies and measures that the host country implements and which can help them to integrate into the host society (European Parliament, 2016).

However, the long-term presence of refugees in host communities can also have negative impacts on social dimensions of life in local communities, such as feelings of safety, social networks, and trust (Fajth et al., 2019). To gauge whether increased probability of interaction with refugees reduces cohesion, these outcomes are compared across local households at varying distances from

a refugee camp. The study found no statistically significant differences between host communities with the presence of refugees and those without. The study also revealed that there are perceptions of key respondents that refugees have long-term health impacts on hosting communities (Gebrehiwet et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important to address the concerns of host communities and involve them in the design and implementation of livelihood programs for refugee women to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness.

The relationship between refugees and host communities significantly influences the livelihoods of refugee women. This literature review examines the dynamics of host community relations and their impacts on refugee women's livelihoods. It explores how positive or negative interactions affect economic opportunities, social integration, and overall well-being.

2.10.1. Host-community - refugee relations and economic opportunities

Host-community relations and their implications for economic opportunities are multifaceted in refugee contexts. A key aspect of this dynamic is the competition for scarce resources (Lindley, 2011). Host communities and refugees frequently find themselves vying for limited resources such as job opportunities and land, which can have direct consequences on the livelihoods of refugee women. This competition adds complexity to the economic landscape, potentially hindering the access of refugee women to income-generating opportunities.

Conversely, some studies suggest that collaborative economic ventures between host communities and refugees can yield substantial benefits for both groups (Beauchemin & Bocquier, 2004). When these two populations engage in joint businesses and economic initiatives, it has the potential to create jobs and stimulate local economies. Such cooperative efforts not only address shared economic challenges but also promote intercommunity cooperation, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and sustainable economic development.

2.10.2. Social integration and livelihoods

Social integration is a significant factor influencing the livelihoods of refugee women and is often shaped by the dynamics between refugees and host communities. Research by Ferris and colleagues (2019) emphasizes the role of positive interactions in enhancing social cohesion, which can, in turn, contribute to improved livelihoods (Ferris & Donato, 2019). When refugee women are accepted and integrated into local social networks, they gain increased access to support

systems and resources, thereby enriching their economic prospects. Negative perceptions of refugees by the host community, as indicated by Milner and Betts, can result in stigmatization and marginalization (Milner & Betts, 2006). Such attitudes may lead to social exclusion and restrict economic opportunities for refugee women. Discrimination and isolation can act as significant barriers, limiting their ability to engage in income-generating activities and adversely affecting their overall livelihood prospects.

2.10.3. Impacts on refugee women's well-being

The dynamics between refugees and host communities can have significant implications for the well-being of refugee women. Research studies highlight the effect of these relations on mental health. Positive interactions with the host community can serve to reduce stress and anxiety levels among refugee women. Conversely, negative experiences, such as discrimination or hostility, can exacerbate mental health issues, underscoring the pivotal role of social integration in overall well-being (Porter & Haslam, 2005). The dynamics between refugees and host communities can have significant implications for the well-being of refugee women. Research by Porter and Haslam highlights the effect of these relations on mental health. Positive interactions with the host community, fostered by organizations like IMC (International Medical Corps), can serve to reduce stress and anxiety levels among refugee women. IMC's initiatives, such as mental health support and community integration programs, have been instrumental in creating a supportive environment (Porter & Haslam, 2005).

Furthermore, the impact of host community relations extends to access to essential services. Positive relations can facilitate improved access to healthcare, education, and other vital services for refugee women (Lippert & Rehaag, 2012). These women are more likely to receive the support they need to enhance their overall well-being when relations with the host community are positive. In contrast, strained or negative relations may result in restricted access to these essential services, further emphasizing the interconnectedness of social integration and well-being for refugee women.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted at Jewi refugee camp, situated in the Gambella Regional State of Ethiopia (Figure 1). Ethiopia, a country marked by its hospitality towards refugees, is currently hosting refugees in twenty-eight active camps as of the latest reports (UNHCR, 2019). Among these, the Jewi Refugee Camp stands out for its significant population and strategic importance. The Jewi Refugee Camp is situated in the Agnua Zone of Gambella Zuria Woreda, within Jewi Kebele. It is located approximately 762 km from Addis Ababa, 15 km from the regional capital (Gambella), and is strategically positioned near key towns: 60 km from the zonal town and 33 km from the Woreda town (RRS, 2024). Established on March 26, 2015, the Jewi Refugee Camp spans an area of 12.6 km². Initially founded in response to the displacement crises, it has become a sanctuary for refugees exclusively from South Sudan. The camp's strategic establishment has allowed for the provision of safety, dignity, and essential services to its inhabitants. As of October 2022, the Jewi Refugee Camp is home to 66,421 refugees (55% of refugees are women), providing a vivid picture of the demographic distribution with a focus on gender and age (RRS, 2024). The camp's infrastructure includes four schools, a health center, a clinic, and two food distribution centers, showcasing a comprehensive approach to address the basic and educational needs of the refugees. Partnerships with over 25 organizations, including RRS, UNHCR, WFP, and others, underscore a collaborative effort in managing and providing essential services ranging from primary education, health, general food distribution, camp management, to specific projects focusing on shelter, infrastructure, livelihood, environmental protection, and more (UNHCR, 2022). Several implementing partners contribute to improving the livelihoods of refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, each playing a distinct role. DanChurchAid (DCA) focuses on food security and self-reliance through cash and voucher assistance, agricultural support, and vocational training. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) emphasizes economic empowerment by facilitating vocational skills and income-generating activities. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) supports education and vocational training to enhance employability. Mercy Corps works on economic opportunities and climate-resilient livelihoods, while ZOA aids infrastructure development, peace-building, and

long-term food security. SHARPE (Strengthening Host and Refugee Populations in Ethiopia) promotes business development, capacity building, and market access to foster self-reliance among refugees and economic integration with host communities. Together, these organizations play a pivotal role in ensuring economic stability and empowerment for the camp's residents.

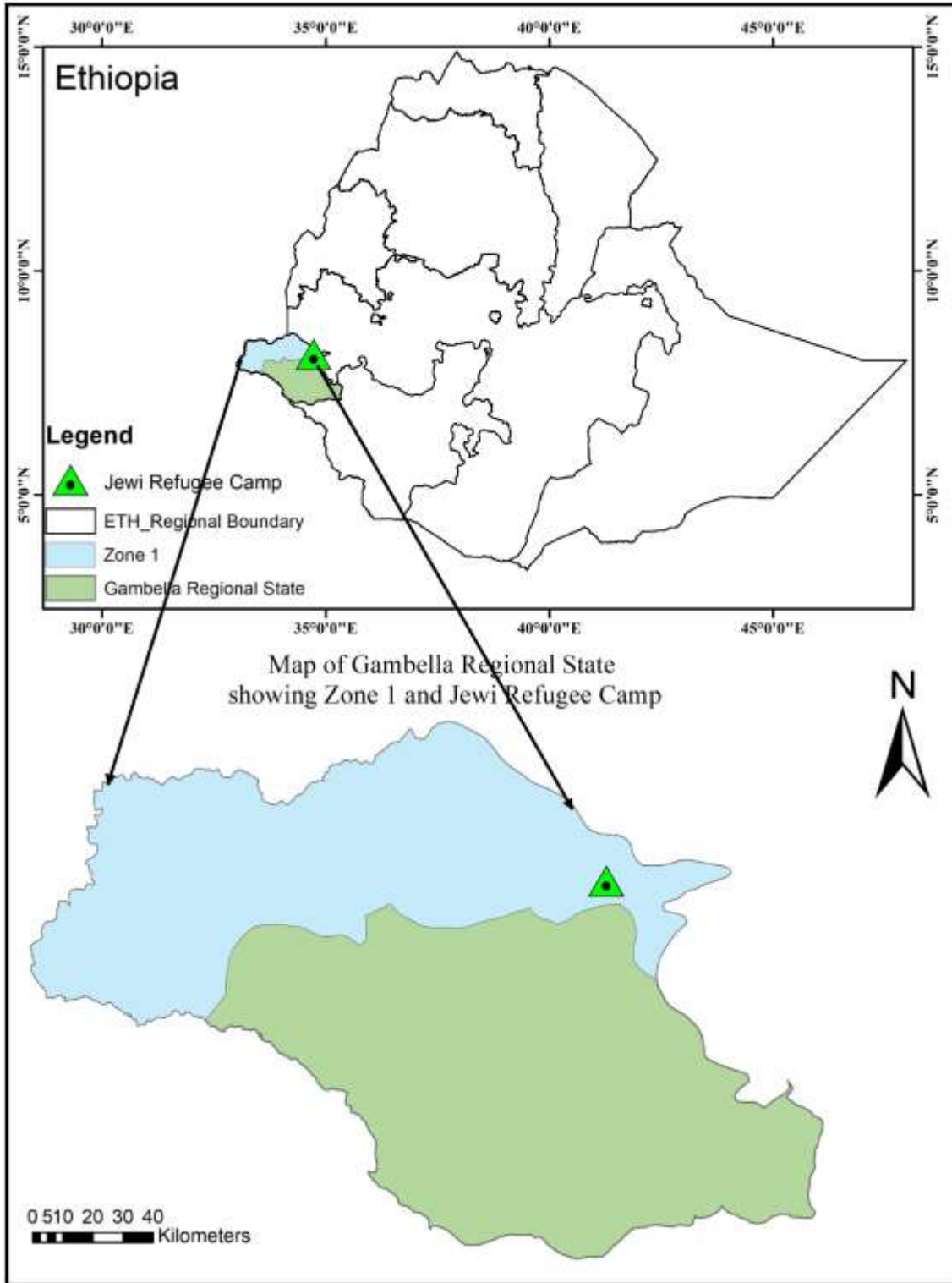


Figure 1: Map of the study area Map source: UNHCR, Pledge Progress Report, 2019 (UNHCR, 2019); Distances from the main gate to the end of the camp is 6 kilometers away from the main gate to the end of the camp. (**Zone A:** Has 14 blocks, the most developed zone in the camp, with the highest population density and the widest range of services available. It is home to the camp's

main market, schools, health clinic, and community centers. Zone A is also home to the camp's refugee leadership committee, which represents the interests of the refugees to the Ethiopian government and humanitarian organizations; **Zone B:** Has 16 blocks, is the second most developed zone in the camp; **Zone C:** Has 21 blocks, is a less developed zone than Zones A and B. It has a lower population density and fewer services available; **Zone D:** Has 13 blocks, is the least developed zone in the camp and the distance is too long from the main get than Zone A, B and C.)

3.1.1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative research approach, which is well-suited for exploring attitudes, experiences, and in-depth opinions of participants, emphasizing the interpretation of observations based on participants' own understandings (Babbie, 2013; Fu, 2011). Qualitative research focuses on understanding personal experiences and gaining detailed insights into processes within dynamic social settings, where human interactions are central to the investigation (Dawson, 2002). Within this framework, a case study design was adopted to explore the livelihoods of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp. The case study design enabled a comprehensive and descriptive analysis of the livelihood strategies and challenges faced by women refugees, aligning with the research objectives. By capturing the nuanced perspectives of respondents, this qualitative approach provided a rich understanding of the social dynamics and lived realities within the camp.

3.1.2. Sampling method

A purposive sampling technique was employed for this study, specifically utilizing the heterogeneous sampling sub-technique. This approach was chosen to ensure the inclusion of participants with diverse characteristics and perspectives, capturing a wide range of experiences related to refugee livelihoods and host-community interactions. By selecting individuals who varied in age, gender, educational background, and community roles, the study aimed to reflect the complexity and diversity of the refugee-host relationship. Participants were identified through close consultation with the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) representative, ensuring a deliberate effort to include voices from different demographic and social groups that are critical to the research objectives.

A total of 41 respondents were interviewed, including 33 semi structured interviews (31 female and 2 male refugees) and 8 key respondent interviews (7 male and 1 female refugee and host community) from RRS, implementing partners (IPs), and hosting community members. Additionally, 4 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted to triangulate the findings from semi-structured interviews and field observations. Each FGD included participants selected to

reflect a diverse range of experiences within the refugee and host communities, with attention to gender and age representation. The demographic composition of participants ranged from 15 to over 45 years, with the majority falling between 15 and 35 years old. This range was intentionally selected to capture perspectives across different life stages, from youth to adulthood. The inclusion of educated and less-educated participants, as well as individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds, ensured a broad understanding of livelihood strategies.

Participants for the life story interviews were specifically chosen based on their unique experiences and ability to provide detailed narratives about their livelihoods and interactions within the refugee-host dynamic. Observations were conducted systematically, with individuals and community interactions chosen based on relevance to the research questions and logistical accessibility during field visits. Organizations included in the sampling, such as the RRS and IPs, were selected because of their direct involvement in refugee management and community support activities. Their inclusion provided institutional perspectives and insights into policy and programmatic contexts influencing refugee livelihoods. This purposive approach ensured that the sample reflected the diverse realities of refugees and host community members while aligning with the study's objectives.

3.1.3. Data collection methods

For the purpose of this research, data was collected from both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data sources were primarily collected through direct field studies conducted at the actual field work. Secondary sources were obtained through critical evaluations and syntheses of previous original studies within the country and pertinent information and insights were acquired from administrative offices at the study area. The primary sources predominantly encompassed empirical data derived from in-depth interviews conducted with refugees and returnees service officials, women refugees, and IP's within the study area. To complement the primary data, secondary sources, including documents from various organizations, reports, magazines, conference papers, previously conducted studies, and tertiary sources such as books and journal articles were used for this study.

For this research, two types of interviews were employed: unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Given that semi-structured interviews afford interviewees ample latitude to freely express their perceptions while maintaining a focused approach toward specific topics (Bryman & Cramer, 2012), this approach was deemed appropriate for the study. Consequently, to address the

fundamental questions of the study, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and personal observation techniques were employed for this study.

3.1.3.1. *Semi structure interviews*

In this study, semi-structured interviews were employed as a key data collection method, allowing for both flexibility and depth in exploring participants' experiences and perspectives. This approach combines pre-determined open-ended questions with the opportunity for follow-up questions to probe further into specific topics as they arise during the conversation. Semi-structured interviews are particularly well-suited for qualitative research as they provide a structured framework while permitting respondents to express their thoughts freely and in their own words. In this study, the interviews focused on understanding the impacts of refugee-host community relationships and conflicts on women refugees' livelihoods, ensuring that the participants' voices and lived experiences are central to the findings. This method facilitated a rich and nuanced understanding of the research problem, capturing both anticipated and emergent themes relevant to the context of Jewi Refugee Camp. The design of the interview guide drew upon the recommendations of Martin and Alexiades (Alexiades, 1996; Martin, 1995). This approach aimed to capture detailed participant views, including any underlying perceptions regarding the issue under study. Additionally, it allowed for both the researcher and participants to reshape the interview direction for a richer exploration of the topic. A total of 33 semi-structured interviews were conducted with women refugees residing in the camp.

3.1.3.2. *Key respondent interviews*

In addition to semi-structured interviews, this study also utilized key respondent (KI) interviews. Key respondents are individuals with specialized knowledge or experience relevant to the research topic. By interviewing them, researchers gain crucial insights that may not be readily accessible from other sources. A total of 8 key respondent interviews were conducted. The KIs included representatives from the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), implementing partner organizations (NGOs), refugees and members of the host community. RRS representatives were included because of their direct involvement in policy formulation, refugee management, and service provision, offering valuable institutional perspectives. NGO representatives were also selected due to their hands-on experience in implementing programs that support refugee livelihoods and integration into host communities. Host community members were included to

provide grassroots-level insights into how refugee-host interactions impact livelihoods and social dynamics. In addition, refugees were chosen based on their extensive experience and long-term residence in the camp, enabling them to provide deep insights into the evolution of livelihood strategies and community dynamics over time.

3.1.3.3. *Focus group discussion*

FGD is another technique of qualitative research whereby a number of people usually ranging from 6 to 12 are invited to take part in a discussion regarding a particular issue through a facilitator or moderator. It is particularly advantageous because it allows me to obtain a wide range of detailed information during the discussion (Dawson, 2002). For this study a total of 4 FGD was held at the camp level with implementing partners (IPs), RRS officials, women and men refugees, host communities, and incentive workers. During the discussion, the major livelihood strategies and related issues of women refugees who are living in Jewi refugee camp were discussed. For this research interview guide checklist was employed for the FGD and interviewing the participants to record and collect required information based on the objectives of the research. The discussions were moderated by the investigation team (I myself, the assistant and translator) and the responses were noted down and recorded using voice recorder and images were captured using digital photo camera after getting the consent to take pictures. All the discussion points were translated by local language speaker (Nuer) and transcribed and then summarized for convergence or divergence in responses.

3.1.3.4. *Field observation*

Field observations were facilitated by local guide (refugees) and participating respondents to obtain the necessary data in the study area using observation checklist. The information gathered through this method does not require any response from the respondents whereas I was responsible to make my own direct observation and interpretation (Kothari, 2004). As a result, I took part in the everyday activities of the women refugees under study, such as how the aid organizations are supporting women refugees, how women refugees are engaged in the economic activities to sustain their life such as in roadside trading, engage in agricultural activities, attend conferences, or participate in cultural or religious activities. In order to determine firsthand information on the perceived but actual living circumstances of women refugees and how they are involved in livelihood activities both in-camp and out camp activities, pertinent information was

documented during field observations to the Jewi refugee camp for the three consecutive weeks of the fieldwork.

