

## CHALLENGES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DISPLACEMENT AND SQUATTING: THE CASE OF KORE AREA IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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### ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to explore the compelling causes, processes, and consequences of displacement from Eritrea in 1991 into Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The model of migration, theories of Aided Self Help Housing, and Empowerment Approaches of Alternative Development were employed as a guiding framework for the research. Triangulation method has been used to generate the necessary data. The findings identified that the defeat of the Derge government and shift of political power into the hands of *Shabia* in Eritrea played the vital factors for the displacement of Ethiopians into a number of countries. Along the arduous journey and refugee life, displaced Ethiopians came across the mistreatment of the *Shabia* forces and severe shortage of basic needs for survival. The study proved that 92.3% of the sample respondents of Kore community depend on informal sector as the sole means of earning their livelihood. However, the repatriates at Kore benefited in accessing temporary shelter in Addis Ababa, base of organized negotiation, and social services though they were marginalized. The lack of open discussion widened the demand of the community against rehabilitation capacity of the government agencies. The delay of appropriate rehabilitation measures by the concerned government institutions as well led the repatriates to be opportunity seekers. Thus, the Kore squatters demanded the government with provision of either urban land or public houses and other benefits in Addis Ababa. Such escalated demand of the community mostly ended up with frequent contradiction on the claim of urban landholding. The rehabilitation measures have to find ways that incorporate the demand of the community and capacity of the government through open discussion. Such participatory discussions can resolve the conflict and lay down bases, which improve the living standard of the people.

**Key words:** displacement, returnees, livelihood strategies, opportunity seekers, rehabilitation.

### INTRODUCTION

Defining the concepts of Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs), refugees and repatriation are essential for better understanding of the issues. The United Nations has provided the definition that helps to identify refugees from IDPs. Internally displaced persons are “persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to

leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border” (UN OCHA, 1999). However, the UN convention relating to the status of refugees, adopted in Geneva in 1951, defines a refugee as “a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for the reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having the nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unwilling to return to it” (UNHCR, 1999). As the definition indicates, refugees are forced to seek safety through asylum in a second or third state out of the control of their own government. The reasons for both internally uprooted people and refugees might be the same. The difference is that internally displaced persons remain within the borders of their country under the jurisdiction of a government that might not want international agencies to help him/her. The refugees, however, have fled away from their country to avoid persecution or violence.

The continuous streaming of IDPs/refugee in Africa has complicated triggering causes and effects. Drought, rural impoverishment, and armed conflict have spilled and forced many people into refugee life or to live as IDPs (Potter and Lloyd-Evans, 1998; Norwegian Refugee Council, 2002). Thus, the contemporary Africa as a whole has been one of the main producers of refugees and IDPs in the world. From the total numbers, about 80% of the world’s refugees are living in the Third World countries with the fewest resources to deal with the problem.

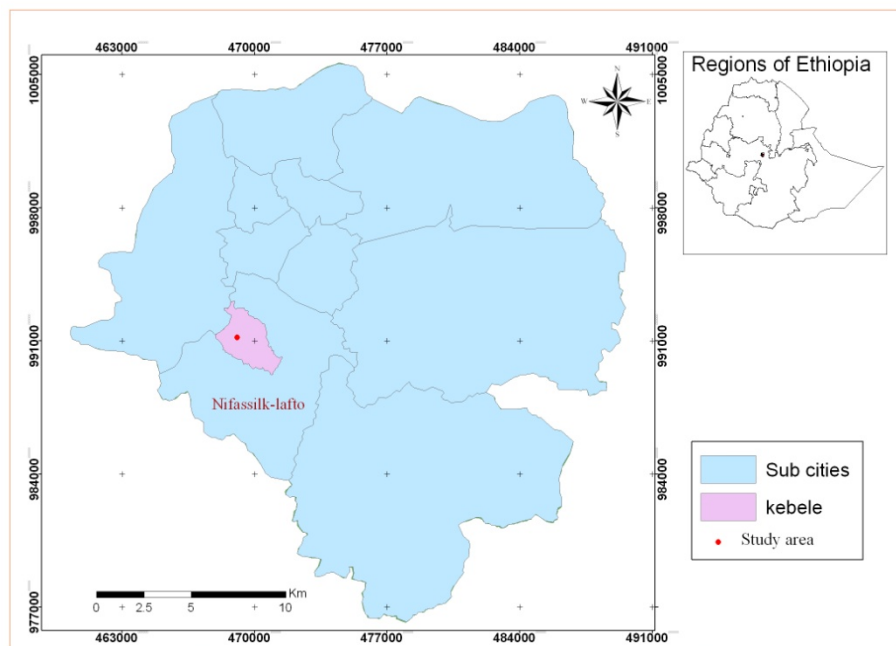
Due to displacement, civilian people are subject to loss of life, malnutrition, injury, loss of productive assets, loss of productivity and dignity, and are forced to live in makeshift camps and caves; children discontinue their school; displaced women with little or no income engage in prostitution and face psychological trauma (Tamirat, 2003). In different host countries, refugees also encounter a number of constraints. In some host countries, they are pushed to camp in unsafe climatic and social areas (Bagenda and Hovil, 2003; Drumtra, 2002) and usually live in extreme poverty with the lack of food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care (Waugh, 1990). Beyond the challenge of the camp life in remote areas, faction groups in the host countries brutally kill, rape, loot and forcibly conscript child soldiers into their army both from the nationals and refugee communities (Bagenda and Hovil, 2003). Furthermore, the foreign policies of some countries, for instance Kenya and Tanzania, lead to the confinement of refugees and violate the freedom of their movement. Because some countries consider refugees as a security threat through the mistaken presumption that all refugees are rebel fighters or criminals (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2002). As a result, the United Nations and other international observers like the Human Rights Watch have confirmed as Refugees and IDPs face one of the most pressing challenges of the contemporary world (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2002).

Based on the tripartite agreement, signed in 1991, among the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Governments of Ethiopia and Sudan, the Ethiopian refugees were voluntarily repatriated into their country. This research, hence, attempted to investigate the challenges and consequences of displacement, repatriation and squatting taking the case of Ethiopian repatriates from Eritrea and/or Sudan into Kore in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The research had also given a due attention to the challenges of Kore squatting/housing.

