



**Child Vulnerability or Agency? Exploring the Experiences of Children with Disabilities in Street Beggary in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

A Research Paper presented by:

**Ayele, Abraham A.**

(Ethiopia)

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Obtaining the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

**Human Rights, Gender and Conflict Studies: Social Justice Perspectives**

**(SJP)**

Members of the Examining Committee:

Supervised by: Professor. Karin Arts (PhD)

Second Reader: Dr Freek Schiphorst

The Hague, the Netherlands  
November 2016

***Disclaimer:***

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

***Inquiries:***

**Postal address:**

Institute of Social Studies  
P.O. Box 29776  
2502 LT The Hague  
The Netherlands

**Location:**

Kortenaerkade 12  
2518 AX The Hague  
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

Fax: +31 70 426 0799

## ***Acknowledgement***

I would like to extend my acknowledgement to individuals and organizations that have greatly contributed to the success of my study at *ISS* in general and for the writing of this paper. My deepest gratitude goes to Netherland Fellowship Program that has granted me the scholarship to cover the cost of the study at *ISS* and for my Employer-State University of Mekelle who granted me the study leave. I would like also to extend my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor. Karin Arts (Ph.D.) for her unconditional assistance and full engagement in supervising and guiding the process of the study from its inception up to the final write up. Indeed, I owe the completion and success of this study to your detailed comments. I am thankful to my reader Dr. Freek Schiphorst, whose critical comments have ignited new way of thinking on how to approach my questions. I want to add that; I am very thankful for all the constructive advice throughout the coursework in the Human Rights, Gender and Conflict Studies: Social Justice Perspectives department. Indeed, I learnt a lot in the process. I would also like also to say thank you to one specific agency, the Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment, and the officer Mr. Abera whose cooperation was invaluable. Further, I also would like to thank the street food vender Ms. Misrak who also participated as key informant because of her special knowledge. My gratitude also goes to the children with disabilities who are begging in the streets of Addis Ababa. For their cooperation and sharing their experiences. I also wish to thank my family for the support and care during the process, especially my brother Minassie, who provided a good company and frequently travelled across the city with me, when government offices frequently changed appointments. Thank you for your relentless support.

Finally, my gratitude goes to all the people of the Netherlands, whose work discipline and self-respect always reminded me the value of hard work; likewise, I am grateful to my classmates whose comments were irreplaceable throughout the process of writing the research paper. Ms. Hameedah Parker, (Ph.D. Researcher) provided critical comments and added unreserved technical support. My discussants; Akiko S. and Temkin M., provided useful insights. Special thanks goes to my girlfriend Nana Takeouchi.

***Dedication:***

*Dedicated to the children with disabilities who are Begging in  
the streets of Addis Ababa*

# Contents

<i>Acknowledgement</i>	iii
<i>Dedication:</i>	iv
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	viii
<i>Abstract</i>	ix
<i>Relevance to Development Studies</i>	ix
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Statement of the Problem	1
1.2. Background of the study	3
1.3 Research Objectives and Questions	4
1.3.1. The General objective	4
1.3.2. Specific Objectives	4
1.4. General Research Questions	4
1.4.1 Sub-Questions	5
1.5 Justification/Rationale	5
1.5.1. RBA: A justification	6
1.6 Significance of the Findings	6
1.7. Study Area Description	7
<b>Chapter Two: Theoretical and conceptual framework</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1. Introduction	8
2.2 The ‘Agency’ Discourse on Child Begging	9
2.3. Child Rightss Discourses	10
2.3.1. The RBA and CRC Principles (4ps)	11
2.4. National Child Rights Laws and Policy Frameworks	14
2.5. Critical Disabilities Views	16
<b>Chapter Three Research Methodology</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1. Introduction	18
3.2. The Research Design	18
3.3. Sampling Procedures	18
3.4. Methods of Data Collection	20
3.5. Data Analysis	22
3.6. Ethics in Studying Children and Positionality	22
3.7. Responding to Limitations in the Study	23

<b>Chapter Four</b>	<b>24</b>
An Exploration of Experiences of CWDs with Street Begging in Addis Ababa: Child Rightss Implications	24
4.1. A Glimpse of Begging by Children With Disabilities in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa	24
4.2. Queering the Responses: ‘Sikella’ or Double Bind of Child Rightss Violation?	25
4.3 The Absent presence! Experiences of CWDs in Beggary.	31
4.4. Children’s Best Interest: Unpacking the experiences of the CWDs who are in the begging activity in Addis Ababa	33
4.5. Dynamics, Interrelationships and Rights Violation in CWDs Involvement in Begging.	36
4.6. Responsibility for the Family or Family Care and Protection?	38
4.7. Ethiopian Government responses to CWDs involvement in the street beggary, in Addis Ababa	39
<b>Chapter Five: Concluding Remarks</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>55</b>
Appendix 1: Background of Research Participants	55
Table. 1.1 General Background and Characteristics of Participants	20
Table 1.2. Background of the Respondents CWDs who are begging.	55
Table 1.3. The demographic backgrounds of participants: Members of the community in the sub-city	56
Table 1.4. Background of Participants (Participants from the Non-Government Offices)	56
Table 1.5. Background of Participants (Participants from the Government Offices)	57
2.1. Interview Guideline for the interview with the Begging by CWDs	59
2.2. Interview Guide for Key-informants from Agencies	60
2.3. Interview Guide for Key informants from community;	60
2.4. Focus Group Discussion Guideline.	61

## **Maps**

**62**

**Map 1.** Administrative Map of Addis Ababa, the Capital City of Ethiopia. 62

**Figure 1.** A Male begging child (age-16) with a physical disabilities due to polio, taking street food.

**Diagram 1:** The 4Ps of the UNCRC. 59

## List of Abbreviations

AABSLA	-	Addis Ababa Bureau of Social and Labour Affairs.
ACPF	-	African Child Policy Forum
ACWRC		African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child
BOWCYA	-	Bureau of Women Children and Youth Affairs
CRBA	-	Child Rights Based Approach
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRP	-	Child Rights Programming
CRSA	-	Child Rights Based Situation Analysis
CSA	-	Central Statistics Agency (Ethiopia)
CSO	-	Civil Society Organizations
CWDs	-	Children With Disabilities
FDRE		Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
ILO	-	International Labour Organisations
JICA	-	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MoLSA-	-	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ethiopia)
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
RBAs	-	Rights Based Approaches
SJP	-	Social Justice Perspectives
UN	-	United Nations
CRC		Convention for the Rights of a Child
CRPD		Convention for Rights of Persons With Disabilities
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund



## **Abstract**

The involvements of children with disabilities (CWDs) in street beggary is an under-studied phenomenon and little-understood due to the complex nature of the activity. CWDs who are begging for alms in the streets are often approached as part of the ordinary street working street children. They are not in schools, care or protection schemas and/or out of the policy web in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Employing a qualitative methodology of exploration, this paper considers both the narratives of child agency and vulnerability of CWDs involved in beggary in the streets of Addis Ababa. The presentation of these discourses results in a broader framework of understanding the practices of begging by CWDs in Addis. Furthermore, the paper emphasizes the child rights pillars expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The research has also generated practical evidence that the notion of agency needs re-thinking and dismantling. These existing discourses have not adequately analyzed the experiences of CWDs with begging. This study disproves the agency assertion in beggary by CWDs and highlights the multiple child rights abuses involved in the activity. The children themselves perceive the activity as the last resort. In the words of participant child; “there is nowhere for me to go and to do outside of the streets and begging; the money helps me to buy food and a place to sleep” (4<sup>th</sup> participant child with physical disabilities due to polio, male, age 14). Further evidences throughout the study also indicated that, it is child rights violation, yet ignored in intervention policies and programs. A deeper understanding of the CWDs involvement in beggary is vital to move towards more effective and rights-based interventions. For this end, the paper suggests that this also applies to relevant offices in child protection in Addis Ababa’s city administration. These offices would do well to apply a child rights-based approach to supporting the rights of CWDs that involve in beggary.

## **Relevance to Development Studies**

The research draws from and situates its exploration in contemporary narratives in childhood studies of agency, vulnerability, and the critical disabilities views that conceptualize these debates. This paper attempts to re-think the implications of dominant narratives on children’s human rights. The tendency to overlook the realities and perceptions of specific groups, such as CWDs involved in street beggary, negatively affects successful intervention pathways. Overall, the analysis offers a crucial focus for development studies in general and the area of children’s rights particularly in developing countries’.

**Keywords:** Addis Ababa, agency, Begging, Children with Disabilities, child abuse, RBA, Ethiopia.

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1. Statement of the Problem

The participation of CWDs<sup>1</sup> in street beggary is a particularly troubling phenomenon of our day in Addis Ababa, because CWDs, who are begging are clearly visible to the wider society begging on the streets and yet ignored by the responsible actors (FSCE, 2012: p.9). Children's rights experiences, and support needs are inadequately assessed (*ibid*). The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia(FDRE), The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Report(MoLSA) (as cited-in Tsegaye, 200, p.3) indicates that, vulnerable children in Ethiopia are [estimated] at 5 million of which 2.7 million are CWDs'. Moreover, a recent report, UNICEF (2013: p.2) estimated that, one-in-three children begging in the streets have some form of disabilities<sup>2</sup>. This amounts to 1/3 of the estimated 100,000-150,000 street begging children. These estimations are indictments of fundamental blind spot which is unattended.

Several reports (ACPF, 2011; FSCE, 2012; Boersma, 2013) suggested that, the interventions towards children who are involved in the phenomenon of child begging, is far behind children's urgent needs. On top of that, a recent civil society act<sup>3</sup> is said to have negatively impacted the NGO sponsored child protection efforts in Ethiopia (Abdi, 2012). Almost 85[Percent] of child care and protection, and almost all child rehabilitation services are provided by NGOs (ACPF, 2014; Boersma, 2013). Ethiopia has ratified most of the international Human Rights(HRs) instruments<sup>4</sup> that explicitly stated state's responsibility for child rights violation in activities including beggary within the city administration. However, there exists huge gap of rights interventions toward children who are widely involved in the street beggary (Adugna, 2009; Boersma, 2013; FSCE, 2012).

There is widespread practice of begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa-*Bole* sub-city, and this has serious consequences such as in ability to get to education, health and care supports. Nevertheless, existing studies on the phenomenon of begging have largely focused on ordinary street begging children or children

---

<sup>1</sup> The CRC, Article 1. Stated "children are those under the age of 18". In this view, this paper used it refers to participant begging children between 12 to 16 years old.

<sup>2</sup> "The CRPD itself does not give comprehensive definition of disabilities, per se." (as cited in UNICEF, 2009: p.20) yet, within the broader view of CRPD (Art. 1); 'disabilities' in this paper represents CWDs who are begging in the streets with physical disabilities caused by polio, accidents and blindness due to trachoma etc.

<sup>3</sup> See, FDRE Proclamation No.621/2009

<sup>4</sup>See for example, CRC, 1992, ACRWC, 2002; CRPD, 2010 etc.

begging in partnership with older persons with disabilities (Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013; ILO, 2013; Boersema, 2013, Abebe, 2009). Therefore, there is a knowledge gap relating to begging by CWDs.

By way of a first glimpse of theoretical debate that will be analysed more in depth later in this paper, I observe that there are two dominant narratives of child rights that are pertinent to child begging. In the first approach, the activity appears as a business partnership for both the child and the adult (Woubishet, 2005). In the words of Abebe (2009: para.1034-5) “the children are actively participating (agency) to support their household...and that they should not be regarded as passive victims of their circumstances”. The second is child rights-based (CRB) discourse that argues that “children are being forced into the activity and that it is a child rights violation that should be prevented” See e.g. Art. 29 (b) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). Furthermore, CRC, (Article.23) recognizes; “the rights of the disabled child to special care and assistance” shall be designed to ensure their “fullest possible social integration and individual development”.

Research focused on categorizing child begging into the mundane street child phenomenon (Panter-Brick, 2002 para.147-49). This implied gap on how best to approach the specific begging phenomenon. Therefore, the study here posited to find out whether if begging by CWDs is child rights violation<sup>5</sup> or just children’s survival agency? The research argues the importance of considering children’s perceptions of their agency and their vulnerability within which to address a child rights implication. Moreover, critical look at the agency versus vulnerability debates can fill the missing link in analyzing begging by CWDs.

The state renders little attention to the phenomenon of begging by CWDs (ACPF, 2011: p.9). In this light, the study poses the need for examining the child rights implications of begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa. In the initial investigations phase, the researcher gave specific attention to the frequented locations, and techniques used in a bid to tailor the research problem and techniques of study. The information indicated that the begging CWDs come from different backgrounds and move from *sub-city* to *sub-city* to beg. However, for reasons of feasibility, the analysis in this paper has only dealt with children in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa. Therefore, the subject still needs further investigation.

---

<sup>5</sup> As per, CRC, article 19; “the child rights violations to which State Party and family/guardians are to account for constitutes; “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”.

## 1.2. Background of the study

Begging by street children has become a contemporary global concern that is unfolding in diverse forms and affecting the lives of CWDs in many ways (Save the Children, 2013). The World Health Organization (as cited in FSCE, 2012, p.9) found that, “globally close to 1.6 billion children have some form of disabilities” and 10% live in Africa under conditions of deep poverty.

Delap (2009, para.4) claims that, in different part of the world children are forced to move to the streets because of a mix of social, caste (India), religious (Senegal), and economic problems. These are factors that are making CWDs, the most vulnerable minority groups. Further, begging increases the vulnerability of CWDs for various human rights abuses (FSCE, 2015). Hence, CWDs essentially requires the support and care of family, society and the state (Save the Children, 2009). A recent study by the US, office of the International Labor Affairs (USILA) indicated that the absence of state intervention in providing necessary habilitation and rehabilitations support is directly linked with the increase of the activity, and abuses in different parts of Africa (USILA, 2014).

Ethiopia is party to international human rights agreements and conventions on the rights of a child such as; UNCRC, since 1992; ACRWC, 2002; UNCRDP, 2007 et al., which gave birth to changes including the 2009 proclamation of Child Rights Guide Lines, among others. Nevertheless, the changes are equally met with diverse challenges<sup>6</sup> with this prevalence of child begging. Beggary by CWDs occurs in streets, and public spaces justified under the family economic needs and children’s survival needs (Abebe, 2009). Accordingly, the socio-economic backdrop is said to have contributed a lot.

In Addis Ababa, begging largely takes place with Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), street children, and CWDs in the major streets, churches and mosques, (ILO, 2014; FSCE, 2012; UNICEF, 2011). The research explores the practice of begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa, with the intention to understand the situation and analyse the child-disabilities-beggary nexus, gender, age and other relevant dynamics and above all the child rights implication.