3.1.3.5. *Life history*

In this study, the life history method was employed as a qualitative research approach to gather in-depth insights into the lived experiences of women refugees. This method involves collecting personal narratives and accounts from individuals to understand their life trajectories, focusing on critical events, challenges, and coping strategies. By using life history interviews, the study captures the subjective experiences of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, providing a nuanced understanding of their livelihood strategies and challenges over time. This approach allows for the exploration of the complex interplay between individual agency and broader structural factors, offering a comprehensive view of the participants' resilience and adaptation in the face of adversity within the camp.

3.1.3.6. *Document analysis*

Within the framework of qualitative research, document analysis stands as a vital secondary tool for data collection. This methodology assumes a significant role, especially in the preliminary stages preceding field study implementation. Prior to embarking on the fieldwork phase, a thorough integration of document analysis is conducted. The utilization of document analysis is particularly prominent during the construction of the literature review. This involves a comprehensive exploration of documents directly pertinent to the research topic. The repository of sources encompasses a spectrum of mediums, encompassing books, articles, scholarly journals, reports, and audiovisual materials. These resources are extracted from a wide array of literature that encompasses issues pertaining to refugees and host communities, with a special emphasis on the African context. This comprehensive exploration of documented insights serves as a critical foundation for the research, enabling an enriched and informed perspective on the subject matter.

3.2. Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the study to ensure the protection of community knowledge and the rights of the participants. Official permission from relevant authorities and local stakeholders (Addis Ababa University Department of Social Anthropology and Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS)) was obtained to conduct the research in the study area. Prior to conducting the study, informed consent was obtained from participants, emphasizing the

voluntary nature of their involvement and the intended data usage and publication of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained during data collection, analysis, and reporting to safeguard the privacy of the participants. Ethical guidelines and principles were strictly adhered to throughout the study to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct in research.

3.3. Data Analysis

In accordance with Dawson's framework, a thematic analysis approach was applied to the collected data, embracing an inductive research orientation. Data convergence was achieved as data from various sources were analyzed collectively (Dawson, 2002). The transcribed data from both focus group discussions (FGDs) and individual interviews, centered on the livelihood strategies of women refugees within the study area, underwent thematic analysis (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2015). This analysis involved reducing the data into thematic structures aligned with the research questions. Concurrent data arrangement and writing alongside data collection mitigated potential information gaps. Documentation analysis was employed to dissect data from different sources, employing a narrative approach for interpretation (Hill, 2005). Interview data were analyzed to unveil participants' lived experiences pertaining to the research phenomenon (Knott et al., 2022). Lastly, my personal observations contributed to the overall analysis, culminating in a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Therefore, for this study, thematic analysis method was employed, with the objective of categorizing the accumulated data into distinct groups and homogenous clusters to unveil significant patterns. Ensuring data accuracy, a triangulation strategy was adopted (Creswell & Zhang, 2009). This technique aimed to validate research findings by employing various approaches and viewpoints. The analysis also considered life history details or narratives shared by participants during the interviews and focus group discussions, providing context for their current livelihood strategies and highlighting their experiences of displacement and resilience within the camp.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. WOMEN REFUGEE AND THEIR LIVELIHOOD IN JEWI REFUGEE CAMP

3.1. Adaptation and Survival: Refugee Experiences in Jewi Refugee Camp

The life history narratives of South Sudanese refugees residing in the Jewi Refugee Camp in Ethiopia present an emotional illustration of resilience, adaptation, and the ongoing struggle for survival amidst displacement. Refugees' experiences are deeply embedded within the broader socio-cultural framework of forced migration, displacement, and adaptation. The narratives shared reflect a universal theme of loss and adaptation, as individuals' transition from a known life in South Sudan to an uncertain and often challenging existence in refugee camps. As highlighted by widowed refugee's experience,

In the complex picture of my life, I am a South Sudanese women hailing from the resilient Nuer ethnic group. The recent chapters of my story bear the weight of widowhood, an emotional turn of events marked by the passing of my husband just last year. In South Sudan, I was self-reliant, freely working and living. However, the war forced me into Ethiopia's Jawi camp, where life is starkly different. We rely on donations, which are often insufficient for our needs. The contrast between my past independence and the present dependency is a testament to the hardships faced by refugees.

Their stories resonate with broader themes in refugee literature, including loss of homeland, cultural dislocation, and the quest for identity and belonging in a new context (Eastmond, 2002; Horst, 2006). A significant theme across the narratives is the transition from self-sufficiency to dependency on aid. Many refugees express a profound sense of loss for their previous lives, where they managed land, businesses, and were self-reliant. As an example, a young girl refugee story exemplifies the impact of displacement on self-reliance, a common theme among refugees like her. She says,

I'm 16 years old and belong to the Nuer ethnic group from South Sudan. I arrived in Ethiopia in 2015 seeking refuge from the war in my homeland. In South Sudan, we had access to all essential services, but life in the Ethiopian camp has been markedly different, with a notable lack of adequate services. The war has uprooted our lives, leaving us in a constant struggle for basic necessities here in the camp.

This loss is not only material but also deeply tied to a sense of identity and autonomy. The shift to dependency on international aid and the insufficient services within the camps underscores the dramatic change in their socio-economic status and personal agency (Harrell-Bond, 1986).

Despite the hardships, these narratives are also stories of resilience and adaptation. The young woman story illustrates, many have pursued education, developed new skills, or engaged in entrepreneurial activities to rebuild their lives in the camps.

I am 23-year-old Christian and Nuer ethnic group member from South Sudan. Displaced by war, I now live in Ethiopia as a refugee. Before the conflict, I pursued high school education, but now I navigate life in a refugee camp, seeking safety and stability far from the turmoil of my homeland. My story is one of resilience and adaptation to the new realities of life as a refugee.

On the other hand, a woman refugee's narrative, where she describes engaging in entrepreneurial activities, demonstrates the dynamic adaptability many refugees develop.

I am a South Sudanese refugee residing in Ethiopia's Jawi camp since 2015. Married with 2 children, my life changed from self-sustenance through cultivating a backyard garden to relying on UN rations and informal work. I am employed with IMC in women and girls service and engage in various entrepreneurial activities, including crafting, dried fish products, traditional baby curt, and other handmade goods. These efforts supplement the rations and contribute to my family's livelihood in the camp.

This adaptability is reflected in the broader literature, which recognizes the dynamic and resourceful strategies refugees employ to cope with displacement (Kibreab, 1996). Organizations providing training and resources, like the ZOA organization mentioned by one of the women refugee participants, play a crucial role in supporting these adaptive strategies.

Continued struggle and uncertainty:

The narratives also highlight the ongoing struggles and uncertainties that define life in the refugee camps. Issues such as insufficient food, lack of basic hygiene items, and the struggle to provide for families are recurring themes.

As evidenced by the testimonies of those living in Jewi Refugee Camp, a 25-year-old refugee incentive worker's account, detailing the long-term impact of displacement, brings to life the chronic challenges and uncertainties faced by refugees:

I'm a South Sudanese refugee living in Ethiopia's Jewi Refugee Camp. I'm also a Seventh Day Adventist, a member of the Nuer ethnic group, and I hold a diploma in midwifery. I came to Ethiopia in 2015 as a refugee due to the war in South Sudan. Here, I work as an incentive worker, teaching in a primary school, and benefiting from educational opportunities and other services provided in the camp. My life has shifted from the uncertainties of war to a more structured existence within the refugee community.

Such conditions reflect the chronic nature of life in camps, where temporariness becomes a prolonged state, and uncertainty shapes daily existence (Turner, 2005).

3.2. Role in the Family

In examining the life histories provided by refugees, a clear thematic narrative emerges, centering around the multifaceted and adaptive roles individuals take within the family unit, especially in the context of displacement and survival. These narratives, integral to an anthropological understanding, provide a window into the social and cultural dynamics of refugee life. The responses from refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp reveal the complex and adaptive roles assumed by family members in response to their displacement and the challenging conditions of camp life. These roles, articulated through their narratives, underscore the resilience, resourcefulness, and communal spirit prevalent among the refugees.

The individuals articulate their primary role as managing survival under constrained resources. They describe a life of managing food rations, engaging in risky tasks like collecting firewood, and maintaining personal and familial wellbeing in the camp. This narrative highlights the centrality of survival strategies and the daily quest for sustenance in the face of persistent scarcity. As stated by a refugee woman,

In the camp, once the food rations deplete, life becomes particularly hard. I, like others, am compelled to go to the forest to collect firewood, a risky but necessary task to afford more food by selling it at the local market. This is the reality of our lives here - a constant struggle to make ends meet in the camp.

This response reflects a prevalent theme of survival and the continual struggle for resources. It highlights the economic strategies, such as collecting and selling firewood, adopted under constrained circumstances. The narrative resonates with broader discussions on refugee economics

and survival strategies, emphasizing the adaptability and resilience of individuals in harsh living conditions.

The majority of refugee respondents stated that, women are mainly responsible for their family care. A woman highlighted about her role within her family:

In our family, everyone pitches in. Alongside my siblings, I participate in cooking, cleaning, and other domestic tasks. We support our parents by sharing the load of home activities, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility within our family.

For families with children, ensuring educational access emerges as a significant role. Parents and guardians articulate their commitment to their children's education, recognizing it as a critical pathway to potential future stability and success.

In the words of the refugees themselves, a woman elucidated:

My primary role in the family now revolves around ensuring my three children continue their education, which is fortunately free here in the camp. This is a significant improvement from the challenging educational situation in South Sudan. However, securing daily sustenance like stew remains a challenge, reflecting the constant balancing act between addressing immediate needs and investing in our children's future.

Here, the participant underscores education as a beacon of hope and a strategic investment for the future, a common theme in refugee narratives. This pursuit of education amidst hardship aligns with global understandings of education as a means of social mobility and stability, especially poignant in the context of displacement. This commitment reflects broader findings that education is a beacon of hope and a critical investment in the future for displaced populations (Dryden-Peterson, 2017).

Several refugees detail a collaborative approach to managing domestic responsibilities, with tasks shared among family members. This communal approach fosters a sense of shared responsibility and unity, crucial for maintaining family cohesion and resilience in the face of adversity.

Reflecting on the narratives provided by the camp's residents, as a refugee woman respondent explained:

As the key manager of all home activities, my role encompasses the entire spectrum of domestic responsibilities. From cooking and cleaning to organizing the household, my

efforts are centered on creating a semblance of normalcy and comfort for my family amidst the camp's limitations.

The emphasis on domestic management entails to the gendered dimensions of refugee life, where maintaining household normalcy is a form of resistance against the confusion of displacement. This narrative aligns with gender studies in anthropology, highlighting how roles are adapted and intensified in refugee settings.

One woman refugee respondent describes their role as a peace mediator and awareness promoter within the refugee community, reflecting a commitment to community wellbeing and development. As evidenced by the testimonies of those living in Jewi Refugee Camp, a 36 years old woman elucidated that:

In the camp, my role revolves around promoting peace among my community members. Whenever conflicts arise, I step in to mediate and resolve the issues. Additionally, for the past 9 years, I've worked with organizations like IMC, supervising and disseminating awareness on critical issues such as domestic violence, early marriage prevention, and the importance of education. My focus is on ensuring that when we return to our homeland, we do so with a better perspective and equipped to build a peaceful community.

This response illustrates the leadership roles that individuals assume within the camp, focusing on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It speaks to the communal strategies of governance and social organization that emerge in displacement settings, reflecting broader anthropological themes of social order and community resilience. This role is vital in fostering a sense of order, safety, and progress within the camp setting, aligning with findings on the importance of community-led initiatives in refugee contexts (Harrell-Bond, 1986).

The narratives illustrate the extensive caregiving responsibilities assumed by women, alongside efforts to contribute to the family's income through small-scale entrepreneurship or work. This dual focus on caregiving and income generation reflects the multifaceted strategies employed by refugees to manage their challenging circumstances. As explained by a 42 years old refugee woman residing in Jewi Camp:

As a women in the camp, my role encompasses extensive caregiving and household management. I am responsible for cooking, washing clothes, collecting firewood, and

caring for my husband. Beyond these, I engage in income-generating activities to contribute to my family's livelihood, including cleaning the compound and other small-scale entrepreneurial tasks.

Another woman also mentioned:

In my family, I take on all responsibilities, especially as my husband is not living here. This means taking care of all my children's needs and managing the household by myself, ensuring that they are well-fed, educated, and safe.

Though access to formal employment within the camp is limited, some educated refugees secure work as incentive workers. This income enables them to manage their families' needs, including childcare, as a 29 years old refugee woman incentive worker explained:

As an incentive worker in a primary school and a student myself, I am the sole caregiver for my children since my husband is not here. Balancing my educational pursuits and work, I ensure that my children's needs are met and that they have a supportive environment for growth and development.

Overall, these narrative is a testament to the gendered economic activities within the camp and the innovative strategies adopted for family sustenance. This suggests that women refugees are the main source of income for their households and are responsible for providing for their families' basic necessities. For families where one parent is absent, usually the father, the remaining parent (often the mother) assumes all responsibilities. These individuals describe taking on all caregiving, economic, and decision-making roles, a testament to their strength and adaptability. The personal stories recounted by a refugee woman reveal:

In my family, I take on all responsibilities, especially as my husband is not living here. This means taking care of all my children's needs and managing the household by myself, ensuring that they are well-fed, educated, and safe.

These narratives provide a window into the adaptive strategies, communal bonds, and individual resilience that characterize refugee family life. The responses underscore the need for continued support in areas like education, economic opportunities, and social services to empower families to manage their circumstances and build towards a more stable future.

3.3. Opportunity to Access Works for Refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp

Regarding employment opportunities, refugees highlighted the absence of wage employment opportunities within the camp. Selected refugees, both male and female, were employed as incentive workers under the administration of RRS. The participants noted that RRS controlled the employment process, with all NGOs requiring permission from RRS to provide salary increments to incentive workers. Despite this, women refugees demonstrated resilience and creativity, engaging in informal economic activities such as small grocery businesses, roadside trading, and selling goods from the local area or within the camp. Exploring employment opportunities revealed a mix of formal and informal labor activities available to both genders. Women exhibited entrepreneurial skills by engaging in small businesses.

Participants discussed challenges related to gender equality in livelihood opportunities. While efforts were made to provide equal opportunities for women and men, the participants identified educational disparities as a challenge. The lack of education hindered some women from accessing a wider range of employment opportunities. However, NGOs such as HelpAge offered capital support to women to initiate their businesses, contributing to their economic empowerment.

I have examined refugees' perceptions of gender equality within the Jewi Refugee Camp. Key respondents and focus group discussions highlight on how the camp's stakeholders and humanitarian organizations approached gender equality. Many refugees expressed their belief in the equitable treatment of male and female refugees. A refugee interviewee in a focus group discussion highlighted, *“We refugee women’s are participating in different activities like selling items in a small shop, selling and buying goods, running grocery, and cafeteria within the camp”*. Additionally, a South Sudanese refugee asserted, *“We have equal opportunity. Because we are getting opportunities to work in the school as incentive worker”*. Refugee respondents also express that women have access to various forms of work, from formal employment as incentive workers in schools to engaging in entrepreneurial activities such as selling firewood, food items, and handcrafted goods. As articulated by a woman who was navigating daily life in the camp:

As a formally employed teacher in the primary school, I work as an incentive worker, a role that provides a stable source of income within the camp. Besides formal employment, many women, including myself, are engaged in informal entrepreneurial activities. We sell firewood, tea, stew products like tomatoes, onions, and potatoes, and create traditional

crafts and other handmade goods. This blend of formal and informal work is essential for sustaining our livelihoods and supporting our families in the camp.

The responses suggest an environment where women are active participants in the camp's economy, contributing to their families' livelihood through diverse means. This data highlights the resourcefulness and adaptability of women refugees in the Jewi Refugee Camp. By engaging in both formal and informal work opportunities, they demonstrate a multifaceted approach to overcoming livelihood challenges. This suggests a need for comprehensive support systems that acknowledge and address the diverse income-generating strategies employed by women refugees within the camp.

Moreover, the study examined the extent to which opportunities for livelihood activities were accessible to both female and male refugees in the camp. Findings indicated that a range of income-generating avenues were available to both genders. Women refugees exhibited resilience by participating in diverse formal and informal labor activities.

A 36 years old woman participant in a focus group discussion emphasized,

Women in the camp undertake both informal and formal a work to support their families beyond humanitarian aid. Informally, we engage in activities like collecting and selling firewood, selling groceries, and running small retail shops. Formally, many of us are employed by organizations as incentive workers. The income from these various sources is crucial for purchasing essentials like food, clothing, and shoes for our children, highlighting the importance of diverse work opportunities for refugee women.

This active involvement showcased the adaptive strategies employed by women to secure their financial independence and contribute to their families' well-being. The study revealed that women refugees actively engaged in a variety of formal and informal labor activities to sustain their livelihoods beyond receiving humanitarian aid. The responses highlighted the resourcefulness of women in the camp who operated small businesses such as small grocery shops and cafeterias.