## METHODS OF THE STUDY

### Description of the Study Area

The Kore study area is found in Kebele 02 of Nifassilk-Lafto sub-city in Addis Ababa (Fig. 1). The study sub city encompasses eleven Kebeles out of the total 100 urban Kebeles of Addis Ababa. According to the focus group respondents, the Kore squatter community had 400 households with a total of 2, 320 residents who lived in the study area. As the researcher found out, two or more households used to live in a single housing unit. An outsider, therefore, could not easily determine the exact number of household heads in the community simply by counting the number of houses.



**Figure 1. Location Map of the Study Area**

## **Research Design and Methodology**

Denscombe (1998) and Jick (1983) confirmed the strong value of scientific research through different methods because the findings of one method can be proved or disproved by the outcome of other (s). It also enhances the reliability and validity of data and research results. Quantitative and qualitative research methods can be combined as complementary rather than as rival camps in data collection, analysis and interpretation. Therefore, methodological triangulation was employed for this study to understand the whole process of displacement and its consequences.

## **Sampling and Instruments of Data Gathering**

For the questionnaire survey, stratified random sampling technique was used to select about 25% of the sample respondents of the total households of Kore squatters. The strata of the sampling frame were divided into different age groups to generate the experiences of different people. Because young people are relatively open to explain some socio-economic facts than elders who are largely influenced by cultural factors. Sample house holds who took part in the questionnaire survey were aged from 30 to 59 years. The sample sizes of 32 respondents were, therefore, equally but disproportionately selected out of the total members of each age group. From the three stratified age intervals which range from 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59 years old, 96 household heads were randomly selected. However, youths between 15-29 and the elderly at or above 60 years old were not included in the questionnaire survey due to the absence of household heads in these aged categories.

The structured questionnaire mostly incorporated closed questions of various types. An open-ended text box was also included in most of the structured questions to collect additional qualitative data. In the questionnaire survey, the limitation of wording, ordering of questions, the range of pre-coded and available answers given to respondents have the advantages of “standardisation” for analysis, efficient and quick use of time (Denscombe, 1998).

However, for the qualitative data, the key informants with better knowledge and experience were purposely selected based on the information the researcher gained during the questionnaire survey. The local committee members have as well contributed their part in selecting the key informants both from the local community and committee. The concerned government officials were also interviewed in their office during working hours. Hence, the required qualitative data were collected through in-depth interview, group discussions and personal observation.

Interview was used to learn the complex processes of displacement, refuge and repatriates because semi-structured interview provides interviewees the opportunity of developing their ideas and freely explaining the

issues. One-to-one in-depth interview, therefore, had been carried with twelve local informants, two community leaders and two higher government officials. Moreover, both male and female focus group discussions have been employed to collect data about the constraints and impacts of displacement and Kore squatting. The male focus group composed of both the local people and community leaders were separately discussed to avoid cultural influence on females group. Observation was carried before, during and after the structured and semi-structured interview surveys to investigate the life styles, social services and environmental calamities of the community.

Ideas generated from the photographs of dwellings, waste collection bins, public water supply and used to demonstrate the existing realities and enhance the imagination of readers had been included in the analysis of the study. Secondary sources of data collected and organized from various government offices, research and higher institute libraries were used for the research.

### **THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Though housing is one of the basic needs, the provision of conventional houses is one of the serious problems in urban areas of developing countries. Similarly, the information section of UNDP emergencies unit for Ethiopia stated the shortage and rising demand of housing and expansion of squatter settlements on the outskirts of Addis Ababa (UNDP, 1998). Squatter settlements, though they have many constraints of planning, have their own benefits. The low cost squatter housing is often a staging area for the urban poor. They offer not only a source of shelter but also serve as “the base camp” for strategies that enables large masses of the urban poor to survive with minimum demands and climb out of poverty (UNCHS, 1987). However, to minimise the expansion of squatter settlement, concerned government officials and NGOs have to give their support in tackling the urban housing problems of Third World cities.

Squatter settlements common throughout the cities of Third World countries are established due to various factors. First, the large influx of people from rural to urban areas. Second, the financial limitation of the national and municipal governments to provide planned urban houses to the majority of urban people. Third, the high cost of even the legal low-cost housing for the urban poor. Fourth, the marginalization of urban land requests of the poor through unaffordable land lease policies. Fifth, high population growth is the other major reason. Squatter settlements are, thus, often the only affordable option used by the majority inhabitants of many cities of developing countries (Carter, 1972; Herbert and Thomas, 1990; Nordberg and Winblad, 1994; UNCHS, 1987).

In relation to housing, the urban poor can be divided in to three categories; first the large class of homeless people or street sleepers who, in some Third World cities, can be counted in hundreds of thousands. Often, more recent migrants or refugees, or those who have failed to assimilate, belong to this group. These people live in abject

poverty. Second, the slum or tenement dwellers, especially in south Asia occupy densely built up areas of the old cities. Overcrowding (shared between 6 and 10 people), severe shortage of basic facilities; small “home” and windowless cubicles are their major constraints. Third, squatters or occupants of the shanty towns are ubiquitous throughout the Third World cities. From the different groups of urban poor, this study, however, was limited to explore the interplay among war, displacement, repatriation and squatter settlement in Addis Ababa due to failure of other studies to address the above links. (Tsegaye, 1998; Yishak, 2000; Minwuyelet, 2005). The research were, therefore, carried to investigate the challenges/consequences of displacement, refuge, and repatriation from Eritrea/Sudan to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and to uncover the compelling causes leading to the establishment of Kore squatting.

## **THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The models of migration, theories of aided self-help housing and empowerment approach of alternative development have been employed for the research as basic frameworks of research.