Countries have utilize approach to dealing with begging by children. Ebigo, (2003) noted that, children suffer from various abuses and neglect among which begging is but one. Laws that does not correspond to the actual needs of children and their family often face challenges from the civil society. Specifically, banning of begging is a most contested social justice issue (Boresma 2013; Tewelde, 2011). Hence, a study on begging children that

---

<sup>6</sup> Periodic reports for the CRC ETH/No 4-5 <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org>

considers the children's life and voice the center of an analysis could greatly support to understand how best to approach CWDs and begging it self.

The above background reasserts the existing broader dynamism with child labour and children participating in street begging globally as well as in Africa. Similarly, in Ethiopia, the prevalence of begging is an emerging major concern. Thus, the understanding of how this relates with begging by CWDs needs further analysis. The study has drawn explanation from literatures to compare with the evidences in the study. Hence, analysis here covers a wider understandings of child agency and child vulnerabilities that in away canvases both burning social concern in the child livelihood and their human rights impediments.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Questions**

#### **1.3.1. The General objective**

To critically explore specific experiences of CWDs in street beggary in Addis Ababa, and to generate recommendations on how best to understand and support the children's rights.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

-To explore perceptions, and experiences of CWDs in street beggary in-light of the content and implication of RBA.

-To reflect on children's agency or vulnerability narratives in relation to CWDs who are involved in begging in Bole sub city, Addis Ababa

-To analyse the risk factors, and rights violations related to begging by CWDs in Bole sub-city Addis Ababa.

-To study the responses of the state and NGOs actors (if any) to the prevalence of CWDs involvement in the street beggary in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa.

### **1.4. General Research Questions**

The researcher has formulated the following set of main research questions:

-What are the agency, vulnerability and other specific experiences of CWDs with street begging in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa?

-What are the gaps in the existing interventions to ensure the rights of CWDs who are begging for alms on the streets of the city and how a more nuanced RBA of intervention could improve their condition?

### **1.4.1 Sub-Questions**

1. What are the experiences, and perceptions of begging CWDs in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa on their situation and interventions therein?
2. How do the existing narratives fit into the realities of the CWDs who are involved in begging in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa?
3. What are the determinant factors, and power relations implicating on the rights of CWDs who beg in the streets, Bole sub city?
4. How do the state and agencies respond to CWDs involvement with street beggary Child begging by in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa?

## **1.5 Justification/Rationale**

Ethiopia, despite ratifying major child rights protection conventions, such as CRPD, CRC, ACRWC begging by CWDs has remained prevalent in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia (Save the Children, 2011). However, the absence of both national and international surveys on the begging by CWDs, their condition and the child rights implications make the situation a dire reality yet hardly noticed. The state should provide for substantive application of the children's rights stated under international principles. This is the major reason for the inclusion of A-RBA perspectives and discourse in the discussion of children's rights concerns.

The literature review and the personal experiences with CWDs while I was working with religion based charity organization, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia since 2010 has reinforced my quest to seek for answers to the specific type of child begging that requires closer understanding and yet is to be covered in main stream narratives. While presenting evidences for the existence of little researches Delap (2009: p.3) argued that, the deep poverty and in some countries involvement of criminal groups that shifted interest of stakeholders. Nevertheless, what I have learnt through my experiences with the children is that, criminal gang groups that operate on a bigger scale are absent in Addis Ababa. In addition, unrelated studies indicated that CWDs in the city are highly vulnerable to psychological and physical abuses, as they remain socially stereotyped, out of school and largely in urban and rural poor families. The research on child beggary so far is scanty and as far as the researcher's knowledge goes, there is no study on the experiences of CWDs in street begging in Addis Ababa.

### 1.5.1. RBA: A justification

Begging by CWDs has essentially implication in terms of child rights concerns (ACPF, 2008: p.38). Similarly, RBA is the most comprehensive normative child hood notion of fundamental human rights of children, (UNICEF, 2007). On the other hand, begging by CWDs is less understood both conceptually and in intervention<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, CRC's rights principles could provide important frame of balanced discussion along with agency discourse and possible venue for recommendation. Ethiopian government is party to both the ACWRC and CRC. The agreement imply obligation on the part of the state to vulnerable children not just, as 'victims' but as individuals with rights. The point is that, comparative presentation of principles embodied in these agreements, together with the concepts, approaches and the languages of disabilities provides a broader view of the subject and a better understanding of the values of RBA in identifying the needs and interventions to realize the rights. Hence, responding to CWDs who involves in street beggary requires considering the central role of the normative frame (CRC) for our epistemological base. Generally, the discussions during my field research have confirmed that it was necessary to include RBA as a frame for the exploration of the practice. For this end, the study diagnosed the principles against the practice and vice versa.

### 1.6 Significance of the Findings

CWDs that are involve in beggary face dual challenges. Firstly, the existing narratives on child begging give little attention to the phenomenon. Secondly, the children's cross-cutting experiences also bring out different vulnerabilities and rights violation. Moreover, their disabilities are among the major pulling factors for their engagement in the begging. It is the researcher's conviction due to the findings from the field that begging by CWDs is a degrading practice and that CWDs who beg are more prone to rights violation.

Hence, the study will serve to bring the children's condition in to attention of relevant actors (researchers, Addis Ababa city Administration, *Bole* sub-city). More-importantly, the findings implied a more nuanced RBA of intervention towards begging children, which is pathway to capacitate children to claim and realize their rights. The study has also engaged and alerted the relevant offices in the sub city. Literature invested hugely in focussing on child migration, child sexual abuses or trafficking of minors, from the perspectives of exploitative labour and decent work. Overall, begging children are dubbed as ordinary child beggars (Woubishet, 2005; Gebre, 2012; Hailu, 2015). This in effect resulted grey area of knowledge about begging by CWDs. This paper argues that the need for understanding the activity and its implications on the rights of the

---

<sup>7</sup> See the discussion in 1.4

CWDs involvement is very sensitive and timely. More so, a more nuanced rights-based approach, mainly by the state party, towards the children could help to protect and provide better support to the children in realizing their rights. Finally, the paper recommended to initiate a broader research on the phenomenon-involvement of CWDs in the street beggary.

### **1.7. Study Area Description**

Addis Ababa is the most populous city of Ethiopia with a total number of inhabitants of 3 million and growing at a 2.6% rate (CSA, 2007). The city has the highest share of street children in the country. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2003) and Save The Children (2007) Addis Ababa is the most populous city with total inhabitants of 3 million and growing at 2.6 % rate (CSA, 2007). Begging by CWDs are mostly the result of overcrowding of the urban slums, poor sanitation health services and lack of adequate access to food etc. (WHO, 2003; Save the Children, 2007). A situation analysis of the general street phenomenon by the UN and Bureau of Women Children and Youth Affairs (BOWCYA) (2007) as cited in Hailu (2015) indicated that boys and girls with disabilities in the city are at higher risk of mal treatment and economic exploitation. Further, the researcher observed concentration of begging children in Bole sub-city. Therefore, the research took place in three main locations of the sub-city and involved in total 42 research participants who were targeted for their involvement in or knowledge of the phenomenon of begging by CWDs.



## **Chapter Two: Theoretical and conceptual framework**

### **Begging by children with disabilities: Critical review of debates, concepts and applications**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

Begging by CWDs occurs within the larger social and legal setting and is perceived in a wide variety of ways, which in effect give out to multiple constructions and understanding of begging (Abebe, 2008; Camacho, 2001; Delap, 2009). The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2004:8) has defined child begging as follows:

a range of activities whereby the child asks a stranger for money [because of having disabilities(s)], being poor or needing charitable donations either by a personal decision to engage in the activity to help once self and the household or under the control of the third party... [Emphasis added].

The definition canvases manifestations and techniques of child begging. However, references to the exploitation in the definition imply certain built-in assumptions. In this regard, ILO's understanding of child begging manifests "worst form of child labor or hazardous work" as indicated in the ILO Convention on this subject (ILO, 1999: No. 182). Moreover, it underlines that children have some form of credentials that make them eligible to engage in the begging, and based on which the family asked their service. This is what the proponents of approaching child begging as child work (Gonzaga et al., 1990; Go, 1992; cited in in Camacho, 2001: p.6) refer to as "the children are their families' mechanism for coping with poverty situation". These views are inconsistent with the cited conditions of child vulnerability in the very same definition of child begging (disabilities and/or poverty).

The other competing assessment of begging by CWDs is the view as a child rights violation. The practice presents evidence of utter neglect of child rights. In this regard, Delap (2009: p.3) asserted that all child begging involves "forcing boys and girls to beg through physical or psychological coercion". Besides, the ACRWC, Art. 29 (b)) also declared that all forms of child begging are against children's fundamental human rights. Therefore, these views underline contested understanding of the begging by children.

The view of children as family agents put the begging by CWDs within child labour or economic exploitation frame of analysis that could be answered outside of a violation of child rights framework (in Camacho, 2001: para.4-5). Further, for Abebe & Bessell, (2011) children's rights are normative values that can only be practiced in the Global North.

Further, the understanding of the agency and vulnerability paradox implies analysing how their experience is influenced by their position in the family (Poluha, 2007; ACPF, 2010). In some contexts, gender role expectations play a role in society where male children are expected to help the family in different ways (Thompson, 2002). Similarly, Abebe (2008b) has noted the interactive nature of these multiple factors in the orphan and vulnerable children livelihood.. Hence, the discussion emerging from these discourses, and the implied theoretical frameworks and concepts provide a spring board for a critical exploration of the experiences of the begging by CWDs in Bole, Sub-City, Addis Ababa. The discussions are by no means exhaustive, but the triangulation of the discourses with the practice could contribute its fair share to on the much-needed analysis of child begging.

## **2.2 The 'Agency' Discourse on Child Begging**

The concept of child agency emerged in the 1990s with the growth of childhood studies. It asserts that children have the "capacity to choose to do things" (Mizen & Ofosue-Kusi, 2013: p.363). Accordingly, the view of child agency asserts that children are persons and that they can take decisions that shape their destinies within the boundaries of social, cultural views (e.g. on disabilities) and other limitations (Grugel & Ferreira, 2012: p.832). Hence, agency underscores the child's decision to take part in street begging as a survival strategy (Abebe, 2009). Further, the discourse mainly emerged in opposition of the view of children as passive victims of their situation and calls for taking into consideration their social and economic roles in the household (Abebe, 2008b).

Generally, the view underscores "a complex and deep division in terms of what kind of activity is advantageous or not and the nature of work that is considered appropriate or not" (Abebe 2009: p.11). Therefore, the view recognizes that, the exercise of child's agency is constrained by the environment (Robson et al, 2007; Abebe, 2009). Research in this line of argument suggested that for boys and girls in the street of Addis Ababa begging is a crucial aspect of social reproduction in which children earn resources to contribute towards household's livelihoods (Abebe T., 2008a: p.272). According to Abebe (2008a) "the perception of the public towards the children's involvement in begging and the children's own perceptions of the

begging is different...the children perceive their engagement as *Sikella*,<sup>8</sup> while the public considers them ‘at’ risk or ‘as’ risks”, (*ibid*).

Counter arguments however, view this agency in itself as a vulnerability (Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi, 2013). More importantly, Heineken (2011: p.32) noted that *Yilunta*<sup>9</sup> or the social contraction of shame and pride is the important variable that explains the street children’s livelihood in Ethiopia. This finding in Ethiopia shows that, the social set-up tends to accept willingly burdens, rights violations of social positions and family responsibilities. The research used these concepts to respond to the question whether this is the same for CWDs who are in the street beggary? Heineken proved that *Yilunta* has forced many children to say there is nothing else for them except to do begging. However, CWDs in the street beggary whose experiences and vulnerabilities are subject to each child’s individual perception, form of disabilities, sex, etc. could have different perception.

### 2.3. Child Rights Discourses

Contemporary debates of child rights draw from the arguments envisaged in relevant international human rights conventions. Especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) marks a turning point in the child rights discourse. The CRC is the major actor in establishing a new paradigm of childhood. Hence, in this paper I critically review both child rights- based approaches and the child agency discourse in analysing the experiences of begging children. More importantly, the conceptualization in terms of child rights elucidates the socio-legal and practical hindrances, for example because of policy or legal invisibility, that potentially deprive children the necessary care and protection (ACPF, 2011; Boersma, 2013).

The CRC principles contain important principles of child rights that are both instruments and guidelines for ensuring rights (UNICEF, 2007). On the other hand, the critical limitations in understanding and human capacity on the part of the state parties and relevant stakeholders is staggeringly immense that limits the successful implementation of pertinent principles (White, 2002; Grugel and Piper, 2007). The child rights discourse is the envisioning of the ‘proper childhood’ or normative framework of child rights based on international treaties and conventions with the aim of “building rights-holders’ capacity to claim their rights and duty-bearers’ ability to meet their obligations” (Save the Children, 2007; see also Save the Children and Theis, 2004:4). The

---

<sup>8</sup> *Sik’älla*, refers to the Amharic street word used in the research article (Abebe, 2009) to describe child beggary as Survival Strategy form of work by Ethiopian Child beggars and asserting the existence of agency on the part of the begging children.

<sup>9</sup> *Yilunta* is Amharic word to refer to a self-censorship by a child or belief of rights wrong in specific context

underpinnings are essentially a policy and programming instrument for the betterment of the lives of CWDs (Save the Children 2005: p.20). RBA, as opposed to charity, recognizes “legal entitlements, claims, justice and guarantees equality and freedom” (Harris, Marlin et al., 2005: p.16).

### **2.3.1. The RBA and CRC Principles (4ps)**

Rights-based approaches essentially are policy and programming instruments for the betterment of the lives of vulnerable groups in different contexts, such as CWDs, and settings (Save the Children 2005:20). Such deep beliefs in the normative childhood frameworks are the guiding justification for establishing RBAs for both procedural and substantive policy intervention. In view of the conceptual clarity of RBAs and their applicability in diverse social and cultural settings, it is highly relevant to analyse the context of begging children with disabilities. However, this is far from saying that, this child rights framework is complete recipe for realizing rights because the normative framework has been challenged to gain political commitments on the part of states in different developing countries (Pemberton, S., Gordon, D., & Nandy, S., 2012).

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) declared that, freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse are the human rights of disabled persons. Similarly, the CRC established RBA as part of international attempts to ensure the claiming, framing and realization of the rights of CWDs. More specifically, the CRC imposes the legal and moral responsibility of state actors to work towards changing the situation of vulnerable children (Article 2). More so, the (Articles.19) in this regard is very essential which states, “State Parties shall take...measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment...”.

