

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**CLIMATE CHANGE REPORTING IN THE
ETHIOPIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION
AGENCY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

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ADDIS ABABA**

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AND TELEVISION AGENCY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract

Climate change is becoming a major threat to the wellbeing of the entire world. The alarming impact of the change in developing countries like Ethiopia makes the issue more ear-catching.

This study attempted to qualitatively explore climate change reporting in the Ethiopian radio and television agency. In the process of the study the researcher employed in-depth interview, focus group discussion, observation and content analysis under qualitative approach.

The sampling technique used was mainly purposive. Two focus group sessions and three in- depth interviews were conducted with twelve journalists, two editors and one higher official of the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA). Efforts are made to present the analysis thematically.

The findings of the study show that even though there are some improvements related to the past, most climate change stories of ERTA lack clarity and proximity. English mix and newly coined Amharic words are widely seen in the stories. Too often, journalists do not talk about efforts that are being exerted locally to adapt and mitigate climate change. In addition, the station does not give the expected priority to climate change stories relative to other programs. Most climate change stories are transmitted in mornings and daytimes. While there are some endeavors to incorporate the voices of farmers and other community members at the grassroots level, the majority journalists use officials and experts as main sources.

Regarding with the format, the results of the study shows all environment related programs except AWDEGETER, are not in magazine format, which respondents believe that it attracts audiences than mini-documentary. Furthermore, nearly all producers and editors of climate change and related environment programs have not got formal trainings on the subject matter. Besides, the station can hardly handle feedbacks which come from audiences.

Acronyms

BBC - British Broadcast Corporation

COP- Conference of Parties

EEJA -Ethiopian Environment Journalists' Association

ERTA -Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency

FfE- Forum for Environment

IPCC -International Panel on Climate Change

NCCF- National Climate Change Forum

UNESCO- United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC -United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Content

Page No.

Acknowledgement-----	i
Abstract-----	ii
Acronyms-----	iii
Table of Contents-----	IV

Chapter One

1. Introduction -----	1
1.1 Background of the Study-----	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem-----	3
1.3 Objective-----	4
1.4 Research Question-----	4
1.5 Methods-----	5
1.6 Scope of the Study-----	5
1.7 Significance of the Study -----	6
1.8 Limitation of the Study -----	6
1.9 Organization of the Study-----	6

Chapter Two

2. Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework -----	8
2.1 Introduction-----	8
2.2 Climate Change-----	8
2.2.1 Definition-----	8
2.2.2 Impacts of Climate Change-----	9
2.3 Climate Change and Media-----	10
2.4 Source Selection-----	15
2.5 Framing Theory-----	16
2.5.1 Definition-----	16
2.5.2 Kinds of Framing-----	19
2.5.3 Affecting Factors of Framing-----	21

Chapter Three

3. Research Methodology-----	23
3.1 Introduction-----	23
3.2 Data Collection-----	23
3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis-----	24
3.2.2 Focus Group Discussion-----	25
3.3.3 In-Depth Interview-----	26
3.2.4 Observation-----	28
3.3 Secondary Data Sources-----	28
3.4 Sampling-----	28

Chapter Four

4. Presentation and Data Analysis-----	30
4.1 Introduction-----	30
4.2 Awareness of Journalists and Editors about Climate Change-----	30
4.3 Idea for Ideal Climate Change Stories-----	34
4.4 Sources used in Climate Change Stories-----	36
4.5 Neither Plain Field nor Plain Language for Climate Change Stories----	39
4.5.1 Priority-----	39
4.5.2 Clarity, Proximity and Presentation -----	46
4.5.2.1 Clarity-----	46
4.5.2.2 Proximity-----	50
4.5.2.3 Presentation-----	51
4.6 Training-----	57
4.7 ERTA Systems to Handle Feedbacks about Climate Change Stories--	59

Chapter Five

5. Conclusion -----	60
---------------------	----

Bibliography -----	62
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Appendices

Appendix A

Guidelines for Focus group Discussions-----70

Appendix B

Guidelines of Interviews-----72

Chapter One

1. Introduction

“An exploratory study of climate change reporting in Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA)” discovers how journalists report and present climate change issues. As a result the study will identify the effectiveness of the reported issues to let the target audiences to take immediate action.

The theoretical foundation of this study comes from framing theory that describes the media which draws the public attention to certain topics, it decides where people think about, and the journalists select the topics. In news items occurs more than only bringing up certain topics.

The study will employ qualitative approach to gather data and to explore how ERTA journalists report and present climate change issues by using specific time frame. As the title of the study indicates, this study will be confined to Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency.

1.1. Background of the Study

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its article one, defines climate change as a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. (UNFCCC, 1992:4)

Scholars agree that climate change is becoming world’s number one problem. Hundreds of thousands of lives are lost every year due to climate change. (Akirma, 2009:26-27, Brown, 2009).A report released by Global Humanitarian Forum indicates that every year climate change leaves more than 300,000 people dead. In 20 years this will rise roughly half a million. Over nine in 10 deaths are related to gradual environmental degradation due to climate change. Within the next 20 years, one in 10 of the world’s present population could be directly and seriously affected by climate change. (Global Humanitarian Forum, 2009:3).

The problem of climate change is worse in developing countries like Ethiopia. According to a study conducted by Miz-Hasab Research Center (MHRC), Ethiopia is extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change due to social, economical and environmental factors. (MHRC, 2009)

Twenty years ago drought happened in Ethiopia once every 8 to 10 years. But for the last 20 years, it is happening every year. Temperature increases have also been constant for the last 50 years. But this will be expected to rise 3.1°C by 2060, and 5.1°C by 2090. (Abebe, 2007:1-5)

Despite the unprecedented impact of climate change, it is hard to conclude that media report climate change issues in ways that catch audiences' attention and prompt action. The general picture painted by the most recent research is that while coverage of climate change in non industrialized countries is increasing, the quantity and quality of reporting do not match the scale of the problem. The studies reveal a reliance on reports from Western news agencies rather than more locally relevant news. (UNESCO, 2009)

Like many sub Saharan countries, Ethiopia suffers from lack of information in order to adapt and mitigate climate change problems. For instance, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) survey shows that most Ethiopian farmers lack information to adapt to climate change. About half of a thousand Ethiopian cereal crop farmers say they are not adapting at all to changes in temperature and rainfall. They mainly blame lack of information. (http://www.freshplaza.com/news_detail.asp?id=35452) Retrieved on Oct. 22, 2009

The Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA), the media organization that this study focuses on, is also not reporting climate change as expected. It is also impossible to conclude that it is framing climate change issues in the way to target audience preferences and understands as my preliminary research and observation show.

ERTA which recently merged as a single organization began radio service in 1934 and television service in 1964. (Population Media Center, 2006:9-11) Though both have long years of service, they have not designed any program specifically focus on climate change. However, issues which are related to climate change are

entertained under news and environment programs. But they are not sufficient. According to a research conducted by Stalin G/Sellassie, from the environment issues covered by ETV's "Akababiachin" program, climate change issues share only 10 percent.(Stalin,2009: 38) Besides, ERTA's editorial policy does not state anything about climate change or environment in general. It simply says, "State media shall give coverage to the national social development strategies and policies."(ERTA, May 2005)

This study will examine how ERTA frames its climate change reports. It will also point out what, how, and what sources journalists use to address the issue in the way that majority of its audiences hear or view and prepare for action. Furthermore, it will provide to academicians a fresh perspective to do in-depth research on the subject matter.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Media have the power to influence public opinion as well as social policy about significant social matters. (Biruktawit, July 2008:12) Climate change is one of the issues that require media's attention. In addition to the attention the issue receives from the media, how it is framed has implications for both public perception and policy making. (Shanahan, August 2009:150)

How climate change is reported in the media can certainly affect the public's perception of the issue. For example, Biruktawit (July, 2008:13) noted that the Ethiopian media have played a significant role in minimizing stigma and discrimination against HIV-infected people.

Despite the fact that media have an important role to combat climate change, there are very few studies that focus on media and climate change internationally. Even these few studies show that climate change issues are not reported and presented in the way that let audiences to take immediate actions.

When we come to Ethiopia very little research has been done specifically on media and climate change although there are some studies that are focused on media and environment. Therefore, the researcher believes that there is a need to conduct a

study which aims at finding out how the local media like ERTA report and present burning issues of climate change.

1.3 Objective

The general objective of this study on climate change reporting by ERTA is to investigate the issues reported under the title of climate change and ways of presentation. It will examine the effectiveness of climate change reporting in the aforementioned media with reference to principles of media framing.

Specific objectives:

- To explore the methods that journalists use to report and present climate change issues.
- To closely investigate the clarity, understandability and attractiveness of climate change reports.
- To identify how journalists get and use sources to report the issue.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the above objectives this study will attempt to answer the following questions.

- How and where ERTA journalists get sources to report climate change issues?
- What are the methods that ERTA journalists use to report climate change issues?
- Are the media outlets of ERTA clear and understandable to its target audience?
- What are evaluation mechanisms of ERTA to get feedback from target audiences?

1.5 Methods

This study hopes to explore the understandability, attractiveness and simplicity of the program; and how journalists get and use sources. To achieve this, I will mainly employ qualitative research method. Since my arena of study is limited in one media organization (ERTA), qualitative research works best. As scholars also agree, qualitative approach helps to investigate the view of a single case in detail. And this makes the result credible and easy to apply. (Deacon & et al, 1999).

Under the qualitative approach, I will mainly employ focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observation in order to collect primary data. In this research focus group discussion will be important to deepen insights and views of different individuals who work and record an interest in the issue. In-depth interviews will also help to investigate the way of reporting and presenting climate change issues. As a journalist working for ERTA, I can do well to more observation. Deacon and others also support this method. They said that if someone wants to find out about the motives and ideas that propel a news team to cover a story in a particular way, he\she can get a lot more from watching them at work listening to their discussion, than asking them retrospectively to describe their work. (Deacon& et al, 1999)

Aired programs that focus on climate change, books, journals and some credible websites will be employed as a secondary source of data. The findings that the researcher will obtain from both primary and secondary data sources will lead to conclusions as well as recommendations, if necessary.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA). To deal with the issue in proper manner, I will use news and program outlets of ERTA that were transmitted about six months before and after the Copenhagen climate summit, which was held in the second and third weeks of December 2009. The study will mainly examine how ERTA cover and present climate change issues in the abovementioned time frames. In addition, the study merely looks at how the media present issue; and does not include reception analysis.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Because this study is conducted in an organization, it may be possible to apply the result easily. It will not cost much time or large manpower. It will be only a matter of commitment and willingness to change.

The main benefit of this research will be to journalists, ERTA and audiences who watch and listen to ERTA's climate change news and programs. Journalists will acquire some knowledge and experience about clear, interesting and simple ways of climate change reporting. By doing so, they will upgrade their professional output and carry out responsibilities. And target audiences that will get information to understand easily, catching the ear and encouraging action.

Findings of the study will also be helpful for sectors that work on climate change and related environment issues like Ethiopian Environment Journalists Association (EEJA), Forum for Environment (FfE) and National Climate Change Forum (NCCF) by providing them some notes how climate change issues frame in the Ethiopian broadcast media.

1.8 Limitation of the study

This study has been conducted in a single media organization, ERTA. So as any other qualitative researches, the results of this study may not be generalised to larger population. However, it would provide detailed information how ERTA reports climate change and the information produced will help raise issues, research questions and agendas for future large-scale research. Besides, since there is shortage of mini DV in ERTA, producers might overwrite one program/story over the other. Thus, it was a daunting task for the researcher to find aired climate change stories easily from the audiovisual library.