### **Concepts and Models of Migration**

Analyzing most important models of displacement can contribute to conceptualise the meaning, causes, and effects of migration/displacement on the establishment of squatting. Migration is a broad concept and a fact of life. Though refugees are one category of migrants, there are a number of differences between migrants and refugees. A migrant leaves his home seeking for opportunity while a refugee is one who does so out of fear; a migrant travels to escape poverty and stagnation while a refugee travels to escape persecution, conflict and perhaps death; a migrant seeks opportunity while a refugee seeks haven; a migrant does not “wish” to return home while a refugee cannot “dare” (Velath, 2003).

To understand the nature of migrants and their relation with refugees, it is necessary to explore first the reasons why people change their domicile. Some causes of migration instigate people to move within their own country while others compel them to permanent emigration to a new country (Cox, 1976). Better economic opportunities and political conditions such as better social security system or opportunities for greater freedom of expression may pull people to migrate to other countries. In addition, religious or racial intolerance may cause large population transfer, often very hastily from the area of origin to a country of destination (Cox, 1976). International migrants and refugees are partly the same because the movers cross their borders into a foreign country. However, refugees are always brought about by the push factors and the absence of opportunities in the country of origin. However, migration is taking place as a consequence of the pull factors into the country of destination and the push factors from the country of origin. As a result, migrants have a partial freedom compared to refugees.

As Ravenstein's model depicts, the lack of employment opportunities and oppression and discrimination of certain social, racial, political, ethnic, and economic factors can lead people to internal/international migration (Shrivastava, 1983). Skeldon (1997), citing the works of Ravenstein's (1885 & 1889), indicated that "migration increases in volume as industries and commerce develop and transport improves." Migration from Ravenstein's point of view is thus mainly caused by development. "Migration means life and progress, a sedentary population stagnation" (Skeldon, 1997 citing Ravenstein 1889). In Lee's model, migrants are defined as a group of people who are ambitious to travel or who cannot get any jobs at the place of their origin or cannot get jobs to suit their skills, knowledge, or cannot get incomes that they want, or who cannot tolerate socio-political and cultural conditions of the point of origin, and who are determined enough to surmount intervening obstacles (Shrivastava, 1983). A series of 'pushes' from the areas of origin and 'pulls' to areas of destination lead to the migration of people (Skeldon, 1997).

The defeat of the *Derge* military force by *shabia* forces displaced many Ethiopians from Eritrea into Middle East countries, Sudan and Djibouti. The Kore squatters, the case study of the research, were one group of Ethiopians who were forced to emigrate out of Eritrea in May 1991 and repatriated from Sudan in to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

### **Aided Self-Help Housing Theory**

Aided self-help housing theory tries to overcome the housing problems of the urban poor families in collaboration with state or private investors/NGOs (Mathey, 1997). Considering its merits, therefore, the resolution of UN Vancouver Habitat Conference held in 1976, Canada accepted assisted self-help housing as an alternative strategy to conventional mass housing schemes (Mathey, 1997; Potter and Liloyd-Evans, 1998). States adopting the policies of aided self-help housing can support the urban poor to improve their houses through the following strategies:

### **Site and Service Strategy**

Site and service strategy of aided self-help housing benefits the urban poor families in three ways. First, the state or the local authority provides a small plot of land with security of tenure for families on which they can build houses by themselves. The strategy favours thousands of families to get access to land where conventional housing could reach only hundreds (Hesselberg, 1996; Rodell and Skinner, 1983). Second, the state provides minimal public services, such as streets, latrines, water supply, lighting, and waste disposal, etc. and some subsidized materials for dwelling construction (Saini, 1979; Rodell and Skinner, 1983). Third, the residents are allowed to construct houses from any material [either permanent or temporary] they choose. The houses can be built from mud to sun-dried bricks and bamboo with simple low-cost roof structures.

The city centre is the ideal residence for the urban poor to generate a relatively better income and get market access for their labour and local products (Dwyer, 1975). However, site and service projects are usually located on the fringes of urban areas due to the lack/absence of sufficient land at the city centre. The dwellers are, therefore, forced to travel long distances to ideal areas in search of better sources of livelihood and market for their goods (Hesselberg, 1996).

### **Upgrading the Existing Settlement**

This strategy has been used in many developing countries when finding sufficient land is a problem for site and service project. It is used to improve the quality of the existing slums and squatter settlements at their locations. In many countries, upgrading strategy entitles the residents to security of tenure and improves either one or many aspects of their infrastructure, for example, water provision, sewerage, basic amenities of sanitation, path ways, street lighting, and providing social services, or upgrading of people's dwellings at a lower cost (Saini, 1979; Hesselberg, 1996).

### **Core Housing Schemes**

In this strategy, the government provides a single room "core-house", to which a family could later add more rooms according to their incomes (Hesselberg, 1996). Turner's aided self help housing policy generally advised the governments of developing countries to support the urban poor through public intervention. Therefore, Potter and Lioyd-Evans (1998) Citing Abram's (1964) report pointed out that the self-help housing strategies are curiously opposing the bulldozing of houses in the condition of housing shortage.

### **Empowerment Approach**

The disempowered members of society lack the means of development and "require help from religious organizations, labour unions, and even the state" to fulfil the basic needs of life (Friedmann, 1992:71). Therefore, empowerment approach claims the incorporation of development guarantee for the weakest social groups such as the squatters of towns and cities in all development programs (Bjørn, 1995).