While some respondents note the progress made in terms of women's involvement in work, others highlight the challenges that still exist. A notable point is the gender disparity in employment opportunities. Women often face household and societal restrictions that limit their access to certain types of work, particularly those perceived as traditionally male roles. Additionally, while

organizations like IMC and DCA provide support and training, the assistance is not always sufficient to meet the needs of all women in the camp, indicating a need for more comprehensive support structures. As a 38 years old woman respondent notes:

Refugee women in the camp are engaged in various activities with support from organizations like IMC, which empowers women, and DCA, which trains and provides startup capital for small businesses. However, the assistance we receive is not sufficient to address the needs of most of the refugees in the camp. Many women, especially, struggle to find livelihood opportunities to support their families and children, indicating a gap in the support provided by aid organizations.

Then again, among the respondents, some women refugees are taking the initiative to engage in small-scale businesses and informal work to support their families. This includes selling homemade products, participating in organization-led training programs, and utilizing small grants to start businesses. These activities not only provide necessary income but also empower women and contribute to a sense of self-sufficiency within the restrictive environment of the refugee camp. Furthermore, the narratives reveal a call for more inclusive employment strategies that address the unique challenges faced by women in refugee camps. This includes breaking down barriers to employment, providing targeted training and support, and recognizing the diverse skills and contributions that women can make to the camp economy. Drawing from the firsthand accounts of the 15 years old girl:

There is a notable gender disparity in employment opportunities within the camp. Boys and men are often involved in entrepreneurial activities like transporting rations or providing transportation services. In contrast, girls have limited access to these opportunities due to familial restrictions cultural attributes where women's and girls are full responsible for caregiving and domestic tasks in their family.

Therefore, this disparity underscores the need for more inclusive approaches that provide equal work opportunities for both men and women in the refugee camp. Furthermore, the majority of women refugee stated that, aid organizations play a crucial role in facilitating employment opportunities within the camp, offering training, resources, and support for entrepreneurial activities. However, the narratives suggest that while these efforts are beneficial, they need to be

expanded and made more accessible to address the widespread need and promote gender equality effectively.

In conclusion, the responses from Jewi Refugee Camp highlight the importance of considering gender dynamics in the provision of work opportunities within refugee settings. While progress is evident in terms of women's participation in the camp economy, significant challenges remain, reflecting broader trends observed in refugee camps worldwide (Crisp, 2003). To move towards greater gender equality in labor opportunities, a multifaceted approach involving continued support, targeted training, and inclusive employment strategies is essential. These efforts should aim not only to provide immediate livelihood options but also to empower women and men alike to build sustainable futures, both within the camp and beyond.

3.4. Livelihood Strategies of Women Refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp

The livelihood strategies of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp are significantly shaped by the support they receive from various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the area. These organizations play a critical role in providing resources, training, and opportunities that enable refugees to sustain themselves in a challenging environment. The responses gathered from the study area highlight the diversity of livelihood support available, the criteria for accessing these resources, and the broader social and economic dynamics at play within the camp.

Multiple NGOs, including the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), ZOA, IMC, and Lutheran World Federation (LWF), have been instrumental in enhancing the livelihoods of refugees through targeted assistance programs. For instance, a refugee woman respondent noted, “*DRC, ZOA, and IMC are helping refugees in livelihoods, with criteria like vulnerability women, elders, and people with disabilities to get selected for receiving cattle or other assistance*”.

This approach not only provides immediate relief but also empowers these groups by giving them the resources needed to build sustainable livelihoods. The emphasis on vulnerable groups reflects a broader humanitarian strategy aimed at reducing inequalities and promoting social inclusion within the camp.

In addition to direct assistance, NGOs such as Sharp have focused on skill development and entrepreneurship, particularly among women. Sharp’s initiatives include providing hens to start poultry businesses, offering training, and certifying participants to help them sustain their

livelihoods. A woman refugee respondent shared, *“Sharp gives hens to start poultry businesses, provides training, certifies us, and gives chances in groups to produce and sustain our livelihoods”*. This approach not only equips refugees with practical skills but also fosters a sense of community and collaboration as they work together in group enterprises.

Furthermore, NGOs like LWF have previously provided technical training in tailoring and knitting, which are crucial skills for income generation. Although some of these programs have been terminated in recent years, their impact continues to resonate within the community. One refugee respondent noted, *“Several NGOs terminated their programs in 2024, such as Plan International and NRC. However, LWF previously provided technical training in tailoring and knitting”*. This points to the ongoing need for consistent support in skill development to maintain and expand livelihood opportunities for refugees.

Agriculture remains a key livelihood activity within the camp, supported by NGOs like ZOA and DRDIP. Refugees are provided with seeds, farming tools, and training to engage in agricultural practices. Interestingly, the camp does not impose restrictions on accessing farmland, allowing refugees the freedom to cultivate land within the camp as they see fit. A refugee woman respondent explained,

In the summer season, ZOA supports us with seeds and farming tools. DRDIP also helps refugees and the host community with agricultural activities. There are no restrictions on getting farmland within the camp; anyone can come and cultivate easily.

This accessibility to land within the camp is crucial for food security and income generation, especially for women whose husbands remain in South Sudan. These women, however, often limit their farming to maize and sorghum due to a lack of familiarity with vegetable cultivation. As one refugee noted, *“Most women’s husbands live in South Sudan, and we are not familiar with vegetable farming, so we cultivate only maize and some sorghum”*. This highlights the need for targeted agricultural training that can expand the range of crops grown and improve overall food diversity and security within the camp.

Despite the various livelihood activities within the camp, market access remains limited, particularly in terms of interaction with the host community. Refugees primarily engage in trade

within the camp, where consumable products are bought and sold at local markets known as MENAHAREA (stations). These markets are frequented by HABESHA (highlander) traders who bring goods into the camp. One refugee respondent remarked,

There is no specific marketplace where we interact with the host community, but we get and sell consumable products in the camp's local station, MENAHAREA. Many HABESHA traders are always there.

The absence of a designated marketplace for interaction with the host community reflects broader challenges in integrating refugee and host community economies. While trade within the camp is active, it remains somewhat insular, limiting opportunities for broader economic engagement and integration with the surrounding communities.

In summary, the livelihood strategies in Jewi Refugee Camp are deeply influenced by the interventions of various NGOs, which provide essential resources, training, and support to vulnerable groups. These efforts are critical in fostering self-reliance and resilience among refugees, enabling them to navigate the challenges of displacement. However, the ongoing need for skill development, particularly in agriculture and market integration, underscores the importance of sustained and targeted support. The insights from the respondents highlight the successes and gaps in current livelihood programs, pointing to areas where continued investment could further enhance the economic stability and well-being of the refugee community.

3.5. Women Refugees Participation in Formal or Informal Labor Activities

The responses from women refugees regarding their participation in labor activities can be woven into a broader socio-cultural and economic narrative. This narrative reflects their resilience, resourcefulness, and the coping mechanisms developed in response to the constraints of camp life. Based on my camp observations, women refugees actively participate in various informal economic activities as a means of sustaining their livelihood, encompassing endeavors such as operating small shops, vending firewood, grass, tea, coffee, managing local restaurants, vending dried fish and vegetables, selling raw meat, as well as crafting and selling handmade products, baby curt, and pottery items. This indicates a dynamic informal economy within the camps, driven

by necessity and facilitated by the community's interdependence. An emotional reflection from one of the women highlights this sentiment, stating,

As a refugee woman, I can attest that we actively participate in diverse informal work activities within the camp. Many of my fellow refugees and I engage in small businesses, such as selling tea, bread, dried fish, and various other items. These entrepreneurial endeavors serve as a crucial means of sustaining our families, providing us with a level of autonomy and financial stability in the challenging camp environment. This collective effort showcases the resilience and resourcefulness of refugee women as we strive to secure the well-being of our families amid difficult circumstances.

Similarly one refugee respondent shares her life experience within the camp:

My mother is an example of the resourcefulness prevalent among women here. She earns money by selling tea and bread by the roadside, contributing to our household income and demonstrating the entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women in the camp.

This entrepreneurial spirit is not merely a means of survival but also an assertion of autonomy and dignity in a constrained environment. Some refugee women have found formal employment as incentive workers with international and local organizations. However, these positions are limited, highlighting the scarcity of formal employment opportunities within the camps.

One refugee woman notes that, pointing out the low wages and strict control by camp authorities.

Employment opportunities within the camp are scarce and highly regulated. Selected refugees, including myself, are employed as incentive workers under RRS's control. Despite the work we do, the pay remains low, and NGOs cannot increase salaries without RRS's permission. As a unit leader at a primary school, I face the same financial constraints as other workers, emphasizing the need for improved employment terms.

Another refugee woman stated that:

In my case, I don't have any labor activity or formal employment within the camp. This lack of work contributes to the challenges of daily survival and highlights the need for more job opportunities for women refugees here.

The theoretical frameworks of resilience and resourcefulness provide a profound understanding of how refugee communities navigate these systemic barriers. Resilience, in this context, refers to the capacity of refugees to withstand and recover from the adversities they face, including the challenge of securing livelihoods under constrained conditions. Resourcefulness, on the other

hand, highlights the innovative and adaptive strategies employed by refugees to overcome these barriers and sustain their livelihoods, often through informal economic activities.

The call for a reevaluation of policies to improve work conditions and rights for refugees is grounded in the understanding that current policies often do not adequately address the unique needs and challenges faced by refugee populations. Improving these conditions requires a multifaceted approach that includes legal reforms to ease access to the formal labor market, protection against exploitative work practices, and initiatives that support refugee entrepreneurship and skill development.

In conclusion, this collective narrative of women refugees' labor participation encompassing both the vibrant informal economy and the constrained formal employment landscape echoes broader patterns of restricted labor rights and opportunities for refugees globally. The experiences shared by these women, analyzed within the theoretical frameworks of resilience and resourcefulness, call for a reevaluation of policies to improve the work conditions and rights of refugees, resonating with the scholarly discourse on the subject (Bloch, 2008; Turner, 2005).

Several responses indicate collaboration with NGOs in agricultural, educational, and communal activities. For instance, one woman mentions the support from organizations like ZOA in providing crops and tools for agriculture.

Organizations like ZOA are supporting experienced women in agriculture by providing crops and tools. This support is invaluable as it helps us engage in sustainable agricultural practices, contributing to our food security and self-sufficiency.

A host community woman working in the IMC in gender-based violence initiatives, vividly describe the support of aid organizations for refugees living in the camp stating:

In Jewi refugee camp some of the women who were supported with the capital by HelpAge to operate their business are now running their business to support their families with the benefits they gain. It reduce the suffering of those women by providing support to them and this also reduce their stress they were having by engaging them in the activities. Some of the women after knowing they have some money they stop and go to South Sudan and didn't returned. The support they are getting is very supportive and the women from the

camp are benefiting and helpful to them. Helpful to the community of Jewi especially women.

This sentiment resonates with the notion that humanitarian aid is often the lifeline for refugees, providing essential services that range from basic needs to education and health services (Harrell-Bond, 1986). These collaborations point to the critical role of NGOs in facilitating economic activities and providing necessary resources. However, as one refugee respondent notes, the opportunities provided do not cover everyone, underscoring the need for more inclusive and extensive support.

The narratives align with existing research on refugees' economic lives. Studies have found that despite severe restrictions, refugees engage in a variety of economic activities, demonstrating remarkable resilience and ingenuity (Jacobsen, 2005). The entrepreneurship and collaboration with NGOs highlighted in the responses are consistent with findings from other camp settings, where refugees adapt and find ways to sustain their livelihoods despite numerous challenges (Betts et al., 2014; Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). Overall, the life history narrative of women refugees underscores the importance of recognizing and supporting these economic activities as integral to the well-being and autonomy of refugees. The narrative also calls for more research and policy focus to understand and enhance the economic lives of refugees, ensuring that they not only survive but thrive within the limitations of camp settings. The direct quotations from refugees serve as a powerful testament to their experiences, aspirations, and the socio-cultural dynamics that shape their economic activities.

3.6. Livelihood Opportunities Within and Outside the Camp for Refugees

The livelihood opportunities for refugees in the Jewi Refugee Camp are largely confined to the boundaries of the camp itself, with significant restrictions on their ability to engage in economic activities outside the camp. The responses from the study area highlight several key challenges that refugees face when attempting to open businesses outside the camp, as well as the internal mechanisms that exist for establishing small enterprises within the camp.

Within the camp, refugees have more freedom to start small businesses if they have the necessary start-up capital. The process for starting a business within the camp involves requesting to the

Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS), which then surveys the potential business location and grants approval. One refugee respondent described this process:

When I have money to start a small business within the camp, I simply request to RRS, and they survey the place and give the place to me.

This system provides a structured yet accessible pathway for refugees to engage in entrepreneurial activities within the camp, allowing them to generate income and contribute to the camp's internal economy. Despite the opportunities within the camp, there are significant challenges that limit the effectiveness of these livelihood strategies. The RRS respondent elucidates,

There is a gap in the livelihood strategies; the strategies are not effective, and the refugees have not reached the position to become self-reliant because the strategies do not consider the refugees' culture and norms.

Refugees in Jewi Camp are generally not allowed to open businesses outside the camp due to regional rules and regulations that restrict their movement and economic activities. This restriction effectively limits their ability to access broader markets and opportunities that could potentially enhance their livelihoods. One refugee respondent expressed this limitation clearly:

No, because there is no access, and the criteria prevent refugees from going to another area due to the region's rules and regulations, but inside the camp is free if you have capital.

This response underscores the legal and regulatory barriers that prevent refugees from expanding their economic activities beyond the confines of the camp, thus curtailing their economic potential and self-sufficiency. The inability to operate outside the camp not only limits income generation but also reinforces the isolation of refugees from the host community and the broader regional economy. This isolation can lead to a dependency on aid and internal camp economies, which are often insufficient to meet all the needs of the refugee population.

This observation highlights a critical flaw in the current livelihood programs: they fail to adequately incorporate the cultural and normative contexts of the refugee population. This

disconnect between the designed strategies and the lived realities of the refugees hinders their ability to fully benefit from the available opportunities, thus perpetuating cycles of dependency rather than fostering true self-reliance. In this case, while refugees in Jewi Camp have some opportunities to start businesses within the camp, their ability to engage in economic activities outside the camp is severely restricted by regional regulations. The internal processes for starting businesses within the camp are relatively straightforward but are hampered by broader strategic shortcomings that fail to account for the cultural and normative needs of the refugee population. This gap in strategy highlights the need for more culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches to livelihood support, which could better enable refugees to achieve self-reliance and reduce their dependency on aid. Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing the economic resilience of the refugee community and facilitating their integration into the broader economic landscape.

3.7. Problems Encountered in the Pursuit of Women Refugee Livelihoods

Women refugees in Jewi refugee camp underscore the ongoing struggle to meet basic needs. Women in Jewi Refugee camps often face critical shortages of essential items like food and hygiene products. As one refugee respondent briefly explained,

As a woman living in the refugee camp, I'd like to share the challenges we face every day. We need basic essentials like stew ingredients, milk, onions, and tomatoes, but even a single piece of vegetable costs 10 Birr, making the cost of living incredibly high. In our culture, women traditionally did not work in the market, but times are changing, and now many of us are trying to work and adapt to the new environment, although it's not without its challenges. Regarding work permits, despite raising this issue with RRS and other partners, many of us are still waiting for proper work permits or licenses. We are confined to the limited work available within the camp. We strive for better integration with the host community, and when issues arise, we work together with refugee representatives and local authorities to find solutions. We live in a state of high collaboration with the host communities of Karmi and Jewi Kebele. While we feel secure within the camp, our access to education and health services has its ups and downs. The primary education quality has fluctuated, partly due to unpaid salaries for incentive workers like teachers. Health services are also strained; there's usually just one clinic to serve everyone, making access difficult, especially for pregnant women and the elderly who face a challenging journey to

the clinic located in the center of the camp. For any of us women in the camp, delivering our babies at the clinic is essential; otherwise, organizations like RRS and UNHCR won't register the infants. While we appreciate the services provided, the reality is that life here is tough, and we are continually adapting and striving for a better future for ourselves and our children.”

Studies like those by Jacobsen and Harrell-Bond have long noted that food insecurity and inadequate provision of basic needs are common in refugee settings, leading to compromised health and well-being (Harrell-Bond, 1986; Jacobsen, 2005). While some refugees are employed as incentive workers and engage in small-scale entrepreneurship, they face significant economic challenges. The income from such activities is often insufficient, especially given the camp's high cost of living. Additionally, the lack of land for cultivation hampers their efforts to become self-sufficient. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, leading to inflation and further limiting their economic capabilities, as a refugee woman says:

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've faced significant inflation, making life even more challenging. Essential items like sugar, tomatoes, and onions have become prohibitively expensive. This inflation has severely impacted our ability to afford necessities, highlighting the need for more robust support systems in the face of global crises affecting local economies.

The responses reveal that access to livelihood opportunities, while available, is not comprehensive. Many refugees find themselves excluded from NGO-led programs, forcing them to resort to trading rations or small-scale buying and selling activities. The limited income from governmental incentive work and the inability to work freely outside the camp compound further constrain their economic opportunities.

From the perspective of those directly affected, a refugee respondent shares:

Access to livelihood opportunities provided by NGOs is not comprehensive and often seems random, leaving many without the needed support. Those who do not get selected for specific programs find themselves resorting to trading rations or engaging in small-scale buying and selling to meet their needs. The income from such activities is usually just enough to purchase basic items like clothing and shoes for our children, emphasizing the instability of our economic situation.