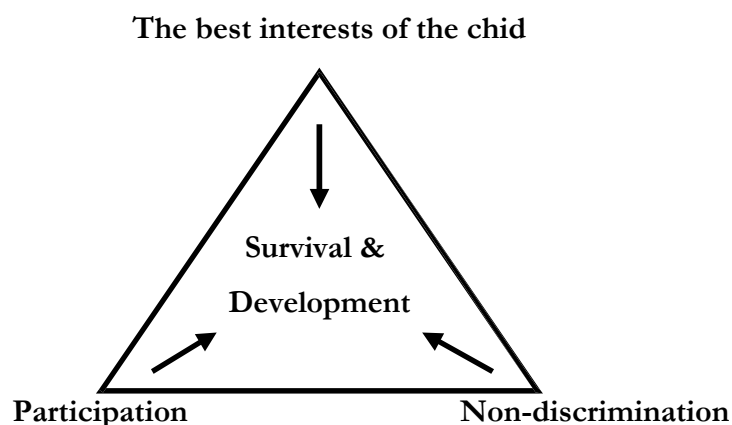
RBAs also challenge the view of begging CWDs as passive recipients or burdens to the state. CWDs have various constraints hindering their survival and development, therefore, a child rights-based approach as a framework can play a role in putting them into a position that enables them to participate and make decisions in matters concerning their lives (Save the Children 2005: p.19). similarly, the regional, African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child<sup>10</sup> (ACRWC). importantly recognized the obligation of states, to provision of necessary care and protection. All in all, the RBA obliges states and the duty bearers to insure the human rights of (rights holders) to get the necessary support to realize their rights under the 4 pillars; for begging children from begging and pertinent abuses<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ratified in Ethiopia 2002/283.

<sup>11</sup> Like the CRC, it established the state’s responsibility, see for example, Article 16.

**Diagram 1:** The 4Ps of the UNCRC.



**Source:** (Save the Children: 2005: p.50)

The diagram shows four fundamental principles of CRC as guidelines for a RBA. Accordingly, Ethiopia as a party to both the CRC and ACRWC is duty bearer to up hold these principles and implement substantively.

### **(1) Participation**

Children who are begging with disabilities have their own perspectives and views on the begging activity and on the actual experiences. CRC Article 12(1) particularly states that “states parties’ must promote the child the child participation in accordance to age and maturity. One of the most heart wrenching challenges of CWDs in this regard is that children are not well-integrated in the system to have access of participation in child care and protection programs (Save the Children, 2007: p.11). CWDs are mostly absent from schools and institutions and seen relatively little in the society (*Ibid*). A rights-based approach recognizes that children who are begging with disabilities can have their own opinion in dealing with the concerns in their life. The principle is essentially about the rights of the children to be heard in terms of their views on their abuse and agency, as stipulated in international child rights principles (CRC, Art.12; ACRWC, Art.7). In this regard, duty bearers are obliged to conduct assessments and evaluations of the children’s views when creating a path towards redressing the problems (Save the Children, 2005: p.20; 2007: p.13).

Further, participation implies representation of their views in the decisions to participate in the activity or not (Pemberton, Gordon, et al., 2012). More importantly, participation of the children on to explain their life and on how to

support them can create effective intervention to realise their rights. Above all, Participation beseech children's capacity to frame, claim and realize their rights. Therefore, analysing children's experiences is essential.

## **(2) Non-discrimination**

As indicated in the CRPD (Art.2): "all rights apply to all children without exception". Therefore, state parties are obliged to apply the rights to all children including CWDs who beg. The same emanates from the non-discrimination clause in Article 2 of the CRC. The principle also urges for specific look of children and those who are abused to identify the kind of support needed. Therefore, state parties are obliged to apply the rights to all children including the CWDs (Lansdown, 2009; O'Kane, 2003). Unlike the child agency discourse or the blatant vulnerability view of the child, the discourse of a-RBA recognizes the children specific needs and wider policy focus. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Constitution in (Arti. 24) stated that, "no person shall be denied of protection on the grounds of disabilities". A-RBA puts forth the responsibilities for families of a CWDs and the state to ensure the rights and freedoms.

## **(3) Rights to Life, Survival and Development**

The principle of survival and development<sup>12</sup>, is very crucial element of realizing rights (UNICEF, 2007). In pertinent to the CWDs the convention puts the highest responsibility on the state Party. Article 23 (1,2) states that, "states Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child 's active participation in the community". In addition, Arti. 23(2) calls upon state Party' to ensure the rights of CWDs to special care in accordance to the child need. This basically involves the provision of access to empowerment opportunities including access to health care, education and physical security to CWDs who are begging (CRC Art 4, 16; ACRWC Art. 5).

This child rights frameworks provide for standards on how to approach children under various contexts abuse. Further, CRC (Article. 6(1)) declares that, "states parties should recognize that, every child has the inherent rights to life" Furthermore, in article 6(2) it is stated that, States are obliged to ensure "the survival and development of the child". These agreed upon standards also become practical guidelines for child support (Townsend, 2009).

Begging by CWDs essentially impacts on the rights of children's survival and development. Therefore, a RBA towards children provides for state parties to abide by the principle.

---

<sup>12</sup> see in CRC Article 6, 7, on the basic social and physical wellbeing of all children

#### **(4) Best Interests of the Child**

According to, CRC, Article 3(1): “in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration”. This shows that, Best Interest of the Child (BIC) have a central place in the child rights frame. Similarly, Article. 3(2) also states that, “state Party must ensure the protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being ...through appropriate legislative and administrative measures”.

The BIC to be substantively translated it needs the concerted effort of state; to refrain from orchestrating an interest of other parties, against the children’s interest. At same time, state Party have a role to play in facilitating venues in which the interest of children could be entertained. In a similar fashion, ACRWC, (Article.29) also clearly stated that, begging by children (with disabilities) does not reflect the best interest of a child. Above all, as stated in Article 3(3); the success of BIC depends on “the conformity of care and protection by the family/guardians and the state Party for CWDs in the standards established by CRC”.

Generally, the four CRC’s principles are crucial guidelines to explore perceptions and interventions in the lives of children. CWDs are rights-holders, to participate equally in matters of their life, and not to be discriminated because of their (dis)ability. In addition, State Party and NGO stockholders in child care and protection including the family are obliged to give services that are in line with the principles and best interest of children. Unless the CWDs can have access to enjoy their rights of care and protection, it goes as rights violation. More importantly, children’s survival and development principle is central to the rest of child rights promotion framework (Lundy, 2007). The principle obliges state actors to fulfill their responsible by taking the necessary protection and care services.

#### **2.4. National Child Rights Laws and Policy Frameworks**

Ethiopia has made sea changes in terms of signing and adoption of different international laws pertinent to the protection and development of CWDs. Recent assessments, including; the reports of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, indicated that Ethiopia has established several legislative and policy frameworks to address child rights issues (CRC 2015: p.70-1). In addition, the FDRE has ratified ACRWC in 2002 which is the most important international convention in Africa in relation to protection of the children and which includes a specific article that recognized “all form of child begging as

violation of rights” (Article. 29). Generally, the constitutional<sup>13</sup> as well as other legal frameworks in Ethiopia provide at least the procedural basis for support and intervention in favor of realizing the rights of CWDs who beg in Ethiopia.

### **The FDRE Constitution**

FDRE Article. 9(4) declared that all international conventions ratified by the state are by default part of the law of the land. In this view, the UNCRC was adopted, since early 1992 therefore, all the principles as well as articles of the international convention is also part of the law to ensure the human rights of begging children with disabilities. The government enacted different proclamations and regulations and established offices like (MoLESA) a ministry for social and labour wellbeing is among such moves FDRE report-to CRC (2012: p.2). The constitution also gives for establishment of executive committee, up to *kebeles*<sup>14</sup> with ‘the mandate of overseeing the implementation of the CRC by coordinating, monitoring and evaluating efforts at both federal and regional levels’ are established to deal with abused children, (MoLESA, 2002, cited in Adugna, 2009). As a party to these international conventions, the state is duty bearer to ensure proper support towards realizing rights. Most importantly, Ethiopia is obliged to ensure the establishment of rights based approach to intervention on begging by CWDs.

### **Policy Frameworks**

The latest growth and transformation plan (GTP) a national policy that is now in its second phase is constitutes the consideration of vulnerable child protection (MoFED, 2010) Regarding the assurance of respect for fundamental rights the plan intends to widen the government collaboration with UN agencies, and civil society in making extensive efforts to create awareness about the CRC and mobilize the public around children’s rights’ (FDRE 2012: p.9).

Similarly, the national government have launched the National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2013-2015) regarded as one of the huge moves. However, like all the preceding initiatives it does not specifically target begging by CWDs. Some argue that, this is because of counterproductive laws, like the ‘Charities and Societies Proclamation’ (No. 621/2009). This law is criticized for disengagement of stakeholders in diverse sectors including those in child protection (Abdi, 2012). Overview of the laws and regulations related to vulnerable child rights protection in the country

---

<sup>13</sup> See FDRE, 1995 Articles, 36(2/3), revised Family Code, 2002

<sup>14</sup> The lowest tier of government in Ethiopia.



shows that, children are absent from specific programs, and regulation within child protection framework (USILA, 2014).

This study makes use of these discourses to show the gaps in the dominant discourses/debates, or even silences about begging by CWDs. More importantly, it will uncover the child rights implications of the activity through the analysis of the social, legal backgrounds and the begging experiences of the children.

## **2.5. Critical Disabilities Views**

An all-encompassing definition and understanding of the concept of disability is missing. Even “the CRPD itself contains no common definition of disabilities, per se.” (UNICEF, 2009: p.20). The CRPD’s understanding of disabilities (PWD) is stated in its Art.1 as entailing “long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”. But the absence of commonly agreed definition could implicate on the actual policy and programing to address the concerns of the group. Moreover, the conception has only underlined the possibility of hindrance to their [their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with other]”. This implies that, the focus is on challenges to full participation, yet rights violation because of disabilities is not stressed enough.

In literatures, there are two broader dimensions of understanding disabilities. These are the social and medical model. The Medical model or frame of understanding concerns itself with the medical cure and needs of PWDs, (Onyango, 2012). The focus of this approach on the physical and bodily manifestation instead of external-social-legal and environmental impacts is highly criticized in child rights discourse. The critics are mainly on its role in creating the levels and names for individuals as; blinded, impaired etc. that resulted in stereotypic understanding of the persons.

The Social Model of Disabilities on the other hand, focuses on interplay between the actual impairment and the socio-cultural context that have multiple implications on the children (Rothman, 2010; Onyango, 2012). The model conceptualizes children’s disabilities as resulting from socio-legal invisibility. The proponents argue for the need of reasserting the social model of understanding to disabilities in the social justice or rights discussion.

In contrast to the understanding of the social-model, the child agency discourse on begging children highlighted the role and responsibility of children within the society and their household at the expense of their rights or abuse of their fundamental rights. To this end, the conceptualization of

begging CWDs in this paper considers both children's physical and other motorial challenges as well as underscoring their social and legal conditions.

# Chapter Three Research Methodology

## 3.1. Introduction

This section presents the overall data gathering and data analysis techniques or standard research methods that were used for this study.

## 3.2. The Research Design

Studying a social phenomenon requires critical conceptualization of the relevant aspects of the subject and flexibility in study. For this end, the study used a qualitative methodology. This is in line with the nature of the research objective and the questions of this study, which are exploring experiences (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative methods are important in exploring deep social issues such as child begging (Wedadu, 2013; Boersma, 2008). The design enabled the researcher to explicate the complexities surrounding CWDs beggary (O' Leary, 2010). Overall, the research used a combination of four different qualitative methods including; interviews, observation, quick-interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore the children's experiences and voices (Thomas and O'kane, 1998; Kothari, 2004).

The collection of qualitative methods was imperative in allowing an in-depth analysis of the experiences of CWDs who are begging in the streets and provides a viable understanding of the setting which otherwise may have been difficult to attain (Kale and Brinmann, 2009: p.115). This is because the methods used were in a way responding to the needs of the context, or the flexibility required in the process of interviewing the children. For example, the research used informal ways of operating interviews; including fast interview during the time they are taking tea or when the road is quiet. This in turn benefited both the research and children. The sources of data included both primary and secondary sources to benefit the broader understanding of the phenomenon. All in all, the analytical value of the descriptive explorative methods followed in this study helped to also examine the conditions, the interventions so far and avenues of intervention for rights improvements of the CWDs who are begging on the streets (Miles; Huberman et al., 2014).

## 3.3. Sampling Procedures

The target children in the study are CWDs who beg. In addition, the initial investigation has determined the specific sub- city and locations to situate the study. Moreover, the objective of the study is to gain in-depth understanding, inferring from the begging children's standpoints rather than drawing generalizations from the status quo held on the phenomenon (Kale and Brinkmann, 2009: p.1). To this end, the research adopted non-random

sampling to identify and select children for interviews. The method provided the flexibility that is required to get respondents (Creswell, 2013; O' Leary, 2010). The biggest challenge in researching the begging CWDs in the sub-city was the level of 'disabilities taboo'<sup>15</sup> and stigma and not the criminal gang networks that posed a challenge to studies in other countries (Delap, 2009:4). Responding to these setbacks was also served well by using qualitative methods.

The sampling techniques have also allowed the inclusion of the unfolding new dimensions in the-course of the paper. For example, during the observation of the child begging and the note taking process on the emerging manifestations of the begging by CWDs including, the street level relations and gender-dynamics were uncovered. The researcher approached both CWDs who were begging for alms 'individually' in the streets of the sub-city area and those begging 'accompanied' by others. This dual existence of child begging (those who beg alone and those who are accompanied by older persons) has not been well treated in studies.

The information provided by the *Woreda*<sup>16</sup> office for children and women affairs has helped in choosing the particular-begging spots to be studied. Accordingly, key informants were selected from the *Woreda* offices. The church provided the first access point to link with the CWDs who are engaged in begging within their communities. However, the coordinators in the *Woreda* office for childcare have also helped the researcher access to various supports including the support from the Addis Ababa city police. Without the paper the police could intervene in the data collection process.

Overall, 42 respondents have participated in the study. The 17 key-informants were begging CWDs. Six of them have been included only in the observation, because they were in the begging in company with able-bodied persons, who often family members and sometimes with a third party. The challenge to approach the CWDs come from the elders who were not willing to respond to the questions. Further, I conducted interview with 13 key informants from both GOs and NGOs. The FSCE, ACPF, CFDD and Handicap International offices in Addis Ababa were from the NGOs. GOs includes; Bureau of Women, Children, Youth, Affairs (BOWCYA), Addis Ababa Women and Child Affair Office and similar other offices in the *woreda*. The exact participants were selected for their particular-position and knowledge on CWDs who involves in street beggary. The key-informants consisted of 12 members of the community in the sub-city who were interviewed for their

---

<sup>15</sup> 'Disabilities taboo' refers to the situation where people are not even willing to talk about persons with disabilities and their relations with them,

<sup>16</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> tier of government structure in Ethiopia. The structure constitutes 5 tiers of governance in total and *Kebelles*' are at the lowest level.

experiences and understanding as a basis for explaining the social dynamics of the practices and situations involved.