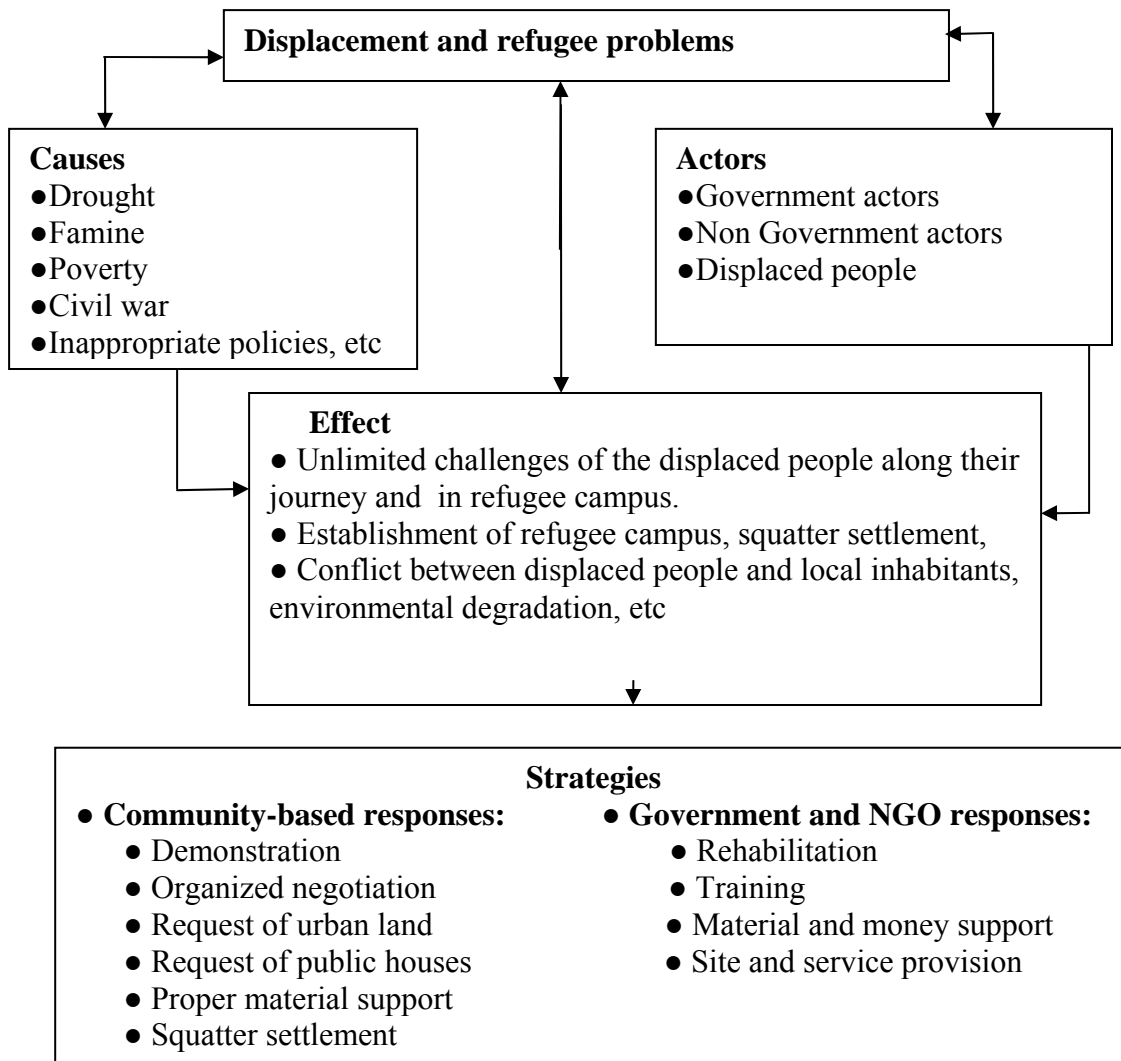
Squatter occupants of Third World cities are the disempowered members of the society. They are living in small, low standard and crowded houses mainly in town or city outskirts with meagre social services. Thus, to improve their life, urban poor could be empowered to participate in decisions affecting their life. Because alternative development theory is centred on the satisfaction of people's needs and sustainable uses of the environment rather than production for profit (Friedman, 1992). According to the theory, development has to minimize or, if possible, overcome the central problems of the society such as poverty, social inequality, unemployment, and others.



Above all, the strategies of development and needs of the people may not necessarily be designed by the top authorities; rather they must also come through the participation of communities.

## **ANALYTICAL FRAMWORK**

The analytical model is used to indicate the actors of rehabilitation, causes and effects of displacement and strategies of Kore squatters (Fig. 2). The actors encompass the local committee, government organizations, domestic NGOs and international agencies that directly or indirectly involved in addressing the problem of the people. The integrated causes of displacement and temporary squatting have been discussed together. The effect theme tries to sum up the various human and environmental impacts of displacement and temporary squatting. The strategies portrayed at the bottom of the model illustrate the request and action made by local human agencies to influence the measures taken by the government. The top-down approaches take by the government in addressing the constraints of repatriates are shown at the lower right corner of the frame. The bottom-up measures of the Kore community are indicated at the lower left corner. Therefore, the strategic components of the model clearly show Giddens' (1984) mutual interaction between structure and human agents.



**Figure 2. Analytical Framework**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Repatriation from Eritrea/Sudan to Ethiopia

Ethiopia has terribly suffered recurrent internal wars at different historical times. The fighting of the Tigrian People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in the northern parts of Ethiopia against the *Derge* government was one of the most recent wars in the country. The different attempts made to solve these conflicts became unsuccessful and finally resulted in the defeat of the *Derge* regime in May 1991. The defeat of the national army by *shabia*, the military force of EPLF, in Eritrea, however, exposed Ethiopians to be seen as foreigners in the face of the Eritrean people affiliated to EPLF. Consequently, the change of political power into the hands of *Shabia*, as it can also happen during wars in other countries, compelled Ethiopians to

migrate from Eritrea into Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti or the Middle East countries to escape the possible violation of human rights. The focus group participants reported that the displaced Ethiopians lost most of their worthy possessions in Eritrea except some properties like radios, tape recorders, gold, etc. Therefore, after the fall of the *Derge* regime in May 1991, a large number of Ethiopians were displaced from Eritrea into Ethiopia and many other countries. Some Ethiopians were directly returned from Eritrea to Ethiopia while others came from Sudan to their own country. Thus, by the permission of the Ethiopian government, approximately 30, 000 returnees were allowed to shelter in 19 camps and used old grain stores, community halls, tents, etc available in different Kebeles of Addis Ababa as a source of shelter (GOAL International, 1996). The Kore community was one example of the displaced Ethiopians repatriated from Eritrea/Sudan into their own country, Ethiopia since May 1991.