The narratives also reflect the socio-cultural shifts and employment barriers that women face in the camp. Employment opportunities are scarce and often not suited to the skill sets of many women, as highlighted by a woman:

In Jewi refugee camp in terms of employment perspectives, work permit, socio cultural issue, integration with host community, access to major services such as health, education, security and other the service available are free and equal opportunity for all women and girls. The challenges were like the most women are not educated hence they have only cleaning, and if there is not that post they will not be employ in any organization since they are not learned to suit any post except the cleaning.

The lack of work permits and limited job options within the camp confines them to low-paying or informal labor, reflecting a broader issue of restrictive policies and cultural barriers that hinder women's economic participation and empowerment in refugee settings. Betts discuss how restrictive policies and cultural norms often limit women's participation in formal and informal labor markets in refugee camps, underscoring the need for more inclusive economic strategies (Betts et al., 2014).

Women's safety, particularly in relation to gender-based violence and the risks associated with daily tasks like collecting firewood or water, is a significant concern. The women describe how they have adapted by moving in groups, following the advice of organizations like IMC. A woman explains.

As a refugee, I'd like to share the key issues affecting our daily lives. We face a constant shortage of stew ingredients, which makes it very difficult to sustain our families. Regarding socio-cultural issues, the sense of community support has diminished. Previously, my relatives and community would offer support, especially after my husband's passing, but now, I find myself increasingly isolated and rejected. This change represents a significant challenge in our community dynamics. Violence is another critical concern for us, particularly for women. The places where we collect firewood are often far, and the journey is fraught with dangers, including sexual violence. Consequently, we have adapted by moving in groups to protect ourselves, especially when facing water shortages that require us to travel to the river. Regarding our relationship with the host community, while open conflict has decreased, disagreements still occur. Thankfully, RRS and local Kebele representatives facilitate discussions and help resolve these issues, ensuring a more

peaceful coexistence. Despite these interventions, the challenges of safety, social support, and basic needs remain pressing concerns in our lives.

This adaptation reflects their resilience but also underscores the dire need for improved security measures and community support structures. The strategy of moving in groups is a form of self-organized risk mitigation. The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in refugee camps and the importance of community and international efforts to provide safe environments (Turner, 2005).

While some responses indicate a level of integration and collaboration with host communities, tensions and conflicts occasionally arise, often related to resource use and cultural misunderstandings. The women appreciate the mediating role of organizations like RRS in fostering peaceful coexistence, yet they call for continued efforts to strengthen these relationships and ensure mutual respect and understanding. Dryden-Peterson emphasizes that while host-refugee interactions can lead to shared resources and cultural exchange, they can also result in tension and competition, necessitating careful management and community engagement strategies (Dryden-Peterson, 2017).

The challenges around education and healthcare accessibility are consistent with global refugee experiences. While there are efforts to provide these services, shortages and inconsistencies remain. In Jewi refugee Camp, Women particularly emphasize the need for better educational opportunities for their children and healthcare services. Studies by UNHCR and others have documented these gaps, advocating for improved access and quality of education and health services in refugee settings (UNHCR, 2019). A refugee respondent explained:

For us women, accessing healthcare and education for our children has been particularly tough. The health facilities are inadequate, and supporting our children's education, especially if they pass the national exam and go to universities in Gambela or elsewhere, is a struggle. Many of us resort to selling our food rations to send money to our children. This sacrifice is a heavy burden for us. Regarding violence, it was rampant when we first came from South Sudan; conflicts and violence were everyday occurrences. However, with agencies spreading messages and providing psychosocial support, sexual violence and rape have decreased. Now, when we go to the forest or river to collect water and firewood, we go in teams for safety, following the advice and awareness sessions conducted by

organizations like IMC. It's important to note that the perpetrators of these violent acts are not from the host community but are refugees themselves. This distinction is crucial as it reflects the complex nature of violence and the need for continued vigilance and support to protect vulnerable individuals in the camp.

By weaving these individual experiences with broader research, it's clear that while organizations provide crucial support, gaps in food, safety, employment, and social integration persist. The narratives underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to aid, considering the unique needs and strengths of women refugees. Enhanced support, informed by both the lived experiences of refugees and the extensive body of research on refugee camp dynamics, can lead to more effective and empowering aid strategies. This holistic understanding is vital for developing interventions that not only address immediate needs but also foster long-term resilience and empowerment.

The study's qualitative insights, drawn from both Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews with refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, underscore distinctive patterns of marginalization affecting elder individuals and widows. Notably, these groups face increased marginalization, indicating potential disparities in resource allocation and social standing within the refugee community. Contrastingly, traditional skills such as Blacksmithing (Biret Ketkach or Antiregna, Amh) and Pottery (Shekla Seri, Amh) are not subject to marginalization. These activities, viewed as sources of income and repositories of technical skills, challenge marginalization trends, highlighting the significance of economic roles in shaping societal perceptions. Interestingly, while these economic pursuits shield certain individuals from marginalization within the camp, the same individuals might face cultural marginalization in Northern Ethiopia (Wayessa, 2020). This dichotomy emphasizes the nuanced nature of societal attitudes towards specific occupations among refugee communities. Moreover, the study brings attention to the heightened vulnerability of women in Jewi camp, attributed to cultural dynamics rooted in Nuer traditions. A woman elucidated,

In Jewi, all of us refugees originated from South Sudan's Akobo County, fostering a sense of familiarity among us. Unfortunately, this familiarity has given rise to conflicts and instances of both sexual and physical violence. Compounding these challenges is the fact that a significant number of refugee women have seen their husbands compelled to return to their homeland. The absence of husbands has left us in the camp confronting further difficulties, particularly concerning heightened vulnerability to sexual and physical

violence. Consequently, we have shouldered the entire burden of sustaining our families, undertaking sole responsibility for our livelihoods in the challenging circumstances of the refugee camp.

Therefore, this discussion underscores the multifaceted nature of vulnerabilities among distinct refugee groups in Jewi camp, necessitating tailored interventions and a deeper understanding of cultural influences on their experiences.

Respondents propose rigorous measures against violence and improved community integration strategies. A woman reflects a desire for a safer environment.

The government should strictly penalize attackers, and NGOs should increase awareness about violence. All assistance should address the needs of the majority of refugees, focusing on preventing and reducing violence through continuous awareness programs.

The emphasis on peaceful coexistence with the host community and the implementation of conflict-resolution mechanisms echoes the need for social cohesion, as discussed in works by (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). A recurrent theme in the responses is the need for special attention to the elderly and other marginalized groups within the camp. Respondents advocate for targeted care and protection measures, reflecting the principle of inclusivity in humanitarian support. For example, a woman stated:

We need assistance with essential items like stew ingredients, clothing, and shoes for our children, and more opportunities for self-employment and formal employment. Sanitary products like soap and sanitary pads are also critical. Additionally, agencies should provide more information to refugees to protect women from violence and develop awareness among both women and men.

This perspective is supported by literature underscoring the importance of age-sensitive interventions in refugee camps (Barbelet, 2018).

Continuous feedback and needs assessment

Lastly, participants stress the importance of aid organizations incorporating refugee feedback into their program designs and assessments.

A woman asserts, advocating for a participatory approach in aid delivery, says:

We need organizations to genuinely consider our input and feedback on the shortages and challenges we experience. There should be a system to regularly collect and act on feedback from refugees to improve services. Additionally, organizations must intensify

their efforts to create and develop awareness about the violence within the camp, ensuring safety for everyone. The government should also work more effectively on integrating the local community and refugees to foster peaceful coexistence.

This call resonates with the growing advocacy for refugee participation in humanitarian programming (UNHCR, 2019). These narratives, rich with personal experiences and specific proposals, offer invaluable insights into the needs and aspirations of the refugees in Jewi Camp. They underscore the importance of a multi-dimensional approach that addresses immediate material needs, fosters economic self-reliance, ensures personal safety and dignity, promotes social integration, and respects the voices and agency of refugees. The responses not only highlight the gaps in current aid strategies but also pave the way for more responsive, effective, and dignified humanitarian interventions.

3.8. Proposed Solutions for Problems Encountered in the Pursuit of Women Refugee Livelihoods

Respondents emphasize the critical need for consistent and accessible basic amenities like food, water, clothing, and sanitation products. A refugee woman emphasized that:

Governments should provide more employment opportunities for women refugees. This could be done by creating jobs in the camp, providing training and support for women entrepreneurs, and working with the private sector to create jobs for women refugees. Governments and NGOs should work to address the socio-cultural issues that women refugees face. This could be done by raising awareness about the challenges faced by women refugees, providing training and support for women, and working to change attitudes and behaviors. Governments and NGOs should work to help women refugees integrate with the host community. This could be done by providing language classes, cultural orientation programs, and support for women to get involved in community activities. Governments and NGOs should work to improve access to major services for women refugees.

Another woman indicated:

We need NGOs to help facilitate access to milk, especially for infants, mothers, and the elderly. Additionally, both the government and NGOs should work to improve and enhance the supply of water resources to meet our daily needs effectively.

The call for more comprehensive support in providing essential items mirrors the broader literature on refugee welfare, which consistently emphasizes the need for a rights-based approach to humanitarian aid (Harrell-Bond, 1986).

Given the large number of women in the camp, respondents urge for more targeted initiatives addressing their specific needs. This aligns with research indicating that empowering women in displacement settings leads to improved community well-being and resilience (Jacobsen, 2005).

As suggested by a refugee woman, the need for capacity building, skill training, and employment opportunities tailored for women are important:

Given that a significant portion of the camp's population is women, we expect more organizations to focus on women's issues. We need more attention from both the government and NGOs, including capacity building to resolve our livelihood challenges by creating and providing sustainable job opportunities.

Furthermore, a refugee respondent elucidates about the proposed solutions regarding women refugees' livelihood challenges:

We are hopeful that the Ethiopian government and RRS, who stand for refugees, understand our urgent needs. For instance, there's a significant shortage of soap, and we're unclear about who is responsible for providing it. Whether it's the government, RRS, or UNHCR, we need them to coordinate and ensure essential items like soap are distributed, as it directly impacts our community's health and well-being. Regarding the WASH project, we wonder which organizations are accountable - is it MCA or Oxfam, or are there others involved too? It's crucial for us to know so we can reach out for assistance in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene. In the past two weeks, we've witnessed violent cases, including three instances of rape. Thankfully, RRS has taken action against the perpetrators, demonstrating the importance of addressing such violence to prevent its escalation and ensure community safety. This response at the community level, including awareness programs, is vital for reducing violence and fostering a safer environment.

We also face socio-cultural violence and conflicts, often related to marriage and ideologies, but with the intervention of the Ethiopian government and community elders, these issues are usually resolved. Previously, women in our community faced marginalization, but since arriving in Ethiopia, we've been exposed to different cultures and values, leading to a more egalitarian society where discrimination based on gender is

increasingly addressed. In my family, I am a provider for nine members, including my six children, wife, and younger brother. I work and hand over what I earn to my wife, who manages our household, preparing food, and dealing with any conflicts that arise within our community. My day-to-day activities involve peace-making and spreading awareness about violence, particularly sexual violence and the dangers of early marriage. We're actively working to educate our community about the importance of education for both girls and boys, with support from NGOs and RRS providing free education opportunities. As for my wife, she takes care of our children and me, managing tasks like washing clothes, preparing food, and collecting firewood. Her role is fundamental to our family's well-being. I strive to support her and our family by working every day for our community within the camp, ensuring we address and mitigate the challenges we face collectively.

The support provided to the refugees, though beneficial, is inadequate to address the broader challenges they face. The limited land for cultivation, seasonal use, and restrictions on movement highlight the need for a more substantial and comprehensive approach to improving refugees' economic well-being and freedom.

A refugee woman reflects:

The support we receive, while helpful, is not enough to address the broader challenges we face. The land provided for cultivation is limited and only allows for seasonal use. The lack of freedom to move and work outside the camp severely restricts our livelihood options. Even educated refugees find themselves limited to jobs within the camp, unable to utilize their full potential or access wider employment opportunities. This situation calls for a more substantial and comprehensive approach to improving refugees' economic well-being and freedom.

Additionally, the inability of educated refugees to utilize their full potential due to restricted employment opportunities within the camp points to a need for policies that expand employment options and provide greater economic freedom. In conclusion, the results underscore the complexity of refugee livelihoods and the need for more inclusive, comprehensive, and sustainable support systems. While the current support structures provide basic needs, they fall short in enabling refugees to become economically self-sufficient and improve their overall quality of life. These findings echo broader research that emphasizes the importance of enhancing livelihood

opportunities for refugees, not just as a means of survival but as a pathway to empowerment and self-reliance (Betts, 2013; Jacobsen, 2005).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUPPORTING WOMEN REFUGEES' LIVELIHOODS

4.1. Existing NGOs and Governmental Agencies in Jewi Camp for Refugees

As per the 2022 report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Jewi Refugee Camp currently benefits from collective assistance provided by a total of 25 humanitarian organizations. Among these, only six non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specifically, DCA, LWF, Mercy Corps, SHARPE, VIS and ZOA has been actively engaged in supporting the livelihoods of refugees within the camp. This collaborative effort underscores the multifaceted nature of humanitarian aid provision and emphasizes the distinctive role played by a subset of NGOs in addressing the specific needs related to refugees' livelihoods in the Jewi Refugee Camp.

The narratives from the refugees in Jewi Camp present mixed feelings about the assistance provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations. Several respondents express dissatisfaction with the support, particularly concerning health services and the distribution of essential items. A woman shares that,

The food supply in the camp is insufficient, and the distribution methods used by aid organizations seem unfair. For example, individuals like me who live alone receive only 7 kg of meal, which is hardly enough to sustain oneself. This disparity in food allocation poses a survival challenge for those without family in the camp.

This indicated that there is a challenge in meeting basic nutritional needs of refugees who are living in Jewi Refugee Camp. However, another woman appreciates the various forms of aid, she explained:

We appreciate the support from the Ethiopian Government (RRS) and other aid organizations, particularly in education, food, and health. However, there are gaps in services; for instance, our health center lacks medicines, and while we have access to water, we face difficulties obtaining containers like Jerrycan. There's also a shortage of blankets and shelter, which are essential for our wellbeing.

Despite the challenges, there is a recognition of the contributions made by various organizations. For instance, one refugee respondents acknowledges, citing the provision of basic services like food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education. Yet, the inconsistency in aid delivery and the inadequacy of resources remain points of concern. A woman further explained:

Many organizations are supporting refugees here in the camp. The Ethiopian government (RRS) provides basic services such as food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education to refugees in Jewi camp. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also provides protection and assistance to refugees here in Jewi camp. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as IMC, Save the Children, World Vision, and Mercy Corps provide a variety of services to refugees in Jewi camp, including education, healthcare, water and sanitation, and livelihood support.

These responses underline the complexity of providing aid in refugee settings. While there is appreciation for the support received, the narratives also highlight significant gaps in meeting the comprehensive needs of refugees. The findings suggest a need for more coordinated and effective aid strategies to ensure the well-being of refugees in such settings. The contributions of NGOs and government agencies in refugee settings, like the Jewi Refugee Camp, are critical yet often face challenges. The provision of basic services such as food, healthcare, and education is essential for refugee well-being (Betts, 2013). However, disparities in resource distribution and the adequacy of aid often lead to mixed perceptions among refugees (Jacobsen, 2005). In line with the present study, while there is gratitude for the support received, refugees also highlight the need for more comprehensive and consistent aid. This calls for a more coordinated approach by aid organizations and government bodies to address the multifaceted needs of refugees effectively (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

4.2. Strategies, Contributions, and Compliance Handling Mechanisms of Government Agencies, Local and International NGOs

The responses collectively convey a sense of agency among the refugees in advocating for their needs and rights. Despite the challenges of camp life, refugees utilize various mechanisms to voice their concerns, including suggestion boxes, direct communication with organizations, and media engagement. This reflects a proactive stance in seeking better living conditions and asserting their rights within the camp's socio-economic structure.

The narratives reveal a complex interplay between dependence on aid and the drive for self-reliance. While expressing gratitude for the support received from NGOs and government agencies, refugees also highlight the gaps and inefficiencies in aid distribution. The mention of entrepreneurship initiatives, especially among women, points to a desire for economic independence and empowerment beyond the confines of the camp.

Implementing partner employs specific criteria to identify the most vulnerable individuals within the camp, ensuring that their services reach those who need them most. The criteria include individuals who are widowed, mental health clients, HIV positive, people with disabilities, GBV survivors, and women with many children who require assistance. This targeted approach ensures that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively, prioritizing those who are at risk of marginalization and neglect. A refugee key respondent emphasized the selection criteria of aid organizations, *“As an example IMC focuses on the most vulnerable groups”*. This statement highlights the critical role that IMC plays in not only providing services but also in advocating for the needs of those who might otherwise be overlooked in a large and diverse refugee population.

Refugees describe a structured approach to raising complaints and seeking resolutions, involving suggestion boxes, online communications, and direct calls. This systematized advocacy reflects an understanding of the bureaucratic nature of aid organizations and a strategic approach to navigating these structures to address their needs. The result revealed that, the complaint handling mechanisms of NGOs and government agencies. The respondents discuss various platforms like suggestion boxes, online contact options, and direct calls for raising issues. One of the key respondents among the refugees states, *“Our mechanisms to resolving any compliances organizations have a suggestion box... and the other one is direct call to the organization”*.