**Table. 1.1 General Background and Characteristics of Participants<sup>17</sup>.**

The category of research participants	Number	Gender		Method of data gathering
		Male	Female	
CWDs who involve in beggary, operating alone	11	10	1	Interviews, FGD
CWDs who are in street beggary, in company of elder persons	6	4	2	Observations
Key-informants from NGOs	7	6	1	Semi-structured interviews, discussions
Key informants from government offices	6	2	4	Semi-structured interviews,
Informants from the public	12	6	6	Semi-structured interviews, discussions

**Source:** (Own Computation, 2016)

### 3.4. Methods of Data Collection

Relevant data is pertinent to the phenomenon of begging CWDs. Such data have among others been collected through qualitative methods, from both primary and existing literature in the area. The methods of primary data collection were in-depth interviews, observation, and focus group discussion. According to (Kvale, 1996 cited in Lorente-Catalán, E., & Lleida, 2014: p.4) Interviews are essential research instruments, “to describe and know the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects” through exposing the hidden or silenced experiences of individuals and vulnerable groups. In the in-depth interviews, the researcher spent 35-40 minutes with the begging

---

<sup>17</sup> Please find more details of the participants in annex in the back of the research, Pages, 52-55

children asking essential questions about their age, experiences and the challenges they face in the activity. During FGD, the researcher used various techniques including games. Further, the study included key informants from various relevant government and NGO representatives who were asked about their specific experiences and information on the subject. The interview also extended to alms giving members of the community within the sub-city for their views and perceptions regarding the phenomenon.

On the other hand, the document review focused on the works of various relevant GOs and NGOs, the relevant human rights instruments such as the UNCRC, CRPD, and ACRPWD, Ethiopia's domestic reports to the CRC Committee, Constitutions, Proclamations and so on. The document review helped to make sense of the situation of the begging children.

Overall, the research methods enabled me to answer the research question. The research also used discussion and interview guides to guide the process of data gathering through those methods. The type of questions developed were open-ended questions that allowed the participants to respond freely and from different perspectives. Regarding the atmosphere of the interview, the researcher situated the process within their natural environment to allow children freely express their experiences and views. This is specifically under the road bridge in Megengnaga area where some live and stay during the heavy rainfall. The major begging areas identified are three major areas of Woreda 6 of the Bole Sub-City, Weste Megenagna West, Egiziharab, and Holly-city centre.

The medium of communication was Amharic during the interviews with the CWDs who are begging. This allowed easy communication with the children. Also, important to mention is that the first contact with the CWDs was created in and by the church. Later this expanded into full access and to their full participation via the street food vendor. This street food vendor has participated as key-informant in the study due to her knowledge of the children and her interaction with the children further strengthen the successful interview. Moreover, the actual interview with the children was facilitated by a child care expert from the *woreda* office for child and women affairs. Therefore, both the expert support for the children and the familiarity of the street vendor played huge role in collecting the data. The researcher documented the data from children primarily by pictures, recording and note-taking. The medium of communication during the interview with stakeholders of both GOs and NGOs in their respective offices was English and Amharic and documented through note-taking.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

The study generally focused on the experiences of CWDs in begging in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa, and the child rights implications of the activity. It analysed the social-institutional environment of these children. The analysis predominantly follows qualitative interpretation techniques, to explore beyond the surface of child beggary (Kothari, 2004; O’Leary, 2014). The interviews were mainly conducted in the local Amharic language for familiarity reasons. Finally, data gathered in different ways were re-transcribed into understandable format. This was followed by the process of categorizing into themes and sets of ideas pertinent to the main and sub-research questions. In this regard, the content analysis and thematic categorization have greatly benefited the paper in the final critical analysis against the backdrops of the existing discourse and literature. Generally, the tools of analysis effectively supported to transfer the bulk of data in the form of opinions and quantitative data collected from literature.

### **3.6. Ethics in Studying Children and Positionality**

The first key ethical element in conducting research with children is to get the consent of the subjects before any research engagement (Powell, Fitzgerald, et al., 2012). Moreover, child research ethics differs from one context to another depending on the social and cultural setting as noted by (Graham, A., Powell, M. & Taylor, 2015). The subjects of the study here were mainly begging CWDs. Therefore, the researcher exhausted every technique and put maximum effort to get the children’s confidence and ensure their safety. The result was impressive as the begging children successfully presented their views and experiences. To avoid bias on the sampling of begging children with serious disabilities that negatively affected their ability to communicate, the researcher attempt to include them in observation, and utilized the first-hand experiences of the street food vender.

The other paramount consideration was confidentiality, in this regard, all necessary precaution has been taken to ensure the confidentiality of the identity or specific opinion of the participants. The interview participant CWDs are dominantly male children and individually begging. At first some of the them asked me to connect them with *Dirigit*/NGOs, in return for their participation, but after the explanation from the street food vender who has a strong tie with them, understands begging, they agreed to share their experiences. To this end, the data is gathered with the full consent of the research participants. The street food vender (Ms. Misrak) has went to college but she dropped out because of financial constraint.

Conducting research with vulnerable groups necessitates the use of psychologists and trained supports (Christensen and James, 2008) to avert any

negative consequence. Here, with the support of professional techniques, the research managed to keep the risk at the lowest (Kavel and Brinkmann, 2012: p.73). The recent recognition of a child as an important social actor brings the need to include and listen to their views on the matter (Powell; Fitzgerald et al., 2012: p.14). In this regard, the researcher drew from the experiences of similar works, (cf. Boersma, 2008; Wedadu, 2013). Overall, the research followed the fundamental ethical steps in conducting the research including: securing consent, avoiding possible harm or distress on the child, and confidentiality of the participants' identity for their safety.

### **3.7. Responding to Limitations in the Study**

As far as the researcher's knowledge extends, this research is one of only a handful attempts to research begging by CWDs that delves into the child rights implications of this practice. Consequently, there is limited statistical data both because of the nature of the phenomenon as well as the lack of focus from relevant stakeholders. Here, the research process placed an emphasis on life experiences of the subjects in the activity and tried to build on diverse case studies and global reports. More importantly, the resources obtained from the Forum on the Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) an organization working with vulnerable children including CWDs has helped in filling the gaps. The research has also tried to estimate the numbers based on the observation. The data on the begging by CWDs performed together with guardians and by children with speaking diffability is also insufficient. However, through thorough interviews with the street food vendors, the researcher managed to get a picture of the lives of the children involved.



## Chapter Four

### **An Exploration of Experiences of CWDs with Street Begging in Addis Ababa: Child Rights Implications**

#### **4.1. A Glimpse of Begging by Children With Disabilities in Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa**

The experiences or perceptions of CWDs who beg in the streets of Bole sub-city, Addis Ababa are inextricably linked with their specific context including their disabilities, social and family background, their sex and other factors. This study primarily focusses on these practical and contextual experiences, on a belief that subjects should own their reality. To this end, due to the conceptual and explicatory value of RBA, the analysis utilized the frame to relate to the discussion on the rights implication. Further, the collection of qualitative methods of research, and RBA to understanding children have immensely benefited critical exploration in the study.

The previous parts of the paper have clearly laid the contextual and theoretical background for this analysis. Then the chapter here presents an analysis of the data in a manner that is relevant to understanding of begging phenomenon in Bole sub city, Addis Ababa city.

In Ethiopia, there is a strong association between a person's disabilities and begging or beggary (JICA, 2002; Boersma, 2013). Most disturbingly, a growing number of CWDs are also coming to the streets of the capital city, Addis Ababa to beg for alms. The children are largely between the ages of 12 and 16, and mainly visible in the public transportation areas, main roads, and in the corners of the road bridge. However, some respondents from the public<sup>18</sup> pointed out that they have encountered children as young as 5 years old. However, the dominant age group is between 12 and 16 and consists of children with visual impairments and polio-caused disabilities. Moreover, some of the begging children also inhabit big bridges within the city. Still others live with their family or guardians/third party, although in these case the child's involvements have usually proved to be far from being voluntary. The average-begging CWD in the city has at least one form of physical disabilities that he or his guardian uses to appeal for pity from the alms givers. The children mostly lay on the road covered with a thick and dirty blanket/bed sheet. The better offs are those who are begging individually.

More specifically here in the study, almost none of the CWDs involved in the research have been to school, apart from one child who became completely

---

<sup>18</sup> Please refer to the Annex on the back of the research for further details about these respondents.

blind after attending grade three. Moreover, except for the few who were born in the streets of Addis Ababa, most the children are from rural and urban poor households of all regional states. In addition, all participant children are children with physical disabilities caused early childhood sickness or polio affected children and other accident related physical challenges.

#### **4.2. Queering the Responses: ‘Sikella’ or Double Bind of Child Rights Violation?**

*What can I do about it, to live and where can I go!*

(Participant, male, age 15)

Reliable data about the CWDs who are in the begging activity in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is largely absent. Further, the national and city wide surveys on vulnerable children have also focused on the ordinary street children, and adult persons begging with disabilities. Therefore, data on the trend and nature of the activity is largely missing. Nevertheless, sporadic and unrelated researches have reported that, child begging is growing at alarming rate in the city (Boersma, 2013; UNICEF, 2007). Due to main concern of the study in the children’s rights, the focus has been life experiences of children in the begging. The begging children, like all other children, have the rights to receive necessary life skills and empowerment opportunities to help themselves live dignified life. The societal makeup in the society justifies begging for disabled person.

The studies on child begging in Addis Ababa, reported a clashing reality of the activity and the lives of children. Some reported that children are not victims but active participants in the activity as a survival methodology (Abebe, 2008, 2009.). On the other hand, FSCE (2012) suggested that, vulnerable (including disabilities) children, begging children are subjected to multiple abuse in the activity. In addition, ACPF (2011: para.9-11) importantly noted that begging by CWDs are out of the policy web and are at higher risk. The actual observation in the sub-city; Weste-megenaga, Hollycity, and Egziareab also reinforced, the assertion that the children are in the state of present absence, faced with human rights abuses. The next paragraphs elaborated these specific and crosscutting experiences of begging children, which challenges the dominant narratives of the mono-existence of the practice.

The study argued that, observing these big number of begging by CWDs, in the streets of Addis Ababa is the first blow to the homogenized narratives that reduced the role of children in begging to be only as a guide, for the adult beggars with disabilities (Wededu, 2013; ILO, 2014). Moreover, children’s

experiences also varied along various lines; the level of child's disabilities, the circumstances of begging, sex, and other characters.

Further analyzing of children's experiences showed that, the reasons as to the engagement in the activity lie between the terrains of vulnerability and survival resort. More importantly, the begging children with a disabilities identified 'the absence of basic parental protection or care coupled with the absence of government support for their family and care takers as a cause for their engagement'<sup>19</sup>. Further, CWDs who street beg indicated that, being born on the street and with disabilities have led to their involvement. The responses are indictments to the rights abuse in the activity that are against the international child rights frameworks.

The children perceive their condition as the last resort because of family pressure. This is primarily reflected in the in-depth interview with the children. They reported that they are asked by the family to continually engage in the activity from the early morning to the nightfall on daily bases. In the words of begging child on the streets;

I only think to live for the day, I don't have anybody to care for what I am going through here in the streets, my family just waits for the money that I am making, they don't ask me how I bring the money. Instead, if I don't take at list the minimum amount of money that I get on a normal day, I will be made to beg during the nights also and sometimes beatings and I will not be given food to eat...I most remember one day, I did not take money home because, I could not even get one penny... when I get back I told my stepfather that I did not make any money today. I was punished severely with his feast that led my nose to bleed... the insults are also still in my mind... (1<sup>st</sup> child participant, male, age 13).

Moreover, the time to rest and the time to take their food are at the same time. These experiences of children emphasize the serious challenges they are facing, which is outside the explanation offered by homogenizing theories of social economists and anthropologists alike (Abebe, 2008, 2009). This finding is inconformity the research findings of (Delap, 2009) which found out that, "Children who are forced to beg suffer a lot and particularly poor living conditions". Incongruent to this findings and children's response of strong family involvement in child begging and maltreatment, participants from the community also shared their experiences,

---

<sup>19</sup> See for example responses of 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> child participants

I was coming from Mexico area to Bole, the child with disabilities begging was between the ages of 12-15, he was using a crunch, while the child was begging the car started to move and the door touched the child's crunch he failed very badly, this is bad memory for me (participant, male, age 36).

Many other, respondents have also witnessed at list a child being pushed by a police from the cars or the street. Surprisingly, these experiences are also normalized by the intensification of the activity coupled with long existing cultural and religious association of begging with disabilities in the societal setup of Ethiopia (ILO, 2014; ACPF, 2011; FSCE, 2012). Such deep-rooted episteme reinforced by contemporary individual experiences and the media have added to the misunderstanding of begging by CWDs. In the words of (2<sup>nd</sup> participant, male, age 28)

...I used to see one begging child with a disabilities in a specific spot, and I always gave the child some coins thinking that he is mentally disabled. As a matter of chance, once I was going to another part of the sub city, and I saw the same child who was pretending to be having a mental disabilities and speaking challenges in that taxi, and I found out that the child has none of the problems he was pretending to have. I was shocked to see this child who is healthy and speaking properly. Since then I always rethink before I give.

This emphasizes that, amidst the confusion of false and genuine disabilities or the multiple other forms of street child phenomenon, begging by CWDs are misunderstood. This notion also brings into attention the existence of social normalization of the activity. However, as indicated in the above discussions, children also experiences beatings, denial of basic needs like food and physical security, which is a clear indication of child human rights violation<sup>20</sup>, declared under CRC, (article, 19). The study has also found ample evidences that, these children do not perceive their activity as *sikella*<sup>21</sup> but as a response to their lack of protection and care. In the words of a begging child

I feel less of human and undesired. People especially the youngsters living in the area harass me, beat me tell the passer-by not to give money to me, by saying that I can see or that I am cheating (4<sup>th</sup> child participant, male, age 16).

---

<sup>20</sup> See CRC, Article 19, paragraph 1.

<sup>21</sup> See foot-note 8<sup>th</sup>

This conflicts the finding of Abebe (2008) that reported the child begging, in Addis Ababa as *sikella* a source of income, simple survival engagement for the begging children. Nevertheless, this view neglected the child rights dimension. More so, this is the emergent discourses that has also largely influenced the policy direction in Ethiopia. The responses of the government officials in the sub city reflected such understanding of begging by CWDs, which argued that, “the level of development and existing larger poverty is responsible for this kind of begging”. I argued that this are the kinds of understandings that underlie the inadequate responses towards children. Children also told the researcher that, they face the challenges of lack of support from the state, civil society or NGOs. This is partly because the children are mobile and held under the firm control of their family. However, it also suggests that, the absence of understanding, and engagement on the part of these stakeholder.

