

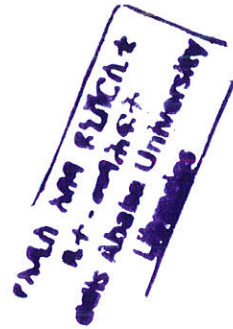
Running head: INTERNATIONAL KINSHIP CARE ...

Exploring International Kinship Care Arrangement: The case of Ethiopian Children
applying for Australian Orphan relative Visa

A research paper Submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Social Work in
Partial fulfillment of the requirement of Masters of Social Work

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Asnakech Tesfaye, entitled: Exploring International Kinship Care Arrangement: The case of Ethiopian Children applying for Australian Orphan relative Visa submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Social Work in partial fulfillment for the requirements of Master of Social Work complied with the regulations of the Addis Ababa University and meet the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Abstract

This study explored international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia, focusing on Ethiopian children who apply for an Australian Orphan Relative Visa. A qualitative exploratory research method with a cross-sectional case study strategy was used. The main research participants were Ethiopian children who were applying for orphan relative visas at the time of data collection. Additionally, key informants from MoWA and Federal First Instance Court participated in the study. With the help of a semi structured interview guide, in-depth interviews conducted on reasons that lead children to apply for an Australian orphan relative visa, expectations from such placements, availability of pre placement services and legal bases for such care arrangements. Additionally, data also was derived from observations, document reviews and secondary sources. The data collected from different sources were analyzed using thematic and cross case analysis methods. The study identified two main categories of children who apply for international kinship care placements in Australia: Children who cannot be cared for by family resources in the country because of permanent loss of parental care or inability of parents to take care of them, and Children who use this arrangement as a mechanism to access a better life in Australia. Children expect to get better education, employment, material benefits and living conditions after placement abroad. However, they express concerns about how well they will be treated by relatives abroad. Pre-placement services provided for these children lack a standardized and holistic approach. Furthermore, lack of clarity on the legal protection that should be given to children in international kinship care arrangement puts them in a precarious socio-legal situation.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACG -	Alternative care guideline
AIDS -	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ACPF -	African child policy forum
ACRWC -	The African Charter on Rights and Welfare of Child
CRC-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA -	Central statistics agency
CWLA -	Child Welfare League of America
FHI-	Family Health International
HIV -	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ISS -	International social service
MoWA -	Ministry of Women Affairs
MOH -	Ministry of Health
OVC -	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
UN -	United Nations
UNICEF -	United Nations Children Fund

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Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Millions of children around the world are without, or at risk of losing, their parental care due to different reasons. They face significant challenges in their daily lives, which can affect them well into adulthood (UN Guidelines for Alternative Care, 2010). The number of children who lost their parents due to different causes in Africa was estimated to be 145 million. By the same token, Ethiopia is estimated to have more than five million orphans, consequently having one of the largest populations of orphans and vulnerable children in Africa (Single Point HIV Prevalence Estimate, Ministry of Health, 2007).

A large number of children from birth to 5 years of age are not living with a parent. Most children who are not living with their parents are living in the family of a relative, especially grandparents (Leigh, 1982 & Bruskas, 2008). Over 90% of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) are taken care of by the extended family (Biemba, Beard, Bram Brooks, Bresnahan & Flynn, 2010).

The current Ethiopian government has responded to the situation of OVC by putting in place various alternative care arrangements. The notion of Alternative Care for children is defined as all residential care (either formal or informal) provided outside of the parental home (Biemba, et al, 2010). Ethiopia has developed an Alternative Childcare Guideline (ACG) in 2009. The guideline identified Community Based Child Care, reintegration and reunification, foster care, adoption and institutional care services as alternative care options for orphan and vulnerable children (MoWA, 2009).

Kinship Care Arrangement is one of the various Community Based Alternative childcare options available for OVC. It has been defined as "the full-time nurturing and protection of children who must be separated from their parents by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, step-parents, or other adults who have a kinship bond with a child" (Child Welfare League of America, 1994, p.4 as cited by Meseret Kassahun, 2011). Kinship Care Arrangement can also be arranged across international borders; this is when children are placed with their relative living in another country (ISS, 2011).

A larger number of Ethiopian children travel across international boundaries seeking kinship care due to different reasons. These includes factors such as death of parents or guardians, family violence, abuse, neglect or the inability of parents to provide for their children, conflict, war and natural disaster are some of the common (ISS, 2013).

Regarding children in need of cross border protections, the UN Guideline for Alternative Childcare,(2009) stated that, States concerned should ensure a designated body which has responsibility for determining specific standards to be met. These criteria are used for selecting carers in the host country and the quality of care, as well as for supervising and monitoring the operation of such Care Arrangements (UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, 2010).

The existing literature indicates that a large number of Ethiopian children travel across international boundaries to be looked after by their relatives. However, literature that specifically focus on Ethiopian children in International Kinship Care Arrangement is extremely scarce. Thus, the present study attempted to explore International Kinship Care Arrangement focusing on the experiences of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa. It attempted to understand the

reasons that lead Ethiopian children to be placed in International Kinship Care Arrangement, the availability of pre-placement supports, children's expectations from their placement and the legal protections given to children in this kind of care arrangement.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Internationally, specially in the Western world, a number of studies have been conducted on various dimensions of child care arrangements and their outcomes, including child care education, child parent relationship, prevalence, impact and support system for OVC, Alternative child care, policy and legal frameworks and so on.

Le igh,(1982), conducted A Demographic Analysis of Children and Adolescents living apart from their Parents and indicated that Almost one million preschool age children, or approximately one out of every 21 children from birth to 5 years of age are not living with their parents. Most children who were not living with their parents are living in the family of a relative, especially grandparents.

Similarly, Biemba , Beard, Brooks, Bresnahan & Flynn, (2010), studied the Scale, Scope and Impact of Alternative Care for OVC in developing countries. The number of orphans in developing countries were estimated to be about 145 million in the year 2010. These children were taken care of by their extended family members. Moreover, even when one or both parents are alive, a fair number of vulnerable children live with other members of the extended family.

W ettasinghe, Shanmugam & Emmanuel, (2012), have studied Alternative Care giving of Migrant Workers' Children in Sri Lanka. The findings of this study showed that the general Alternative Care giving norms in the households without parental care

are largely permissive of children dropping out of school, child labour, alcohol consumption, sexual conduct at a young age and allow early marriage.

Bruskas, (2008), also conducted a literature review on children living in foster care. The findings of this study demonstrated that Most children in foster care experience feelings of confusion, fear, apprehension of the unknown, loss, sadness, anxiety, and stress. Such experiences might result in such children's social, mental, psychological and educational poor developments. This in turn negatively affects such children's adulthood life.

Z ima, Bussing, Freeman, Yang, Belin, & Forness, (2000), examined the behavior problems in school-aged children living in foster care. The findings of this study illustrated the prevalence of high percentage of behavior problems observed among such children in their classroom. Severe delays in reading or maths, repeating grades, history of school suspension and expulsion among school-aged children in foster care were highly prevalent.

Hong, Algood, Chiu & Lee, (2011), researched the Ecological Understanding of Kinship Foster Care in the United States. According to this study since the mid1990s, government policy in child welfare has become increasingly supportive of family-of-origin or kin-based alternatives for Orphan and Vulnerable Children. The study attempted to show the many benefits associated with kinship based foster care. The advantages among the others include increased contact with biological families, preservation of culture, absence of stigma as foster care children, and comfort of being with a family members.

In the Ethiopian context, the following studies have dealt with the issues of Alternative Care giving for orphan and vulnerable children .Yohannes Mekuriaw, (2006), studied community response for OVC in Gojam Region of Northern Ethiopia.

The findings of this study showed that, HIV/AIDS and poverty were the main factors that attributed to the sever problems of orphan and vulnerable children. This study also found that these children were taken care of by their extended families and local HIV/AIDS projects found in the town.

Meseret Kassahun, (2011), studies the issue of kinship care for orphan and vulnerable children in Ethiopia. Her study identified that most of kin caregivers were female and live on less than 2 US Dollars per day. Living arrangement patterns, parents' inability to care for their own children because of HIV/AIDS, family expectations, prior relationships with deceased neighbors, and not wanting to send children to rural area were the major pathways that led kin caregivers to assume the care giving role. This study also demonstrated that supports provided for kin caregivers were found to be largely inadequate and irregular and lack consistency. As a result, these were found to suffer from stress that was clinically significant.

To summarize, even though numerous studies have been conducted on alternative child care, very few studies have been conducted on international kinship care arrangement. The existing studies on international kinship care arrangement for orphan and vulnerable children were conducted in the western countries. The existing Ethiopian literature also made their major focuses on domestic kinship care, foster care and domestic and international adoptions. But, none of them has focused on international kinship care as an Alternative Childcare Arrangement available for Orphan and Vulnerable children.

Thus, the present research sought to fill one of the existing gaps by explore international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia with a specific focus on Ethiopian Orphan and Vulnerable Children who applied for an Australian orphan relative visa. More specifically, the study explored the reasons that lead Ethiopian children to apply

for Australian orphan relative visa, their expectations from being placed in such Arrangement, availability of pre-placement supports, and the legal bases in processing international kinship care arrangements in Ethiopia have been explored by the present study.

1.3. Research Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this research is to explore the state of International Kinship Care Arrangements for Orphan and Vulnerable children in the context of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To understand the reasons that lead Ethiopian Orphan and Vulnerable children to apply for an Australian Orphan Relative Visa.
- To explore these children's expectations from being placed in International Kinship Care Arrangement and kin residency in Australia.
- To find out the availability or absence of pre-placement support for Ethiopian children who apply for an Australian orphan relative visa by the Government.
- To investigate the Ethiopian State policy and legal provisions for Ethiopian children who seek International Kinship Care Arrangements.

1.4. Research Questions

- Why do the Ethiopian Orphan and Vulnerable children apply for an Australian Orphan Relative visa?
- What are these children's expectations from being granted an Australian Orphan Relative Visa and from their placements with their kin in Australia?
- What sorts of pre-placement supports are available in Ethiopia for Orphan and Vulnerable children who apply for International Kinship Care Arrangements?

- What sorts of specific policies and legal bases exist to facilitate International Kinship Care Arrangement in Ethiopia?

1.5. Scope of the Study

This research is limited to the study of the current state of international kinship care arrangements for orphan and venerable children in Ethiopia. The study also covered the experiences of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa. The research has consulted experts from MoWA and The Federal First Instance Court. Regarding issues included in this study, the study limited its scope at exploring the reasons that lead children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, children's expectations from their placement with relatives in Australia, the availability of pre-placement supports and the legal bases in processing international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia. The study did not include children who apply for international kinship care arrangement in another countries except Australia. Though, available parents and current caregivers were included, relatives who are sponsoring children were not included in the study.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Taking into account the scarcity of kinship care related research in Ethiopia, this study is hoped to contribute to the working knowledge so far developed and fill the knowledge gaps on this issue in the context of Ethiopia. It is also hoped that the findings of this study will provide information and insight by generating details on international kinship care arrangement for orphan and vulnerable children by assessing the case of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa. This study further attempted to generate an evidence based information for concerning government bodies and policy makers to seriously consider the situation

of children in international kinship care arrangement and develop appropriate supporting mechanisms.

1.7. Organization of the Paper

This paper is structured in six Chapters. The first Chapter includes the introduction, statement of the problem, research objective, and research questions. Additionally, it discussed the scope, significance, challenge and provides the definition of important terms used in the study. It provides introductory information about the notion of international kinship care arrangements in general and the case of Ethiopian children placed in such arrangement in particular. The second Chapter is dedicated to literature review that shows the experience of other countries and findings of different authors and gives a general overview of international kinship care arrangement. The third Chapter describes the methods that were employed in the study; how data was collected and analyzed, data quality assurance and ethical considerations. The fourth Chapter provides the data presentation. Five major themes that were emerged from the qualitative data gatherings and the use of scientific data analysis procedures are presented in this Chapter. These themes are reasons that lead children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, children's expectations from the placement, the availability of pre-placement supports and the legal issues in international kinship care arrangement. The fifth Chapter discusses the above mentioned major themes by comparing and contrasting them with the findings of prior studies and domestic and international legal documents. The final Chapter is dedicated to conclusion, social work implications and recommendations.

1.9. Definition of Terms

Child - the term child is used in this paper to identify any person under the age of 18.

Orphan - For the purpose of this paper, orphan refers to a child who lost his/her biological parent/s regardless of the cause of the loss.

Orphan Relative visa - The term 'Orphan Relative Visa is used to a specific visa type that allow children to permanently live in Australia with their relatives.

Kinship care- for the purpose of this paper kinship care is the full-time nurturing and protection of children who must be separated from their parents by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, god parents, step-parents, or other adults who have a kinship bond with a child.

International kinship care- for the purpose of this study, international kinship care arrangement is a kinship care arrangement that involves a child migrating to another country.

Kinship carer -an adult who is providing care for a relative child. This term is used interchangeably with the term relative in this paper.

Caregiver - for the purpose of this paper, a caregiver is a person who has a legal responsibility for a child.

Sponsor- sponsor is used to Australian relative who undertakes sponsorship obligations to take a family member to Australia through orphan relative visa application.

Vulnerable Children-For the purpose of this paper vulnerable children are children whose survival and development is jeopardized by certain circumstances and are therefore in need of alternative childcare services. These includes Single and double orphans, Street children, Abandoned children whose parents /families are untraceable,

Children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, Non-orphan children whose parents are not able to support the child due to illness, injury or detention, Child mothers etc.

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review

This section provides a review of relevant literature sources which mainly deal with kinship care arrangement for children deprived of parental care. The body of the literature includes the review of different studies that focused on prevalence of orphan and vulnerable children(OVC), the global response for OVC, alternative care options, global trends on kinship care giving, the need for kinship care arrangements, international kinship care and the legal & policy bases. The chapter presents what the existing literature tell us about kinship care arrangement for children in Ethiopia and other countries. An inclusive review of literature was conducted using mostly books, journal articles, thesis materials and domestic & international legal documents.

2.1. Prevalence of OVC

Large number of children from birth to 5 years of age are not living with parents. Most children who are not living with their biological parents are living in the family of their parents such as grandparents (Leigh, 1982 & Bruskas, 2008). The number of children living without parental care reached over 13 million in 2002 and more than 25 million in 2010 (Smart, 2003).

Overwhelming number of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are living with surviving parents or extended family members, many of them are being cared for by a remaining parents who are sick or dying, elderly grandparents who themselves are often in need of care and support, or impoverished relatives struggling to meet the needs of their own children. Increasing numbers of children are living in child-headed households, with minimal or no adult supervision or support (Smart, 2003).

By the same token, a large number of children are said to live without parental care in developing countries. The number of orphans and vulnerable children due to

different causes including HIV and AIDS was 145 million in 2010. Over 90% of OVC in developing countries are taken care of by the extended family and even when one or both parents are alive, a fair number of vulnerable children live with other members of the extended family (Biemba, Beard, Brooks, Bresnahan & Flynn, 2010).

Ethiopia is one of the most populous countries in Africa. More than half (55.5%) of the population is constituted by children below the age of 18 (CSA, 2011). As of 2009, Ethiopia is estimated to have 5,459,139 orphans of whom 855,720 are orphans due to HIV and AIDS. This estimate makes the country one of the largest populations of OVC in Africa (MOH, 2007).

In Ethiopia all OVC directly or indirectly are vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and other health, socio-economic, psychological and legal problems in Ethiopia. The vulnerability may be linked to extreme poverty, hunger, armed conflict and child labour practices, among other threats (Standard Service Delivery Guideline, 2010). Therefore, improving the well being of children and families is a growing issue of concern as the country remains one of the poorest nations in the world.

2.1.1. The Global Response to OVC

Taking into account the ever increasing number of OVC, the global community has responded to this crisis by putting in place various alternative care arrangements. Alternative care for vulnerable children is defined as all residential care (either formal or informal) provided outside of the parental home. These care arrangements can be provided and organized by relatives, community services or other formal and informal child welfare structures (Biemba, Beard, Brooks, Bresnahan & Flynn, 2010).

Despite the challenges caused by east Africa's history of high mobility and its impact on the care and protection of children, there is recognition of the resilience of

families and communities across the sub-region. Communities in this sub region strive to ensure adequate care and protection for children. Informal care practices such as kinship care arrangements are the widely used forms of community's resilience in the sub region (Save the Children, 2015).

Similarly, the government of Ethiopia has taken various measures to positively address the complex issues associated with OVC. Ethiopia has ratified both the UN Child Rights Convention (CRC) and the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC). The country has harmonized domestic laws and policies with the provisions of both conventions and which creates an enabling environment for improving the well being of OVC (Standard Service Delivery Guidelines, 2010). Additionally, different alternative care and support arrangements that mainly come from the extended family are among the various responses given by the Ethiopian community to the situation of OVC (Meseret Kassahun, 2011).

2.2. Alternative Childcare Options

Parent child relationships and Parenting quality has the strongest influence on children's cognitive and social-emotional development. Responsive parental care that surround children with language, warmth, and chances to learn are the key to children's well being (Madzwamuse & Barnes, 2014, Belsky, 2009). The family institution being the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth, well-being and protection of children, efforts should primarily be directed to enabling the child to remain in his/her parents or when appropriate, other close family members (UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, 2010).

When parents are not able to fulfill their parental responsibilities of caring for their own children, other forms of alternative care including kinship and community resources may be relied upon to provide care for the children. However,

the ultimate responsibility falls on the government to ensure that children are placed in appropriate alternative care (UNICEF, 2011). Accordingly, in 2009 Ethiopia has developed the Alternative Child Care Guidelines. The guideline promotes Community based child care, Reunification and Reintegration Program, Foster Care, Adoption and Institutional Care Service provision for children without proper parental care. Family reunification and community based child care options are preferred, and the Guideline recognizes kinship care as one of the key alternative placements for orphans and vulnerable children (save the children, 2015).

Community based child care including kinship care are measures supported by international law for children who need to benefit from a family environment. Such care has advantages as an alternative means of care. Unlike institutionalization, it offers a family environment (UNICEF, 2011). Kinship care for example occurs within the child's extended family or within close friends of the family known to the child, whether formal or informal in nature (International Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, 2010).

Once separation of children from their families takes place, and when in the best interests of the child, family reunification measures should be pursued. Family reunification is an obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), as it assists children to reunite with parents or the extended family (ACPF, 2012).

Adoption is one of the alternative care options available for children permanently deprived of their family environment. The fact that domestic adoption offers a permanent placement and family environment puts it ahead of many other alternatives. Furthermore, there is evidence that in countries where domestic adoption is well established, it has a demonstrated high success rate in permanent placement,

especially when decisions have been guided by the best interests of the child and children are adopted at a young age (ACPF, 2012).

Among the various types of alternative care options, foster care is also identified as one form of formal alternative care for Orphan and Vulnerable children. It is recommended that local foster caregivers should be identified carefully so that these identified individuals can provide children with appropriate care and protection while maintaining children's closer ties to their family, community and cultural group. This Formal Alternative care option is believed to provide a family environment for children deprived of their parental care (UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, 2010).

While the emphasis and priority should always be on developing and supporting children's biological family based care alternatives, the UN Guidelines on Alternative care acknowledges that some residential care will be needed for some children. When the use of institutions is appropriate and necessary as an alternative means of care for a child, group homes ("small, residential facilities located within a community and designed to serve children") should be preferred over large orphanages (ACPF, 2012).

2.3. Kinship Care

In anthropological literature, the term kinship care describes the upbringing of a child by kith and kin, non-blood and blood-related relatives, tribes and friends. A kinship care placement can be initiated by the local authority, a relative or friend, and involves some sort of assistance or arrangement, including decisions concerning legal orders, financial and social work support (Broad, 2007). More comprehensively, "Kinship care has been defined as the full-time nurturing and protection of children who must be separated from their parents by relatives, members of their tribes or

clans, god parents, step-parents, or other adults who have a kinship bond with a child (Child Welfare League of America, 1994, p.4 as cited by Meseret Kassahun, 2011).

There are two common types of kinship care arrangements. Informal kinship care (private kinship care) is an arrangement that is usually made by the family and extended family without child welfare Agencies involvement. Conversely, Formal Kinship Care is organized by statutory authorities as a result of the necessity for a child to be placed out of the home (Strozier & Krisman, 2007, Carpenter & Clyman, 2004, Winokur, Crawford, Longobardi & Valentine, 2008).

Several benefits are associated with why kinship care is the most preferred option for providing parental support to children in a very difficult circumstances. Kinship care is believed to preserve continuing contact with birth family, siblings and the extended family networks, to help maintain children in the same cultural and ethnic identity. Additionally, it is believed that it decreases the trauma and distress of relocation and grief of separation of a child from his/her parents (UNICEF, 2011).

2.3.1. The Global Trends on Kinship Care Practices

Since the mid 1990s, the world's government policies in child welfare has become increasingly supportive of family-of-origin or kin-based alternatives for Orphan and Vulnerable children. Kinship care has become the most preferable Alternative Care Arrangements for OVC. This can be associated with the several benefits that kinship group members can provide for Orphan and Vulnerable children such as staying in the family of origin (Hong, et al, 2011).

In Africa, kinship care practices were and are still very common. In many societies child fosterage is an accepted means of raising children, and members of society value the parenting roles and responsibilities of extended family members in providing parental support for Orphan and Vulnerable children (Chirwa, 2002 &

Mdhayan, 2004 as cited in Meseret Kassahun, 2011). Several Factors influence kinship care arrangements in most African countries including a wide range of traditional socio-cultural and religious benefits and practices which promote kinship care; family poverty; family breakdown (divorce, re-marriage, early marriage, alcoholism); poor health, death of parent, HIV and AIDS or outbreak of other diseases; lack of access to schools, health services or livelihood opportunities; political insecurity, conflict, and disasters; and urbanization and migration (Save the Children, 2015).

In Ethiopia, as in most traditional societies, a strong norm and values of caring for orphans, the sick, disabled, and other needy individuals by their extended family members, churches, and mosques has existed for centuries. Based on socio-cultural and religious beliefs, provision of care to orphaned, abandoned, and vulnerable children has been seen as the duty of the extended family system among most of the ethnic groups in the country (FHI, 2010). In Ethiopia, about one in every five households has a foster child, one in every ten households has a child with only one living parent, and children who lost both of their parents were prevalent in 1 in 100 of the households (The Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey, 2011).

2.3.2. The Need for Kinship Care Arrangement

Historically, large-scale orphaning has been a sporadic, short-term problem associated with war, famine, or disease. However, since recently, Orphaning caused mainly by HIV/AIDS has become very serious cause for large scale of orphanage of children not only in Ethiopia but also in many other African societies. Africa has become home for millions of orphan and vulnerable children (Smart, 2003).

Factors underlying the highly increased level of vulnerability of children and loss of appropriate parental care include the spread HIV and AIDS, natural disasters, and

chronic poverty. These factors have been documented as the main reasons children lack parental support. As a result, these children were forced seek other forms of alternatives on a global level and more specifically, in the African continent (FHI, 2010).

According to the same source a large number of children, more than six percent of the overall population in Ethiopia were identified as one- or two-parent orphans. The reasons for the increases in the number of Orphan children are said to be multifaceted, it included factors such as loss of parents to HIV and AIDS and other diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and malaria, high maternal mortality rate, extreme poverty, famine, and migration. Ethiopia has been identified by these studies repeatedly as one of the highest number of orphan and vulnerable children in Horn of Africa.

Kinship care is likely to become even the most preferred Alternative for providing care to Orphan Vulnerable children in the future, as the HIV AIDS epidemic continues to kill parents and results in ever-increasing numbers of orphans. Approximately 15.2 million children under 18 years of age have lost one or both of their parents to AIDS, and millions of children have been made vulnerable. In 2002, it was estimated that 90 per cent of the children orphaned by AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa (save the children, 2007).

2.4. International Kinship Care Arrangement

International kinship care arrangement is a child care arrangement where a child is relocated or moved to live and cared for by a relative in another country. International kinship care placements may occur in a neighboring country, in the same region, or on the other side of the world. Consequently, a child may remain in a similar cultural and linguistic environment, or experience a radical shift to a foreign

language and an unfamiliar culture. Therefore, the norms of kinship care may vary according to culture, traditions, concepts of family, religion and the socio-economic status of families involved (ISS, 2013).

Similar to the domestic kinship care arrangements, International kinship care can be arranged formally; a statutory arrangement, with involvement of Government child protection Agencies and Courts or informally; non-statutory arrangement, without the involvement of the State's child protection authorities (ISS, 2013). However, UNICEF, (2004), noted that international kinship care Arrangement is most commonly arranged on an informal basis.

Hundreds of children are placed with family overseas every year .This holds true for a larger number of Ethiopian children who travel across international boundaries. An example of which is Ethiopian children traveling to Australia to be looked after by a relative. Ethiopia has been ranked as second among the top ten countries of birth of children and young people granted Australian Orphan Relative visa between 2002 and 2012 (ISS, 2013).

2.4.1. The Legal and Policy Bases

There are a number of international protocols and guidelines that raise concerns about children who require cross border care (ISS, 2013). The three widely used legal instruments include convention on the rights of the child (CRC), the African charter on the rights and Welfare of the child (ACRWC), and the Hague convention on the Protection of children and cooperation in respect of inter country Adoption. Ethiopia ratified both CRC and ACRWC except the Hague convention (ACPF, 2012).

The UN Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children, 2010 noted, States should devise special and appropriate measures designed to protect children in informal care

from abuse, neglect, child labour and all other forms of exploitation, with particular attention to informal care provided by non relatives, or by relatives previously unknown to the children or living far from the children's habitual place of residence. In addition, States concerned should ensure that a designated body has responsibility for determining specific standards to be met regarding, the criteria for selecting careers in the host country and the quality of care, as well as for supervising and monitoring the operation of such schemes.

Children who migrate to be cared for by a relative are entitled to all the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). However their vulnerable status of being without parental care, being in alternative care, and being a migrant (potentially with refugee experiences) creates a complex socio-legal situation in which their rights may be compromised (ISS, 2013). Issues related to immigration policy can easily overshadow the fundamental principle that Orphan Relative children are children deprived of parental care, and as such they are entitled to particular attention and care to ensure that they enjoy the same degree of protection as other children (UNICEF, 2011).

The Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable for the Protection of Children, (1996), is the most effective tool that could serve in upholding the rights of children in international kinship care, as it calls on States to work together on determining the placement of the child in accordance with best interests principles (ISS, 2013). The Hague Convention aims to protect children and their families against the risks of illegal, irregular, premature or ill-prepared adoptions abroad. However, the Convention is only binding on participating countries. Currently, 81 countries are parties to the Convention but Ethiopia has still not acceded to it (Save the Children, 2010).

Several international conventions, principles and guidelines identify the important rights and needs of children without parental care. They also identify the rights of children deprived of parental care and who are outside of their home country. These conventions address some of the rights of children regardless of whether alternative care arrangements for these children are statutory or non-statutory. However, they do not provide a binding framework for managing international kinship care arrangements (ISS, 2013).

How the global legal principles are upheld in international kinship care arrangement depends greatly on the two countries involved. The countries domestic laws regarding child welfare, parental responsibility and migration highly affects the protection given to children in international kinship care arrangements. These principles also highly depend on the two countries ratification or recognition of international legal instruments and their practical application through domestic law and policy (ISS, 2013).

2.5. Summary

The existing literature indicates kinship care is one of the globally existing alternative child care approaches. Various reasons including death of parents, conflict, natural disaster, HIV/AIDS etc leads the extended family system to provide care for orphan and vulnerable children with or without the involvement of formal social support system. In sub-Saharan Africa, millions of children are left without appropriate parental care due to the negative consequences of preexisting poverty and HIV/AIDS epidemic. As a result, kinship care giving is continuously cited as one of the most prominent support mechanisms available for OVC.

The available literature sources on the study issue demonstrated that kinship care within the Ethiopian extended family system has been sustained for long period of

time and has been serving as an alternative support system for vulnerable children. Although few studies provide an insight about kinship care giving as an appropriate child care alternative for OVC, none of these studies have explored international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia. This situation showed a huge knowledge gap in understanding the nature of international kinship care arrangement. Thus, using an exploratory research method presented in the following chapter, the current study provided an insight about international kinship care arrangement in the context of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa.

Chapter Three

3. Research Methods

This chapter presents the methodological approaches used to carry out the present study. The philosophical instance used to guide actions throughout the research, the research design, participants of the study, the sampling technique and sample size, the data gathering process and data collection tools discussed in detail. Additionally, the chapter presents the data analysis methods, quality assurance and the ethical considerations.

3.1. Philosophical Paradigm

This research was implemented with the understanding that reality is subjective to the people who are living it. Actions in this study were guided under the Social Constructivists world view, meaning international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia was explored by relaying on participant's subjective expression of their life experiences. Individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. In the process they develop a subjective meaning of their experiences (Creswell, 2009).

This study is influenced by social constructivist world view throughout its implementation in so many ways. In the process of data gathering, the study raised broader and general issues and asked open ended questions to let participants construct the meaning of their situation. Creswell, (2009), confirms, the goal of a research written under constructivist world view is to rely as much as possible on the participant's views of the situation being studied. Probing was used as a means to get rich information. In the course of data analysis and interpretation, the study made sense or interpreted the meanings that participants had about the issue under study and related it subjectively with what the researcher knows. It analyzed the subjective

reality of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa and presented realities based on their subjective interpretation.

3.2. Research Design

This is a qualitative exploratory research with case study strategy. Case study was employed to get a holistic and in-depth understanding of international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia with the help of qualitative research tools like in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, observations and document reviews. Qualitative research helps researchers to gain a rich and complex understanding of a specific social context (Mack et al, 2005). Semi structured interview guide was used for in depth interviews that were carried out on nine participants selected using availability sampling technique. This research was a cross-sectional study meaning, it was conducted at one point in time with a time range of Feb, 2016 to Apr, 2016. Therefore, the findings doesn't indicate long term causal variation of the issue before and after the data collection.

3.3. Participants of the Study and Inclusion Criteria

Specific inclusion criteria were set in order to determine the right participants from which the data was collected. Participant who satisfied the inclusion criteria and who were willing to participate in the study was included. The respective inclusion criteria were separately used for three groups of participants;

The first inclusion criterion was used to select children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa. These children are the main cases of the study. Children who (1) had the approval of the court that they can be placed in international kinship care arrangement, (2) sponsored to live in Australia by a family member or relative already settled in there, (3) were applying for Australian orphan relative visa by the time of data collection and (4) willing to participate in the research were included.

The second inclusion criteria were used for parents or current caregivers of children. Parents or Current caregivers who (1) were providing care to a child who was applying for Australian orphan relative visa at the time of data collection, (2) who have been providing care for the child for at least six months, (3) who had children residing in their homes and (4) who were able to communicate clearly in Amharic & volunteer to speak about their experiences were included.

The third inclusion criteria were used for key informants from two different organizations. These individuals were one judge and two social workers from Bole First Instance Court and two Child Protection and Promotion Experts from The Ministry of Children and Women Affairs. Individuals who (1) have been working on international kinship care arrangement cases (2) have been working for at least one year and six months (3) those who were willing to participate in the study were included.

3.4. Sampling Technique

The participants of the study were Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa. Children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa are children who have lost their parents due to different humanitarian crisis in their country of origin and who are subsequently sponsored to live in Australia by a family member already settled in there (ISS Australia, 2014, p.2). The units of analysis therefore, were selected based on the specific eligibility criteria set to apply for an Australian orphan relative visa. According to Mack et al (2005), the research objectives and the characteristics of the study population determine which and how many people to select for the study.

Convenience sampling technique was used to conduct the research. This technique was chosen as an appropriate technique because the situations was difficult

to develop a complete sampling frame for the study before the data collection (Berg, 2001). Since children who apply for Australian orphan relative visa come from different corners of the country and each had to come to the concerned organizations up on different schedules, it was found difficult to access them anytime. Thus, all children who met the inclusion criteria and available at the time of data collection (from March 7-April 7, 2016) were included in the study.

3.5. Sample Size

The number of sample in this study was determined by theoretical data saturation. Meaning, the data was collection continued until no new data was forthcoming or a point of information redundancy. The study included nine children who were aged from 12-17 years and were applying for Australian orphan relative visa at the time of data collection. The rationale for limiting the age range is that children in the upper age range are more likely to provide a detail account of their experience and finish the allocated time for data collection as compared to children below the age of 12. Mack, (2005) confirms, qualitative study sample sizes are often determined on the basis of theoretical saturation where the point in data collection when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions. However, Nixon & Wild (2012), noted data saturation is regularly achieved within ten individual interviews, with evidence that this can be achieved with fewer for homogeneous participants. Additionally one judge and two social workers from The Federal First Instance Court and two Child Protection and Promotion Experts from The Federal Ministry of Women and Children Affairs were included in the study. The selection of these professionals was based on the relatedness of their positions to the research topic and their working experiences on the research area.

3.6. Method of Data Collection

This study used both primary and secondary data collection techniques. In-depth interviews, key informant interviews, observations and document reviews carried out through reviewing organizational records both at Federal First Instance Court and Federal Ministry of Women and Children Affairs were used as primary data collection methods. Secondary data also collected through reviewing published books, journal articles and electronic information as well as published and unpublished reports on international kinship care arrangements.

3.6.1 Observation

Along with the use of other data collection tools, the study employed direct observation technique using check-list to get contextual information for the interviews conducted. The observation check-list was developed based on key concepts focusing on children in international kinship care arrangement. According to Creswel (2007), contexts are important for understanding what the participants will say, it is necessary to understand the context beside what the participants address. Furthermore, the observation served as an additional technique that complement the information obtained through interviews and document review.

Children's living condition, their interactions with their parents and current care givers, children's reactions to their placement while attending court procedure were critically observed using a check-list developed in a manner that is consistent with the research questions. The researcher took factual and accurate notes and included observations of interactions between children and their care givers. Through home visits the researcher observed children's living conditions, physical and economic situations of the families and verbal and nonverbal reactions of children for a maximum of one hour per case.

3.6.2. In-depth Interview

This study used in-depth interviews with eighteen participants in order to gather a deeper understanding of international kinship care arrangement for Orphan and Vulnerable children. The participants include children who were applying for Australian orphan relative visa at the time of data collection or their parents and current care givers and key informants from MoWA and Federal First Instance Court.

The study used semi-structured interview guide with an open ended questions to get information on reasons that lead Ethiopian children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, their expectation, the availability of pre-placement support as well as the legal bases to process the placement of children in international kinship care arrangement. The questions were prepared in a specific order to help participants develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised. According to Bruce, (2001), questions in semi standardized interview are typically asked in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are permitted to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared questions. The guiding questions prepared in line with the research objective, helped the researcher to follow up and probe responses that enriched the data.

The interviews carried out with the cases of the study raised basically three research questions. Reasons that led children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, children's expectations from their placement in Australia and the availability of pre-placement supports for them in Ethiopia were raised and participants of the study discussed the issue in detail. The use of probing helped the researcher to find detailed information that enriched the data. Interviews with key informants also answered two research questions; availability of pre-placement supports in concerned organizations

and the available legal grounds in placing children in international kinship care arrangements.

3.6.3. Document Review

With the purpose of understanding international kinship care arrangement and factors related to some outcomes or actions, document reviews in this qualitative case study was employed. Document reviews serves to supply pieces of information that are helpful in explaining social practices (Yin, 2003). Thus, such documents as organizational records and reports, domestic and international legal principles, guidelines and conventions concerning international kinship care arrangement and reports on different seminars and workshops was consulted as scrupulously as possible. Similarly, case files from Ministry of Children and Women affairs and Federal first instance court was critically scrutinized and analyzed in the manner that helps to answer the research question. The reviewed case files used to triangulate the data found from interviews and observations on the reasons that lead children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, the availability of pre-placement supports and the legal grounds to process such care arrangement.

3.7. Data Collection Process

Prior to the beginning of data collection, a support letter that calls for cooperation was taken from the School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University and the researcher approached two organizations that have primary responsibilities of handling international kinship care arrangement at national level (1) Bole First Instance Court, it is in charge of seeing all final inter-country child placement cases in the country, (2) The Federal Ministry of Children and Women Affairs, which is in charge of checking the appropriateness of inter-country child placements and provide comment in order to facilitate the final approval by the court.

The researcher described the title of the study as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria so that the aforementioned organizations could suggest the appropriate participants from whom they provide service to. With the help of key informants, the researcher was able to access nine children who were applying for Australian orphan relative visa at the time of data collection. Experts from the above mentioned organizations also interviewed.

The interviews were conducted after discussing on the convenient place and time with participants. The researcher respected participant's full interest in selecting interview settings. All interviews were held in the offices at MoWA and the federal first instance court for a maximum of an hour per participant. The media of communication was Amharic with the use of tape recorder after assuring participant's written consent. For those participants who didn't want their voice to be recorded, a facilitator took an intensive notes while the researcher interviewing and taking memos by analyzing participant's reactions on specific issues and their facial expressions. For the rest of the cases, tape recorder with a cosset made ready before the interview started and the interviews were tape recorded and it was facilitated by one individual who was oriented and assigned to take note while the researcher interviewing and taking memos.

3.8. Method of Data Analysis

This qualitative exploratory study aimed to generate a rich and deep understanding of international kinship care arrangement for Orphan and Vulnerable children in Ethiopia using case study strategy. Due to the nature of qualitative data collection tools employed, the data gathered in this study was detailed explanation of issues provided by research participants. Qualitative data are in the form of text,

written words, phrases or symbols representing people, actions and events in social life (Krueger & Nueman, 2006).

The data analysis of this research started along with the data gathering process through transcribing, observing important and emerging issues that needed to be included in the final draft, reviewing the gathered information, memos and cleaning data throughout the process. In conducting qualitative research, data analysis is continuous starting from the time of data collection (Creswell, 2009, p.184). Depending on the kinds of data collection methods used, the data was transcribed, translated, codified, categorized and thematically analyzed following different procedures.

The data analysis of this research started with transcribing the gathered data. An in-depth interview taped using voice recorder and note was taken for some participants. The voices and responses of participants recorded during the interview were transcribed in to paper. While performing this, attentive listening and careful note taking was employed in order to make a valid documentation. The noted data was translated in to English (the original recording was in Amharic), because this study is expected to be produced in English.

After the note taking and translating, coding procedure followed through giving a false name to address participants. The coding helped to assure ethical issues of confidentiality and minimizes researcher's bias in the analysis of cases. This research therefore, used codification of giving Pseudo names for the cases to be analyzed.

The transcribed and coded data was read thoroughly and organized so as to be familiar with the information, and categories were developed and the data was described under each categories. In this stage, the coded data was categorized in to similar and related categories together. This categorization indicates how the different

codes were constructed into similar categories of different types that gave a meaningful shape. Data categorization helps to sort out texts into meaningful groups, which make the data to be manageable (Tuckett, 2004).

The categorized data was converged into themes, and all the cases were examined to make sure that all the manifestations of each theme have been accounted for and compared. Thematically converged data in the analysis process adds strength to the findings as the various elements of data are intertwined together to promote a greater understanding of the case (Yin, 2003).

3.9. Quality Assurance

The current research was conducted and examined under the key elements of data quality assurance in qualitative inquiries as explained by Andrew, (2004). These elements include credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the data. The researcher first established a good rapport to create a trusting relationship with study participants and reduced reactivity as well as enhanced study participants' commitment to provide genuine information. Additionally, a peer checking was employed through distributing the data collection tools to check the credibility of the question guides.

Triangulation was used to accommodate the different data sources and to signify the use of different data collection technique from both primary and secondary sources. Data collected through in-depth interview was triangulated with observation and document reviews. A cross case analysis was also implemented in order to identify important differences in the patterns observed as a way to develop a significant explanation for the different outcomes and identify commonalities and differences in the patterns of response provided by participants (Samia, & Robert, 2008).

3.10. Ethical Considerations

A maximum effort was made to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by study participants. Interviews were conducted without putting any identifiable information about the study participants on the semi-structured question guide. In addition, any identifiable information of participants was eliminated from the transcribed data after the transcript of the interview was prepared and any identifying information wasn't included in presenting the analysis of study findings.

The three core ethical considerations in social work ethics are the major component of the present study. These are the autonomy of the research participants, beneficence and justice (Mack et al, 2005). Autonomy of study participants in this research was encompassed by ensuring informed and voluntary participation in the research process. As the study participants are children and can't decide about participation by their own, their parents and caregivers were told about rights to obtain clear and complete information about the purpose and characteristics of the research as well as the right to withdraw or decline participating in the research even after signing the informed consent.

Beneficence is another principle which requires a commitment to minimize the risks and maximizing the benefits to research participants. In this regard participants were informed that their involvement in the study would not create any risk to their process of kinship care arrangement. The purpose of the study being for academic uses explained for them and information provided by participants kept in a safe place where they can only be accessed by the researcher.

The other principle is Justice; it requires ensuring a fair distribution of the risks and benefits resulting from the research. Although participation in this research brought back some undesired memories and experiences, the findings of the study are

believed to bring important indirect benefits for study participants in the future. The findings may be used to mobilize service providers such as government, non-governmental, and voluntary community based associations to design appropriate interventions that address identified needs of the study participants. Additionally, the research findings are believed to provide valuable information for policy advocates, policy makers and social service providers in developing alternative policy provisions. However, participation in this research didn't have immediate benefits such as payments.

3.11. Challenges of The Study

The following part describes some of the challenges encountered by the researcher o this study. First and for most, insufficient time has posed the biggest challenge in conducting this study. Because of the pre-determined time frame allowed by the school to gather data, data was gathered only for short period of time and from limited participants. However, this challenge was managed using multiple data sources; in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, document reviews & observations and multiple participants; children, experts and current caregivers. The researcher stayed on the field long enough to ensure that all the needed information was gathered and data was saturated. The researcher also went to the field back and forth to complete the few missing information simultaneously with data analysis process.

The second challenge was the lack of adequate data on the research topic in concerned organizations visited for the purpose of the study. The poorly organized documentation system in these organizations and the none existence of information on the issue under study was a great challenge in finding the necessary data that could be of great importance for the information provided. However, the study provided a great deal of information using the available documents as intensively as possible and by

bringing together and cross-checking documents found in different concerned organizations on the area.

The third challenge encountered by the researcher was lack of cooperation by the authorities of the visited governmental organizations in providing information. This perception was associated with the sensitivity of the issue under study and lack of understanding around the purpose of the study. However this challenge was managed through creating a good rapport with participants and patiently explaining the purpose, use and significance of the study. Visiting organizations several times and creating rapports also helped to go half way through in proving the purpose of the research being fully academic.

3.12. Summary

Through the use of the above mentioned qualitative exploratory research method with a cross-sectional case study strategy, this study explored international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia. The research methods specifically used in order to explore the reasons that lead Ethiopian children to apply for Australian orphan relative visa, children's expectations from their placements, the availability of pre-placement supports in the country and the legal grounds used to process international kinship care arrangement. The use of these research methods helped the researcher gather detailed information on the aforementioned issues. Data gathered through these methods are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Four

4. Data Presentation

This chapter outlines the findings from all sources of data: in-depth interviews, observations and document reviews; and from all participants, including children, current caregivers and key informants. It looks at the reasons why children apply to be placed with their overseas relatives, their expectations from the placement, available services in the country, and it ends by reviewing the legal frameworks used to process international kinship care arrangement.

4.1. Understanding International Kinship Care Arrangement

While kinship care is the most common form of out-of-home care in Ethiopia, it is also the care option systematically least recorded, monitored or supported. Interviews identified that international kinship care arrangement for Orphan and Vulnerable children in Ethiopian context is an extremely unresearched and most loosely managed area. The fact that most of these kinds of arrangements are private and the absence of clearly defined working framework specifically dealing with this issue, has created a huge gap in its management.

Confusion exists in identifying international kinship care arrangement as a different form of arrangement from other alternative childcare options. Besides this, participants argued that a lack of clarity around specific standards, processes, and responsibilities regarding a child placed with relatives abroad impacted on clear understanding of international kinship care arrangement. A Child Protection and Promotion Expert at MoWA explained this situation as follows:

A lot of people, even in our organization, have a difficulty knowing the difference between international kinship care arrangement and international relative adoption. It is because the organization works

more on inter country adoption than any other type of alternative care options. Besides this, the issue is left open as the arrangement almost entirely depends on private interests.

4.1.1 International Kinship Care as a Family Obligation

There are various reasons why kinship care giving is the most preferred alternative care option for children. The fact that Ethiopian society has a deep rooted informal kin based support system for children who are in need, especially in the form of kinship care arrangement, has made placing children with relatives a common trend regardless of where the relatives might reside.

Most of the Ethiopian community considers taking care of vulnerable relatives as a family obligation rather than simple responsibility. As a result, people never refuse providing support for their relatives back home even when they live miles away from them. One form of helping families as identified in this study therefore was by placing children in international kinship care arrangement. These deep rooted socio-cultural norms magnify the importance of international kinship care arrangement as it makes taking care of relative's child a family obligation. Henok, a Child Protection and Promotion Expert at MoWA pointed out this idea as follows:

This kind of arrangement is safe for children because children are staying with their relatives and in their culture. Furthermore, the Ethiopian community has a deep rooted culture of supporting vulnerable children especially in the form of kinship care giving. Relatives are believed not to cause any harms to children they are taking from here.

4.1.2 Prevalence of International Kinship Care Arrangement in Ethiopia

It is difficult to know how many children today are living in international kinship care arrangement. The only documentation found in MOWA provides rough estimates on the number of children in private arrangement across international boundary. This data shows that between the year 1998 E.C and 2005 E.C, a total of 24,677 children were placed in out of home care system across international boundaries. Among these children, 1999 of them placed in private arrangements with relatives living abroad. Because of poor documentation though, the exact figure and the prevalence of this arrangement remain unknown.

A total of 143 children were said to have applied to be placed in Australia over the past eight years, between the years 1998-2005 E.C. This number includes children who have applied for both Inter Country Adoption and International Kinship Care Arrangements. Between these years, the number of applications for inter country adoption were lower than the number of applications for international kinship care arrangements in Australia. More specifically, in the past ten years, between the years 1998-2007 E.C a total of 201 children were placed in international kinship care arrangement in Australia. Solomon, Child Promotion and Protection Expert at MoWA said the following:

There is a huge gap in documentation and data available to tell how many children are placed with relatives overseas. We have a well-organized working system for inter country adoption, we even assess and document children's condition after the placement succeeded. However, the system doesn't work that way for international kinship care. This is because generally, the number of children placed in this arrangement is low comparing inter country

adoption and children are preferred to stay with their relatives no matter where.

The informal nature of this type of arrangement, lack of well-organized documentation and the existing gaps in the system that manages this specific care arrangement have made information untraceable. Any information related to pre and post placement situation of children is also nowhere to be found as information is poorly managed or not recorded at all.

4.2. Reasons to Apply For International Kinship Care Arrangement

Although the culture of kinship care giving in the community has intensified the prevalence of international kinship care arrangement, there are also some major root causes that actually make international kinship care arrangement the only option for children. Two major factors stand behind the decision of placing children in this kind of arrangement. Some arrangements happen because of out-of-control circumstances and the others happen by the choices made expecting specific outcomes from the arrangement. These reasons are presented under four major categories below. These are: losing parental care due to different reasons, inability of parents to take care of their children, lack of satisfaction, and looking for permanent help and family responsibilities.

4.2.1. Permanent loss of Parental Care

The very common reason that leads children to apply for Australian orphan relative visas was a permanent loss of parental care. Participants explained that permanent loss of biological parents made placing children with extended families abroad the only way to survive. These circumstances occur out of control and make alternative care mandatory for such a child. As a result, placements with relatives abroad were used as the only mechanism as these relatives were considered

economically capable of providing good parental support for such Orphan children.

Three common patterns of parental losses were identified in this specific situation; losing parental care because of death, losing parental care because of family migration and losing parental care because of family breakdowns were the very common ones.

Death of Parents. Deaths of biological parents commonly leave children without appropriate parental care and this circumstances lead orphan children to be placed with relatives overseas. When the deaths of biological parents happen, the remaining family members search for other alternative care options for children. Alternative options mostly involved searching within the extended family members. Children are prone to different risks because of the situations they have been through and families need to protect them from other parenting issues. Especially when children lose both of their parents and have a close family member living abroad, placing them with that relative is taken as a priority because relatives overseas were perceived to be in a better economic situation to take care of them. Sixteen year old Rahel explained her situation as follows:

Both of my parents were passed away. My father died ten years back to TB and my mother followed three years letter. I and my younger sister were very little when both of them died. I even barely remember my dad. After my mom died, my uncle took me and my sister in with him. We live with our uncle, his wife and their children now. My aunt in Australia is going to take us because she lives a better life that my uncle here does.

Losing both biological parents multiplies the vulnerability of children to different risks and raises a serious concern. As a result, children desperately look for alternative care options within their family bonds. However, it was not the only cause that leads

children to be placed in international kinship care arrangements. Interviews identified that, even when children have one surviving biological parent, the death of the other parent forces them to be placed with relatives overseas. When the breadwinner of the family dies, the whole family turns upside down as the remaining parent is economically dependent on that person. These situations force children to be placed with relatives because relatives are perceived capable of providing better care than the parent that is still alive. Seventeen year old Nathy illustrates this as follows:

I don't know much about my dad. He died when I was five. I live with my mom and my older brother. My mother used to work in a government organization as an accountant until she got very sick and forced to quit her job. After she left her job my older brother and I help her but it is not enough. Most of the income was coming from my father and his death turned the family upside down. That's why she is sending us to our aunt in Australia.

Family Migration. Children whose parents have migrated across international borders and who have lost contact are also forced to apply for International kinship care arrangement. In many cases, parents who work abroad and/or migrate to secure employment are forced to place their children in the care of family and friends. Children in this kind of situation are being taken care of by another extended family member in the country. After some time, different reasons cause inabilities of these family members to continue care giving for children. Inability to get the appropriate care from their parents and other extended family members in the country causes children's placement with a relative abroad. Zenebech, a grandmother who was in the process of sending her 13 year old grandchild explained the situation as follows:

My daughter gave me her kid when she went to Kuwait. This girl was eight years old at the time. She used to call me frequently but after a while she stopped to call me as she used to before. She told me she changed her work place and started working by herself. I knew it was illegal and risky but what could I say to her? After a while she stopped calling and we lost our contact. I can't take care of this kid all by myself so I begged my other daughter to take her to Australia.

Migration of close family members to the developed countries is another determinant factor in seeking this kind of arrangements. These relatives' strong desires to provide children with better opportunities such as education, identified as a sole reason that cause children's placement in international kinship care arrangements. In this specific case, it is used as a mechanism of meeting relative's desires to reunite themselves with the rest of the family too. Migration of close relatives took a lion's share in initiating children and other family members to seriously consider this kind of arrangement. Fourteen year old Kidus illustrated:

Most of our relatives live in foreign countries. My brother, my aunt, my grandmother and all of my cousins live overseas. I used to be close with them especially with my grandmother and my brother. They wanted to take me with them and my grandmother came here to start applying for me. I think it is because there is a better place for all of us to live. My aunt told me that it is a very nice place for kids too. I also saw some pictures and watched some videos and i like the way they live.

Family Breakdown. The other categories of children who apply for Australian orphan relative visas were those children who had their biological

parents divorced and found themselves in a complex parenting situations. Family breakdowns due to different reasons deprive children from appropriate parental care. This kind of family dynamics puts children in a dangerous situation to be taken care of by their own parents. Inability of parents to sort out a better way of providing appropriate parental care make placing children with relatives overseas a reasonable option to be considered. Parents place children with relatives overseas when the situation is considered dangerous to children's proper development and when a relative overseas is considered responsible enough to provide a better care. Hawi, a sixteen year old girl said the following:

My parents divorced two years back, our relatives were trying to make peace between them since then but they couldn't. I am going to live with my aunt because I don't think my parents are going to make this family work.

4.2.2. Inability of Parents to Take Care of Children

Inability of parents to provide parental support for their children because of health, economic and related issues results in children's placement with relative overseas. When these types of situations happen, international kinship care arrangements are used as an alternative because kinship care giving is the most culturally appropriate form of care available for children in the community.

Financial Inability. Economic issues were identified as the most determinant factor in different families that raise concern about the kind of care children should get from their parents. Economic inability of parents to meet the basic needs of children causes children's placement in international kinship care arrangement. Inability of parents to send children to good schools, secure good health care and satisfying children's needs were among the very common forms of economic inabilities. International kinship care arrangement is used as the last resort because the

family's economic issues could not be managed with family resources available in the country.

The observation further confirmed that children who apply for this kind of arrangement live in households that were female headed, larger and have more dependent on few income-earners. The lack of economic support in the household and its impact on children's current and future well-being affected children in several ways. Children were going to government schools because good private schools were not affordable for parents and children were forced to engage in different type of activities after school in order to help their parents economically. In addition, their living condition is not conducive to a successful mental, behavioral and academic development. Children living in small rental houses where most of their basic needs are compromised, where they do not have a proper study or rest environment, or proper bedrooms, even after turning fifteen.

Economic difficulty of parents also manifested in parent-child relationships. The overwhelming economic burden on parents causes inability of understanding the psychological and developmental needs of children. Parents were unable to properly manage and treat changes in children's behavior over time as they are busy trying to manage economic issues in the family. As a result, there is a lack of proper treatment and ability to solve problems in children's overall wellbeing. Furthermore, economic issues tend to cause more problems especially in the single headed families where most of economic burdens are on a single parent. As a result, children are forced to be placed with relatives overseas hoping for the best treatments. Fifteen year old Samson explained his situation as follows:

My dad died when I was little and since then it's my mum who raised me up. My mum lives with the money she gets from my

older siblings. She cannot afford anything if they don't give her.

My sister specially helps my mum a lot, she sends money every month. Therefore my sister started the process to take me to her.

Health Problems. The other categories of children in this study had come to apply for international kinship care arrangement because their parents were sick. Serious health problem of parents lead children to be placed with relatives. Children who had their parents sick and have a close relative overseas prefer to be placed with them rather than looking for other options in the country. Participants had their own reasons and justifications for choosing international kinship care arrangements over the other alternatives they had in the country.

In general kin members living overseas are considered capable of providing the best care for children because they were previously engaged in helping the family for long time. They are also trusted to understand the emotional and developmental needs of children better than anyone else in the family circle. Being placed in developed nations was also perceived as a huge opportunity for children to get access to a better future and exposure to modern way of thinking than staying in the country. These three main reasons were taken as the selecting criteria to placed children with relatives overseas when their parents had serious health problems that made alternative care arrangement mandatory. Hiwot, a fifteen year old girl explained he situation as follows:

My dad has illnesses but it started to get worse a few years back.

We knew he was going to die sooner. As my father got sicker, he started to get worried about my future, and then my uncle in Australia decided to take me to him. I am not happy about going

because I don't want to leave my dad here alone but its not up to me to decide.

4.2.3. Lack of Satisfaction

So me parents lose interest in raising their children in their country for so many reasons. Interviews revealed that among many factors, the poor standard of living, the tough employment situation, the financial and other life hassles that children might face in the future cause lack of interest in parents about raising children in the country. This situation impacted on decisions made about the kind of parental care that children will be placed in.

When it comes to placing children with relatives living abroad, most of the decisions lie with their parents and current caregivers. Parent's unmet wishes of providing a better life for their children; better education, better living condition and a better future caused children's placement in international kinship care arrangement. The mismatch between reality and the type of care parents wish to provide their children was identified as a major reason that lead parents to place children in such arrangements.

Despite the love and affection parents have for their children, they give them up to relatives wishing to secure the best future for their children. Participants noted that parents are more concerned with their children's future life than the family environment they might end up in. The highly exaggerated images of western life in the community also resulted in children's lack of interest in living in Ethiopia. This situation motivated children to share the desire of going with their parents. It is considered as one way of showing their love for their children. Kidus illustrates this situation as follows:

My parents think I can be better off if I would live with my aunt. They said I can get a better education and I can be raised with someone who can afford better things. It is mainly economic issues. I think my parents are not happy with what they get from their job and they think my aunt can afford better than they does.

4.2.4 Looking for Permanent Help

Previous engagement of relatives in helping children in different ways such as sending money, clothes, materials and its consequent need of a permanent way of helping them leads children to apply for a visa. After an overwhelming engagement of helping children, the relatives start to look for a permanent way of helping mechanisms. This kind of help is mostly in the form of taking some of the family members to the place they live and offering a better education and better life.

International kinship care arrangement is considered the best way of providing a permanent help to children. It is also considered to give relatives a chance to get close to children and make the right moves towards providing the best care. Providing a permanent help to relatives is mainly in the forms of providing better opportunities, sustainable parental care and assuring a better future for children.

When considering getting permanent help from relatives who were previously engaged in the helping, the most common way is in the form of accessing better opportunities in life. Participants argued that receiving remittances from relatives was not enough to continue with life: they needed permanent help so that the children can help themselves in the future. Children found it best to permanently live with their relatives because staying in Ethiopia with the money they get every once in a while does not guarantee a possible better future.

Access to better opportunities such as education, employment and better living conditions were the ultimate goal of the arrangement in this case. These opportunities were considered to pave a way to children's future self-reliance. Once children are provided with these opportunities, they will stand by themselves instead of keep supported by their relatives overseas for the rest of their lives. Forty three year old mother Sintayehu explained this situation as follows:

My sister-in-law helps us a lot. She sends money to cover my kids' expenses but sending money only helps them for now. She can only help them by providing them with a better opportunity because if the kids are going to stay here, she is going to have to help them throughout their lifetime. We see people completing college and having a job but still depend on their family economically. I don't want that to happen to my kids. That is why we have decided to send them to her. I think at least they will be assured a permanent job and be able to help themselves in the future.

Another way of providing permanent help was in the form of assuring a brighter future for their children. Assuring a better future for children is thought to be achieved through exposing them to better opportunities. Children were believed to be assured a better economic security, better job opportunity and better education if they migrate to developed nations. Especially parents argued that they want to send their children abroad because where they believe that their children will have a brighter future in the developed nations. Relatives also take children because it is considered a family obligation to help the rest of the family back home. Yeshihareg, a mother who is sending her two kids to her sister-in-law explained this as follows:

I used to work in a government organization but my salary was not enough to go through the month. I don't want my kids to be like me in the future, I want them to be at least better than me. The best way I can assure that is if I send them somewhere else, to a developed nation. They can get a better education and better job. I am worried about their future. Their aunt can't keep helping them, so once they go there, all will be ok and they will not need other people's help anymore.

Children look for permanent parental care especially when unfortunate things happen to them. Children who have lost multiple caregivers and exhausted in being placed with different people look out for a permanent caregivers to take care of them. Looking for a sustainable parental care was observed in children who have suffered from multiple placements and start desperately searching for relatives to look after them. A fourteen year old boy, who is applying for an Australian orphan relative visa to go to his aunt there narrated:

After both of my parents died, my grandmother took me and my brother to her house. After a while my grandmother died and we were placed with another relative in the neighborhood. My relative was not happy with us because my little brother likes to play a lot and he fights with other kids. She was very mad at him all the time so we were again placed with my aunt here; she lives alone in a small house. My aunt is now about to go to a foreign country. That is why we are going too.

4.2.5. Taking Over Family Responsibilities

The family's need to pass on responsibilities of parental support to another person caused children seek for placements with their relative living abroad. These children are expected to take over family responsibilities after the placement took place. Especially, children above the age of fourteen were mainly being placed to take care of their families back home because the relative abroad made other priorities in their lives such as forming their own family. Elyas , who is sending his nephews to his brother explained:

I talked to my brother there; he was the only person who's helping the kids. It has been already over 7 years since he has been sending money to them. We agreed that it is tedious that he sends money all the time. so it would be better to take one of them and make them help the other. It is very difficult for him because he has another family to help to. If he can take one of these kids he will put off some burden from his shoulder.

Having an unemployed or dependent family members at home also seem to encourage children to seek for placement with relatives in order to take care of them. They believe it is crucial to take over this parental responsibility because it is difficult for relatives to help all family members at the same time. The fact that most relatives have another close family members to help or not the closest member of that specific family signifies the need to pass on their responsibilities to children they are taking. Nathy explained this situation as follows:

My mother doesn't have a job because she is sick. My aunt sends money to help us but it is not enough. If we can go to our aunt's, then we will help mum in a better way. The main reason that I

am going is to help my mother. I think helping three people is too much for my aunt right now. Once me and my brother get there, we will be able to help mum.

4.3. Expectation from International Kinship Care Placements

There were three different ways children explained about their expectations from placements overseas. Children associated their expectations with the things they have been sent by their relatives, the things they've heard about living in developed nations and with the things they have seen from the movies and social media. Accordingly, relatively better economic sustainability, education opportunity; better living condition and better employment opportunities were identified as main positive outcomes expected from international kinship care arrangements. On the other hand, children doubted the love and affection they will get from their relatives after the placement took place.

B etter education was the best possible outcome expected by children as it was one of the main reasons why they are put into this arrangement. They explained what kind of education they expect and how did they came to know about it. Children were told that they are going to be able to get the best education in Australia. Children in all cases believed that access to better education is in the forefront of their expectations and were hopeful that they will get the best education after the placements. Dawit explained this situation and he said:

I am in grade ten and I want to study computer science. I spend most of my days practicing computer and mobile technologies.

The school I am going to is a government school. We are over 60 students in the class and we cannot access computers easily, most of the computers in the school doesn't even work. I think I can

get a better education if I go abroad. I can go to a better place that gives the kind of education I want to study. In here it is hard to learn what you want.

Children's expectations about their future economic situation were associated with material and tangible things. When talking about economic issues, children explained it in-terms of shoes, clothes, houses and electronics they saw in movies and on social media. These expectations also have their roots from the things that relatives send for them such as money, clothes, pictures and videos. These things created excitement in children's minds about a possible future. Their expectations were all perfect and exciting when it comes to economic well being, as they only associated it with materials sent by their relatives. Ruth, a thirteen years old girl explained:

I can imagine how my life would be like by the things that she sends us and from the pictures and some videos I watched. She sends me nice stuff every time because it is easy in their country. If she can send the nice stuff while I am far away, I think she can provide a better things if I can go live with here. I think they can afford better than my parents especially economic wise. I can tell this from the things I heard about their way of life. Everybody at home says very nice things about living in Australia.

Children described what difference such arrangement would make if they grow up with their relatives living abroad. Though children like it if they grow up in their country, they were worried about growing up being less of who they want to become. Exposure to the developed world was expected to create a better future for children, especially by providing better access to education and better employment opportunities.

Children's expectations of positive things about their future lives came from the possibility of accessing or gaining these opportunities to become a better person in the future. Children were aware of opportunities found where they are heading and expect their access would create a better future for them. Ruth explained this idea as follows:

...my cousins told me it is a good place for girls. Girls can be whatever they want in Australia. I want to be something big but you know, it is difficult for girls here. I want to go to big colleges and be a doctor. If I go there I am sure I will be a great doctor.

Relatives' previous engagement in the helping process has build strong trusts between children and their relatives. The fact that future caregivers are from the extended family members created an expectation of a familiar family environment in children. Small conversations made over the phone and the meeting of relatives while they are on vacation created a rapport between children and their relatives. This situation gives children a way to know what kind of family environment to expect in the future. Children expect a positive psychological, emotional, and economic care and support from relatives. Blen, a social worker from The Federal First Instance Court explained it as follows:

This arrangement is made by people who have contacts previously and already are engaged in helping the children. Therefore, the arrangement is easier and does not feel like a sudden situation to children. Children also feel more comfortable when they are placed in international kinship care arrangement than any other forms of out of home care for that they know who they are about to be placed with and they already have contacts.

On the other hand, there were different doubts about relatives' parenting capability. Because relatives left the country long ago, some children are not sure what kind of "parents" their relatives might be. The other was that children do not really know their relative's personalities as they haven't contacted them for a long time, or they went to foreign countries while children were infants. Relationships are limited to phone conversations that might happen two or three times a year and sending money and other items every once in a while. These kind of relationships do not guarantee the best parental care they want from their relatives overseas.

Though children had issues in fully trusting the psychological and emotional support their relatives may offer, they believe their placement would guarantee permanent parental care, which is one of the expected positive outcomes of this arrangement. Besides, relatives are never expected to treat children wrong as they have a family obligation to take care of children. Nathy explained this situation and he said the following:

I don't know much about my aunt but she sounds like a nice person. I have met her once, four years back when she was here for a vacation. That was the only time I met her in person, I only knew her in pictures and phone calls before then. She calls us sometime, especially around holidays. She talks more with my mother. Hope we will get along well when I go there but generally I think she would be good for us. We don't have that much intimacy but I think we will get intimate after I go there. Besides she is my aunt, she won't hurt me no matter what. Though I would miss family life and love, all other things would be great.

4.4. Availability of Services to Facilitate International Kinship Care

There are different packages of services available for children who apply for international kinship care arrangement. In this regard all services that are provided by the Ethiopian government are available mainly in two governmental organizations at national level. The Federal Ministry of Women & Children Affairs and the Federal First Instance Court has the primary responsibilities of providing their respective services to children in need of international kinship care arrangements. Key informants from these two organizations argued that the government is currently working on protecting vulnerable children from potential risks associated with out-of-home care systems, especially placements that occur internationally.

Though the responsibilities of these two government bodies differ and the services they provide to children are not identical, they both work towards assuring the principle of the best interests of the child. Participants argued that children are entitled to several benefits and protections that are stated in different legal instruments and making sure these legal rights are upheld is the very crucial responsibilities they both had in common. Concerning international kinship care arrangements, both organizations work hand in hand to assure the placements are appropriate and meet the best interests of children by integrating the laws of the country with international laws that focused on alternative child care approaches.

4.4.1 The Court

The Federal First Instance Court is one of the prominent organizations that provide services to children who apply for international kinship care arrangement. The organization has the responsibilities of approving all international kinship care arrangements after revising different documents provided by applicants at national level. The court with the help of MoWA is responsible for seeing all pre placement

cases in order to make sure that all placements are appropriate and working to the best interests of the child. In addition to the above responsibilities, the court provides legal and social work supports.

Legal supports. The Federal First Instance Court plays a vital role in performing specific legal tasks in international kinship care arrangements. The court is responsible for assessing the appropriateness of applications by revising legal documents provided by applicants and giving the very final decisions on the arrangement. The court assesses the circumstances that resulted in children being without parental care, child's developmental and emotional needs, health, education and their relationship with their sponsors and other family members in the country in order to make decisions.

Concerning the requirements that have to be met by sponsors, the court looks through information provided by applicants in accordance with the eligibility criteria, mainly in relation to parental responsibility, best interests of the child and previous registerable criminal offences. Other issues such as sponsor's relationship to the child and extended family members, their employment situation and income levels, household composition and family history, physical and mental health and social networks with its possible effects on the wellbeing of children are seriously assessed.

Social Work Supports. In addition to the legal services, the court provides social work supports in its department found within the federal first Instance court. The experts in social work department works towards upholding the best interests of the child and makes sure arrangements are the best possible option available for them. Participants explained that the department provides applicants with an understanding of all the benefits and potential consequences of placing children across international

boundaries and help them think their decisions through before getting the placement done.

The department is also responsible for making a recommendation about the suitability of arrangements by assessing the social and emotional needs of children and potential carer's parenting capacity. Experts provide information and advice for applicants in order to show directions on all possible options found within the country before placing children across international boundaries. The ultimate goal of providing this social work services is to prevent unnecessary risks associated with cross boundary child placements before any further steps are taken. Abebe, a Social Worker in Federal First Instance Court explained about the available support as follows:

This department is mainly established to protect children from any kind of harm. Even if we cannot say we are doing our absolute very best to protect children's best interest, we are trying to fulfill some of them. We try to understand the situation from both children and relative's sides in order to see if the arrangement is appropriate. We ask parents to provide evidence that shows they are not capable of taking care of their children. We assess evidence from all sources before approving the placement and decide on it.

However, the observation indicated that there is no a holistic approach to ensure that the best interests of children are met, and that international kinship care arrangement is a suitable form of arrangement for children. The available single and time limited advice couldn't give an ample time for applicants to think their decisions through and consider all options available. Those services were only capable of

providing a slight idea about the possible outcomes of this kind of arrangements rather than making applicants explore all options. Besides, the wide range of complex issues that are raised by applicants cannot be addressed with a single intervention like a one time consultation provided by the department.

Participants in this study confirmed that the ultimate goal of promoting the best interests of children through providing information and advice takes a long time as it needs to establish trust and rapport in order to effectively assist applicants. The available social work services are not inclusive enough to address all issues because of the existing limitations in the packages of services. Blen , another Social Worker in this department explained the situation as follows:

We call children above five here and question about their placement and its consequences. We take their consents about the arrangement. For children below five their current caregivers or parents will be giving the information on behalf of them. The sponsors are not necessarily expected to come and confirm about arrangement. They will send an e-mail that confirms they are willing and capable of taking care of the child. We only do awareness creation on the family and children who are coming here with the help of the judge. In my personal opinion, this is not the best service that children need.

4.4.2. The Federal Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

The general process, practices, and procedures of international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia are dealt with by the Federal Ministry of Women and Children Affairs at national level. Key informants reported that MoWA is responsible for carrying out the major administrative roles of facilitating the implementation

decisions . The Ministry, in collaboration with the Federal First Instance Court and Regional Government Bureau of Women and Children Affairs undertakes the tasks of facilitating the process of international kinship care arrangements. The Childcare Affairs Directorate, specifically, the Child Right Protection and Promotion Department which is placed within the MoWA is mandated with the facilitation of alternative childcare care and adoption processes.

Child Right Protection and Promotion Department is mandated with handling all affairs of children as well as processing inter-country child placements including international kinship care arrangements. This Government agency is also responsible to offer a recommendation letter that shows whether a child is eligible to be placed in specific care arrangement by reviewing documents for the Federal First Instance Court. It also has the responsibility of monitoring and following up the well-being of children placed internationally. Solomon an expert at MoWA explained this as follow:

Concerning international kinship care arrangement our organization has the responsibility of assessing and commenting on the appropriateness of children's placement that is given by the revised family code. The organization provides the court with an assessment report on children's current situation, specific benefits that children could get from the arrangement, and make a comment if the arrangement is the most preferred option. Besides commenting on the arrangement, the organization writes children a support letter to different organizations in order to help children get the appropriate services in their visa, birth certificate, passport and other application process.

Reviewing birth, marriage & education certificates of applicants in accordance with the stated eligibility criteria, scrutinizing histories of applicants in order to see the positive and negative consequences of arrangements on the wellbeing and development of children, checking up supporting letters written by different authorities that shows economic, social, psychological and emotional capability of caregivers and other important documents in order to approve the arrangement.

However, key informants argued that the organization lacks a specific working mechanism to manage international kinship care arrangement. The fact that all international kinship care arrangements are found to be private or informal, with the limited involvements of the governmental agencies, created the absence of clear and well defined working mechanism in the organization. These technical limitations coupled with the documentation problems created a huge gap in effectively handling of international kinship care arrangement in the country.

Unlike inter country adoption, the available services for children who apply for international kinship care arrangements are very limited. The government mainly focuses on inter country adoptions than international kinship care arrangements. Pre placement and post placement services that are basically available for children in inter country adoption are not available for children in international kinship care arrangements. This services include home studies that are done in children's country of origin which is Ethiopia, relatives are not obligated by law to come and confirm on the arrangement if they don't want to, they are also not obligated to bring home study reports from their country but it will be included if they can provide or asked by authorities in their country.

Post placement reports are also not asked from relatives who take children from Ethiopia, it is considered the arrangement is safe and will bring the best outcome for

children as the arrangement is done between relatives. Relatives that take children are mainly interested in helping each other and helping the rest of the family.

Participants believed that the fact that most international kinship care arrangements were found to be private or informal arrangements and that there is a lack of clarity in the existing working system, caused a huge gap in providing appropriate pre placement supports to children. Through the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs review documents that are provided by applicants, other kinds of pre placement supports such as home study, counseling, awareness creation and other assessments on potential care givers are not being carried out. The available supports for children are limited to revising documents provided by applicants.

Another issue identified from document review was that there is no comparable government system that specifically supports international kinship care arrangement. The system provides a wide range of support for inter country adoption but not for international kinship care arrangements and these cases do not reflect the interests of reasonable number of children being placed in international kinship care arrangements in variety of nations. The law itself does not push international kinship care applicants enough to seriously consider other alternatives for children as international kinship care arrangements are dealt with between close relatives.

4.4.3. Concerns Raised

The government organizations concerned provide services to people who apply for international kinship care arrangements according to the already set eligibility criteria. However, experts argued that this arrangement is being used as an alternative mechanism to send children to foreign countries rather than help vulnerable children. The gap in the system that manages this arrangement lead applicants to exploit the services that should be given to eligible children to use the service.

The existing legal procedure were found to be very permissive of exploitation as there are no clearly stated working mechanisms that manage international kinship care arrangement. This situation allows people who have the knowledge to exploit the services intended to serve the needs of vulnerable children who apply for this arrangement. Only those families and children who have the information are using the available services. Most children who have been placed in international kinship care arrangements do not satisfy the eligibility criteria set in different legal documents. Some children miss out in their chance because of lack of information while many others exploit the services just because they know how the system works.

Families and relatives provide the authorities with falsified birth, education and health certificates in order to place children abroad. The organizations do not have a specific system that can critically assess the originality and truthfulness of information provided. The documents are mainly given by the local authorities, especially kebeles and regional children and women affairs bureaus. The government organizations at national level, which are in charge of giving final approvals to all arrangements, are not able to check the information because they are legally not allowed to interfere in the duties of another government authority or question their work unless some external body has raised a concern. An explanation given by Abebe explained this situation as bellow:

We have concerns about children who apply for this arrangement but parents use providing access to a better education and better future as excuses for sending children to relatives living in developed nations. The thing is, we only consider the evidence and documents provided by applicants. We do not have any checking mechanisms for the evidence provided. Even though, we

know the children are better off living with their parents here, we will be forced to process the arrangement. Most applicants provide us with birth certificates and letter that confirms they are not able to take care of children. These documents are coming from government authorities and we do not have the legal ground to question them back.

The question remains how international kinship care arrangement can be managed properly in the way that ensures adequate protection for children as enshrined in the Ethiopian Constitution . Additionally the available guidelines with their weaker wording may make it actually possible that children whose parents are both alive and capable of taking care of them can be placed abroad with relatives.- since it only needs to be "authenticated" by the concerned government body - the Kebele.

4.5. Legal Framework

The Ethiopian government has provided the best interests of the child principle in legislation. Participants argued there is no shortage of laws that entrench the best interests of the child principle in the country. These laws provide either a general best interests guarantee, or one that is specific to adoption and related issues. One of the fundamental laws of the country, the constitution also makes children's best interests a primary consideration in its Article 36(2).

Despite the fact that there is no lack of principles that guarantee the best interests of children, the principles are difficult to be implemented in practice as there is no clear definition, description, or criteria regarding what constitutes the best interests of the child. Different legal documents that make mention of child rights especially in the forms of children in alternative care systems outside of the country and its process

are less certain, less uniform, and ultimately complex to implement in practice. The absence of a fixed definition of what constitutes best interests of children in alternative care systems in various direction of the world including international kinship care arrangement is absent in these documents. Besides this, the available general principles do not allow for a case-by-case consideration, facilitating a context-dependent consideration of each alternative childcare options and specific child's case in these situations.

4.5.1. Domestic Legal Instruments

In Ethiopia, the revised Family Code is one of the fundamental legal documents available to work on various child care issues including different forms of alternative childcare. This legal document sets general principles and guidelines that manage different issues including issues related to inter country child placements and domestic kinship care arrangement. However, document reviews identified that there are no specific legal instruments or standards which govern international kinship care arrangement. The legal protections given to children in need of cross boundary placements including kinship care arrangements are not clearly identified as there are no detailed and holistic tools that could be applicable in upholding the rights of children in such arrangements. Participants also stated that the concerned organizations namely MOWA and the Federal First Instance Court used the general principles stated in the Family Code in order to formulate internal working manuals and guidelines that could be applicable for international kinship care arrangements and other forms of alternative care options. Yared, a judge from Federal First Instance Court explained this as follows:

We have a well defined working frame in the revised family code of the country. This document stated specific working guidelines

for inter country adoption but it does not provide a binding framework for managing international kinship care arrangement.

We can find these things in a system level. These systems take the principles as a base and use them to manage other similar issues in accordance with the law. Systems are available because laws are grand principles in nature.

4.5.2. International Legal Protections

In addition to the aforementioned domestic law, the country has ratified various international protocols and guidelines concerning children in need of cross boundary right protections. These international legal documents are integrated with the laws of the country and are used in upholding the rights of children in different forms of alternative care systems including international kinship care arrangement. The CRC, ACRC and the 2009 UN Alternative Childcare guideline are the major legal instruments ratified by the country and integrated with the laws of the land. Upholding these international legal instruments strongly depends on the legal criteria stated in the revised Family Code regarding child welfare, parental responsibility and inter-country child placements.

Both the participants and the available legal documents reviewed for the purpose of this study revealed that there are no universally binding legal instruments or standards that govern international kinship care arrangement. However, some of the aspects of these kinds of arrangements are referred to in different international legal documents. For instance when parental care is not possible, pursuing care by the extended family and others with a kinship bond with the child is at the forefront of CRC. Article 20 (2 &3) of this guideline explicitly acknowledge that a wide range of options for care and accommodation arrangements exist for children in need of

alternative care. The article acknowledges these options as follows: “... *inter alia*, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or, if necessary, placement in suitable institutions for the care of children”. Similarly the 2009 Alternative Childcare Guideline section-II 5.3.6 states, “If a child cannot be cared for by his/her biological parent/s, an agency operating child-family reunification shall consider reunification of the child with the extended family”. This guideline also acknowledged all the aforementioned alternative childcare options stated in CRC Article 20(3).

The CRC further states that when selecting from the aforementioned alternative care options, the particular vulnerabilities of such a child including their being outside of their country of origin should be taken into account. Article 22 of this guideline highlights consideration must be given to what specific protections shall be given to children in this situation as follows: “*Mechanisms established under national law in order to ensure alternative care for such children in accordance with Article 22 of the Convention, shall also cover unaccompanied or separated children outside their country of origin*”. However, the Convention on the Rights of the Child remains neutral about children placed across international boundaries with their relatives, though Article 20 mentions some sort of protection should be directed to children in such situation.

4.6. Summary

International kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia has been managed as a form of international relative adoption or international private arrangements. Which mean all this arrangements are informal in nature. They are initiated and fully processed by applicants themselves. The involvement of government authorities is limited to revising legal and other personal information in order to assure the suitability of placements in this specific type or arrangement.

This study identified two major categories of children who apply for international kinship care arrangement: Children who are unable to be cared for by family resources in the country and children who choose to be in this arrangement expecting specific outcomes from it.

The study also identified four major reasons that lead these categories of children to apply for international kinship care arrangement:

(1) The death of both or single biological parent lead children to be in different forms of alternative care systems specially kinship care arrangements. Death of parents leads children to apply for international kinship care arrangements either by leaving them without appropriate parental care or imposing extreme burden on the parents that are still alive.

(2) Inability of parents to take care of children because of economic and health issues leads to placing children in international kinship care arrangement. Parents who are very sick and unable to work or provide for the family are forced to place their children with their relatives. Children in single headed households are also placed in this arrangement as their parents economic situation doesn't allow providing appropriate educational and financial treatments.

(3) Previous engagement of relatives in helping children creates a need for permanent helping mechanism. As a result, children apply for international kinship care arrangements looking for permanent help from their relatives. Providing this kind of help is mainly in the form of placing children with their relatives. Exposing children to better education and living condition, providing permanent parental care and securing a relatively better future life are some ways used to help them in a permanent manner.

(4) The need for taking over family responsibilities is the last reason identified in this study. Especially for children above the age of sixteen, the purpose of international kinship care arrangement is to help the rest of the family back home. Inability of relatives to continue helping the family any more leads using this arrangement as a mechanism to take children abroad and hand over family responsibilities. Children in this category are expected to help family members who cannot help themselves because of unemployment or other reasons back home.

Placement in international kinship care arrangement creates various expectations from children. Positive outcomes, especially in relation to future economic and material gain are among the very common. These expectations emanate from materials sent by relatives who reside in Australia, influence of social media and informal talks around the family that raises a high level of expectations. Better education, better job opportunities and better living conditions are some of the positive outcomes expected from this placement.

On the contrary, children were not certain about the type of treatments they might encounter after the placement took place. The fact that their relatives left the country long ago, in some cases even before children were born, coupled with the limited knowledge of children about them, raised concerns. Children were aware of the less intense psychological, emotional and parental treatments they might get from their relatives.

Various packages of services are available for children who need cross boundary placements in different government organizations. However, very few services are available for children who apply for international kinship care arrangement. MoWA and the Federal First Instance Court assess the suitability of placements by revising documents given to them. Documents are reviewed in order to ensure the best

interests of the child are upheld in accordance with domestic and international laws. However, there are no holistic and practical services in these organizations except some sort of counseling given to applicants about the possible consequences of these kinds of arrangements.

The legal protections given to children in international kinship care arrangement are not clearly identified as there are no detailed and holistic tools that could be applicable in upholding the rights of children in such arrangements. The available general principles do not allow for case-by-case consideration, facilitating a context based consideration for each alternative child care option, including international kinship care arrangement.

Chapter Five

5. Discussion

This study sought to explore international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia. Using a qualitative research method, five themes presented in the previous chapter were identified. Thus, the current chapter presents the discussion of these major themes by comparing the current research findings with results found in prior related studies on the area. In particular, the findings of studies conducted in Ethiopia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Australia are given due consideration. National and international legal documents concerning international kinship care arrangement are also discussed in this chapter.

5.1. Understanding International Kinship Care Arrangement in Ethiopia

International kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia is not a new practice but it has been practiced in informal ways. That is, the involvement of government authorities in the process is very limited. As a result, the exact number of children living in this arrangement and the extent of its prevalence is unknown. This finding supports the findings of studies conducted by UNICEF, (2004) and ISS Australia (2013). Both studies found that most international kinship care arrangements have taken place in an informal way and therefore are difficult to regulate.

A significant number of Ethiopian children live in international kinship care arrangement in Australia today and many more are lining up to be placed yet. A similar study by ISS Australia, (2013), also identified Ethiopia as the second top country that placed children in this care arrangement in Australia. However, this area is still very poorly managed and poorly recognized in the country (p.13). Although a significant number of children live in this out of home care system, attention has not

been paid to set specific standards and guidelines for its proper management in Ethiopia.

The current study indicates that there are no specific assessment standards that take into account the particular needs and characteristics of children in international kinship care arrangement in the country. The low standards of assessment and monitoring leave children without the supports they require from child protection services. It also raises a concern about the proper management of children's difficulties and disadvantages related to their emotional and psychological needs and most importantly the promotion of the best interests of the child. Additionally, the lack of well organized assessment and support means that the prevalence and extent of risks to children is not being managed properly.

5.2. Reasons that lead Children to apply for International Kinship Care

Ethiopian children who apply for international kinship care arrangement fall into two major categories; Children who are unable to be cared for by family resources in the country, and children who use this arrangement as an option expecting specific outcomes. This study identified permanent loss of parental care, inability of parents to provide for children, lack of satisfaction, taking over family responsibility and seeking permanent help as the major reasons that lead children to be placed in international kinship care arrangement. Among these research findings, some of them are shared by other studies too. Biemba , Beard, Bram Brooks, Bresnahan & Flynn (2010), Save the Children, (2015), ISS Australia (2011), and FHI (2010), identified death of parents or guardians, family violence, abuse, neglect or the inability of parents to provide for them as the main reason for the placement of hundreds of children with family overseas. Except death and inability of parents to provide for

children, the other reasons are not common for Ethiopian children placed with relatives in Australia.

This study indicates that the increasing number of Ethiopian children placed in international kinship care relates to the number of Ethiopians migrated to Australia. Relative's strong desire coupled with their familial obligations to help their extended family lead children's placement with relative in Australia. Children are mostly placed with their relatives who previously engaged in helping them in different ways. Meseret Kassahun, (2011) and Biemba, et al (2010), also support these findings, alternative care and support arrangements in most African countries and Ethiopia mainly come from the extended family.

Lack of satisfaction with the living conditions in Ethiopia is the major factor for placements of Ethiopian children in international kinship care arrangement. Relatives' influence in shaping children's attitude about life in developed nations especially established by the importation of foreign-produced materials, money transfers, and temptations created through informal conversations vicariously established a set of expectations which in varying ways negatively altered children's interest in life in Ethiopia and positively influenced their interest in placement abroad. Thus, international kinship care arrangement is used as a mechanism to migrate to Australia. These findings are quite in contrast to the research finding by ISS Australia (2013), which identified that the majority of these children are from countries that experienced recent or ongoing conflict or unrest, leading to children's placement in Australia (p.13). Drawing on the findings of the present study, it can be said that placements in Australia for the majority of Ethiopian children is not caused by conflict or unrest, but rather they are caused by poverty and migration driven factors.

5.3. Children's Expectations

Findings showed that children travel miles away from their homes and families hoping to access better education, employment and living opportunities in Australia. The tremendous western influence especially accelerated by social media and family migration created a huge impact on children's perceptions of the destination country. Children who participated in this study noted that movies, photographs and other images, videos and social media have shaped their perceptions towards wishing to live and work in Australia.

Findings of this study indicate that international kinship care is taken as a form of arrangement used to continue emigrating families to Australia, expecting to provide them with better education and employment opportunities. ISS Australia, (2013), also identified that, sponsors emigrate children to provide them with better education and employment (p.17). The present study indicates that though positive expectations from placements in developed nations are common, expecting only the positive outcome especially in situations where formal assessment and monitoring are not at work, could be an illusion.

On top of this the study identified that either children or relatives do not really know each other's personalities. This is because relatives went to foreign countries while children were infants or they haven't contacted them for a long time. Relationships between them are limited to phone conversations and remittance sending and receiving. These kinds of relationships do not guarantee the best parental care that children need in the future. Question remains as to whether children will, in most or all cases, are protected because they have a blood tie with sponsors.

5.4. Availability of Services

The findings identified the availability of very limited services for children in international kinship care arrangement. All child protection and promotion services available in Ethiopia are intended to contribute positively towards the rights of children upheld by the local and international legal documents (Alternative Child care Guideline, 2009). But the pre-placement legal and social work supports are not responsive to these principles. The general child protection principles available in Ethiopia are difficult to implement in practice as there is no clear definition, description, or criteria regarding what constitute the best interests of the child in international kinship care arrangement.

The fundamental goal of child protection services is to protect children in alternative care systems from potential harm. However, the responsible governmental organizations lack a well- functioning service delivery system for children in international kinship care arrangement. They also lack a systematic screening and critical assessment to safeguard children from inappropriate placements. This situation implies that such arrangements either do not reflect the best interests of the child, or that it is quite possible for applicants to misuse the arrangement.

The current study identified that children are being placed in international kinship care arrangement without getting properly evaluated and formalized processes. Some applicants provide authorities with falsified stories, birth, education and health certificates to place children abroad with relatives. Lack of strong and systematic screening mechanisms at the pre placement stage gave applicants a free pass to use this arrangement in a way that it is not intended to be used. There is no proper checking mechanism to see whether information provided is correct. The weak

performance of service delivery system puts children in a difficult situation as to how best their rights be protected.

5.5. Legal Issues in International Kinship Care Arrangement

When children are left without parental care due to different reasons, the onus is upon the government to ensure their safety and protection. This is confirmed by UNCRC, Preamble: "In all countries in the world there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions and such children need special consideration". Even though international kinship care arrangements fall into these categories of exceptional conditions, the existing legal protections in Ethiopia do not guarantee these special considerations. The ultimate disadvantage to a child in this situation therefore occurs when these legal protections fail to protect them from potential risks.

The rights of children in international kinship care arrangements are referred to in different international legal documents which have also been adopted by Ethiopia. ACPF (2012), also identified that Ethiopia has ratified both the UNCRC and ACRWC. The UNCRC, Article 22 highlights that consideration must be given to what specific protection shall be given to children who have particular vulnerabilities including being outside of their country of origin. Accordingly, the child protection system should consider specific situations of children when placing them in international kinship care arrangements. The response of the current system towards upholding these rights however is very neglectful.

Children are being placed in relative care overseas in informal ways where the appropriate pre and post-placement supports and assessments are not provided for them. This implies that issues related to immigration policy can easily overshadow their entitlement for special attention and care. Similarly, UNICEF (2011), stated that the complex socio-legal status of children in international kinship care arrangements

can hold them back from enjoying the same degree of protection as other children deprived of parental care.

How children experience their placement and whether they feel sufficiently safe is one of the most important indicators of the child protection system's performance. Children are entitled to the right of expressing their views about their placement no matter where and with whom they are being placed. This right is given to children by UNCRC, Article 12 (1). The document stated that, "State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child". Preservation of these rights highly depends on the existing child protection and promotion system in Ethiopia. The findings of the current study identified that well developed approaches are lacking in the system, which consequently neglects this very right of children. Children are being placed with their relatives overseas without getting the chance to express their feelings about their placements.

Chapter Six

6. Conclusions and Social Work Implication

6.1. Conclusions

This study sought to explore international kinship care arrangements between Ethiopia and Australia. Using a qualitative research method, it has provided detailed information on reasons that lead children to apply for international kinship care placements, their expectations, the availability of services in responsible governmental organizations and the legal issues associated with international kinship care arrangement from the perspectives of Ethiopian children who apply for Australian orphan relative visas.

The findings of this showed that a significant number of Ethiopian children were placed in international kinship care arrangement in Australia. However, it was difficult to know the exact number of these children as it is the least systematically recorded and supported system. Lack of clarity around specific standards, process and eligibility criteria regarding children who need placements with relatives overseas created a huge gap in fully understanding international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia.

Various factors contributed to the increasing number of children in international kinship care arrangement. The dramatic increase of migrations to the developed world and relative's desire to support their extended families are the major factors. Additionally, the pre-existing informal support mechanism in Ethiopia especially in the form of kinship care giving also accelerated the number of children placed with relatives overseas.

Two major categories of children apply for international kinship care placements in Australia: Children who are unable to be cared for by family resources in Ethiopia,

and children who use this arrangement as an option for accessing better education, material and financial lifestyles and employment opportunities. Western influence established by the importation of materials, money transfers, and the consequent temptations affected children's attitude about life in Australia and created a set of positive expectations. As a result a considerable number of children use this arrangement to get to relatives who are already settled in there.

The Ethiopian government provides legal and social work services to children who apply for international kinship care arrangement. All of these services contribute positively towards the rights and welfare of children. However, there is no clear definition, description, or criteria regarding what legal procedures could be followed in processing such care arrangement. Though some of the rights of children in international kinship care arrangement are mentioned in different legal documents, preservation of these rights depends on the existing child protection system. The current working system however, doesn't guarantee proper safeguarding of children from associated risks.

6.2. Social Work Implication

The findings indicate the issue of international kinship care remain largely unexamined. This important alternative childcare system could greatly benefit from further research to clarify the issues to be addressed, to promote kinship care as an option for children deprived of parental care and to develop better practice standards and guidelines to ensure the protection and well-being of children. This study paves a way to fill the gap in the existing knowledge base. However, this study is exploratory and further investigation is needed to confirm and enhance the findings with a large representative sample that could provide a generalizable finding.

The findings of this study identified that children who apply for international kinship care are not receiving adequate pre placement supports from responsible bodies. Therefore, this study provides social work practitioners with an understanding that could help them reflect upon their practices and service delivery processes. It also indicates the need to make available supports more responsive in addressing the needs of children and inform service providers of the need to set specific service provision standards and guidelines. Furthermore, the fact that some of the children participated in this study use international kinship care arrangement as a way simply to migrate to Australia, reflects the tremendous effects of family migration and western influence on children's sustainable development. Thus it indicates the importance of working on the ever increasing number of families migrating, through designing a suitable approach to promote a better and sustainable family environment in Ethiopia.

The findings of this study have important implications for social work education. The findings could be useful in the Child and Family education, because kinship care for relative's children is one of the pre-existing informal support mechanisms in the country. These findings can also be used to generate and promote indigenous knowledge regarding children in out of home care system. This could bring a positive impact on social work services, practices and policy through education. Furthermore, the findings could be used in teaching advocacy on the issue of vulnerable children in international kinship care arrangements.

The findings of this study demonstrated that there are no policy documents that explicitly acknowledge international kinship care arrangement as an alternative care option for vulnerable children. Additionally, the currently available policy options do not provide specific and comprehensive responses for children in alternative care system outside of the country. The findings imply that there is a need for a

well-developed policy alternative to address the issues with children in international alternative care system. The findings also inform the country's social welfare structure to specifically benefit children in international kinship care arrangement. Furthermore, it indicates that social welfare services provided by the government, National and International Non-Governmental Organizations, and Community Based Organizations to be developed to have clearly stated standards, services to be delivered, eligibility criteria, and organizational responsibilities for international kinship care arrangement.

6.3. Recommendations

Drawing on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are offered for consideration by the government, policy makers, Child Protection and Promotion Service providers at federal and local levels, and non governmental community service organizations:

- A national initiative should be taken to properly acknowledge international kinship care arrangement and proper standards should be maintained to support children in this care arrangement.
- The child welfare system at federal level should provide transparent kinship care policies that properly acknowledge international kinship care arrangement. Policy, programming and practice should set specific benefits and requirements used in international kinship care arrangement.
- Specific approaches for assessing applicants during the process of international kinship care arrangement should be identified in both MoWA and the Federal First Instance Court. The process of assessment should be more collaborative, supportive and allow child participation.
- Professional staff who are well trained, skilled and aware of the particulars of

international kinship care arrangement should be employed in both MoWA and the Federal First Instance Court. These professionals should critically assess the suitability of kinship placements in terms of kinship carers' capacity to care for children and best interests of the child.

- Pre-placement assessments on the potential kinship carers and post-placement follow ups on the successful placements of children should be mandatory. MoWA should take responsibility of assessment and monitoring, because it has a legal obligation in this issue.
- Child protection and promotion authorities at MoWA should establish a well functioning network that works tightly with the destination country's child protection system to ensure successful placements.
- Further research should be undertaken to better determine the prevalence of international kinship care arrangements and the specific needs of children in this arrangement.

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Annexes

Table 1- Socio-Demographic Information of Children Participated in In-Depth Interviews.

Case	participant's Pseudo Name	Age	Sex	Level of education	Parenting situation	Current care giver
1	Ruth	13	F	6 th grade	Both parents alive	Both Parents
2	Kidus	14	M	7 th grade	Both parents alive	Both parents
3	Nebiyu	14	M	8 th grade	Double orphan	Relative
4	Hiwot	15	F	8 th grade	Half orphan	Father
5	Samson	15	M	8 th grade	Half orphan	Mother
6	Hawi	16	F	9 th grade	Parents divorced	Father
7	Rahel	16	F	8 th grade	Double orphan	Uncle
8	Nathy	17	M	10 th grade	Half orphan	Mother
9	Dawit	17	M	10 th grade	Both parents alive	Both parents

Source: Researcher's Field in depth interview, 2016

Table 2- Socio - Demographic Information of Caregivers Participated in In-Depth Interviews.

No.	Participant's Pseudo Name	Age	Sex	Living place	Relation to the child
1	Yeshareg	37	F	Addis Ababa	Grandmother
2	Sintayehu	43	F	Addis Ababa	Mother
3	Elyas	47	M	Tigray	Uncle
4	Zenebech	56	F	Addis Ababa	Mother

Source: Researcher's Field in depth interview, 2016

Table 3- Socio - Demographic Information of Key Informants Participated in in-Depth Interviews.

Key informants	Participant's Pseudo Name	Age	Sex	Organization	Position	Work experience
KI 1	Blen	25	F	federal first instance court	social worker	three years
KI 2	Henok	25	M	MoWA	child protection expert	Three years
KI 3	Abebe	28	M	federal first instance court	Social Worker	Two year and half
KI 4	Selomon	35	M	MoWA	child protection expert	Three years
KI 5	Yared	30	M	federal first instance court	Judge	Three years and half

Source: Researcher's Field in depth interview, 2016

Consent Form

Study Title: Exploring international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia: The case of Ethiopian children applying for Australian orphan relative visa.

Researcher Details:

Asnakech Tesfaye

Post graduate student in school of Social work, Addis Ababa University

Purpose of Study: To explore international kinship care arrangements in Ethiopia.

1. I've told about the purpose of the stud and had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw myself or my data at any time, without giving any reason, and without any adverse consequences
3. I understand who will have access to personal data provided.
4. I understand how personal data will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.
5. I understand how research will be written up and published .
6. I understand how to raise concerns or make a complaint.
7. I consent to being audio recorded.
8. I understand that audio recordings will be used in research outputs.
9. I consent to the use of direct quotes.
10. I agree to take part in the study.

Name of participant:

Signature: _____

Date:

Name of researcher: Asnakech Tesfaye

Signature: _____

Date

Interview Guiding Questions for Children Who Apply for Australian Orphan Relative Visa

I. Background Information

Pseudo Name

Age _____

Sex _____

Place of Birth _____

Place of living

Are you currently going to school? If yes, what grade? where?

1. Could you please tell me about your current living condition?

- With whom are you living currently?
- How many children are found in your current household?
- What is the job of your current caregivers?
- Describe your relationship with your current caregiver?(are you related by blood or other relationship?)
- Who is supporting you besides your family?(your relative living in Australia? If yes, how?)

II. Understanding international kinship care arrangements

2. Can you please tell me how you started to apply for Australian orphan relative visa?

- Source of information (how did you know about international kinship care arrangement)
- who initiated the application(parents, current caregiver or a relative who is living in Australia?)

3. Can you please tell me about who have been involved in the visa application process?

How?

- Just you, your current caregivers and your relative in Australia?
- Agencies, if yes, how?
- Professionals such social workers or legal practitioners, if yes, how?
- People from your social network, if yes, how?

III. Reasons for applying for international kinship care Placement

4. Would you please tell me the reasons that lead you to apply for Australian orphan relative visa?

- Current economic, health other situations
- Current caregiver's situation? health, economic or family related
- Have you tried any other options rather than going to Australia? If yes what are they?

IV. Children's Expectations

5. Can you describe your relationship with your relative in Australia?

- what is your relationship with your future caregiver(by blood or other ways)
- For how long your future caregivers have been living in Australia,
- How often you contact your relative in Australia? (in what ways you contact them, phone conversations or in person)
- How close are you with your future care giver? Before they left to Australian and after?
- tell me what you know about their living situation in Australia(work, family life and how did you know)
- Tell me about the supports you have been getting from your relative in Australia?

6. Can you please tell me about your expectations from your placements in Australia?
- How you imagine your life in Australia? How did you come to know?(did your relative in Australia tell you about it or somebody else did)
 - Do you think you will be better off if you live in Australia? How? (economically, socially, emotionally, educationally)
 - How do you expect your relationship with your caregiver would be after you go to Australia? How about with their other family members?

VI. Availability of Supports

7. Can you please tell me about the procedures you have been following in applying for visa so far?
- When did you start applying for Australian orphan relative visa?
 - How many places and organizations have you visited so far? For what purposes?
 - Tell me about the requirements you've asked to fulfil?
 - What are the challenges you faced in these organizations?
 - Did you and your parents/guardian try other ways to process your arrangement? If yes tell me about it? (is it through agencies or other ways)
8. Can you explain the assistance you have got from the organizations you visited so far?
- What professional supports have you got? (ex.counseling)
 - How helpful are they? In what ways?
 - Are you satisfied with the services you have been given ?(do you think there are enough services for you? If yes, explain how? If no explain what did they miss ?

9. Can you tell me about the major challenges you have faced in applying for Australian orphan relative visa?

- What are they, in which sector
- Financial, legal and other professional challenges

10. Is there anything you would like to add concerning the issue of international kinship care arrangements?

Thank You for Your Time!

Interview Guiding Questions for Key Informants/Professionals

Pseudo Name.....

Age

Sex

Work position in the organization?

For how long have you been working for the organization?

I. Understanding international kinship care arrangement

1. Can you please tell me about international kinship care arrangement?

- Explain what makes international kinship care unique from other types of alternative childcare schemes? Especially from international adoption?
 - explain it in terms of the legal grounds, and promoting child welfare
- Are there any specific procedures that have to be followed in the processing international kinship care arrangement? If yes what are they? If no, what are the existing procedures?

II. Pre-placement assessment and support

2. Can you please tell me about services you provide for applicants of international kinship care arrangement?

-Legal and other professional supports like social work support

3. Can you please tell me about the eligibility criteria used to place children in international kinship care arrangement?

➤ Eligibility criteria should be by children and future care givers

- Legal requirements (documents)
- Child's current condition (economic, health, emotional needs, relationship with relative),

4. Pre- placement assessments

➤ Pre-placement assessments on future caregiver's economic, social and health capabilities of caring for the child

- Relationship with the child especially with regard to child's emotional attachment to the relative

➤ Assessments on children including family background, current support system, child's relationship with the relative and best interests of the child

➤ Mechanisms being used to ensure a successful integration of children into the new family, post placement follow up and evaluation?

III. Legal issues

5. Can you please tell me about the legal bases used to process international kinship care arrangement in Ethiopia?

➤ What are the specific guidelines, policy frameworks or other legal instruments that have been used in international kinship care arrangement?

- How do the available legal instruments work in international kinship care arrangement?
- Explain how national and international legal instruments on the welfare of children have been considered (The Ethiopian family code and international guidelines, conventions and principles on welfare of the child)

6. Can you please tell me how the best interest of the child is protected in international kinship care arrangement?

. In pre placement assessment,

.In the court procedure

7. Are there any policy and legal amendments concerning international kinship care arrangement so far? (how effective are they, what changes they have brought?

8. Share with me the major challenges you have faced in placing children in international kinship care arrangement?

9. Is there anything you would like to recommend for the future regarding international kinship care in Ethiopia? (Regarding policy, pre -placement assessment and other professional supports provided for applicants).

Thank you for Your Time!!!

Observation Checklist about Services delivered to Vulnerable Children**Observation Check List**

This observation checklist helps the researcher to understand the physical and emotional expression of the children applying for international kinship care arrangement.

- Does children get adequate services in MoWA and The Federal First Instance Court
- Do children have a say in the process of their placements, do they get a chance to express their feelings
- Do children seem comfortable with their placement in Australia
- Is there favorable living condition for children's proper development in their houses
- Do children have smooth interaction with their parents, guardian.

የተሳታፊዎች ፍቃደኝነት ማረጋገጫ ፎርም

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የሶሻል ወርክ ትምህርት ቤት

የተከበራችሁ የጥናቱ ተሳታፊዎች

ስሜ አስናቀች ተስፋዬ ይባላል። በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በሶሻል ወርክ የትምህርት ክፍል 2ኛ ዓመት የማስተር ድግሪ ተማሪ ስሆን በአሁኑ ሰዓት የመመረቂያ ጽሁፌን በመስራት ላይ እገኛለሁ።

የጥናቱ ዓላማ፡ በዘመዳማች መካከል የሚደረግ አለም አቀፍ ጉዲፊቻ ያለውን ነባራዊ ሁኔታ ለመረዳት ነው።

የተሳትፎ ቅደመ - ተከተሎች፡ ጥናቱን ስኬታማ እንዲሆን የጥናቱ ተሳታፊዎች ሚና ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ በቃለ - መጠይቁ ጊዜ ለጥያቄዎቹ ትክክለኛውን መልስ እንዲሰጡና እንዲያብራሩ ተደርጓል። እንዲሁም ከጥናቱ ተሳታፊዎች የተገኘውን መረጃ በአግባቡ ለመያዝ እንዲቻል ቃለ - መጠይቁ በድምጽ መቅጃ መሳሪያ (Audio Recording) የተሳታፊዎች ፈቃደኝነት መሰረት ባደረገ መልኩ እንዲከናወን ተደርጓል።

ሚስጥራዊነት፡ ከጥናቱ ተሳታፊዎች የተገኘው መረጃ በመለያ ኮድ የተያዘ በመሆኑ መረጃው ሚስጥራዊነቱን እንዲጠብቅ አድርጓል።

ማረጋገጫ

እኔ ከዚህ በታች ፊርማዬን ያስቀመጥኩት የጥናቱ ተሳታፊ ከዚህ በላይ ያለውን መረጃ በማንበብ እና በመረዳት በፍቃደኝነት በጥናቱ ውስጥ ለመሳተፍ ተስማምቻለሁ። በዚህ ጥናት ላይ ስሳተፍም በፈቃደኝነት ሲሆን በቃ-መጠይቁ ጊዜም ያልገቡኝን ነገሮች በመጠየቅ ትክክለኛ መረጃ ለመስጠት ያለኝን ፈቃደኝነት በፊርማዬ አረጋግጣለሁ።

የተሳታፊው ስም.....

የአጥኚው

ስም.....

ፊርማ

ፊርማ.....

ቀን

ቀን.....