These responses indicate an awareness and utilization of the available channels for voicing concerns. Another respondent highlights the integrated efforts of organizations in supporting livelihood activities and the mechanisms for raising complaints. This suggests a structured approach to addressing refugees' concerns, aligning with the need for effective communication channels in humanitarian settings (Harrell-Bond, 1986; Jacobsen, 2005). The varying levels of satisfaction with these mechanisms underscore the importance of ensuring accessible, responsive, and efficient complaint handling processes in refugee camps.

The narratives provide insight into the roles played by various organizations in supporting refugee livelihoods. While some organizations are lauded for their targeted support, others are critiqued for their limited reach and responsiveness.

A female respondent stated her feeling about the roles of NGOs and government agencies:

At the community level, there's a structured approach to addressing and escalating issues. Community and zonal representatives observe and forward significant matters to RCC, then to RRS. For specific issues like GVB, connections to IMC/GVB programs link to protection mechanisms. Additionally, livelihood initiatives, including small business skills and market assessment, are facilitated by RRS in collaboration with specific organizations, aiming to enhance our economic independence and quality of life within the camp.

Additionally, in the words of the refugees themselves, a woman residing in Jewi Refugee Camp remarked:

We express our gratitude to the Ethiopian Government (RRS) and aid organizations for their substantial support in education, food, health, and other sectors. Despite these efforts, we still face shortages, such as a lack of medicine at the health center, insufficient Jerricans, blankets and shelter. These gaps significantly affect our day-to-day life, yet we remain hopeful for continual support and solutions.

Similarly, a refugee woman stated:

Our community in Jewi camp faces numerous challenges, with limited support that often doesn't meet our needs. When trying to address these issues with those in charge of aid, we find a lack of responsiveness. For instance, we've experienced prolonged periods without soap or sanitation supplies. Our complaints to various NGOs and organizations like UNHCR often go unanswered, leaving us in a state of need and uncertainty.

The responses underscore the importance of tailored, comprehensive, and responsive aid programs that recognize the diverse needs and aspirations of refugees. As a key respondent mentioned,

While my knowledge of the specific strategies of various organizations is limited, I recognize the protection provided by RRS and the global support from UNHCR, including

food item distribution. Although I have not had the opportunity to explore all the programs offered by different NGOs, the support I am aware of is crucial and appreciated.

These narratives align with scholarly research on refugee agency, camp economies, and the role of NGOs in crisis settings. Researchers have long argued that refugees, despite their often-dire circumstances, are not merely passive recipients of aid but are actively engaged in shaping their social and economic environments (Harrell-Bond, 1986; Jacobsen, 2005). Recent studies continue to emphasize the entrepreneurial spirit and resilience of refugees, challenging the conventional portrayal of refugees as uniformly dependent and disempowered (Betts et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the responses resonate with critiques of the humanitarian aid system, highlighting issues of inefficiency, lack of responsiveness, and the need for more participatory and empowering aid models (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). They also reflect ongoing discussions about the need for aid organizations to better understand and support the complex socio-economic dynamics of refugee camps and the diverse aspirations of their inhabitants. In conclusion, the Life History Narratives of refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp provide valuable insights into the mechanisms of advocacy and aid in refugee livelihoods. They highlight the resilience, agency, and diverse strategies employed by refugees to navigate the challenging conditions of camp life. By situating these individual experiences within a broader socio-cultural framework, this approach enriches our understanding of refugee agency and the critical role of NGOs and government agencies in supporting refugee livelihoods. The narratives call for continued scholarly attention to the voices and experiences of refugees, and for aid organizations to adopt more responsive, inclusive, and empowering approaches to supporting refugee communities.

4.3. Sufficiency of Humanitarian Aid in Jewi Refugee Camp

The responses from the participants present a varied perception of the adequacy of humanitarian aid in the Jewi Refugee Camp. Some respondents believe the aid to be sufficient, yet others express concerns.

A refugee woman underlines,

Yes! It's sufficient! Only last year, there was a shortage of food. I think it is not the Ethiopian government problem. The problem is from UNHCR, they said we have a lot of food provision and they cut some percentage from our food. But this year everything is

fine. In my perception it is because of the global issue and the number of refugees has been increased time to time.

Another refugee woman remarks,

Last time before two years back the humanitarian aids are better than now, the supervisors (UNHCR and RRS) strongly supervise the activities, but now specially after covid 19 ban, the services that gave the agencies decrease time to time currently not sufficient to live the life is difficult to here and seems are also stop.

On the other hand, some refugees are not yet satisfied with the aid support to live and sustain their live in the camp. A young refugee girl says,

There is no enough support here. Even in our school here there is no good support to give us personal hygiene materials like Sanitary Pad and Soap. In order to fulfill this things, we tried to cut trees and sell the wood materials here within the camp, the local government is not allowed to do such things and even cutting trees within the camp is not allowed for everybody. It is strictly forbidden.

Similarly another refugee respondent elucidates about the insufficiency of aid support in the camp:

No, the humanitarian aid are not sufficient for us to live in the camp, because they gave us food and oil but does not including stew product currently, there is no soap to wash our clothes, the medication is not enough for even the center is one in the camp.

Another refugee points out,

While there are services available within the camp, our health center often lacks necessary medications. Numerous organizations are present, with some significantly contributing to improving our living conditions. However, not all are effective, as their efforts sometimes only reach a limited number of us. We, the refugee representatives, regularly voice our concerns through various communication channels such as notice boards, telephone calls, and direct interactions, hoping for an improvement in the distribution and quality of aid.

Despite recognizing the importance of the aid received, respondents consistently call for more support, especially in terms of livelihood and health-related services. A refugee man in Jewi Refugee Camp says, *“We are happy for the aid organizations support. But still, we need to get Jerricans Mosquito Net, Blanket e.t.c.*

The narratives emphasize that while the support is impactful and appreciated, there are gaps in sufficiency and consistency. A refugee woman stated about the integration and gaps in sufficiency by saying:

As a refugee woman, I acknowledge the support we receive from IMC, UNHCR, RRS, Action Against Hunger, Save the Children, and others. Their assistance includes security, food, nutrition, education, livelihood, and psychosocial support. While these organizations work together to offer integrated support, there are limitations. The quantity and frequency of aid are not enough, leading to reduced potential for us to engage effectively in work. We've noticed a decline in assistance quality and sufficiency over time, affecting crucial services like job opportunities, informal work, and entrepreneurial activities. For instance, incentive workers, especially teachers, have faced delays in payments for months, diminishing the quality of education. Previously, initiatives like training women refugees and opening beauty salons were promising but were closed due to skill gaps among trainees. The real need is not for closing but for enhancing capacity building and continuous support to fill these gaps and foster self-sufficiency in livelihood activities. Currently, the level of support and assistance is not as it used to be, necessitating more substantial and consistent help from partner organizations.

The study results revealed that the reality of aid sufficiency in refugee settings is fraught with complexities, as even basic needs are often not fully met, leading to significant challenges in maintaining dignity and health. The findings indicate that while some refugees have observed improvements in aid distribution, others continue to struggle with access to essential resources. This discrepancy points to systemic issues in the distribution mechanisms and the availability of critical items, such as hygiene products, which are essential for maintaining well-being. The observed gaps suggest that the current aid systems may not be fully responsive to the evolving needs of the refugee population. These findings align with previous research highlighting similar issues in other refugee settings. The challenges identified in this study imply a need for more targeted and equitable aid distribution strategies, alongside stronger advocacy mechanisms to ensure all refugees can meet their basic needs. Additionally, the persistence of these issues raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of aid interventions and underscores the importance of adopting a holistic approach that integrates the voices of the refugees themselves into the planning and execution of humanitarian efforts.

4.4. Integration of Aid Organizations in Jewi Refugee Camp

The responses from participants in the Jewi Refugee Camp reveal a nuanced perspective on the aid provided by various organizations. A female refugee respondent expresses a sense of continuity and survival due to the assistance:

As a refugee woman, I can confirm that we receive essential support in food, health, and education from organizations like UNHCR, RRS, IMC, and FRC. Their efforts are well-integrated, providing impactful aid that sustains our lives within the camp. However, there are challenges, particularly in the timely delivery of food items. Despite these issues, the comprehensive support we receive is crucial and continues to play a significant role in maintaining our livelihoods. Our life is continued with the support of those organizations.

Another woman stated that:

As of today I'm getting supports from UNHCR, RRS, IMC, FRC, and other aid organizations. Those organizations are integrated each other while helping refugees. Their support to us is really helpful for refugees in the camp. Because currently our children are learning, women are getting health related services, all the support we get from any organizations within the camp is very meaningful for all refugees who are surviving with the support of aid organizations. Because, all things are very challenging to access without those organizations.

A host community woman working in the IMC, vividly describes the support of aid organizations for refugees living in the camp stating that:

In Jewi refugee camp some of the women who were supported with the capital by HelpAge to operate their business are now running their business to support their families with the benefits they gain. It reduce the suffering of those women by providing support to them and this also reduce their stress they were having by engaging them in the activities. Some of the women after knowing they have some money they stop and go to South Sudan and didn't returned. The support they are getting is very supportive and the women from the camp are benefiting and helpful to them. It is helpful to the community of Jewi especially women.

This opinion resonates with the notion that humanitarian aid is often the lifeline for refugees, providing essential services that range from basic needs to education and health services (Harrell-

Bond, 1986). These findings suggest that the collaboration between aid organizations in the Jewi Refugee Camp is perceived positively by both refugees and the host community. The integrated approach appears to be effective in addressing basic needs, promoting education and healthcare access, and fostering some level of self-reliance through income generation initiatives. However, further research might be beneficial to explore the challenges mentioned regarding food distribution delays and to investigate the long-term sustainability of these programs, particularly regarding their impact on self-sufficiency.

Several respondents highlight the entrepreneurial activities undertaken by women, enabled by capital support from organizations like HelpAge. A key respondent among the women emphasized that the majority of aid organizations prioritize the assistance of women refugees due to their predominant numerical representation within the camp. Furthermore, the prevalence of women in the camp significantly surpasses that of men, with men often returning home shortly after receiving aid from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Notably, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) registers refugees based on the male-headed household, reflecting the family structure. However, as men frequently depart post-aid distribution, women bear the entire spectrum of responsibilities. This dynamic encourages NGOs to concentrate their efforts on supporting the livelihoods of women within the camp. Another key respondent said:

Some women's who were supported with the capital by HelpAge to operate their business are now running their business to support their families with the benefits they gain. The assistance from NGOs like RRS and UNHCR has positively transformed our community, particularly for women who have moved from domestic confines to running small businesses. This entrepreneurial shift has not only improved our incomes but also reduced household conflicts. I appreciate this support, which has significantly improved our lives. However, there are challenges, especially during the pandemic, which led to shortages and a lack of essentials like soap. The soaring prices have made it difficult for large families like mine to afford basic hygiene products. Despite these challenges, the overall support has been a positive force in changing our community dynamics.

The role of aid in fostering women's entrepreneurship in refugee camps is a multifaceted subject that touches on economic empowerment, household dynamics, and societal change within these settings. Aid organizations, by focusing on women, leverage their numerical predominance in camps to spur entrepreneurial activities that have broader impacts on the refugee community. A

study by (Ofosu-Koranteng et al., 2022) found that while refugee women in Ghana's camps are economically empowered, they still face challenges in attaining decision-making power within their households, suggesting the need for programs that enhance both women and men's capacity for equal participation in household and entrepreneurial decisions. This emphasizes the interconnectedness of economic empowerment and social dynamics within refugee settings. These studies collectively underscore the critical role of targeted aid in empowering women within refugee camps through entrepreneurship. Such initiatives not only provide women with avenues for economic self-reliance but also bring about social change by altering traditional household dynamics and fostering a sense of agency among women.

In this study, several respondents highlighted the entrepreneurial spirit of women within the camp, fueled by capital support from organizations like HelpAge. This focus on female-led initiatives, as a key respondent pointed out, stems from the numerical reality of the camp. The disproportionate number of women compared to men, likely due to men returning home after receiving initial aid, positions women as the primary caregivers and economic drivers. The UNHCR's registration system, based on male-headed households, unintentionally overlooks this shift in responsibility. NGOs, recognizing this dynamic, prioritize supporting women's livelihoods to ensure the well-being of families.

This focus on female entrepreneurship resonates with the concept of women's economic empowerment (Jacobsen, 2005). Aid has demonstrably facilitated a transition for many women, moving them from domestic roles to becoming breadwinners for their families. This shift, as another respondent highlights, extends beyond economic benefits. It fosters a reduction in household conflicts and a sense of agency among women.

However, the respondents' narratives also acknowledge challenges. The pandemic's impact on essential supplies and soaring prices underscores the precariousness of this newfound economic self-sufficiency, especially for larger families. Despite these hurdles, the overall sentiment remains positive. The targeted support has demonstrably transformed community dynamics, fostering a more prominent role for women in the camp's economy.

This analysis reveals the two-fold impact of targeted aid. First, it empowers women by providing the resources to become economically self-sufficient. Second, it fosters a broader societal shift within the camp, challenging traditional gender roles and creating a more equitable economic

landscape. However, the respondents' experiences also highlight the need for long-term support structures to ensure the sustainability of these positive changes.

The narratives collected from the refugees in the camp reveal a deep-seated appreciation for the support provided by various organizations, including IMC, UNHCR, RRS, Action Against Hunger, Save the Children, among others. This support spans a broad spectrum of needs such as security, food, nutrition, education, livelihood, and psychosocial support. Despite the gratitude expressed by the refugees for this multifaceted assistance, there emerges a consistent theme of insufficiency and inconsistency that underpins their experiences and perceptions. The testimonies highlight a critical decline in the quantity and frequency of aid, which in turn compromises the refugees' ability to engage effectively in work, entrepreneurship, and other livelihood activities.

In general, the respondents' emphasis on consistency further strengthens this point. Delayed payments for incentive workers, like teachers, not only affect their well-being but also disrupt the very services refugees rely on, impacting the quality of education.

These narratives paint a picture of unmet needs and a system struggling to keep pace with the evolving challenges faced by refugees. The impact on well-being and livelihood, particularly for families grappling with rising prices, is undeniable. Betts' discussion of the complexity of aid provision in refugee settings offers a relevant framework for understanding these shortcomings (Betts, 2013). Moving forward, a shift towards a more coordinated, needs-based approach, with a focus on capacity building and sustainable support systems, appears crucial for ensuring the well-being and long-term livelihood opportunities of the camp's residents.

These calls for additional support are echoed in broader refugee literature, emphasizing the need for holistic and sustainable aid strategies that go beyond immediate relief (Crisp, 2003). Overall, the narratives collectively advocate for continuous and comprehensive support, not only in addressing immediate needs but also in fostering long-term empowerment and self-sufficiency. As the women of Jewi Camp navigate their daily lives, they highlight the essential role of aid organizations and simultaneously point to areas where additional resources and capacity-building efforts are needed. Their stories of resilience, entrepreneurial spirit, and community engagement stand as a testament to their strengths and the potential for greater support to enhance their livelihoods and well-being. The call for a reevaluation of aid strategies is clear, emphasizing the need for tailored assistance that responds to the evolving and diverse needs of refugees, as echoed in the broader refugee literature (Crisp, 2003). Their lived experiences and the cultural context of

their narratives serve as a compelling argument for more effective humanitarian interventions in refugee camps worldwide.

4.5. Women Refugees Feeling Towards Service Provision

Refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp offered mixed feedback on their current ability to access work, banking services, and land ownership, especially when considering Ethiopia's various pledges made in 2016, 2019, and 2023. Nevertheless, a recent legislative approved by the Ethiopian government permits refugees to acquire work permits and various legal documents, enabling them to engage in lawful employment, officially register births and marriages, and avail themselves of financial services. Despite this progressive shift, a significant proportion of refugees expressed a lack of comprehensive awareness regarding the pledges. This underscores the necessity for responsible entities to conduct orientations, ensuring refugees in the camp are informed about the implications and provisions of the pledge.

Many refugees' express gratitude for the services provided in the camp, noting that these services are crucial for their survival. The access to necessities like food, health services, and informal work opportunities offers a semblance of stability in their otherwise challenging lives. However, they also acknowledge the absence of certain services, like banking, directly in the camp, which poses additional challenges. A refugee woman respondent expresses her feeling:

As a refugee, I'm grateful for the services provided to us in the camp. We have access to essential services and aid, which allows us to meet our basic needs and maintain a semblance of stability in our lives.

Refugees' narratives reveal a complex interplay between gratitude for existing services and a yearning for a more comprehensive support system. This aligns with the concept of basic needs fulfillment discussed by Maslow, where access to food, healthcare, and shelter forms the foundation of human well-being (Maslow, 1943). The services provided within the camp offer a lifeline, ensuring a basic level of survival amidst displacement.

However, the respondents' narratives extend beyond mere gratitude. There's an underlying recognition of the limitations of the current system. The lack of access to certain services, like banking facilities directly within the camp, creates additional hurdles. This highlights a key concept the need for a holistic approach to refugee support. While basic needs are crucial, a

broader range of services, including financial infrastructure, is necessary for true stability and the potential for future self-sufficiency. The respondents' expressions paint a picture of resilience in the face of adversity. They acknowledge the importance of existing services but advocate for a more comprehensive system that addresses their evolving needs. This nuanced perspective underscores the importance of meaningful engagement with refugees when designing and implementing aid programs.