The government reports collected from the local *Woreda*<sup>22</sup> offices reflect that the children with disabilities are not specifically targeted in the interventions<sup>23</sup>. However, the able-bodied persons and family of beggars have been receiving scattered supports. In this regard, the director in the *Woreda* office for children and women affairs responded that the government is making a progress in changing the problem by creating an interface with the non-government organizations like save the children. Other, key informants in the office, have also suggested that there is currently an initiative that is being taken by the Addis Ababa City Administration, to establish task forces for vulnerable child protection and follow-up (*Yehitsanat Tibeka Bureau*) within each *woreda*. This is promising, however, as Ms. *Lemlem*, Director of the *Woreda* office for the women and children affairs admitted, there is a need to work on the programs that are specifically geared towards the children with disabilities that are begging on the streets

In the process, this study also discovered a second variant of child begging with a disabilities. This occurs when a child with disabilities engage in the activity under older person’s watch. The technique involves putting a child with disabilities on the street sides, while the mother and sometimes guardian stands behind the child. This is among the troubling observations rights violation I have made during the study that, the children did not change their location, the entire day, even during the rainy times, instead they remained in their places laying on the ground uncovering the wounded parts because of injury, and physical disabilities.

In contrast, children who are individually begging with disabilities are observed eating street foods and having drinks (coffee, tea) as can be witnessed in the

---

<sup>22</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> tier of government administrative structure in Ethiopia

<sup>23</sup> Interview with the key Government officer in the *woreda*

picture below. This reality asserts that the children have different reality, and their experiences is also dependent upon these bases.



**Figure 1.** A male begging child (age 16) with a physical disabilities due to polio, taking street food.

Therefore, the experiences of the children vary along the lines of their disabilities and condition of begging. However, this does not mean this child and children like him are better off, instead the level of child rights abuse may vary. In this regard, the researcher could tap in to the unbiased exposure of the begging phenomenon, from the female street vendor, who become one of the key informants in the research. She suggested that those children with disabilities, and who are begging under the parental/foster mother care are not getting food and basic care let alone to attend schools. She added that, their life is not better than death, (participant, female, age 28)

The research has also found responses that underscore a strong link between the CWDs who are in the begging activity and resort as a survival strategy. The same children that responded they do the begging alone, have also told the researcher that they are expected to take the money back to the family and that they are also `bounded by time. Moreover, begging children pointed that, the money they get is important to the family survival and to maintain their place in the household. However, the general group of the children replied that they want to engage in alternative business like petty trades if they can be allowed by their families and get the access.

Deep reading of the response shows a mix of ‘generational dependence’ in Ethiopian households and at the same time children’s lack of agency, absence of choice, discrimination, neglect etc. Hence, a generalized view on some of the reflections may show some sort of ‘agency’ on the part of the begging by CWDs, however the reality is the otherwise.

Alms giving members of the community who are interviewed regarding their experiences also expressed that they often face a moral dilemma when approaching CWDs who are in the begging activity in the streets. The dominant religious groups that constitute the social make of city and the country in large are Christianity and Muslim. Both religious teachings have long lists of laws that are strongly followed by their followers. In this regard, the values of *Zeka* (feeding the needy) among the Muslims and *beggars* or (ለማኝ in Amharic) culture among the orthodox Christian followers are the most renown. In line with the above analysis, the alms giving respondents told the researcher that they feel more compelled to give when they see children with disabilities. In the words of one of the key informant,

Giving is both morally rights and religiously obligatory therefore whenever I see a child with disabilities begging I often throw alms (3<sup>rd</sup> participant, male, age 40).

Thus, it seems like there is a tacit agreement in this culture and norms that are governing the social interrelations. The responses also suggested child migration as the cause for the intensification of the begging phenomenon in general and child beggary with disabilities in Addis Ababa. Furthermore, in the words of Key informant from the sub-city

I am a Christian and in my religion, disabled weak and old aged people are legitimate, (in Amharic ሃይማኖታዊ ነው) to receive alms from the believers. When I see a child with a disabilities and begging in the streets, I cannot even control my emotions, and I am engulfed with emotions of petty, I even start to think... what if it is my own biological son or daughter under such conditions and I try to help the child with whatever I can do including giving alms (4<sup>th</sup> participant, female, age 38).

In line with this, some alms givers responded that they understand the existence of cheating beggars with a disabilities, but these does not prevent them from almsgiving for the children. Still, others believe that the children are forced to engage in the activity, mainly by their family members. On the contrary, some members of the public also noted that the children are mainly on the streets to earn living for themselves and support their needs like food,

shelter, and clothing. The response of one informant sums up the overall issues discussed above, that “the multiple form of beggary in the city has shrouded this type of begging, and that, it is almost normal to see begging by CWDs as young as 5-year-old in the activity’ (5<sup>th</sup> participant, male age 42).

In general, the study uncovered that, the active actors that are working with begging by CWDs in the streets are; religious organizations and handful civil society organizations that have tried to help the children by providing short term solutions. Nonetheless, the children need a long term and sustainable solution. This study argued that, so far the experiences of key actors’ suggested child human rights violation. Thence, the RBA mostly resonates with the experiences of begging by CWDs rather than the agency view towards their experiences.

### **4.3 The Absent presence! Experiences of CWDs in Beggary.**

*I am not considered as a brother by my brothers and sisters in the house!*

(7<sup>th</sup> participant with polio affected legs,)

Begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa, are living in the absent present, and their life is subjected to violence. All children have a rights to participate in matters of their life without discrimination<sup>24</sup>. Children should be protected from segregation and discrimination based on their race, religion, family, gender, and abilities, social, political or economic status or any other character. The UNCRPD, Article 7, also declared that, “children with disabilities should enjoy all human rights”. This is also declared in the regional child rights protection instruments. The ACRWC (Article 3) and the UNCRC to which Ethiopia is a party. State parties are obliged to ensure that all children are protected equally. CRPD, in-Article 16, stated that, “all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational measures to protect PWDs from exploitation, and rights violation should be taken”. In Ethiopia, despite ratification of this rights principles, CWDs in Bole sub city are neglected. Furthermore, the number, status, and experiences of CWDs who involves street beggary are not comprehensively assessed, and are mainly excluded from major policy web (Boersma, 2013: p.123; ACPF, 2011: p.9). The begging children have never been to school; they are subjected to neglect and discrimination by their own family. In the words of one begging child,

I have 11 brothers and sisters 4 who are my elders and 7 below me, all of them have no disabilities like me, they don’t consider me as one of them, because most of the time I am outside of the house

---

<sup>24</sup> See for-example, CRC, articles 2, 19, 23, 34, 35, 36, 37.



and we don't see each other ...my mother takes me to the sites early in the morning and I get back home very late (7<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 15).

The responses shade light on the neglect and lack of participation. Substantial application of the ratified conventions, and even national proclamations<sup>25</sup> remains in its infancy. During the interview in Addis Ababa with Cheshire International, the officer told the researcher that, "he has never heard of any specific program or actor including the state working directly to address street beggary by CWDs". The organization is the only organization that works with children with disabilities in Ethiopia. However, CWDs that are already on the street are not allowed to participate in the program. On contrary, the CRC, article 12 informs that, "children have the rights to participate in expressing their concerns and needs" and "actors to make child vulnerability assessment and to alert the state. Therefore, it is not only the state that is failing to protect children from the violence but also other traditional actors, which are supposed to be more aware of the vulnerability dynamics.

The children's response in general, suggested a disparity between the children's participation need to be educated, institutionalized etc. and the actual life experiences. Therefore, the rights to participate and to be heard for these begging by CWDs is highly limited. A RBA toward the rights violence of begging by CWDs, thence recognizes the children's rights to participate and not to be discriminated based on their disabilities or sex. These rights imply the chance to participate in Schools, access skill trainings etc. to cope with the social and physical challenges they face<sup>26</sup>. Most of the participants responded they have never been approached by state or NGOs or have directly benefited from any support. The children also responded that, if they could participate in programs and get support, things might be different but for now begging is the only option.

---

<sup>25</sup>See for example, FDRE, Article 25, 36, Revised family code 283/2002

<sup>26</sup> Child participants dominantly responded that they have never been approached by state or NGOs or have directly benefited from any support.

#### 4.4. Children’s Best Interest: Unpacking the experiences of the CWDs who are in the begging activity in Addis Ababa

*“...but there is no option for us now!”*

(Participant, male, age 16)

Respecting the best interest of a child is stated under the provision of CRC Article 3. In contrary to these rights principle, the children responded that their participation in the activity come about because of family pressure albeit a decision by themselves to support family survival. Deep reading and understanding of children’s decisions however, shows that it a response to absence of care and protection from their family or the state. In the words of one of the begging by CWDs,

I was approached by different Fereng’ ፈረንጅቶች Amharic name for ‘white colored people’, who promised me a better help. However, only my family got the money, flour, and other gifts but still asks me to do the street begging in different locations in Addis. I think the money and supports are not enough to them and they don’t ask me about my conditions (4<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 16).

This vindicates that, CWDs who involves street beggary experiences ineffective intervention and that this can reinforce the children’s involvement, and social legitimacy of the activity. This is against children’s human rights. Significant number of CWDs replied that they want to get a better care and services, and to be included in child care center/ ‘ድርጅት’ in Amharic or at list get the support of the government to start up pity trade. Children, however, displayed attitudes that nobody is coming to rescue them, and that there is no other option for them now but to face the challenge every day.

The FDRE, Article 36 (2) on the best interests of the child, provides that “the child interest should be the center of both private and public institutions decisions...etc.”. The children with severe, disabilities required a better medical care, and others asked if they can involve in ‘better work’ as noted above. Accordingly, State should provide the necessary protection and rehabilitation services that is in the best interest of the child.

Further unpacking the CWDs who are in the begging activity presents diverse rights implications. However, as mentioned above the research and policy in the area runs along dominant narratives, such as the framing of child begging as a form of work reinforced by economic needs in the households. This is one

of the grey areas in the research. The study here, presented the fact of dual and crosscutting notions of both agency and vulnerability induced abuses and violence against the children's human rights. This is against the backdrop of the existing discourse. The research has also identified that the CWDs that are exposed to the street life get very little, if so, government or NGO support and protection, (key informant, FSCE, 2016). This, in turn, has played a role to the vulnerability of the children with disabilities to engage in the activity.

The information in the multi-level interview with key actors, show that, CWDs in poor households are forced to go out on the street to beg for alms<sup>27</sup>. Key informants also indicated that, the society largely tolerates begging for the children with a disabilities than to able-bodied children. The response of one alms giving respondent reflected this assertion;

I feel more pity to give to the CWD begging for alms than those children who are able bodied and asking money from passer-byes as 'kefela' ቅፈላ (street language referring to asking money from individual straight up by using words like sister, brother...give me one Birr...) because the CWD may have no choice, therefore I only give to the begging by CWDs (6<sup>th</sup> participant, age 32).

In the same way, the research has also found out that, the 'addiction to the easy money' as explaining factor.in this regard, one of the key informant sharing his experiences suggested that: *I believe the children are in the activity because of the money they get...* (7<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 30). Thus, these reflections implicated the complexities in the activity.

These responses help to unpack the social aspect of the phenomenon or how the perception of the society has impacted on the lives of these children. The paper argues that even the conscious decisions or participation as a survival means on the part of the children is just one aspect and varies from one disabled child to another. For some, the decision came with peer pressure, or absence of an alternative. The experiences of one begging child supports this statement.

I am 16 years old and I was in my house for most of my life before I came here, but when I see that the same children like me who went to Addis Ababa to beg for alms and got a lot of things including, the money to buy oxen and cows, I decided to come to the city to beg for alms (10<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 16).

---

<sup>27</sup> Refer to 4.2 discussion on the begging experiences.

The response again implied, what others would understand as a decision to earn money. However, the circumstances that led to their conscious choice are not under the children's control.

Annual report by (FSCF, 2015) reported that the families of the begging children with a disabilities do not have the educational as well as economic capabilities to provide the care and protection that is a need for the children. Moreover, CWDs in poor families are viewed as objects of tackling poverty and most of these family use the children to meet these ends instead of sending them to school or providing the necessary care that the children require. Generally, pressure from the family often reinforced by complex interrelationships of being born in a poor family etc. are the push and pull factors responsible for the intensification of the begging by CWDs. Therefore, children's disabilities influenced their power in the household. This is the missing link in most of the dominant discourses and that CWDs in the global south are wrongly perceived both in policy and practice as social agents when in fact they are social and technically de-capacitated.

The information from government offices shows that the federal government together with the Addis Ababa city administration, have reallocated a significant number of able-bodied adult beggars and there is ongoing training for this person in different parts of the country. The interview also suggested that major civil society organizations like Mekedonea, Muday, etc are working to alleviate the wide rampant begging problem in the city. However, the researcher confirmed that these organizations are working with the old aged and mentally disabled persons, and with the begging family in general. Hence, the begging by CWDs in the streets are largely missing in the interventions, magnifying the policy as well as intervention gaps in the area.

As expected in the initial phase of the paper, begging hampers the children rights in many terms. The major concern, however, is how to understand and support the children? Children expressed the research utter hopelessness throughout the research. What the society perceives legitimate for the CWD overlooks the wider impact of the activity. In line with this, a begging child responded that,

the public give money to me more than they give to my mother, therefore my mother always asks me to do the begging (9<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 15).

Thus, the phenomenon requires an understanding beyond, a form of child begging and street child phenomenon because of poverty'. The researcher observed that, there are few female CWDs who beg, and they are under the constant and strong watch of their family member/guardian while they are

sleeping covered with thick bed shit. On the other hand, most begging by CWDs are boys. This in a way is an indication of the existence of gender risk factor. Hence, the study included only one girl in the interview and few in the observation. The major reason for the discrepancy is that, the society largely views boys as strong and resistant to challenges and normal for a boy from a poor family to engage in such kind of activities. This view is constituted in the gender role and of what is rights and wrong in the society.

In conformity to this assertion, participants from the community indicated that, “male children are resistant to challenges” (participant, male, age 40). This implies that the family and even the child’s decision to involve in beggary is reinforced and legitimized in the existing power relation at the household level and at the society level. The begging girl child participant in the study responded that, “the disagreement with her uncle’s wife led her into the begging activity” (11<sup>th</sup> participant, female, age 16). More importantly, she pointed that her sex had made her vulnerable:

I faced a lot of challenges because of my sex, my disability does not allow me to do anything other than begging.

This is in contrary to the findings of the (ILO, 2013:8) which found out that there is no sexual violence against the female disabled beggars in the streets of Addis Ababa. Overall, the condition of the begging warrants the conclusion that, ‘the children have no consent over their involvement and the life in the street’ and it amounts to child rights violation in Addis Ababa. A RBA is accommodative of these realities, and can be effective guideline to enable children survive and thrive.

#### **4.5. Dynamics, Interrelationships and Rights Violation in CWDs Involvement in Begging.**

Data compiled from Addis Ababa bureau of societal welfare and labor affairs; and (FSCE, 2012; 2015) reports showed that, the number of begging children is growing at an alarming rate. Currently there are approximately 40-50 thousand, begging by CWDs in the Addis Ababa. These reports also indicate CWDs in the streets are more vulnerable to violence. Therefore, the CWDs who are in the begging activity is a child/human rights violence that is manifested in Addis Ababa.