**ጥናቱን በተመለከተ ለማንኛውም ግልፅ ያልሆነ ጥያቄ ወይም ማብራሪያ ከፈለጉ
የሚከተለውን አድራሻ መጠቀም ይችላሉ።**

የአጥኚው ስም፡- አስናቀች ተስፋዬ

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት

የቃለ-መጠይቅ መምሪያ ክፍል 1

በጥናቱ ላይ ለሚሳተፉ ህጻናቶች የተዘጋጀ

በቃለ-መጠይቁ ለተሳተፉት ህጻናት በነጻነት ሃሳባቸውን እንዲገልጹ ማብራሪያ

ተሰጥቷል፡፡ ከተዘረዘሩ ጥያቄ በመነሳት አጥኚው(ዋ) ተገቢ ሆኖ ያገኘ(ች)ውን ተከታይ

ጥያቄዎችን በማንሳትና በመረዳት ነው ጥናቱ የተካሄደው፡፡

የጥናቱ ተሳታፊ መሠረታዊ መረጃዎች

1. ዕድሜ.....
2. ጾታ.....
3. የትውልድ ቦታ.....
4. የመኖሪያ ቦታ.....
5. በአሁኑ ሰዓት ትምህርት ትማራለህ/ለሽ?.....

I. አሁን ስለምትኖርበት/ሪበት ሁኔታ ልትነግረኝ/ሪኝ ትችላለህ/ሽ?

- በአሁኑ ሰዓት ከማን ጋር ነው የምትኖረው/ሪው?
- አሁን በምትኖርበት/ሪበት ቤት ውስጥ ስንት ልጆች አሉ?
- አሁን ከምትኖርበት/ሪበት አሳዳጊህ/ሽ ጋር ያለህ/ሽን ግንኙነት አብራራ/ሪ?
- ወላጆችህ/ሽ ናቸው? ዘመድ ወይስ ሌላ?
- አሁን አሳዳጊህ/ሽ በተጨማሪ የሚረዳህ/ሽ ሰው አለ? ካለ ማን ነው? በምን አይነት መልኩ ነው የሚረዳህ/ሽ?

II. በዘመዳሞች መካከል ስለሚደረግ አለም አቀፍ ጉዲፈቻ

2 አውስትራሊያ ወዳሉት ዘመድህ/ሽ ለመሄድ ሂደቱን እንዴት እንደጀመረክ/ሽ

ልትነግረኝ/ሪኝ ትችላለህ/ሽ?

➤ መረጃውን ከየት ሰማህ/ሽ? (ስለዚህ አይነት ጉዲፈቻ እንዴት አወቅህ/ሽ)

➤ በመጀመሪያ ይህንን ሂደት ያነሳሳው ማን ነበር? (ወላጆችህ/ሽ፣ አሁን ያሉት አሳዳጊዎችህ/ሽ ወይስ አውስትራሊያ ያሉት ዘመዶች)

3. እባክህ/ሽ ለቪዛ በምታመለክትበት/ቺበት ወቅት ስለተሳተፉት ሰዎች ልትነግረኝ/ሪኝ ትችላለህ/ያለሽ?

➤ አንተ/አንቺ አሁን ያሉት አሳዳጊዎችህ/ሽ እና አውስትራሊያ ያሉት ዘመዶችህ/ሽ ብቻ ወይ ኤጀንሲዎች፣ ባለሙያዎች ወይም ሌሎች ሰዎች?

➤ እነዚህ ሰዎች በምን አይነት መልኩ ነበር የተሳተፉት? (ምክር በመስጠት፣ በቀጥታ ሂደቱ ውስጥ በመሳተፍ፣ ወይም ሌላ ካለ አብራራ/ሪ)

III. በዘመድ መካከል የሚደረግ ጉዲፈቻን ለማድረግ ያመሩት ምክንያቶች

4 እባክህ/ሽ ወደ አውስትራሊያ ለመሄድ ያደረገህን/ሽን ምክንያቶች ንገረኝ/ሪኝ?

➤ በአሁኑ ሰዓት ያሉበት የኢኮኖሚ፣ የጤና ወይም ሌላ ሁኔታ?

➤ የአሳዳጊዎችህ ሁኔታ (የጤና፣ የኢኮኖሚ ወይም የቤተሰብ ችግር)?

➤ በሀገር ውስጥ የሚገኙ ሌሎች አማራጮችን ሞክረህ/ሽ ነበር? አዎን ከሆነ ምን ነበረ?

IV. ልጆች በዘመዳማቸው መካከል ከሚደረግ ጉዲፈቻ የሚጠብቋቸው ነገሮች

5. እባክህ/ሽ አውስትራሊያ ካሉት ዘመድህ/ሽ ጋር ያለህን/ሽን የዝምድና ሁኔታ ንገረኝ/ሪኝ?

(የደም ወይስ ሌላ ዝምድና ነው ያላችሁ)

- ዘመድህ/ሽ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ በአውስትራሊያ ቆይተዋል?
- በምን ያህል ጊዜ ትገናኛላችሁ? (በምን አይነት መንገድ ነው የምትገናኙት በስልክ፣ በአካል፣ ወይስ ሌላ)
- ምን ያህል ቅርበት አላችሁ? (ወደ አውስትራሊያ ከመሄዳቸው በፊት እና አሁን)
- ዘመድህ/ሽ አሁን ስለሚኖሩበት ሁኔታ የምታውቀውን/ቂውን ንገረኝ/ሪኝ (ስለ ስራቸውና ቤተሰባቸው እንዴት አወቅ/ሽ)
- ዘመድህ/ሽ በምን አይነት ሁኔታ ሲረዱህ/ሽ እንደነበር ንገረኝ/ሪኝ?

6. በአውስትራሊያ ጉዞህ/ሽ ምን እንደምትጠብቅ/ቂ ንገረኝ/ሪኝ?

- አውስትራሊያ ከሄድክ/ሽ በኋላ ህይወትህ እንዴት የሚሆን ይመስልሃል/ሻል?
(ይህንንስ እንዴት አወቅ/ሽ)
- አውስትራሊያ ከሄድክ/ሽ በኋላ ከዚህ የተሻለ ህይወት የሚያጋጥምህ ይመስልሃል/ሻል? ከሆነ እንዴት? (በኢኮኖሚ፣ በማኅበራዊ ህይወት፣ በትምህርት ወይስ በሌላ)
- አውስትራሊያ ካሉት ዘመድህ ጋር ያለህ ግንኙነትስ እንዴት የሚሆን ይመስልሃል?

VI. በሀገር ውስጥ የሚገኙ አገልግሎቶች

7. እባክህ/ሽን ቪዛ ለማግኘት የተከተልካቸውን/ሽውን ሂደቶች ልትነግረኝ/ሪኝ ትችላለህ/ሽ?

- መቼ ነበር ይህንን ሂደት የጀመርከው/ሽው?
- ስንት ቦታዎች ጎብኝተዋል/ሻል ለምን ጉዳይ?
- ምን አይነት ተግዳሮቶች አጋጠሙህ/ሽ?
- አንተ ወይም በአሁኑ ሰዓት ያሉት አሳዳጊዎች በሌላ መንገድ ይህንን ሂደት ለመጨረስ ሞክረው ነበር? ከነበረ በምን መንገድ (በሰው፣ በኤጀንሲ ወይስ ሌላ)?

8. እስካሁን ከጎበኝቷቸው/ሽው ተቋማት ስላገኘኸው/ሽ አገልግሎቶች ልትነግረኝ/ሪኝ ትችላለህ/ሽ?

- ምን አይነት ሙያዊ እገዛ አገኘህ/ሽ? (ለምሳሌ፡- የምክር ወይም ሌላ አገልግሎት)
- ምን ዓይነት እርዳታ አገኘህ/ሽ? እንዴት?
- ባገኘኸው አገልግሎት ረክተሃል/ሻል? በቂ አገልግሎት አለ ብለህ ታስባለህ/ሽ?
- አዎ ከሆነ መልስህ/ሽ አብራራው/ሪው? አዎ ካልሆነ ምን ይጎለጻል?

9. እባክህ በዚህ ሂደት ውስጥ ስላጋጠሙህ ተግዳሮቶች ንገረኝ/ሪኝ?

- ምን ዓይነት ችግሮች ነው አጋጥሞህ/ሞሽ የነበረ? በየትኞቹ ተቋማቶች ውስጥ?
- ኢኮኖሚያዊ፣ የህግ ወይም ሙያዊ ተግዳራቶች?

10. መጨመር የምትፈልገው/ጊው ነገር ካለ?

ስለትብብርዎ አመሰግናለሁ!!!

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ሶሻል ወርክ ት/ቤት

የቃለ-መጠይቅ መምሪያ ክፍል 2

ጉዳዩ ለሚመለከታቸው ተቋማቶች ውስጥ ለሚሰሩ ባለሙያዎች የተዘጋጀ

ይህ ቃለ-መጠይቅ ጉዳዩ ለሚመለከታቸው ተቋማት ውስጥ ለሚሰሩ ባለሙያዎች ወይም ሃላፊዎችን የተዘጋጀ ሲሆን ታሳታፊዎች በነጻነት ሃሳባቸውን እንዲገልጹ በቃለ መጠይቁ ዙሪያ እንዲሁም ስለ ጥናቱ አጭር ማብራሪያ ተሰጥቷል፡፡ ከተዘረዘሩ ጥያቄ በመነሳት አጥኚው(ዋ) ተገቢ ሆኖ ባገኘችው ላይ ተከታይ ጥያቄዎችን በማንሳትና በመረዳት ነው ጥናቱ እንዲካሄድ የተደረገው፡፡

ክፍል1: መሠረታዊ መረጃ ጥያቄዎች፤

1. ዕድሜ.....
2. ጾታ.....
3. የስራ ድርሻ.....
4. በስራው ላይ የቆይታ ጊዜ.....

1 እባክህን በዘመዳሞች መካከል ስለሚደረግ አለም አቀፍ ጉዲፊቻ ልትነግረኝ ትችላለህ?

- ይህን የህፃናት ክብካቤ ከሌሎቹ የህፃናት ጥበቃና ክብካቤ አማራጮች የሚለየው ምንድነው? በተለይም በሀገራት መካከል ከሚደረግ ጉዲፊቻ?
- ከህግ አግባብ እና ለህፃናት ከሚሰጠው ጥቅም አንፃር ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ?
- በዘመዳሞች መካከል የሚደረግ አለም አቀፍ ጉዲፊቻን ለማድረግ የሚጠቅም እራሱን የቻለ አካሄድ አለ? መልሱ አለ ከሆነ ምንድናቸው? መልሱ የለም ከሆነ በምን አይነት መንገድ እንደሚካሄድ ያብራሩ?

II. ቅድመ ምደባ ግምገማና እገዛ

2. እባክዎ በመ/ቤታችሁ በዘመዳሞች መካከል የሚደረግ ጉዳፊቻ ፈልገው ለሚመጡ ሰዎች

የሚሰጡትን አገልግሎቶች ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ?

➤ ህጋዊ እና ሙያዊ እገዛዎችስ? ለምሳሌ ማኅበራዊ ላይ የባለሙያ እገዛዎችን

በተመለከተ ምን ይመስላል?

3 ህፃናትና በዘመድ መካከል የሚደረግ ጉደፊቻ ውስጥ ለመመደብ መሟላት ያለባቸው

መስፈርቶች ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ?

➤ ህፃናትን የሚወስዱ ዘመዶች እና በልጆች በኩል መሟላት ያለባቸው ነገሮችን

በተመለከተ፤

✓ ህጋዊ ሰነዶች

✓ የህጻናት ነባራዊ ሁኔታ (የኢኮኖሚ፣ የጤና እና ከቤተሰብ ጋር ያላቸውን ግንኙነት

በተመለከተ)

4 በቅድመ ምደባ ወቅት ስለሚደረግ ግምገማ

➤ ህፃናትን የሚወስዱ ዘመዶች የኢኮኖሚ፣ የማኅበራዊ እና የጤና ብቃት ላይ የሚደረግ

ቅድመ ግምገማ ምን ይመስላል?

✓ ከልጆች ጋር ያላቸው ግንኙነት በተለይም የልጆችን ፍላጎት ማሟላት መቻላቸውን

በተመለከተ

➤ ልጆች ላይ የሚደረግ ግምገማ፣ የልጆችን የኋላ ታሪክ፣ በአሁኑ ወቅት ያላቸውን

የድጋፍ ሁኔታ፣ ከሚወስዷቸው ዘመዶች ጋር ያላቸውን ግንኙነት እንዲሁም ድኅረ

ምደባ ክትትል እና ግምገማ የሚካሄድበት የአሰራር ዘዴዎችን ያብራሩ?

III. የህግ አግባቦች

5. በዘመዳሞች መካከል የሚደረግን ጉዲፈቻ ሂደት ለማስፈፀም የምትጠቀሙበትን የህግ አግባቦች ሊትነግሩኝ ትችላላችሁ?

➤ የምትጠቀሙባቸው መመሪያዎች ወይም የፖሊሲ አቅጣጫዎች ምንድናቸው?

✓ እነዚህ የህግ መመሪያዎች በዘመዳሞች መካከል ለሚደረግ አለም አቀፍ ጉዲፈቻ በምን አይነት መልኩ ነው በስራ ላይ የሚውሉት?

✓ የህፃናት ደህንነት እና እንክብካቤን በተመለከተ የወጡ ሀገር አቀፍ እና አለም አቀፍ የህግ መመሪያዎች በምን አይነት መልኩ ታሳቢ እንደሚሆኑ ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ? በተለይም የኢትዮጵያ ቤተሰብ ህግ እና አለም አቀፍ መመሪያዎችን በሚመለከት?

5. በዘመድ መካከል የሚደረግ አለምአቀፍ ጉዲፈቻ በሚካሄደበት ወቅት የህፃናት ሙሉ ፍላጎት በምን አይነት አግባብ ታሳቢ እንደሚደረግ ሊነግሩኝ ይችላሉ? በተለይም

➤ ቅድመ ምደባ ግምገማ በሚደረግበት ወቅት

➤ ችሎት በሚሰማበት እና የልጆች ጉዳይ በሚታይበት ወቅት

6. በዘመዳሞች መካከል የሚደረግ አለምአቀፍ ጉዲፈቻን በተመለከተ የተደረገ የፖሊሲና የህግ ማሻሻያዎች አሉ? ካሉስ ምን አይነት ለውጥ አምጥተዋል?

7. በዘመዳሞች መካከል የሚደረግ ጉዲፈቻን በምታካሂዱበት ወቅት ያጋጠማችሁ ዋና ዋና ተግዳሮቶች ልታካፍሉኝ ትችላላችሁ?

8. ለወደፊት ሊሻሻሉ ይገባሉ የሚሏቸው ነገሮች አሉ? በተለይም ከፖሊሲ፣ ከቅድመ ምደባ ግምገማና ሌሎች ለህፃናት ከሚሰጡ ሙያዊ እገዛዎችን በተመለከተ?

ስለትብብርዎ አመሰግናለሁ!!!

Letter of Declaration

I, the undersigned declare that, this is my original work and has not been presented for degree at other university and all the source of materials used for the research project have been dually acknowledged.

Researcher's Name: Asnakech Tesfaye

Signature:  _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Date of Submission: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the thesis advisor.

Advisor's Name: Ashenafi Hagos (PhD)

Signature: _____

Date: _____