1.9 Organization of the Study

Like most other theses, this study has been organized in five chapters. Brief background of the study, significance, objectives, scope and limitation of the study are treated in the first chapter.

Most pages of the second chapter are devoted to various related literature reviews of climate change including framing and agenda setting theories.

While chapter three is dedicated to a discussion of the research methods employed in the study, presentation of findings and analysis makes chapter four. Based on the findings and analysis of chapter four, conclusions and recommendations are given in the last chapter.

Chapter Two

2. Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

The main aspiration of this chapter is to provide a literature review which helps as a corner stone to the study. It will mainly address basic notions of climate change in relation with media and framing theory, which the researcher selected to hold up findings of this study.

2.2 Climate change—(Also called climatic change)

2.2.1 Definition

Different organizations and authors give various definitions to climate change while most definitions seem similar to each other. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (1992:4), in its Article one, defines climate change as: “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity. This alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods”. The UNFCCC thus makes a distinction between “climate change” attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition, and “climate variability” attributable to natural causes.

American Meteorological Society(AMS) defines climate change as “any systematic change in the long-term statistics of climate elements (such as temperature, pressure, or winds) sustained over several decades or longer. (<http://amsglossary.allenpress.com/glossary/browse?s=c&p=40>) retrieved on 12 Feb 2010. According to AMS, Climate change may be due to natural external forcings, such as changes in solar emission or slow changes in the earth's orbital elements; natural internal processes of the climate system, which is consisting of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere, determining the earth's climate as the result of mutual interactions and responses to external influences (forcing) or anthropogenic forcing, resulting from human activities; often used to refer to environmental changes, global or local in scale.

(<http://amsglossary.allenpress.com/glossary/browse?s=c&p=40>) Retrieved on 12 Feb 2010.

James Fahn (July 2007) also makes the distinction between individual weather events and climate change. As to him, Climate is the average weather over a long time. A few extreme weather events do not confirm or disprove climate change and it is usually wrong to attribute individual weather events directly to climate change. But if someone is covering a story about, say, a devastating cyclone, it is appropriate to contact climatologists or weather experts and report their views on likely trends.

According to Forum for Environment (FfE), climate change is the effect of rapid global warming caused by substantially raised emission of so called green house gases predominantly in the industrialized part of the world including China and India. (Green Forum, 2008: p.3)

In general terms, climate change refers to a statistically significant variation in either the mean state of the climate or in its variability, persisting for an extended period (typically decades or longer). Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.

2.2.2 Impacts of Climate Change

“Climate change has been considered mostly as an environmental and distant threat rather than a human issue. But over 300,000 lives are claimed each year because of climate change. Over 300 million people are seriously affected. And there are 26 million climate displaced people today, with one million new cases every year” said Walter Fust, Chief Executive Officer, Global Humanitarian Forum Geneva, and Chairman of the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). (UNESCO, 2009)

The 20th century’s last two decades were the hottest in 400 years and possibly the warmest for several millennia. As persuasively illustrated by former vice president Al Gore in his Academy Award-winning documentary film, entitled *An inconvenient Truth*, it is reported that 10 of the hottest years on record occurred in the last 14 years.(Daniel, 2008: pp10-11).

As Fields (2005) said and quoted by Daniel (2008:11), not all parts of the world are equally affected by climate change. But Africa is the most vulnerable region to the change. Predictions for 2025 disclosed that some 480 million people in Africa could be living in water-stressed areas due to the negative impact of climatic change.

According to a study conducted by Miz-Hasab Research Centre (MHRC) (2009), Ethiopia is extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change due to social, economical and environmental factors. Either directly or indirectly, several critical sectors in Ethiopia are being affected by the impact of climate change. An assessment made by Vincent (2004) shows that Ethiopia ranks the 7th vulnerable country in Africa to the impact of climate change.

The impact of climate change could either be reduced or enhanced by the interaction of several factors in a given country. In Ethiopia, lack of awareness, lack of information and research are amongst the factors that are believed to complicate the problem of climate change. As Daniel (2008:29-30) argues, in the absence of awareness on the issue even the existing policies will keep ignoring climate change and the problem will continue to affect the economy and especially the poor households.

Biniyam (May 2009:8-9) noted the issue on Ethiopian Environment Journalists Association magazine by quoting a study that climatic change impacts on livelihoods of pastoralists in Oromia and Southern regions of Ethiopia. The study showed in Borena zone, for instance, the average number of livestock per household declined from ten oxen, 35 caws and 33 goats to three oxen, seven caws and six goats.

In general, climate change has been affecting the whole world but in different magnitude. The problem seriously hits Ethiopia since it is mainly depend on agriculture. However, it is impossible to say that media performs its task to accelerate activities to adapt and mitigate the change. The following sub topic will attempt to discuss how media plays a role to let the public aware about the issue and give an immediate response.

2.3. Climate Change and Media

These days, various media studies are focusing on climate change as the issue grasps major attention throughout the world. UNFCCC (1992:5), in its article four, also puts an obligation on the parties of the convention that they have to commit to

promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change.

On the other hand, there are many criticisms of how the media has covered climate change to date. Even though the coverage of climate change shows improvement, it is difficult to wrap up that the issue gets much attention in terms of quality. (Shanahan, December 2007)

Climate change's media profile has never been higher, and public awareness is rising fast worldwide. But in most nations, coverage of sport, celebrities, politics, the economy and crime dwarfs that of climate change. Polls show that public understanding of the subject is still low and public action lower still. Nor does the news reach all people equally. (Shanahan, December 2007)

Television and Radio are amongst the most accessible sources of information. Broadcast media have brought the reality of climate change in to everybody's homes, helping to raise public attention to climate variability. International and regional broadcasting unions are committed to increasing the quality and quantity of programmes of climate change and building capacities of national broadcasters, especially in developing countries. (UNESCO, 2009)

On the other hand, according to Shanahan (2007), in parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America the quality and quantity of climate change articles are growing fast in the newspapers read by wealthier urban people. But there are little researches available on how much information is reaching the poorer communities. James Painter at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism has looked at this question. He showed that the prime-time evening news on the main TV stations in China, India, Mexico, Russia and South Africa made no mention of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on mitigation when it was released in May 2007.

According to Andy Revkin, environment correspondent of the *New York Times*, and Max Boykoff of Oxford University, coverage has increased massively since 2004. But despite an increase in coverage, climate change is still not an easy subject area for

non-specialist media to get to grips with. "It's a century-scale phenomenon, but editors are only interested in the things happening now," said Revkin, explaining why it can be difficult for science and environment correspondents to convince their papers to publish news about climate change. (Fahn July, 2007) Retrieved date Oct.22,2009

Stocking and Leonard(1990) cited in M.Wilson(2000: 201) identified Climate change as a difficult story to recreate for a daily news budget, while a short-term drought episode or any other weather event is much easier to visualize and portray. The global warming story is one of the most complicated stories of our time. It involves abstract and probabilistic science, complicated laws, grandstanding politics, speculative economics, and the complex interplay of individuals and sciences. According to the authors, climate change story is also affected by a number of journalistic constraints, such as deadline, single-source stories, and complexity and reporter education.

Language is another tricky area. Scientists speak in caution and probability, but not the kind of crisp commentary that's valued by the public, newspaper editors and policymakers. Added to these challenges comes the difficulty of interpreting output from groups that are trying to influence public opinion by putting their own spin on the science. An oil industry association in the US attempted to influence climate change reporting by spreading uncertainty about the causes of global warming, while environmental groups can tend to go the other way and highlight the most alarming elements of climate change. In February 2007, for example, the UK's the *Guardian* newspaper reported that the American Enterprise Institute was offering payment of \$10,000 to scientists for writing articles that emphasize shortcomings in the International Panel on Climate Change(IPCC) report. (Fahn, July 2007) (<http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/opinion/30498> July 6, 2007)retrieved date Oct.22,2009

Shanahan (2007) argued that though media has started to cover climate change, it is not possible to say that it meets the expected quality. The general picture painted by the most recent research is that while coverage of climate change in non industrialized countries is increasing, the quantity and quality of reporting do not match the scale of the problem. The studies reveal a reliance on reports from Western news agencies rather than more locally relevant news.

As Spranger(1989) in M.Wilson(2000) illustrated citizens need accurate and understandable information, but unfortunately, many of the recent media outlets on climate change are either sensational, technical or too abstract for the general public, and do not help people make a connection between their everyday actions and the imminent long-term global changes that will probably take place.

To achieve quality in climate change reporting Fahn (July 2007) advised journalists to be aware of the science. He said that all journalists should understand the science of climate change — its causes, its controversies and its current and projected impacts. Start by doing your own research from established sources, such as reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) or from local scientific experts you trust. According to Fahn, this is particularly true for journalists in the developing world, where the issue generally goes under-reported despite the fact that the poorest countries are most vulnerable to climate change.

In developing countries especially, few reporters are well trained, connected and resourced for the challenge ahead. Globally, apart from a few journalists who have been covering climate change for years, the media has been slow off the mark. Climate change used to be 'just' a science/environment story – never the best funded news desks. And many senior editors are arts graduates, who are unwilling or unable to understand science. But climate change now encompasses the economy, health, security and more. Suddenly science reporters are covering a political issue and vice versa. For many, the topic is new, extremely complex, and easy to get wrong. (Fahn, July 2007)

For journalists, the main issue is to grasp the complex nature of climate change as it continues to gather new dimensions. Training and access to experts will be key, especially for under-resourced reporters in the poorest countries. With a little time and training, non-scientific journalists can cover climate change well. They need not think it is beyond them. Internet-based sources are becoming increasingly important and accessible to journalists around the world. (Fahn, July 2007)

General problems facing reporters who cover climate change in developing countries like Ethiopia include a lack of training, unsupportive editors, and limited access to information and interviewees (Shanahan, 2009: 145). In addition, limited

resources mean that few journalists from poorer nations can follow and report on the international negotiations aimed at addressing climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

As Fahn (2007) indicated, attending a global climate summit can seem overwhelming, with so many people to meet and events to attend. So getting to know some sources in your country's delegation or finding other local attendees can be useful as they can often help you find and assess information. Report on and analyse your government's stance on treaty negotiations.

Despite the above fact, the negotiations are gathering pace and the decisions made will have far-reaching consequences for people the world over. As Fahn (2008a) noted and quoted by Shanahan (2009:146), yet of 1,500 journalists who applied to attend the UNFCCC summit in Bali in December 2007, just 9 percent were from non industrialised countries other than the host Indonesia. A much smaller percentage actually travelled to Bali and for nearly the entire UN list of 50 Least Developed Countries, there was zero media representation. This prevents relevant information from reaching people in such nations and means that negotiators are under little public scrutiny. It also means that journalists are missing major opportunities to meet climate change experts and to learn more about the subject. Some brief anecdotes from Fahn's own work illustrate knowledge gaps that suggest many millions of vulnerable people are being misinformed.

Mike Shanahan asked 111 journalists from 35 nations including Ethiopia. All reported on climate change (with varying frequency) but only 35 (31 percent) had received any formal training about the subject, usually in the form of short workshops. Beyond the lack of training, the main problems they reported were including a lack of local research and news and of local experts who are prepared to talk to journalists (35 percent); difficulties accessing information and understanding the subject (35 percent); difficulty persuading editors that climate change stories matter (29 percent); Insufficient resources for travel to remote areas or to relevant conferences (21 percent). (Shanahan, 2009:146-147)

Malene Haakansson (2009:128) believes that climate change issues started to be entertained in the Ethiopian media although she could exemplify only in print media outlets. She noted in her second book that climate change has really arrived on the agenda. In English language newspapers there are regular articles on the impact of climate change for Africa and Ethiopia. She writes that the international climate negotiations are also being mentioned, especially since Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was chosen at the end of August by the African Union to lead the delegation that will negotiate a deal on behalf of Africa at the COP15 Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen December 2009.