Evidences suggested that, a strong and unbalanced power relation exists between the children and the family/guardian both at home and on the street. Evidence of non-voluntary child begging suggests that begging by CWDs does

not necessarily implicate any partnership.<sup>28</sup> The interviews with the key informants further suggest that;

there exists a form of external or family arrangement between a person renting a-child for beggary and child's family' (participant, female, age 28).

As discussed so far, begging children have also replied that they have decision space on the activity including on where to beg or on how to use the money earned. However, it is important to note that, the experiences and the challenges vary according to children's ties with their family or the nature of their disabilities and other determinants. The begging CWDs mostly described their situation as the result of being unlucky and some were explicitly describing their condition as ለመኖር 'compulsory beggary' and mirrored utter hopelessness of their situation. This purely amounts to a survival rights violation of children that are stated in the major international child rights conventions to which Ethiopia is a party.

Begging CWDs have also responded that when they came to Addis they were having a story of Addis Ababa as being a life changer either by their peers or family members. The study revealed that the CWDs are specifically discriminated and targeted within their family and in the streets. In other words, the survival or security questions of a child is being substituted for their socio-economical role expectation in the household. The research has also found much dynamism as to the cause of begging by CWDs. Some of the CWDs are born on the street, while others are born among begging poor families in urban areas. Therefore, their engagement in begging also follows these social and economic causes of vulnerabilities. Study participant CWDs are dominantly born on the street, while others are born among begging poor families in urban areas. Therefore, their engagement in the begging also follows these social and economic causes of vulnerabilities. In this regard, one of the children begging with disabilities responded that;

I used to beg together with my mother when I found out that my family is not even willing to get me new (*Goma*- a local word to mean remain of old car tire) that I can put my hand to walk, I decided to run away and since then I am on my own... (2<sup>nd</sup> participant, male).

These stories reveal that; the children were finding themselves in a situation that they are just used by others and where there is no place for their future life conditions and decisions. The responses of the children reveal that; the activity

---

<sup>28</sup> It refers to the kind of interrelation between the child and older persons that is suggested in the child agency discourse

is like a trap. Some are promised a better care and education before coming to the city, others are caught in the mix of social and family pressure. In the words of child participant,

My uncle promised me and to my family that he knows a place that is best for children like me and finally my parents gave me to my uncle to take me to Addis. After arriving here my uncle told me that, he needs me to beg for alms in the street for just one year so that the people who are going to help me can see me. However, no one has come to help me... (3<sup>rd</sup> participant, male, age 13),

Therefore, the activity remains the only means of survival for the child or a means of earning income. This is the aspect that is reported and assessed by other researchers (Adugna, 2006; Abebe, 2009). However, the study here explicated some of the overlooked aspects which includes, the very experience and perception of the children, the existing social understanding of disabilities etc. that rendered the children vulnerable to be used as a mere instrument of soliciting income and to experience diverse circumstances that impact their well-being, survival, and development. Further, children with multiple disabilities (mental and other neuro-motor) are excessively vulnerable.

Above all, the phenomenon manifested complex dynamics including; child disabilities-vulnerability nexus, social hierarchy within the family, and on how the CWDs are viewed within the society as well as the perception incited in the study in relation to the phenomenon indicates social normalization which is also confirmed in other researches (ILO, 2014; ACPF, 2011). The RBA in this regard explicitly considers the children's position to negotiate access to resource and survival opportunities both within the household and outside. Therefore, substantive application of the rights principles to guide intervention should consider these realities.

#### **4.6. Responsibility for the Family or Family Care and Protection?**

Throughout the interview and focus group discussion the researcher has learned that the activity has come to be perceived as normal among the members of the community. Similarly, some of the participant begging children also perceived the activity as their fate. In addition, some also responded that this is the only way they can support the family. Most expressive of this situation is the question asked by one participant, 'So what else can I do?' (5<sup>th</sup> participant, male age 16).

The study argues that; these responses reflect the intricate web of fulfilling the role tacitly assigned to them to support family livelihood and the challenge they face to support their own survival. Evidences in the study have indicated of

these survival challenges or child mortality because of accidents and severe mal treatments by family, and street environment is eminent danger due to the children's level of vulnerability. This is again against international human rights principles and instruments that affirms, "all children have the rights to get the protection and care necessary or to get the support they need for rehabilitation from the state. Further, their continual engagement in the activity, conflicts with these notions of rights to access to better care security, protection, access to primary education, and health services.

Children's responses are vindication to the dual coexistence of their vulnerability and some form of conscious involvement to generate income and meet theirs and family's need. Above all, Wedadu, (2013: p.30) noted that, "understanding the situation of many working children including the child beggars requires a more nuanced analysis of what they exhibit as their agency and their relation to the larger family". Therefore, future programs of intervention should address the situation of vulnerable boys and girls as well as their families.

The crux of the issue lies in the children's need for the family care and protection which is their rights as a child and their socio-economic responsibility for the family (Abebe, 2008a: p.1). The study argues the notion of 'empowered childhood' or the view that, 'children can choose' fails to size ground when it comes to the practice. This is because in begging by CWDs, their ability to negotiate access to 'care and protection' in the household is highly constrained by their disabilities and dependent on whatever role they play as an income generator for the household. Thus, the children have no option but to engage in beggary. Therefore, the question remains on how to strike a balance between protection and survival for begging by CWDs? Answering this question requires further practical investigation beyond this study scope, nevertheless, it is proposed that the move by the state towards RBA of the CWDs who are in the begging activity in intervention is crucial to realize children's human rights and fulfill its international and moral obligations.

#### **4.7. Ethiopian Government Responses to CWDs Involvement in the Street Beggary, in Addis Ababa**

Regarding the government's response to the child rights violation, the resulting data suggested that, responses are inadequate not to say nonexistent. The Addis Ababa city-administration, and relevant offices in Bole sub-city administration's including the office for child care and protection are primary responsible actors to intervene and provide protection and care for CWDs who are begging in streets of the city.



In the process, the researcher noted that, although there are number of international organizations that works with the child care, including; Cheshire International, FSCE, Handicap etc., like the government/*woreda* offices, these NGOs have not focused on these children and the activity. In these regard, the literature review indicated that, the policy and actual interventions largely hinges on the understanding of the matter with the relevant bodies. Hence, their inaction can be linked to their understanding of the activity. A number base line surveys, conducted by the MoLSA, and BOWCYA in collaboration with the UN agencies have neglected assessing the begging by CWDs.

The information from state institutions presented multiple responses in the current focus on children. For example, respondents from Addis Ababa Bureau of Women and Child Affairs argued that the begging phenomenon underscores the larger problems of work ethic in the society. However, the researcher observed that the engagement of CWDs in begging in the first place is the consequence of the absence of access to institutions and support by the state. During the interview with key informants from the *Woreda* level officers, the respondents pointed that, the government has taken initiatives to change the widespread child begging by intervening in various ways. Suggesting that, the government have provided training for persons who were engaged in beggary. However, these respondents also recognized that these programs have not specifically targeted children. Therefore, the children are hardly in the major policy circle of the government.

Looking from the social dimension, there exists conflicting perceptions which could have led to such normalization and reduced public pressure on the government to assess and protect children from rights violence. In line with this, community members suggested varied responses. For example, one respondents reflected that “he does not give money to these types of beggars because some of them can engage in another form of work”, (7<sup>th</sup> participant, male, age 30). On the contrary, others suggested that, ‘the children have no other means of survival and the money they get is just for the daily food and that they often give money to CWDs who beg. Apart from the few youth, the elderly sympathizes for begging children with disabilities. Generally, the perception of the relevant offices and the public as whole also underpins the social and governmental policy decisions in relation to the CWDs begging in the street. In other words, it impacted the current intervention environment towards children and their condition.

Over the recent years, the Addis Ababa police bureau for public relations and communication office has forwarded different warnings with graphic displays in the media of the children who were pretending to be disabled but turned out to be cheaters. According to the data from observation and the informant responses from FSCE this situation has two wider implications. One is the sheer size of the problem that is manifesting itself as a biggest social problem

of the day, and the other is the policy dilemma on how to deal with the matter. However, the researcher observed that the conditions and techniques of the begging CWDs phenomenon underline the vulnerability of the children while begging in the street, as well as in their interaction with the family or guardians. Some of these challenges include “the lack of access to medical care for the children on the street”, the severe weather condition, car accidents, or the commission they have to give for youth groups in the street for not bothering them while doing the begging.

Generally, these highlight the lack of the access to institutional support for children. With regard to a RBA of begging by CWDs, the children are rights holders and the understanding as well as interventions should comply with their fundamental rights as stated in the international and regional CRC and ACRWC principles to which the state is a party<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, the state as a primary actor and other relevant actors in child rights promotion and protection should work to ensure the rights of begging CWDs without discrimination. The substantive application of RBA to these children implies that the state and its relevant agencies are committed to respond (de Benitez, 2003) to address the survival, participation, best interests and non-discrimination needs of the children involved.

The law in Ethiopia does not criminalize begging for any group in general and no control exists on any group<sup>30</sup>. Moreover, the government offices that were approached during the research, from ministerial offices to the lowest *woreda/kebele* offices and bureaus for children’s affairs, have all responded that there is policy discontinuity or program changes, and less focus on begging CWDs. More specifically the director of the Bureau of women children and youth in Addis Ababa (BOWCYA) noted that, “there were projects designed to address the child and women’s protection (from abuse, neglect, and violence) issues in collaboration with NGOs. However, because of the multiple transitions in the office administrators, many projects failed to result in the much-needed changes”. In addition, the response from AASLAB also proves that the begging CWDs are not getting any support:

The government is reallocating many of the begging families from the streets, and have transferred many street children to NGOs working in the area, for example, Elshadie, and this is as far as we can go with regard the begging by CWDs. (participant, male, age 32)

The responses from the government offices generally pointed to the rhetoric of NGOs-area of work<sup>31</sup>. the notion that there may be some NGOs working in the area. However, the study found that there are only two NGOs or

---

<sup>29</sup> Ethiopia has ratified the ACRWC 2002. Proclamation No. 283/2002.

<sup>30</sup> See discussions in section Chp.2 (2.4).

<sup>31</sup> Refers to the notion that there may be some NGOs working in the area.

humanitarian associations Handicap International locally known as *Brihan Lebitsanat* and the FSCE - that are specifically trying to deal with the problems of CWDs who are out on the streets. The number of street children and begging CWDs in Addis Ababa is beyond the reach of these two organizations. Thus, the situation of the CWDs who are begging in the streets have become 'no man's land' where the respective offices are presuming that one organisation must be working with the children to address the issue in Addis Ababa. Here, the researcher wants to re-emphasize that this discourse underlines the existing gaps in policy and intervention. From a RBA perspective, addressing the child rights issue is the state's main responsibility and other stakeholders at most have a supplementary role in helping the state fulfil its responsibility as enshrined in the international, regional and national human/child rights frameworks to provide security and care for the vulnerable children.

The ACRWC as established in the theoretical discussion<sup>32</sup>, is the most significant international law in this regard which contains a comprehensive provision 'against all forms of child beggary as human rights violations'. However, the sheer size of the practice of begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa, the adverse understanding of the urgency of action and child survival rights violation implication of the phenomenon make this study very essential and timely. To this end, this research argues that the policy and responsibility gaps indicated in the discussion need an immediate response, directed by an active and fine-tuned RBA to the support of begging CWDs.

Begging CWDs have clearly pointed out that they need the support of the state to get out of the utter hopelessness, of accepting begging as their destiny because of their disabilities. More so, they want to go to school. The children further suggested that if their family can get support, this would help them to live freely like other children. These key findings also resonate with the current global vulnerable child rights issues that are being witnessed in various parts of the world and Africa. A 2012 Human Rights Watch Report already indicated the need for swift action to address child beggary.

The above discussions underscored the relevance of RBA as a basis for interventions, as it obliges the state of Ethiopia to ensure the welfare and safety of begging CWDs. Further, the findings of this paper could serve as a wake-up call for the relevant offices to act and to promote further research on the matter.

---

<sup>32</sup> See discussions in sec.2.3.1

## Chapter Five: Concluding Remarks and A Way Forward

The research explored the phenomenon of begging by CWDs and the children experiences. It focused on the case of CWDs involvement in street begging in the Bole sub-city of *Woreda* 6, areas of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In particular, the study focussed on comparing the dominant discourses with the practice, to find out child rights implication of begging by CWDs. This has been done via analysing the data that were generated through the multi-level research engagement with actors. Chapter 1 introduced the argument and background of child begging globally and in Addis Ababa whilst also including the rationale and main research questions. The background also provided a glimpse of causes for becoming involved in begging explicated by other researchers in the world including; race, religion, etc. (cf. Delap, 2009). Further, relevant data were assessed to see how the phenomenon relates to discourse and the situation of intervention from relevant actors.

Chapter 2 provided the agency and child vulnerability theoretical discourses in the child rights and concepts surrounding the issue of child begging and CWDs. The dominant assumptions of economic need as a risk factors for the children's' participation was represented by the agency view and various international human/child rights frameworks were also assessed on the discourse of child rights violation. The debates are theoretically and conceptually viewed considering national policy and international frameworks for children's rights. In Chapter 3 details of the overall research design including: methods and analysis, are discussed. The positionality of the researcher within context as an important consideration demonstrates the process of access and integration among these children in Addis Ababa. In Chapter 4 of the study, arguments are presented in a way of questioning their merit to explain the life experiences and responses of CWDs who involve in beggary. Determinant factors for CWDs involvement in beggary includes; disabilities, age, sex etc. of a child. The exploration finally included analysis of the responses from the relevant state bodies and children's response in accessing the support and intervention programs envisioned in the child rights frameworks that are also part of the wider legal framework in the country.

The children's rights has recently gained considerable amount of attention from the international bodies and institutions. The recent declaration of "all forms of child begging as child rights violation" in ACRWC, 1999 is a huge move in addition to the prior child rights convention of UN, CRC 1989. Recent studies, (Boersma, 2013; USDS 2014) reported that, CWDs are the most vulnerable group of children in the streets. On the other hand, the state

as a party is expected to make the political commitments and has an obligation to respond to children's rights abuse.

The critical analysis of the responses from research participants including; children, and other key-informants showed that, children's agency ultimately depicts their vulnerability. Especially, the condition of those children which were begging under their guardians clearly indicated child abuse from their guardians. The researcher witnessed that these children were not allowed to rest, get meal, or move from the site. Key-informants, especially the female street food vender also added that, some of these children have serious disabilities(as a result of wound or glaucoma) that needs immediate medical attention but they are kept in solitary-slavery like life. This is strong indication of rights violation against CWDs who are begging.

The socio-family pressures are also strong and often reinforced by complex interrelationships of being born in a poor family, having disabilities etc. This is vindicated in the process of unpacking their experiences. Therefore, the children are wrongly perceived as social agents when in fact they did not properly receive the social skills and other capabilities. The major missing link in the dominant discourses is that little is discussed about CWDs who beg. Similarly, the analysis of the children's responses reflected that they do not perceive their situation as agency but 'last resort' or response to utter vulnerability because of absence of care and protection from relevant stakeholders in Bole sub-city. Therefore, in the view of continual plight of children in the activity, it can be concluded that, a rights based approaching is missing. As demonstrated throughout the paper, the study argues that a rights based approach/RBA could serve as rectifying guideline to this child rights abuses.

The RBA to child begging is not practically insured in Bole area, Addis Ababa. Despite, the state's agreement the principles of ensuring the rights to life, survival and development, non-discrimination, best interest of a child and participation rights within the CRC, are highly undermined. In terms of creating institutional structure and human capacity to respond to the child abuse, the city has huge gaps. One of the gaps explicated in the study is understanding gap, which is pivotal to take any action. The government officials largely admitted the gap, yet argued that some NGOs might be dealing with such issue. Similarly, NGOs replied that, it part of states role, and that, they do not have any running program focused on street CWDs. Therefore, the children are fundamentally out of the focus of major actors.

The document review also shows that children have limited access to major sources of social and economic empowerments which includes education and health care, (USILA, 2014). These factors, are identified as short comings of the UNCRC, after decades of experiment (Arts, 2014). Further, this is the

situation that the researcher dubbed as ‘no man’s land’. Therefore, requires a look beyond the orthodox of child labor or street child rhetoric.

The study revealed begging children are forgotten in Addis Ababa urban areas, their rights and needs to access school, and get a better care and protection are unheard. In this regard, findings have contradicted to the rights principles and rights-based approach the city administration purports to follow in addressing such challenges. Hence, the study argues begging by CWDs is the result of children’s vulnerability and not a means of earning income for their own benefit.. Furthermore, the study also calls for deconstructing the hegemonic explanations of all children who live on the street and participate in beggary as *Sikella*. CWDs are in beggary due to vulnerability.

Thus, responding to the problem should consider enhancing the rights based intervention, tailored to the specific needs. Stakeholders that are also informed in this research process should work to address the child rights as stated in the child rights framework. More importantly, the intervention should also seek to respond to the children’s family economic needs, which have proved to be significant determinant in the realization of children’s survival and development. Finally, the researcher wants to reemphasize on the fact that, further research is highly recommended in the subject. Especially, ways of striking a balance between the children need for family care and protection (which is their rights as a child) versus their socio-economic responsibility for the family remains ambiguous, therefore, studies should indulge more on the matter for sustainable child rights intervention.

## References

- Ababa, A. (2000). Investigating the Intervention of Community-Based Rehabilitation Program for Children with Physical Disabilities in Adama Town. Ethiopia.
- Abdi, A.G. (2012). Ethiopian Civil Society Law in light of the Principle of the Best Interest of the Child, the Interdisciplinary Justice and Human Rights Law. 7: 127.
- Abebaw Minaye (2003). A Special Form of Child Abuse: Using Children for Begging and Its Psychosocial Effects on the Behaviour of Children. A Master's Thesis Submitted to The School of Graduate Studies, Addis Ababa University.
- Abebe, T. (1999). *Šik'älla: The Survival Strategies of Ethiopian Child Beggars*.
- Abebe, T. (2008a). Earning A Living on The Margins: Begging, Street Work and The Socio- Spatial Experiences of Children in Addis Ababa: *Series B, Human Geography*, 90(3).
- Abebe, T. (2008b). Ethiopian childhoods: A case study of the lives of orphans and working children.
- Abebe, T. (2009). Begging as a livelihood pathway of street children in Addis Ababa. *In Forum for Development Studies*. Vol. 36, No. 2.
- Abebe, T., & Bessell, S. (2011). Dominant discourses, debates and silences on child labour in Africa and Asia. *Third world quarterly*, 32(4), 765-786.
- ACPF (2006). Violence Against Children in Ethiopia: In Their Words. African Child Policy Forum and Save the Children Sweden. Addis Ababa.
- ACPF (2010). Breaking the silence, violence against children with disabilities in Africa. Addis Ababa: The African Child Policy Forum.
- ACPF (2011). Violence Against Children With Disabilities in Africa, A field study from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Senegal, Uganda and Zambia. Addis Ababa: The African Child Policy Forum.
- ACPF (2013). Towards greater accountability to Africa's children. Addis Ababa: The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF). Addis Ababa.
- ACPF (2014). The African Report on Children with Disabilities: Promising starts and persisting challenges. The African Child Policy Forum. Addis Ababa.
- Adugna, G. (2006). Livelihoods and survival strategies among migrant children in Addis Ababa

- Adugna, G. (2009). Church as A Refuge for Marginalized Children in Urban Ethiopia. In *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim*. (Vol. 9, p. 2015).
- Arts, K. (2014). Twenty-Five Years of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Achievements and Challenges. *Netherlands International Law Review*, 61(03), 267-303.
- Asrese, K., Tilahun, T., & Mekonnen, A. (2007). Demographic and socioeconomic determinants of women begging in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia.
- Bell, N. (2008). Ethics in child research: rights, reason and responsibilities. *Children's Geographies*, 6(1), 7-20.
- Boersma Marieke (2008). Violence against Ethiopian children with disabilities, the stories of children. Amsterdam, Master's Thesis, University of Amsterdam.
- Boersma, M. (2013). Protecting Children with Disabilities from Violence in CBR Projects: Why we need to work with a different form of child protection policy for children with disabilities. *Disabilities, CBR & Inclusive Development*, 24(3), 112-122.
- Christensen, P., & James, A. (Eds.) (2008). *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. Routledge.
- Camacho Agnes Zenaida V.,(2001).Changing perception of child work. Child and child right study series
- Combrinck, H. (2008). The hidden ones: Children with disabilities in Africa and the rights to education. *Children's rights in Africa: A legal perspective*, 299-322.
- Committee on the Rights of the child General Comment No. 13 (2011) The rights of the child to freedom from all forms of violence CRC/C/GC/13 [https://www.unicef.org/portfolios/general\\_comments/CRC.C.GC.13\\_en.doc.html](https://www.unicef.org/portfolios/general_comments/CRC.C.GC.13_en.doc.html) date accessed 23/9/2016
- Cornwall, A., & Nyamu Musembi, (2004). Putting the 'rights- based approach' to development into perspective. *Third world quarterly*, 25(8), 1415-1437.
- De Benitez, S.T. (2003). Reactive, Protective and Rights-Based Approaches in Work with Homeless Street Youth. *Children, Youth and Environments* 13 (1): 134-149.



- Delap, E. (2009). *Begging for Change: Research findings and recommendations on forced child begging in Albania/Greece, India and Senegal.*
- Deluca, M. M., Tramontano, C., & Kett, M. (2014). Leonard Cheshire Disabilities and Inclusive Development Centre.
- Ebigbo, P. O. (2003). Street children: The core of child abuse and neglect in Nigeria. *Children, youth and Environments, 13*(1), 1-12.
- Ethiopian Central Statistical Authority (2007). *The 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia. An Analytical Report, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Central Statistical Authority.*
- FDRE (1995). Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1995, Proclamation No.1/1995: A Proclamation to Pronounce the Coming into Effect of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: *Federal Negarit Gazette*, 1st Year, No.1, Addis Ababa
- FDRE (2009) Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No.621/2009: Charities and Societies Proclamation, *Federal Negarit Gazette* Year 15, No. 25, Addis Ababa.
- FDRE, (2010). Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rightss of Persons with Disabilities. 676/2010. Ethiopia
- Fireyihun F. (2011). Experiences of Mother Beggars: The Case in Urael Church and The Nearby Traffic Light in Addis Ababa. A Master's Thesis Submitted to the School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University.
- FSCE (2012). Role of multi-stakeholder intervention on child protection experiences of Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment, Planning Monitoring and Evaluation and Child Resource Development Centre Publication. No. 14. Addis Ababa.
- FSCE (2015). Annual Report of the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment. Child Resource Program Development. Addis Ababa.
- Graham, A., Powell, M. A., & Taylor, N. (2015). Ethical research involving children: encouraging reflexive engagement in research with children and young people. *Children & Society, 29*(5), 331-343.
- Groce N. E. (2014). From Alms to Income: Begging as an overlooked issue of disabilities and poverty. Findings from the Disabled Beggars Project, Ethiopia.

Leonard Cheshire Disabilities and Inclusive Development Centre. University College London.

Groce, N. E. (2005). Violence against disabled children: UN Secretary General's report on violence against children thematic group on violence against disabled children: findings and recommendations.

Groce, N., Murray, B., Loeb, M., Tramontano, C., Trani, J. F., & Mekonen, A. (2013). Disabled Beggars in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. *International Labour Organization*.

Grugel, & Ferreira (2012). Street Working Children, Children's Agency and The Challenge Of Children's Rights: evidence from Minas Gerais, Brazil. *Journal of International Development*, 24(7), 828-840.

Hailu, D. (2015). The Composite and Dynamic Risks and Vulnerabilities of Ethiopian Children: The Case of Children in Addis Ababa. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 16(2), 200-219.

Hill, M., Davis, J., Prout, A., & Tisdall, K. (2004). Moving the Participation Agenda Forward. *Children & society*, 18(2), 77-96.

[http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/world\\_report/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/)

ILO (2013). Disabled Street Beggars in Ethiopia: Findings from Ethiopia: Findings from the UCL/ ILO Pilot Study. Employment Working Paper 141. Geneva: International Labour Organization, United Nations.

ILO, (1999). Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. (No. 182). Geneva, 87th ILC session (17 Jun 1999).

Kaushik, A. (2014). Rights of Children: A Case Study of Child Beggars at Public Places in India. *Journal of Social Welfare and Human Rights*.

Klocker, N. (2015). Participatory action research: The distress of (not) making a difference. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 17, 37-44.

Kothari, C. R. (2004). Research methodology: Methods and techniques. New Age International.

Kuale Steinker and Brinkmann (2009). Interviews. Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing. Sage Publications. USA. California.

Lansdown G (2005a) Can you hear me? The rights of young children to participate in decisions affecting them. Working Paper 36. Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, The Netherlands.

- Lansdown G., (2005a). What's the difference? Implications of a child-focus in rights-based programming. Discussion Paper –for Save the Children UK
- Lansdown, G. (2009). See Me, Hear Me: A guide to using the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities to promote the rights of children. Save the Children UK.
- Lansdown, G. (2010). The Realization of children's Participation Rights', *A Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation*: 11.
- Lewis, I. (2009). Education for disabled people in Ethiopia and Rwanda. Manchester, Enabling Education Network.
- Lorente-Catalán, E., & Lleida, I. (2014). Interviews as method of data collection used in qualitative research.
- Lundy, L. (2007). 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualizing Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(6), 927-942.
- Mekonnen, M. (2011). Street Children in Addis Ababa: Exploring Policy. AAU.
- Mepham, S. (2010). Disabled children: The rights to feel safe. *Child care in practice*, 16(1), 19-34.
- Milnes B., Matthew, Haberman A. Michel and Saldina Jonny (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods source book*. Sage Publications.
- Mji, G., MacLachlan, M., Melling-Williams, N., & Gcaza, S. (2009). Realising the rights of disabled people in Africa: an introduction to the special issue. *Disabilities and rehabilitation*, 31(1), 1-6.
- MoFED, (2010). Ethiopia, Growth and Transformation Plan 2010/2011-2014/2015. Addis Ababa. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- Morrow, V. (2009). The Ethics of Social Research with Children and Families in Young Lives: Practical Experiences: Young Lives Working Paper 53.
- Nieuwenhuys, O. (2001). By the sweat of their brow? 'Street children', NGOs and children's rights in Addis Ababa. *Africa*, 71(04), 539-557.
- OAU (1999) African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child: OAU Doc.CAB/LEG/24.9/49
- Ofosu- Kusi, Y., & Mizen, P. (2013). Agency as vulnerability: accounting for children's movement to the streets of Accra. *The Sociological Review*, 61(2), 363-382.

- Onyango, G. O. (2012). *A socio-legal critique of the legal framework for the promotion of rights of persons with disabilities in Kenya*. Erasmus University.
- O'Kane, C. (2003). Street and working children's participation in programming for their rights. *Children Youth and Environments*, 13(1), 167-183.
- O'Leary Zina (2014) *Doing Your Research Project*. (2 Ed) Vol.3. London: Sage Publication.
- Pankhurst, A., Crivello, G., Chuta, N., Tiumelissan, A., Valadez, L., Wilson, E., & Medhin, L. W. (2015). Child Work and Labour in Ethiopia: Literature Review and Policy Implications. In Proceedings of the 10th Annual Conference of the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists.
- Panter-Brick, C. (2002). Street children, human rights, and public health: A critique and future directions. *Annual review of anthropology*, 147-171.
- Peebles, G., (2012). *Hurt and Abused Children in Ethiopia*.
- Pemberton, S., Gordon, D., & Nandy, S. (2012). Child rights, child survival and child poverty: The debate. *Global child poverty and well-being: Measurement, concepts, policy and action*, 19-38.
- Pinheiro P. (2006). *World report on violence against children*. The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. Geneva.
- Poluha, E. (2007). *Research on Ethiopian Children. The world of girls and boys in rural and urban Ethiopia*.
- Powell, M. A., Fitzgerald, R. M., Taylor, N., & Graham, A. (2012). *International literature review: Ethical issues in undertaking research with children and young people*. Child watch International Research Network. Lismore: Southern Cross University, Centre for Children and Young People
- Reading, R., Bissell, S., Goldhagen, J., Harwin, J., Masson, J., Moynihan, S. & Webb, E. (2009). Promotion of children's rights and prevention of child maltreatment. *The Lancet*, 373(9660), 332-343.
- Redmond, G. (2009). Children as actors: How does the child perspectives literature treat agency in the context of poverty? *Social Policy and Society*, 8(04), 541-550.

- Rwezaura, B. (1998). Competing 'images' of childhood in the social and legal systems of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 12(3), 253-278.
- Save the Children (2005). Child Rights Programming: How to Apply Rights-Based Approaches to Programming. A *Handbook for Internationals Save the Children Alliance Members*, London, Save the Children.
- Save the Children (2006). Violence against Children in Ethiopia: In Their Words" Save the Children, Sweden East and Central Africa Regional Office.
- Save the Children (2011). Regional Report on Child Begging: Prevalence, Prevention and Suppression of Child Begging.
- Save the Children and Theis, J (2004). Promoting Rights-Based Approaches: Experiences and Ideas from Asia and the Pacific. Stockholm: Save the Children-Sweden
- Save the Children Sweden (2003) Children's Rights in Ethiopia. A Situation Analysis [http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/childrens\\_rightss\\_in\\_ethiopia\\_a\\_situation\\_analysis.pdf](http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/childrens_rightss_in_ethiopia_a_situation_analysis.pdf) last date accessed 11/08/2016
- Sloth-Nielsen, J. (Ed.) (2016). Children's Rights in Africa: A legal perspective. Routledge.
- Stern, R. (2006). The Child's Rights to Participation—Reality or Rhetoric? The African Child Policy Forum and Save the Children (2009). Sticks, Stones and Brutal Words. The Violence against Children in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa.
- Thomas, N., & O'kane, C. (1998). The ethics of participatory research with children. *Children & society*, 12(5), 336-348.
- Thompson, M. (2002). Boys will be boys: Addressing the social construction of gender. *Masculinities matter: Men, gender and development*, 166-185.
- UN (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child: G.A. Res. 44/25, U.N. Doc. A/RES/44/25.
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (2013). Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention, Fourth and fifth periodic reports of States parties due in 2011: Ethiopia, CRC/C/ETH/4-5,
- UN, CRPD. (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

- UNICEF (2007a) Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights Child?. New York. (3rd ed.) United Nations Children's Fund.
- UNICEF (2007c). Excluded and invisible children
- UNICEF (2008). Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UNICEF (2009). The Rights Of Children With Disabilities In Vietnam Bringing Vietnam's Laws into compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
[http://www.driadvocacy.org/wpcontent/uploads/UNICEF\\_final\\_legal\\_analy sis\\_report\\_in\\_Vietnam2.pdf](http://www.driadvocacy.org/wpcontent/uploads/UNICEF_final_legal_analy sis_report_in_Vietnam2.pdf) last date accessed 2/11/2016
- UNICEF (2010). UNICEF'S Child-Friendly Schools: Ethiopia Case. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
[http://www.unicef.org/education/files/FINAL\\_Ethiopia\\_CFS\\_Case\\_Study.p df](http://www.unicef.org/education/files/FINAL_Ethiopia_CFS_Case_Study.p df)date accessed date 23/10/2016
- UNICEF (2013). State of the World's Children 2013: Children with Disabilities. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). New York. UN
- UNICEF (2007). Promoting the Rightss of Children with Disabilities, *Innocenti* Research Centre, United Nations Children's Fund. *Innocenti Digest* No. 13.  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children\\_disabilities\\_rights s.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children_disabilities_rights s.pdf) last date accessed date 11/November/2016
- Union, I. P. (2007). Eliminating violence against children. *A Handbook for Parliamentarians*. Geneva: IPU.
- Wamisho, B. L., & Menore, L. H. (2009). Begging on the streets of Addis Ababa: an impact of musculoskeletal disabilities.
- Watson A. (2004). Seen but not heard: the role of the child in international political economy. *New Political Economy* 9(1): 3–21
- Wedadu S. (2013). Exploring the Experiences of Children in Child-Adult Partnerships for Begging in Tamale, Ghana. Research Paper. Erasmus University. <https://thesis.eur.nl/pub/17419/Wedadu-Sayibu.pdf> last accessed date 05/11/2016
- WHO (2002). World Report on Violence and Health.
- WHO (2011). World Report on Disabilities. Geneva. World Health Organisation.

Woubishet D. (2005). Begging as a means of livelihood: conferring with the poor at the orthodox religious ceremonial days in Addis Ababa. *African study monographs*.

Zermatten, J. (2010). The best interests of the child principle: Literal analysis and function. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 18(4), 483-499.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Background of Research Participants

**Table 1.2. Background of the Respondents CWDs who are begging.**

No.	Name of Informants	Age	Sex	Place of Origin	Duration of children's involvement in the begging	Type of Disabilities.
1	Informant 1	13	M	Addis A.	Born in begging family	Physical
2	Informant 2	15	M	Amhara	Born in Long time	Physical
3	Informant 3	14	M	Addis A	Don't know	>>
4	Informant 4	16	M	Addis	Don't know	>>
5	Informant 5	16	M	SNNP	6 years	>>
6	Informant 6	13	M	Addis A	<2 years	Physical
7	Informant 7	15	M	Oromia	Long time	Physical
8	Informant 8	15	M	Addis A	3 years	>>
9	Informant 9	15	M	Addis. A	2 years	>>
10	Informant 10	16	M	Amhara	4 years	>>
11	Informant 11	15	F	Addis A	<1 year	>>



**Table 1.3. The demographic backgrounds of participants:  
Members of the community in the sub-city**

No.	Name of Informants	Age	Employment	Duration of stay in the Sub-City.	Religion
1	Informant 1	36	Working	4 years	Orthodox
2	Informant 2	28	Business man	Over 10 years	Orthodox
3	Informant 3	40	working	25 years	Muslim
4	Informant 4	38	Working	Born in Addis	Orthodox
5	Informant 5	42	Working	10 years	Protestant
6	Informant 6	32	Working	Over 15 years	Orthodox
7	Informant 7	30	Working	5 years	Muslim
8	Informant 8	30	Working	Born in Addis	Orthodox
9	Informant 9	34	Working	Born in Addis	Orthodox
10	Informant 10	30	Working	Over 10 years	Orthodox
11	Informant 11	40	Working	30 years	Protestant
12	Informant 12	35	Working	7-8 years	Orthodox

***Table 1.4. Background of Participants (Participants from the Non-Government Offices)***

No.	Offices/agency	Number of Participants	Position	Role
1	Elshaday	1	Director	Working in collaboration with the government to address the child vulnerability, evaluation
2	FSCE	1	Child care officer,	Participate in various child

				protection and care projects across Ethiopia, supported by several IOs
3	Cheshire international centre for children with disabilities	1	Office member, in the child care unit.	Works with polio victim children in the provision of various, orthopaedic and medical supports.
4	Handicap international/ Birhan lehitsanat	2	Director	Involves in several boarding schools, and protection facilities for the children with disabilities.
5	ECDSD	1	Child affairs office director	Centre of Ethiopian disabilities study and development

***Table 1.5. Background of Participants (Participants from the Government Offices)***

No.	Offices	Number of Participants	Position	Role
2	BOWCA	2	Director, office Member	The office in Addis Ababa, operate in collaboration with UN agencies to investigate child protection and vulnerability issues
3	Bole sub-city women and children affairs office.	3	The director, members in the office	
4	AABSLA	1	Child Labour Follow up and study Officer	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs including child labour laws.
5	AAYCA			
6	Sub City, Child protection post			



## Appendix 2.

### 2.1. Interview Guideline for the interview with the Begging by CWDs

#### Introduction:

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Site name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_/2016

1. How old are you? What is the highest-grade level you completed?
2. What is your disabilities? How did you come to engage in the begging?
3. Can you tell me when you started to beg for alms on the street? Probe,
4. What are the main factors that made you engage in the activity?
5. Do you get a chance to decide on your daily engagement in the begging? Probe, to see their daily experiences?
6. What are the main challenges you encounter while begging in general?
7. How do use the income you get? Probe, see if they can decide on the income.
8. Can you tell me about your family situation? Probe, see if their family uses the activity as a survival strategy
9. How many hours per day do you engage in the activity? Probe see the extent of implication
10. What happens if you get sick or unable to do the begging? Probe, have you ever encountered any kind of violence?
11. Are there many begging by CWDs like you across the city?
12. What did you feel about the most important contributing cause for your engagement as a beggar? If yes, why?
13. Which sex group do you think are mostly involved in the activity, Probe? Why did you think it is so?
14. Are you begging in partnership with physically abled adults or family members? Probe, if yes, how are you bound in the partnership?
16. What are the services provided by different organizations or government bodies? Probe, see if the children have ever accessed; rescue, rehabilitation and supports
17. Could you explain your general experiences about the activity?

18. What do you think should be done in *Bole Sub City* to improve your situation?

## **2.2. Interview Guide for Key-informants from Agencies**

1. What is your current position in the organization?
2. How long have you worked in areas of child protection and welfare issues?
3. How do you perceive the phenomenon of begging by CWDs in Addis Ababa? Probe, to the perception of the status.
4. Do you have any knowledge of specific projects or works in relation to the CWDs who are in a begging phenomenon in Addis Ababa?
5. Do you know any policy gaps that hinders specific focus or to address the issue of the begging?
6. What should the role of responsible stakeholders in the protection of vulnerable children (CWD)?
7. What could be the challenges of begging by CWDs relative to their human rights?
8. What are the gaps in relation to domestic laws in addressing the rights concerns?
9. Can you suggest possible mechanisms to curtail the problems?

## **2.3. Interview Guide for Key informants from community;**

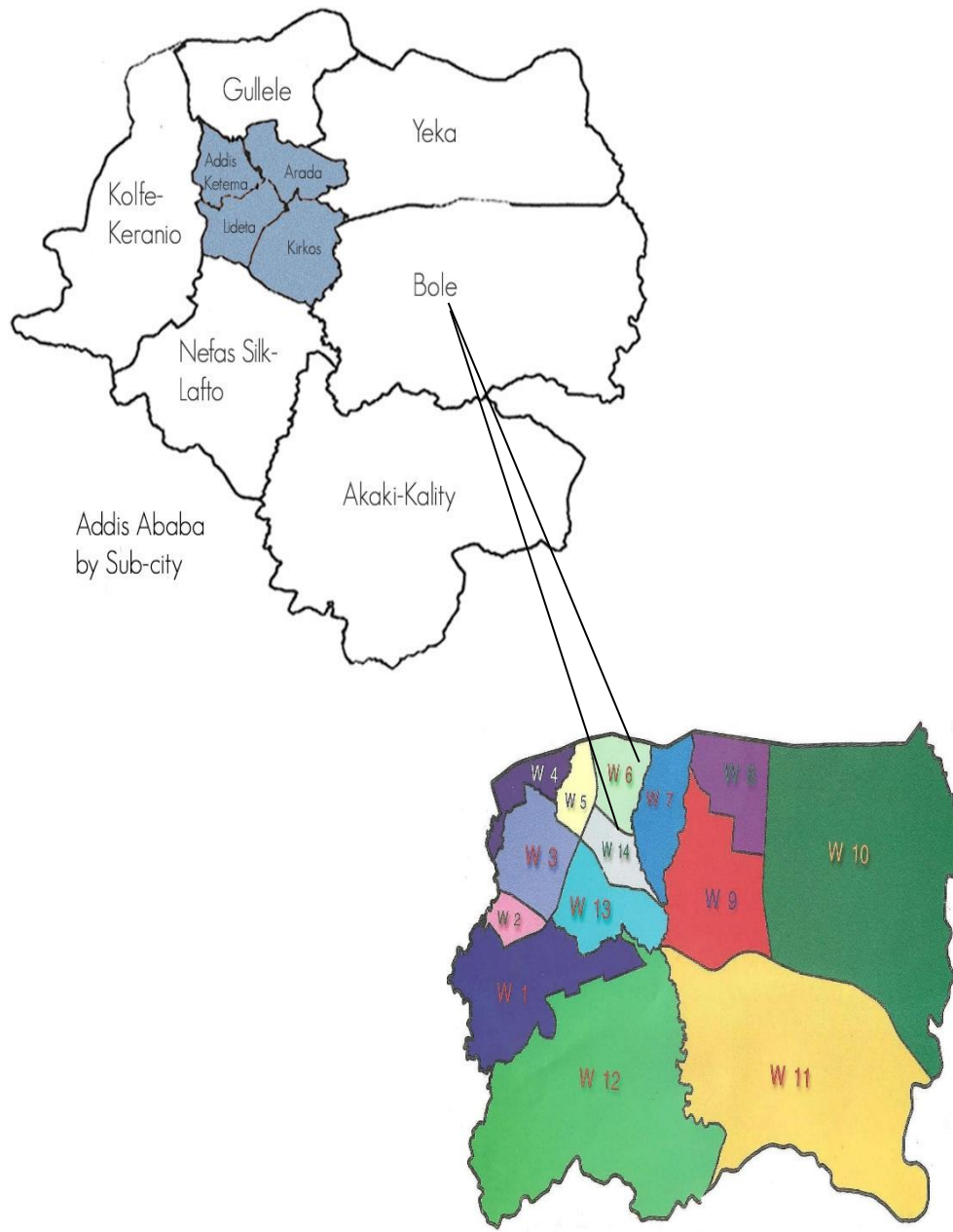
1. Can you tell me your age, and how long have you lived/stayed in the sub city?
2. What do you perceive when you see children begging with a disabilities in the street?
3. Do you think it is normal for a child with a disabilities to do begging? Probe, to see the underlying moral and religious traditions of giving
4. Do you give often give alms to children who are especially begging with disabilities? If yes,
5. If you give alms, do you think the children are beneficiary?
6. Do you have any experiences in relation to the phenomenon in Addis Ababa? 7. Do you think the child begging is growing over the recent years? If yes, why?
8. What measures do you suggest to address the situation?

#### **2.4. Focus Group Discussion Guideline.**

1. Discuss the current conditions of begging in your areas.
2. Discuss the main challenges that begging by CWDs encounters in Bole Sub City.
3. Discuss how your physical disabilities and impacted on your involvement in the activity in the Bole Sub-city.
4. Discuss the issues in relation to any pressure from groups/individuals against your will.
5. Discuss if you have any decision power over the many, time in the process of begging.
6. What do you think should be done respond to the needs of begging children with a disabilities?
7. Any suggestion or comments in relation to these aspects of child rights?

## Maps

**Map 1. Administrative Map of Addis Ababa, the Capital City of Ethiopia.**



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis\\_Ababa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Addis_Ababa)

የቦሌ ክ/ክተማ ወረዳ 6 አስተዳደር



Bole sub city wereda 6 ademinsetration

ሴቶች ህፃናትና ወጣቶች ጉዳይ ጽ/ቤት

women,child & youth affair office

NO B/SW-6W/CW/0708/08

Date 11/12/2008ዓ.ም

To whom it may concern

MR.ABRHAM ALIHONAY has asked for the recognition letters to be given to him on the conduct of the study, in the werda. Thefore, I declare that Mr. Abrham Alshonay did come to Ethiopia for his MA. Thesis on the phenomen of child begging with disability in Addis Ababa city Adminstrthion the case of Bole subcity,Woreda 06.Therefor,our office of women and child affairs would like to give recognition ,that your student has been gathering data in the sub city areas of (wesite megenagna,Egzabherab,and mbirathalie areas).

Best regards

ሀይማኖት አዳኝ  
የአድራሻ ደጋፊ ኮሚሽን ሠሪት



አዲስ አበባ

ቦሌ

ስልክ ቁጥር 011 646 68 33 መልስ ሲፀፉልን የደብዳቤውን ቁጥር ይጥቀሱ!!

ADDIS ABEBA

BOLE

PHONE 011 646 68 33