### **Causes and Challenges of Displacement and refugee life**

The crisis of refugees from Ethiopia was instigated through a multitude of factors. Drought, famine, inappropriate policies of different governments, political repression of human rights, and continuous civil wars obliged hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians to abandon their homes and flee into refugee camps in various countries (Bauer, 1991). Particularly, the 1993 returnees of *Ada Bai* settlers around the town of Humera in North Western Ethiopia had fled war and famine to the refugee camps of Sudan from their native region of Tigray in 1984-1985 (Hammond, 1999).

The forcible villagization and resettlement program of the *Derge* regime had also generated a number of refugees. In Harerge alone, one of the former administrative region in south east Ethiopia, the forced imposition of villagization prompted 33,000 Ethiopians to flee into Somalia (Bauer, 1991). Forced collectivization had been empirically proved in Ethiopia to be a hindrance to development (Bauer, 1991). Ideological differences of political groups were not resolved through negotiation and discussion during the *Derge* regime. Rather, the security and military forces of the government banned the real and imagined opponents. The ruthless repression of human rights by the *Derge* regime brought more deaths and exodus of students and professionals to foreign countries. The long civil war between opposition forces and the imperial regime had led to a large influx of refugees into different countries. The escalation of the armed conflict through time between the *Eritrean* and *Tigrean* opposition groups and the *Derge* regime also caused a number of deaths and Ethiopian refugees across different countries. All the above forces of displacement are explained by the push factors of migration (Cox, 1976; Shrivastava, 1983)

As explored through the household survey and in-depth interview, the defeat of *Derge* regime induced the displacement of many civilians and members of the former Ethiopians army from Eritrea into a number of countries. Some portion of the displaced Ethiopians settled as refugees in other countries while others were

directly returned from Eritrea into Ethiopia. This study, therefore, tries to investigate the challenges of repatriate Ethiopians in displacement/refugee campus in Sudan and dislocation from Eritrea and squatting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

As many of the interviewees reported, most of the displaced Ethiopians fled the arduous journey on foot from their departure in Eritrea into the boarder areas of Eastern Sudan. In the arduous journey, the people suffered from the shortage of water and food. Moreover, the *Shabia* forces aggravated the situation by compelling them to take the wrong routes, making them suffer from thirst by deliberately spilling their water from *Jerican* or *Koda*, rubber and metal made liquid containers, respectively. Properties of the displaced, such as gold, watch, money, tape recorders, radios, clothes, etc., were largely plundered. More over some families were isolated from their household members while travelling to Sudan. The defeat of the *Dergue* regime by the combined forces of EPLF and TPLF also led to the forced emigration of Eritrean women who gave birth to children from Ethiopians. To indicate the challenges of the displaced/refugees while travelling the long journey and in the exile camps, the life history of one case has been presented below.

#### **Case Study: Risks of the Displaced along the hazardous Journey from Eritrea and in refugee camps Sudan to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

Alemayehu, an imaginary name of the key informant, was the x-military member of the *Derge* regime. He served in the regular army of Ethiopia in different position, from August 1977 until May 1991, for about fourteen years. Alemayehu voyaged to Sudan through the towns of Keren, Hagaz, Anderde, Agarni, Akordat, Barentu, and Tesene Aligider in Eritrea to Lafa and Durdib in Sudan.

Recalling the challenges that the displaced suffered while travelling through the western lowlands of Eritrea to Eastern Sudan, Alemayehu reported:

First, “The displaced Ethiopians were confronted with thirst along the long journey to Sudan. However, to save their lives, some displaced people drank polluted well water mixed with human carcass. Even accessing such polluted water was tough and competitive especially among the weak displaced people. Second, according to Alemayehu, “hunger and the excessive temperature of the border lowlands had challenged the displaced along their way to Sudan.” Third, the *Shabia* forces humiliate both Ethiopian civilians and defeated *Derge* military forces along the arduous journey. Alemayehu also reported as he saw the “carcasses of displaced Ethiopians along the roadsides almost throughout the western lowlands from Hagaz in Eritrea to Eastern Sudan.” In addition, he reported the “burial of a number of coffins in a single grave yard dug by the bulldozers of Lafa municipality in eastern Sudan.”

Arriving at Lafa in eastern Sudan was not the end of misery for Alemayehu and other Ethiopian refugees. In Lafa, the displaced suffered the shortage of food, as they had no access to enough food supply except the wheat aid they received from UNDP. The refugees used boiled wheat as the only source of food for about two weeks. Poor sanitation, overcrowding, dehydration, malnutrition, and dysentery were the other challenges most refugees in Sudan. As Alemayehu pointed out the exile misery:

“At the beginning of our arrival in Sudan eating only wheat *nifro*, boiled cereals, became so unbearable”. Exhausted with *nifro*, some refugee males ground the wheat to prepare *kniche*, traditional food made of grounded wheat and butter. However, in the absence of food the displaced Ethiopians ate boiled grass in the exile camps of Sudan though it is not human culture. As Alemayehu reported as “his family relatively led a better life in Kore squatting than they did in the exile campus of Sudan.”

As Alemayehu concisely reported, exile life was worsened due to the delay of food assistance to the refugees by the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). It was after prolonged suffering that the UNHCR and International Red Cross (IRC) came with minimal food and medical facilities to assist the refugees. After fifteen days’ stay in *Lafa*, Alemayehu was transferred, with his relatively high military position in the *Derge* national army, to the *Durdib* military training center in Sudan.

The Tripartite Agreement signed among the representative of UNHCR and governments of Ethiopia and Sudan in 1991 facilitated the voluntary repatriation of refugees from Sudan to Ethiopia. For Alemayehu, the repatriation did not immediately bring freedom of movement throughout his country. Rather, he was taken to *Tolay*, a military training centre in south western Ethiopia, for ideological transformation until the end of December 1991. Finally, Alemayehu got the opportunity to travel to Dessie, a town of South Wello, to search for his family from whom he was isolated during displacement. Later, in June 1992, almost after six months’ stay in Dessie temporary shelter, Alemayehu and his family and other repatriates travelled and started to live in Addis Ababa.

After enormous challenges, through a letter written from the Prime Minister’s Office, in the middle of July 1992, the repatriates were temporarily allowed to settle at Kore in tent shelters. The tents were donated by the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) of *Shewa* province for which the responsibility of rehabilitating the returnees was vested by the government. A similar action was taken to settle other returnees in pocket areas of various Kebeles in Addis Ababa. The researcher, therefore, argues that the Kore squatting was temporarily but legally established settlement by the state. The case study of Alemayehu was not a typical example to the challenge of all refugees and displacement. However, his life story can be one good practical example.

In various countries, squatter settlements are established and developed through a number of triggering factors. This fact is also true in Addis Ababa. The temporary camping of Kore community had progressively developed into ‘temporary’ squatting due to many triggering factors. First, the wearing out of the tents led to the establishment of rudimentary houses in the area. Second, the delay of the government to provide permanent rehabilitation solutions had mainly consolidated the temporary camping to be transformed into a squatter settlement. Similar studies made in Buenos Aires also proved that most of the urban poor of the Third World cities build, buy, or rent an “illegal dwelling” in the absence of alternatives since they cannot afford even to buy the cheapest “legal” house or apartment (Hardoy & Satterthwaite, 1989). The Kore community, likewise, built “informal dwellings” as aided self-help housing to solve their shelter problem.

### **Impacts of Repatriation**

The impacts of the Ethiopian repatriates who were returned from Eritrea/Sudan into Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the failure of the government rehabilitation program were discussed here.

### **Temporary Squatting**

After repatriation, the 1991 returnees of Ethiopia were temporarily allowed to reside in the pocket areas of different *Kebeles*, the smallest urban administrative unit, in Addis Ababa (Goal International, 1997). Based on the permission of the Prime Minister office, the repatriates of Kore community were transported and settled in the study area by the aid of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) of *Shewa* province. The Kore community, as one group of the 1991 Ethiopian repatriates, did not have permanent legal urban land rights for their settlement in the area. Rather, they were temporarily but legally permitted by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) to shelter in the tents installed by RRC of *Shewa* province. Thus, the researcher argues that the failure of rehabilitation process had contributed to the expansion of squatting by enforcing the returnees to temporarily settle in legally permitted pocket areas within various *Kebeles* of Addis Ababa. The establishment of Kore squatting was the direct consequence of the failure of the rehabilitation program of the government due to the shift of the responsibility of rehabilitation scheme from Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) to Foreign Relation and Development Co-operation Bureau (FRDCB) of the Addis Ababa City Government (AACG).

### **Land tenure Conflict of Kore Community versus Government Agencies**

Following the wearing out of government established tents, the Kore community built self-help squatter houses to minimize the pressing constraint of shelter. However, 91.7% of the questionnaire respondents pointed out the serious and recurrent land tenure conflict between the community and the government agencies. Such recurrent

conflict might indicate the potential insecurity of the settlement to steadily exist in the study area. Furthermore, 93 (100%) of the respondents of the sample survey, except 3 missing cases, indicated the uncertainty of the land tenure security and dismantling of their settlement in the future. The temporary nature of Kore squatting and the insecurity of land tenure in turn prevented the people in investing time and money in improving the quality of their houses. Hence, most houses of the study area were made of cheap and non-permanent material. As a result, most of the shacks were characterized by their poor quality, short height, and small size.

To minimize the housing problems of urban poor families, the government, hence, should adopt aided self-help housing approaches either provide legal title deed to the occupied land tenure or new sites in other parts of Addis Ababa with minimum basic services to enable returnees to establish permanent settlement (Vaa, 1998; Rodell & Skinner, 1983; Mathey, 1997). However, the attempt of the government to evict repatriates from the area would only relocate the constraint to other areas of the city, rather than providing sustainable remedies to the problem.

### **Health Impacts**

The poor in Third World urban areas live in overcrowded settlements, destitute houses, or small shacks and usually suffer comparable or higher rates of diseases and death than their rural counterparts (Hardoy, Cairncross, & Satterthwaite, 1990). Most of the houses of Kore community were similarly cramped and crowded like the shacks of Third World cities. The sizes of the houses ranged from 4 m<sup>2</sup> to 20 m<sup>2</sup>, while heights varied between 1.50 m and 2 m. From the survey of 96 households, 71% of the respondents lived in single room tenements. It was only 3.1% of the sample respondents who were living in three room dwellings.

The holes between roofs & upper rims of walls of almost all houses caused by either poor quality nature of construction materials or the removal of plastering mud exposed residents to the impacts of weather change. This, in turn, might lead people to high risk of diseases. The common breeding and recurrent appearance of frogs, lizards, Cockroaches/Berero, Amharic name of flying insects, and millipedes, especially during the wet summer, within and outside the dwellings tend to spread diseases among the community. The results of multiple responses indicated that 83.3% of sample households suffered from the dampening of their houses in the wet season. The high risk of diseases, noise pollution, and diffusion of dusts into the houses were commonly reported by 71.9%, 58.3%, and 51% of sample household heads, respectively. The consequences of the cramped and poor houses, therefore, could exacerbate the risk of diseases and ill health of the local people.

A single communal tap was the main source of water to all residents of the study area. The restricted supply and occasional intermittent nature of communal water contributed to the low water consumption of the people below the average requirement for normal health. The constraints of fleas and lice, reported by some interviewees, might be partly the result of inadequate water supply that influences the hygiene and sanitation of the people. The

inadequate provision of garbage collection, accumulation of solid wastes for long period of time, and the spread of human excreta from over flown old pit latrines during the *kiremt* season contributed to the health risks of the community. Such poor sanitation can favour the breeding of flies and pathogenic micro-organisms which can either intensify transmission or cause diseases among the community. The bad smells of the garbage and toilets were also the causes of asthma and whooping cough through air pollution. As reported by most interviewees, the offensive smell of *fagulo*, the residual of oil seeds, was the other cause of asthma, especially among women due to their frequent exposure. Though medical professionals prohibit *fagulo* as a source of fuel, many people continued to use it due to its affordable price than the higher cost of wood and/or Kerosene. Triggered by a number of factors; intestinal parasites, diarrhoea, respiratory infection, typhoid and tuberculosis were the common types of diseases among the people (Table 1).