On the other hand, as Green Forum (2008:7) explains, in the Ethiopian public, the understanding of the link between climate change, its environmental consequences, and its impact on the economy and in particular on the livelihoods of the majority of the people is still low. The political strategies required to adapt to the impact of climate change are still not publicly discussed. The vast majority of people is not even aware that fundamental changes to their lives are about to happen. In order to be able to adapt and cope they have to be informed.

In contrast to the low profile climate change receives in the local media, the issue is intensively discussed and acted upon by government agencies. Ethiopia has signed and ratified the important international agreements such as Kyoto Protocol and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. With the National Meteorological Agency, the Environmental Protection Authority and many international research institutions there are well established centres of competence in the country. Media should help to bridge the gap between a still uninformed public and the knowledge and ideas existing in specialised government and non government agencies and organizations. (Green Forum, 2008:8)

2.4. Source selection

One of the best documented findings in news research is that journalists rely on governmental sources. Because other sources like community representatives, victims, etc are not readily or easily available to news sources since they are not living in the capital or center of a country where most media houses are located

(Miller and Riechert, 2000: 51). Shanahan (2007) also identified lack of resource as a barrier to get the appropriate sources. From 111 reporters from 35 nations, 21 percents said that they are suffering from insufficient resources for travel to remote areas or to relevant conferences.

Too often, journalists only report what they hear from government officials speaking at conferences. However, scientists are also excellent sources. They generally share you the truth. But try to explain what they're saying in everyday terms. Remember to include the voices of other stakeholders, whether local villagers, nongovernmental organizations or top business people. They all have insights to offer. (Fahn, July 2007)

Generally, to make the reporting of climate change simple and interesting, Fahn (July,2007) advises journalists to use different angles, report on solutions and tie stories to interesting people, places and topics. He further recommends usage of reporting aids and different sources.

2.5. Framing Theory

As Price and his colleagues noted down and cited in Scheufele (1999: 103), the framing and presentation of an issue or event in the media can affect how recipients of the news understand and interpret the stories. Climate change is becoming world's number one problem. Thus, how it is framed by the media can affect the public's awareness and the response received from the government regarding the issue.

2.5.1 Definition

In the past decade, the term 'framing' became very popular in media research and communication articles. (Weaver, 2007) Several definitions have been said about media frames. Weaver (2007) defines media frames by quoting authors like Tankard and others as "the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration."

In her classic study of media technology, Tuchman (1976:1066) noted and quoted by Miller and Riechert (2000:47) that 'framing implies identifying some items as facts, not others'. Similarly, in a study of news coverage of Students for Democratic Society, Gitlin (1980:6-7) observed that frames 'are the principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of implicit little theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.' These statements emphasize selection and emphasis of facts. Framing allows journalists to focus on facts and still shape discourse –either consciously or unconsciously.(Gitlin, 1980:6-7) The process of framing involved in both definitions is similar, that is, they both consider selecting, emphasizing, interpreting and excluding as the main components of framing.

Weaver (2007) has provided more than one definition for media framing by quoting Entman(1993, 2007). His famous definition of framing is 'to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.'

Using the same theme, Entman (2007) defines framing as "the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation." In other words, framing is intended to make the audience think or feel in a certain way about the issue under discussion.

According to Entman's (2007) definitions, well developed frames usually have four functions: problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment, and remedy promotion. First, frames define problems that are salient to the public. Then, they determine and highlight causes of the problem. Next, they encourage moral evaluations by providing the causal analysis. Finally, they promote remedies so the concerned bodies can come up with favoured policies.

Frames can affect the way people understand and interpret issue or events. (Shen, 2004:123-125) Similarly, McManus and Dorfman (2002) assert that:

...news frames are influential in making certain elements of issues and events available for mental processing while ignoring others. We know the level of context in

stories greatly influences comprehension. Terse episodic reporting, for example, throws readers and viewers back on their own pre-conceptions about why events take place. It encourages simplistic explanations such as blaming individuals and exempting the conditions shaping them. Some kinds of reporting appear to promote an apolitical or social reaction while others elicit only apathy

As to Carlyle et al (2008:168), the effectiveness of frames is found in their “ability to make certain elements and perspectives more salient, thereby increasing the chances that certain schemas of interpretation will be evoked.” Frames can be found in “the properties of news narratives, thus encouraging certain interpretations and understandings of issues.”

The media draws the public attention to certain topics, it decides where people think about, and the journalists select the topics. This is the original agenda setting ‘thought’. In news items occurs more than only bringing up certain topics. The way in which the news is brought, the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists.

Thus, a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided with. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings. Frames influence the perception of the news of the audience, this form of agenda-setting not only tells what to think about, but also how to think about it. (<http://www.cw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/Alphabetic%20list%20of%20theories/>)

The term framing has been used interchangeably with concepts like agenda setting and priming. (Scheufele, 1999:110) Entman (2007) suggests agenda setting to be considered as an alternative name for “successfully performing the first function of framing: defining problems worthy of public and government attention. Among other things, agenda problems can spotlight societal conditions, world events, or character traits of a candidate.” Scholars like McCombs et al. (1997) in Zhou and Moy (2007 79-92.) refer framing as second-level agenda setting. On the other hand, Scheufel(1999:112) argues that framing is concerned with “the salience of issue attributes”; whereas agenda setting is concerned with “the salience of issues”. Zhou and Moy (2007:97-98) also point out that although framing and agenda setting are two theories of media effects, they have been represented as one.

Journalists use various tools to frame an issue or event. Pan and Kosicki in Scheufel (1999:115) present four types of structural dimensions that journalist can frame news through: a) syntactic structures, or patterns in the arrangements of words or phrases; b)script structures, refereeing to the general newsworthiness of an event as well as the intention to communicate news and events to the audience that transcends their limited sensory experiences; c) thematic structures, reflecting the tendency of journalists to impose a causal theme on their news stories, either in the form of explicit causal statements by linking observations to the direct quote of a source; and d) rhetorical structures, referring to the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects.

2.5.2 Kinds of Framing

The existence of one or another frame in the news and its consequences for the public opinion has been a focus in many studies. (Semekto and Valkenburg, 2000: 93- 97)

Framing can be classified under two contrasting dimensions: episodic and thematic coverage. (Shah et al., 2004:102-107) Episodic framings are used to “construct social issues around specific instances and individuals” This type of framing, according to Carlyle and others (2008:170-172) tends to rely on individual explanations. They describe individual explanations as “those that focus on the personality, disposition, or motivational states of the people involved”.

On the other hand, thematic framing emphasizes society’s role in addition to the individual. (Iyengar, 1991 cited in Carlyle et al., 2008: 174-177) The frame relies on social explanation. These social explanations focus on “circumstances and situational forces”. (Sotirovic, 2003 in Carlyle et al., 2008:178-181)

Semetko & Valkenburg (2000:95-107) discuss five dominant news frames that have been identified in earlier studies: conflict framing, human interest framing, economic framing, morality framing, and attribution of responsibility framing. In addition other frames like diagnostic and prognostic are commonly used frames.

According to these authors, while conflict framing focuses on conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions so as to attract audience attention, human interest framing puts a human face or an emotional perspective on the report of an issue or event. It personalizes the news, “dramatize or emotionalize” the stories as a means to capture and retain audience interest. The frame is also referred as “human impact” frame, and is considered the second common frame in the news next to conflict frame. (Neuman et al., in Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:96) As Bennett said and cited in Semetko and Vakenburg (2000:96-97), because of the increasing competition in the market for news, journalists and editors are exerting greater effort to produce stories that capture the public’s interest.

Economic framing on the other hand presents issues or events focusing on their economical consequences on an individual, group, institution, or country. (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:98) When an issue or event has wide impact, it adds value to the news, and its economical consequences are often vital. (Garber cited in Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:100)

Morality frame is also among the kinds of framing and as the name indicates it emphasizes moral or religious contexts of an issue or event. (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:99) In order to keep the professional norm of objectivity, journalists often make use of the moral frame indirectly by using quotation and inference, for example, having others ask the question. (Neuman et al., in Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:99-101)

As Semetko and Valkenburg (2000:103) put it, attribution of responsibility framing “presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group.” Iyengar (1987) argued that when television news covers an issue or event, or individual (episodically) rather than presenting the larger historical social context (thematically), it promotes individuals’ explanations for social problems. (Cited in Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:105)

Diagnostic framing emphasizes identifying a problem and attributing blame and causality.(Gerhards and Rucht, 1992 in Scheufel, 1999:118) similarly, prognostic

framing which sometimes called predictive framing can be described as a solution frame which specifies what needs to be done. (Gerhards and Rucht 1992 in Scheufel, 1999)

2.5.3 Affecting Factors of Framing

Framing can be affected by various factors. According to Scheufel (1999:120-122), journalists' framing of an issue may be influenced by several social-structural or organizational reasons and by individual or ideological factors. Based on the abovementioned study, the author further identifies five variables that may potentially affect journalists' framing of an issue or an event: 1) social norms and values, 2) organizational pressures and constraints, 3) pressure of interest groups, 4) journalistic routines, and 5) journalists' ideological or political orientations. Likewise, McLeod et al in Shen (2004:109-114) point out framing social and political issues and events can be affected by "journalists' individual values, ideological constraints, and market forces."

In case of journalists, their "common reliance on politicians, interest groups and other experts for quotes and analysis means that the news media may serve as conduits for individuals and interest groups eager to promote their perspectives." (Shen, 2004:116-120) Consequently, journalists adopt frames suggested by interest groups or political actors as sound bites and incorporate them in their report of an issue or event. Furthermore, type and political orientation of the medium can also influence news framing. (Scheufel, 1999:121-122)

Despite the fact that framing theory has been used in many different researches, it has been criticized by some. As to Scheufele (1999), most of the limitations of framing theory are attributed to its "lack of clear conceptual definition and generally applicable operation."

As mentioned above, framing plays a prominent role in presenting and realizing salient issues like climatic change to the public. Furthermore, as scholars concur, the discursive context in which issues are presented has an important impact on public opinion and policy-making processes. It makes a difference if the issue of endangered species, for example, is discussed in terms of economic development,

biodiversity or aesthetics. (Miller and Riechert, 2000:45) However, little has been done on the area of media and climate change. The current study will play its role by showing how climate change issues are reported and presented by the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency.

Chapter Three

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the impact of climate change and its relationship with media. I have also put the conceptual framework and to which theory this study sticks to. This chapter deals with a discussion of the methodology and the different techniques that are supposed to support the objective of the study.

3.2 Data Collection

In conducting this study, I employed a qualitative approach (qualitative content analysis, focus group discussion, interview as well as observation). The qualitative method was selected as a major research method since it is a frequently used and an appropriate approach for media studies. Lindlof(1995:22) writes “If communication is primarily a matter of signifying meanings and purposes, then qualitative inquiry is interested in how signifying occurs and what it means for those who engage in it.”

Qualitative methods are typically more flexible – that is, they allow greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant. For example, qualitative methods ask mostly “open-ended” questions that are not necessarily worded in exactly the same way with each participant. With open-ended questions, participants are free to respond in their own words, and these responses tend to be more complex than simply “yes” or “no.” In addition, with qualitative methods, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is often less formal than in quantitative research. Participants have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in greater detail than is typically the case with quantitative methods. In turn, researchers have the opportunity to respond immediately to what participants say by forwarding subsequent questions to information the participant has provided. (Family Health International, nd: 4)

However, unlike quantitative research qualitative research findings do not represent the larger population. According to Eyob (2006:47), the major limitation of qualitative research is that the findings cannot be directly generalized to the larger population

being studied. Eyob (2006:47) further justified why qualitative research is not representative of large population. He said that in qualitative research participants are not selected randomly and the number of participants is too small to be representative of the population. It aims primarily at understanding particulars rather than generalizing universals. However, the aim of this study is not reaching to generalization. It rather explores how the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency reports and presents climate change issues. To achieve the aforementioned goal, I mainly made use of the following approaches.

3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

It is unimaginable for a researcher in media studies to get on the task of focus group and in-depth interviews without having a prior knowledge of the media output under investigation. This initial correlation with the 'media product' helped the researcher to have a valuable and 'focused' dialogue with the research groups during the data collection. (Schroder et al., 2003:154-155)

Conducting the qualitative content analysis also helped me to give objective assessment of the selected programs and corroborate the results with the responses of research participants regarding the content of climate change reporting in the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. It needs to be noted here that in a qualitative content analysis of this kind, the required analysis is only at elementary level in a way that familiarizes the researcher with the media product. As Schroder et al (2003, 126) put it "it is often wiser to abstain from a detailed preliminary textual analysis; and just to familiarize oneself with the text sufficiently to be able to pursue the cultural or political research questions that motivates the project". In the same manner I conducted reviews of climate change reports and programs aired between July 2009 and June 2010. I deliberately selected this period as it shows how climate change issues were reported in the time of pre and post Copenhagen Climate Summit (COP15), which was held in the second and third weeks of December 2009. Furthermore, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia was chosen in around July 2009 to represent Africa at this international climate summit. And it is believed that after Meles was chosen, the state media started to give more coverage about the summit and to climate change issues. A rough examination of the

programs aired over this period, therefore, enabled me to discuss how different climate change issues were presented on ERTA.

3.2.2 Focus Group Discussion

A more descriptive, simpler and comprehensive definition of focus group discussion, it seems, is provided by Lunt and Livingstone (1996:80). As the authors put it “Briefly, the focus group method involves bringing together a group or, more often, a series of groups, of subjects to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator.”

Larry Strelitz (2005:121) argues that application of focus groups in communication studies has a long history but their role as tools of investigating media studies became widespread since the early 1980s. While sharing his experiences and observation about the contribution of focus groups, Strelitz (2005: 121) writes:

...group discussion on a particular topic or set of themes lies at the heart of focus group research. The interaction between respondents seen to produce data and insights that would not necessarily arise in individual interviews as the group discussion is seen to stimulate, elicit and elaborate responses from the interviewees.

As opposed to the face-to-face interview, focus group does not follow a designed conversation between the researcher and the respondent. The existence of this ‘unstructured dialogue’ is considered as the ‘strength’ of focus group. This is because the interaction among group members in the focus group “produces information and insights in to the attitudes of people that would not be likely to emerge from a straight one to one interview.” (Mytton, 1999:128)

Scholars in media and communications recommend that the researcher is usually expected to act as a moderator of the focus group discussions. This seems to come out of the conviction that the researcher is the one who best knows the nature and objectives of the study. The moderator needs to be wary of not dominating the proceeding. (Hansen et al., 1998: 272) Accordingly, my role as a moderator would

not go beyond inspiring and helping the discussions run smoothly. I was also able to make sure that the discussion was progressing as per the topics listed in the interview guide and whether all members of the focus group had got fair chances to air their views.

Most intellectuals agree on the importance of recording focus group sessions which they argue that it helps to ease the moderator's burden of note taking in detail. The recording also provides the researcher with an accurate and comprehensive account of what was said and happened throughout each session. (Strelitz, 2005:122 Mytton, 1999:133). During each focus group session in this study I started by asking participants if it was comfortable for them to record the discussions and explaining why I wanted it on tape. Then I requested each of them to introduce themselves which helped me identify their names against their voices while transcribing and writing the findings.

3.2.3 In-Depth Interview

The simplest way to describe an interview is to say that it is a conversation between a researcher and an informant. The term is related to the French term *entrevue*, which means "to see one another or meet." This points out an important element of interviewing – usually there is a face-to-face relationship. But it is not always. (Berger, 2000:111)

According to Berger (2000: 111), Interviews are one of the most widely used and most fundamental research techniques- and for a very good reason. They enable researchers to obtain information that they cannot gain by observation alone.

Even though there are several kinds of interview, for this study, I got unstructured (In -depth) interview very appropriate since it helped me to obtain the deeper insight of the interviewees. Berger (2000:112) also supports this notion. He argues that in-depth interviews are unique in allowing researchers to get inside the minds of people and to gain access to material of considerable importance. Like many high-risk activities, they are also high-gain ones.

In most cases the term 'In-depth Interviews' is used substituting 'individual interviews'. It seems that the word 'in-depth' is added to deliberately imply the benefit a researcher gets by using this approach which is a means of creating better understanding about an issue under investigation. This benefit comes due to the nature of individual interviews that allow an interviewee to make additional reflections with the prospect of building up 'an argument or a narrative in an hour than any group member does in the same amount of time' (Schroder et al., 2003: 153). In the same manner, individual interviews gave the researcher the privilege of raising more and specific issues during the session. Also in situations where the researcher confirms anonymity to the informant, individual interviews are best tools to discuss rather sensitive and controversial issues as opposed to the focus group interviews which may be characterized by the presence of 'spiral of silence'. The individual interview is also a means to avoid the prospect of 'group pressure' which scholars take as a likely limitation in the case of focus group discussions. (Schroder et al., 2003:153)

While describing the nature of the in-depth interview, Lindolf (1995:5) writes "These interviews resemble conversations between equals. Most of what is said and meant by both interviewer and interviewee emerges jointly in interaction." 'Social interaction' as is the case in focus group is not the feature of in-depth interview as it emphasizes the individual. Mytton (1999:141) notes that individual interviews are relevant means of data collection in media research.

In-depth interviews are also instrumental in corroborating the findings of the focus group sessions. This view is shared by Morgan(1988) cited in Strelitz (2005) who says "one pays the price for relying on group interaction in that compared to the one-to-one interview; one has less control in managing what data is actually collected."

One of the many reasons that demand a qualitative researcher to conduct an in-depth interview is when it is impossible to get enough participants for a focus group discussion (Mytton, 1999:142).

However, as a researcher I faced challenges from the limitations of interview. As noted in Silverman (2000), in interview people do not always remember things accurately and sometimes they tell to the researcher what they think the researcher wants to hear.

3.2.4 Observation

Besides the above three approaches, I employed observation when it was needed to supplement the data. According to Creswell (2009) observation helps a researcher to have a first –hand experience from participants. Furthermore, by using observation it is possible to record information as it occurs and notice unusual aspects.

Even though sometimes researchers might be seen as intrusive in observation (Creswell, 2009), I took the advantage of being an employee in the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency.

3.3 Secondary Data Sources

For this study, books were the major sources to supplement the primary data. Even though it was difficult to get many books that show the relationship between climate change and media, I tried my best to investigate different literatures by using contacts I have with environment organizations and experts. Besides, credible environment websites were also employed as a source of secondary data to get most up-to-date information and facts about the international scenario of climate change and media. For the sake of qualitative content analysis, I used aired programs and news stories to have a glimpse about how ERTA reports climate change issues. Furthermore, these aired programs and news helped me to support the views of focus group discussion participants and interviewees.

3.4 Sampling

The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question (Creswell, 2009). In this study, I used purposive sampling so that to get the appropriate discussants and interviewees.

Purposive sampling, one of the most common sampling strategies, groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question. Sample sizes, which may or may not be fixed prior to data collection, also

depend on the resources and time available, as well as the study's objectives. (Family Health International, nd: 5)

Based on the above sampling method I made to take part about twelve journalists who have better knowledge and experience on the issue for focus group discussion. And I selected two editors based on their merit, experience and proximity to the issue for in-depth interview as well as a higher official to get confirmation for some questions raised during focus group discussions and interviews.

The location of both the focus group discussion and interviews was in the compound of Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. While I facilitated both the discussion and the interview I used digital tape recorder by asking the permission of participants in advance.

Chapter Four

4. Presentation and Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives presentation, discussion and analysis of findings by exploring how ERTA reports climate change issues within the time period from June 2009 to May 2010. The data were collected from the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency by using qualitative approach of data collection. Accordingly, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with journalists and editors of ERTA. Qualitative content analysis of stories, the researcher's observation and response of higher official of ERTA are also included in analysis.

The analysis and discussion will be given in accordance with the objectives of the study as well as reviews and theories that are set in the previous chapters.

4.2. Awareness of Journalists and Editors about Climate Change

To be an environmental reporter, it is necessary to have an understanding of scientific language and practice, knowledge of historical environmental events, the ability to keep abreast of environmental policy decisions and the work of environmental organizations, a general understanding of current environmental concerns, and the ability to communicate all of that information to the public in such a way that it can be easily understood, despite its complexity. (UNEP, 2006)

As I mentioned in chapter two, to achieve quality in climate change reporting Fahn (July 2007) advised journalists to be aware of the science. He said that journalists should understand the science of climate change -its causes, its controversies and current and projected impacts.

Thus, I first attempted to know how much journalists and editors understand the concept of climate change. Both in the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews no one said "I don't know the meaning of climate change." All of them gave me their own definition of climate change.

Different scholars that I incorporated in the review of literature put their meanings for climate change based on its scientific and other related notions. However, nearly all of them agree that climate change is a result of anthropogenic interference that happened in long-term period. And they specified that climate change is caused by substantially raised emission of so called 'green house gases' predominantly in industrialized part of the world. In similar, most participants of the focus group discussion and respondents of in-depth interviews defined climate change as a change of the existence climate system into negative and some said it is caused by human interferences. But only one among the respondents from focus group discussions and interviews raised 'green house gases', which scholars mention as one of the major causes of climate change.

Abebe Haile is a newsroom journalist in ERTA. After he earned B.A degree in Journalism and Communication, he has been working for about four years. Even though he doubted about the exact definition of climate change, he forwarded what he felt.

Abebe: I can't give you exact definition of climate change. But, I think, climate change is the pollution or change of inhaling air from the usual one in to negative direction. At the international level climate change results several impacts. It usually increases temperature and sea level. We can also confidently speak that climate change happened in Ethiopia. To justify this argument, we can only take the last rainy season (2009). We haven't had enough rain. Furthermore, we were affected by drought and strong heat.

While Abebe was assuring about the existence of climate change followed by his definition, Fesiha Mebrhatu, a BSC holder in Applied Physics and a working journalist in ERTA since two years back, argued against the existence of climate change by saying "we need laboratories to check whether climate change exists or not". However, after hot discussion between participants, Fesiha admitted the existence of climate change. He also gave definition to climate change standing from the symptoms that he observed. According to Fesiha, climate change is the alteration of climate system from the normal occurrence.

Fesiha: what we call climate change is the alteration of climate from the usual happening like absence of rain in the rainy seasons or the irregularities of rainfall. Generally, when there is something extraordinary on the earth we call

it climate change. I understand that abnormal rain and flood are results of climate change.

Like the previous discussants, Tigist Tsegaye, who has been in ERTA for three years after she completed her BA degree in Language and literature, also defined climate change as unusual but constant happening of something different on climate system.

Tigist: for me climate change is about happening of constant but unusual situation like drought, extremes of temperature and the like. For example, we experienced unseasonal rise of temperature in October. This is the manifestation of climate change. Because I am experiencing it, I want nobody to confirm me whether climate change is happening or not. Hopefully, everybody understands it.

Besides, Tigist tried to make a distinction between weather condition change and climate change. According to her definition, there is a change in the weather condition. But, to call it climate change, this change in weather condition must take longer period of time.

A typical response here is from Zerihun Getachew-BA degree owner in Sociology and has more than five years working experience including two years and few months as a journalist in ERTA. Unlike other respondents, Zerihun explained the term 'climate' in advance to give definition to climate change. In addition, he exemplified his definitions in the Ethiopian context.

Zerihun: before defining climate change, let me say something about climate. Climate is something that is permanently seen in some parts of the earth unlike weather, for example, summer, winter, etc. In other words, climate is the cumulative result of the daily weather condition. When we say climate change we mean that there is unpredictable change from the usual climate system. For instance, in our case, there was no rain in the last rainy season. Accordingly, our dams were empty so that they couldn't produce power. Therefore, climate change is a change over the ordinary behavior of seasons. Globally, climate change lets temperature to rise and ice to melt.

On the other hand, one respondent among the focus group discussion participants quoted industrial revolution as a cause for the current climate change. For Getachew Balcha who studied Philosophy as a first degree and has been working as environment program producer in ERTA since 2007, human beings are the major causes for climate change.

Getachew: climate change is a recent phenomenon that did not exist long years back. I think industrial revolution is the main cause to the change. In addition, anthropogenic interference on natural resources accelerates climatic change. As far as my understanding about climate change is concerned, human beings are the major cause to happen.

The definition that came from the young but experienced journalist Ashenafi Ligaba is a bit different from others. Unlike the rest discussants and interviewees, Ashenafi who has honoured diploma in Radio Journalism and BA degree in Language and Literature, defined climate change as follows: “if there is something different from the ordinary alternation of seasons, it can be called climatic change. Degradation of natural resources and escalation of green house gases in the developed nations are major causes for the change”.

Climate change, as one of the biggest science, gets broader definition by various intellectuals. Especially these days, different people give diverse definitions and reasons to the change from different angles. Likewise, Baye Gulte, who has been working in ERTA since 2006 after earning BA degree in Foreign Language and Literature, considered climate change as irregularities of seasons. He rationalized the definition by what he visited in Northern Shewa. According to Baye, farmers of Northern Shewa haven't got the expected amount of rain for the last five autumns. For Baye, who came from rural area of Ethiopia, this is amongst the indications of climate change. In addition, Baye thinks that climate change is directly connected with rapid population growth.

Hearing the responses of reporters in mind, I attempted to explore how much editors of ERTA aware about the basics of climate change. Even though I didn't get special definition from editors, I was able to notice short and simple definition in layman's language.

For the well known female veteran journalist of ERTA- Birtukan Haregewoin, climate change is a diversion from the natural process or phenomenon that was happening before some time.

Similarly, Haileamlak Kasaye who has been working as a reporter, producer and editor of environment and agricultural programs for the last seven years, defined climate change as a change of weather condition because of manmade and natural activities.

Even if all of the reactions from journalists and editors give some highlights about the meaning of climate change, good number respondents said, they have no opportunities to know the meaning and impacts of climate change. They get this “small” amount of information or knowledge from what they have read and what they hear from experts and professionals when they interview to their stories. However, as far as the researcher’s observation is concerned, both journalists and editors have been striving by themselves to advance their skill on climate change using different sources like journals, books and internet.

4.3 Idea for Ideal Climate Change Stories

There is an English proverb which says ‘a good beginning is half ending’. Someone should exert efforts to the establishment of something in order to get a good result. To have climate change stories that attract and let target audiences in favor of immediate action, journalists and editors should articulate where they have to get ideas.

To this end, the researcher attempted to explore where ERTA journalists get ideas to their climate change stories. In the process of getting views of focus group participants and interview respondents, the researcher could know that invitations of events, which are organized by different bodies, and plans of the station are the major sources of ideas to report on climate change. Sometimes reporters bring ideas from what they hear and observe in their surroundings. There are also times that journalists use their sources like news agencies to dig up ideas.

Among the participants of both focus group discussions, there is one respondent who replied typical answer for the question ‘where do you get program ideas?’ In the Ethiopian context, as obviously known, the Head of State presents annual plan of the country every year at the first joint meeting of two parliaments (House of Peoples’

Representatives and House of Federation). Most executive bodies of the government prepare their plan based on the president's speech. According to Mengistu, ERTA also use the President's opening speech to the parliaments as a source of idea to planning and produce stories at different levels.

Other respondents like Baye and Zelalem quoted planning and telephone messages as sources of program ideas. "After we gather first hand information, we plan by ourselves and present to editors to get their willingness", Baye said. "Finally, we are deployed to different parts of the country".

Zelalem who argued for Baye's idea of planning, mentioned telephone messages as an additional but important mechanisms to find ideas. We give calls to local leaders to tell us what is going around in their localities. We also received calls when there is something special," Zelalem said. "Based on these messages and our regular plan we try to produce stories on climate change".

While planning is among the ways to obtain ideas, it is not much frequent activity. Many respondents rather cited invitation letters as a major source of ideas still now. However, Ashenafi noted that recently the trend in the newsroom has been changed. As an experienced journalist in the newsroom, Ashenafi compared what was happening before three years with the current situation.

Ashenafi: before three years we got story ideas from Ethiopian News Agency. In addition, when there is an event, we used the opportunity to get ideas and produce stories. Since we did not prepare plans, we had no project news. But since 2008, we have been working based on plans that we prepared. We plan by ourselves and present to editors. If we can convince editors we usually go to different regions and report on different climatic change issues.

Even though scholars like Shanahan (2007) dislike event-driven stories, Getachew who has been producing environment stories including climate change for the last four years, pointed out invitation letters of seminars, conferences and workshops on climate change as major systems to acquire story ideas. But sometimes, Getachew said, they prepare plan by themselves.

For someone who worked several years as environment expert and journalist like Nebiyu, it is difficult to say that climate change has been reported based on researched ideas. For him, even climate change has started to grasp the attention of ERTA very recently.

Nebiyu: As I remember, Copenhagen climate summit helped as a turning point to boost news stories on climate change. Even at that time most of our stories were from foreign news sources. We have not taken the initiative to originate ideas, and gather and report from local sources.

Findings from in-depth interviews are indicators of confirmation for what focus group discussions participants responded. For my question about sources of story ideas, Haileamelak briefly answered as follows: “It is mainly from the annual plan, invitation letters and from different regions based on their context”.

4.4 Sources used in Climate Change Stories

One of the barriers that affect climate change stories is single source. (Fahn, 2007) To alleviate this problem, reporters should stretch their hands to different sources. Especially, reporters who work for broadcast media need variety of voices in order to appeal audiences and to forward the intended message easily. McLeish (1999:7) argues a great advantage of an aural medium over print lies in the sound of the human voice. The voice is capable of conveying much more than written speech or quote. It has the warmth, the compassion, the anger, the pain and the laughter of the person who speaks.

On the other hand, most people do not like to hear the long and complex sentences of officials and experts. They prefer to hear voices of their community members or people who have same life style with them. (Eyob, 2006:73)

Awdegeter is one of ERTA’S biweekly programs that entertain agricultural and environment issues including climate change. According to the fact I obtained from Haileamlak, the editor and long year producer of Awdegeter, 30 to 40 percent of Awdegeter program focuses on climate change. Like most other environment programs of the station, Audegeter also highly use voices of officials and experts. But a study conducted by Eyob Getahun (2006:74) on Awdegeter program shows

that the target audiences of this program prefer to hear voices of farmers. As far as Eyob findings are concerned, of the five attentive listeners, four of them, and all other respondents, who listen to Awdegeter irregularly, said they prefer to listen to the voices of farmers to that of journalists and professionals (other interviewees). Haileamlak admitted the problem but he argued it has shown improvements from time to time.

Haileamlak: Most reporters gather information to their stories from outside the capital, Addis Ababa, use farmers and other community members as main sources. On the other hand, stories that are done in Addis Ababa use officials from government and non government organizations as major sources. But, recently, we have started to strengthen the habit of involving views (voices) of community members who are successful in scaling up some good practices in order to show their strategy to the wider public.

I also observed some variety of sources from the content analysis that I made on sample climate change programs including Awdegeter. But I can't dare to conclude they are enrich of voices as of expected although some programs have involved voices of community members.

Lacy and Coulson (2000:14) point out that "general studies on news source use conclude that reporters limit their choice of sources and choose governmental officials over any other.

Results I got from focus group discussion participants and interviewees also indicate that most climate change stories of ERTA use officials and experts as a major source. But according to few respondents, they sometimes use or include voices of the larger community members. This is often true, respondents replied, when they go out of the capital city and when they have researched stories to work on.

Tigist: when I intend to produce a researched and planned story, I try to include variety of voices in it. But I never produce any story unless I include the voices of officials from environment protection agency, especially Addis Ababa Environment Protection Agency. I usually need to have experts view and confirmation of officials in my stories. I also incorporate scholars from Addis Ababa University. In addition, I want to have voice of eye witnesses or individuals who are involved in specific activities when I get their permission. However, this is difficult when I do an event-driven story. I rather use the words experts, officials and participants of that specific event. Furthermore, sometimes I face challenges when I try to have voices of victims.

For example, recently I was reporting on the problem of industry wastage. At that time, I wanted to have people who are affected by the wastage. Actually there were many who told me about the problem off mike, but they were not allowed me to record. Most of the time, they fear to talk, particularly about negative aspects of cases.

One of the best documented findings in news research is that journalists rely on governmental sources. Because other sources like community representatives, victims, etc are not readily or easily available to news sources since they are not living in the capital or center of a country where most media houses are located (Miller and Riechert, 2000: 51).

That is why Getachew more often use NGOs as a source. Besides, he includes views of National and Addis Ababa Environment Protection Agency experts and officials. He also uses books and internet as a reference since he can easily access these materials than going out of the capital. However, when he occasionally gets chances to visit rural areas of the country, Getachew stated, he usually comes back with voices of farmers, Development Agents (DAs). According to his response, Getachew prefer to repeatedly ask farmers about the impact of climate change in their daily lives and how they apply coping mechanisms to adapt and mitigate the impacts.

Too often, journalists only report what they hear from government officials speaking at conferences. But remember to include the voices of other stakeholders, whether local villagers, nongovernmental organizations or top business people. They all have insights to offer. (Fahn, July 2007)

What journalists, who report on climate change and environment at large, told to the researcher and outcomes that I obtained from focus group discussions and content analysis revealed that ERTA journalists highly depend not only on government sources but also on local and foreign news sources. But the reason mentioned to use these sources varied from reporter to reporter. Some stated lack of attention as an obstacle and others said it is because of inadequate resources and finance that the station (ERTA) has.

Abebe: since lots of our stories are event-driven, I don't have courage to conclude that incorporating voices of different parties is too often. We mostly wait for stories from news agencies. We have very few original stories. Even these stories are not good at involving voices of affected people.

To journalists like Zerihun, using variety of voices and other similar activities are unswervingly related to capacity of reporters. Thus, he strongly argue that to enable journalists to produce stories that incorporate the views of different individuals, professionals and scientists, they must be empowered. In addition, he said "unless editors should be concerned about climate change issues, it is not sufficient to attend only meetings".

While Zerihun mentioned the aforementioned barriers, Fesiha tried to make balances by taking account of voices of experts and affected people when he deals about climate change.

Generally, the responses from focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and qualitative content analysis showed that a large amount of ERTA climate change stories use officials and experts as a major source since most stories are based on events. While some journalists use the voices of farmers and other community members when they go to rural areas, very few stories include variety of sources at a time. On the other hand, according to the findings, there are many occasions that journalists make use of single source.

4.5 Neither Plain Field nor Plain Language for Climate Change Stories

4.5.1 Priority

Whereas respondents of focus group discussions were divided in to two groups regarding with the clarity and simplicity of climate change stories, all of them agreed that the station (ERTA) doesn't give priority and much attention to climate change stories and environment at large. Respondents of in-depth interviews on their behalf told to the researcher that there are improvements regarding with attention to climate change stories. As deputy editor-in-chief in the newsroom, Birtkuan stated that

recently, especially ahead and after COP15, there is an interest to give better attention to climate change and related stories. Therefore, according to Birtukan, there are stories that focus on climate change and environment protection at large.

Birtukan: I edit several news stories which are related to climate change and environment protection. The government has also given attention to the issue especially for water and soil conservation because of COP15. So I can say that there are environment news stories to edit although they are not too many.

Reporters that attended the focus group discussions on behalf of news department stated that climate change does not get as priorities as other programs are given. On the contrary, some respondents who came from Akababiyachin (TV environment program) argued against the idea. They said recently, climate change has been getting better attention by ERTA. But even these discussants raised the inappropriateness of airtime given to environment programs.

According to the respondents who argued for the inattention of climate change issues, the time when climate change stories are transmitted and the amount of airtime which is given to these programs are not as of expected. They further argued that editors of ERTA and high level management bodies do not give serious attention to the issue unlike the government.

“In one side, great emphasis is given for development activities in Ethiopia”, Zerihun said. “On the other hand, in our media (ERTA), environment issues including climate change are not the center of attention”.

Furthermore, Zerihun do not believe that editors in the newsroom are very much concerned about climate change issues.

Zerihun: in the newsroom there is nobody who obliges you to work on climate change or environment as a whole. For example, so far I haven't done any local story on climate change. I rather translate and present international climate change stories from different foreign news agencies (sources) like BBC and Reuters. These are also few in numbers. It is undeniable fact that before and after the Copenhagen climate summit, great attention was given to coverage of climate change issues. However, gradually it started to decline.

But Zerihun's idea of inattention by editors is not acceptable for Birtukan Haregewoin who says "I would be very happy if all stories were about environment". According to Birtukan, there is an improvement in coverage and quality of climate change stories unlike previous periods.

Birtukan: These days, the station usually does not wait rainy seasons to report about tree planting. Even when we deploy journalists to different regions of the country, environment (climate change) is among our priorities. For instance, recently we did continuous stories on Meret project, WFP backed project that focus on rehabilitation of degraded lands through different environment activities.

Unless there is big national agenda like election, Birtukan said the station gives as equal attention to environment stories as other news stories. Even sometimes it gives priority to environment protection news stories when there are good practices in some areas of the country as Birtukan argued.

Despite the above fact, Abebe has peculiar argument. For him, it is not just a matter of raising an issue. It should consider several things so that to achieve the desired objectives.

Abebe: If it is only talking about climate change, yes, we have been talking for several times. But for me, it must go beyond that in order to bring change on climate change reporting. Most of our news stories are based on events and meetings. It only gives information about the rough definition of climate change. While we are covering the international activities on adapting and mitigating climate change, we have done nothing about ourselves. As a developmental journalist, we have to show the good practices of some places so that others can scale up in their villages. Thus, I think we have to do deep and participatory climate change reports to say climate change is given due attention

When Ethiopian celebrated their new millennium two years back, there were different activities enacted nationally and locally. Tree planting was one of the major activities of that time. Particularly, three or four months ahead to the new millennium, everybody was planting trees here and there. However, as far as the researcher's observation is concerned, these days, very few people are taking care of the trees. In the same way, ERTA was also giving high coverage to these mass activities. But after sometime, the station diminished its coverage about the issue.

The comment forwarded from Zelalem supported what I stated before. According to this respondent, ahead and immediate after Ethiopian millennium celebration climate

change issues, especially tree planting was a big agenda but gradually it started losing the attention.

As a journalist who stayed for six years in ERTA's newsroom, Ashenafi doesn't remember a single period when environment was big and hot agenda to the station. "For example, ahead of the election our agenda was education. We all were saying education, education, education. But I never remember the time when we were saying environment, environment, environment", He said. However, Ashenafi keeps in mind that sometimes he and his colleagues report on good practices on agriculture although they haven't been given any direction to strictly focus on environment.

On the other hand, few respondents said that recently, climate change stories have got better attention. For Getachew, climate change has got better attention since 2008.

Getachew: these days we do a number of stories that focus on climate change and related issues. Especially for the last two years, it has been getting better attention. Thus we have been producing environmental programs (stories) with special attention to climate change. Personally, I have been reporting on environment for the last three years. And I usually focus on climate change mainly since 2008 as the world began to give more attention to climate change.

Moreover, Getachew indicated that, relative to other ERTA program outlets, Akababiachin (environment program) has been started recently. Accordingly, he believes that his department (socio-economic department) is trying to address climate change issue with special attention to its impact and efforts to adapt and mitigate the change.

However, Getachew acknowledged that International scenario of climate change takes the lion share among the reports has done so far. For example, he reported on the global impacts of climate change and the measures taken globally to adapt and mitigate climate change. In addition, he produced several stories before and after COP15. He said "At that time there were many issues to deal and our media also gave the attention to climate change and Copenhagen climate summit hence Ethiopia was chosen to represent Africa through PM Meles Zenawi".

Tigist who is the only female among participants of the focus group discussions supported Getachew's idea. However, she didn't dare to say that many of the stories are directly focus on climate change. She explained her argument as follows:

Tigist: We are dealing numerous issues which are indirectly related to climate change. For instance, when we talk about deforestation, obviously, it is known that we are talking about climate change since it is among the causes of climate change. Even though they are few in number, we are also producing issues which are exactly hub on climate change. To mention some, I produced a story about the international scenario of climate change activities ahead of COP15. Even after the summit I was reporting on the issue with special focus on animals and plant species.

While Tigist said climate change has started to take the floor, she strongly argued against the airtime and duration that is arranged by ERTA to environment programs counting climate change issues.

As a regular producer of Akababiachin program, Tigist felt that the scheduled airtime by the station has its own impact to address the issue to larger audience. As far as the fact that I got from Tigist is concerned, at the beginning, especially Akababiachin program was broadcasted in the evenings. But after some time it is transferred to mornings. Now, as to the researcher's knowledge, it is transmitted in mornings around 7p.m. Tigist noted "this is difficult to address larger audiences. Even from our staff journalists, there are many who don't know the existence of Akababiachin program". Based on this reality, Tigist concluded, ERTA does not give priority to climate change issues and environment at large.

Fesiha also remarked similar comment on the airtime. Since it is broadcasted in mornings, Fesiha don't think many audiences could watch it.

Noting similar challenges, Baye and Mengistu took transmission time and lifespan of environment programs as an indicator to priority. For Baye, mid-day when Sinehzbna akababy (radio environment program) put on air is not suitable for either office workers or farmers. He believes that it would have been in evenings if it had got attention. Mengistu also does not think climate change stories are televised or broadcasted at primetimes like evenings.

Haileamlak, one of my interviewees from social and economy department, where most climate change stories are produced, agree the fact that climate change has been given better attention since five or six years back. But he said there are still more questions of priorities. He, for example, raised transmission time of Akababiachin and Sinehizbna akababiy. According to the respondent, these two programs are being transmitted in mornings and mid days respectively.

Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency, which has recently started 24 hours service, considers evenings as prime airtimes. To check this fact, it is enough to see prices of advertisements requested by the station (ERTA).

According to Daniel (2008: 249-251), prices of advertisements at evenings are more expensive than other airtimes. If someone wants to transmit advertisements from 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the evenings, he or she entitled to pay around 44 to 70 ETB to TV and 25 to 27 ETB for radio per second respectively. But if someone chooses to broadcast at late evenings or daytimes, he or she pays cheaper than of the aforementioned amount.

Similarly, programs which have more attention are obviously put on air in evenings and sometimes they are transmitted for a second time at daytimes. The fact that I got from the head of ERTA General Director's office, Daniel Bekele, usually current affair programs receive priorities of the station. I could also confirm this information from what I observed from ERTA's evening Amharic transmission.

For Haileamlak as a senior editor of environment programs, the airtime that is given to environment programs is not very appropriate to address target audiences. For instance, Sinehizbna akababy (Population and Environment) is transmitted on every Thursday at 12:25 a.m. (after mid day news) on the national service of Radio Ethiopia. Akababiachin program of ETV also transmitted in mornings of Tuesday. Haileamlak does not believe target audiences are comfortable with these transmission periods.

Haileamlak: Referring Sinehzbina akababy, even though it is followed by news, I don't believe that it is very appropriate time to the majority. The same is true for Akbabiachin of ETV. Thus, the time has to be changed in to evenings so that most people can hear and watch the stories. We have asked the concerned management body to do so and we are waiting the response. Hopefully, it will facilitate conditions to bring in to the prime time (evenings).

Likewise, in his research on Awdegeter, Eyob (2006:65-70) commented on transmission time of both environment and agriculture-focused programs standing from the results of his study. Based on his findings, Eyob said that the airtime where Awdegeter is transmitted is not appropriate for farmers who are the main target audiences of the program. Since they go out to field work early in the morning, most farmers can hardly follow Awdegeter, which is aired mornings of every Monday and Saturday. However, there are few audiences who listen to the program in the morning paying sacrifices.

In addition, from the twenty seven respondents that Eyob (2006:63) asked about environment programs of Radio Ethiopia nobody mentioned the program Population and Environment, which is transmitted starting from 12:25 on Thursdays.

In the current situation, Population and Environment (Sine-hzbna akababiy) are merged as a single program and only 20 minutes are given to these two biggest issues of the day. Therefore, Haileamlak commented, population and environment should be separated and each of them has to get enough and primary air time in order to address the issue as of estimated.

Currently, Environment or climate change is merged with other several issues like industry, economy, and development under a single department. But as to Zelalem, environment has to be considered as a department by itself since it is very sensitive and big issue.

In fact the latest Ethiopian constitution (1995) article 44 says all persons have the right to a clean and healthy environment, ERTA's editorial policy does state nothing about the subject. It simply says "State media shall give coverage to the national social development strategies and policies."(ERTA, May 2005)

In general terms, almost all of the respondents raised transmission time as an indicator of giving priority to the issue. And all of them but Birtukan commented on the airtime to be rearranged.

Head of ERTA Director Office, Daniel Bekele acknowledged that more priority is given to current affair programs than climate change stories since there is no adequate airtime (channel) to arrange to all equally. Even the station cannot deliver enough airtime to programs that are already designed. However, he said that in the near future ERTA will have eight to ten additional channels. At that time, all programs including climate change stories will get enough airtime at the primetimes (evenings). In addition, not later than 2015, the station will be completely detached from analog and transferred into digital system.

4.5.2 Clarity, Proximity and Presentation

4.5.2.1 Clarity

Most world citizens will not learn about climate change research directly from the cautious lexicon in scientific journals, however, but rather from the mass media. Increasingly it is the media's responsibility to translate complex, scientific concepts to the 'lay audience'. (Wilson, 2000:201)

Particularly, in the case of broadcast media, audiences have no second chance to get the message that once put on air (Boyd, 2001:61). Therefore, journalists who work in TV and radio should prepare their stories in simple and clear language.

Scholars like Shanahan, Stocking and Leonard believe that climate change stories are one of the most complicated stories of our time. (2007, 1999) Thus, these stories need clear and simple language in order to address the majority. Electronic media by its nature need short, simple and clear languages because audiences could not get chances to hear or watch again. If it is once transmitted, there is no way to get back. Besides, as scholars also agree, complicated issues like climate change should be

reported in language that majority, especially people who are affected by the problem, can understand easily and take immediate action.

R.K. Pachauri, Chairman of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) once said that change will come about only if people understand the scientific realities of why we need to fight climate change. If you don't get that message clearly, then obviously you are not going to see any change whatsoever. (UNESCO, 2009)

However, when we refer to ERTA climate change stories, it is impossible to conclude they are simple, clear and interesting to audiences as my observation and responses of participants indicated.

Results from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews show that climate change stories that are transmitted in ERTA face several challenges of language like mix-use of English words, jargons and cliché words. Officials and experts who dominate ERTA's climate change stories are also among the barriers to have clear and understandable program outlets.

According to Boyd (2001:61), the enemy of good writing is the official, the bureaucrat and the so-called expert who uses words as a barrier to understanding instead of as a means of communication. Boyd stresses the broadcast story has to be crystal clear the first time of hearing. There cannot be effective communication when there are less understandable words here and there in any program.

As respondents of focus group discussion raised and editors of in-depth interview confirmed, the words of officials and experts are sometimes not easy to understand since most words are very technical and jargons. Besides, these experts usually express their ideas in a mixed language, which is difficult for target audiences of ERTA environment programs.

While climate change stories of ERTA suffer from the aforementioned limitations from sources, journalists related the problem to their capacities too. They said that to have stories of good quality, journalists need to be aware of the issue and its

reporting mechanism. But according to the respondents, there is no body that help them to do so.

Abebe: if you don't have a know how to report on climate change, there is no way to make it clear, understandable and attractive. In our case, most of us do not know how to tell climate change stories. Besides, we select similar issues repeatedly to deal with. And even sometimes we do not confront to "some serious issues" because these issues may affect other sectors like economy. Thus, most of our stories are redundant and boring.

Likewise, Nebiyu pointed out that the clarity of the stories depends on the capacity of reporters and sometimes on the sources. When he further explained he said "most of us don't have enough background on the issue. Besides, we usually use foreign news sources. Sometimes we may get detailed and simple information from these sources but not always".

Like Nebiyu, Getachew also mentioned foreign sources as barriers to have stories of good language. Most stories which are produced by Getachew lack to consider what is going on locally. Moreover, according to his clarification to focus group participants and to the researcher, the stories lack to explore the impact and coping mechanisms standing from individuals' experience. So he doesn't think they are clear enough to local audiences.

As most African journalists (Shanahan, 2007), Getachew is not much skilled in reporting and presenting climate change issues.

Getachew: I did know nothing when I was appointed first to produce 'Akababiachin' program, the only environment program on ETV. But through time I have been trying at least to acquire the basics of environment science and its way of reporting through reading different books on the issue. This enabled me to have stories that give some awareness on climate change. However, still I lack many things to produce and present clear and provocative climate change stories. .

If journalists don't report on ways to mitigate and adapt to climate change, the public is likely to throw up its hands and lose interest. (Fahn, 2007) Thus, ERTA as a national electronic media which reaches millions of people is expected to air stories

in clear and simple language. Regardless of this expectation, most climate change stories require clearer and simpler language as the result of this study disclosed.

Tigist's response also shows that most climate change stories are full of technical words or jargons even journalists can't understand.

Tigist: Even though we sometimes try to explain in other words, it is difficult to get parallel translation to those words. While we know audiences could not understand, we simply forward as it is. Even sometimes environment experts themselves face challenges to clarify or find exact Amharic translation to the words. All these show that our climate change stories lack clarity and simplicity.

Whereas Zelalem does not consider language as a big problem, for Mengistu who have been facing challenges for several times when he was producing climate change related stories, jargons and some coined Amharic words are very tough even to explain in other words. Even though his educational background is very near to climate change, sometimes, Mengistu could hardly find parallel definitions to some technical words.

Mengistu: I usually could not find appropriate meanings when I try to translate technical words or jargons into equivalent Amharic words. So I simply forward the words to audiences without any change. I know this is very hard to illiterate people or farmers who take around 85 percent of Ethiopian population. Thus, I admit that our stories are suffered from limitations of clarity and simplicity.

According to the results of this study, even coined Amharic words are not easy to audiences to understand. For instance, coined words like 'Bizhahiwot' which means Biodiversity, 'Sinemihidar' which refers Ecosystem are not familiar to the majority but environment experts. Likewise, Mengistu also mentioned 'Yemeret Kilet' which means degradation of land among words they usually use in their stories.

Senior editor of Socio-economic Department and long year producer of environment and agriculture programs, Haileamlak, also observed terminologies, scientific words and complex sentences in climate change stories. According to Haileamlak, especially stories which are produced based on seminars or workshops face

language problems. So sometimes target audiences of the program can hardly understand the message. And since these stories are full of terminologies, they let audiences to get bored. However, most stories that obtained from field reporting are not suffered from such problems.

4.5.2.2 Proximity

Other respondents like Zerihun, expressed proximity as a backbone to produce climate change stories which are interest of the mass. Like the previous respondents, Zerihun argued that ERTA climate change stories lack to contextualize or localize the issue. The outcomes from Zerihun further indicate that most news stories came from foreign news sources like BBC and Reuters to translate into local languages.

Obviously, these stories usually do not focus on Ethiopia. They rather talk about ice melt in Antarctica or flood in Asia. According to Zerihun, this doesn't give sense to target audiences. Thus, audiences may not consider themselves as a part of the problem and they are not interested in watching or listening to these stories.

In addition for Zerihun who often translate English news stories into Amharic, the words that he gets from foreign sources are not simple and familiar to local audiences, especially to farmers. When he generalized his argument, Zerihun noted "in the newsroom we don't have planned and local stories on climate change. And the language that we deploy to produce climate change stories is not simple and familiar to audiences of ERTA".

The results from Tigist also showed that most climate change stories do not focus on issues which are very close to audiences. Thus, as Fahn (2007) said the public is likely to throw up its hands and lose interest. On the contrary, the stories may lead the audiences to think climate change as a problem of other countries. They may not see as their own matter.

Too often, journalists only report what they hear from government officials speaking at conferences. However, Haileamlak supported, these event-driven stories are not lively or

near to the daily activities of the society. On the contrary, they focus on policies and experts views. So they can hardly attract target audiences who want to hear about issues which are very close to their daily lives. Besides, since there is shortage of resources and manpower, journalists are usually running against time in order to meet the deadlines. According to Haileamlak, they must put on air at least two environment related stories every week. Thus, habitually reporters do not think about the quality. They simply want to deliver on time what they have on hands.

Haileamlak also replied the following answer to the question “Do you think ERTA stories are interest of audiences?” “Frankly speaking, I am not confident to say majority of our climate change stories are interest of audiences although there are some stories that are produced based on research and presented in clear, simple and interesting way”.

Unlike other respondents, Birtukan supposed that climate change and other environment protection stories of ERTA started to grasp wider attention.

Birtukan: Now everything has been changed. Environment protection is quite considered as a group work. In other words, most people are involved in it either directly or indirectly. Thus, I guess, climate change stories that I usually edit grasp attention of audiences. I am also very interested in editing such stories. When you see the stories, they are directly connected with lives of human beings. So, I think, people like to hear these stories, especially the way how people rehabilitate the degraded areas and cover with green plants.

4.5.2.3 Presentation

Obviously, the attractiveness of any program whether it focuses on climate change or not lies on its presentation. Unless the issue presented in the way that appeal audiences, it is difficult to address the desired message easily.

Ashenafi who suggested appropriate angle to good climate change stories responded that most ERTA stories lack apposite angles. And he argued that in order to make environment stories easy and understandable, journalists need to explain in connected with different perspectives.

Fahn (2007) advised journalists and editors to use different angles in order to make the story interesting. Climate change is also a political, business, science, human rights, energy and technology story. Look into all these different angles (and more), and pitch them to different editors. Editors and producers in turn could assign climate change stories to journalists throughout their news organisations, whatever their areas of expertise.

Besides, Ashenafi believes that to deploy clear and simple language in the stories, journalists should know about the details of climate change. For him, one should report continuously on follow up issues to produce stories in the way audiences can understand without difficulty.

Similarly, both representatives from ERTA news and program departments agree that the attractiveness of climate change stories vary from journalist to journalist. And according to these respondents, sometimes resource and time affect the beauty of the stories.

Birtukan: There is a difference among journalists in writing stories. Some write in clear, simple and in the way that attract audiences. For example, there is a journalist in our newsroom who gives life for climate change stories. The way he narrates and explains is very interesting. On the other hand, there are reporters who do not know how they have to write and present climate change stories. These reporters lack appropriate pictures and up sounds to write good scripts and to produce attractive news stories.

The results that I obtained from focus group discussions and content analysis also show that the presentation of climate change stories differ from reporter to reporter even though most of the stories lack beauty. Lack of resource, time and awareness take the lion share among the factors that the researcher observed as barriers to interesting stories. However, the researcher also understood that there are some stories that are produced based on plan and research, and in the way audiences can understand easily and ready to take action against climate change.

Despite the facts that the aforementioned challenges take their share in minimizing the quality of stories, environment programs current format has also its own impact. As far as the results of this study are concerned, nearly all of ERTA environment

programs are presented in mini-documentary format except Awdegeter, which has magazine format. Mini-documentary, my result revealed, is boring and outdated. Thus, Haileamlak suggested magazine format, which enables to entertain different and short stories in a single package.

In addition, Baye one of the participants of focus group discussion do not think that the existence format of most environment programs appeal target audiences. If it were magazine format it would give the chance to audiences to hear variety of voices. Accordingly, he needs to change on the formats into a magazine format that incorporates short and simple but different stories in a single package.

Eyob (2006:69) also commented on Sinehzbna akababy (Population and Environment) to be reformatted. According to Eyob, Population and Environment program does not have magazine format like that of Awdegeter. There is mostly one interviewee talking for fifteen minutes about an issue. Thus, the program is less attractive even to its target audiences.

While Haileamlak and other respondents quoted specialization as a solution to have attractive climate change stories, the station (ERTA) has not given attention to specialization. In addition, instead of giving priority to journalists who are interested in environment reporting and closer to the subject, the station assigned journalists randomly.

The researcher also observed that many journalists are assigned randomly regardless of their educational background and interest on the subject. For example, only two of the focus group participants have environment related educational background. All the rest have very different educational background from environment like sociology, philosophy and language.

On the other hand, according to the General Director's Office Head - Daniel Bekele, at this time ERTA does not give much attention to specialization since there are too many journalists that need to know about basic journalism. For Daniel most journalists who have earned degrees and diplomas do not have adequate knowledge about the profession and its requirements. Accordingly, Daniel blamed the thoughts

of journalism schools of Ethiopia. To Daniel, these schools do not equipped students in the way the market needs. Thus even after they employed, there are many so called journalists who need further trainings. He said that currently ERTA is doing on that. But in the future the station will be thinking of specialization because of several reasons.

Format of Akababiachin (Environment) sample program (TV)

Program Intro

Jingle (Instrument) and title of the program written in words on the screen

Narration about the past and present appearance of earth

Instrument

Narration about causes of climate change

Up sound of an environment official

Narration

Instrument

Stand up of the reporter

Up sound of the same environment official

Narration

Up sound from the same environment official

Narration

Instrument

□

Narration

□

Exit Jingle

Source: Qualitative content analysis of the researcher

Format of Awdegeter Sample programs (Radio)

Mondays

Program Intro (theme)

The presenter gives general introduction about the program items of the package.

□

Jingle (piece of instrumental music)

□

Short briefing by about program item one, which sometimes considered as main part of the package

□

Program Item one

□

Instrumental

□

The presenter introduces the next program (oral literature) with some briefing.

□

Instrument, which is only for the second item)

□

Program Item two (Oral literature)

□

Instrument

□

The presenter announces the conclusion

□

Exit Jingle

Saturdays

Program Intro (opening Jingle)

The presenter gives general introduction about the three items of the package

Instrument

The presenter gives introduction about program item one

Instrument

Program item one

Instrument

The presenter introduces the second item with some facts

Instrument

Program item two (Agriculture news)

Instrument

The presenter connects the third item

Program item three (listeners' letter)

Instrument

The presenter announces the conclusion of the package

Exit Jingle

4.6 Training

As I mentioned in the previous sub-topic, most journalists who report on climate change have different educational background from environment. Thus, to feel this knowledge gap, journalists must get continuous on job trainings. However, the result of this study shows that nearly all journalists who report on climate change never get trainings on climate change reporting and environment at large. And only two among participants of focus group discussions attended one to two days workshops on environment and climate change reporting. Even these respondents did not confident to conclude that the trainings are satisfactory. Besides, none of my interviewees get formal trainings regarding with climate change reporting and editing.

Actually, this is observable in most journalists who work in developing countries. According to Shanahan (2009:146), from 111 journalists from 35 developing nations including Ethiopia only 35 had received any formal training about climate change, usually in the form of short workshops.

Unlike his colleagues, Abebe who needs trainings badly to enhance his profession received week long training on environment reporting including climate change.

Abebe: most of the time we participate on workshops and seminars not on trainings. But I prefer trainings which show the way how I use the information from experts. Most of the time, Ethiopian Environment Journalists Association (EEJA) arranges trainings on environment reporting to journalists. As a member of EEJA, I have also once obtained training on climate change reporting. Except this, I haven't got the chance to attend any other training on climate change and environment reporting.

Since his recruitment in ERTA, Getachew has never got any training on climate change or environment reporting but once he attended a workshop on biodiversity. Likewise, Tigist hasn't obtained any training about the subject. She said "I am told today to attend half day training but I have no any information about the details of the training". In fact the researcher had information about this training. It was about basics of climate change and its latest updates organized by Forum for Environment (FfE) and Ethiopian Environment Journalists' Association (EEJA).

Even though they have been working in ERTA for more than two and five years respectively, Fesiha and Nebiyu also have not attended a single training about climate change or environment reporting.

Surprisingly, neither Birtukan nor Haileamlak who are responsible to edit news and programs respectively has attained trainings about the subject matter even though Birtukan replied that she have had opportunities to know about environment protection.

Relatively to other journalists, Zelalem and Mengistu have got better chances to attend workshops. Whereas he has not gained further opportunities, Zelalem once attended a one and half day workshop arranged by MELCA Mahiber, an association working for the revival and enhancement of traditional ecological knowledge that enhance a sustainable relationship with nature and the protection of associated community rights in Ethiopia through advocacy, research and development. (Green Forum, March 2007:146)

In the same way, Mengistu could attend two days workshop organized by Forum for Environment (FfE), a platform for environmental communication and advocacy striving to bring about environmentally literate, conscious and accountable citizen in Ethiopia. (Green Forum, March 2007:146)

When she replied about attempts done by ERTA, Tigist expressed her dissatisfaction in nodding her head. "As far as my knowledge is concerned our organization, is not making efforts to facilitate trainings on climate change or environment reporting".

Head of ERTA General Director Office, Daniel Bekele said that the organization is giving priority to basic journalism trainings. According to Daniel, trainings on specialization like environment are not current priority of the organization because there are many journalists who know nothing or few about the basics of journalism. However, Daniel noted that the time for specialization trainings would come soon. Because as Daniel said, the training center of ERTA is reviewing areas which need priority to arrange trainings. Environment might be among the priorities.

4.7 ERTA Systems to Handle Feedbacks about Climate Change Stories

Mail, telephone, and recently electronic mail are major means of ERTA to get feedbacks from audiences. As far as the researcher's observation is concerned, most of the time journalists announce telephone and E-mail addresses. They sometimes announce postal address, especially to radio listeners.

However, the outcomes of this study revealed that ERTA does not have well organized system to handle feedbacks that are obtained from audiences via the abovementioned addresses.

According to Haileamlak who often produce and edit environment stories, when they produce researched and effortful climate change stories, their phones get busy. He said "A numbers of audiences give us a call from different corners of the country". Besides, when reporters go to different regions, they sometimes come back with some feedbacks. Regardless of this fact, the researcher understood that feedback management system which ERTA deployed to environment programs is not that much good. For the question "do you have special airtime to transmit feedbacks back to the audience?" Haileamlak responded "So far we have not arranged air time to collect and present back suggestions or feedbacks to audiences except Awdegeter. Even we do not handle feedbacks that we get from reporters and via phones properly".

As I mentioned in the result of content analysis and as indicated in the format of Awdegeter Saturdays program, there is airtime to present letters that are sent to Awdegeter producers. Most of the letters came from all corners of the country but the four major regions (Oromia, Amhara, SSNPRS and Tigray) take big share.

On the other hand, for the programs those are entirely focused on environment – Akababiachin (Environment) and Sinehzbna akababy (Population and Environment) no airtime has been allocated to entertain feedbacks.

Chapter Five

5. Conclusion

This study attempted to explore how the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) reports climate change issues. The researcher also made an effort to identify where journalists get ideas, what kind of language they use, how much the subject gets priority and how the station handles feedbacks from audiences by using qualitative research design. Under qualitative research design, the researcher deployed focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, observation as well as qualitative content analysis, which helped the researcher to have some know how about climate change reports of ERTA. Furthermore, secondary data sources like books, journals, magazines and credible environment websites were in use so that to supplement the primary data and incorporate views of different scholars.

Agenda setting theory and framing theory were incorporated and thoroughly discussed the arguments stated by different scholars in order to conceptualize the issue. Besides, literature reviews which give an idea about the interrelation between climate change and media were examined from several points of view.

At the end of the study, it is likely to generalize that invitation letters and events like workshops, seminars and conferences are used as main gates to come across story ideas. But as far as the findings of the study are concerned, sometimes journalists prepare proposals in order to go out of the capital, Addis Ababa, and talk to people who have direct attachment with climate change and its impacts in order to come back with local stories which are enrich of community members' views.

According to findings of the study, despite the fact that improvements are being made towards the quantity and quality of climate change stories, most of ERTA climate change stories lack clarity, proximity and attractiveness. Many of the respondents agreed that they have been producing countless stories full of jargons, English-mix and newly coined Amharic words like Yeozone Meshenkor, Sinemihidar,

Yemeret kilet, Bizhahiwot, etc. Besides, mostly they raise climate change issues which are very far to their target audiences like polar ice melt, flood in Asia, etc.

Journalists who report and produce climate change stories at different frequencies as well as editors do not have much knowledge about the details of climate change as well as its causes and impacts. For example, from the participants of the study, only one journalist 'raised green house gases' which scholars mentioned as a major cause for the escalating rate of climate change. Besides, journalists are not confident enough to define the term climate change since they have not acquired clear definition about the issue.

The study further revealed that even if there are stories which include voices of farmers, pastoralists and other community members, a large amount of ERTA journalists use higher officials and environmental experts in their stories frequently. Moreover, they highly rely on government officials instead of people at the grassroots level. This makes the stories an incomprehensible and less attractive as the findings of the study demonstrated.

Additionally, unlike its attention worldwide, climate change is not among the major priorities of ERTA. Except Awdegeter, all environment-focused programs are transmitted in mornings and daytimes, which are not considered as primetimes of the station. As far as the responses of the research participants and researcher's observation are concerned, ERTA usually gives priority to current affair programs which are often focus on politics, development and good governance.

According to the interviewed journalists and editors, time and resource constraints affected the quality and framing of climate change issues. The results of the study also identified that the way climate change stories are being presented minimized their attractiveness and understandability. As far as the researcher's observation and content analysis as well as the responses of interviewed journalists and editors are concerned, ERTA's environment programs are presented in mini-documentary format except Awdegeter, which has magazine arrangement.

While they have attended one to two days workshops and conferences, nearly all journalists and editors who produce climate change stories at various frequencies have not got formal trainings about the subject. The station (ERTA) also admitted that training on specialization like environment is not the current concern since there are many journalists who do not have adequate knowledge about basic journalism. Additionally, the researcher understood that journalists are appointed randomly regardless of their educational background and interest. For instance, all participants of the study but two have different background from climate change and environment in general.

As the outcomes of this study disclosed, mail, telephone, and recently electronic mail are major means of ERTA to get feedbacks. As far as the researcher's observation is concerned, most of the time journalists announce telephone and E-mail addresses. But they sometimes announce postal address, especially to radio listeners. However, the station has not arranged air time to collect and present back suggestions or feedbacks to audiences except Awdegeter. Thus, it is plausible from the outcomes of this study that ERTA does not have well organized system to handle feedbacks which are obtained from audiences via the abovementioned addresses.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Guide for In-Depth Interview with Editors

Dear Editor,

My name is Degsew Amanu. I am working for Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. Currently, I am attending postgraduate program in Journalism and Communication at Addis Ababa University School of Journalism. For the partial fulfilment of the aforementioned program, I am conducting a research under the title of “Climate Change Reporting in the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency: An Exploratory study”. To achieve the objectives of the study, I intend to use interview method as one of data collecting mechanism. Thus, I very much need your support to attain good findings. Please, take few minutes from your precious time and kindly answer the following questions.

I am very grateful for your cooperation in advance.

I. PART ONE

1. Name _____
2. Position _____
3. Educational background _____

II. PART TWO

1. How do you define climate change?
2. How often you edit climate related stories?
3. What are your basic criteria when you edit climate change stories?
4. How you observe the stories? Are they appeal your attention?

5. Do you think the stories are in clear language so that the majority can easily understand?
6. What are the limitations that you observe from the stories?
7. Can you tell me the reason why the stories suffer from such limitations?
8. What is your suggestion to make climate change stories attractive and clear?
9. Have you ever got trainings on environment or climate change reporting?
10. Do you believe that your organization, ERTA, gives priority to climate change news and stories?
11. How do you get feedback about the programs you produce from the audience?
12. What kind of comments do you mostly get?

Appendix B

Guideline Questions for Focus Group Discussion

Dear Journalists,

My name is Degsew Amanu. I am a working journalist for Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency. Currently, I am studying for an MA Degree in Journalism and Communication. For a partial fulfilment of the MA degree, I am conducting a research under the title of “Climate Change Reporting in the Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency: An Exploratory Study”. Focus group discussion is one of the methods that I have planned to employ in the study in order to achieve its objectives. I, therefore, would like to request your cooperation to respond to and discuss the following questions. Since your hot discussion on the issue helps me to have good findings, please take few minutes and share your ideas and experiences each other. I will also play my role as a moderator by raising questions.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in advance.

I. PART ONE

1. Name _____
2. Position _____
3. Educational background _____

II. PART TWO

1. For how long have you been involved in the production of environment related news and/or programs?
2. How do you get program ideas?
3. How do you construct your reports on climate change? Why?

4. To which effect, (long- term or short term) of climate change, do you focus more? Why?
5. Are the issues nationwide? Or do you focus on specific areas of the country?
6. Who are the dominant sources for your reports about climate change?
7. Are victims of climate change used as sources in your stories?
8. Do you edit scripts/stories you take from other sources (newspapers, magazines, websites...) so that they can appeal to your audience?
9. Do you edit interviews you have with experts that use English words and terms?
10. Do you make efforts to have up sounds of climate change victims?
11. How do you balance their voice with that of professionals?
12. In which part of the country do you have more listeners and viewers?
13. If you are one who is not trained in the fields of environment/ climate change or related areas, what challenges are you facing in doing programs on climate change issues?
16. Have you ever received media related trainings? And if you are trained in particular on environmental (climate change) reporting, please tell me about it.