Notably, many respondents state they have not encountered any policy issues affecting their livelihoods in the camp. This lack of awareness or impact from policy issues might indicate either a satisfactory policy environment or disconnect between policy implementation and refugee awareness. Further research and dialogue are necessary to understand this gap and ensure that policies are effectively communicated and beneficial to the refugee population (Betts et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the refugees' narratives from Jewi Refugee Camp shed light on the relatively peaceful coexistence achieved through structured governance, community involvement, and mediation processes. However, the expressed need for better representation, decision-making power, and ongoing support from organizations highlights areas for improvement. These insights underscore the importance of continuous dialogue, empowerment, and effective governance mechanisms to maintain peace and support refugees' livelihoods in the camp setting.

4.6. The Local Community's Benefit from IPs in the Context of the 70/30% Refugee-Host Strategy

The interaction between the host community and refugees in the Jewi Refugee Camp is shaped by the 70/30% strategy, which is designed to ensure that 30% of the resources and opportunities provided by implementing partners (IPs) are accessible to the host community. The responses from the focus group discussions (FGD) with the host community reveal mixed outcomes regarding the implementation of this strategy, particularly in terms of accessibility, entrepreneurial opportunities, and the integration of efforts between refugees and the host community.

5.1.1. Accessibility of resources under the 70/30% strategy

The 70/30% strategy aims to distribute a portion of the resources intended for refugees to the host community. While this approach is theoretically equitable, the practical implementation appears to

have limitations. One respondent noted that while some resources, such as goats and agricultural inputs, are accessible to the host community, the amount provided is often minimal compared to what is allocated to the refugees. One host community respondent mentioned,

Somehow it is accessible from some projects of the organization; they distribute goats or agricultural inputs to refugees and give us a very small amount, rather than refugees, according to the strategies.

This response indicates a perceived disparity in resource allocation, where the host community feels that they receive significantly less support than the refugee population, despite the provisions of the 70/30% strategy. On the other hand, the local community has benefited from various senior projects and government initiatives, such as the Sustainable Land Management Program (SLM) and the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP). These projects have provided seedlings, restored health centers, built clean water stations, and improved infrastructure such as roads. Additionally, ZOA's support in fishery business development has contributed to the economic activities of the host community. A host community respondent highlighted, *“Governmental projects and other organizations are supporting us in different packages, like SLM giving seedlings, DRDIP restoring our health center, and ZOA helping in the fishery business.”*

5.1.2. Entrepreneurial opportunities and market challenges

The strategy's goal to foster entrepreneurial opportunities for the host community has seen some success, but the scope of these opportunities remains limited. Small businesses have been organized, particularly for women, through initiatives like the DRP, which has helped build shops and encourage trade activities. However, the fluctuating market conditions have posed significant challenges to sustaining these businesses. An respondent from the host community expressed his feeling by saying, *“Yes, but limited. We are organized in small businesses, like DRP organized women and built shops, but the market fluctuations are challenging to sustain our working activities”*. This indicates that while entrepreneurial opportunities exist, they are not sufficiently robust to withstand external economic pressures.

5.1.3. Suitable livelihood activities

Agriculture remains the most suitable livelihood activity in the region, with the host community primarily engaged in producing agricultural products and gold mining. The respondents identified these activities as aligned with the local topography and economic environment. A host community member noted, *“The first one is agriculture; we produce maize, sorghum, and charcoal according to the topography, and also work on gold mining in the dry season”*. These activities are crucial for the economic survival of the host community and reflect the traditional reliance on natural resources and agriculture.

5.1.4. Integration and peacebuilding efforts

While the host community and refugees generally work separately in entrepreneurial activities, there is significant collaboration in peacebuilding initiatives. Implementing partners and government bodies have focused on peacebuilding as a core component of their integration efforts, conducting surveys, providing training, and establishing strategic plans to ensure peaceful coexistence. The two sides of the peace committee work together to address and resolve conflicts when they arise. A host community member commented,

First of all, they are working on peace. They survey the situation, give training to refugees and the host community, and set strategic plans. The two sides of the peace committee work together to solve problems when they happen.

This collaborative approach to peace-building is essential in maintaining synergy between the refugees and the host community, fostering a shared commitment to resolving disputes and promoting mutual understanding. However, the lack of joint entrepreneurial activities suggests that economic integration has not reached the same level as social and peace-related integration.

5.1.5. Training opportunities

Training opportunities for the host community have been somewhat limited, with respondents acknowledging that while they do receive some training, it is not extensive. One host community mentioned in response to a question about receiving training, *“Yes, somehow”*

This indicates a need for more comprehensive and frequent training programs that can equip the host community with the skills and knowledge necessary to fully benefit from the available opportunities and to engage more effectively in economic activities. In conclusion, the 70/30% refugee-host strategy, while well-intentioned, faces challenges in its implementation, particularly regarding the equitable distribution of resources and the creation of sustainable entrepreneurial opportunities for the host community. The host community has benefited from various government and NGO initiatives, particularly in agriculture and infrastructure, but the economic integration with the refugee population remains limited. Peacebuilding efforts have been successful, highlighting the potential for collaboration between refugees and the host community. However, more targeted support, including expanded training opportunities and better market conditions, is necessary to enhance the economic resilience and integration of the host community in line with the strategy's goals.

5.1.6. Obstacles and prospects in implementing refugee-host strategies in Jewi Kebele

The implementation of refugee-host strategies in Jewi Kebele reveals both successes and significant gaps, particularly in terms of resource distribution, conflict resolution, and the integration of refugees with the host community. The responses from the focus group discussion (FGD) with the host community members shed light on these issues, highlighting the complexities and challenges faced in ensuring equitable support and fostering harmonious relationships between the two groups. The responses indicate that while there are strategies in place to support both refugees and the host community, the execution of these strategies is uneven, particularly in resource allocation. A host community respondent pointed out, *“There are strategies, but a gap in implementation. For example, refugees get rations, but we haven't. Some organizations support us, but it's very limited”*. This statement reflects a sense of disparity in the distribution of aid and resources, where the host community feels underserved compared to the refugee population. Such imbalances can exacerbate tensions between the groups and undermine the effectiveness of the overall refugee-host strategy.

Despite the challenges in resource distribution, the government has provided different support to the host community, particularly in the area of livestock farming. This assistance is crucial in a region where agriculture and livestock are central to livelihoods. A host community noted, *“Yes,*

the government is supporting us, such as organizing us for cattle farming". This indicates a level of governmental involvement aimed at enhancing the economic resilience of the host community, albeit with room for expansion and greater impact.

Conflicts between refugees and the host community are a recurring issue, but they are largely managed by the peace committees formed by both groups, along with the Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS). The existence of these peace committees is a positive step towards maintaining harmony and resolving disputes locally. As one respondent shared, *"Most of the time, conflicts happen between refugees and the host community, but they are mainly treated by the peace committee of both and RRS"*. This collaborative approach to conflict resolution demonstrates the potential for effective community-based mechanisms in mitigating tensions and fostering peaceful coexistence. One of the most significant challenges identified by the respondents is the lack of integration between the refugees and the host community. A host community respondent said, *"No, there is no integration between us; we only work together in the peace committee"*.

This lack of integration underscores the social and economic divide that persists between the two groups, limiting opportunities for mutual understanding and shared development. The absence of joint initiatives beyond peacebuilding efforts suggests a need for more inclusive strategies that promote economic and social collaboration.

The host community has taken steps towards economic empowerment, particularly through the organization of small business activities. For instance, during the distribution of refugee rations and government aid, local "youngster" (likely informal labor groups) have organized themselves to perform loading and unloading tasks. This has allowed them to enhance their economic standing, with some even investing in motorbikes to improve their work efficiency. A host community respondent highlighted this development, stating, *"Yes, such as the youngster's organized in load and unloading work during refugee ration time and government distribution. They enhance themselves economically and even buy motorbikes for work effectiveness"*. This initiative shows the resourcefulness of the host community in leveraging available opportunities, albeit limited ones, to improve their economic situation. It also reflects a broader trend of informal economic activities that play a vital role in the local economy.

Women's participation in economic and social activities has been a focal point of both governmental and non-governmental organizations' efforts. The government has emphasized women's empowerment through capacity-building programs, while NGOs like ZOA have supported women in entrepreneurial activities, such as establishing shops and starting businesses in fisheries. Despite these advancements, women in female-headed households continue to bear the dual responsibility of managing their homes and engaging in agricultural activities, traditionally led by men. A host community respondent remarked, *"Most of the time, women are responsible for their families and home. Nowadays, the government focuses on women's participation, giving them chances to empower and build capacity"*.

This involvement of women in both domestic and economic spheres is crucial for their empowerment and the overall economic development of the community. However, it also highlights the ongoing challenges women face in balancing multiple roles and the need for continued support to ensure their full participation in the economy.

Infrastructural development in Jewi Kebele has seen some progress, with the community gaining access to clean water, electricity, roads, and primary education. However, there are significant challenges in accessing secondary education and healthcare, particularly due to safety concerns. The high school and health clinic are located within the refugee camp, which the host community perceives as insecure. This has forced families to send their children to Gambella or Bonga for education, incurring additional costs for housing and transportation. One host community expressed these concerns, stating, *"We have access to clean water, electricity, roads, and a primary school. However, the high school is located in the refugee camp, and we feel insecure, so we refer our children to Gambella or Bonga, which requires covering rent and transportation fees"*. The limited access to secondary education and healthcare poses significant barriers to the development and well-being of the host community, highlighting the need for improved infrastructure and services that are safely accessible to all.

CHAPTER SIX

6. THE IMPACT OF REFUGEE-HOST COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP AND CONFLICT ON WOMEN REFUGEE LIVELIHOOD

6.1. Women and Nuer Culture

6.1.1. Marriage practices among refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp

Marriage practices within the Jewi Refugee Camp are deeply rooted in cultural traditions, reflecting both continuity and adaptation in the face of changing circumstances. The respondents have highlighted two primary forms of marriage in the camp: formal and informal marriages. These practices underscore the social and economic roles that marriage continues to play within the refugee community, as well as the tensions that arise when traditional norms clash with the realities of life in displacement.

Formal marriages within the camp follow a formal and culturally sanctioned process, where the man expresses his intent to marry a woman and engages in discussions with her over a period of one or two months. Once both parties agree, the families are informed, and a formal request is made by the man's family to the woman's family, seeking her hand in marriage. This process culminates in the payment of a dowry, traditionally valued at around 35 cattle, which symbolizes the union and the transfer of the woman from her family to her husband's household. As one key respondent described,

The formal one is when the man wants her to become his wife, he tells her and discusses with her for one or two months. If she agrees, they inform their families, and his family asks hers to give her to him in marriage. If she consents, the families agree, and the dowry is paid.

This response highlights the importance of mutual consent and familial involvement in the marriage process, which is seen as a critical component of maintaining social order and continuity within the community. However, the practice of legal marriage is also influenced by traditional norms that allow for polygamy and early marriage. Although the prevalence of early marriages has decreased due to increased awareness and education, it remains a concern, particularly in the absence of strict age restrictions. As another woman noted,

Previously, when we were in South Sudan and even here, early marriage was common due to a lack of awareness and education. While the number has decreased, there are still no age restrictions, and men can marry 5 to 6 wives if he have the wealth to manage their families.

This statement reflects the ongoing challenges in balancing traditional practices with the evolving legal and social frameworks that aim to protect the rights of women and girls.

Informal marriages, on the other hand, are marked by the absence of familial consent and often occur when a couple elopes without informing their families. Such unions are further complicated when a woman becomes pregnant, as this is considered a violation of cultural norms and can lead to severe consequences, including conflict between the two families even her brother may the men and his families and then financial compensation will be expected from the men side to manage the conflict. One of the key respondents emphasized the gravity of these situations:

Marriage in our culture is very restricted. The girl is considered a resource for her family, and if she marries illegally, her family may seek retribution or compensation from the boy's family. If unresolved, this can lead to ongoing conflict.

This perspective reveals the economic significance of marriage within the community, where a girl's marriage is viewed as an important transaction that benefits her family, particularly through the dowry system. Furthermore, this illustrates how marriage is not just a personal union but also a vital economic strategy for families, where the dowry plays a central role in wealth distribution. The consequences of informal marriage thus extend beyond the couple involved, affecting the broader social and economic dynamics within the community.

Moreover, the practice of transferring a girl to another husband if the original suitor cannot pay the full dowry further emphasizes the transactional nature of marriage in this context. A woman refugee respondent noted, *“If the man cannot pay the whole dowry, the girl's family may give her to another husband”*.

This practice underscores the commodification of women within the marriage system, where economic considerations often overshadow personal choice and agency. Overall, marriage

practices in the Jewi Refugee Camp reflect a complex interplay between tradition and adaptation. While legal marriages continue to follow traditional customs, including the negotiation of dowry and family involvement, the community is also dealing with issues such as early marriage, polygamy, and the challenges posed by informal marriages. These practices reveal the deep-rooted cultural values that persist even in displacement, as well as the economic implications of marriage within the refugee community. The responses highlight the need for continued education and legal frameworks that respect cultural traditions while promoting the rights and well-being of women and girls.

6.1.2. Access to wealth

The narratives reveal a recurring theme of financial constraints, limited employment opportunities, and the high cost of living, which collectively impede the accumulation of wealth. Refugees highlighted the financial burden imposed by the high cost of living within the camp, hindering any potential for savings or investment. In the words of a refugee woman:

Despite engaging in various formal and informal activities, it has been impossible to accumulate wealth at Jewi Refugee Camp. The high cost of living consumes any income I might earn, relegating my efforts to merely covering my family's basic needs along with the provided rations. The inability to develop wealth stems from the sheer expense of daily life, leaving no room for savings or investment.

This findings from studies on refugee economies, emphasizing the impact of economic conditions on the daily lives of individuals. As described by a woman respondent:

The absence of land for cultivation and lack of access to both formal and informal employment severely limits any opportunity to build wealth within the camp. Financial constraints prevent me from starting any self-employment ventures, while the challenging conditions of camp life further exacerbate our family's plight, making wealth accumulation an unattainable dream under these circumstances.

This underscores the interconnected challenges of the absence of cultivable land and restricted access to employment, creating a formidable barrier to wealth-building. This aligns with research on refugee livelihoods, which emphasizes the importance of economic opportunities in shaping the

well-being of displaced populations. This also resonates with literature highlighting the importance of external support structures in enhancing economic prospects for refugees (Freedman, 2016). A refugee woman respondent stated

We have been unable to develop wealth in the camp due to various constraints, including the lack of land for cultivation and insufficient employment opportunities. The meager wages from organizational employment fail to meet even our basic needs, let alone allow for savings. Additionally, the limited and competitive nature of available opportunities, coupled with communal expectations of sharing any small gains, stifles any chance of progressing economically within the camp.

This response expands on the various constraints, including limited employment opportunities, insufficient wages, and communal expectations due to cultural orientation, contributing to the economic inactivity within the camp. The findings reveal that the preceding cultural orientations of the Nuer ethnic group of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia exert a discernible influence on their current work habits, contributing to adverse effects on wealth development. This aligns with existing literature on the Nuer community, emphasizing their collective economic ethos, where generosity stems from scarcity rather than wealth accumulation for special privileges. The Nuer community functions as a cohesive economic entity, sharing surpluses with neighbors rather than amassing wealth for individual advantage (Hutchinson, 1992). The observed negative impact on wealth development among Nuer refugees in the findings resonates with the cultural principles outlined in the literature, underscoring the continuity of cultural influences on economic behaviors in the refugee context. This mirrors studies emphasizing the role of social dynamics in shaping economic outcomes in refugee settings (Barnett, 2013).

On the other hand, a woman explained about the issue of wealth development:

My attempts to engage in entrepreneurial or employment activities within the camp have been pointless, with no viable means to develop wealth. Even as I strive to meet my children's basic needs through borrowing and occasional earnings, the camp's restrictions and lack of access to resources or supportive infrastructure make any form of substantial wealth accumulation impossible.

This response elucidates the impact of economic inflation and the expensive cost of living on the participants' efforts to sustain a livelihood. This aligns with research emphasizing the vulnerability of refugees to economic fluctuations and the challenges of maintaining financial stability (Betts & Collier, 2018).

As evidenced by the testimonies of those living in Jewi Refugee Camp, a key respondent stated that,

The lack of access to employment within the organizations or opportunities for self-employment leaves me reliant on the camp's ration system and minor income from selling firewood. The limited and highly competitive nature of available opportunities, combined with the insufficient scope of organizational support for livelihoods, means that even the most basic needs are a struggle to meet, let alone accumulating any form of wealth.

This indicates the reliance on the camp's ration system and limited income sources, emphasizing the insufficient organizational support for livelihoods. This resonates with literature highlighting the importance of effective support mechanisms in promoting economic resilience among displaced populations (Crisp, 2003).

In conclusion, these narratives provide a rich tapestry of experiences within Jewi Refugee Camp, offering a valuable contribution to the broader anthropological understanding of economic struggles in refugee settings. The findings underscore the need for comprehensive interventions addressing both economic and socio-cultural dimensions to foster sustainable wealth accumulation within such environments.