Table 1. The Common types of self-reported diseases in Kore community, Addis Ababa, 2002 (Multiple response is possible, N=96)

Types of diseases	Count	Percentage
Tuberculosis	10	12.3
Diarrhoea	34	42.0
Typhoid	16	19.8
Intestinal parasites	60	74.1
Respiratory infections	34	42.0

Source: Field Survey, July 2002.

74.1% of the valid multiple respondents reported the occurrence of intestinal parasites in their household within a years' time until July 2002. In addition, parasitic diseases, respiratory infection, and diarrhoea were the dominant health risks in the area. Though the numbers of the count seem low, tuberculosis was common, owing to the crowded nature of the settlement and delay of residents to attend to medical treatments at the right time due to their low level of income.

### **Psychological and Social Impacts**

The psychological and social impacts of repatriation and squatting were related either to the informal nature of the settlement or the meagre level of social services or socially constructed perceptions of the people. First, though the authorities repeatedly requested the people to evacuate from the Kore area, the residents reacted against the appeal through demonstration or organized negotiation. The recurrent conflict between government actors and repatriates caused the uncertainty of the existing settlement and fear of losing land in the mind of the community.



This fear, in turn, deterred the establishment of *idir* and the social stability of the residents. *Idir* is an organized traditional and informal welfare system voluntarily established by individuals. Its cardinal aim is to meet the expenses of death, mourning, and securing honorable burial after death. Second, inadequate provision of toilets and social services caused psychological problems to many of the Kore residents. As it was proved through observation during the field survey, the toilets of the community were poor in sanitation, old in quality, and had repelling smell to residents, especially to *asthmatic* people. The poor sanitation of the toilets also influences the people to defecate in the nearby open fields. Defecation in the open field ashamed the people and feel guiltiness of their activity. So, defecation depletes both the quality of the environment and the personality of the Kore residents. Third, the naming of the Kore settlement as *meteleya*, temporary shelter, developed a negative perception in the minds of the residents because the local meaning of term *meteleya* conveyed the instability of the settlement in the future. The researched community, therefore, aspired to nullify the settlement naming of *meteleya* to avoid its negative connotation on the psychology of the people and instability of the settlement.

### **Kore Repatriates and Squatters: the Discourse of Permanent Opportunities of Housing the Urban Poor**

Repatriation is a complex process. It needs an integrated decision of the UNHCR, other UN agencies, the host and immigrating governments to provide appropriate assistance to returnees. Therefore, repatriation is not only a mere transportation of people across international borders. In the process of repatriation, a multitude of planning questions must be raised as a guiding line to make the necessary preparation for sustainable rehabilitation program. Many questions can be raised during the process of repatriation. For example, where in the host country should refugees be repatriated? What kind of short and long-term assistance should be given to the repatriates? Which governmental institutions are responsible for ensuring protection and welfare for the repatriates? For how long are they are considered as a “vulnerable group,” possibly deserving of specially targeted assistance (Hammond, 1999)?

The earlier discussions revealed that the returnees of the Kore community are confronted with a number of problems throughout the whole process of their displacement, in refugee campus and squatting. Though repatriation helped the Kore community to return to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the inadequate social services, lack of employment, and recurrent land tenure conflicts with the government actors challenged the local people. From all the psychological and social calamities the people faced after repatriation, the issues of housing and the urban land tenure were some of the most crucial problems of the Kore community.

In this section response was not given to all questions raised above. Rather, an attempt was only made to discuss durable strategies attempted to implement by government actors or proposed by the residents in addressing the housing and urban land tenure constraints of the people. The first approach analyzed strategies of the state actors, while the second approach discusses the opportunities proposed by the community.

## **Top-down Strategy**

Finding plausible strategies that can solve individual or societal problems is a complex matter. However, the actors of the Ethiopian government practiced various approaches in minimizing or solving the housing problem of the urban poor. According to the interview data, the high ranking government officials of Works and Urban Development and Foreign Relation and Development Co-operation Bureau of Addis Ababa City Government (AACG) had divergent strategies about the permanent housing remedies of the Kore community. The main strategies proposed by the two government officials are analyzed and presented below.

### ***A. The High Ranking Government Official in Works and Urban Development Bureau (WUDB) of Addis Ababa***

City Government proposed three different strategies to minimize the housing problems of the urban poor, in particular, and residents, in general. These were:

**1. Creating awareness** about the negative impact of illegal house construction through the dissemination of the necessary information by the responsible officials using different media. This awareness creation can progressively help to prevent the people from the construction of illegal squatters.

**2. Improving the urban housing policy of the country.** In Ethiopia, housing construction was almost basically dependent on individual or co-operative bases. During the *Derge* regime, the urban housing policy did not permit people to construct more than one house. During the current government, there are no sufficient private house construction companies in Addis Ababa, except some real estates, like Ayat, Sunshine construction, etc. To balance the demand and supply of housing, the shift in urban housing policy is crucial. The urban housing policy permits people or companies to build affordable houses for renting or sale during the present regime. However, still the second option can be one way of solving the urban housing problem of only for middle and high income urban dwellers. The assumption is the change of urban housing policy and provision of low-cost affordable housing for renting or sale would gradually minimize the problem of shelter. However, such profit oriented real estates could not be the appropriate means to solve the housing constraints of the urban poor. Therefore, the urban land and housing should try as well to consider the demands of the poor.

**3. Providing site and service & upgrading the existing settlement for urban poor dwellers.** The current demand of housing is much higher in Addis Ababa than its supply. To minimize this imbalance, and the housing problem of the Kore community and other poor urban dwellers, the higher official from Works and Urban Development Bureau (WUDB) supported the ‘site and service’ and ‘upgrading the existing settlement’ approaches of ‘aided self-help’ housing theory. With these strategies, the state actors should provide land, communal water supply, electricity, and unpaved road services and some subsidize materials to the urban poor to build their houses on a given plot of land (Hesselberg, 1996). In addition, the government can arrange long term

bank loans to the urban people to upgrade their settlement in situ. In response to the interview questions about the constraints of urban housing, the higher-ranking official of Works and Urban Development Bureau confessed that:

*“Without implementing the provision of housing strategies, bulldozing could not be an appropriate remedy to control the illegal construction of houses. Therefore, the forceful evacuation of the Kore community from the area might not be the right measure in solving the urban housing and land tenure constraints of Addis Ababa.”*

In principle, the representative of WUDB agreed to the provision of site and service to minimize the housing constraints of urban poor, like the Kore repatriates. However, until the summer of 2002, the period of data collection, the government didn't practically provide either legal title deed to the occupied land or new sites to permanently rehabilitate the Kore community.

**B. The High Ranking Official of Foreign Relation and Development Co-operation Bureau (FRDCB)** proposed technical training, material, and money support to rehabilitate and provide durable solution to the housing and urban land problem of Kore community. The institute designed and provided short term training of three months period. The young and adult people who were 45 years old got the training opportunity in the area of hair dressing, carpenter, maintenance, pipe work, and production of building materials. At the end of the training, the institute also gave technical materials and money support ranging from 375 to 500 *birr*, the national currency of Ethiopia, for every household. However, the institute granted about 2,750 *birr* per household only to elderly and some people who were unable to attend the training due to physical retirement or health factors. The institute, however, strictly forbade the returnees to rehabilitate in Addis Ababa, since it had believed that the trainees could not afford the market competition and high cost of house renting of the city with respect to their low training and income, respectively. However, the rehabilitation strategies of FRDCB failed to empower the Kore community to participate in the decision of training scheme designed by the institute that would affect the lives of the people. Because, according to Friedman (1992), the strategies of development and needs of people are not necessarily designed by the top authorities; rather, they must empower the community. The absence of community empowerment, the low quality of training, the mismatch of individuals' interests and area of training, the meager amount of money support, and prevention of rehabilitation in Addis Ababa adversely affected the success of the project.

Through the local people's resistance, the institute gradually raised the amount of money support and cost of technical materials to range from 1,430 to 2,500 *birr*. This money was only given to repatriate households who completed the training and accepted their rehabilitation outside Addis Ababa. However, later on the bases of community request and constitutional right of a person to live in any part of the country (article 32 of the current

constitution), the institute had also voided the restriction of repatriates to live in Addis Ababa. Though the government agencies tried to meet some of the requests, still the people continued to oppose the rehabilitation project and demanded the provision of either urban land or public housing in Addis Ababa. The request for urban land or public housing was the nuclei of intensive disagreement between the Kore community and government representatives while implementing the rehabilitation strategies.

### **Bottom-up Strategy**

As confirmed by the survey and interview results, the Kore community lived in the temporary squatting for about twelve years. During their stay, as the male focus group participant reported, the repatriates were benefited to access:

- 1. Temporary squatting** because the temporary, but legal, urban land provision of the government actors benefited the returnees to access space for the establishment of their settlement. The squatting settlement helped the returnees to live together and keep united in their demand for the permanent solution of the housing problem and security of tenure.
- 2. Subsistence strategies**-the settlement of the returnees in Addis Ababa opened opportunities to generate source of livelihoods from urban informal sectors. As the survey data indicated, most females obtained their source of livelihoods from irregular unskilled labor, domestic work, street vending, local brewery, and informal crafts in order of their importance, while most males were dependent on unskilled labor jobs.
- 3. Social services**-the settlement of the community in Kore site of Addis Ababa favored the repatriates to get access to communal water supply, shared toilets, waste disposal bins, and free medical services though they were meager.
- 4. Organised negotiation**- the temporary squatting in the city had helped the local committee of the Kore community to keep in touch and united with the executive committee of the 1991 Ethiopian returnees. This in turn helped the repatriates to carry out organized negotiation about the rehabilitation of the returnees with the government actors.

As it had been proved through questionnaire survey, more than 96% of the sample households can accept the provision of either site or services support proposed by the actor of Works and Urban Development Bureau or legal title deed to the occupied land to bring permanent solutions for their urban housing constraint. However, at the time of the field work, the conflict was not resolved due to the following reasons. First, the shift of the rehabilitation authority from RRC/DPPC to FRDCB of AACG had brought gap in properly managing the rehabilitation project. Second, the inconsistency of rehabilitation decisions of the FRDCB of AACG instigated ambitious demand of the repatriates. Third, the top-down approaches of rehabilitation program, which excludes

the voice of the poor mass led to conflict between the government actors and the returnees. Fourth, the inconsistent shift of the demand of the community from money support to the request of either urban land tenure or public housing had adversely affected the permanent rehabilitation of Kore community and confined them to stay in the area for a number of years.

## **CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The May 1991 victory of EPLF in Eritrea and TPLF in Ethiopia did not only overthrow the *Derge* regime from power, but it also brought many changes in the history of Ethio-Eritrea. First, Ethiopians were considered as foreigners in the face of Eritrean people affiliated to EPLF. Second, the change of government in Eritrea had also exposed massive Ethiopian to exodus from Eritrea either into their home country or other countries to avoid the violation of human rights by *Shabia* forces. Third, Eritrean women who gave birth to children from Ethiopians and wanted to live with their children were obliged to leave from Eritrea. However, Eritrean women who want to live in their country should send their children outside Eritrea. The *Shabia* government considers the children of Eritrean women who had blood ties with Ethiopians as potential enemies. The researcher, however, did not find a child born from Ethiopian women and an Eritrean father during the field work. As the results of the research depicted, the Kore community had suffered a lot from various challenges of displacement, life, and Kore temporary squatting. Taking the experience of this research as a lesson, future rehabilitation programs should avoid the following weaknesses. First, the frequent shift of rehabilitation authority from one institute to the other has to be controlled. Second, instantaneous changes in decision making in the implementation of the rehabilitation projects should be minimized or carefully made. Third, the exclusion of communities in designing the rehabilitation strategy that affects the life of the people must be avoided. According to empowerment approach, the inclusion of the voice of people in designing rehabilitation project is significant for a number of reasons (Friedman, 1992). First, it can help to minimize differences between the demand of community and the capacity of the government and second, it contributes to the acceptability and sustainability of the rehabilitation scheme.

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