6.1.3. Social structure in Jewi Refugee Camp

Some of the social relations within Jewi Refugee Camp is significantly shaped by the establishment and active participation in traditional community-based systems defused from the local communities who live around the camp for business purposes. These new social relations and support systems include *Ider* and *Ekub*. Today, these support systems, which were introduced and developed within the camp, play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion, mutual support, and a sense of community among the refugees. The responses gathered provide insight into how these systems function and their importance in maintaining social stability within the camp.

Ider: A community-based support system

Ider is a traditional social structure that serves as a community support system, particularly in times of crisis, such as funerals or other significant life events. Within the camp, *Ider* brings the community together to provide emotional and material support to individuals and families in need. As a refugee woman described this process:

We have social structures called Ider. If something happens to an individual, the community comes together from morning to evening, counseling, and some bring maize or other items, staying for 3 or 4 days starting from the funeral ceremonies.

This response highlights the deep-rooted cultural practice of communal solidarity, where the collective responsibility of supporting one another is emphasized. *Ider* not only provides practical assistance but also reinforces the bonds between community members, ensuring that no one faces hardship alone.

The practice of *Ider* in the camp is indicative of the strong cultural continuity that refugees maintain, even in displacement. It also reflects the adaptability of traditional practices to new environments, as the refugee community has successfully transplanted this social structure from their homeland to the camp, where it continues to serve as a vital mechanism for social support and resilience.

Ekub: A rotating savings and credit association

Ekub is another significant social structure within the camp, functioning as a rotating savings and credit association. This system allows community members to pool resources, typically money or goods, and distribute them based on a lottery or rotational system. As a woman explained,

Yes, we have Ekub. We collect money, and the chances are given by a lottery system. Ekub is not only about money; we also participate by collecting items like maize or sorghum and distribute them in rounds.

Ekub provides a crucial financial safety net for refugees, allowing them to access funds or resources when needed, thereby fostering economic resilience within the community. The

implementation of *Ekub* in the camp demonstrates the refugees' ability to adapt their economic practices to the constraints and opportunities of their current situation. It also underscores the importance of collective financial management in a context where formal financial institutions may be inaccessible or unreliable. Through *Ekub*, community members can maintain a degree of economic autonomy and stability, even in the face of limited resources and uncertain futures. Both *Ider* and *Ekub* were not practices brought from South Sudan but were established within the camp itself. This points to the dynamic nature of social structures among displaced communities, where new practices can emerge or existing ones can be adapted to meet the needs of the community in a new environment. A woman refugee expressed, “*Both social structures were established here, not when we were in South Sudan*”.

Moreover, the adaptation of *Ider* within Jewi Refugee Camp reflects a significant transformation in the social dynamics of the refugee community, illustrating their resilience and capacity for cultural innovation in a displacement context. Unlike in South Sudan, where *Ider* was not practiced, refugees in Jewi Camp have successfully integrated this social structure, facilitated by support from organizations such as the IMC. IMC played a pivotal role in fostering social cohesion by organizing orientation sessions and capacity-building programs, specifically aimed at enhancing the social attachment among women refugees. Through these initiatives, women were encouraged to engage in mutual support systems, creating a robust communal network.

In the camp, *Ider* has evolved into a key mechanism for collective assistance, particularly in times of need. Refugees are organized into blocks where they actively participate in supporting each other, such as the elderly or those unable to consistently access food resources. This includes providing material aid during periods of food shortages, visiting and caring for the sick, and offering emotional and practical support during funerals. The practice of *Ider* within the camp highlights the community's ability to adapt a social system that fosters solidarity and ensures that no individual faces hardship in isolation. The successful establishment of *Ider* in Jewi Camp demonstrates the adaptability of traditional practices to new contexts, reflecting how displacement has catalyzed the development of new forms of social organization that enhance community cohesion and provide essential support in the absence of formal social services.

Additionally, *Ekub* as a rotating saving and credit association, has been adapted by refugees in Jewi Camp as a result of their interactions with the local highlander community who are living and selling items around the main gate of the camp. Through regular exchanges of goods with local highlanders, refugees have integrated this economic practice into their communal life. Today, *Ekub* functions as an essential financial mechanism within the refugee camp, where community members contribute resources, either in kind or in the form of Birr, and distribute them on a rotating basis. This system provides a critical safety net for many refugees, allowing them to access goods when needed. Furthermore, the IMC has supported this initiative by promoting saving habits and offering awareness creation. Moreover, IMC has helped facilitate the creation of income-generating activities by engaging women refugees in the production of handmade goods, further supporting their livelihoods. The adaptation of *Ekub* within the camp illustrates how refugees have borrowed and transformed local economic practices to suit their needs, fostering both economic autonomy and social cohesion.

6.2. Host and Refugee Integration Impacting Refugee Women's Livelihood

The integration of refugees with the host community in the Jewi Refugee Camp is a complex and multifaceted issue, characterized by significant barriers and challenges. The responses from the study area highlight the limited interaction between refugees and the host community, primarily due to the camp's structure and the security protocols in place. Refugees in Jewi Camp are settled in a compound-based living arrangement, which is designed to ensure their safety and security. This arrangement inherently limits their ability to integrate with the surrounding host community, as access to the camp is strictly controlled by government bodies such as the Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS). One of the key respondents concisely described this situation:

The relationship is not possible because the refugees settle in compound-based living. The compound is the safety and security of refugees, and no one is allowed to enter the camp without permission from the governmental body such as RRS.

This statement underscores the institutional and structural barriers that prevent meaningful interaction between refugees and the host community. The security protocols, while necessary for the protection of the refugees, inadvertently create a physical and social divide between the two groups, making integration difficult. Additionally, the lack of a physical fence around the camp

exacerbates the challenges of integration and security. The absence of a fence has led to incidents where individuals from the surrounding community have entered the camp without authorization, resulting in conflicts and attacks on refugees. This situation was highlighted by a refugee woman respondent who noted, *“One of the reasons for conflicts is that the camp does not have a fence, so some people enter the camp and attack the refugees. This was also the case in the recent conflict in July 2024”*.

The vulnerability of the camp to external threats not only heightens the sense of insecurity among refugees but also further complicates any efforts toward integration with the host community. The recent conflict (July 2024) mentioned by the respondent underscores the precarious nature of the relationship between refugees and the host community. Without adequate physical barriers or security measures, the camp remains susceptible to external violence, which in turn fuels mistrust and tension between the two groups. The incidents of unauthorized entry and subsequent attacks illustrate the challenges of maintaining both security and the potential for integration in such a setting. In general, the integration of refugees with the host community in Jewi Refugee Camp is significantly hindered by the camp's compound-based structure and the lack of physical security measures, such as fencing. These factors contribute to a sense of isolation and vulnerability among refugees, which in turn limits opportunities for interaction and integration with the host community. The ongoing security challenges and conflicts further exacerbate these issues, highlighting the need for more effective strategies to protect refugees while fostering a more inclusive relationship with the host community.

6.3. Conflict and Conflict Management

6.3.1. Conflict and social cohesion between refugees and host communities

In Jewi refugee camp, resource sharing between refugees and host communities is a critical aspect that significantly influences the dynamics of conflict and social cohesion. As per the information obtained from the FGD, various domains of shared resources, such as transportation services, local markets, banking services, and high school education, serve as focal points for interaction and potential sources of both cooperation and tension. In the realm of transportation services, the collaborative use of communal transportation may foster social cohesion, as individuals from both refugee and host communities interact during their daily travel. However, during my second field work (July 2024) I have observed that conflicts arise when local communities perceive worry on

shared transportation resources and loading and unloading items in the main station or when differing preferences and expectations clash. Similarly, local markets serve as spaces where refugees and host community members engage in economic activities. The coexistence in these markets can potentially enhance social cohesion by providing a shared economic space. Yet, tensions may emerge due to competition for resources, market access, or economic disparities between the two groups.

On the contrary, the respondents elucidated that conflicts between refugees and host communities may manifest when utilizing communal services. Local communities might resist or feel resentful when refugee's access transportation or tap into natural resources like firewood, grass, and river water. Ethnic differences can exacerbate these conflicts, acting as catalysts for tension. The cited observations align with the broader literature on refugee-host community relations. Works such as Betts et al. (2023), emphasize the significance of resource sharing in shaping intergroup relations, with potential for fostering cooperation or contributing to conflict. Additionally, ethnic diversity's role in conflicts resonates with studies like Fajth et al., underlining the intricate interplay between ethnicity and social dynamics. In conclusion, understanding the complexities of resource sharing between refugees and host communities is crucial for promoting social cohesion and mitigating conflicts (Fajth et al., 2019). Tailored interventions that address the specific challenges within each domain can contribute to building peaceful relationships between these two communities.

6.3.2. Peaceful coexistence with awareness

The refugees express a general sense of peaceful coexistence within the camp and with the host community, citing conflicts that are typically handled through the mediation of RRS, UNHCR, and local committees. They describe a system of dual governance involving both self-governance by refugee representatives and oversight by the Ethiopian government, reflecting a structure that aims to address minor and major disputes efficiently.

During the first round data collection on March 2023, a woman refugee explained,

In our experience, conflicts are rare, and when minor issues do arise, they are addressed by both community-level governance and the RRS. The local refugee committee and the RRS work together to mediate and resolve any disputes, with participation from all relevant parties. We appreciate that there are no policy issues restricting our freedom to work, move, or engage in recreational activities within the camp.

This sentiment of managed peace aligns with studies on conflict resolution in refugee camps, which emphasize the importance of structured mediation processes and community involvement (Milner & Loescher, 2011). The peace and security situation in and around Jewi Refugee Camp has fluctuated over time. During the initial data collection phase (April 2023), refugees reported that the camp was relatively safe and secure, with minimal concerns regarding peace and stability. However, during the most recent fieldwork (August, 2024), it became evident that the situation had deteriorated significantly, with peace and security now described as fragile and unstable. This shift has had direct implications for the livelihoods of women refugees, who are now facing heightened challenges in securing their basic needs and engaging in economic activities due to the increasing instability within and around the camp.

Another woman also stated that,

In Jewi camp, we have a dual governance system: a self-governing body of refugee representatives and oversight by the Ethiopian government. Minor internal issues are typically handled by our self-governing body, while larger or external conflicts involving the host community are escalated to the Ethiopian government. The RRS also plays a crucial role in managing and mediating problems. We pride ourselves on solving issues through our local committees and have not encountered any policy issues that impede our livelihoods.

As an example, a refugee woman respondent said:

Recently, a conflict arose between refugees and the host community in the local market. Such problems are usually resolved by the RRS and the local refugee committee, with the RRS taking the lead in mediation efforts. Thankfully, we don't have any policy issues that affect our daily lives or freedom within the camp.

6.3.3. Conflict management mechanisms

Throughout the responses, refugees consistently mention that conflicts, when they occur, are mostly minor and resolved through community discussions, negotiations involving local and refugee representatives, and mediation by RRS. This approach of local resolution and escalation to authorities as needed is reflective of conflict management strategies suggested in humanitarian guidelines that prioritize community engagement and empowerment (Sphere Project, 2011).

The participation of refugees in the conflict resolution is highlighted by a refugee woman as:

To my knowledge, conflicts between refugees and the local community have been minimal. In cases of minor disputes, the entire community, including adolescents who sometimes form groups, comes together to resolve issues. The local government often steps in to manage and mediate conflicts. The refugee community actively participates in problem-solving through discussions and effective communication, with refugee representatives playing a significant role. No policy issues have been affecting us here in the camp.

Another key respondent also stated,

Conflicts do occur but are usually resolved quickly. For example, transportation issues near the camp are handled efficiently, reflecting the local community's cooperation. Decision-making power lies primarily with refugee representatives, UNHCR, and the Ethiopian government, including RRS, who ensure our protection and set living guidelines. When conflicts arise between local kebeles, representatives come together for resolution, demonstrating a commitment to peaceful coexistence.

The reflections of the participants emphasize the collaborative and community-centered approach to conflict resolution within Jewi Refugee Camp. Both the refugees and the local community actively participate in addressing disputes, with refugee representatives, local government officials, and organizations such as UNHCR and the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) playing key roles. Minor conflicts, including those involving transportation issues or disputes between local kebeles, are typically resolved swiftly through open communication and collective decision-making. This system of conflict resolution reflects a strong commitment to peaceful coexistence and effective governance, where both the refugee and host communities work together to maintain peace building. Notably, the absence of policy-related barriers to conflict resolution further contributes to the stability and security experienced within the camp.

In the context of the Jewi Refugee Camp, conflict management is a multi-layered process that involves both internal refugee-led structures and external support from various organizations. The conflict management chain within the camp begins with local block representatives, known as Shurta, who are responsible for addressing disputes at the most immediate level. When conflicts escalate beyond the capacity of the Shurta, they are passed on to zonal representatives, typically

members of the Refugee Community Committee (RCC). Finally, if the issue cannot be resolved within these structures, it is referred to the Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS) protection teams and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which provide higher-level intervention and support. One key respondent emphasized the role of these internal structures, stating, *“We solve our problems by ourselves through our block and zonal Shurta, but if the problem is beyond our capacity, we report it to the RRS at the camp level”*.

This indicates a strong sense of self-reliance within the refugee community, where conflict resolution often occurs internally before external authorities are involved. The reliance on these internal mechanisms reflects a need to maintain social cohesion and autonomy within the camp. It is noteworthy that conflicts within the camp are not primarily related to gender-based violence (GBV). Instead, GBV cases are often rooted in cultural and compound-specific issues. Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the International Medical Corps (IMC), Save the Children, and Plan International, play crucial roles in addressing these issues by providing psychosocial support, child protection services, and youth-focused interventions. The presence of these organizations, each with its own refugee structures, ensures that cases are identified and reported safely to legal services, highlighting the comprehensive nature of protection and conflict management efforts within the camp.

However, despite these efforts, the ability of refugees to protect themselves remains limited due to the federal government’s prohibition on arming refugees. Consequently, self-protection strategies rely heavily on awareness campaigns conducted through the refugee community’s own structures, such as the Shurta and RCC. A woman pointed out, *“The federal government does not allow us to be armed, so we protect ourselves by raising awareness within our community through our block and zonal Shurta and RCC”*.

This statement underscores the importance of community-based awareness and the role of internal structures in ensuring the safety and security of the refugee population. In summary, conflict management in the Jewi Refugee Camp is a well-organized process that integrates internal refugee-led structures with external support from NGOs and federal authorities. The emphasis on self-reliance, combined with targeted interventions by NGOs, reflects the complex dynamics of conflict resolution in a refugee setting. The involvement of various stakeholders ensures that

conflicts are managed effectively, although the limitations on self-defense highlight the ongoing challenges faced by the refugee community in maintaining their security.

The handling of crime, particularly serious offenses such as rape and gender-based violence (GBV), within the Jewi Refugee Camp is a critical aspect of the overall protection framework established by the Refugee and Returnee Service (RRS). As per the respondents, the RRS plays a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and security of refugees, with a specific mandate to monitor and manage day-to-day incidents within the camp. When cases of serious crimes arise, the RRS coordinates closely with legal institutions at both the regional and federal levels, ensuring that such cases are appropriately escalated and addressed within the legal system. A woman refugee highlighted this coordinated approach, stating, *“One of the responsibilities of RRS is protection, so they follow up on cases daily and, if needed, transfer them to the legal institutions at the regional and federal levels”*.

This statement underscores the structured process in place for addressing crimes within the camp, ensuring that incidents are not only documented but also dealt with in accordance with the law. Furthermore, the presence of a mobile court within the camp signifies a significant advancement in the accessibility of justice for refugees. This system allows a judge to visit the camp bi-weekly, where cases are heard directly within the refugee setting. The mobile court is designed to be responsive to the needs of the camp population, enabling refugees to raise their cases with the protection department of the RCC camp office and have them adjudicated in a timely manner. As a key respondent described,

Within the camp, there is a mobile court, which means the judge comes to the camp every two weeks. The refugees can bring their cases to the protection department in the RCC camp office, where the judge then makes a decision.

The implementation of a mobile court system within the refugee camp is particularly important for addressing crimes such as rape and GBV, which require prompt and sensitive handling. This system helps to overcome the barriers that refugees might face in accessing traditional legal services, such as distance, cost, and fear of reprisal. It also serves as a deterrent against such crimes, as it demonstrates a clear commitment to upholding justice within the camp. Overall, the

combined efforts of the RRS and the mobile court system within the Jewi Refugee Camp illustrate a comprehensive approach to managing and mitigating crime, particularly serious offenses like rape and GBV. By facilitating access to legal recourse within the camp and ensuring cases are handled swiftly and fairly, these mechanisms contribute to the protection and empowerment of the refugee community, reinforcing the camp's internal justice system and enhancing overall safety.

6.3.4. Role of organizations in conflict mediation

Responses indicate that RRS and UNHCR are seen as primary decision-makers and mediators in the camp. Refugees acknowledge the role of various organizations in livelihood support and conflict resolution. They are particularly aware of initiatives like crop seeding and entrepreneurial training by NGOs like DCA and ZOA, which are essential for enhancing their life in the camp. However, they also express a feeling of marginalization and a lack of power in negotiations, especially when conflicts involve the host community. The refugees' emphasis on the need for effective representation and decision-making reflects broader discussions on empowerment and participatory approaches in humanitarian settings (Crisp, 2003; Dryden-Peterson, 2017).

A key respondent narrates that:

Conflicts between refugees and the local community do arise, but RRS typically manages them effectively. The refugee community feels marginalized compared to the host community, but government intervention usually resolves these issues. Most conflicts are minor and related to daily activities, solved through the participation of local and refugee representatives with a focus on transportation or material handling. NGOs also offer various livelihood programs like crop seeding and entrepreneurial training, which are vital for enhancing our life in the camp.

6.4. Refugee Aspirations

The viewpoints offered by the refugee individuals living at Jewi Refugee Camp provide a comprehensive perspective on their desires, concerns, and prospects. Many refugees express uncertainty about returning to South Sudan, leading them to seek sustainable activities like agriculture within the camp. They articulate a desire for productive engagement and self-sufficiency, reflecting a broader trend of refugees seeking to maintain agency and dignity through work (Betts et al., 2014). Their gratitude for the support received and the longing for improved

living conditions with continued NGO support underscores the complex interplay between dependence on aid and the drive for autonomy.

As noted by a woman:

As a refugee, our return to South Sudan remains uncertain. We are keen on obtaining permission from the local government and UNHCR to engage in agriculture within the camp, as it's a vital activity for our sustenance and well-being. We hope to continue working on agriculture if the opportunity allows, reflecting our desire for productive engagement and self-sufficiency.

Education emerges as a consistent theme across the responses, viewed as a transformative tool for personal development and community change. Respondents envision education as a pathway to a better future, either within the camp or upon return to South Sudan. For example, a refugee woman said,

My primary concern for the future is my children's education and well-being. I aim to ensure they grow up in good conditions with access to quality education. I hope our voices and conditions here in the camp are heard and understood globally, advocating for better support and a brighter future for us all.

This emphasis on education aligns with research highlighting its role in fostering resilience and long-term development in refugee populations (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

Several refugees hold onto the hope of returning to South Sudan, contributing to its development through the skills and knowledge gained. They dream of peaceful returns, improved community situations, and entrepreneurial ventures. Yet, the prevailing sentiment is one of making the best of their current situation, whether through continued work in the camp or focusing on family well-being and support.

For example, a woman shares her future plan as,

I am grateful for the life I've had in the camp, but my aspiration is to return to South Sudan when conditions allow. I aim to continue my education and become an educator and entrepreneur, contributing to the betterment of my home country.

In conclusion, the future plans articulated by refugees residing in the Jewi Refugee Camp offer a nuanced perspective on their aspirations and concerns. Many express uncertainties about returning

to South Sudan, prompting a focus on sustainable activities like agriculture within the camp as a means of achieving self-sufficiency. The desire for productive engagement aligns with broader trends among refugees seeking autonomy through work. Education emerges as a consistent theme, seen as a transformative tool for personal development and community change. While expressing gratitude for aid organizations like RRS and DCA, refugees acknowledge continued dependency on aid, with aspirations for resettlement opportunities abroad. Some hold onto the hope of returning to South Sudan, aiming to contribute to its development. Despite grappling with uncertainty, the narratives underscore the importance of tailored humanitarian strategies that address immediate needs while empowering refugees to build sustainable futures, whether in displacement, upon return, or resettlement elsewhere. These stories are a testament to the resilience of the refugee community and highlight the critical role of ongoing support and opportunities.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Conclusion

This study provides an in-depth exploration of the livelihood strategies employed by women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp, highlighting the complex interplay of challenges and opportunities that define their experiences. The findings demonstrate that women refugees face significant barriers to achieving sustainable livelihoods, which are deeply intertwined with issues of gender inequality, limited economic access, and inadequate institutional support. These challenges are exacerbated by socio-cultural factors and the precarious conditions within the camp, all of which significantly impede their ability to secure stable sources of income and improve their overall quality of life.

One of the key findings of this research is the pervasive impact of security concerns on women's participation in economic activities and gender-based violence. Fear of violence, coupled with limited legal protection, restricts their movement and engagement in livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, access to education and healthcare services remains insufficient, directly affecting their ability to acquire the skills necessary for economic empowerment and limiting their overall well-being. The lack of formal employment opportunities, compounded by socio-cultural expectations that confine women to domestic roles, further restricts their capacity for economic autonomy.

Despite these challenges, the study also reveals the resilience and resourcefulness of women refugees, who actively participate in informal labor markets and entrepreneurial activities within the camp. Their engagement in small-scale businesses and community-based initiatives underscores the importance of targeted support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies. However, this study indicated that while the contributions of these organizations are vital, there are critical gaps in the provision of resources, skill development programs, and long-term economic opportunities. Many women expressed a strong desire for enhanced educational and vocational training, emphasizing the need for programs that cater to their specific needs and help bridge the gap between survival-based strategies and sustainable livelihood development.

The adaptation of *Edir* and *Ekub* within Jewi Refugee Camp reflects the resilience and ingenuity of women refugees as they navigate the complexities of camp life. Although these practices were not part of the traditional Nuer culture in South Sudan, the establishment of these social structures within the camp underscores how displaced communities recreate and modify their social systems to suit their new circumstances. These organizations not only provide essential financial and emotional support but also foster a sense of community and continuity in the face of displacement. The ability of refugee women to embrace and institutionalize these social networks highlights their agency and the potential for communal systems to enhance both social stability and economic resilience in refugee settings.

The conceptual framework employed in this study, rooted in Bourdieu's anthropological theory, effectively aligns with the research objective by demonstrating how knowledge, skills, education, and cultural resources shape social mobility and access to opportunities for women refugees. These elements act as key determinants in influencing livelihood strategies, as they enhance the capacity of refugee women to navigate formal and informal labor markets, as well as seek relief from aid organizations. The findings illustrate that while many women refugees lack access to formal employment due to structural barriers, their ability to leverage cultural resources, adapt their skills, and engage in entrepreneurial activities underscores their resilience and agency. Similarly, the framework highlights the critical role of education and skill development in breaking the cycle of dependency and enabling economic empowerment, aligning with the study's aim to explore pathways toward sustainable livelihoods for women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp.

In conclusion, addressing the livelihood challenges of women refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp requires a multi-dimensional approach that integrates safety, education, healthcare, and socio-economic empowerment. A collaborative effort between NGOs, government bodies, and the refugees themselves is essential to develop interventions that are responsive to the complex realities of camp life. By enhancing access to education, expanding skill development opportunities, and fostering economic inclusion, stakeholders can help transform the livelihoods of women refugees, enabling them to achieve greater autonomy and resilience within the camp and beyond. This study highlights the urgency of these efforts and calls for sustained, gender-sensitive strategies that address the specific vulnerabilities and aspirations of women refugees in Jewi Camp.

7.2. Recommendations

Based on the overall study findings, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- Implementing Partners (IPs), RRS and the local government should design and implement culturally sensitive vocational training, literacy programs, and entrepreneurial skill-building initiatives that recognize the socio-cultural realities and lived experiences of women refugees.
- IPs, and responsible body of the local government should transform employment paradigms by creating avenues for women refugees in sectors like education, healthcare, and agriculture, while challenging traditional gendered roles through targeted advocacy and capacity-building.
- IPs and RRS should develop iterative feedback systems rooted in participatory methodologies, ensuring that refugee voices are central in shaping and evaluating livelihood interventions.
- UNHCR, IPs and RRS should foster collaborations between NGOs, international bodies, and governmental agencies that acknowledge and integrate the cultural practices, social structures (e.g., Ider and Ekub), and indigenous coping mechanisms of refugee communities.
- Microfinance institutions, and local cooperatives should establish community-managed revolving credit systems, microfinance access, and culturally resonant business support programs that empower women refugees as economic actors.
- Academic institutions and IPs should conduct in-depth ethnographic and socio-economic research on the intersections of gender-based violence (GBV) with livelihood challenges, the psychological resilience and social support networks of women refugees and refugee economy in general.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guideline

1. Interview Guideline for Female Refugees at Jewi Refugee Camp

This question is prepared for collecting a data to conduct a research work on **Exploring Women Refugees' Livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia**, for the partial fulfillment of MA Degree Social Anthropology. Your cooperation in providing genuine answers to the following questions is highly important for the success of this study and your response will be kept confidential. It is only for academic purpose.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. **Muluemebet Semaw**

Research Site

Site name: _____

Place: _____

Date: _____

Note: Do not write/mention your names on this paper!

A. General Information

1. Tell me about yourself. How old are you? Where is your place of birth? What is your religion? What ethnic group do you belong to? What is your academic status?
2. Tell me about your life history from the very beginning (in SS and in Eth). When did you leave your birthplace/home country? How long have you lived in Jewi refugee camp?
3. What is your role in your family?

B. Social and economic background

1. What is your religious affiliation? Muslim { } Christian { } Other Religion { }
2. Are you married? Single { } Divorced { } Widowed { } Separated { }
3. If married, is your husband in Ethiopia with you? Yes { } No { }
4. Do you have any formal education? Yes { } No { }
5. What level? Primary { } Secondary { }, Tertiary { } Vocational { } Other (please specify)
6. Was this your educational level before you left home? Yes { } No { }
7. Do you think that the humanitarian aid are sufficient to live in Jewi camp? Yes { } No { }
If No, what do you do for survival? _____

8. Do you have any opportunity to work (Wage employment /Self-employment) in Jewi refugee camp or around Jewi camp?
Yes { } No { } If Yes, please explain in detail about which type of work you participate in?
9. How do women refugees participate in formal or informal labour activities to sustain their livelihoods in addition to receiving humanitarian aid? _____
10. According to the pledge, how do you evaluate the access to work in the camp, participating in the entrepreneurial activities, access to banking service, and owning land?
11. Do you think that there is equal opportunity to access works for women and man in Jewi refugee camp? Yes { } No { } If No, please explain the reasons: _____
12. Have you get a chance to develop wealth while living in Jewi refugee camp?
Yes { } No { }
If No, what are the reasons that you couldn't develop wealth? _____

C. Role of NGOs, UNHCR, and other state agency in the pursuit of refugees' economic activity

1. What are the strategies, contributions and compliance handling mechanisms of Local and International NGOs as well as government agencies facilitating the livelihood of women refugees living in Jewi Refugee Camp?
2. Do you receive any assistance from any organizations (Church, NGOs, RRS, UNHCR etc....) or persons to help you with the means by which you take care of yourself? (both previous and current) Yes { } No { }
If Yes, please tell me about the names of the organizations and their major support (i.e what forms of assistance did you receive? Eg education, health, employment, shelter, and other kinds of support): _____
3. Do you believe that the governmental and non-governmental organizations that have been helping refugees at the Jewi refugee camp have integrated? Yes { } No { }
4. How do you evaluate this support you receive?
5. What is the effect of this support on your life?

C) Problems encounter in the pursuit of livelihoods

1. What are the livelihood challenges of women refugees in Jewi refugee camp in terms of employment perspectives, work permit, socio cultural issue, integration with host community, access to major services such as health, education, security and other_____

2. What are your proposed solutions that would be good to both Governmental and Non-governmental organizations you encounter in your work? _____

D) Conflict and Conflict Management

1. Are there any conflict that have occurred with the local community while you try to make your living around the camp/ in the town _____
2. Who are the decision makers and people of power within the camp? Some examples might include refugee representative, government officials, RRS leaders or others _____
3. If there is conflict between two individuals or groups (refugees and host communities), what are the mechanisms for conflict management or resolution?
4. Who is typically involved in the process? _____
5. Is there any policy issues at regional and local administrative levels regarding livelihoods of refugees in Jewi refugee camp. _____

E) Aspirations

1. Do you hope to continue with this work in the future? Yes { } No { }
If Yes, why? _____
2. If no, what is next for the future? _____
3. Do you have any recommendations or additional information? _____

2. Interview Guideline for Key respondents at Jewi Refugee Camp

This question is prepared for collecting a data to conduct a research work on **Exploring Women Refugees' Livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia**, for the partial fulfillment of MA Degree Social Anthropology. Your cooperation in providing genuine answers to the following questions is highly important for the success of this study and your response will be kept confidential. It is only for academic purpose.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. **Muluemebet Semaw**

Research Site

Site name: _____

Place: _____

Date: _____

Note: Do not write/mention your names on this paper!

1. Tell me about yourself. How old are you? Where is your place of birth? What is your religion? What ethnic group do you belong to? What is your academic status?
2. What's your role in the camp?
3. Could you please explain the existing contribution of governmental and NGOs in the camp.
4. What are the strategies, contributions and compliance handling mechanisms of Local and International NGOs as well as government agencies facilitating the livelihood of women refugees living in Jewi Refugee Camp?
5. Do women refugees receive any assistance from any organizations (Church, NGOs, RRS, UNHCR etc....) or persons to help you with the means by which you take care of yourself? (both previous and current) Yes { } No { }
6. If Yes, please tell me about the names of the organizations and their major support (i.e what forms of assistance did you receive? Eg education, health, employment, shelter, and other kinds of support): _____
7. Do you believe that the governmental and non-governmental organizations that have been helping refugees at the Jewi refugee camp have integrated?
8. Do you think that the humanitarian aid are sufficient to live in Jewi camp? Yes { } No { }
If No, what do you do for survival? _____
9. Is there equal livelihood opportunities for female and male refugees in Jewi refugee camp?

- If No, please explain your reasons in detail _____
10. Is there any job opportunity (Wage employment /Self-employment) to women refugees in or around Jewi camp?
If Yes, please explain in detail: _____
11. How do women refugees participate in formal or informal labour activities to sustain their livelihoods in addition to receiving humanitarian aid? _____
12. According to the pledge, how do you evaluate the access to work in the camp, participating in the entrepreneurial activities, access to banking service, and owning land? _____
13. Do you think that women refugees have a chance to develop wealth while living in Jewi refugee camp? If No, what are the reasons? _____
14. Are there any conflict that have occurred with the local community while refugee women try to make their living around the camp/ in the town? _____
15. Is there any policy issues at regional and local administrative levels regarding livelihoods of refugees in Jewi refugee camp. _____
16. What are the opportunities for women refugees lived in Jewi refugee camp to sustain their livelihood? _____
17. What are the livelihood challenges of women refugees in Jewi refugee camp in terms of employment perspectives, work permit, socio cultural issue, integration with host community, access to major services such as health, education, security and others _____
18. What are your proposed solutions that would be good to both Governmental and Non-governmental organizations you encounter in your work?
19. Do you have any recommendations or additional information?

3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline

This question is prepared for collecting a data to conduct a research work on **Exploring Women Refugees' Livelihood in Jewi Refugee Camp in Gambella, Ethiopia**, for the partial fulfillment of MA Degree Social Anthropology. Your cooperation in providing genuine answers to the following questions is highly important for the success of this study and your response will be kept confidential. It is only for academic purpose.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation. **Muluemebet Semaw**

Name of the refugee camp: _____

Place/Region/City: _____

Date: _____

i. FGD guiding questions for refugees:

1. Discuss current conditions of female refugees in the camp?
 2. Could you please explain the existing situation (number, social cohesion, opportunity, challenges, etc.....) of refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?
 3. Are there any conflict that have occurred with the local community while refugee women try to make their living around the camp/ in the town?
 4. Is there any policy issues at regional and local administrative levels regarding livelihoods of refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?
 5. How equal are the opportunities (livelihood activities, education, socio cultural, etc) for female and male refugees in Jewi Refugee Camp?
 6. How do women refugees participate in formal or informal labor activities to sustain their livelihoods in addition to receiving humanitarian aid?
 7. Could you please explain the support and roles played by local and International NGOs as well as government agencies (please mention examples)?
 8. Discuss different forms of compliance mechanisms used by the responsible bodies regarding the inquiries of women's living in Jewi Refugee Camp.
1. What economic activities do women refugees engage in outside the camp, and what opportunities are available to them there?
 2. Do women refugees have opportunities for wage employment or self-employment in or around Jewi Camp?

- If yes, how can they find opportunities for self-employment or create small businesses to sustain their livelihoods?
3. Are there challenges women refugees face when trying to obtain land for livelihood activities, both inside and outside the camp?
 4. Are there any social networks, such as *Ekub* or *Edir*, that women refugees participate in? Were these networks established in South Sudan or after arriving at the camp?
 5. How do women refugees perceive the relationship and integration with the host community regarding land use?
 9. What are the opportunities of these women refugees encounter in the pursuit of their livelihoods strategies in the camp?
 10. What are the challenges of these women refugees encounter in the pursuit of their livelihoods strategies in the camp?

ii. FGD Guiding questions for host community participants:

1. Do you think that there is equal opportunity to access works for refugees and host community? If No, please explain the reasons
2. What are the livelihood challenges of host communities in terms of employment perspectives, socio cultural issue, integration with refugees, access to major services such as health, education, security and other.....
3. Are there any conflict that have occurred with the refugees while you try to make your living in your village or around the camp? If yes, explain the reason why the conflict has been occurred?
4. If there is conflict between refugees and host communities, what are the mechanisms for conflict management or resolution? Who is typically involved in the process?
5. Who are the decision makers and people of power? Some examples might include refugee representative, government officials, RRS leaders or others

4. Guideline for Personal Observation

Observation checklist:

1. Livelihood activities in the refugee camp?
 - Economic activities of women refugees
 - In-camp and out camp activities
2. Facilities in the refugee camp?
 - Health cares
 - Protection/security
 - Light/electricity
 - Education
 - Entertainments area (sport, cinema, etc)
3. Any signs of livelihood projects
 - Overall Comments: