THE SOCIAL DISLOCATION OF AND SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR FEMALE STREET CHILDREN ENGAGED IN COMMERCIAL SEX WORK: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY IN THE ADDIS KETEMA SUB-CITY, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

by

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Student number: 46922512

DECLARATION

I declare that "The social dislocation of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work: An explorative study in the Addis Ketema sub-city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia" is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

[Signature]
Ms Lude Abiy Melaku

[Date]
September 12, 2015

A dissertation entitled "The social dislocation of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work: An explorative study in the Addis Ketema sub-city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia" is submitted for examination purpose.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to all street children found in the world. I wish they could live the lives they deserve. May God be with them!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank and praise my Heavenly Father, who gave me strength to complete this dissertation. Secondly I want to thank my family (Tilaye, Almi, Shonti, Gelu and Kahenu) for your prayers and for being there during all the difficult times. I also want to thank my supervisor, Ms Elize Koen for her academic supervision and support as well as my mentor, Ms Carol Jansen who has been there all the time when I needed her assistance. Their support ensured the successful completion of this dissertation. Last, but not least, I thank the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment employees for their support throughout this study.
## Glossary of Local Terms

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<td>Alga bete</td>
<td>the direct translation means “bed house” and refers to small partitioned rooms available for rent, which is a very common in the Addis Ketema sub-city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atobis Tera</td>
<td>the bus station located in the Addis Ketema sub-city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilit</td>
<td>name given to sell vegetables in small portions on the street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>local drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kocho</td>
<td>the common food in the South part of Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injera</td>
<td>the most common food throughout Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madaberia</td>
<td>a sort of sleeping mat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulae</td>
<td>name given to leftover food by street dwellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kefela</td>
<td>begging for money on the street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birr</td>
<td>local currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idier</td>
<td>small community association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iqube</td>
<td>it is local system of saving money within a group of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asbeza</td>
<td>food and other related expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dureye</td>
<td>name given to a misbehaved person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shermuta</td>
<td>prostitute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shele</td>
<td>another name given to prostitutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yebite lige</td>
<td>reference to a child who is living with parents at home and considered to be a well-behaved child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tela</td>
<td>homemade alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebele bete</td>
<td>subsidised houses for rent owned by the sub-division of the sub-cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebele</td>
<td>sub-section in the Addis Ketema sub-city</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wereda sub-sector of a sub-city
SUMMARY

In this study semi-structured, in-depth individual interviews were conducted with sixteen female street children aged 15 to 18, who were engaged in commercial sex work. These children were conveniently selected to explore the social dislocation of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work. In addition, two focus group discussions consisting of nine female street children each, as well as seven key informant individual interviews, were conducted. This study found that female children engaged in commercial sex work experienced a high degree of social dislocation and that the children who participated in this study tended to create their own communities and isolated themselves from the broader community in which they lived. This study further found that different support programmes had been introduced to alleviate the problems experienced by these children and that a number of organisations delivered support services to address their needs.

Key terms

social dislocation, marginalisation, social bonds, children’s needs, child sex workers, street children, sexual exploitation, support programmes, community perceptions, availability of support
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<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANPPCAN</td>
<td>African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect - Ethiopian Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANU</td>
<td>Child Abuse and Neglect Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community-based organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Compact disc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAD-ET</td>
<td>Child Aid Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of a Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRDC</td>
<td>Child Resource Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECPAT</td>
<td>End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWLA</td>
<td>Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus group discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSCE</td>
<td>Forum on Street Children Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSCE</td>
<td>Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFSO</td>
<td>Integrated Family Services Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPECL</td>
<td>International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour</td>
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</table>
ISP  Involved in the support programme
IRIN  Integrated Regional Information Networks
NGOs  Non-governmental organisations
MOLSA  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NCC  National Children’s Commission
OPRIFS  Organisation for the Prevention, Rehabilitation and Integration of Female street children
Sa  *sine anno*, “without a year”
SC-D  Save the Children Denmark
STDs  Sexually transmitted diseases
STIs  Sexually transmitted infections
UN  United Nations
UNCRC  United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF  United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
UNICEF [Sa]a  United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund “without a year” first
UNICEF [Sa]b  United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund “without a year” second
UNISA  University of South Africa
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
WHO  World Health Organisation
CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ideally, families should take responsibility for the development, protection and well-being of children. The family or domestic setting in which a child grows up and is socialised with regard to the norms and values of society, has a crucial influence on the life of the child (Zubrick, Silburn & Prior 2005:161). According to Radda Barnen (1988:8), most of the basic needs of children living in developing countries are not being met. “They are abandoned or have lost their parents or need substantial protection beyond what their families can offer.”

Ethiopia, being a developing country, needs substantial research and policy assessment to address the problems of all vulnerable children in the country. The United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (2006) holds the view that the problem of poverty challenges the country to guarantee children’s fundamental rights. The lack of fundamental rights jeopardises the country’s future generation. Too many children in Ethiopia come from poor a family, which leads to them dropping out of school and forces them to live on the streets to get jobs and escape from the problems in their homes. For UNICEF (2000:8)

“Many of the children come from female-headed households. They do not have access to nutritious food or proper clothes. They have extreme difficulty paying school fees. They work because a parent (parents) and siblings or older siblings are unemployed.”

When children live on the streets their basic needs will not be met, and they are likely to fall prey to different forms of victimisation. The Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE) (2003:2) describes the situation of street children as follows:
“Street children live a transitory lifestyle and are vulnerable to inadequate nutrition, physical injuries, substance use, and health problems including sexual and reproductive health problems.”

In general, this study focuses on the challenges faced by female street children engaged in commercial sex work and in particular, it explores their needs, their social dislocation, neglect and marginalisation and the degree of social support that they experience.

In this chapter, the background of the study and problem statement is discussed in detail. This is followed by an explanation of the focus of this study, the research setting, the rationale for the study and the research objectives and research questions are explained. In addition, definitions of the key terms are also given after a brief summary of the research design and methodology of the study are discussed.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

This section deals with the background to the study and the research problem.

1.2.1 Background of the study

Children represent the hope and the future of every society. However, in many parts of the world, children and their standard of living are at serious risk. As stated by UNICEF (2005:41), a large number of children, unsupervised by adults, are found in almost every country in the world. Therefore, it is important to note that the problem of street children is becoming a worldwide phenomenon. It is indicated in the UNICEF (2005:40) report on the state of the world’s children that the number of street children runs into tens of millions across the world. Furthermore, the vast majority of these children work and live in large cities in developing countries (Consortium for Street Children 2009:2).
As is the case with other large cities in the developing world, Addis Ababa is facing increasing challenges with regard to addressing the human rights of street children. In fact, there are many poor, displaced, unsupervised and orphaned children in Ethiopia. Their basic human rights, including the right to education, adequate nutrition, health services, shelter and protection cannot be met by their families. In Addis Ababa, more than 30 percent of girls aged 10 to 14 were not living with their parents in 2006. According to the UNICEF survey in 2006 of two areas in Addis Ababa, 30 percent of the children (aged 10 to 14) were not living with their parents and were engaged in household work (UNICEF 2006). Furthermore, a considerable proportion of children work on the streets, with some even living on the streets permanently without any adult care and protection. The fact is, these children are forced to the streets in search of a better life. They supplement their parents' meager incomes or support themselves with the small incomes they earn doing menial jobs. The reality is that street children face many dangers such as being exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. Many are forced to drop out of school or never get a chance to go to school at all, while some drift into begging or petty crime. According to UNICEF (2006), “They [the children] are very young, very vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, and typically have no legal or social support. Most of the time the opportunity given to the female street children is to be engaged in commercial sex work for survival.”

The phenomenon of street life has many interdependent economic, social and political root causes. There are many reasons why children end up on the street including “poverty, family disintegration, neglect and violence at home, lack of educational opportunities, the death of parents and sexual abuse were among the factors that pushed vulnerable children onto the street” (UNICEF 2012:30). The conspicuous and “deviant” behaviour of underprivileged children and their families receives a great deal of attention from society, but not the social marginalisation underlying it. In most countries, the common attitude of society, based on occasional contact with these children focuses on the physical and emotional survival strategies
such as dishonesty, theft, substance abuse and sexual promiscuity displayed by these children (Balachova, Bonner and Levy 2009:30).

The street children of Addis Ababa are involved in menial tasks that pay a small amount of money such as delivering goods, selling of small items, running errands or begging to survive. However, these children earn a meager income from these tasks. Accordingly, Balachove et.al (2009:30) comment, “typical street work includes such activities as begging, collecting empty bottles, washing cars, cleaning, carrying goods and assisting in market places”.

Most of these children depend on leftover food, but some also buy cheap food or are given food at feeding centers. However, some do manage to have two or three meals a day. As homeless children, the most common sleeping place of the children is at the roadside. Once on the street, children endure all forms of hardship including exposure to the cold, police brutality, theft and physical and sexual abuse. Female Street children in particular, are frequently subjected to these latter abuses and often become sex workers for survival (UNICEF 2009:3). It is important to note that these children are socially dislocated by the society in which they are living and are taking whatever options are available to survive. In this regard, Schimmel (2008:214) also states:

“In the context of living on the street or in a transitional shelter, one of the most developmentally and psychologically significant deprivations that street children face is the lack of the experience of unconditional positive regard, of love and of a supportive and emotionally intimate relationship with an adult.”

1.2.2 Problem statement

In Ethiopia, up-to-date and comprehensive statistical information on children living on the street is almost non-existent. However, experience suggests that the problem of street children is increasing. It is estimated that in Addis Ababa, the capital city of
Ethiopia, there are about 60,000 children living on the street of which 25 per cent are girls. Other sources estimate the number to be far higher, with nearly 600,000 street children countrywide and over 100,000 in Addis Ababa itself in the year 2004 (Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) 2004). On the other hand, UNICEF (2012a:30) mentions that there was a further survey that estimated the number of street children in Addis Ababa to be 12,000 in 2011.

There is no accurate figure about the extent of child prostitution in Addis Ababa. However, due to the increasing rural-urban migration, poverty, and despite the spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemics, the number of girls who are engaged in sex work as a means of survival seems to be increasing. The Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment (FCSE) – an NGO – and other governmental organisations at the sub-city and at the ministry level point out that children as young as 13 to 16 years of age are engaged in this practice in ever-increasing numbers. In their National Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children, the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), have estimated that there are more than 6000 child commercial sex workers in Addis Ababa (MOLSA 2005:7). However, due to the illegal nature of the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the absence of any comprehensive research on street children in Ethiopia, there is no source that clearly indicates the extent of the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in Ethiopia.

Female street children face specific dangers and challenges due to factors related to their gender. In this respect, Smart Consulting Associates (2007:3) asserts in the case of Ethiopia:

"Female children living on the street are more vulnerable to street life than their male counterparts due to gender-based violence and exploitation. Most of these children are highly exposed to rape. They are also forced to divert to
commercial sex work when other survival options are limited. As a result of both sexual abuse and exploitation, street girls are exposed to various problems like HIV/AIDS, STIs and unwanted pregnancy.”

Similarly, Baltet, Bhukuth and Radja (2013:405) stated on their case study in Mauritania that street girls also face a problem being recognized by support providers because of their gender “…difficult to recognise them because they are more frequently picked up by adults [it refers men and women who live around them] who either abuse them directly in return for accommodation or hire them out to brothels or prostitution networks”. Female street children engaged in commercial sex work represent a worldwide phenomenon that must receive urgent attention (Kapell 2009:7). The first congress against the commercial sexual exploitation of children was held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996, in partnership with UNICEF and Child Rights Connect with the co-organiser being End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT). This congress was the first event at which governments admitted that child sexual exploitation exists in every nation. The congress adopted a Global Declaration and Agenda for Action (Kapell 2009:7).

Despite this Global Declaration and Agenda to stop the sexual abuse of children, street girls are left with no other choice but to become engaged in commercial sex work. This is because of the hardships they face on the street such as not having access to money to pay for a night’s shelter or to buy food and clothing (Perschler-Desai 2006). These children are not only experiencing one of the worst forms of child labour, which is sex work, but are also being confronted by the community in which they live. This makes them vulnerable to attacks from older street boys and from other members of society (Smart Consulting Associates 2007:159). Street girls are raped by street gangs who usually perpetrate group rape and inflict brutal physical violence on them. Importantly, studies show that many of these children are not accepted by society because of the work they do (Perschler-Desai 2006).
Children become socialised by observing the roles of those around them and by internalising the values, beliefs and expectations of their culture (Andersen & Taylor 2006:102). However, street children consisting of deprived children, rejected children, and runaway children, who migrate to urban areas are engaged in a transitory lifestyle most of the time by dislocating themselves from the society in which they live (Schmidt 2003:4). In the process, they are exposed to various forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation (Adeyemi & Oluwaseun 2012:88). Volpi (2002:1) asserts that the very fact that there are street children can be regarded as “an alarm signaling the dire need for social development and poverty reduction policies to improve the situation in the community at large, and to prevent more young people from becoming marginalized”. In Ethiopia poverty often deprives children in their early years of life to have access to adequate food, shelter, medicine and family (UNICEF 2006). On the other hand, poverty plays a major role in the increasing number of child sex workers as stated by IRIN (2004).

It is important to point out that children represent the future generation and play an important role in the future socio-economic and political development of a country (Flanagan & Faison 2001:12). Thus, proper access to health care, education and family welfare assistance is a priority with regard to the children. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) – an international human rights treaty that grants all children a comprehensive set of rights – *inter alia* children, have the right to, enjoy special protection measures and assistance, have access to services such as education and health care, develop their personalities, abilities and talents to the fullest potential, grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding and to be informed about and participate in exercising their rights, in a responsible way.

Currently, the issue regarding the sexual exploitation of children has become a global concern (UNICEF [Sa]). The 2008 Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children included in its proposals “many different
actions, activities, campaigns and legal developments to end the sexual exploitation of children” (Kapell 2009:7). Despite such measures, it seems that the number of female street children in Ethiopia is increasing due to factors such as the recurrent droughts associated with famine and the spread of HIV and AIDS (Drimie, Tafesse & Frayne 2006). The crisis of Ethiopian street children has become a countrywide epidemic, exacerbated by civil war, famine and a shrinking economy (Adfesew & Gettlemman 1994:1). In fact, the increasing number of female street children has become a serious problem in the cities of Ethiopia. In this regard, Drimie et al. (2006:18) remark:

“The homeless, street children and beggars, especially in urban areas are among the most destitute, living in wretched conditions in makeshift plastic and cardboard shelters, relying on charity, and petty trade in the informal sector and crime…. In the urban context, many occupations are largely or exclusively carried out by poor women, such that gender and occupation exacerbate poverty. The most obvious case is that of commercial sex workers. Poverty may drive them to resort to prostitution, but the effects on their lives, the ways they are treated and viewed go far beyond a simple poverty analysis.”

As in many other countries, the public’s perceptions of street children in Ethiopia are overwhelmingly negative (Smart Consulting Associates 2007:3). Studies seem to suggest that female street children engaged in commercial sex work are regarded as a socially marginalised group, since they participate in activities that society considers taboo (Olufemi 2000). Furthermore, research also shows that female street children engaged in commercial sex work have often lost the support of their families (WHO [Sa]). Once the girls are on the street, the probability of getting raped and attacked by gangs of older street boys is much higher than before they left their homes (Molla, Ismail, Kumie and Kebede 2000:120). In some cases sexually abused children feel obligated to be engaged in sex work, because they are excluded from
the major activities of the society. Heiberg (2001:9) suggests that this lack of physical and emotional protection by society is one of the reasons why children are forced to be involved in sex work. If these children are not supported to overcome their social dislocation, society will be forced to deal with the negative consequences of a generation of young people who have been exploited, unemployed, uneducated and involved in risky behaviour.

1.2.3 Scope and limitations of the study

Since this is a qualitative study, it would be difficult for the researcher to generalize the findings of this study regarding the perceptions and experiences of children engaged in commercial sex work, because the sample selected for this study is “not an appropriate means for arriving at statistical descriptions of a large population” (Babbie 2007:327). Furthermore, the researcher only managed to interview children who had been involved in one of the support programmes delivered by an NGO (FSCE) that was available in the area. A possible limitation is that other possible interviewees were in other support programmes or were above the age of 18 and were consequently not included in this study. The FSCE was the only support programme that was working actively in the area with street children engaged in commercial sex work at the time of data collection. Furthermore, due to the unequal distribution of participants in terms of the involvement of varied support programmes, this may present a one-sided view.

Accordingly, the researcher discovered that some street children who were not involved in sex work had been admitted to the support programme, which was only targeting street children engaged in commercial sex work. Such children were admitted to the support programme after convincing the support providers that they were indeed engaged in commercial sex work because they wanted to receive the benefits of the rehabilitation programmes such as, counseling, shelter facilities and food services that were being provided by support providers. In fact, these street
children depended on other sources of income and not on commercial sex work and lied about their work on the street to be admitted to the support programme so that they could escape from the difficult street life that they experienced. As it was, the researcher had to take the word of the respondents that they were indeed engaged in commercial sex work.

On the hand there was a problem of translating word by word of the primary data gathered during the data collection into English language since the interview that was conducted was through the local language (Amharic).

1.2.4 Focus of the study

The focus of this study is on firstly exploring the social dislocation of female street children involved in commercial sex work and secondly, on investigating the needs of female street children involved in commercial sex work. Attention is paid to the needs of these children as they often lack the experience of unconditional acceptance, love and supportive relationships with adults due to their social status in society and the fact that they live on the streets.

Thirdly, the support provided to these children will also be explored with regard to health care and educational opportunities, recreational services, preventive and curative health service, provision of meals, peer housing, job placement and washing and laundry facilities (Asian Development Bank 2003).

This study focused on children who are between the ages of 15 and 18 since this age range entails a period of human development where children are in the process of developing physical, behavioural and cognitive abilities. Furthermore, this is a time of emotional growth and change (Wray-Lake 2010:2). Throughout these processes, each child develops and internalises the attitudes and the values of society through social interaction with their community or their family around them.
(Sotomayor - Peterson 2008:13). It is believed that if the developmental needs are addressed satisfactorily children will be able to view life positively, and be able to take decisions that will not jeopardise their future.

Although the term “children” includes children younger than 15 years of age according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989:4), for the purpose of this study, only children aged 15 to 18 years were included. The researcher realised that the needs and social dislocation of the children older than 15 year could be qualitatively different or could differ not only with regard to their needs and but also their social dislocation in comparison with the younger children.

1.3 RESEARCH SETTING

This study was conducted in Addis Ababa (the capital city of Ethiopia), which has grown exponentially in terms of its population since it was established in 1886. In 2007, it accommodated about 30 percent of the total urban population of Ethiopia and had a population of 2,738,248; while 38 per cent of Addis Ababa’s population was below 20 years of age, according to the 2007 population census (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission 2008). The population of Addis Ababa was estimated to be 3,194,999 in 2014 in accordance with the population projection done in 2013 (Federal Demographic Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency 2013).

Addis Ababa is sub-divided into 10 sub-cities. One of these, the Addis Ketema sub-city, was selected for the setting of this research. This sub-city had a population of 255,092 of which 124,741 were male and 130,351 were female according to the 2007 population and housing census (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

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1 The last National Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia was conducted in May 2007 and was published in 2008. After the year 2007 the base for population projections was obtained from the Population and Housing Census conducted on the year 2007.
Population Census Commission 2008:81). The targeted sub-city includes an area called Merkato, which is one of the largest and busiest areas in Addis Ababa. This area has various commercial stores, houses that serve alcohol drinks, room renting services, child sex workers and other related activities (FSCE 2007:9).

In its project proposal documentation for the Merkato integrated community-based child focused project, the FSCE (2007:9), reports:

“The majority of families residing in the area generate income from renting beds for a very small fare to those individuals who cannot afford to rent beds in the nearby hotels. These beds are also meant to serve for sex work. The shortage of space has made it imperative for many of the residents to set up double deck beds in their narrow rooms. The housing pattern in the area in general is congested and inconvenient for human residence. What is more, the health status of the community is highly affected by the lack of appropriate latrines and human waste disposal systems. The majority of the inhabitants in the area live in absolute poverty mainly characterized by inadequate access to health and education services, dilapidated houses, and unhealthy neighbourhoods.”

Before choosing the targeted sub-city (the Addis Ketema sub-city), a preliminary assessment was done by the researcher by reading previous studies and by investigating the experience of NGOs working with the street children that were found in the ten sub-cities. It was found that there were street girls who were engaged in commercial sex work and who were exposed to commercial sexual exploitation in almost all the sub-cities. However, it appeared that some sub-cities, if not all of them, had certain places where the practice of commercial sex and exploitation were rampant and were commonly known by the public at large. Among these sub-cities, the Addis Ketema sub-city was selected in which to conduct the fieldwork, since it was one of the best-known areas where street girls participated in
commercial sex work. Therefore, female street children engaged in commercial sex work from the Merkato area in the Addis Ketema sub-city, who worked in hotels/bars, brothels and on street corners, were identified and were requested to participate in this study.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There is no inclusive information regarding the extent of the problems of, as well as the increasing number of children living on the street in the world (UNICEF 2009:1). Nevertheless, service providers such as NGOs and concerned government organisations estimate that the problem of street children is growing as well as the number of children living on the street. The increasing number of female street children engaged in commercial sex work in Ethiopia is another indication of the need for efficient research that can guide the existing policies and programmes that are being implemented in the country to address the problem of all the vulnerable children that are found in the country. “Appropriate social and economic policies are clearly essential to prevent the number of street children from growing in the future.” (Volpi 2002: vii).

This study is important since it could contribute to knowledge about the family background of these children, the experiences and challenges they faced before they joined the street life. This knowledge could assist with the development of preventive measures in order to minimise the number of children joining street life. It is also important to conduct this study because it could contribute to the existing knowledge about the children’s lives on the streets.

By doing this study, the researcher also attempts to stimulate further interventions by identifying frontline practitioners (governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) who are providing support to street children. This information can serve as baseline information to create more awareness about the needs and the degree of
the social dislocation of these children. In turn, this information can be used to design efficient programmes and support services that could address the problems of these children by those who are working for a better life for these children. In other words, this study could contribute to the body of existing knowledge about the availability of support services and highlight some of the ways in which and the degree to which support services are delivered to these children.

It is therefore important to undertake this study because there is insufficient information regarding the extent of the social dislocation of these children from the broader society and the extent to which the social support they have received is helping them to find solutions to their existing problems. The UNCRC in article 5.18 sets out a framework for the protection of children from any harm and emphasises that the family and community have the main responsibility for caring for children (Wernham 2004:165). Importantly, since this study explores what support society has been providing to these children to overcome the problems they are facing and to decrease the involvement of these children in sex work, it could provide helpful guidelines to the community, the government, non-government organisations and other concerned bodies in terms of their understanding of the needs of these children and taking the necessary measures to provide support to street children, specifically those engaged in commercial sex work.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are:

- To explore the social dislocation of female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city, Addis Ababa.

- To explore the needs of female street children involved in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city.
• To explore the social support available for female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

• To what degree do female street children involved in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city, experience social dislocation?

• What are the needs of female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city?

• What social support is available to female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city?

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As stated above, this study was conducted in Addis Ababa (the capital city of Ethiopia). The intended units of observation were female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city. The age range of the children included in the study was 15 to 18 years of age.

An exploratory, qualitative research approach was used to enable the researcher to explore the social dislocation and the needs of and the social support for these children. Non-probability sampling techniques, specifically snowball sampling and convenience sampling, were used in this study to recruit girls from the streets of the Addis Ketema sub-city. The study used in-depth, semi-structured face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions as a data generation tools. Sixteen in-depth face-to-face interviews and two focus group discussion were conducted with street children engaged in commercial sex work. Each focus group discussion had nine participants.
In addition, seven face-to-face interviews were conducted with key informants. The researcher again used snowball sampling and convenience sampling to recruit key stakeholders that had a link with these street children, namely three NGO workers, two Addis Ketema sub-city employees and two representatives of the community in the specified sub-city who were selected to participate in the interviews in order to obtain sufficient information.

The research methodology of this study is discussed in further detail in chapter 3.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

The key terms pertaining to this study are defined next.

1.8.1 Child

Depending on the socio-cultural context, there are different definitions of a “child” in the world. For example, definitions of the legal age for marriage are different from definitions for the age of criminal capacity or the voting age or for employment. According to the UNCRC (1989:4) adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 20, 1989, Article 1:- “…a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

The concept of ‘child’ in the Ethiopian context as defined by the National Children’s Commission, refers to a person from birth to the age of fourteen years (Radda Barnen 1988:4). However, the revised Family Code, Article 7:1 states that “Neither a man nor a woman who has not attained the full age of eighteen years shall conclude marriage” (Federal Negarit Gazette 2000). For the purpose of this study, a child will be regarded as any person below the age of 18 years.
1.8.2 Social dislocation

“Social dislocation” in this study refers to the marginalisation of an individual or group of people from the wider society with regard to extreme disadvantage, weak social attachment and a high degree of social exclusion from mainstream social life. In this study, “social dislocation” refers to the marginalisation of female street children engaged in commercial sex work from the society because of the work they do. According to Given (2008:49), marginalisation entails the dislocation of an individual from significant social contacts, or is a state when one individual isolates himself/herself from society because of the distinctive action that he/she takes in society:

“Marginalization is the process through which members of some segments of society find themselves out of the mainstream based on their membership in socially meaningful groups. Groups may become marginalized based on a variety of characteristics such as religion, social class, ethnicity, visible racial characteristics, gender, age and sexual orientation” (Given 2008:49)

1.8.3 Social integration

“Social integration” refers to the social bond/attachment of a group of people or could be an individual (that can be arranged economically or culturally) within a society. In this study, social integration refers to the social attachment, inclusion, acceptance, and participation of female street children engaged in commercial sex work in mainstream social life. As stated by Jeannotte (2008:1), in her article, social integration refers to the social bond among the people in the community where diversity, equality of opportunity and participation of all people are respected by the society’s members.
1.8.4 Streetism

For the purpose of this study, “streetism” is a term used to refer to “the desperate situation of children who are forced to spend most of their time outside their homes on the streets, engaging in menial income generating activities in order to survive, and often having to sleep on the streets” (Adeyemi & Oluwaseun 2012:88). In this study, this term refers to the phenomenon where homeless or unmonitored children living on the street that are exposed to disease, neglect and physical and sexual abuse in particular.

1.8.5 Street children

For the purpose of this study, the term “street children” is defined as “children who are abandoned or neglected for whom the street has become their home” (Schmidt 2003: 4).

1.8.6 Child commercial sex work

Child commercial sex work occurs when a child is used in a sex act by an adult/older person who pays for this with money, food, clothes, drugs, gifts or favours (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT 2008:6). Child commercial sexual exploitation is different from the sexual abuse of a child because it involves some kind of payment (Kapell 2009:5). “Over the past two decades the term prostitution, which globally carries a stigma and is often used to denigrate women, has been exchanged for the concept of ‘sex work’. This new term is commonly understood to protect practitioners” (Caribbean Community Secretariat 2009:9). For the purpose of this study, “children involved in commercial sex work” refers to the fact that female children work in brothels or as freelance sex workers who are engaged in commercial sex work when conditions
force them out of necessity to earn money to buy a meal, find shelter or avoid an attack by street gang boys.

1.8.7 Social attachment

“Social attachment” refers to an individual’s sensitivity and interest in others and is related to the values that the individual attaches to what is desirable, proper, good or bad on the one hand, and on the other hand, to the social norms pertaining to the correct or proper forms of behaviour to which the individual conforms. Norms are specific prescriptions about how an individual ought to behave in particular contexts in order to be consistent with the values of contemporary society. According to Travis Hirschi’s (1969:252) social bond theory, attachment is one of the basic elements of social integration. The other elements are commitment, involvement and belief. As stated by the Centre for Parenting and Research (2006:2):

“The term is most often used to refer to the relationship between an infant or young child and the infant’s or child’s parent or preferred caregiver. The theoretical basis of most of the attachment research is that to secure attachment in infancy will predict good social and emotional outcomes.”

For the purpose of this study, “social attachment” refers to the relationship between street children engaged in commercial sex work and the people in the community.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1 introduces the study objectives and states the research questions; describes the significance of the study as well as the background of the study; gives the statement of the research problem; describes the study setting; and lists operational definitions.
In chapter 2, the researcher focuses on a review of the relevant literature regarding the concept of “street children”, the social dislocation, needs and experiences of street children as well as interventions and responses to the plight of street children in Ethiopia. The researcher also sets out the theoretical framework that guided this study by examining different secondary resources and opinions of different writers.

In chapter 3, the researcher discusses the research methodology of this study. In this chapter, the research design and instruments; the research setting, the study sample, the data collection and management processes, data analysis, the reliability and validity of this research, the ethical considerations and the pilot study are discussed.

Chapter 4 sets out the findings of this study since it provides details of the analysis and interpretation of the collected data as well as the biographical information regarding the participants of the study. An explanation of the themes emerging from the interviews and focus group discussions are presented.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the research findings: the conclusions, recommendations for policy and practice and the limitations of this study as well as recommendations for future research are discussed.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The following aspects were discussed in this chapter: the background of the study, the problem statement, focus of the study, the research setting, the research objectives and the research questions. In addition, the rationale for conducting this study was also dealt with. The research design and methodology were summarised in this chapter. This was followed by definitions of key terms used in this study. Finally, a brief outline of each chapter was presented.
In the following chapter, the literature review pertaining to this study will be discussed regarding the context of street children; the social dislocation, the needs and the challenges of street children; interventions and response to the problem of street children in Ethiopia and the theoretical framework that guided the study will be presented.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, literature on the social dislocation, needs of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work is examined. This chapter starts with a discussion of the findings on the causes of streetism in Ethiopia. Thereafter, a discussion of the findings of studies on the circumstances, and social dislocation of street children, the needs and challenges of street children and interventions and responses to the plight of street children in Ethiopia are reviewed.\textsuperscript{1} This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical perspectives that guided this study with regard to both the social dislocation of and social support for female street children.

2.2 THE CAUSES OF STREETISM IN ETHIOPIA

The term “streetism” refers to the situation of children who are forced to live on the street and who are frequently engaged in unskilled income-generating activities in order to survive (Adeyemi & Oluwaseun 2012:88).

The phenomenon of streetism has existed in a few cities in Ethiopia, but in others, it has just begun to emerge. IRIN (2004) reports that the Ethiopia Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) has estimated 150,000 children live on the streets in Ethiopia, with about 60,000 of them in the capital city in 2004. It also states that aid agencies’ estimation is “far more serious, with nearly 600,000 street children

\textsuperscript{1} At the time this study was undertaken, the Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE), which changed its name later on to the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE), was the only NGO that actively supported female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city. The FSCE is one of the prominent indigenous, non-governmental organisations that reports on child-oriented activities in Ethiopia. The researcher reviewed the documentation of this NGO, and the information gathered in this way was included in the discussion in this chapter.
country-wide and over 100,000 in Addis Ababa.” On the other hand, Medilinks Africa in its July 27, 2003 news story quotes the UNICEF report that estimates “the number of street children at 50,000 - 60,000”. The same report explains further that “around 25 percent of them are girls” (FSCE 2003:14).

It is interesting to note that street children do not have a particular address so they can not necessarily be found at a specific location at a specific time, therefore, it would be difficult to determine their numbers (Hatloy & Huser 2005:11). In this regard, there is no up-to-date information that indicates the number of street children in Ethiopia. However, it is estimated that there are ten million street children in the world; the numbers increase as population size, migration and globalisation increase in the world (UNICEF 2012b:32). This information makes it clear that, it is very likely that the problems associated with increasing numbers of street children in Ethiopia have escalated at an alarming rate.

Many factors contribute to streetism in Ethiopia such as economic factors, loss of parents, family violence, abuse and neglect, and peer pressure. The United Nations Education and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) also confirms that children living on the street is due to a combination of many factors, such as the loss of a parent, peer pressure and harsh conditions in their family homes (FSCE 2006:iii). The most important of these factors will be highlighted below:

2.2.1 Poverty

Ethiopia is a country on the Horn of Africa, a country with one of the richest histories on the African continent (Federal Research Division 2005:5). The Axumite Kingdom was one of the great civilizations of the ancient world. This kingdom achieved prominence as a major player in the commercial dealings between the Roman Empire and Ancient India. (Federal Research Division 2005:2).
In 2007 Ethiopia had a population of around 73 million people (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission 2008). In 2013, the population of Ethiopia was estimated to be 86 million people (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency 2013). As one of the least developed countries in the world, Ethiopia ranked 172th out of 187 countries on the UN Human Development Index in 2012 (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2013). This country that is characterised by a diversity of languages, traditions and cultures is also characterised by poverty, famine, disease and insufficient social and economic services such as water, education and transport (Abate 2004). These are some of the important factors contributing in general to the suffering of children in Ethiopia. A quarter of the population lives on less than $1.25 per day (UNDP 2011), and “87.3 percent of the population suffers multiple deprivations while an additional 6.8 percent are vulnerable to multiple deprivations” (UNDP 2013). “Almost half the population are considered undernourished, and the average life expectancy is only 48 years”. Most people living under these crushing conditions are trapped in a cycle of poverty (UNDP 2011).

Street children leave their homes mainly because of financial problems in their family (Balachova et al. 2009:30). Poverty is a major factor in this regard and accounts for close to 70 percent of the factors that cause streetism in Ethiopia. The levels of poverty are on the increase in urban areas and children have no choice but to go out and look for jobs to earn enough to assist their families or themselves (FSCE 2006:iii).

As far as severe food insecurity is concerned, children are the hardest hit because of their dependency status and their low social positions. Because children are mostly guided and supervised by adults, they cannot make their own decisions and many of them are forced to take low paying and difficult menial jobs to earn their daily meals, which results in many of them often living a life of abuse and mistreatment (Abate
2004). As stated by UNICEF (2000:7), deprived children found in Addis Ababa are expected to share the burdens of their families by having to work:

“....in the city children, especially those from families of lower socio-economic statuses engage in different jobs to help with the household chores and generate incomes to support their families, feed and clothe themselves and pay their school fees. Often the jobs these children undertake are tiring and risky both physically and psychologically.”

Moreover, the manifestation of under-development in several sectors of the country’s economy expose children to extreme deprivation, which affects their chances of proper development and survival and the likelihood of receiving adequate protection. Examples of such deprivation are found in the areas of nutrition, water, sanitation, health, shelter and education (FSCE 2006:III).

2.2.2 Migration

Importantly, the migration of people from rural to urban centers is contributing increasingly to the magnitude of the problem of street children (FSCE 2006:iii). In this regard, studies show that people migrate from rural areas to cities in search of better jobs. In the recent past, Ethiopia has witnessed growing numbers of children moving from rural to urban areas in search of a means of survival. Many of these children tend to engage in anti-social activities such as prostitution or becoming involved in robbery or street gangs (Schmidt 2003). Cities offer opportunities for children to engage in commercial sex work rather than earning a living by any other means. Undoubtedly, the weak financial capacity of families and communities act as “push” factors for children to leave their homes and to live on the streets (FSCE 2006:III). Most of the time, financial problems in families lead to the migration of children from one place to another place in search of better opportunities. “Numerous other studies have confirmed the role of economic poverty in the
phenomenon of children’s migration onto the streets” (Ballet, Bhukuth & Radja 2013:399). Abate (2004:5) explains the circumstances of these children as follows:

“Many rural and urban families live under tremendous stress caused by staggering poverty and reoccurring emergencies. Their children are forced to seek their livelihood elsewhere. Often, such children find their way into cities and towns, only to find themselves victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, as they take to street life and slums. Many live under the most wretched conditions in cities, towns and rural villages working, begging and selling their bodies to survive.”

Ethiopia is one of the countries which in the past struggled to achieve growth in the economy and with the implementation of poverty reduction programmes (UNDP 2013). Recently, however, “Ethiopia is among the fastest growing economies in the world and has maintained an average GDP growth rate of 11 percent in the last ten years” (UNDP 2013). Moreover, in its annual report, UNDP (2013) reports that Ethiopia has grown in different economic sectors:

“The country’s growth registered in 2012/13 was broad-based with key sectors of the economy such as agriculture growing by 7.1 percent, industry by 18.5 percent and services sector by 9.9 percent respectively. This growth momentum is expected to continue in 2013/14 and 2014/15, though at a slower rate.”

Despite this growth in the economy, Ethiopia is still “vulnerable to disease outbreaks as well as natural hazards, such as droughts and floods, and continues to address food insecurity” (UNICEF 2011). Addis Ababa has an ever-growing population, as people migrate to the city from the rural areas in search of a better life. However, the dream of having a better life in the cities does not transform into reality for most people (Abate 2004:5). Smart Consulting Associates (2007:4) remark in this regard,
“migrant children who come to the capital city both from rural and other urban areas become highly vulnerable to destitution, homelessness, exploitation, etc. as soon as they reach their destination.” Unfortunately, children who come to the cities from other towns of the country will most likely be forced to lead their lives on the streets, joining the existing army of street children.

These children try to support their family and themselves by working on the streets with some even living totally on the street without any adult supervision and protection. “In major cities of the country, children are drifted to street work to support themselves or their families” (FSCE 2003:6). The Forum on Street Children Ethiopia in their sample survey on the circumstances of street children in eight major towns of Ethiopia states that close to half of the sample of the Addis Ababa street children indicated that they had made the decision themselves to live on the streets. However, many children also revealed that their families ordered them to find jobs on the streets (FSCE 2003:ii).

2.2.3 Loss of parents

A second cause of streetism in the country is the loss of parents. The loss of parents could be due to “armed conflicts, natural disasters, HIV and AIDS and other epidemics, and refugee problems” as stated by Volpi (2002:6). The Ministry of Health estimated that if the trends in connection with the spread of HIV and AIDS continues, the number of orphans could increase to 1.8 million by 2009 (FSCE 2006:31). On the other hand, the Central Statistical Agency (2012:22) of Ethiopia estimated that orphaned children constituted 11 percent of the total population of children in 2011. Even worse is the situation of children that are orphaned and rendered vulnerable due to HIV transmitted to them by their parents and who are left on the streets without protection and supervision. These children have to face neglect and abuse because they are infected with HIV, or the cause of their parents’ death was AIDS-related. This, in itself, can add to the problem of social exclusion.
“These children often face widespread stigma and discrimination as a result of their parents’ or their own infection” (Abate 2004:9). Accordingly, many of these children are forced to take to the street as the only survival option regardless of the negative consequences, such as the lack of medical services, balanced nutrition and not attending school, all which have their own impact on the children’s growth and development (Smart Consulting Associates 2007:4). Save the Children (2011) states that in Ethiopia, the HIV and AIDS crisis is devastating families at a rate that is destabilising “entire communities, leaving many children orphaned and at risk of exploitation.” UNICEF (2006) also states that HIV and AIDS play a major role in orphaning children:

“Ethiopia counts as one of the largest populations of orphans in the world: 13% of children throughout the country are missing one or both parents. This represents an estimated 4.6 million children – 800,000 of whom were orphaned by HIV/AIDS. The country has seen a steady increase in the number of children becoming orphaned because of AIDS. In the past, famine, conflict and other diseases were the main factors that claimed the lives of parents.”

Furthermore, in their study of street children in Russia, Balachova, Bonner and Levy (2009) assert that children are in a much worse position when there are no parents to take care of them. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989:3) states that, “The child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth.”

2.2.4 Family violence

A third cause of streetism is family violence. Most of the time, family violence forces the child to take the decision to live on the street. According to a study conducted in
Ethiopia, children perceived their involvement in street life as a method of actively addressing domestic problems at home (Shah, Graidage & Valencia 2005:18). It is now generally agreed globally, that the experience of violence is one of the key triggers that precipitates children’s decisions to join life on the street. In a wide range of contexts, children cite violence most often as one of the causes for them being on the streets (Ray, Davey & Nolan 2011:13).

2.2.5 Child abuse and neglect

A fourth cause of streetism in the country is child abuse and neglect. Children leave their homes to avoid the abuse they face from their families. It is mentioned in several studies in the world that children join the street life because of the physical abuse they face at the hands of their families (Balachova et al. 2009: 31). Violence against children has existed and has been a social problem for a long time. According to the FSCE (2003:iii), apart from physical abuse, violence against children has been categorised into two additional categories: firstly, emotional abuse and secondly, sexual abuse. Children often leave home because they are abused by their families/relatives or deprived of their human rights such as the right to receive an education, the right to be loved, the right to be happy, the right to have adequate food, the right to have clean water, the right to have medicine, to name only a few.

2.2.6 Peer influence

A fifth cause of streetism in the country is peer pressure; often, a child who lives in an abusive family will be influenced by another child who is already living on the street after leaving his/her violent family. The FSCE (2003) names peer pressure as one of the underlying factors leading to children living on the streets in Ethiopia – most street children choose to go and live on the street as their friends do because they think that this could lead to a better life.
2.2.7 Uncontrolled urbanisation

Another cause is the fast and unrestrained growth of cities (FSCE 2003:2). Urban centers are developing in various parts of Ethiopia, but basic amenities are not provided in these areas. In Ethiopia “social poverty, such as access to education, safe water and health care, is increasing and the HIV/AIDS prevalence is high” (Schmidt 2003:21). Addis Ababa, which developed in one rapid spate of uncontrolled urbanisation, resulted in the fact that the “majority of the population lives in substandard housing and many citizens lack running water or electricity facilities” (FSCE 2003:14). The January newsletter of IRIN (2012) reports that “officials say parts of Ethiopia are still reeling from the effects of the recent drought, flooding, conflict or a combination of the three, resulting in increased numbers of children dropping out of school.”

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF “STREET CHILDREN”

Street children are defined in this study as “children who are abandoned or neglected for whom the street has become their home” (Schmidt 2003:4). UNICEF (2012:30) has also stated that “the term ‘street children’ refers to both children on the street and children of the street. The phrase ‘children on the street’ is employed to describe those children who work on the streets to earn money for themselves or their families. On the other hand, children of the street are those children who are homeless and live on the streets”. De Benitez (2009:6) has also explained street children as children who have gone through all the violence in their young age as follows:

“children survive abuse at home in fragile families; live in poverty-afflicted, chaotic neighbourhoods; their access to educational and health services is erratic, discriminatory and exclusionary; they confront risks in the street, experiencing violence in their premature entry into the world of work;
subjected to abuse and neglect in detention centers and welfare homes designed to protect them, they are stigmatized and shunned by mainstream society.”

Street children are those sectors of society that are much exposed to violence, neglect and are the most disadvantaged from the basic needs of life (Hai 2011:45). On the other hand street children cannot be regarded as a homogeneous group since children who live on the streets come from different backgrounds and face different challenges and difficulties. According to Hong and Ohno (2005:4), in their study on street children in Vietnam, “street children are not a homogeneous group. Each child has a different family background, a different reason for being on the street, a different education level, and different requirements to be filled.” In addition, Ray et al. (2011:7) inform us that, “In reality, street children are not a clearly, defined, homogeneous population.” For example, some street children are orphans, while others that come from very poor families have been abused or rejected or are runaways. Even though street children do not have a homogenous background, they face the same realities when it comes to life on the street. Hatloy and Huser (2005:11) described the circumstances of street children in their study on the identification of street children in Bamako and Accra as follows:

“Street children are found in most cities around the world. They live in the streets, they sleep in the open or in empty buildings, and they have no one to support them in their daily struggle for survival. Street children are probably the most visible face of child labour. Most of them are involved in petty trade or carrying goods, shoe shining, begging, or collecting garbage.”

Street children use the streets at different times of the day. “The use of the street by any child is fluid and dynamic, depending on his or her age, gender and experience” (Ray et al. 2011:7). In its study of the situation of street children in eight major towns of Ethiopia, FSCE has also explained that some street children were “on the street”
which means they still saw their families and used the street during “daytime” and returned home every night to sleep in their family homes (FSCE 2003:2). “Children on the street” maintained strong family ties and usually returned to their homes (or domestic dwellings) at night. Although they were vulnerable because they tended to come from poor families and they tended not to attend regular or night school, such children had strong linkages to their families (FSCE 2003:2). Their time spent on the streets was usually directed at supplementing their families’ incomes. Some studies categorise these children as “part-time” or “day-time” street children, since these children work on the streets, but live at home (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 1999).

On the other hand, there are children who have no links with their families. These “children of the street” participate fully in street life. They work, live and/or beg on the street. Such children do not have permanent addresses or identifiable caretakers. Many of them have lost contact with their parents or relatives for various reasons. Some might even be orphans. These street children are regarded as “full time street children” (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 1999). As highlighted in the study of the circumstances of street children in eight major towns of Ethiopia by FSCE, these children have no family homes and they use the streets both as a workplace and as a home (FSCE 2003:2). FSCE (2003:2) also states that some street children are categorized as children on the street “until the children get full adaptation to the street culture.” The researcher contends that street children can “start off” as “children on the street” and become “children of the street” due to the deterioration in their domestic or familial relationships. In short, the FSCE (2003:1) sums up what “on the street” children and “of the street” children entail:

“Many children work on the street to earn money for themselves and/or their families. Some street children are ‘on the street,’ which means that they still see their families regularly and may even return every night to sleep in their family homes. Children ‘of the streets’ on the other hand, have no home but
the streets. Even if these children occasionally spend time in institutions for children or youth, they consider the streets to be their home.”

According to the Consortium for Street Children (2009:1), “which is the only worldwide network that works collectively to help street children on a global scale”, “defining street children is a difficult task especially considering the many uncertainties surrounding the term”. The term “street children” sometimes can be problematic as it can be used as a stigmatising label. “It has come under increasing criticism as labelling and stigmatising due to its connotations of delinquency in many societies” (Ray et al. 2011:8). One of the greatest problems such children face is that they are regarded by many members of society as a threat and are seen to be likely to display criminal behaviour. For this reason, the term is disliked by children themselves and some organisations have started to use terms such as “street active children” or “street involved children” (Ray et al. 2011:8). On the other hand, in her study on the neglected and forgotten human rights of street children, Schmidt (2003:4) points out that many children living or working on the street have accepted the term. They feel that the term offers them a sense of identity and belongingness. According to Wernham (2004:1):

“The term “street children” has both positive and negative connotations. It can label and stigmatising children, or it can provide them with an identity and a sense of belonging. It can include a very wide range of children who: are homeless; work on the streets but sleep at home; either do or do not have family contact; work in open-air markets; live on the streets with their families; live in day or night shelters; spend a lot of time in institutions.”

As Ray et al. (2011:7) point out, even though the definitions of street children vary, they tend to include the following common characteristics as highlighted by UNICEF:
“Any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, and so on, has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, directed, and supervised by responsible adults.”

The above mentioned common characteristics of street children have also been confirmed by UNICEF’s working definition of “children on the street” (UNICEF 2012:30). For the purpose of this study, the term “street children” refers to those children who are under the age of 18 and who live on the street without the care, support and guidance of an adult, parent or guardian. These street children “work long hours for little pay, have their money stolen, and often get sick because they live in an unsanitary environment” (Hai 2014:46, Citing Rahamn 2009).

2.4 THE VULNERABILITY AND SOCIAL DISLOCATION OF STREET CHILDREN

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. UNICEF (2004:5) states that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 indicates that “children are uniquely vulnerable and deserve particular protection, they are also to be prepared to live an individual life in society.” Children live and grow up in a world of adults over which they have very little control.

A considerable number of children live in an environment where there are neither parents nor any adult persons to look after them. According to UNICEF (2005:1), “Millions of children make their way through life impoverished, abandoned, uneducated, malnourished, and discriminated against, neglected and vulnerable. For them, life is a daily struggle to survive.” UNICEF (2004:10) further contends that even those children who have parents may not be able to enjoy the status of childhood because most of their parents are too poor to support them. Furthermore,
it asserts that there are many poor families in developing countries that are not able to provide their children with the basic necessities of life:

“Poverty is the root cause of high rates of child morbidity and mortality. The rights of over 1 billion children - more than half the children in developing countries - are violated because they are severely underserved of at least one of the basic goods or services that would allow them to survive, develop and thrive. In the developing world, more than one in three children does not have adequate shelter, one in five children do not have access to safe water and one in seven has no access whatsoever to essential health services. Over 16 per cent of children under five, lack adequate nutrition and 13 percent of all children have never been to school”.

De Benitez (2009:9) contends in her case study of street children in Bangladesh that “poverty, abuse and family breakdown are common factors forcing children to leave home and flee to the streets”. As stated above, many children who have been victims of different circumstances of abuse while living at home with their parents, will adopt the street as their home because the majority of them will be influenced by elder siblings or friends who were already living on the streets (Volpi 2002:6). When these children are forced to choose the street as their home, their vulnerability increases. “Once on the street, children experience high levels of stigma and discrimination, especially after they reach puberty, boys being regarded as delinquent and girls being regarded as shameful, fallen women” (Ray et al. 2011:9, citing Plan 2010).

Nevertheless, these children often prefer to stay on the streets even if they have the option to go back to their families because they want to avoid the violence in their family’s homes and try to seek affection on the streets (FSCE 2003). Street children need love and good social contact with people. “It is now thought that the experience of violence is one of the key triggers that precipitates some children from poor and
disadvantaged families, and not others, to separate from their families and move onto the streets” (Ray et al. 2011:14). These children do not want to go home to their own families; instead, they prefer to be with other street children on the street. Consequently, living on the street is their most likely option because they lack other options. UNICEF (2009:2) asserts that the conditions of these children often were much worse when they were living with their families than when they were on the street:

“When these children live with their families, poverty and lack of services means that most parents are not in a position to provide appropriate care. Children grow up on the margins of society without appropriate accommodation, protection, education, health care, food, drinking water, security, recreation and guidance.”

After leaving home and once on the street, most of these children will face the consequences of being partially or totally isolated from their families or from the community in which they are living. Hai stated on his study of street children in Bangladesh that street children are “vulnerable to violence, abuse, public humiliation and harassment and often find themselves incarcerated with adult criminals” (Hai 2014:46, Citing Rahamn 2009). “In terms of policy at international, regional and national levels, street involved children are generally treated as one group of socially excluded or marginalized children” (Ray et al. 2011:7). Because of their exclusion, they face insurmountable problems that they are incapable of solving themselves. In a hostile, repressive and violent context, street children who have experienced rejection by society for a long time could become members of street groups or gangs as a coping strategy to defend themselves against external threats such as abuse (Smart Consulting Associates 2007:2). Most of the time, these children are of school-going age (5 to 18 years), but do not attend primary or secondary schools, or receive any informal education at all. They are thus partially or totally out of reach of
the social control normally exerted over children of their age (Smart Consulting Associates 2007).

“Street children constitute a marginalised group in most societies” (FSCE 2003: i). The term “street children” acknowledges the idea that these children “belong to the street” with no adults who are responsible for their problems or who could teach them how to behave within society. Hai (2014:51) in his study of problems faced by street children in Bangladesh stated that “most of the street children reported being bullied by unscrupulous people, troubled by musclemen, police and child lifters, robbed by elders who used to snatch money, forced to do menial and dirty jobs/acts by devious persons and looked down upon by society”. These children often become engaged in different activities that society frequently regards as social taboos. Consequently, in many cases, street children face problems from the police or security guards who interrogate them on false charges or administer physical punishment to them. In some cases, they even rob them of their money and material possessions. As a result of the police interrogations and accusations, these children often face rejection and marginalisation by some members of society and this excludes them from the wider community much more than had previously been the case because they are now regarded as “thieves” and “bad citizens” (UNICEF 2009:2). Furthermore, Shah et al. (2005:17) assert that street children are a marginalised group in society who prefer the street life to escape from the rejection they face in society:

“Communities often ostracize and stigmatize street children by regarding them as antisocial, dirty, and lacking in work ethic. Stigmatization compounds the street child’s feelings of isolation and rejection and often becomes the major source of concern and distress, thereby dwarfing any initial trauma that may have necessitated life on the street.”
It is also mentioned by UNICEF (2009:5) that street children are stigmatised in ways that make it hard for them to fit into society because some members of society consider these children as creators of problems for society, rather than as fighters for their own survival. UNICEF (2009:5) adds that “one of the most difficult challenges facing children living on the streets is marginalization from the communities who commonly see them as dangerous, mischief makers and thieves.”

Studies of street children in Vietnam by Hong and Ohno (2005) and a survey on the circumstances of street children in eight major towns of Ethiopia conducted by the FSCE (2003:iv), also show that the community generally regards street children as “thieves, trouble makers, and runaway children, amongst others,” which results in them being abandoned or neglected by the public. In most countries, the public view of street children is overwhelmingly negative because it is assumed that these children will negatively influence all the other children in the community and therefore, they are considered troublemakers rather than children who need help (UNICEF 2000). Accordingly, they are viewed with suspicion and fear. Many people would actually prefer not to see street children around their communities. As indicated by UNICEF (2009:5), street children are stigmatised and are misunderstood by society and are regarded as delinquents, thieves and “good for nothing.” They are often treated as if they are not members of society.

It is important to mention that female street children are often sexually and verbally abused by older street boys. They feel unprotected and have many uncertainties while living on the street. Consequently, these children are identified as extremely vulnerable groups that experience marginalisation and social exclusion from the communities in which they are living (UNICEF 2009:5).

As declared in the UNCRC (1989) street children need to have access to basic services such as access to proper education, psychological support and supervision that will help them become part of society. However, the basic rights of street
children are often not met; consequently, they are continuously exposed to various forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, as indicated above (UNICEF 2004:26):

“Families form the first line of defense for children; the further away children are from their families, the more vulnerable they are. Children separated from their families, both those living or working on the streets and those in institutions, are more likely to be marginalized, abused and live in poverty in adulthood. Those living on the streets are left unprotected against violence and exploitation. They are also at greater risk of contracting HIV.”

These children mostly do not have what society considers appropriate relationships with the major institutions pertaining to childhood, such as the family and educational and health facilities (Smart Consulting Associates 2007).

“In the case of youth [children] on the streets, many have chosen or been forced to disassociate from community life and exist independently or dislocated from family and communal structures. In an attempt to adapt and survive within the context of the street, the youth actively seek to associate with other environments of belonging, such as street gangs or brothels that exhibit their own social hierarchies and behaviour codes.” (Shah et al. 2005:5)

Schmidt (2003:4) maintains that although the street can be a place of exclusion and marginalisation, it could also be a place for socialisation and social integration for some of the children. She also points out that social-structural and cultural arrangements² render street children (for the sake of this study, female street

² Examples of social-structure and cultural arrangements are social stratification and social class systems which refer to the idea that society is separated into different levels where social class is defined by economic or cultural arrangements of groups in society (Chambliss 1973).
children involved in commercial sex work) vulnerable to the ravages of poverty, discrimination and stigmatisation. According to this author, “social dislocation” represents a state of extreme disadvantage in which a person’s relatedness or connectedness to society is very weak. This view of social dislocation is related to the views of Durkheim on the value of social solidarity, social networks and social support to achieve social integration and guard against social exclusion (Bury & Gabe 2004:6). The presence of unsupervised children on the streets is living proof of the failure of communities to provide a well-defined social structure that gives them an identity and protects them. Instead, they are being alienated from society. Moreover, for Wilson (1991), the notion of social dislocation is related to dispossession in economic terms, social exclusion, loss of social attachment and a lack of participation in mainstream social life.

On the other hand, in her study of street children in Moscow, Stephenson (2001) describes how street children handle their problems by finding other ways of becoming integrated with the society in which they are living, such as by trying to find recognition by means of deviant actions. Thus, it is important to explore the two seemingly opposing notions of “social dislocation” and “social integration” in order to gain an understanding of experiences of social dislocation and social integration from the perspectives of the street children themselves.

2.5 THE NEEDS OF AND CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY STREET CHILDREN

Undoubtedly, street children need certain resources to meet their physical and emotional needs. Like any child, street children need to have board and lodging, they need to be protected and they need to be taught how to live in society, to be educated and to have vocational training as stated in the UNCRC (1989:24).

However, street children are often victims of every conceivable physical and moral danger and as they grow older, they often become a danger to others. After such precarious childhoods, most street children are condemned to spend their lives
excluded from mainstream society (Schmidt 2003:27). Street children face untold hardships and dangers on the streets and their living conditions on the roads and public squares of cities all over the world in the eyes of the public, are extremely harsh. UNICEF (2009:1) remarks in this regard that:

“Ethiopian street children don’t have access to basic rights such as proper care, education, psychological support and supervision. Often, orphans and other vulnerable children are forced to work to earn an income. They are exposed to various forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation.”

Other studies also confirm that street children live under extremely adverse conditions. In this regard, Kopoka (2000:5) asserts, “Street children face untold hardship and danger on the streets, the lack of food, clean water and adequate health care.” Ray et al. (2011:18) comment on the challenges faced by street children as follows:

“Street involved children experience a range of emotional, physical and reproductive health problems, lack of access to education and high levels of violence and exploitation. They are denied the opportunity to contribute to and participate in their societies, and have difficulties in accessing the services they need.”

It is easy to notice these children wondering around the street, yet they are also among the most invisible and, therefore, the hardest to reach with regard to vital services, such as education and health care and are also the most difficult to protect (UNICEF 2005:40).

The challenges faced by street children will be discussed in more detail below.
2.5.1 Lack of food, clothing and shelter

Street children experience a high degree of insecurity regarding the provision of food and clothing. A large number of them cannot afford even a single meal a day. “The children do not get sufficient and well-balanced diets. There are many that do not get three meals a day” (UNICEF 2000:10). Their faces reveal strain and sadness; while their clothes are ragged and dirty; while others appear hungry and suffer from ill-health and malnutrition (Consortium for Street Children 2009). Hai (2014:49) commented in his study of street children in Bangladesh that “most of the street children do not have more than one set of clothes which becomes most of the time torn, dirty, and undersized”. The sample survey on the circumstances of street children in eight major towns of Ethiopia carried out by the FSCE confirmed that food is also one of the priority needs of street children. This study also highlighted that only a small portion of street children expected to be provided with of food, whereas a relatively higher number of children expected the provision of shelter (FSCE 2003:iv).

2.5.2 Health problems

Among the problems faced by street children, health problems are rated by the Consortium for Street Children (2009) as the worst problem that leaves children highly vulnerable to diseases. The health problems are mostly caused by malnutrition, exposure to insanitary living conditions, the utilisation of unclean water and food, the lack of toilets and exposure to cold. These children belong to one of the groups in society that are precluded from receiving health care services; they suffer the most from health problems because there is no one to care for them and the fact that they are excluded from society. Kopoka (2000:5) adds that street children need health centers to consult about their health since many street children “sleep on sidewalks and are exposed to bad weather, unsanitary situations and
violence,” which bring health problems in their life. Volpi (2002:6) also explained additional reasons why street children experience health problems:

“Street work includes odd jobs, petty trading, and services, because of the lack of protection in these jobs, there is a great risk of exploitation and of encountering health hazards. The health problems suffered by the street children are most probably reflections of their deplorable life situations” (FSCE 2003:36).

In effect, street children are exposed to a great variety of diseases, physical injuries and abuse, including psychological abuse and sexual abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and drug abuse which are very dangerous to their health (Volpi 2002:7). In their situational analysis of the case studies of child sex workers, child domestic servants and street children, the Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (2003:6) also highlights poor living conditions as one of the factors that contribute to street children’s health problems when they state:

“Many street children experience health problems that can be traced to the impoverished social conditions in which they live. Girls living on the streets are exposed to even more health problems, as they are vulnerable to violence, rape, sexual abuse and prostitution.”

Abate (2004:5) also emphasises the high risk of thousands of girls becoming infected with HIV and AIDS and STDs because many street girls are obliged to engage in sex work for survival. Secondly, their communities often lack information about the possible ways of preventing HIV infection (Consortium for Street Children 2009). Most of the time, the individuals with which the street children associate have erroneous perceptions of the transmission of HIV infection due to the lack of adequate knowledge regarding modes of transmission or negligence because of the high consumption of alcohol or drugs (Consortium for Street Children 2009). Thirdly,
as unprotected female children, they are exposed to high risks of sexual exploitation (Molla, Ismail, Kumie & Kebede 2000). “By nature of their unstable environments, children living on the streets are especially vulnerable to victimization, exploitation, chronic illness, and the abuse of their civil and economic rights” (Shah et al. 2005:16). These girls are likely to join the ranks of child prostitutes or street mothers and continue living unhealthy street lives and are inevitably highly at risk of becoming infected with HIV and AIDS, which may then often be passed on to their own children (Consortium for Street Children 2009).

2.5.3 Being involved in risky behaviours

Streetism in many countries is also connected to substance abuse (Volpi 2002:3). Many street children are forced to become involved in illegal activities such as the selling of drugs, theft or prostitution in order to survive on the streets (Volpi 2002). Hong and Ohno (2005:3) confirm that street children will be involved in risky behaviours while they are on the streets:

“Children who work or live on streets do not have the full knowledge of their rights and are often unaware of various risks in unguided urban life. Many of them are under the stress of day-to-day living. Some use alcohol or illegal drugs to relieve the stress and to forget painful experiences. Others are trained to become professional beggars. Still others commit crimes individually or join anti-social gangs.”

These findings are confirmed by Shah et al. (2005:17) when they assert:

“Street youth are involved in unhealthy behaviours, such as smoking marijuana, drinking ‘tela’ (a local beer) and ‘arake’ (a strong spirit, similar to vodka), chewing chat (a stimulant and mild narcotic) and sniffing Benzine (Petrol) at gas stations. Some work as taxi boys, and obtain these drugs and
spirits in exchange for their work. Many of the girls end up as prostitutes, sent by their families from the rural areas to find work, but who resort to commercial sex work in the absence of other forms of income.”

2.5.4 Lack of adult supervision

Like any child, street children need to be protected and they need adult guidance on how to live in society: They need adult supervision to guide them since they are too young to deal with the situations they are facing in their day-to-day lives (FSCE 2003:i). Furthermore, street children need the support of adults in order to fulfill their basic needs, and they need the attention, care and affection of and protection by their parents, guardians and the community to prevent them from being exposed to physical injuries and abuse, including sexual abuse, prostitution and intravenous drug use. They are also in dire need of assistance to teach them about the world around them, to lead them so they can be safe, to guide them regarding where to go and how to behave in accordance with societal norms (Hong & Ohno 2005:3).

However, these children come from the most deprived sector of society. Most of the time, street children do not have any adult protection and supervision that enables them to go in the right direction. These children are led by their immature minds to choose what street life provides them. According to Hong and Ohno (2005:3), street children are regarded as children in danger because they live without the protection of their parents or guardians: “Disabled children may be sold to strangers who force them to beg on streets. Girls seem to be in a particular danger as the targets of sexual assault and exploitation.”

2.5.5 Lack of security and protection

Living on the street, with no supervision, protection, guidelines or emotional support often makes the children vulnerable to a wide range of bad experiences, problems
and hazards, which affect their daily existence and overall wellbeing. Violence, particularly physical abuse, harassment, police arrests and detention are common problems faced by street children.

The Consortium for Street Children (2009) indicates that violence against street children is often brutal and in most cases unprovoked. In this regard, street children are often victims of severe police beatings and mistreatment. Smart Consulting Association (2007:1) explains the situation of street children in this regard as follows:

“Throughout the world they are subjected to physical abuse by Police. The society also treats them as outcasts rather than as children to be nurtured and protected. They are frequently detained arbitrarily by police simply because they are homeless, or they can be charged with vague offences such as loitering, or petty theft.”

Furthermore, the beatings and the assaults experienced by the street children were not limited to those perpetrated by the police, but also included the violence perpetrated by fellow street children. Female street children often experience sexual assault inflicted on them by older street boys or adults (Molla et al. 2000:120). Schmidt (2003:5) points out that:

“Street children are frequently harassed by local security and are subjected to pressures they cannot influence. Many street children live outside official norms and regulations and often find themselves criminalized even though they did not commit any crime.”

It is important to point out that girls who work and live on the street face extremely harsh conditions including sexual abuse by adults, rape, unwanted pregnancies and early motherhood. According to Save the Children-Demark (SC-D), “children as young as 13 were being lured to the city and thrust into the sex trade” (IRIN 2004).
As indicated above, most street children lack life skills, protection and the upholding of their rights as laid out by the UNCRC of the Child. “Children who work or live on the streets do not have full knowledge of their rights and are often unaware of the various risks in unguided urban life” (Hong & Ohno 2005:3). UNICEF (2004) recommends that societies should ensure that children know their rights and are encouraged and empowered to express them; in addition, they should be “given the vital information and skills they need to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation.”

2.5.6 Lack of education and employment

Another major problem faced by street children is a lack of education. Because of the financial problems in their homes, most street children are forced to go out and find work. Hatloy and Huser (2005:63) in their study of characteristics of street children in Bamako and Accra stated that street children “generally have little education, and many of them have never gone to school”. Many street children were unable to attend school because it was difficult to balance living on the street and going to school and for some, their school performance was not satisfactory, in any case (Volpi 2002:7).

These children stop cars and people to beg or to ask for work. Others shine shoes, sell sundry articles of uncertain origin or hurry to wash the windscreens of cars stopping at traffic lights (Consortium for Street Children 2009). Yet others roam around or gather in small groups waiting for something to do. Volpi (2002) points out that they have a poor educational status, low self-esteem, and experience emotional disorders as well as being engaged in low-paying jobs.

“Once living on the streets, children have limited access to formal education due to their lack of a parent or guardian, an address and documents. Some street working children try to combine school and work, but have difficulties in
coping with the hours, are frequently absent and have poor grades due to lack of time to study” (Ray et al. 2011).

2.6 INTERVENTIONS AND RESPONSES TO THE PLIGHT OF STREET CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA

Undoubtedly, these children need somebody to provide them with food, education, health care, a better place to live than their homes and the streets, protection and the many things that a normal child has. Undoubtedly, street children need a stable lifestyle rather than the transitory lifestyles that they are living.

Although non-governmental organisations are making a significant contribution to alleviate some of the problems of street children in Ethiopia, many agree that they cannot solve such a fundamental urban problem alone. These organisations need strong support and cooperation from the Ethiopian government and public.

According to a report of the FSCE on child abuse in Ethiopia, present government structures on a regional level, in other words, regional governments, are directly responsible for the practical implementation of programmes and policies focused on children’s affairs.

“As a federal republic, Ethiopia has several types of programmes, policies and legislation: federal legislation that applies to the entire country, such as the criminal and labour laws; legislation of the nine administrative regions in areas such as family law and customary and religious norms governing personal and family issues” (ECPAT 2007:19).

In their report on the status of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children, ECPAT (2007:19) contends that:
“Ethiopian law outlines a variety of offences involving sexual acts with children, but falls short of international standards for protecting children from prostitution. As a preliminary matter, Ethiopia has not signed or ratified the Optional Protocol. While its few laws related to prostitution address procuring or prostituting a child and provide for enhanced penalties where a crime is committed with the intent to prostitute a child, the Criminal Code fails to prohibit the act of having sex specifically with a child for remuneration. Furthermore, the laws criminalising sex with children divide children into two categories - those under 13 and those between 13 and 18 years of age and provide stricter penalties for crimes involving younger children.”

The federal government of Ethiopia has assigned different offices to handle the social issues in the country. The Regional Social and Civil Bureaus coordinate and direct the efforts of the Office of Social Affairs, non-governmental organisations, the Labour Affairs Office, the Youth and Sports Commission and the Women’s Affairs Office. Among these offices, the Women’s, Children and Youth Affairs Office are mainly responsible for implementing programmes and policies focussed on children’s affairs. Moreover, these bureaus play significant roles in the co-ordination of efforts and the strengthening of collaboration between the various concerned bodies in the area of children’s affairs (FSCE [sa]).

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has a Federal Government. The Federal Government is divided into nine Regional States. The nine Regional States are founded on the basis of language, ethnicity and geographical location (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2008:14). As Figure 1 shows, administratively, at the federal level, there is a Ministry of Women’s, Children and Youth affairs that address children’s issues. Each of the nine Regional States also has their own Women’s, Children and Youth Affairs Bureaus to direct the work concerning issues related to children. Furthermore, the regions in Ethiopia are divided into zones/sub-cities, and the zones are divided into administrative units called Weredas.
(municipalities). Each *Wereda* is further subdivided into lower administrative units, called *Kebeles* (Central Statistical Agency 2012:7). At each level, there is an office that deals with the well-being of children in the country.

![Diagram showing the governmental structure of Ethiopia]

**Figure 1: The governmental structure of Ethiopia (Source: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2008)**

The ECPAT report also indicates that the involvement and commitment of civic society in a strong partnership with all the relevant bodies, such as non-governmental and governmental organisations, is vital for the success of all efforts aimed at countering child abuse. In this regard, government organisations, international agencies and NGOs have shown their commitment towards protecting children from abuse and neglect by establishing committees, forums and projects;

“...Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self–respect and dignity of the child.”

Article 32, sub – article1, of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989:15) reads:

“.....parties recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.”

Some of the organisations such as the UNICEF, the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE), Child Aid Ethiopia (CHAD-Et) and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) are working towards addressing the various problems faced by children in Ethiopia. Examples of actions taken are the Advocacy and Child Protection Programme, the establishment of the Preventive and Support Programme for Sexually Abused and Exploited Children, the establishment of child friendly
courts, and the Prevention and Support Programme on Child Trafficking. These actions have led to major achievements resulting in significant changes in policy reform and in the increase of the support delivered to children in Ethiopia as discussed below.

2.6.1 United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

The United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) is working for the rights of children in different regions of Ethiopia in collaboration with the government of Ethiopia (UNICEF [SA]). UNICEF, in collaboration with the government of Ethiopia and other partners, is actively involved in addressing various problems affecting children and women in Ethiopia through its various programmes. The overall goal of UNICEF, Ethiopia, is to assist the national and regional offices to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by focussing on the following priority areas: girls’ education, integrated policies for early childhood development, immunisation and supplementation, and HIV infection prevention amongst children (FSCE [sa] 21). UNICEF [sa]) elucidates this as follows:

“UNICEF Ethiopia works closely with the Government of Ethiopia and other partners in the realisation of the rights of the children and women in Ethiopia based on the programmes and projects developed and agreed upon by the Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF. The programmes and projects operating nationally and/or in selected regions fall under the following areas: Health and Nutrition, Education, Gender and Child Protection, Water and Environmental Sanitation, Capacity Building in Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.”
2.6.2 International Labour Organisation (ILO)

The ILO in Ethiopia advocates the formation of new policies for the benefit of children and promotes the elimination of child labour through its International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPECL).

It works with pertinent Ethiopian government bodies, employers, workers organisations, NGOs, universities and media agencies to fight against child labour in the country. Capacity building and the mobilisation of movements to combat child labour are its main activities in the country (FSCE [sa]:21).

2.6.3 The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect - Ethiopian Chapter (ANPPCAN)

The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect - Ethiopian Chapter (ANPPCAN) is a:

“…nongovernmental organization established in 1990 and registered by the former Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1990 and the NGO registration office of the Ministry of Justice in 1996 with a vision to see a society in which children fully enjoy their rights and live free of maltreatment” (ANPPCAN Ethiopia 2007).

Importantly, ANPPCAN runs a psychosocial and legal aid programme for impoverished young girls who are at a high risk of commercial sexual exploitation. The programme operates in three sub-districts of Addis Ababa and includes skills training and the facilitation of employment opportunities (ECPAT 2007:16). The annual report of ANPPCAN Ethiopia (2007) indicates that since its establishment it has been at the forefront of protecting “and promoting children’s rights and putting
child rights issues on the agenda of planning and development at community, "Wereda (Municipality), regional, and national levels in Ethiopia.


ANPPCAN Ethiopia was established to achieve the following objectives:

- To protect children against abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- To promote the rights of children.
- To undertake research on issues affecting children and disseminate the findings.
- To provide psychosocial, legal and material support to children who have been abused, neglected and/or exploited.
- To advocate legal, policy, programmatic, social and administrative changes to improve the well-being of children.
- To empower children to become actively involved in issues affecting them.
- To undertake development programmes benefiting children and women.

2.6.4 The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA)

MOLSA is the Ethiopian government body responsible for conducting research, formulating laws, policies and directives that affect the social services of the country. A department in the ministry is responsible for children and family affairs. At federal level, the ministry mainly deals with macro policy issues such as policy formation and the preparation of directives regarding children’s rights as well as family issues. MOLSA is also responsible for the coordination, advocacy and lobbying policies and
directives for protecting children and families through the different levels of administrative units found in all the sub-cities, such as the Office of Labour and Social Affairs at Zone (district), Wereda (municipality) and Kebele (lower administrative unit) levels.

The National Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, chaired by MOLSA, monitors and coordinates the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at National Level (FSCE [sa]:20).

2.6.5 Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA)

EWLA works to fight gender injustice and provides legal aid to women and child victims of abuse. Furthermore, EWLA works for women or children who have been raped and abducted and who are unable to afford legal services and undertakes training, research and public education activities in high schools, police academies and other pertinent organisations regarding the rights and safety of women and children in general. EWLA also actively campaigns for the necessary legal reforms with regard to the well-being of women and children in the country (FSCE [sa]:22).

2.6.6 Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE)

FSCE is one of the well-known, native non-profit making and child-oriented organisations in Ethiopia. Formerly, FSCE used to be called the Forum on Street Children, Ethiopia but changed its name later on to Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment. Importantly, FSCE is a child rights non-governmental organisation committed to creating favourable and supportive conditions for disadvantaged children living in cities.

“It is committed to ensure the respect of the rights of urban disadvantaged children in general, and street children, sexually abused and exploited
children, physically abused children and children in conflict with the law in particular. It has accomplished a great deal since its establishment in 1989." (FSCE 2007:8)

This organisation addresses various forms of child abuse through six major programmes, namely the Prevention and Support Programme for Sexually Abused and Exploited Children, the Prevention and Support Program for Trafficked Children, Advocacy and Child Protection Programme, Child Resource Centre, Community-Based Child Focussed Integrated Programme and the Gender and HIV/AIDS Programme (FSCE [sa]:21).

FSCE has also been working on an integrated community-based child-focused project in four major cities of the country, namely Nazareth, Bahir Dar, Dessie and Dire Dawa “which have been very successful in promoting the welfare of vulnerable children in particular and the status of the community in general” (FSCE 2007:8).

Abate (2004) has outlined the programmes of the FSCE as follows:

- Advocacy and child protection.
- Preventive and support programmes for sexually abused and exploited children as well as regional projects, which include the urban areas of Dessie, Dire Dawa, Nazareth and Bahir Dar.
- Establishing and running a Child Resource Development Centre (CRDC), a nexus for the Research, Training and Information Network.
- Starting and running regional programmes in health education, saving and credit, awareness raising, amongst others.
- Gender mainstreaming programmes.
2.6.7 Child Aid Ethiopia (CHAD-ET)

CHAD-ET is a non-governmental organisation for child development and transformation that was established in 1995 as a non-governmental organisation that was “based in the largest market area of Addis Ababa, also home to the city's central bus terminus. It has two main aims – to protect and rehabilitate children exposed to sexual exploitation and to prevent the transmission of HIV” (FSCE [sa]:22). This organisation provides homes for these children and is committed to protecting the girls from working as commercial sex workers as well as not returning to sex work (FSCE [sa]:22). CHAD-ET is also actively engaged in a prevention and rehabilitation programme with regard to child abuse, neglect and exploitation. Its main focus is on the support and rehabilitation of children exposed to sexual exploitation by providing counselling, educational training support as well as undertaking preventive measures via awareness raising activities and savings and credit services (FSCE [sa]:22).

2.6.8 Organisation for the Prevention, Rehabilitation and Integration of Female Street Children (OPRIFS)

OPRIFS is a non-governmental organisation that operates a comprehensive programme to address the vulnerability of female street children to various types of abuse, including sexual abuse and exploitation, in different parts of Addis Ababa. The major activities of the organisation include advocacy, awareness raising, networking, family reunification, temporary shelter, education and health (FSCE [sa]:22).

2.6.9 Integrated Family Services Organisation (IFSO)

The Integrated Family Services Organisation (IFSO) was “founded in Addis Ababa in 1995 to mitigate the plight of extremely poor households and alleviate the
helplessness of vulnerable orphaned children” (Italian Cultural Institute 2005:41). It provides a “family service” to non-governmental and governmental organisations with the fundamental objective of creating and enabling environments for very weak households, orphans and destitute children by undertaking various programs in Addis Ababa (Integrated Family Service Organisation 2011). The major activities of the project focus on the rehabilitation and prevention of very weak households. The aspects of rehabilitation and prevention comprise financial, medical services, counselling and skills training support for the victims of poverty (Italian Cultural Institute 2005:43).

The IFSO centre also provides financial and technical support for vulnerable children in Addis Ababa. In addition, IFSO supports vulnerable and orphaned children with regard to “the enrolment of formal government schools … further education at certificate, diploma, and degree levels in different fields of training are arranged in cooperation with private training centers and colleges” (Italian Cultural Institute 2005:42). Together with these services, other support such as house renovation, medical support and the supply of educational materials and individual and group counselling services is provided to very poor households found in Addis Ababa (Italian Cultural Institute 2005:42).

2.6.10 Child Abuse and Neglect Unit (CANU)

The Child Abuse and Neglect Unit (CANU) that falls under the Pediatric Department of the Yekatit 12th Hospital in Addis Ababa, was established in 2001 and was replicated in the form of the Adama Hospital at Nazareth, one of the cities in Ethiopia, in 2005. The unit provides psychosocial support, medical treatment, medical certificate services and age determination tests for physically and sexually abused children. In addition, the unit undertakes research on the health problems of abused children in the regions of Addis Ababa and Nazareth and also has training
programmes for the medical personnel in Addis Ababa and specifically in the Yekatit 12th Hospital (FCSE [sa]:20).

These are a few of the many organisations working towards addressing the various problems faced by children in Ethiopia. Although there are a number of organisations in operation in Addis Ababa to support street children, the types of support services offered often revolve around the basic necessities of life such as food, educational materials, clothes and medical services (FSCE 2003:63). However, they generally do not address the root causes of the problem, such as broken families and the problem of how to reunite children with their families.

Undoubtedly, the problem of street children in Ethiopia requires immediate action-oriented research. The presence of street children is a sign that a country should take the initiative to develop efficient research and design policies that can address the problems of those who are neglected and vulnerable (Volpi 2002:1). Life on the street seems to be associated with specific physical and emotional problems that call for specialised early programmes such as assisting NGOs and concerned bodies in assessing and supervising their interventions as well as advancing the qualification of their employees, as stated by Volpi (2002). In his study, Gorfu (2003:18) explains with regard to the problem of street children in Ethiopia, that “the need for contemporary research on the street children is to have a clear idea about their problems and to find solutions according to the problems they are facing”. Gorfu (2003) and Volpi (2002) both believe that various interventions such as up-to-date research and assessment programmes should be available to address street children’s problems.

In general, these children need assistance that will also address the root causes of their problems such as social neglect, illiteracy and abusive behaviour, amongst others. Moreover, they need support from different institutions that can uphold their rights as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
The vast number of children on the streets is in many ways, indicative of major government, public policy, economic, public health, and even moral breakdowns in societies” (Shah et al. 2005:16). In this regard, it is important to do the following: define children’s rights, provide support to children working and living on the street, widen the scope of subsidised or free health services deliveries and provide formal education if possible, otherwise, provide non-formal education and tutorial services. The Consortium for Street Children (2009) recommends that the public, government and non-government agencies should formulate and design a well-coordinated and comprehensive plan of action to solve the problem of street children and improve their living conditions.

2.7 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK THAT GUIDED THE PROPOSED STUDY

As explicated earlier on, the approach of society to the issue of street children in general, is overwhelmingly negative. In this regard, the researcher has reviewed two theories namely; the labelling theory and the social bond theory within the context of being a street child and being socially excluded or being in circumstances of finding their own category in the wider society is discussed briefly.

2.7.1 The labelling theory

The labelling theory views the act of labelling itself as invoking the social exclusion of the labelled from “healthy” conforming circles. Labelling is the assignment or attachment of a deviant identity to a person by others, including by agents of social institutions (Calhoun & Konty 2007). Therefore, people’s reactions, not the individual “action itself, produces deviance as a result of the labelling process. Once applied, the deviant label is difficult to discard” (Andersen & Taylor 2006:179). Sociologists define deviance as a type of behaviour that is recognised as violating the expected rules and norms of a specific society (Calhoun & Konty 2007). Furthermore, deviance is more than simple nonconformity, “it is behaviour that departs
significantly from social expectations” (Andersen & Taylor 2006:116). According to Andersen and Taylor (2006:166), “deviance can be divided into the study of why people violate laws or norms and the study of society reactions”. Calhoun and Konty (2007) also point out that there are two types of deviance namely, primary deviance and secondary deviance in which all deviant labelling is the result of social reactions:

“Primary deviance is norm-violating behaviour that goes undetected by others and consequently escapes being labelled deviant. This type of deviation does not affect the individual's social relationships or self-concept. Secondary deviance, however, is known to others and provokes negative societal response.”

In this regard, one person could be labelled as deviant while another person is not labelled as such, even though the same rules are broken. For some people, the term “street children” is negative in that it labels and stigmatises children.” On the other hand, others argue that labelling gives “street children” a distinctive personality that enables them to become part of their own group. Shah et al. (2005:6) argue that:

“...sense of belonging to a group is a crucial element of psychosocial well-being. Feelings of belonging contribute to identity formation and minimize perceptions of isolation while promoting acceptance, and most importantly, provide the foundation for relationships in which love is extended and received.”

Labelling children puts them into a specific category in society; it might be children who need protection and nurturing or children who are treated as outcasts. For William Chambliss (1973), self-identity and the behaviour “of individuals may be determined or influenced by the terms used to describe or classify them” by society and is associated with the concepts of a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ and ‘stereotyping.’ On the other hand, in her studies of the neglected and forgotten human rights of
street children, Schmidt (2003) declares that although street children are excluded and marginalised because they live on the street, street life can be regarded as an alternative lifestyle and can be considered as a place where socialisation takes place among the children themselves. For some children, street life can be a life through which they get to know their identities, achieve solidarity and feel that they belong to a sort of grouping.

However, with time, labelling street children negatively leads to the assignment of a perception of themselves that makes them engage in different risky behaviours such as developing addictions to alcohol and drugs and engaging in prostitution, amongst others. “These negative reactions ascribe negative characteristics to the individual” (Calhoun & Konty 2007).

2.7.2 The social bond theory

The social bond theory is a theory that assumes that deviant acts result when an individual’s bond with society is weak or is broken (Hirschi 1969:251). In turn, the social bond theory argues that social bonding determines the status the individual holds in society. Social attachment is one of the elements of social bonding where a person’s level of attachment to others determines his/her commitment to commonly held norms and values in the society (Hirschi 1969). On the other hand, socialisation refers to the commitment one individual has to the society they are living in that affects how we behave towards others and what we think of ourselves. From this perspective socialised people conform to cultural expectations; socialisation “gives society a certain degree of predictability, establishing patterns” that become the basis for social order. Those who have weak socialisation skills tend to be excluded from the social order (Hirschi 1996).

This theory points out that “deviant behaviour” (in the case of this study, female street children engaged in commercial sex work) occurs when social bonds are
weak or lacking (Hirschi 1996). When an individual is committed to the social relationships, he/she has in society, then that individual will be reluctant to become involved in any delinquent behaviour because he/she does not want to jeopardise the stable relationships he/she has constructed in society (Hirschi 1969). “The more attached persons are to other members of society, the more they believe in the values of conventional society, and the more they invest in and are involved in conventional lines of activity, the less likely they are to deviate” (Chriss 2007:692).

This study focused on children who are between the ages of 15 and 18 since this age range entails a period of human development where children are in the process of developing physical, behavioural and cognitive abilities. Furthermore, this is a time of emotional growth and change (Wray-Lake 2010:2). Throughout these processes, each child develops and internalises the attitudes and the values of society through social interaction with their community or their family around them (Sotomayor - Peterson 2008:13). It is believed that if the developmental needs are addressed satisfactorily children will be able to view life positively, and be able to take decisions that will not jeopardise their future.

The researcher intended to explore in this study the above-mentioned two theories (namely, labelling theory and social bond theory) in relation to the lives of the street children engaged in commercial sex work. Furthermore, the researcher intended to explore the impact of being labelled as “street children,” to determine if this label gives these children a sense of belonging to some category or if it has negative consequences such as stigmatisation and weak social bonds with the community or society. This was done by gauging how street children experienced the attitudes of society concerning the female street children engaged in commercial sex work and by probing the extent to which negative labelling and the strength of social bonds impacted on their lives.
2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave a general overview of the situation in which street children in Ethiopia find themselves and explored the main causes of streetism in Ethiopia. This was followed by a brief review of the concept of 'street children' and a discussion of the neglect and social dislocation of street children. Thereafter the needs of street children and the challenges and experiences of street children were discussed briefly. Moreover, the interventions and responses to the plight of street children in Ethiopia were reviewed in this chapter. Finally, the theoretical frameworks that guided the study were discussed.

In the following chapter, a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in this study will be presented.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

An exploratory, qualitative research approach was used to study the social dislocation of and social support for female street children aged between 15 and 18 and engaged in commercial sex work in Addis Ketema sub-city. This approach was used to enable the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of female street children’s social dislocation, needs and available social support.

In this chapter, the researcher describes the research design and the research setting of the study. This chapter also describes the sampling techniques, the data collection methods, the data collection process and the data management process. Thereafter, the data analysis and interpretation as well as the trustworthiness of the data are discussed. The last two sections of this chapter describe the ethical considerations that guided both the main and the pilot study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used a qualitative research design in order to explore the real life settings of the female street children engaged in commercial sex work. A qualitative research design, as opposed to other research designs such as a quantitative research design, enabled the researcher to explore the feelings, experiences and perceptions of the research participants in-depth (Babbie 2010:327). Moreover, a qualitative research design enabled the researcher to gain insight into and obtain an in-depth understanding of the effects of being involved in commercial sex work on the lives of the children and the social support they were receiving. This research design helped the researcher to explore the relationships, the complexity of interactions and the experiences of female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the community in which they were living. The researcher used individual in-depth face-
to-face interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) as data collection instruments. These data collection instruments were used in an open conversation approach, which allowed the participants to reveal their experiences and their views without any fears of misinterpretation.

The researcher was able to record the female street children’s recounts and memories of their unique life experiences while engaged in commercial sex work during the interviews and the focus group discussions. Some of the female street children who participated in this study were involved in a support programme delivered by an NGO called the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) while others were never involved in any support programmes, and a few were only involved for a certain duration. The researcher was able to learn about the children’s life experiences before and after they became involved in the support programmes. For in-depth interviews 9 female children from the support programme were selected. Similarly, 9 female street children who were not involved in the support programme were selected for the in-depth interview.

In order to understand the true nature of the subject under study, the researcher took field notes on what she observed during the interviews and focus group discussions. This is in line with what Denzin and Lincoln (2005:26) advocate: “The researcher first creates a field text consisting of field notes and documents from the field.” The interviews and focus group discussion field notes were about 10 to 20 pages long, which included recounts of experiences that were emphasised by the research participants and body gestures used by them during the interviews. Notes on the researcher’s observations during the interviews and focus group discussions were also included in the discussion.

3.3 PILOT STUDY

With regard to the pre-testing of the research instruments, the researcher conducted
a pilot study prior to the major study. The pilot study was undertaken by conducting two individual interviews where one of the participants was in the support programme and the other participant was not involved in the support programme. In addition, two mini focus group discussions were conducted at the office of the FSCE; one with children involved in support programme and the other with children who were not involved in support programme. The researcher managed to develop and test the data collection instruments and to design a research protocol, assess the proposed data analysis techniques, uncover potential problems, determine which resources were needed to administer the study, adjust the research questions and the data collection instruments based on feedback from the pilot study.

All the pilot interviews and focus group discussions were tape-recorded and transcribed word-for-word to see whether the research instruments met the objectives of the study. Thereafter, questions that led to the same responses were adjusted and corrections were done to the questions that did not address the objectives of the study.

3.4 RESEARCH SETTING

This study on the social dislocation and needs of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work was conducted in Addis Ababa. The study specifically targeted the areas known as Atobis Tera and Merkato, which are found in the Addis Ketema sub-city. The latter is one of the sub-cities among the ten sub-cities of Addis Ababa. The Addis Ketema sub-city has incorporated a large marketplace called Merkato and a bus station, named Atobis Tera, that links up with other cities in the country. The population is almost exclusively Amharic speaking. This sub-city has a population of 255,092 of which 124,741 are male and 130,351 are female according to the 2007 population and housing census (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission 2008:81). On the other hand, the sub-city population was estimated to be 297,793 in 2014 as per a
population projection that was done in 2013 (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission 2013).

The targeted sub-city was chosen after the researcher had done a preliminary assessment. This assessment was carried out by studying a number of previous studies such as Adfesew & Gettemman newsletters as well as FSCE project reports, and by accessing the research reports of NGOs that were working with street children in the different sub-cities of Addis Ababa such as FSCE and CHAD-ET. It was found by the researcher that there were street girls who were engaged in commercial sex work and who were exposed to commercial sexual exploitation in almost all the sub-cities. Out of these locations, the Addis Ketema sub-city was selected in which to conduct the fieldwork, since it was one of the areas where street girls were engaged in commercial sex work in large numbers. One of the reasons for this is that the main bus station, Atobis Tera, that provided transportation services to people who were moving from the rural to the urban areas was located in this sub-city. Due to this, many children who came from rural areas were living in this area, especially if they did not have anywhere else to go. Ultimately, it appeared that many of these children became engaged in commercial sex work because there was no other means of survival open to them.

This specific location also held many types of trade fairs that could accommodate children who were in search of a job or other ways to make a living. One of the available and in-demand jobs in this area was that of a sex worker because there were many department stores, small enterprises, hotels, local beer and alcohol outlets in this area and other business activities such as room rental services, motels, brothels, and small agent offices that employed commercial sex workers. Consequently, the researcher concluded that comparatively more children became sex workers in the area under study than in the other sub-cities.
3.5 SAMPLING

In this study, the researcher used non-probability sampling methods as sampling techniques, namely purposive sampling, to select both the research setting and the research participants. Purposive sampling is a “type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” Babbie (2010:193). The reason for selecting the Addis Ketema sub-city as the area for this study was purposive, because this area was one of the busiest places in the city of Addis Ababa and accommodated many children who came from rural areas, and many of these children were forced to become involved in commercial sex work.

3.5.1 Female street children involved in support programme

The researcher used the techniques specified below to recruit female street children engaged in commercial sex work who were already involved in support programme for in-depth individual interviews as well as for a focus group discussion: the purposive sampling technique was employed in this study based on the researcher's judgment about which children were willing to participate in the study and which children the NGO workers recommended (see the discussion below regarding how the children were selected by the NGO workers).

The selection of children engaged in commercial sex work who were involved in the support programme was carried out by the FSCE’s social workers. The FSCE provided counselling, material support and financial support to these children in the Addis Ketema sub-city during the data collection period. The selection was done on the basis of the child's willingness to discuss her past experiences freely and also based on ease to talk about her past experiences.

During the recruitment process, the researcher contacted the children engaged in
commercial sex work who were already involved in the support programme at the FSCE’s safe home and was introduced to the potential participants. Thereafter, the researcher received signed assent forms (see Annexure F and G) from those children who had shown an interest in participating in the fieldwork after the background of the study was explained to them. The research participants who had signed assent forms were revisited at the support provider’s venue, in order to conduct the interviews and the focus group discussions. (See the discussion regarding how the appointments were made with the research participants under the data collection process section below).

Snowball sampling was used, after the purposive sampling technique was applied. Snowball sampling is another common non-probability sampling technique and is also known as chain referral sampling in which participants “with whom contact has already been made, use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study” (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey 2005:7). The researcher used snowball sampling to locate new research participants specifically. The selection of research participants in the latter case was based on referrals by the children who had already signed the assent forms to participate in the research, to other children who might be willing to participate. In other words, the researcher started conducting the interviews with a few children and then gradually increased the sample size as new contacts were suggested by the children who had volunteered to be interviewed. Since the envisaged methodological approach was a qualitative approach that entailed using in-depth interviews, the researcher was guided by saturation in data-generation to decide on the number of interviewees.

3.5.2 Female street children not involved in support programme

Children who were not in the support programme were also selected for the in-depth interview and focus group discussion by the FSCE’s social workers through an
outreach programme that was organised by the FSCE and also through the referral of other children by street children who were recruited at the time of the outreach programme. The first few children that were not involved in the support programme were selected purposively at the outreach programmes conducted by the FSCE’s social workers. During the first contact session, these children were given a brief explanation about the purpose of this study and were invited to participate in an interview to discuss their current circumstances. Thereafter those children who agreed and were willing to attend the interviews were given the address of the FSCE office and an appointment was made for a specific date when they would be interviewed at the office. All the information that was collected from these research participants was collected after they had signed the assent forms (see Annexure F and G).

The recruitment process was an opportunity for the researcher to have an open conversation with the children about the study and to gain their trust so that they would be willing to be fully engaged in the study. This also created an opportunity for the researcher to talk to them freely and to gain their cooperation which resulted in her being introduced to other potential research participants. This method was used with children who were not involved in the support programmes and who were willing to recommend other friends who could take part in the interviews.

### 3.5.3 Key informants

The researcher further felt the need to interview other key stakeholders who had links with the selected street children such as NGO workers, Addis Ketema sub-city employees and some representatives of the community in the specified sub-city. The aims of interviewing the key stakeholders were to obtain additional information with regard to the social dislocation and needs of and social support available to the street children. The researcher again used snowball sampling and convenience sampling to recruit the key stakeholders for in-depth individual interviews.
The sampling technique used to recruit the key stakeholders started with a purposive sampling technique to recruit the key informants from the specified sub-city. The key informants included NGO workers, concerned government organisation workers and the sub-city supervisors. At the start of the recruitment process, the researcher approached the Addis Ketema sub-city programme manager of the FSCE and asked the programme manager to assign employees that represented the organisation to take part in the interviews. Thereafter the programme manager assigned two social workers from the FSCE office to take part in the interviews. This was followed by employing the snowball sampling technique based on referral by participants to other key informants by the FSCE office. The referral pertained to the organisations that had worked on the support programmes for female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city and who had known the life histories of these children for a long time. Based on the referrals of the FSCE, the researcher approached two offices, namely the Addis Ketema sub-city Women’s Children and Youth Affair’s Office and the Addis Ketema sub-city’s HIV/AIDS Prevention Control Office and requested that they assign employees that would take part in the interviews. In line with the request of the researcher, the Addis Ketema sub-city Women’s Children and Youth Affair’s Office, assigned the person that worked as a researcher and advocacy officer to take part in the in-depth interviews. Similarly, the Addis Ketema sub-city HIV/AIDS Prevention Control Office assigned a person that was working as a monitoring and evaluation officer. The snowball sampling technique was also used to recruit representatives from the community, based on the referrals from the FSCE Programme Manager. Accordingly, the community representatives of the FSCE’s project committee in the Merkato area and a representative of the councils of the 10 “Idiers” of the Kebele 10, 11 and 12 took part in the in-depth interviews. Moreover, a coordinator representative of the NGO called CHAD-ET (Organisation for Child Development and Transformation) was interviewed to capture a different viewpoint regarding the social dislocation and needs of and the available support services for female children engaged in sex work (see Annexure H, I, J and K).
3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Two main methods were used in the data collection process, namely individual, in-depth face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The open-ended questions that were used during the interviews and focus group discussions were pretested during a pilot study. Furthermore, during the interview and focus group discussions, the Amharic language (the national language of Ethiopia) was used as a means of communication.

3.6.1 In-depth face-to-face interviews

The researcher developed two interview schedules based on a review of the literature. The in-depth, semi-structured face-to-face interviews, guided by an interview schedule, were employed to generate the data required to achieve the stated objectives of the study.

The first interview schedule was used in in-depth interviews with children engaged in commercial sex work. The interview schedule contained semi-structured questions that were asked to obtain the biographical details of each child engaged in commercial sex work. Furthermore, additional open-ended questions were asked to generate narrative-type descriptions about the girls’ experiences, perceptions and needs as described above.

The researcher had originally planned to conduct face-to-face interviews with ten children who were involved in a support programme as well as with ten children who were not in a support programme. However, among the ten children who were in the support programme and had signed the consent form to participate in the study, two children refused to come for interviews on the scheduled dates, saying that they were not ready to share their experiences of street life and commercial sex work. Consequently, eight individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with children.
involved in the support programme (See Annexure A, an interview schedule for both female street children involved in the support programme and not involved in support programme). Similarly, eight individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with children who were not involved in the support programmes (See Annexure A). This interview schedule covered topics such as the research participants’ background information, their reasons for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city, their reasons for being engaged in commercial sex work, their social marginalisation, their social contact and available support services.

These research participants were selected to take part in in-depth face-to-face interviews to obtain a wider range of information from both children who were already involved in the support programme and from those children who were not involved in the support programme. The aim of these interviews was to elicit information regarding their social dislocation, the impact of social dislocation on their life, the degree of social integration they experienced within the community in which they lived and the types of social support available to them.

The researcher was guided by the insights presented by Hutz and Koller (1999), Thomas and O’Kane (1998) and Stuart and Barnes (2005) for interviewing the street children. Some of the guidelines that guided the researcher were the necessity of keeping the research participants’ identities confidential, conducting interviews in a quiet place where the attention of the interviewees would not be interrupted and to show care and respect for the children’s emotional feelings. In addition, the guidelines described how individual interviews and FGDs with children should be conducted and how to make the interview arrangements.

The second interview schedule was developed for the in-depth interviews with the key informants (see Annexure C). This schedule covered topics such as the kinds of support services that were being delivered to the children by the organisations the key informants represented, perceptions of the key informants regarding the social
relationships of the children with their community and the available support services to the children. Seven face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with key informants to render a wider viewpoint about the social dislocation, needs and the available social support for street children engaged in sex work.

After the researcher had received the permission of the FSCE, the researcher was introduced at the FSCE’s office to the children engaged in commercial sex work, who could be potential participants. The background and ethical considerations of the study were explained to the children and to their support programme providers. Before starting the interviewing process, all the potential participants were asked about their willingness and openness to participate in the study. Thereafter, the researcher collected the signed assent forms (see Annexure F) from those children who had showed an interest in participating. Thereafter, each research participant who had signed the assent form was given a different appointment time and date for their interviews. On the scheduled dates, the research participants were invited to come to the FSCE office that had been prepared for the conducting of interviews on an individual basis. Subsequently, when each research participant came to the FSCE office for an interview, before starting the face-to-face individual interview, the researcher took time to briefly explain the purpose of the research and they were asked again if they were still interested in participating in the study. The assent forms, which contained information about the purpose of the study, the nature of voluntary participation, the confidentiality policy and the rights of the study participants were then read to those who were still interested in being involved in the study. After that, they were asked if they had any questions and the researcher answered their questions prior to the commencement of the interviews.

A suitable venue for the purpose of the interviews with the children that was not far from the sub-city where the girls were residing was selected by the researcher. Some interviews were conducted at the FSCE’s main office situated in the study area, and some were conducted at the FSCE’s office at the safe home where
children involved in the support programme resided. These venues were selected by the researcher because they were quiet and there were no disturbances.

The focus of the interviews with the children was to obtain as much information as possible by creating a comfortable environment for the children so that they would feel free to describe their life experiences. Therefore, participants were always given sufficient time to answer questions and to put them at ease to express their points of view. The interviews took an average of 45-60 minutes to complete.

As stated above, the researcher also conducted in-depth individual face-to-face interviews with the key informants. The individuals interviewed were NGO workers, government workers and community organisation representatives that were involved in community-based interventions, specifically those who were recommended by the NGO workers in order to complement the information collected from the female street children engaged in commercial sex work. The individual key informant interviews were conducted in accordance with the prepared interview schedule (see Annexure C). These interviews were held at a suitable venue and tape-recorded after the consent of the individuals had been received (see Annexure D). All the interviews with the governmental organisation and NGO workers were held at their offices whereas the interviews with the other key informants were held at the FSCE’s office.

3.6.2 Focus group discussions (FGDs) with children engaged in commercial sex work

The focus group guide was developed for FGDs with female street children engaged in commercial sex work (see Annexure B, FGD1 schedule for female street children involved in the support programme and FGD2 schedule for female street children not involved in the support programme). This discussion guide covered topics such as their reasons for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city, their reasons for becoming
involved in commercial sex work, their social contacts and the support available to them. The focus group discussions were conducted with two groups of children who did not participate in the individual interviews - each group had nine participants:

- A group of female street children engaged in commercial sex work recruited from the support programmes offered by FSCE.

- A group of female street children engaged in commercial sex work that had made a living on the streets and that did not receive any support services.

As stated above, the other data collection method used was focus group discussions (FGDs), which were held with female street children engaged in commercial sex work. The FGD was done with two groups: one with children that were involved in the support programme and the other with those children that were not in the support programme using the interview schedule developed for the FGDs (see Annexure B). The reason the researcher wanted to conduct the FGDs is that an issue that may not be discussed openly during the individual interviews, might be discussed openly in a group context. This is because listening to others verbalising experiences stimulates memories, ideas and clues in the participants' mind during the focus group discussions. In addition, a wide range of information about female street children engaged in commercial sex work might be revealed when children share information that might be common to some of the girls in the group. More specifically, the researcher felt that the FGDs could offer insights into the social relations among the girls, an aspect that may not be revealed comprehensively in the individual interviews. By using two FGDs, the researcher generated a range of viewpoints from both the children involved and those not involved in support programmes. It was possible to obtain a comparable analysis of different cases of social dislocation and social support among those children already in the support programmes as compared with the children who were not involved in the support programmes. Furthermore, it was possible to explore the varying needs and the
varying levels of social dislocation by comparing the situations of the children who had joined the support programmes with those children who had not joined the support programme.

The FGDs with children that were already involved in the support programmes was held in the FSCE’s office located at the FCSE safe home where the children resided. Another suitable venue was selected by the researcher to conduct the second FGD with children who were not involved in the support programmes. The venue that was selected by the researcher was a school classroom (the school had been donated by the FSCE to the community living in the Addis Ketema sub-city) located in the study area. The school was selected to hold the second FGD because it was convenient to attend the FGD as well as it was close for the research participants to come and attend the FGD. The researcher tape-recorded both FGDs after permission was received from the FGD participants (see Annexure G).

3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Data collection took place during the second half of 2013. Before starting the interview process, FSCE granted the researcher permission to attend a meeting with children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city - both with children who participated in the support programme as well as with children who were not involved in the support programme (see Annexures E and I). The permission granted to the researcher had a precondition that throughout the interviews and FGDs, a FSCE professional social worker would be present in order to provide support in case the children became distressed when recalling their past experiences. Another reason was that they were under-aged children and their parents or guardians could not be reached to give their consent for their children to participate in the study.
The researcher conducted the individual interviews as well as the focus group discussions personally with the recruited research participants. In order to stimulate conversation, Amharic, which is one of the common national languages in the country, was used in all the interviews and focus group discussions. In addition, all the interviews and the FGDs were tape-recorded after the permission of the research participants had been received. Furthermore, prior to the commencement of the interviews and FGDs, the researcher reminded the participants that they had the right to withdraw from the study if it became too strenuous. However, all the participants who had consented to participate in the study completed their individual interviews as well as the focus group discussions.

3.8 DATA MANAGEMENT

The tape-recorded information was translated and transcribed word-for-word into the English language, on the same day that the interviews were conducted, enabling the researcher to capture all the information contained in the tape-recorded interviews by interlinking it with the researcher’s memory of the event. Moreover, the field notes that were taken during the interviews and FGDs enabled the researcher to obtain more information regarding the children’s perceptions and experiences through the observations recorded by the researcher during the fieldwork and also from all the non-verbal communication that the research participants were using during the interviews and FGDs.

All the non-verbal clues such as body gestures, facial expressions and eye contact revealed by each participant, were recorded as separate field notes as they occurred during the interview process, without interfering with the conversation. The researcher developed symbols (short forms that represent the body gestures and facial expressions) to record important non-verbal communication. These symbols were developed to record non-verbal communications easily while the conversation was still going on. Each non-verbal communication was recorded on the field notes.
specifying at which questions they were displayed by the research participants during the interview. The tape-recorded interviews and focus group discussions and field notes were stored safely in the researcher’s private locker at home so that the participants’ confidentiality was ensured.

The researcher conducted up to two interviews a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The tape-recorded interviews were downloaded to a computer, and a backup was made on a compact disc. The interviews were translated into the English language and transcriptions were done each day after finalising all the interviews in an undisturbed environment at the FSCE’s office which the researcher occupied during the day for the purpose of collecting the data. The translation was done by the researcher with the help of a professional translator. The researcher started transcribing each interview by stating the interviewee’s code name (pseudonym) that had been assigned by the researcher in a bold and large sized text format above all the other information and thereafter, each word spoken during the interview was transcribed simultaneously while listening to the recorder to verify all the information transcribed. The entire transcribed interview was entered on the researcher’s computer by creating a database that contained individual files for each research participant, and a backup was made of all the files that contained the transcribed interviews. The written field notes, identifying the observed non-verbal clues during the interview process were included in each individual’s information file created in the database. Each interviewee file arrangement included the transcribed interviews, verifying the transcribed information with the records, assigning the research participants’ information to each individual file as well as creating a database of the research participants’ information on the researcher’s computer. The file arrangement for each research participant took an average of one and a half hours to be completed.
3.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis and interpretation are processes that make sense of the fieldwork and provide an understanding of what has been found from the fieldwork. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005:26):

“The researcher first creates a field text consisting of field notes and documents from the field. The writer-as-interpreter moves from this text to a research text: this text is then re-created as a working interpretive document that contains the writer’s initial attempts to make sense of what he or she has learned.”

Data analysis involves uncovering patterns and trends in the data collected, whereas data interpretation involves explaining those patterns and trends. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) states that data analysis is the process of identifying patterns and connections within and between the information collected. Accordingly, the researcher analysed the research participants’ words to reveal past, present and potential experiences to identify common themes related to their social dislocation, needs and the social support received. This was done by identifying themes, patterns, relationships, phrases and incidents from the field notes and from the transcribed interviews and the focus group discussions (See the list of the main themes and sub-themes in Chapter 4). Accordingly the main themes identified were:

- Biographical information
- Reasons for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city
- Reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work
- Social Dislocation
- Needs of the children
- Support services
Interpreting data entails uncovering meanings and the significance of the data. Therefore, all the findings were sorted and the themes were identified that were subsequently organised into coherent categories. The themes and the connections between them were explained by the researcher in accordance with the objectives of the study.

To structure and manage the data collected, the researcher assigned codes to the themes and sub-themes, in this way a coding scheme was developed. A cross-case analysis was used to analyse the data and to capture the richness of the data. Babbie (2010:395) explains that, “Cross-case analysis is an analysis that involves an examination of more than one case; this can be either a variable-oriented or case-oriented analysis.” In the case of this study, a variable-oriented analysis was used in that the variables such as the social dislocation, social support, social attachment and the needs of the children were interpreted. To grasp all the data that had been generated during the fieldwork phase, the researcher had to listen to the tape-recorded information several times to make sure that all the information was included.

3.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE DATA

Trustworthiness is “the idea of discovering truth through measures of reliability and validity” (Golafshani 2003). On the other hand, validity is “the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration” (Babbie 2010:153). In this study, rigorous data validity and dependability checks were done before starting the analytical work. Babbie (2010:327) stated that qualitative studies “provide measures with greater validity than do a survey and experimental measurements.” Accordingly, in order to achieve valid results in the study on the social dislocation and needs of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work, the researcher used a triangulation technique to maximise the validity of the study. “Triangulation is the
combination of two or more methodological approaches, theoretical perspectives, data sources, investigators and analysis methods to study the same phenomenon” (Hussein 2009:3). Accordingly, this study used this technique, which made it possible to double-check the findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence. In this study, different sources of information were used such as the information collected from the children engaged in commercial sex work, the NGO workers, sub-city employees and small community associations. Moreover, this study used different research instruments as a means of confirming the existing data and offering a deeper and more comprehensive picture. In this regard, Golafshani (2003:603) stated that triangulation is “typically a strategy (test) for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings.”

Furthermore, in order to obtain valid data, this study involved the pre-testing of research instruments and the entered data were printed and proofread by the researcher. The data were also cross-referenced with the audiotaped interviews to ensure the proper transcription of data. Thereafter, all the transcribed data were edited in accordance with the recorded tapes. This was done to ensure the clarity and quality of the collected data. Checking the validity of the data was achieved by using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions that were audio taped so that the researcher could go back to the original data for clarity.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It appears that ethical issues present themselves more sharply when the research participants are children. As stated by Thomas and O’Kane (1998), when social research involves direct contact with children, it may be necessary to face ethical questions that are avoided when the research involves adults. Since this study involved children, much attention was given to ethical issues.
Ethical clearance to conduct this study was granted by the University of South Africa. The researcher took the following ethical issues into consideration during the data collection process and tried to integrate all the ethical considerations:

3.11.1 Permission to conduct the research

Before starting with the fieldwork, written permission was required from the Addis Ketema sub-city authorities to conduct the study. The researcher prepared a letter requesting permission to conduct this research (see Annexure-E) and ethical clearance had to be granted by the University of South Africa (UNISA) in order to proceed with the study.

After permission was granted to do the study, and ethical clearance was granted, the researcher was able to communicate with some of the NGOs and community-based organisations that were working in the specified sub-city. The contacted NGOs and organisations were interested in collaborating with the researcher to study the social dislocation of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the specified sub-city. They assured the researcher that they would introduce her to the potential participants, to take part in the key informant interviews to share their experiences of working in the support programmes to help these children and to provide their venue for conducting the interviews and focus group discussions.

3.11.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the ethical issues that the researcher considered in this study.

“A research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person’s responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly” (Babbie
Confidentiality is an important ethical issue in any research, but deserved special attention in this study is given to the power imbalance between children and adults. Some aspects such as the place and time where the interview was conducted and the interviewee’s willingness to attend the interviews and the focus group discussions were seen as particularly important. On the other hand, it was important that the researcher should give the children who participated in the research the assurance that she would not reveal their identity to others outside the research team (that includes one facilitator during the interviews and a social worker). Edmonds (2003:11) remarks in his research with children on the worst forms of child labour in Nepal that keeping the identity of the research participants confidential whether they are children or adults should be one of the major ethical considerations that the researcher has to heed:

“As in research with adult informants information that is provided to researchers by children should be treated as confidential. Anonymisation in the form of removing names and other identifying information must be strictly adhered to, and should be explained to children participating in the research process. Except under special circumstances, it should be revealed to others outside the research team only with the children’s permission. The special circumstance when researchers might feel it necessary to break confidentiality would include those in which children are considered to be in danger.”

In the case of this study, the participants’ names and other identifying information were kept strictly confidential. The researcher ensured that the identity of the research participants would not be revealed to others that were not part of the research team in order to maintain the confidentiality of the research participants in case they felt insecure about abuse or attacks that might be inflicted on them because of the information they had revealed during the interviews. Furthermore, the researcher first determined the willingness of the children to participate in the study.
at the initial visit with the potential participants during the recruitment process. Regarding the children in the support programmes, the researcher was introduced to the potential participants by the workers working on the support programmes, and this established an immediate feeling of trust, because they knew their support providers well. In addition, during the initial visit, the researcher spent time explaining the goals of the study, building rapport with the potential participants and assuring them that their identity would be kept confidential, which alleviated any fears on the participants’ side because they had a chance to ask questions.

3.11.3 Informed consent and assent

The need to obtain informed consent is always relevant but can be problematic. However, it was essential in this study that the children and the FCSE (the organisation that provides support to the research participants) to obtain complete information about the research in order to safeguard the children’s interests and emotions. Furthermore, this was done in order to obtain their consent to allow the children to take part in the FGDs and in the individual interviews. It was also important to obtain the children’s freely volunteered consent. After collecting the written assent forms from the children, the researcher was able to continue with the individual interviews and FGDs. Moreover, a trained and qualified social worker was present during the interviews and FGDs in case the children experienced frustration or became distressed when recalling their tragic past experiences. It was also explained to the research participants that they could withdraw from participating in the study at any time. Children who were engaged in sex work selected to participate in this study, were between the ages of 15 to 18 for the purpose of this study. The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, states that children should be informed about the decisions that affect them. Children should also have the right to express their views, although this would vary according to the age and maturity of the child concerned. However, this does not mean children could not or should not be included in the research. Within social research, there has been
a growing recognition not only that child should participate in research actively, but that their welfare needs to be protected during the research project (Stuart & Barnes 2005:6).

3.11.4 Flexibility

Research takes time, and high-quality research is dependent on good relationships between research participants and researchers. Asking clear, short and precise questions will help to avoid any confusion and are some of the major ingredients needed to obtain valid data from the children (Edmonds 2003:4).

In the case of this study, the first step that was taken by the researcher was to be friendly towards the children by spending time with them. This took the form of having traditional coffee in a traditional ceremony with them and engaging in conversation about their hobbies, their favorite subjects when they were in school, their favorite music/dance/sport, favorite chores in the household, amongst others, instead of jumping straight into the interview questions. At the same time, it was an opportunity for the researcher to obtain information about what the child was interested in talking about. Edmonds’s (2003:7-8) advice was helpful with regard to knowing when it was necessary to change the topic of conversation during the interviews or FGDs or when the child lost interest.

“If a child appears bored or distracted at any point during the interview, a switch in conversation to a topic more familiar to them can be an effective way to take a timely break instead of ending the interview completely. Conversations about music, films, athletes and pop stars can be helpful subjects to introduce in such instances. Still, if the child remains uncomfortable due to the venue or the line of questioning, the researcher must end the research activity immediately.”
3.11.5 Balanced power

The researcher informed the children verbally that the conversations during the interviews and the FGDs would not be difficult to understand. In addition, it was important that they should engage in all the discussions as much as possible and that as little time as possible was taken. Furthermore, the appropriate language should be used, the researcher should show respect for the children, their views and the researcher’s interpretations or concepts should not be forced onto the children, and they should not focus unduly on negative thoughts or images (Edmonds 2003: 2-5). Accordingly, in this study the researcher applied the guidelines mentioned above in order not to upset the children. In addition, when the children expressed their views, the researcher was patient and gave the child some time to recall events that had happened a long time ago.

Moreover, the researcher ensured the research participants that their participation in the research could be withdrawn by them at any point, they did not have to answer any questions and they could conclude an interview whenever they wished. In addition, the research participants were given as many choices as possible over how and where they would participate in the research, consistent with the objectives of the study by allowing them to direct the course of their interviews to some extent within the overall themes of the research (Edmonds 2003).

3.11.6 No harm

When interviewing a child engaged in commercial sex work, it was important to keep in mind that the possibility existed that she had been a victim of human trafficking, psychological abuse, verbal abuse and physical abuse, amongst others. These girls were at risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections in addition to the problem of poverty they were facing. Because of the above-mentioned issues, the children could have been sensitive and there could have been children who were
living with HIV and who might have been afraid that society would marginalise them even more. The researcher avoided being critical and did not show any judgmental reactions. Furthermore, the researcher generally maintained a positive attitude and a neutral expression when interacting with the children, resisted showing expressions of amazement, disappointment or any other emotions that she experienced when listening to the responses of the children. This attitude and approach were guided by the ethical considerations stated by Edmonds (2003:9).

In this study, the researcher tried to show as much understanding of and empathy as possible towards these children, especially when sensitive issues were raised during the interviews. According to Marrow ([Sa]:8), a further important point to note was that an overly protective attitude towards children may have the effect of reducing the children’s potential to participate in research. By showing empathy and adopting a neutral expression and by avoiding overly protective expressions, the researcher could avoid discomfort and confusion on the part of the participants. In addition, the researcher was assisted by an experienced and qualified social worker during the interviews who could also provide counselling afterwards in case the children became upset, traumatised or distressed during the interviews and focus group discussions. In this regard, there were five children who were distressed by the experiences that they were sharing and were given as much time as they needed and they were provided with counselling by the social worker until they were calm enough to continue the interviews.

It must be pointed out that the possibility of abuse of the research participants by the researcher (such as misunderstanding the participant’s information by researcher misinterpretation) is present in every research relationship (Thomas & O’Kane 1998:337). In cases, where information was revealed such as abuse or something similar, the researcher tried to get permission from the child to reveal the information to the concerned body, in order to get help for the child. In this regard, the researcher found that the majority of the children who were not involved in the
support programmes were abused physically and sexually on a daily basis and the researcher reported their problems to the FSCE’s area manager after obtaining the children’s permission to get support services for them at the FSCE.

3.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the research methodology of the study and provided an explanation of how the study was conducted. The research design, the research setting, the sampling techniques, the data collection process, the data management, the data analysis and interpretation, the trustworthiness of the data, the ethical principles and the pilot study were discussed in this chapter.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the findings of this study, as well as a description of the main patterns and themes that emerged during the data analysis and data interpretation of the study.
CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the social dislocation of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work. This study was conducted in Addis Ababa and the research participants for the study were female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city. The age range of the children included in the study was 15 to 18 years of age.

The researcher used in-depth, individual, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions as data collection methods. Moreover, pre-tested interview schedules and focus group discussion guides were used in this study as discussed in Chapter 3.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

4.2.1 In-depth interview participants’ biographical information

In this study, sixteen children participated in the in-depth interviews. Among the sixteen children, eight of the participants were involved in the support programme (ISP) and the other eight of the participants were not involved in any of the support programmes. Table 1 below presents the pseudonyms and biographical information of the in-depth interview participants who were involved in the support programme. Similarly Table 2 below presents the pseudonyms and biographical information of the in-depth interview participants who were not involved in the support programme.
Table 1: Pseudonyms and biographical information of the in-depth interview participants who were involved in the support programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involved in the support programme</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Place of origin</th>
<th>Length of time stayed in Addis Ababa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meron</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Southern part of the country</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senite</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsega</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marta</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigist</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaza</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6 grade</td>
<td>Engaged to be married</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almaz</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Southern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genet</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>No grade</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Pseudonyms and biographical information of the in-depth interview participants who were not involved in the support programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not involved in the support programme</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Place of origin</th>
<th>Length of time stayed in Addis Ababa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seble</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Southern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahel</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asnackech</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalkidan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6 grade</td>
<td>Engaged to be married</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiwot</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wubit</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5 grade</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Southern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fekerte</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Northern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sina</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Southern part of the country</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.1.1 Age

The distribution, according to age and their involvement in the support programme of the children who participated in the individual interviews is presented in Table 1 and Table 2 above. Among the sixteen participants, the majority or twelve were between 16 and 18 years of age.

4.2.1.2 Level of education

None of the participants were attending school at the time of the interviews except one child who was involved in a support programme.

As shown on Table 1 and Table 2, the majority of the participants used to go to school and most of them had passed at least grade 5. Among the eight children who were involved in a support programme, five could not continue their education because of the problems they faced while they were with their families. Senite, who was involved in the support programme (ISP), gave her reasons for not attending school:

“I quarrelled with my family and I left my family as well as school. I want to learn but don't have the chance. The reason why I am not learning is I was living a very dangerous life and even though I wanted to learn there was no one who could help me to learn; as well as I lost interest. When I say I lost my interest, there is still the feeling of wanting to learn but in the first place when I left my family's home I didn't bring my certificate and in second place I could not find a school who would accept me.”

In turn, Marta (ISP) explained her reason for not attending school as follows:

“When my father passed away I started living on the street because my
mother couldn't afford to take care of us and there was no one that could pay my education expenses. Till now things were not easy for me to go back to school but now since I got [have started receiving] support from the safe home [FSCE], I plan to go back to school this year.”

Tigist (ISP) stated that her reason for discontinuing school was:

“My family was not also able to send me to school and that's why I stopped it.”

Almaz (ISP) explained the situation she had to face while living at her family’s house and intimated her reason for not attending school by saying:

“Because my family could not afford to support me, so I stopped.”

When probed further, she explained that her family could not afford to send her to school because she had to work and earn money in order to contribute her share to meeting the living expenses in her grandmother’s house and she had to work to pay for her own daily expenses rather than go to school:

“…It is about payment, my family has problems because my grandmother is the one supporting the whole family and my father is an alcoholic so he can't support us because of this all of us had to support ourselves. Besides that, my father raised me to work in different households as a domestic worker.”

She also stated that it might be possible for her to continue her education in future because she had received support from the support programme:

“I am not learning now but I have planned to learn at night. It was impossible for me to learn while I was working as a hairdresser so I have a plan to start a small business where I can support my family and go to school at night.”
Genet (ISP) also indicated that the problems with her family forced her to seek refuge on the streets and this was the reason why she did not attend school:

“Now I am being supported by an organization, I used to live on the streets, since I ran away from my family. In the future, I'm planning to study. Around the rural areas, our parents didn't send us to school. When they gave me away to a husband, I left and came to Addis Ababa.”

Tsega (ISP), another child that was part of the support programme, gave a different reason for not attending school:

“I have been learning but because of the pressure from my friend I stopped and started living on the street. I am about to start night school.”

Another child in the support programme, Meaza (ISP) mentioned that she had plans to go to school in future:

“I missed school while I was on the street but now I that have joined the safe home [FSCE safe home] I got the chance to change my life so I have a plan to continue school, that is, probably next year I will start school.”

Family problems were the reason why children not involved in a support programme did not attend school. Among the eight children not involved in a support programme who participated in the interviews, the majority of the participants had family-related problems. Rahel gave her reason for not attending school as follows:

“There was a problem with my family that is why I stopped. There is poverty in the countryside I was not able to pay my school fees.”

Asnackech responded that she was not able to attend school because she was not
able to live with her relatives, as is indicated in her response below:

“I had to stop school because after the death of my parents I had to live with my uncle and his family at his house. But I faced lots of problems at my uncle's house where I could not continue to live because his wife did not like me at all and she made me do all the work in the house and abused me in everything. Moreover, she did not want me to go to school so I had to leave. Thereafter I started to live by myself and I could not pay my school fees and I didn't have the time to go to school because I had to work.”

Kalkidan said that she could not attend school because:

“I quarreled with my family then I started living on the street. Thereafter I stopped going to school... emm... I want to learn [study] but I do not have the support to learn. I don't know how I can learn when I am a sex worker.”

Hiwot also revealed that she could not attend school because of family problems, specifically relationship problems with her stepmother, which prevented them from living together. In a different vein, Fekerte stated that she could not continue learning because she had to work to support her family. The other two children who were not involved in the support programme mentioned that the reasons that prevented them from attending school were directly linked to their separation from their family. The first child explained:

“I used to go to school while I was with my family but now because I am on my own I don't go to school because I don't have family here but in the countryside I used to learn while I was at my grandmother's place.” (Seble)

The second child explained the reason for her discontinuing attending school by saying:
“I was with my family but after I came to Addis Ababa I stopped going to school because there was no one that could support me to learn. I have to work so I don’t have time to go to school.” (Sina)

4.2.1.3 Place of origin

The majority of the participants in this study came from other regions of the country to the Addis Ababa city; whereas the minority of the participants in this study grew up in Addis Ababa city, which is the capital city of the country. Table 1 and Table 2 show the place of origin of the participants.

Among the four children who resided in Addis Ababa, two came from the Addis Ketema sub-city before they started to live on the streets; whereas the other two children came from the Gulele and the Kolfe sub-cities of Addis Ababa respectively. Those participants who came from other parts of the country to reside in Addis Ababa arrived at different times of the year and had lived in Addis Ababa for different lengths of time. Three of the participants could not recall when they had arrived at Addis Ababa and recounted that they had been very young when they arrived in the city and they had to estimate the length of time they had lived in Addis Ababa. Accordingly, Table 1 and Table 2 above reflect the number of years the participants had been residing in Addis Ababa.

4.2.1.4 Marital status

Table 1 and Table 2 also show the marital status of the participants. All the participants were unmarried except for one child as shown in Table 1. The child (Genet (ISP)) who was married, spoke about the wedding arrangements as follows:

“I don’t know I was a child, I was 5 years old. In the countryside, even when you are a child there is a marriage arrangement like a promise to give your
child when you get older, so when you are 15 or 16 you go to your husband's house. So I was told that I have to get married when I was 16.”

When probed further about the marriage arrangement she replied that:

“It was when I was a child, when I grew up I sometimes came to my home and went back to my husband's house at other times, because his family invited me to stay for a month at their house and then I would stay with my family for a month. Then at the end we would be told that we had to be on our own when we are at the ages of 15 or 16.”

When probed further about the age when the arrangement was made, she responded as follows:

“Ever since you know yourself, after the age of ten you live one month here and another month there. I stayed in the marriage for less than a year, the first time it was for three months and I used to tell my family that I didn’t want to go back.”

As shown in Table 1 and Table 2, two children were engaged to be married. One of these children, Meaza (ISP), described her situation as follows:

“...there was a person that my parents agreed to give me to when I grew up. When my father agreed that I should go to school in Addis Ababa, he cancelled the promise he made to this person, this means he gave a promise to the parents that their son would be my husband, so they let us live in our own families' home until we grew up then both parents would keep their promises and they would arrange the wedding ceremony. However, when my father cancelled his promise they were so angry and I don’t think they will forgive him ever. At last they called elder people in the area and tried to
The second child, Kalkidan, described her situation as follows:

“I was engaged but before we got married, I escaped. I was around 10 years old when I was told that I was going to marry our neighbour’s son. So there arrangements for their children.”

When asked for more details, about the wedding arrangements she responded by saying:

“Our parents will decide when we have to live together and till that time both of our families will have close contact with each other.”

4.2.1.5 Living arrangements

The majority of the participants who were not involved in the support programme were living in small partitioned rooms called ‘alga bete’\(^1\), except for two of the children. One of these children lived on the street and the other child lived in a rented house in another sub-city and only came to the Addis Ketema sub-city to work. Among the children who were residing in an ‘alga bete’, one child mentioned that there were times when she would be forced to sleep on the street usually when she did not have the money to pay for the ‘alga bete’. Table 3 below indicates the participants’ living arrangements.

---

\(^1\) “Alga bete” is an Amharic word - the direct translation means “bed house” and refers to small partitioned rooms available for rent, which is a very common in the Addis Ketema sub-city.
Table 3: In-depth interview about participants’ living arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>Living arrangements</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>With other children</td>
<td>With family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the street</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In small partitioned rented room ('alga bete')</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In small partitioned rented rooms and sometimes on the street</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a safe home provided by the support programme</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a rented house</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a family house</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the eight children who were involved in the support programme, four were living in safe homes arranged by a support provider (FSCE) and three were reunited with their families. In addition, one child was assisted by support providers (FSCE) to live in a rented house, because she chose to live in the capital city rather than be reunited with her family who were living in the countryside.
The children were asked whether they were satisfied with their current living arrangements. Table 4 below indicates whether the respondents were satisfied with their current living arrangements.

**Table 4: In-depth interview about participants’ living arrangement preferences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with current living arrangements</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involved in support programme</td>
<td>Not involved in support programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4, none of the children who were not involved in the support programme were satisfied with their current living arrangements. Most of the children who were participating in the support programme were satisfied with their current living arrangements apart from two children. The first child was not satisfied with her living arrangements because she lived alone and the second child preferred not to live with her family because of the disagreements she had with her family.

As per the above biographical information it shows that the majority of in-depth interview participants have reached some level of education but have been drawn from their education because of different problems at their family home and because they joined the street life. Also the participants have specified that they experienced difficult living arrangements once they joined the street life. Accordingly Hai (2011) and De Benitez (2009) have confirmed on their study of street children that this sector of society are disadvantaged form basic needs such as education, living arrangements, protection etc.
4.2.2 FGDs and key informant participants’ bibliographic information

Similarly, as stated above, two focus group discussions were conducted in this study. The participants in one of the focus groups discussion were involved in a support programme that was being delivered in the Addis Ketema sub-city, whereas those who participated in the second focus group discussion were not involved in any of the support programmes. Table 5 below presents the pseudonyms of the focus group discussions participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial no.</th>
<th>Involved in the support programme</th>
<th>Length of time stayed in Addis Ababa</th>
<th>Not involved in the support programme</th>
<th>Length of time stayed in Addis Ababa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aynalem</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Meheret</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Saron</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Lensa</td>
<td>3 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ayda</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Donat</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nebyat</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Selam</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Meri</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Gelila</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Selome</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Beza</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wedase</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Brhan</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Konjet</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Mime</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mesrake</td>
<td>&gt;5 years</td>
<td>Meseker</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Pseudonyms of the key informants of the in-depth interview participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial no.</th>
<th>Key informants</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adanech</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Rehabilitation social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Abebe</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Executive Secretary for the project committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tamirat</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Habtamu</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Research studies and advocacy officer and coordinator of the care core process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yohannes</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Zena</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Councils of the 10 Idier of the Kebele 10,11,12 Finance Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Derej</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 THEMES EMERGING FROM THE COLLECTED DATA

A number of themes evolved from the interviews conducted with the various participants. The five main themes identified from this study were reasons for coming to Addis Ketema sub-city, reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work, social dislocation, needs and support.

Table 7 below presents the themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes that emerged during the analysis of the data.
Table 7: Themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes that emerged during the analysis of the data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
<th>Sub-sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city</td>
<td>Push factors</td>
<td>Conflict within family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work</td>
<td>Pull factors</td>
<td>Education opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High expectation about city life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social dislocation</td>
<td>Challenges and experiences after arriving in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>Problems with sources of income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived benefits of doing commercial sex work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs of the children</td>
<td>Contact with family members</td>
<td>Perception of the community regarding female children engaged in commercial sex work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical and verbal abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social relationships of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The impact of commercial sex work on the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Provisions important in the children’s life</td>
<td>Health impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day-to-day concerns of the children</td>
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4.3.1 Reason for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city

There were a number of reasons why the participants came to the Addis Ketema sub-city as will be discussed next.

4.3.1.1 Push factors

4.3.1.1.1 Conflict within families

Some of the participants in this study referred to the conflict they had had with their family or the conflict among their family members, which, in turn, forced them to leave their family homes. Almaz (ISP) who was involved in a support programme, replied that she came to Addis Ababa with her father because of the disagreement between her parents. Her father, who used to live in Addis Ababa, decided that she had to come and live with him at his mother’s house because her mother had remarried another person:

“As my mother gave birth to another child and my father said that he doesn’t want his child to be raised by a stepfather, father brought me here.”

In turn, Genet (ISP) reported that her parents’ views regarding her future life was far from what she had planned when she was forced to get married as a child. She explained that her parents were not aware of the harm caused by child marriages, which, in turn, forced her to show her aversion to being married at that age by running away from her hometown.

“My parents are farmers, they earn a living by farming, they are not educated and that is why they gave me away to a husband. I never went back or saw them, I think they live the same way as they did before, but I think they were given advice [regarding the pernicious effect of child marriages] from Addis
Ababa or nearby cities.”

She further explained her reason for coming to Addis Ababa as follows:

“The reason for my coming to Addis Ababa is because they [parents] were going to give me away to a husband, so I came here running away from my family, that is, the reason I was on the street.”

Similarly, Kalkidan described how she used to live a happy life until the day she was told to get married to the person who lived next door:

“My family was respected in the community and people in the neighbourhood loved them and everyone in the neighbourhood wanted to be part of our family. That is why our neighbours wanted their son to marry one of us and since I am the oldest, I had to marry their son. I can say we had a good life since our parents are good farmers and had big land to cultivate as well as livestock to depend on. I used to love living in the countryside, except to be married.”

Furthermore, she revealed her disagreement with her parents regarding getting married at that age, which forced her to come to Addis Ababa.

“The reason I left my home is I quarrelled with my parents because I said that I will not get married to the person that lives next door and for this reason I came to Addis Ababa with a friend who lived in the neighbourhood.”

Another participant, Asnackech, initially experienced a happy family life until the death of her parents after which she had to live with her uncle. At her uncle’s house, it was impossible for her to continue the happy family life since she did not get on with her uncle’s family. She described the situation at her uncle’s house as follows:
“Even though I didn't get hungry, most of the days I worked hard in the house and my uncle's wife didn't like me at all, she tried to insult me whenever she could. I remember that I used to cry most of the time, while I was at their place because I missed my parents a lot and little things made me vulnerable. Moreover, I was not treated on the same level as her children; it was very difficult to live there, there were times I missed school because she didn't want me to go.”

Hiwot described the disagreements she had had with her stepmother before she left her family house as follows:

“The mother is not here [meaning she had passed away]. My father, he is married to another woman and so I didn't agree with my stepmother. He used to side with her and beat me.”

Problems regarding conflict with families were also mentioned by the participants as a major reason for coming to the study area in the focus group discussions where the majority of the participants who were not involved in the support programme intimated that they had come to the Addis Ketema sub-city because they had quarrelled with their families.

“I came here [to the Addis Ketema sub-city] three months ago and the reason that I left is because I quarrelled with my aunt who lives next to my grandfather’s house. She hates me too much and that’s why I left.” (Aynalem (ISP))

“I also came three months ago and I used to live with my aunt but I had disagreements with my aunt.” (Saron (ISP))

“I used to live with my mother and my father but my mother and I don’t love
each other so we had disagreements. Because we had disagreements, lots of problems were created. Besides, my mother has a mental problem so before something happened between us, I said to myself that I had to leave my home.” (Ayda (ISP))

“I have come from Debre Brehan [one of the towns in the country] and it has been nine years since I came and so, in the year 2006 [In the Ethiopian calendar which is approximately to the end of the year 2013], I will be in my 10th year. I don’t have [any] family; my mother and father have passed away. I have a sister and I had a brother but it has been two years since he died and my sister, she is married. I used to live with her but she is very angry with everything so I could not live with her, so that is why I left.” (Nebyat (ISP))

“...my sister made me to leave, she said ‘get out’ so I got out on the street because my sister made me to leave.” (Meri (ISP))

“Because my mother is sick she can’t help me in any way and there is no other family that supports us, I am the only child she has. And since she is sick she does not have any capacity [to support me]. I came to this area, my mother lives at her sister’s house. My aunt and I do not get along. First, I used to not go to school but then I went to school after I came to my uncle’s house here. But I quarrelled with him and left and started to live here on my own.” (Wedase (ISP))

“I came [here]; it would be two years and 15 days [ago]. The reason I left my house is because I didn’t get along with my stepmother.” (Konjet (ISP))

In addition, some of the participants in the focus group discussions who were involved in the support programme also revealed:
“The reason why I came to Addis [Addis Ababa] is because I quarrelled with my family and I ran away from them.” (Donat)

“I am from Addis [Addis Ababa] and left my home a year ago due to the misunderstandings that happened between me and my family. I then stayed with my sister for a few months and left her and joined this support group nine months back. Therefore, the reason why I came to this organization [FSCE, which is located in the Addis Ketema sub-city] is because I quarrelled with my family.” (Meseker)

4.3.1.1.2 Sexual abuse

Among the participants in this study, there was only one child who had experienced sexual abuse, which, in turn, forced her to come to Addis Ababa. Seble indicated that the reason for coming to Addis Ababa was the abuse she experienced at the hands of the family of the person that had raped her resulting in her fearing for her life in her home town. The child described the situation to which she was exposed that forced her to come to Addis Ababa, as follows:

“I was raped while I was living with my grandmother in the countryside. Then the person who raped me used to frighten me very much by saying things about killing me. Thereafter, I escaped from that area and came here where everything is worse for me. Now he is in prison, he was our neighbour, he is a big person ['big' refers to the age].”

4.3.1.1.3 Poverty

The participants in this study had different family backgrounds. The majority of them mentioned that they came from poverty-ridden backgrounds, which, in turn, pushed them directly or indirectly to come to the Addis Ketema sub-city. The children coming from other cities in the country also revealed that their reason for coming to Addis
Ababa was to escape from financial problems in their homes. Meron (ISP) described her family situation in the following way:

“My family had a big problem and had a low social status in the society. My mother raised us doing the work of ‘guilit’ [name given to sell vegetables in small portions on the street] and selling homemade alcohol. And my father was an alcoholic and he went out in the morning and returned at night. So all the burdens were on my mother and she was the one raising us by selling ‘guilit’ and alcohol. Even though my father was alive, he never helped my mother. So my family were categorised as belonging to the lowest social status.”

Marta (ISP) mentioned that the standard of living of her family was good when her father was alive, but financial problems arose after his death. She explained that these financial problems had forced her to leave her parent’s house.

“Before my father’s death, we used to live a good life, he worked in a government office and my mother was a housewife. But after he died, it was not good. My mother used to be very mad about everything and she had almost no money to support us. We used to live in a Kebele house [subsidised houses for rent owned by the sub-division of the sub-cities] and my mother was always worried about the rent, even though the rent isn’t such a huge amount of money. While my father was there with us, he provided everything for us like school materials, food in the house, and other things in the house, so there was a peaceful environment in the house.”

Meaza (ISP) described a similar poverty-ridden family history:

“My parents were not in a good position before I came to Addis Ababa. They had a shortage of money in the house. Besides, we were many children who
 Likewise, children who were not involved in the support programme came from families from different backgrounds. However, the majority of the children also came from poor families where circumstances had pushed the children to come to Addis Ababa in one way or another.

Accordingly, Rahel revealed:

“While I was there, it is like we eat one day and we don’t eat the other day. In addition, I learnt up to the 7th grade with the dedication I had because I have a huge interest to learn, that is why I reached up to [the] 7th grade, even my mother told me lots of time to stop the education. But after [the] 7th grade, it was impossible for me to go on like that [to be in poverty and learn] so I said to myself that I have to work and I came here [refers to the Addis Ababa city].”

Wubit explained that she had experienced similar financial problems after the death of her father:

“Well, we didn’t have anything in the house. When our father was here, we lived in the rural area at a place called Chaba. Before he died, he bought us a house in Selam Bar and we moved to the city and then we were living there. There is a thing called ‘Merete’ [land] where the government takes the land. As soon as my father died, the government took the house and the land. After that, my mother rented a house to live in. She sold wood and even though there was no market, we just did it. I quit my school but the others were studying when I went there the last time.”

Fekerte also had a family who was facing financial problems because of the death of her father and because of her mother was not able to support the family – this is why
Fekerte could not continue to live with her family:

“My father passed away four years ago and my mother is bedbound in Kemisse [a town found in the northern part of the country]. After the death of my father, our family did not have anything. My father used to be a farmer, and he supported our family and we didn’t face any problems. We all went to school because my father believed in education but after his death my mother got sick and I had to stop school and support our family since I was the eldest.”

Seble also came from a family that had financial problems. Her parents have passed away when she was a child. She was forced to live with her grandmother and with her other five siblings and her sister’s two children - all of whom were dependent on the income of her grandmother. She described her family’s financial situation before she left them:

“The situation regarding my grandmother was [that she was] involved in a business, selling ‘Shero’ and ‘Berber’ [local foodstuff]. It is not a good living status. For example, if she gets money today... since my family is so many, because there are other children of my mother; we all were dependent on her.”

4.3.1.2 Pull factors

4.3.1.2.1 Educational opportunities

Some of the participants in this study explained that their reasons for coming to Addis Ababa were to get a good education in the city. Meaza (ISP) indicated that she got help from a relative to come to Addis Ababa. The reason why she came to Addis Ababa was to live with that relative so that she could get a good education.
Similarly, Almaz (ISP) said her main reason for coming to Addis Ababa was her interest in getting a good education. She had also heard many positive accounts about city life from the people in her town. She recounted her expectations as follows:

“I had lots of dreams; I thought that I will get [an] education here and that I will live properly. As you know, in the countryside if you have brothers, you will keep an eye on the cows on the field with your brothers, rather than going to school. So I said to myself that I will go to school when I go to Addis Ababa. I assumed that I would learn [study] when I came to Addis Ababa.”

Kalkidan also came from a region outside Addis Ababa. She explained that one of her reasons for coming to Addis Ababa was to continue her education that had been discontinued because of conflict with her family:

“I had a big dream about Addis Ababa and I always dream that I would live a good life and continue my education. I thought Addis Ababa was a place where you could be rich and that there were no poor people living in the city.”

Sina gave a similar explanation regarding her expectations about Addis Ababa and of receiving an education in the city as follows:

“I expected to get a better education, I expected to get a better living situation, I expected to see better people, and there were many things that I was expecting to get but when I got here I didn't get any of them.”

4.3.1.2.2 Job opportunities

In the course of this study, there were some children who mentioned that one of their reasons for coming to Addis Ababa was to find a good job, which would enable them
to support both their families and themselves. Meron (ISP) explained that her family was not in a position to support her after her mother fell ill, she was therefore obligated to come to Addis Ababa in order to help her sick mother. She explained her reasons as follows:

“My family... they had a very huge problem [this was recounted with a very sad face], my mother, she was very sick. So I was very active and clever. And I said at that time I didn’t want to see my mother in such pain. Then I decided to come here and help my mother instead of looking after her when she was sick. And my father he is alive but he is [an] alcoholic and he can’t help my mother or us.”

Senite (ISP) responded that her reason to come to Addis Ababa was to find a job in Addis Ababa since she could not return to her hometown because she had quarreled with her parents:

“My reason to come here [Addis Ababa] was to work in people’s house but I saw it was impossible because I had addictions to drugs [‘chate’ (local drug) and cigarette] and it was impossible to find the brokers [they help in hiring people to work in private homes as housekeepers and related jobs] because I didn’t know Addis Ababa well and it made me to be involved in the street life again.”

In turn, Genet (ISP) gave her reason for coming to Addis Ababa:

“When I was in the countryside I wanted to come here and work as a domestic worker, improve myself, then quit working as a domestic worker and to be independent and to get my own rented house.”

Asnackech came from another sub-city of Addis Ababa with her friend in search of a
job in the Addis Ketema sub-city:

“To get a job and since my friends know this area very well.”

Hiwot also shared that she had hoped to get a good job in Addis Ababa. She intimated:

“Just, that I could get a job instantly and change my life and help my family. That’s what I thought. But when I came here, unexpected things happened.”

She further explained her experience as follows:

“I heard that there is a job here. My friend used to live here so I thought that there were good things here [Addis Ababa]. My friend asked me to come here with her and I came with her. When we reached Piasza [one of the districts found in Addis Ababa] she disappeared, so I came here and I am now living this life.”

Rahel explained her expectations in these words:

“I assumed that I could get a job easily emm... I don't know, like it is difficult to express but when I came it was another problem. I expected to work and to support my mother. I came by assuming that there will be better jobs.”

Fekerte explained her hopes about the life in Addis Ababa:

“I thought Addis Ababa was a city where you can find gold on the street and I had big expectations that it would be easy for me to get a job and get good money so that I could help my family.”
When further probed regarding from whom she got help to come to Addis Ababa, Fekerte replied:

“There are brokers who promise you good paying jobs, I gave them everything I [had] saved and was left with nothing when I arrived in Addis Ababa.”

Rahel said she expected to have a good experience and to help her mother. She declared:

“I came here [Addis Ababa] for a work to support my mother. My mother is very poor and I don't have a father.”

4.3.1.2.3 High expectations about city life

The majority of the children who came to reside in Addis Ababa had similar expectations about city life in addition to having big dreams to see the capital city when they were in their hometowns. Meron (ISP) shared that her expectations about Addis Ababa before she came to the city had been extremely high, as she had expected to lead a positive and fulfilling life in the city:

“While I was at home I was interested in everything about Addis Ababa because of those who came from Addis Ababa to celebrate the Meskele holiday [referring to one of the holidays in the Gurage region, which is widely celebrated and the people that belong to the Gurage ethnic group will go back to the region they grew up to celebrate this holiday with their families]. I always saw the way they dressed and everything and I said to myself that I am going to be like them. So I have a big fantasy about Addis Ababa. It is like… I didn't expect that I will have problems.”
Similarly, Senite (ISP) had big dreams about living in Addis Ababa because she expected that there would be many opportunities in the city for her to improve the life she lived in the countryside. She described her imaginations about city life as follows:

“I didn’t know Addis Ababa physically but I saw it on TV and I always thought that being in Addis Ababa will make you successful in everything. I also thought that people were different in Addis Ababa and I thought that there were no street children. But when I came I got to know everything.”

Meaza (ISP) had similar expectations to those of Senite (ISP) about Addis Ababa. She described her expectations as follows:

“I heard that Addis Ababa is a big place and a very civilized city so I was eager to see the city. I had many dreams about Addis Ababa, I assumed it was a place where people got rich, a place where people got education but emmmm... [trying to remember what happened to her] when I came, it was quite the opposite.”

In turn, Almaz (ISP) wanted to see the city life because of what was being reported in her hometown. She recounted that many people used to talk about the living conditions; consequently, she was eager to experience the opportunities available in the city:

“They say about Addis Ababa that there is everything in this place and while I was back there you eat ‘kocho’ [the common food in the Gurage region] but they told me that there is ‘injera’ [the most common food throughout Ethiopia] in Addis Ababa to eat. Also they told me that education is more available and that houses are available. Also I really wanted to watch TV, so they told me that there is TV so it made me happy to hear about Addis Ababa. Then I
came here [Addis Ababa].”

The children who were not in the support programme had comparatively similar expectations about city life as the children who were in the support programme. Seble explained her first impression of Addis Ababa and compared it to her view of the countryside.

“Addis Ababa is the best place, just in the way that it is a city, there are lots of people living in it and that it is very unique and different from our place.”

Wubit had had a similar positive view about Addis Ababa and the life she was going to have in Addis Ababa:

“I always wanted to come to Addis when I saw Addis Ababa on television and when I asked where the lady [her neighbour] lives, they told me that she is from Addis Ababa. When the lady [her neighbour] contacted me, I was very happy and I hid from my mother and I came here [Addis Ababa].”

Wubit and Fekerte shared a common view in that both of them had heard that Addis Ababa was a good place in which to live and they thought that they would be able to attain a good standard of living by moving to Addis Ababa. Fekerte reported:

“In Kemisse it is rumoured that Addis is a city of riches where you can amass gold from the streets. I came here to try my luck and support my sick mother.”

Sina explained that her friend influenced her friend to go to Addis Ababa:

“I used to see [reports] on television about Addis Ababa and I dreamt to come to Addis Ababa. Then, when my friend told me that she was going to come to Addis Ababa to her uncle’s house and live in Addis Ababa, I got carried away
with the idea to go with her, since she was pushing me as well to go with her. At last I decided to come to Addis Ababa with her.”

4.3.1.3 Summary of reasons for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city

The major contributing factors for a child to lead a street life among the vast number of factors were poverty, migration, loss of parents, family violence, child abuse and neglect and peer influence which were mentioned in the literature review as well as it was found in this study described above. Similarly Balachova et al. (2009), FSCE (2006) and Abate (2004) have also mentioned in their study that children are separated from their family through the pull and push factors as described above. Ballet et al. (2013) have also mentioned in their study that poverty plays the major role to the migration of children to cities. Similarly the majority of the participants on this study have stated poverty in their family house was directly or indirectly the major contributor for a child to move to Addis Ababa city and particularly to Addis Ketema sub-city.

4.3.2 Reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work

There are a number of reasons why the respondents became involved in commercial sex work. These are discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.3.2.1 Challenges and experiences after arriving in Addis Ababa

The majority of the children, especially those children who came from the countryside, faced a variety of challenges and problems after their separation from their families and before they joined the world of commercial sex work. These children had experienced many tragedies that had pushed them in one way or another to become involved in commercial sex work. Meron (ISP) described the experiences she had after arriving in Addis Ababa:
“Before I started commercial sex work I had faced many problems such as I was starved because I had nothing to eat, I ended up sleeping on the street and had no clothing. So I have gone through lots of painful situations. And there was a time where I had no shoes to wear. But now I am in a good place by avoiding all these [things].”

Meaza (ISP) explained that life in Addis Ababa at her aunt’s house was difficult for her since she was forced to do heavy tasks. She also said that she was often ill-treated by her aunt.

“When we reached at my aunt’s house, she was happy to welcome me and I was introduced to all her children and her husband. Then I started to live there but every day became hard for me. I worked all day and she mistreated me. I could not bear all the mistreatment, so I decided to leave her house and live on the street.”

Similarly, Almaz (ISP) wanted to have her own money when she was a child in order to win the love of her family. While she was child, she was obliged by her family to have her own job and money in order to support the family’s financial problems. She also stated that her family used to avoid her whenever she had no money:

“I started to work at the Merkato market, then my aunt made me to start night school but I am very used to having money, since it was very bad to get used to having money while I was very small besides my family used to love me when I have money and don’t love me when I don't have money. So I said to myself that I will be on my own and out on the street but I didn't plan to sleep on the streets.”

She also described that she used to sleep on the street after she had moved out of her grandmother’s house.
“When I got out, I thought I will rent a house like my friends but it didn’t turn out as I planned. You sleep on the street, covering yourself with plastic bags but we try to work very hard not to sleep on the street.”

In contrast, Senite (ISP) revealed that she had come to Addis Ababa after living on the streets for some time in another town. However, after she arrived in Addis Ababa she was faced with the same street life conditions. For example, she was sexually abused and experienced hunger several times before she started to work as a commercial sex worker.

“What I experienced in Addis Ababa is while I was at the Habte Gorigise Bridge [one of the areas in Addis Ababa] where my friend brought me to, there was a boy who raped me whereas nobody had touched me while I was in Dese [another town] and after that we got introduced and we started to be together. I didn't know him before but now he is my daughter's father.”

She described her experience in Addis Ababa further by saying:

“I have faced lots of experiences. I have been hungry, I have been thirsty, and I have lost a place to sleep and since I have no girlfriend after my friend had left me, [consequently], I had faced many difficulties.”

Another participant in this study, Genet (ISP), had the chance to work in a private residence as a domestic worker immediately after arriving in Addis Ababa. However, she was unable to continue her work as a domestic worker because she experienced numerous challenges working as a domestic worker in private residences in Addis Ababa. She was mistreated by her employers, which, in turn, pushed her to choose to become engaged in commercial sex work.

“She [employer] used to insult me a lot. When I went back to the first lady [the
person that helped her to find a job] they told me that they couldn’t assign me any further employment from then on, so I went on the street carrying my clothes [with me], in this 32 Kebele [sub-section in the Addis Ketema sub-city].”

Those children who were not involved in the support programme had also encountered different problems, which made them choose to become involved in commercial sex work. Before she was involved in commercial sex work, one of the respondents, Seble, had been living in a woman’s house in Addis Ababa with her husband. This woman has agreed to take her in when she found her crying on the street. However, after a while, the woman’s husband became opposed to the idea of Seble living with them and she was forced to live on the streets again.

“The lady took me to her home. While I was living in her house, her husband was getting mad at her because she had brought me. So he hit her and abused her verbally whenever he got drunk. Because of this, the lady told me that she will help me while I was out from her house. She told me that she will support me in whatever way she can while I am living outside her home. Then I said ok and because I could not live with her I started this work.”

Asnacek shared that after she had moved out of her uncle’s house in Addis Ababa because she did not want to live with his wife, she went to live in to the Addis Ketema sub-city. However, it was impossible for Asnacek to live on the streets without adult support:

“When I reached at Atobis Tera [the bus station in the Addis Ketema sub-city] the problems I faced about bed rental, shortage of money and to be jobless was so difficult for me to accept. My friends promised lots of things regarding the opportunities that were available but I could not see those opportunities when I arrived here [in the Addis Ketema sub-city].”
Although Rahel received an opportunity to be employed as a domestic worker in a guesthouse owned by the woman who had brought her to Addis Ababa, she could not continue with the work because her health was affected by the work she did. She explained:

“When I arrived, I was employed at her place, the lady who brought me here but when she made me clean up the bedrooms and when I saw the throw ups and the urine in the rooms, I would get sick and I could not eat anything. When I told her that I was sick, she said to me that I [must] just go on with the work. I used to work for 24hrs [figure of speech which refers that she used to work long hours], I used to prepare the bedrooms of the residence as well and I used to wash the bed sheets all day long.”

She recounted that after she had quit her job at this woman’s guesthouse, she started to live with her uncle, which was another disappointment in her life.

“He does not pay me anything, besides his wife treats me like a dog.”

Again, when further probed why she had left her work to become engaged in commercial sex work, she revealed:

“It was hurting me; I could not handle the work. Besides your salary is not given in time and you can't work without food.”

Similarly, Fekerte was given an opportunity to work in a private residence after she arrived in Addis Ababa. However, she did not want to keep the job after her employer raped her.

“Most of the months that I lived with him, it was not that bad but at first since I didn't know most of the city’s way of life. I was very confused but after a while,
I got used to do everything in the house. But during the last month that I stayed with him, his behaviour started to change, he started to drink and he started to come in the house [home] drunk and one day he raped me - in the morning I woke up and left his house even without asking him for my salary.”

Sina was another participant who had a chance to be hired in a private residence but she could not keep her job because her employer became angry, which caused her to become scared and leave her job to live on the streets:

“I started to work as a housekeeper but one day the lady for whom I used to work, got mad at me because I crashed [broke] her dishes and I got scared when thinking what she was going to do on [to] me and I escaped and started living on the streets.”

In contrast to the other respondents, Kalkidan encountered a different problem. She was mugged by street boys when she reached Addis Ababa, which, in turn, pushed her to land up on the streets in Addis Ababa:

“We went out from the Atobis Tera [the bus station] compound and came to this area [in the vicinity of the Atobis Tera at a place called Sebatghna] and we were asking for a place where we could sleep since we had some money in our hands, we were planning to pay for our beds. Unfortunately, we met with some boys around here who took our money by saying that they would find a place where we could rent a bed; so after that we had to sleep on the street and thereafter we started to get along with some street children around here and started to live with them by doing everything in the way they did it.”

Similarly, Hiwot recalled that she had lived on the street for six months immediately after arriving in Addis Ababa:
“The first time when I came here [Addis Ababa], I slept on the streets because when I came here, I didn’t know anyone. I sat on the street and some girl who lives on the street said to me to go with her and asked me ‘what happened?’ I told her this and that [refers to the explanation she gave her regarding how she came there]. So when she said ‘let’s go’ I thought she would take me to her house. But she took me and fixed me a ‘madaberia’ [a sort of sleeping mat] on the street corner.”

She further described her life on the street by saying:

“We used to hustle for money [beg or steal for money]. Then we used to eat some leftover food, other than that, we had no income.”

4.3.2.2 Problems with sources of income

Some of the participants explained that they had started to do commercial sex work because there was no other means of income to support themselves. Meron (ISP), one of the children in the support programme, revealed that she had decided to do commercial sex work because she was unable to support herself by means of other jobs. She decided to become involved in commercial sex work to cover her daily living costs:

“At that time, you will be eager for [to have and experience] many things and there is a shortage of money, in addition there is immaturity. Also you don’t see things in a strong [objective] way because everything was tempting so you want these things and that thing, so I started it suddenly, without thinking about it.”

In turn, Senite (ISP) revealed that the reason why she became involved in commercial sex work was that she had no money to buy food since she did not want
to eat the leftovers that she found while she was on the street:

“I started it because I could not find anything to eat as well as I am very scared to eat ‘bulae’ [name given to leftover food by street dwellers] because I used to find bad things inside it. So I came here [Addis Ababa]. I didn’t do this work while I was at Dese [a town found outside Addis Ababa] and I was forced to do this job here.”

Tsega (ISP) stated that she had no other option apart from engaging in commercial sex work while she was on the street in order to have money for her day-to-day expenses:

“I started it when I was on the street and while on the street I and all of my friends started this work [commercial sex work] When I lost [other] options, I started it.”

Seble intimated that she had started with commercial sex work because of financial problems, whereas all the other participants at the interview who were not involved in the support programme, proffered peer pressure as their reason for starting with commercial sex work. Seble shared that she had begged for money while living on the streets. However, she could not survive on the money she got from begging and decided to become a commercial sex worker. She described her situation as follows:

“Just like heeee... I used to do ‘kefela’ [begging for money on the street] but most of the time it was hard for me to get the money to pay for ‘alga bete’ [small portioned rooms for rent]. So because I was in a shortage of money I started to do this work sometimes. And sometimes I go back to ‘kefela’ to get money. And when I get business [refers to commercial sex work], I do this.”

During the focus group discussions, it was evident that the majority of the
participants who were in the support programme had been engaged in commercial sex work because of the financial problems they were experiencing. They explained these reasons as follows:

“First I thought that it was a good job in which I could get more money but then I couldn’t get out.” (Aynalem (ISP))

“I went to the streets with my friend and I was in a terrible situation while I was on the street. I didn’t get enough food and I didn’t even have soap and water to wash my clothes and I found out that this is the better option to try.” (Saron (ISP))

“I wanted to work as a maid in a private residence but I had no one as collateral for me and I had no other option than doing this job because I didn’t have any other person who could help me.” (Ayda (ISP))

“I used to work as a waitress before but when I got tired of the work, I went to the streets directly and then when I started living on the street there were things that made you start doing /commercial sex work/. Like when you don’t have any food, clothes and shelter, so in order to fulfil your different needs, you will do this work.” (Nebyat (ISP))

“What makes it better is that because you get money day-to-day.” (Selome (ISP))

“I started [this] work [commercial sex work] by myself because I was hungry and thirsty and I saw my friend and she said that nothing happened to her so nothing will happen to me.” (Mesrake (ISP))

Similarly, some of the participants in the focus group discussion with children who
were not involved in the support programme, also mentioned that their reason for starting with commercial sex work was financial. They elaborated on this as follows:

“The reason why I and my friends are engaged in this business [commercial sex work] is that at the beginning when you leave home, there is no other person who can support you or help you to live. And at that time, when you are hungry, you hate life and when you lose hope you just go into this life.” (Meheret)

“You may be employed as a house maid for a monthly salary of 150 birr per month, but this girl could earn 200 birr per day by doing commercial sex work [instead of] earning 150 birr a month, working there for a whole month. Therefore, she prefers the commercial sex work than being the house maid.” (Lensa)

“I went to the broker [refers to the person who facilitates work as a maid in private homes] and asked the broker a job. He then told me that it’s a very nice job [a work in a private residence] but they used to not give me my salary and I even obtained food by stealing and since I was so hungry, I went to another area and started this job.” (Brhan)

4.3.2.3 Peer pressure

The majority of the participants also mentioned that they started doing commercial sex work because of peer influence. Accordingly, Marta (ISP) and Tigist (ISP) explained that they started doing this work because they had been influenced by their friends regarding commercial sex work when they were told that commercial sex work was an alternative way of escaping from street life. Marta (ISP) described the situation as follows:
“While I was on the street I met a girl and she encouraged me to start doing this work [commercial sex work] by telling me that the job pays good money and that it is better for me to get money than to starve and to sleep on the street.”

Tigist (ISP) also explained how she started commercial sex work:

“I don't remember the time but I just started it when my friends told me to start it and then I started it.”

When further probed about the exact reason to become engaged in commercial sex work, she stated:

“I didn't have any justified reason, but simply my friends told me to start it and first I hesitated but then I started it. Ahhhhh... it's disgusting to do that work [Sad face].”

She shared that she met these friends around the area called Piazza, which is not part of the Addis Ketema sub-city. She further explained how these friends encouraged her to do commercial sex work:

“They brought many boys at first and I started to be with them and they told me to start to do a work and when I asked what type of a work, they told me that it was business [commercial sex work] and I said ok and started it. Ohhhh... it's hard to remember it even.”

Similarly, other respondents from the support programme also indicated that they were first initiated into commercial sex work by friends whom they had encountered on the streets. Meaza (ISP) recalled that she obtained information about commercial sex work from other girls who resided in the Addis Ketema sub-city:
“After I left my aunt’s house I was on the streets, but I met other children who were on the street and among them there was a girl called Meron. We became very close and when she moved to Atobis Tera [the bus station in Addis Ketema sub-city] and she asked me to go with her. So I went to with her because I didn’t know anyone else [with whom I could be] as close as we were. After we reached Atobis Tera, there were friends of hers that they told us about commercial sex work.”

Similarly, Almaz (ISP) was pressured by her friends to start commercial sex work since she had no other source of income at that time. Moreover, she indicated that her friends had advised her to start engaging in commercial sex work rather than working as a street vender. Almaz (ISP) explained the situation as follows:

“I used to do manual work and I used to pay for my place to sleep. Thereafter my friend called Semehar said to me ‘why do you have to face all these problems’. Instead of this, she told me that there is other work [commercial sex work] if I wanted to do it but at first I was not interested.”

Genet (ISP) also explained how she became a sex worker:

“It was a coincidence, I didn't know there was such a kind of work. When I left my job as a maid because I was annoyed by the work, a girl found me and told me it is [a] good job and I just followed her footsteps.”

Likewise, the majority of the respondents who were not involved in the support programme indicated that their reason for starting with commercial sex work was the pressure they faced from their friends who were already involved in commercial sex work. Apart from one participant, (Seble), all the other remaining participants who were not involved in the support programme specifically replied that they were informed about the work by friends or the girls they had encountered on the streets
and were encouraged to start the work directly or indirectly because it was lucrative. Rahel recounted:

“I just stood there then the guys were coming to me and they were talking to me but I didn’t respond to anything. Then when it gets dark the other girls started to come and I saw how they talk to the guys and I also stood there and through time, I started doing it.”

When probed further about how she came to know about the existence of sex work, she replied:

“Around Megenagn [an area in Addis Ababa, which is located outside Addis Ketema sub-city], was my girlfriend I had known when I was working as a daily labourer on the construction site. She told me that around the Atobis Tera [bus station in Addis Ketema sub-city] there is such and such a kind of work that is being done.”

Asnackech indicated that she experienced peer pressure when she was told that she would be better off doing commercial sex work than living on the street. She described the situation as follows:

“I started the work because I was pushed by friends. They told me that I could make good money out of it and at that time, I was in shortage of money. So they told me to make use of this chance and they also told me that if I didn’t start this work now then I will end up on the street and that I will be a toy for all the boys on the street.”

Hiwot had a similar tale to tell:

“There was a friend of mine who used to work here [pointing to the direction
of the bus station]. She advised me to start working and sleep in beds instead of sleeping on the streets. So I agreed and went out with her and started working.”

Kalkidan explained her problem and her peer pressure she experienced as follows:

“I started [with this] business [commercial sex work] because I had nothing to go on with my life [no way of getting on with her life]. So some friends that we met on the street told us about the work and since we didn't have [any] other option and we didn't think that it would be [too] hard, we got into the work without thinking about it further.”

In turn, Wubit shared her story:

“I have a friend, we are from the same region, she was also living on the streets but she became very ‘tsedat’ [living in better conditions]. When I asked her what she was doing, she told me and asked me if I wanted to work with her, then we started working.”

In turn, Fekerte recounted:

“Emm.... after I left that guy’s house [her employer], I had no place to go and I was crying and I was heading to the Atobis Tera [bus station situated in the Addis Ketema sub-city] and two girls found me and said to me ‘what happened’, then I told them what [had] happened to me. Then they said, ‘come with us’ and then they told me about this work [commercial sex work] and that I will get good money out of it. At first I was shocked but when they told me that the money is good, I said ‘yes’ and I started working with them the next day.”
Sina also described how she had been influenced by the friends she had met on the street:

> “While I was wandering around the street, here around Atobis Tera [bus station located in Addis Ketema sub-city] I meet two friends on the street and then I started to do this work [commercial sex work] with them.”

### 4.3.2.4 Perceived benefits of doing commercial sex work

Initially, almost all the research participants indicated that there were very little benefits from doing commercial sex work. The only exception was Tsega (ISP) who declared that commercial sex work had more advantages than disadvantages. She explained her stance as follows:

> “It has benefits. It makes you to stand on your own, it makes you to be independent. It also has a bad side, somehow but the benefit is better than its bad side. Emmm... when you get the money, you can do whatever you want to do; you can buy clothes and its good.”

Furthermore, when probed further, the majority of the participants in this research mentioned some benefits of doing commercial sex work. Tigist (ISP), for example, highlighted the money she earned by doing commercial sex work. Upon further questioning regarding what she did with the money, she earned through her work, she replied:

> “The money emm ... I used to buy clothes to wear to look good, that is what you do and also you buy food and that’s all.”

In addition, Hiwot, a child who was not involved in the support programme, stated:
“Even though it is for the time being, you make some money.”

When probed further regarding what she did with the money she earned by doing commercial sex work, she intimated:

“We rent a bed, we eat and with the rest, we buy clothes.”

Initially, Meron (ISP) asserted that she had not received any advantages from doing commercial sex work:

“There is nothing other than my day-to-day expenses. Again the income you got you will spend it on the things you need.”

When asked further about what she got from doing commercial sex work, she indicated:

“We get cash in hand, so you will not think of many things because you don't face a problem, but getting money by selling your body is hard, but you will use the money for the things you need immediately so you won't think about other things. You will not think that you face a problem for tomorrow so whatever you get today, you will use it for today.”

She also described that they spent their money in their day-to-day life buying, amongst others, cigarettes, food and ‘chate’ [local drug], which is a local drug.

“If you bring 300 or 400 birr, you spend it on ‘asbeza’ [food and other related expenses], you pay for using different drugs that you are addicted to and if you are a little bit smart, you will save some money for [the] next house rent, so it is spent like this and all is gone.”
Significantly, Senite (ISP) claimed:

“I didn’t get any benefits, the only thing I worked for was to get money.”

Senite (ISP) indicated that she chose the work specifically to get money. Furthermore, Marta (ISP) indicated initially that she did not get any benefits from being a sex worker but when probed further, she revealed:

“Even the money you get will not be sufficient to fulfil all your needs in life. But it kept me from getting hungry and starving to death. And the other most important benefit I got from the work was I got the chance to sleep in an ‘alga bete’ rather than on the street, I didn’t want to sleep on the street so I say it kept me from that.”

Almaz (ISP) expressed a similar viewpoint to that expressed by Marta (ISP), when she indicated that she had had the benefit of achieving a better standard of living and had been rescued from sleeping on the street by doing commercial sex work.

“It is better than to sleep on the street. In the first place, you protect yourself-you buy clothes, you wash your body, but when you live on the street you don’t have anything to eat, you don’t wash yourself. It is much better to do this work rather than being on the street, you will be raped by drunken people while you are on the street. It is much better to do this work because, at least, there is a chance that you can use a condom but if you are on the street even if you have one guy, he will not stay only with you so there is a high probability of getting diseases and falling pregnant.”

At first, Meaza (ISP) expressed a similar view to that expressed by the other children who participated in the interviews, namely, that there were not any benefits from doing commercial sex work. However, when probed further, Meaza (ISP) indicated
that the money she had received money from doing commercial sex work was a benefit even though the money she earned from being a commercial sex worker had not given her such a big advantage.

“They pay us money but the money we spend to buy cigarettes or ‘chate’ [a local drug] and other daily expenses. Besides there are days that you don't work.”

On the other hand, Seble asserted:

“There is no benefit, you might get the money today but by tomorrow is another problem.”

However, Rahel indicated that she did not benefit from doing commercial sex work except that this allowed her the chance to buy food and drink. In turn, Asnackech claimed that she did not benefit from the work, but when questioned further, she replied:

“We get money in return but the money is not proportional to what we face to get the money, so I can say we get no benefit from the job. In addition, there are my addictions [addiction to alcohol, cigarettes and ‘chate’ that I have to buy and if you have any remaining money you will buy clothes so that you can get customers because if you don't wear good clothes nobody will be looking at you and this means you don't have money to live, so I could say money is also important.”

Sina shared the same viewpoint as Rahel when she indicated that she earned money by doing commercial sex work. However, she stated that the money she earned in this way was not sufficient to cover all her daily expenses. She declared:
“There is no benefit, you might get the money today but tomorrow you don't have any money in your hands and again, you go out to work, so there is not enough money that will make you stop doing commercial sex work.”

When further probed regarding how she spent the money she earned by doing commercial sex work, she explained:

“I pay for 'alga bete'; I buy food, cigarette, 'chate', alcohol. Most of the time it is not enough to buy all these things.”

In addition, Kalkidan also indicated that she used the money she earned through commercial sex work for different things:

“I pay for my 'alga bete', I buy food and if I am left with some money I will buy clothes.”

The same applied to the other participants. Wubit also indicated that she benefitted from getting money from commercial sex work and that she was able to use the money to buy clothes and to meet other daily needs. She revealed that working as a commercial sex worker made her feel equal to others around her:

“With the money you will dress equally with everybody else. It is by the clothes you wear that people will get close to you and come up to communicate with you, so you buy clothes with it. You can be whatever you want to be, but when you are on the street, nobody will see you and I think it [doing sex work] is better than street life. When you are living on the street, the thing that kills you is hunger, you don't find food. Other people have to care for baby’s mothers [refers to the fact that the community feel sorry for girls who have children and reside on the street] but no one cares for us, so everybody says work and eat.”
Fekerte initially responded that there were no benefits from doing commercial sex work. When probed further regarding the possible benefits of commercial sex work, she replied:

“You get money to buy your food, drinks and you pay for your 'alga bete'. I send money for my mother and if I am left with some money I buy clothes for myself.”

4.3.2.5 Summary of reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work

As described above children face many challenges and experience when they join street life. The majority of the participants in this study confirmed that they joined commercial sex work because they faced financial problems, peer pressure, perceived benefits of doing commercial sex work and challenges faced on the street. Similarly Schmidt (2003) and Ballet et al. (2013) mentioned in their studies that many street children involve themselves in socially unaccepted actions in order to win life in the street.

4.3.3 Social dislocation

The children who were part of this study experienced a great deal of social dislocation in their lives as will be discussed next.

4.3.3.1 Contact with family members

The majority of the children who participated in this study started engaging in commercial sex work around the ages of 14 or 15 years. In addition, the majority of the children at the time of the interviews and focus group discussions had no contact with their families or their families were unaware of what their children were doing for a living. Moreover, the majority of the children were estranged from their families.
because they were scared to go back home because of the work in which they were engaged. The majority of the participants were also still scared to go back to their family’s houses even after becoming involved in the support programme because of the trauma they had experienced while they were on the street.

Meron (ISP) started doing commercial sex work around the age of 15 and had no contact with her family because she did not want her family to know about the work she was doing. When probed further regarding why she was afraid to go back to her family, she explained:

“The reason is the countryside people are not like the Addis Ababa people; they misread you by small things. When countryside people hear somebody’s child is doing this [commercial sex work], it is a very disgusting thing, when it is at the countryside it is a very hard case. And the family will be embarrassed because others will point at them by saying your child used to do this [sex work].”

Senite (ISP) also had no contact with her parents and started to engage in commercial sex work at the age of 14. However, later on she did have some contact with her grandparents after becoming involved in the support programme. She declared that she was scared to make contact with her parents:

“The first time I heeee... the first time [at the time she started living on the street] I used to go there [to her parents’ house] they welcomed me in happiness, since I was not involved in commercial sex work and drugs. I go frequently and they welcome me. But now I don’t want them to know about my child and I am afraid that they will know about this. My father is very serious and I don’t want them to know.”

When probing further regarding whether the reason she did not want to see her
family was because she had a child or because she used to do commercial sex work, she reported:

“If they knew that I did this work [commercial sex work] they will not let me see them. So I was very afraid of them and I was very afraid of my father. And when I hear that he is coming to search for me or when my grandmother tells me that he will come and search for me, I automatically hide from him. So he has come to find me many times and I have been hiding from him.”

Marta (ISP) started doing commercial sex work around the age of 15. She used to have contact with her family at the time she started living on the street, but after she started doing commercial sex work, she stopped seeing them. She explained the situation as follows:

“One of the reasons that I stopped having contact with my family was because I do commercial sex work. I really didn’t want them to know that I am doing this kind of work. Also, if I go back to my home I want to show them that I am in a better position. In addition, I didn’t want to see all the harsh conditions in the house which makes me very sad to see my family in that bad situation.”

When probed further regarding what would happen if her family knew she was doing commercial sex work, she declared:

“Emmm...I will never see my family again in my life. Even if I do see them I will not be considered as part of the family and I think they might want to insult me every time they see me or through all my life and tell me how much I am a disgrace to the family. Emm... I don’t really know what will happen to me exactly but I am sure it is not going to be a nice thing.”
The same applied to Meaza (ISP) who started doing commercial sex work at the age of 16. She indicated that the one reason that she did not have contact with her family was because she used to be engaged in commercial sex work:

“But nobody knows that I did this work; even my aunt [that lives in Addis Ababa] does not know. She only knows that I am on the street, nothing else. But I am very embarrassed of [because of] the work I used to do and I assume that everybody knows, so I am very ashamed of it.”

Likewise, the fact that Genet (ISP) started doing commercial sex work at the age of 17 was one of the reasons not to have contact with her family. Similarly, the majority of the participants who were not involved in the support programme also had no contact with their families because of the work they were doing. Seble started engaging in commercial sex work at the age of 14 and said that it is difficult for her to go back to her family because she had already become used to this life:

“If you are used to the life around here it will not be possible to leave from here. Even if they tell you to come back home you can't stay there after you are used to this life. You will try to escape from your home because you have seen this life, the life we are living. It is not a nice life but since you get used to this life, it helps you to forget the things that you experienced.”

Rahel started commercial sex work at the age of 15. This was one of the reasons why she had no contact with her family:

“I don't think they know that I do commercial sex work but it really scares me that there could be a chance for them to know that I do this job because there may be a person who knows both of us and might have seen me doing this job and tell them. So I assume that they will hate me more than before and treat me in a bad way. Besides, they did not want me in the first place, so why
would I have to see them if they do not want to see me in the first place. When I first left my uncle’s house, all the people he knew tried to make me to return back to my uncle’s house but he said to them ‘leave her she will come back by herself because she will be tired with street life in a few days’, but I have no plan to go back to their house again.”

Kalkidan had similar fears regarding her family finding out about the work she did. She indicated that she had started engaging in commercial sex work at the age of 14 and was afraid of her family’s possible response:

“What will I tell them about myself in the first place, as well as I don't want them to know about the work I am doing now and I am afraid that they will know about this. I really want to see them but I am very scared that I will put them in a position that they don't want [a family that has a child engaged in sex work].”

When asked further what her family would say if they knew what she was doing for a living, she replied:

“If they know that I do this work they will not let me see them again forever. I won’t dare to go back to their place because I am a disgrace to my family and to my place of origin; probably I will kill myself, emmm... I don't know it is even hard to think about it.”

Sina started doing commercial sex work at the age of 15. She shared similar feelings about not having contact with her family because she was engaged in commercial sex work:

“Even though my main reason is because I do this work, I am very scared to go back because I have escaped from home in the first place and now I don't
know how they are going to respond if I go back. Besides what will I tell them what I was doing all this time in Addis Ababa? In addition, if you are used to this kind of life around here it will be difficult to leave from here.”

Sina further said that she was scared to have contact with her family because she was used to using different addictive substances such as “chate” (a local drug), cigarettes and alcohol and needed the money she was earning at present in her work to buy these.

Among the participants that were not involved in the support programme, Hiwot and Wubit indicated that they did not have any contact with their families because of other reasons that were indirectly connected to being engaged to commercial sex work. Hiwot mentioned that she had already left her family and she did not see the point of going back. She also revealed that they did not know where she was at all. Furthermore, Wubit revealed:

“If I go I might not find the house they [her family] have rented, since I didn't grow up with them. So they might change the house they have rented before or they might have moved to another region or they might not be there when I get there. Since I don't have anywhere to go to when I go there it will be a problem for me if I didn't find them there. Also, I have never thought of going back.”

On the other hand, Almaz (ISP) started doing commercial sex work at the age of 13 and had had contact since then with her grandmother. However, her grandmother and her other family did not know what she was doing on the street. She did not have any contact with her mother because her mother lived outside Addis Ababa:

“There are lots of things, one because I came here while I was a child, I don't know the way to go back there [her mother’s home]. And also it is very hard
for me to go back without buying things for my mother’s family. My father’s father and neighbours are there waiting for my help.”

On the other hand, there were four participants, two from the support programme and two who were not involved in the support programme who did have contact with their families, but their families did not know what their children were doing for a living. Tsega (ISP), who had completed the support programme preferred to live with her aunt.

“I meet my family at least once a month but I don’t want to meet them quite often.”

She further explained why she did not want to live with her parents:

“I am not happy to live with them and since I came here when I was a child, I don’t want them [she does not want to return to her parent’s house as well as to meet them frequently] but they come and visit us at my aunt’s house.”

Asnackech became engaged in commercial sex work around the age of 18. She shared:

“With my mother, yes I have contact with my mother by phone; she calls me on my cell phone and she calls once in two months.”

When probed further regarding whether her mother knew that she was doing commercial sex work or not, she revealed:

“No, she doesn’t know. Nobody knows that I do commercial sex work. She only thinks that I am working in a private residence [house] as a maid and I used to send money to her while I was working at a private residence. So she
only thinks that I am still working in a private residence.”

Fekerte started doing commercial sex work at the age of 16. She indicated that she had contact with her family but they did not know what she did for a living. She revealed:

“I never went back home but I call my mother on the neighbour’s phone once in a while but now the phone doesn’t work, I cannot talk to her.”

When asked further whether her mother knew what she is doing for a living, she reported:

“She doesn’t know. I don’t want her to know and give her another thing to worry about. She thinks I am working in somebody’s private residence and I always tell her that I am well and that my work is good.”

4.3.3.2 Perceptions towards commercial sex work

The participants had different perceptions about commercial sex work as an income generating activity. The majority of the participants shared similar perceptions when they were asked about their current feelings towards the work. Most expressed an intense dislike for the work and the situation in which they found themselves or were still going through. Meron (ISP) expressed her feelings towards this work when she started doing it as follows:

“It was very ugly; it was unexciting that is ...it is very hard [her face showed how sad she was, yet at the same time unable to express her feelings] because I have never been close to anyone. So it was hard [showing a disgusted face]. And besides sleeping with a person whom you don’t know

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when you are a child, it was very difficult. So I was really not interested [Again showing a disgusted face].”

In addition, this girl revealed that her present feelings about commercial sex work had become more negative in comparison to when she started working as a sex worker:

“At [the] present time ehhh...how shall I tell you [showing a disgusted face] it is very hard even to remember it, because it is impossible to dream about another life while you are in that life. So first you have to leave that life and you need somebody who can help you with this or who can support you.”

Tsega (ISP) also had the same view as Meron (ISP). She had negative feelings towards commercial sex work at the time she started the work. She started doing this work because her friends started to work as sex workers even though she did not like the job at first; she explained her initial feelings:

“I felt bad after I started it. Emm... even at the beginning, it was not my wish to start it and I started it without my interest and after I started it, all my friends were so happy because they also started to do this work but I was not happy even when I started it.”

In addition, she intimated that she still had negative feelings with regard to sex work and explained that she had left the work because she was not comfortable.

“I feel disgusted when I think about it and even when I pass by the Addis Ketema sub-city and see the ladies there, I feel ashamed as it is the worst job.”

The same applied to Tsega (ISP) and Almaz (ISP) who indicated that they had been
influenced by friends and their feelings towards the job had not been good to start with. Almaz (ISP) expressed her present feelings with a great deal of anger:

“I feel very much disgusted oh... [with regret] it was very ugly, I am very disgusted by it. Now I say it is better to be hungry rather than to do that job.”

Tigist (ISP) expressed her initial feelings towards commercial sex work as follows:

“Oh the job was so disgusting but I was neither sad nor happy, I just started doing the work.”

When further probed about her present feelings in this regard, she declared:

“For me ahhhhh.... my brain is already torched by it and doing this is so disgusting.”

Senite (ISP) also shared similar feelings towards commercial sex work at present as the other children when she explained her feelings as follows:

“It is a very disgusting life and for me after I started here [refers the Forum on Sustainable child Empowerment (FSCE-NGO) safe home] my mind is free .... if I found children doing this work I would want to tell them I was in that life too and tell them I have been changed and I will be happy if they changed.”

Marta (ISP), Meaza (ISP) and Genet (ISP) had similar views regarding commercial sex work when they started it. Initially, they had good feelings about the work, but developed negative feelings after they started doing the work. Marta (ISP) revealed:

“I thought it would be a good job that would make me independent but later on I was disgusted by the work I was doing, I didn’t like the work I was doing
at all [showing disgusted face], and I felt bad about everything even though the money was important for me.”

Meaza (ISP) described her initial feelings about the work as follows:

“I thought it would be easy to get money because we had faced many difficult situations while we were on the streets at Kasaches [an area in Addis Ababa which is not part of the Addis Ketema sub-city] but after a few days, I felt very disgusted. I used to blame myself for choosing this kind of life, even I used to regret the time my father decided that I had to go to Addis Ababa.”

Genet (ISP) revealed that she had some mixed feelings about working as a sex worker:

“Half of me knew it wasn’t good and I wasn’t happy and the other half of me was happy because my being a child and getting money every day made me happy. Later on I realized that I couldn’t get out of it and that it was so horrible.”

Even though half of the participants from the support programme had some positive views regarding commercial sex work when they started doing this work at first, all of the children from the support programme indicated that they had negative feelings about the work at present. The participants revealed that they had decided to join the support programme because they were very disgusted with the work they were doing and had therefore decided to change their lives.

Among the eight participants who were not involved in the support programme, seven felt that it was a good job when they started commercial sex work, but one of the participants, namely Rahel explained her first feeling about the work:
“I always cried every night when I was standing, I don’t know... I don’t like it for myself. This kind of work is very disgusting.”

She also stated that she still had negative feelings in this regard. Seble revealed her initial feelings towards commercial sex work:

“At first I thought it was a good job. Yeah I assumed that it is a good job. Then when I saw it was very ugly job and I wanted to get out of this.”

Similar to Seble, Asnackech explained her initial feelings towards commercial sex work as follows:

“When I started the work I thought that it would be a good job and that I will have a good income but after a while I felt that it was the hardest job ever and I was disgusted by the work but I don’t know what I can to do about it.”

She also mentioned her initial feelings by comparing them with her present feelings when she revealed:

“Now I could say I am used to it more than before even though I don’t like the work [now] and it is very hard to work, I am very used to the work when I compare it to before.”

In turn, Kalkidan described her initial feelings by saying:

“I thought it would change my life and that it would make me to continue my schooling but it was completely different from what I thought when I got into the work.”

She added:
“It is a very dangerous life in that you get addicted to different kinds of drugs [she referred to ‘chate’ and cigarettes] and I could not stand the way people in my neighbourhood would think about me. I could say the work is very disgusting and I don’t want anybody to do it.”

Hiwot also indicated that her initial feelings to being a commercial sex worker were positive in that she thought that it would be better than to live on the street but her present feelings differed from her initial feelings:

“Being a commercial sex worker is not good in general. Everyday you sleep with different men. That is not good at all. You sleep with drunk men, you face many things so I hate it.”

In addition, Wubit explained her initial feelings about commercial sex work:

“I didn’t feel anything at first because we were told we will eat without working too much so I didn’t feel anything so I got in to it. However, I hated to stand in the cold weather and with the police beating us they also put us in jail so it is very bad. There are many nights when I don’t work. I wake up in the morning and I go to Tesfa organization [a NGO that support street children] and I stay there the whole day.”

As was the case with the majority of the participants, Fekerte revealed her initial feelings towards commercial sex work:

“At first I thought it would be good work in the sense that I can get money and change the life of my family but after a few days, I started the job, it made me hate myself.”

When further probed regarding her present feelings about the work, she stated:
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“It’s like putting your life in the fire, nobody sees you in a good way, because you do this job. Nobody understands you, they just want to judge you from far. They see you as a misbehaving child, and the work is so disgusting.”
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Sina, like the others, also described her initial feelings as positive in the sense that it was an alternative to street life.

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“At first when I was told about commercial sex work (since I was tired of living on the street) I thought it would be good because they told me that I was going to be paid good money but after a while it was very disgusting to do this work.”
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She indicated that her present feelings with regard to the job were negative:

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“I am very disgusted by the work; nothing makes you happy about the work. You don’t see any change in your life; you become very lost and afraid all the time and worry about what kind sicknesses would the work brings to you.”
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4.3.3.3 Perception of the community regarding female children engaged in commercial sex work

The majority of the participants revealed that the perceptions of the society towards them and their friends who were involved in commercial sex work in general were negative when they mentioned that commercial sex work was not accepted in society, which leads to them being rejected by the community in which they were living. Meron (ISP) described the perceptions of the community in the area where she used to do commercial sex work as follows:

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“….they [people in the community] say things about us like she doesn't like people and they think that we are not born from human beings. But we do this
because of the nature of the work and their view is very negative [closing her eyes to remember the situations]. That is like they treat you as dirt. They expect that you must go and drink coffee with them, you must in return call them to drink coffee with you or you must participant in ‘Idiers’ [small community associations] and help them out during funeral times and parties etc but in these things we cannot participate because this will take our sleeping time.”

In addition, Senite (ISP) explained the perception of the community who lived in Kebele 32 where she used to work and live. This is one of the sub-divisions of the Addis Ketema sub-city where a high concentration of children is found in commercial sex work. She explained:

“What I think, in the context people living in 32 [Kebele 32] there are many commercial sex workers, we are many. Their perception is they don’t see you as equal to other members of the community. There is a way that they undermine you and marginalize you.”

Tsega (ISP) had more or less the same view regarding the perception of the people in her neighbourhood towards her and other friends who engaged in commercial sex work:

“They think it is bad because they see you with different guys, even the ‘alga bete’ owners or others.”

Marta (ISP) indicated that there were two kinds of perceptions of her amongst the neighbours in the area where she used to work:

“...I say most of the people in the neighbourhood don't regard us as good citizens. They don't want us to be seen on the street and sometimes they
point at us and they say she is a commercial sex worker, but there are other kinds of people who approach me and give me advice. Also they try to find a way for me to get out to this kind of work. They basically try to understand our situation and give us advice on how we can change our lifestyle.”

The researcher probed further and asked her to explain who these persons were who ostracised children engaged in commercial sex work. She replied:

“The people are those who live in the neighbourhood around the ‘alga bete’ where we sleep or those who pass by the street while we stand on the street waiting for our customers; you see everybody is not the same. Some of them try to understand us but most of them don’t like us. They see as if we are criminals or they feel that we are spoiling the culture of the country. We are treated as if we are the defects of this community.”

Tigist (ISP) also revealed that there were two different kinds of perceptions regarding children who did commercial sex work. The first group consisted of those people who passed by them on the street or those people who lived in the neighbourhood. She intimated that the people in the area where she used to sleep had a negative perception of them:

“Oh they see us as bad but we pass them quietly by ignoring them.”

She pointed out that the only person who saw her in a good light, were her friends who also worked as commercial sex workers. Meaza (ISP) had the same opinion regarding the perceptions of the society regarding her and other participants who were involved in the support programme. She also divided the perceptions of the community into two categories:

“Most of the people in the neighbourhood don’t like us. They treat as if we are
not part of the culture and as if we are a bad influence on their children. Most of the people say to us when we stand on the street at Atobis Tera, ‘why doesn’t she do another job, look at her she is a very small child, why is she standing there at that time of night?’ Such things are very embarrassing to me to hear all these things while I am standing in front of them. On the other hand, there are some people who come close and say ‘why do you have to do this job, let me find you another work or go home.’ So it depends on the personality of the person, but most of them don’t want to see us in the neighbourhood.”

When probed further regarding who these people were that had negative perceptions of them, she revealed:

”This people are those who live around the ‘alga bete’ or those who are passing by the ‘alga bete’ or those who are passing in the street around 32 [Kebele 32- one of the sub-divisions of the Addis Ketema sub-city]. These people, I don’t know what exactly they do but I know that they don't do commercial sex work or rent an ‘alga bete,’ I don't know anybody among them.”

Almaz (ISP) made the following remarks about the perceptions of society towards her and other friends who did commercial sex work:

“Some of the older people and those who have children say ‘woooo.... I feel sorry for them’; they say these kinds of things while they pass the street. And some of them say ‘why doesn’t she do another job?’ Or other related things. And some of them come close to me and say ‘let me get you another work.’ Yeah there are lots of types of things, and also there are some who spit at you. Even there are males that undermine you.”
Genet (ISP) revealed the perceptions of the community of her:

“In my view I don't think they see me in a good way.”

She also identified two kinds of perceptions when she explained:

“The people who don't see me in good way are for example the neighbours where I live, if they know what I am doing, they will not see me in a good way, these people are those who don't do this job. In the first place when we do this job we stand at the Atobis Tera and some of those who see us standing there will feel sorry for us and some of them will spit at our face and go. So when I see this entire situation I really feel sad inside. There are some who understand this problem and they say ‘this is not good for you why do you do this’ and there are some females that say ‘she is the one that leads our husbands to be bad’.”

During the focus group discussions, the children who were in the support programme had similar views regarding the perception of the community of female children who were engaged in commercial sex work. The majority of the participants agreed that they were not perceived as equal to other people in the community even though there were some people in the community that understood them; this was evidenced by some of the following responses:

“...they say ‘ho..... she is a sex worker’ and they will be disgusted by me because they don’t know this life and they don’t know why I join the work, it could be because I faced a problem that I joined or it was because I wanted to. The people who do not know the reason they talk about me.” (Saron (ISP))

“...they don’t even think that we are human beings, so most of the people’s attitudes are not good.” (Nebyat (ISP))
“We are not considered equally [as equals] and there is an attitude to ignore you. They say ‘she is like this and that’ there is this kind of characters inside the community.” (Meri (ISP))

Similarly, the participants who were not involved in the support programme also divided reactions from the community into two categories, where some of the people felt sorry for them, while the majority of the people had a negative perception of the participants. Seble indicated:

“They are very sorry that I am on street because I am on the street at this age. These people when they know you they advise you. They say ‘go back to your family and continue your education’ so there are many people that say these things.”

When further probed about who had provided advice to her, she proffered:

“For example, there are people who work at the shoe shops and similar things that I know they say ‘don’t do commercial sex work, I always see you standing here, why are you standing here’ and they give me advice then they will tell me not to do this work. Also they say ‘we help you to search for another job for you.’ Then I will say ‘ok’ and then they will go.”

Seble also explained,

“What my friends think is that I should leave this work and start to do another job.”

When further probed who her friends were she replied:

“There are some who are sex workers at the ‘alga bete’ and there are some
who came from the countryside where they sleepover at the ‘alga bete’ and do other jobs like waitressing. And these people want me to leave this job.”

Rahel explained that the community around her has negative perceptions towards her and her friends who do commercial sex work:

“In general they don’t have a good perception towards [of] us. Since it is not good work they do not have a good perception towards [of] us.”

Asnackech described the perception of the community of her and her friends on the street:

“We are taken to be below humans, like we are nothing. When I see this entire situation, I feel very depressed and I don’t want to live at all in this world. But there are some who understand this problem and they say to me ‘I will find another job for you’ or ‘let me take you to my home’ - those ladies who have children the same age as me or ladies who work as brokers [those who facilitate a job in private residence house as a domestic worker].”

When further probed who the people were that had a bad perception of her, Asnackech answered that the community in the Addis Ketema sub-city had a bad perception of her:

“Most of the people who are passing by the street or those people who live around ‘alga bete’.”

She also indicated that the people who lived around the “alga bete” included all those people who were engaged in jobs other than commercial sex work. Marta also explained the negative perception of the community:
“Most of them don't see us as children who need support, rather they think we have chosen this kind of life. They think we have options to be with our families. What can I say? They don't understand us; they look at us as if we are criminals who need to be marginalised and excluded from anything that a human needs.”

Hiwot expressed similar sentiments to the participants regarding the perceptions of the community:

“They see us as dirt. They don't have a good impression of us.”

When asked who these people were, she replied:

“People who are not engaged in this kind of life. They say to us ‘instead of living this life, why don't you work as a domestic servant?’”

Wubit had a similar story as the other participants to tell regarding the perception of sex workers by the community:

“In my opinion they all don't like us but it never happened to me because most of my friends don't know. Only the one who works with me knows. Most of them don't know but most of the time women that come around here, they see us standing around here and they say ‘that girl does those kinds of things’.”

She also revealed that most of the people that she encountered did not know that she did commercial sex work:

“They don’t know that I do this kind of work so I live with them pretending I am a street child. They don't know that I do this.”
In turn, Fekerte who was also not in the support programme explained that the perception of the community is negative towards her and those who are engaged in sex work:

“I don’t expect that they will be good to me because I know that I am doing the most disgusting job so I don’t expect them to be good to me. People in my neighbourhood have a very different perception towards us. Like we are ‘dureye’ [delinquent children] for them and emmm….For example, in our neighbourhood where I sleep, if things got lost from one of the houses in the neighbourhood then we are the first one to be suspected to be the thieves like when they lost their clothes or other belongings and they came to our house and search us, so they think of us as thieves, liars and not equal to them.”

When probed further, who the people in the neighbourhood were, she answered:

“Those who live in their own houses emmm…and other people who live around there and work around there.”

Fekerte also indicated that these people did not do commercial sex work. She also explained the perception of passers-by in the street:

“Those people don’t know that I do this work so I don’t face any problems but when they see us on the street standing while we wait for our customers, hoo…. some of them feel sorry for us like they say ‘she joined this work because she has nothing to eat, what a sad thing’ or ‘Oh! She is a child, what is she doing here’. But still it feels so uncomfortable when the people stare at you as if you are a criminal.”

In turn, Sina described her views regarding the perception of the people in the neighbourhood of her is not positive in that girls engaged in sex work are not
accepted in the community:

“They assume that I am a 'dureye' and they have a bad perception of us and they don't see us as the same as the other girls who live with their families. They considered us as terrible children who sell their own bodies and they don't want to see us around in the neighbourhood. For them we believe in bad things. This is how they all think.”

When asked who these people were Sina answered:

“The society in general and those who live around the 'alga bete’.”

She further explained that the people around the ‘alga bete’ had different backgrounds, she explained:

“…there are some who have come from the countryside where they sleepover at the ‘alga bete’ and there are some who are doing sex work like me. There are also people who are doing other jobs who live in a normal house around the ‘alga bete’ so these kind of people are found around ‘alga bete’.”

The same kind of view was expressed by the children who were not in the support programme that participated in the focus group discussions. All the participants felt that the perception of the community with regard to them was not positive and they explained their views as follows:

“They have a negative perception towards us and they don’t see us in the same way as other girls who live with their families. They considered us as very badly behaved persons who sell their bodies and something like that and they don’t consider us as good children. This is how they all think.” (Meheret)
“In my area, no one knows that I do commercial sex work but they consider me as a ‘dureye’, thief and a burglar that is what they think.” (Donat)

“Society as a whole thinks about a commercial sex worker as if she is a killer of many people. And regarded as ‘dureye’, they think that the devil thinks better of men than the ‘dureye’. If we get dressed well, they might say ‘you look good’ and the next day, ‘oh she looks good today because either she killed someone or she has stolen money from somebody.’ Therefore, they do not even fear hyenas as they fear us, in my opinion.” (Selam)

“The people in my previous area [she was referring to her mother’s home] say that if a girl does this [commercial sex work], then she is considered as someone that left home not because she has problems but because she is acting over her age even though her mother is doing her best and it’s because she needs more money.” (Beza)

“The community has a very different perception of us as if we are ‘dureye’ and emmm….for example, in our area where I sleep things will be lost, like washed clothes that are put to dry will be lost many times during the day time. When they have lost their clothes, the first person that they point at, is me and they come to my house and search for that [the clothes]. And they think of me as a thief.” (Brhan)

“The community has a very different attitude towards the commercial sex workers. I mean, I don’t know emmm…I think they consider us as hired killers, seriously. The neighbours have a different view. That is it.” (Mime)

“The community’s attitude towards us is very bad. And since prostitution is a very different thing for them, it’s very disgusting.” (Meseker)
As evidenced in the key informant interviews, the majority of the participants maintained that the perception of society and the community in general of the children engaged in commercial sex work is not positive. However, some of the participants mentioned that some gradual changes had taken place in this regard through the awareness raising programmes that are being presented in the community by different concerned bodies such as the ‘Idier’ (small community associations), NGOs and the authorities in the Addis Ketema sub-city.

4.3.3.4 Physical and verbal abuse

Both the participants that were involved in the support programme as well as those who were not involved in the support programme had experienced physical or verbal abuse because they were engaged in commercial sex work. The majority of the participants reported that they had experienced physical abuse from customers or the police or passersby in the street, especially at the hands of the drunk men. Meron (ISP) mentioned that she had faced physical abuse and insults from the police:

“You can't stand on the street as a commercial sex worker and when we stand on the street the police will come and make us go away. And sometimes they even ask us to sleep with them and we don't say yes to them because we think that they will not pay us money. So they will beat us make us go away. If they know you once they will find you wherever you go and they will arrest you so they make our lives miserable and beat us with their sticks.”

Senite (ISP), Marta (ISP), Meaza (ISP) and Almaz (ISP) also intimated that they had all experienced physical abuse from the police and explained the situation as follows:
“The police make us go away from the place where we stood. When they want they will put us in prison or when they want they hit us, they make us to kneel down and hit us with a plastic club, yeah, there are lots of painful things.” (Senite (ISP))

“I had the experience of being abused physically by [the] police. When you stand on the streets around 32 [Kebele 32] or Atobis Tera and if they find you they will hit you with the wooden club they have with them. I have scars on my back and on my hand [showing me her hand with a sad face].” (Marta (ISP))

“Most of the nights there will be police moving around the area so every time you go out onto the streets to wait for customers, if the police find you they will hit you without any excuses. So in order not to be hit by the police you have to run as fast as you can when you see them and even worse, they might go after you, which makes your life even harder. It is frustrating to run and hide from them every time they come to you whenever you stand on the street waiting for customers. You have to check your back every minute to see whether there are no police coming towards you as well as some drunk men are not coming towards you because there are times that they will hit you, so all this is very disturbing and [it is] degrading to me to do this work.” (Meaza (ISP))

“The police will hit you and I still have the scars on my side where the police have hit me. But with the regular customers there is no such thing because you try to convince them but the police you can’t convince them, they don’t understand you, but you can convince or delude a male, but the police will never believe you anyway.” (Almaz (ISP))

In the same vein, the participants who were not involved in the support programme
also mentioned the abuse they had faced from the police among the other abuses they faced:

“I have never been attacked by police, but I have been arrested and I have been kept in cold hall room. There is one smashed hall around Atobis Tera. I have been caught and held in that hall at three different days, they will arrest you during the night and keep us in the room that is very cold and they will let us free in the morning. And if you say anything they will hit you with the club so I don't say anything. Then they will let us free in the morning but they made us not to work that night and kept us in the cold room and insult or hit us.” (Rahel)

“I was harassed by the police lots of times. They will insult you and there is no excuse for not being hit by them.” (Asnackech)

“The physical abuse that I have encountered is from the police. They have harassed me in every point they got [possible way]. They will hit you with the club that they carry with them and there is no excuse for not to be hit by them they will hit you without differentiating where they put the club on your body. And there were times that I was sick because I was hit by them harshly and I could not recover quickly.” (Kalkidan)

“You can say it is part of our culture to disgrace a prostitute. The police don't like us when we stand on the streets. If they find you, they will abuse you and they will hit you. Besides, they don't care where they hit you.” (Fekerte)

“I have been beaten by the police many times. And I have been arrested by the police and I have been taken into a cold damaged store room and spend my night there for four different days. During this time, I got very sick which made me to stop working for a few days. Then I could not afford to pay my
‘alga bete’ so I have faced many problems during this time [said with a very sad face].” (Sina)

All the participants in this study also pointed out that they faced physical abuse from customers. Senite (ISP), Marta (ISP) and Almaz (ISP) had mentioned their experiences of physical abuse that they have encountered from customers as follows:

“Those people who are with me [customers], the males, when they hit me, it reminded me of my family and I will be very emotional and cry. When I cry I try to kill myself or I condemn myself and my mother by saying why I was created, this is the result. There was spanking and punching by customers.” (Senite (ISP))

“Some customers are very rude and might hit you if you say ‘no’ to them or if they got annoyed somewhere else and if they are drunk, they might hit you.” (Marta (ISP))

“…..at Feluha [an area in Addis Ababa close to the Merkato market] they give us food for free because you have a ticket [issued by a NGO called Tesfa, which gives support to street children]. Then after my lunch, I went out and it was raining so I got dirty while I was walking and a person asked me to sleep with him. Then I was so amazed because I was so dirty and since nobody wants a girl who is dirty. Then he took me to his home but in the morning he didn’t pay me anything. He even didn’t give me dinner. My eye and my lips were swollen because he was hitting me when I said that I wanted to leave. I was so scared even to ask for my money.” (Almaz (ISP))

Likewise, Asnackech, Kalkidan, Wubit, Fekerte and Sina had also mentioned the physical abuse and mistreatment they experienced from customers as follows:
“An insult is a frequent situation that we face from customers, like if the customer is a bad person or if he was mad in other situations.” (Asnackech)

“Some of the customers will treat you as if you are an object; they try to take advantage whenever they get a chance and they will steal your money, [and] your things such as your cell phone.” (Kalkidan)

“Some of them want to have unprotected sex; some will steal your money afterwards. Some of the customers see you as if you are nothing, like you are an object. When this happens, it really makes me cry. There are times when I am insulted and beaten by customers because I am just nothing to them other than an object to be used.” (Wubit)

“There are some who do not want to use condoms and there are some who want to use condoms. Those who do not want to use condoms when I say ‘no’ to them, then this problem will happen. One time a guy who I go with yelled at me and tried to hit me because I said that I will leave the 'alga bete' since he said ‘I do not want to use a condom’. ” (Fekerte)

“I had the experience of being beaten by a customer because I found out that he was drunk and I told him that I won't sleep with him and want to leave the 'alga bete.' Then he was mad at me and punched me on my nose. I was bleeding very much. I shouted for help, so those people who were in the next 'alga bete' and the 'alga bete' owners came to help me. After that I was sick with a severe headache for two days because he punched me very hard on my head.” (Sina)

Significantly, the majority of the participants in this study pointed out that they had faced insults and mistreatment from the community in which they were living. The majority, who were involved in the support programme, indicated that they had
experienced insults and verbal abuse by people who were passing by on the street or by the people who used to live in the Addis Ketema sub-city. These were their comments:

“...They [her neighbours] abused us verbally or they pointed at us by referring to us as prostitutes.” (Meron (ISP))

“There was an incidence of verbal mistreatment or being completely ignored by the people in the community. And some customers had been treating me unfairly because they were angry about other things in their lives. For example, in the area where we rented the ‘alga bete’ other people who lived in that area said, ‘she works during the night time, she is a prostitute’ and they point at you when you go out to the shop or for other reasons, but these people are those who see us when we bring different customers to the ‘alga bete’.” (Marta (ISP))

“I have been treated unfairly on many occasions such as some of the people who were passing by the street were spitting at me just because I stood on the streets or some of them see me as criminal while they pass by my side.” (Meaza (ISP))

“Since we are doing this job which does not have [engender] any respect, people will see you in a bad way, they treat you unfairly; they all see you in a bad way and not in a good way. They say to you that you don't deserve any respect, even though they don't say it by [with] their mouths, their eyes say like that.” (Genet (ISP))

Tsega (ISP) and Tigist (ISP) also indicated that they had never experienced physical abuse but they had experience of being verbally attacked by customers or people in
the neighbourhood and this affected them emotionally. They explained the situation as follows:

“When we live in the ‘alga bete’ there might be guys around there and they point at us by saying she is working sex work and insult us by calling us names when we pass by. Therefore, our emotions would be affected by them. Yes I used to run away many times from the police but I have never been caught or beaten by the police.” (Tsega (ISP))

“When you encounter drunk customers they treat you as if you are a thing. They abuse you verbally using disgusting words.” (Tigist (ISP))

Some of the participants revealed that there could be insults and mistreatment that could come from those who rent out the rooms, as Meaza (ISP) explained:

“On some occasions, the ‘alga bete’ owners used to call me names and treat me unfairly because I didn't pay their money every day or when I come to them to ask them for credit they will be offended if it is a repeated situation.”

Tsega (ISP) recounted the same experience as Meaza (ISP):

“The ‘alga bete’ owners might insult us like if we rent their rooms and if they hear any sound they will make you leave and they might not return your money because of that you might quarrel with them and even the boy who is with you might get into a fight too.”

Similarly, the participants who were not involved in the support programme also had similar experiences of abuse. The majority of the participants declared that they faced mistreatment and insults from all spectrums of the community, such as the customers, the people who lived in the Addis Ketema sub-city or people passing by.
Seble, Rahel, Asnackech, Kalkidan, Hiwote and Sina explained their experience as follows:

“Most of the time when I stand there [pointing in the direction to the bus station] most of the people, especially the males will abuse me verbally and they will hit me. And it is a problem when you do sex work: the police will hit you. So there are lots of this and if we stand on the street we have to tolerate all this.” (Seble)

“It often comes from the landlords that I have a problem. They insult me when I go out and when I come in and I don’t know ... [bending her head]. It is because I don’t sleep in the house at night and when I leave during the night time they call me names like ‘shermuta’ [prostitute] and I act as if I didn’t heard anything.” (Rahel)

Rahel also explained that the people who abused her verbally most of the time were people who lived near a house she rented and the people who owned the house she had rented:

”Most of them pass by insulting us, they say ‘shermuta [prostitute], look at them they have lined-up’ so most of them pass by insulting us.”

Likewise, the other participants also mentioned how they were being verbally abused because of the work they did:

“Most of the people that live around that area know us most of the time, they see us when we stand during the night time around that area. So whenever they get the chance to make us mad they insult us by referring to what we do. Some of them don’t know us but when they see us standing and waiting for customers they insult us because they know why we stand there.”
(Asnackech)

“There are many who insult you, we are treated unfairly so it is our day-to-day life to be considered as bad people who need to be treated in a bad way so that we disappear from this area.” (Kalkidan)

“When I am standing on the streets, people who pass by call me names or even spit on me.” (Hiwot)

“Nobody treats you good if they know that you are doing [this] job. The neighbours who live around the 'alga bete' treat me badly whenever they see me. They see me as disgusting. One day I was hungry and I asked the lady who sells cookies to give me credit because I know that she gives credit to other people but for me [in my case], she refused to give me [credit] and insulted me with all the names that could hurt me.” (Sina)

The participants also mentioned that they were given names because of the work they did by the people in the Addis Ketema sub-city. For example, they were given names to indicate that the children’s work was not acceptable or that they did not belong to the neighborhood or they were categorised as delinquent children. Accordingly, the participants who were involved in the support programme were used to being given names that labelled them; they revealed that the people in the neighborhood label them with different names. Furthermore, participants who were not involved in the support programme also mentioned some of the names and categorisation that was given to them.

4.3.3.5 Social exclusion

The majority of the participants who were involved in support programme reported that are socially excluded by other members of society who were living in the Addis
Ketema sub-city because of the work they used to do. They explained in their own words that they used to feel physically or emotionally marginalised from the people around them:

“...not being involved in social events is one of the manifestations of the marginalization [we experience] because they are disgusted by us, as if we have a wound.” (Meron (ISP))

“They make me question myself, ‘who am I and what am I? Heee.... Is it because I am a commercial sex worker?’ And people in our neighbourhood when they don’t invite me to weddings, it makes me cry..., I cry a lot. How come the people in the neighbourhood are marginalising me? If I were with my family, they would respect me. And I ask myself, ‘will I be living with my family one day to be considered as a yebite lige’ [reference to a child who is living with parents [at] home and considered to be a well-behaved child].” (Senite (ISP))

“When we get close [when we try to approach to the people in the community] thinking that they will be our friends, they don’t want us to be near to them and then they stigmatise us.” (Tigist (ISP))

“They don’t allow their children to talk to us. For example, if one mother sees one of her children taking to me or if she says ‘hello’ to me then her mother will be upset because her daughter knew me and she will prevent her from coming close to me.” (Meaza (ISP))

“I want to wash my clothes and if I am a street child or if you are sex worker, you can’t use their washing buckets to wash your clothes. Because of this, we wash our clothes on a stone or in plastic bags so you can’t touch their things or they won’t let you have anything they own.” (Almaz (ISP))
“There is material marginalisation; I say this because when you borrow their things, they think that the material they gave us will turn into something when you return it to them. Anyways those who are our neighbours and who don't do the work we are doing, they marginalise us too much.” (Genet (ISP))

Similarly, the majority of the participants who were not in the support programme, indicated that they faced marginalisation because of the work they did:

“They marginalise me through things that affect my feelings. I always feel discomfort when I pass through the neighbourhood and sometimes I spend my day around here [around the area called Sebategha in Addis Ketema sub-city] because I hate going back to my room.” (Seble)

“I feel marginalised especially physiologically because I am not allowed to be friends with other children who live in the neighborhood, especially those who come from a normal family. Most of the children in our neighborhood are told by their family not to talk to us and that makes me very lonely. Though the emotional marginalisation is much worse, there is also physical marginalisation, they are very reluctant to touch us as if there is something on us.” (Asnackech)

Asnackech further explained her experience of social exclusion:

“There are some, when I want to borrow something from somebody they won’t let me have it or if they give it to me they will be scared to take it back because they think that something has happened to it, so I won’t ask them in the first place because I know what is going to happen to me.”

Similarly, Kalkidan indicated that she did not feel that she was part of the community:
“I feel that they are making me feel that I am not good enough to be with them and that they don’t want to see me around them.”

She further explained her experiences of social exclusion:

“Most of the time, I say they are marginalising us emotionally because they regard us as nothing, which in turn, makes you to feel bad about yourself and [you] miss the time that you were with your family.”

Hiwot explained that her social exclusion was evidenced by the way people were scared to talk to her:

“If they see you talking to someone, they say ‘are you talking to her?’ Or ‘do you talk to such a person?’ ”

Fekerte also explained how socially excluded she felt:

“Sometimes emm...most of the people don’t want to get close to us as if we have something on us, they don't want to share any things with us. If possible, they don't even want to share a road with us.”

She further explained how marginalised she felt with regard to the community in which she lived:

“They don’t want me to get close to them because we are ‘dureye’ and a bad influence on their children.”

Sina also explained how marginalised she felt:

“It is emotionally as well as materially that they marginalise me. They don't let
me borrow their things such as dishes or plates and other things.”

4.3.3.6 Social relationships of the children

The majority of the participants indicated that they had little contact and few social relationships with other members of the society that were living in the Addis Ketema sub-city who were engaged in other types of work. As the majority of the participants involved in the support programme reported that there was no interaction with other people living in the Addis Ketema sub-city other than with those children who were doing the same work as themselves. Meron (ISP) explained the social relationships she used to have while she was engaged as a commercial sex worker as follows:

“...within those who are engaged in commercial sex work, we will talk among each other and contribute some money to celebrate holidays. Other than this, we were not included with the people in the neighbourhood. We will have a get-together programme at one of the girl’s houses among the girls who does night work [works as a prostitute] so we spend [the time] by satisfying ourselves with drugs ['chat’ and cigarette] and drinks. Other than these, we were not involved with people in the community. We only do these kinds of things with our friends that are working as commercial sex workers.”

She also described her relationships with her neighbours who were not engaged in commercial sex work:

“If we invite them for coffee maybe some of them might come and if somebody you are close to [refers to the close contact they have with that person], you may go to the funerals but when you enter the funeral house you will not be respected by others. They see you as someone who is very low [has a very low status].”

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Senite (ISP) also mentioned that holidays were celebrated among themselves rather than with other people in their neighbourhood. She explained:

“I remember for the Meskele holiday all of us who are ‘dureye’ in the 32 [Kebele 32 division, which is one of the sub-divisions of the sub-city], we celebrated the bonfire at the 32 square by contributing money.”

When further probed about her relationship with the people in her neighbourhood, she explained:

“We don’t have any contact. You say ‘hello’ to those you know and you don’t say ‘hello’ to those you don’t know. Those we know could be because of the ‘alga bete’ [small partitioned rental rooms], they could be ‘alga bete’ owners and those people you may know because you live in the same area or in a same compound. There is a person called Tsehaye who lives in 32 [refers to Kebele 32], she is a very big person [refers to her age] with whom we get along very well. When I am hungry, I go and eat at her place, also there is a person called Zeritu where I eat. They also want me to be helped by the many meetings they attend [refers to the different community meetings] and they have done many things for me. In my perception [opinion], the problem is from the people in the community not from us.”

In addition, Tsega (ISP) explained that children who engaged in commercial sex work spent their holidays together and isolate themselves from others in the community:

“At [during] the holidays, with the money we earned, we contribute money and me and my friends rent one room and find some coffee cups and we do a coffee ceremony with children who are engaged in commercial sex work. Then we bring baked breads, buy ‘Tela’ [homemade alcohol] and celebrate
together, that is how we celebrate.”

She also described her relationship with her neighbours by saying:

“At least we just say ‘good morning’ and they say back ‘good morning’ but they don’t know that we are doing this work. If they know that, we do this work. Emmm….I don’t know, but I don’t think they would let us come near them.”

Marta (ISP) stated:

“I don’t mix with other people in the neighbourhood. For example we prepare coffee and have ‘chate’ when we get together with my friends like with Maritu and other friends. And we have bonfire ceremonies with other ‘dureye’.”

When probed further about her relationship with the people in her neighbourhood who were not engaged in commercial sex work she replied:

“The other people who live in the neighbourhood when they celebrate holidays they will not call or invite us, they don’t know us. Even if they know us, they don’t want us to be near them because they are scared that we might influence their children so they try whatever possible [as hard as they can] to avoid us.”

Meaza (ISP), Almaz (ISP) and Genet (ISP) explained that their relationships with their neighbours was poor with regard to spending holidays [with them], attending social events and having normal communication with the members of the community other than with their friends who were engaged in commercial sex work.

“We celebrate holidays together with my friends, but other than that, we don’t
communicate with other people in the neighbourhood, since they don't know us and even if they know us, we don't have that much communication as they don't want us to be near to them, so how can you have a relationship with people who don't want you? Most of the time we celebrate the bonfire ceremonies with the 'dureye' that live in 32 [refers to Kebele 32]. Otherwise we spend our day by sleeping in our ‘alga bete’ [small partitioned rented rooms] if we didn't prepare to have any ceremonies with friends.” (Meaza (ISP))

“We only get along with those who rent the ‘alga bete’ to us, we don't have any connection with others who live around here and who don't rent ‘alga bete’. They don't want us to get close to them because they think that we will transmit diseases to their children or them. So we don't get close to other people in the neighbourhood.” (Almaz (ISP))

“Our life doesn't have any quality because we don't get any respect. If it is funeral and if it is one of the neighbours and if you feel sorry for him then you will have the capacity to go, but if it is wedding, you can't do anything you just pass by because there is no communication with the people in the community but if it is a funeral, you will just go by because you feel sorry for the deceased. It is obvious that they will not see us in a good way and they will say ‘what is she doing here’ and this is the attitude they show us.” (Genet (ISP))

The participants who were not involved in the support programme also explained that they had poor relations with their neighbours. Accordingly, Seble stated:

“For me, I don't know that many people so I sleep at the ‘alga bete’ or at least I go to watch movies. Then I will come and sleep in my bed at the ‘alga bete’. And these funerals they don't call me to come.”
She further stated that she was close to one person whom assisted her but this person did not know that she did commercial sex work:

“I go to her place lots of time, I will eat food and if she has money she will give me so that I [can] pay for the ‘alga bete’.”

Rahel explained that she was not close to any one:

“I used to have two friends who did work like me but now we have quarrelled. Now I will go home [the house she has rented] and sleep and I go out. Because if I get along with them it is a problem, they can make me to be addicted to different things so I don’t want to get close to them.”

Asnackech explained that she did not have any relationships with their neighbours:

“Nobody wants us to be involved in any social events that are going on in the neighbourhood. They even don't want to talk to us, let alone call us to be participants in the social events. For example, if one of our neighbours has died we are not welcome to go to this person's house to pay our condolences, even if we go because we feel sorry for the deceased, they won't welcome us so we don't go. [Regarding] wedding ceremonies, it is unthinkable that they will consider us to be called [inviting us], [so] in general we don't have any connections.”

Similarly, Kalkidan explained that she was not involved in any social events with her neighbours as follows:

“Emm...we don't participate in any social events; it is like they don't want us to be found participating in anything that the people in the neighbourhood are involved in because we do things that the people in the neighbourhood don't
like and they are very disgusted about it, so how can we have a chance to participate in the social events?”

Kalkidan further described the social relationships most children engaged in commercial sex work have:

“With other people in the neighbourhood we don't have that much closeness; we call each other for coffee among ourselves. Maybe we say ‘hello’ to them when we pass by them only if we know them and only if they are good to us.”

Kalkidan also indicated that the people whom they knew were the owners of the rented rooms or people who lived in the same compound as them. She also revealed that most of the time, they did not socialise with these people because they were scared of what they would say to them. Hiwot revealed, “I only have one female friend” who was engaged in commercial sex work and indicated that she had no other contact with other people who lived in the sub-city. Wubit described the contact she had with the people that lived around her in the following way:

“I just get in fast and get in to my bed and even in the morning I will not even say ‘good morning’, I just leave. For me to get used to people it takes a longer time. Even to meet friends it takes a long time for me because I feel ashamed of the work I do. I don't say ‘hello’ even to the people I know because they ignore me or when I talk to them they look down on me, so I hate it. So I normally don't communicate with people.”

In turn, Fekerte indicated that she did not have any relationships with the people in the neighbourhood:

“They don’t want me to live in that neighbourhood let alone to have social relationships [with me].”
Fekerte also explained that the only relationship she had was with her friends who were engaged in commercial sex work:

“We eat together, we go to the video house together. In general, we spend our days together and our day times are very nice. We wish that the night won’t come so that we don’t have to separate to go to work.”

Sina also indicated that she had no close contact with anybody except her friends, meaning her friends who were engaged in commercial sex work:

“I have good social relationships only with my friends.”

Similarly, the majority of the key informants interviewed agreed that children who were engaged in commercial sex work had weak social relationships with the community. Adanech, who worked at an NGO called the ‘Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment’ (FSCE) as a rehabilitation social worker, described the social relationships of the children as follows:

“I can say the social relationships they have with the people in the neighbourhood is not good because everything they do is considered as a social taboo or they are treated like criminals. As I can see, no one wants to have relationships with these kinds of children. Most of the time they are avoided by the people around them. They have no relationships with the people in the community other than their own friends who are engaged in commercial sex work. Since everything they do is odd to the people in their neighbourhood, nobody wants to talk to them or tries to help them. Nobody says ‘hello’ to them and the people around them become nervous when they meet these children because they don’t know how to communicate with them because most of the time, they are considered as criminals. They are categorized as misbehaved children or children who are bad in the eyes of
their parents as well as by the society. In a much greater way they are avoided and are not involved in any social relationships in the community or [so that they cannot have] contact with other children who are living with their parents.”

Tamirat who also works at the FSCE as a social worker, shares the same viewpoint mentioned by Adanech. He explained that there was little social contact between children engaged in commercial sex work and the community. He indicated that these children mostly hid away in order to avoid the confrontation they might face from people in the community.

“….they stay the whole day sleeping or hide in their rooms and they will go out during the night time for work. So I think they don’t have good social relationships with the people in their neighbourhood.”

Yohannnes who worked in the Addis Ketema sub-city at the HIV Prevention Control Office as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer made the following remarks regarding the little contact the children who were engaged in commercial sex work had with the people in the community:

“Since this work is not favoured [accepted by society], the children are stigmatized, as we know. Even they can’t get health care, specifically those who are on the streets engaged in commercial sex work because it is difficult to track them to give them the services. It is very difficult to reach those children on the street. So we can’t know their real situations, but in general what we think is that commercial sex workers are stigmatized and are not accepted by the people in the community and they don’t get enough services from the community. These services include food services, health services, etc. Even from the side of the government, they don’t have good things [refers to the lack of support that is being provided to sex workers]. For example,
when we ask to give them a place and money to start their own work at that place, they don’t have IDs [this is an ID given by each Wereda in the sub-city that identifies people who are living in the specific Wereda and sub-city]. Because they don’t have IDs, they can’t get work to get out of this lifestyle.”

Zena, who was the head finance of one of the ‘Idiers’ [a small community association] found in the Addis Ketema sub-city, explained the social relationships of the children engaged in commercial sex work as follows:

“…to tell the truth, the relationship they have with the people in the neighbourhood is too far from each other [are socially isolated from each other]. This is because people in the neighbourhood do not even allow these children to get close to their own children because they are afraid that their children’s behaviour will be influenced by these children and their children will go to the streets too. So, in order to protect their own children, there is no contact between them. In general, they are marginalised. So, I say there is a problem whenever other children make contact with these children who are on the street, they become influenced by the idea of going out onto the street. The problem is getting much bigger than before so people in the neighbourhood forbid their own children to have contact with these kinds of children.”

Similarly, Derej who works for the Organisation for Child Development and Transformation as a project coordinator explained that the social relationships among the children engaged in commercial sex work is much stronger than with the other members of the community:

“…it depends on mutual respect, does one person care for another person, does one person help the another person etc… or is the relationship on the path set by our society as healthy and right? On the other hand, for now when
these children live together and since all of the children live for today, if one can live with the other comfortably sharing things, eating, talking, laughing or going to cinemas there won’t be any problems. Problems start to creep up most of the time, when one girl isolates herself from the group and gives herself a better outlook [prospects], starts going to school alone, practises better hygiene and any [other] minor changes in the quality of her life then this will lead to problems. When they live in the same way, there won’t be any problems. They have a better support system than the other members of society.”

Abebe, who is one of the community representatives of the Forum on the Sustainable Child Empowerment’s (FSCE) project committee in the Merkato area and Habtamu who worked in the Addis Ketema sub-city’s Women’s, Children and Youth Affair’s office believed that at present, there was much improvement regarding the social contact of the children with community members, even though there had been weak social relationships before:

“Till now most of the relationships are good except for a few bad ones. Yeah, there is a healthy social relationship. I said this because nowadays they are involved in the small community associations such as the ‘Idier’.” (Abebe)

“…I think it is very common to have children working as commercial sex workers nowadays and most of them are known very well by the people in the neighbourhood. Although I think the people in the neighbourhood see them as a bit different from other people. I think they see them in a different light to how they see other people, but I cannot say with certainty that they are marginalized. I say this because most of them, for example, in Wereda 8 [a sub-sector of the sub-city] are socialising more with the people in the neighbourhood, there is some sort of closeness, you see some kind of living together in the sense that they have started to do many things together. So,
we are seeing many things changing and less marginalization than before. 
And at least their relationships are much better than before and are getting 
stronger than before with people in their neighbourhood.” (Habtamu)

4.3.3.7 The Impact of commercial sex work on the children

Being engaged in commercial sex work has affected the life of the children in many 
ways. These effects will be discussed in the following sections.

4.3.3.7.1 Health impact

The majority of the participants involved in the support programme indicated that 
they had experienced health problems linked to commercial sex work directly or 
indirectly. They explained as follows:

“I think the stomach ache and headache is from severe worries that come 
from the things I am thinking [about with regard] to getting money, etc. and 
this is told to me by doctors after my examination. And I was told not to think 
too much and I was given medicine to reduce the pain. The stomach ache is 
the food we eat since sometimes you eat food you don’t like and also 
because of the work you have problems around the sex organs where many 
infections could happen. When you go to doctors there are many things that 
you will be told such as ‘don’t sleep with lots of people’ and ‘when you want to 
have a baby it will be difficult for you’ but we are doing the opposite [refers to 
the fact that what they are doing is contrary to the doctor’s orders]. The things 
we do are having an impact on our health.” (Meron (ISP))

“While I was at my parent’s house, I was healthy. I was never sick and even if 
I had a headache, I would say ‘I am not sick.’ But after I started living on the 
street, I had STDs. I got treatment and got rid of it after I joined here [the 
FSCE]. As well as gastric problems because of the different drugs I used to
take. And I also have kidney problems, so all these came to me after I started living on the streets. I had a pain when I was standing on the street and also now at my workplace [refers to the work of leather processing - she was assisted to obtain employment in one of the leather shoe factories by the FSCE] when I stand I have a severe pain in my leg. Also I am talking to you with a pain in my leg.” (Senite (ISP)).

“I am healthy now but I used to have STDs when I was on the street and I got treatment here [at the FSCE] and I used to have stomach ache but now I am fine.” (Marta (ISP))

“The STDs are connected to the work; the doctor has told me that it is. The gastric problem maybe from the things I used to take like the ‘chat’ [local drug] or the food I used to eat.” (Meaza (ISP))

“I used to be incapable of controlling my urine properly, even now I can't control it properly [said with a very sad face], I went to a clinic where my grandmother took me with my money. The doctor called me personally and told me that I have to stop having lots of sexual intercourse that is why this was happening to me.” (Almaz (ISP))

“I feel pain, [as a result of] past experiences, my inside things hurt, there are times where I could not control my urine. Yeah I feel pain in my womb and I am not feeling as good as before. I have a pain in my waist as well when I think of the previous situation [with a sad face].” (Genet (ISP))

Some of the participants who were not involved in the support programmes reported that the work had not brought any health problems until now. Three participants indicated that they had some health problems that were linked directly or indirectly to
doing commercial sex work; while two other participants revealed that they had
never gone to health centers to check their health status but they felt healthy
currently.

In addition, Yohannes who was working in the Addis Ketema sub-city’s HIV/AIDS
Prevention Control Office explained the general health impact of being a commercial
sex worker as follows:

“The first thing is that there are health problems such as STDs and HIV/AIDS. When we see the prevalence there are 9 to 10 children who are HIV positive out of a 100 children and for STDs it will reach 50 percent. So, this is a very high risk when you compare it to the people in the community. It is obvious that the health impact is wider than [involves more than] HIV/AIDS and STDs.”

4.3.3.7.2 Social impact

The majority of the participants who were involved in the support programme had explained that people in the community reactions to them had a huge impact on their social life and had resulted in them being more marginalised from society because of the work they did. This was evidenced by:

“The impact is they [community] made it difficult for me to trust anybody. They have made me not to have good social relationships with people. I am thinking that everybody is like them because they didn’t invite me to have coffee. So even now when I live in my rented house I don’t call anybody to have coffee with me because I have that bad experience. So this has made me not to get close to any people and to be alone where I have decided to be alone. So I [have] lost my trust in people and I don’t have much contact with people, so in this way it has an impact on my life.” (Meron (ISP))
“The impact is that it is difficult for me to communicate with people easily. It makes me not to be part of the people’s lives in the community.” (Senite (ISP))

“They [people in the neighbourhood] have affected my ability to socialize with people. The confidence and the interest I have to live within a society.” (Meaza (ISP))

Similarly, the majority of the participants who were not involved in the support programme also explained the impact of the community’s views on commercial sex workers. They indicated how it affected their social lives, especially their relationships with their neighbours and others who were passing by on the street. They explained their experiences as follows:

“I have lost my confidence and it has made me to feel lonely and it also pushes me to hide in the work rather than going out.” (Asnackech)

“I am living in a society that hates me, which, in return, has put pressure on my life not to live freely and to hide myself from other people that live around here.” (Kalkidan)

“They restrain you from having close relations with people because you think others may treat you the same.” (Hiwot)

“I avoid them. I prefer to be by myself. I like living alone. It made me not to trust anyone and live by myself.” (Wubit)

“It lets me not to be close to people. It makes me not trust anybody; I could not live with confidence in myself.” (Fekerte)
“I have lost my confidence and I cannot communicate with people as I used to do.” (Sina)

When the key informants were asked about the impact of being involved in commercial sex work, the majority of the participants explained that the children who were involved in commercial sex work had the lowest social status in the community. Adanech explained:

“People in the community take them as bad sectors of society and put them in the lowest class of the society.”

Adanech also commented on the nature of their social attachment to others in the community:

“They are poorly connected socially in that they don’t consider themselves as part of the community.”

Abebe expressed similar views to those expressed by Adanech regarding the social status of the children:

“Most of the time they are given the lowest level in society [being considered as low class people], most of the time these children are already marginalized because of the work they do. In addition, they don’t earn good money and the work is not accepted among the people in the society, which leads them to be [among] the poorest and [most] unaccepted part of a society.”

Tamirat indicated the following regarding the social status of the children engaged in commercial sex work:

“Having the lowest social status makes their communication with people in
the neighbourhood very difficult. Not having positive communication with the people in the society will take away the confidence they have.”

Tamirat also explained the social bond among the street children engaged in commercial sex work was strong which was difficult for them to let go of their group members or accept another person’s intervention:

“In the Addis Ketema sub-city, there are strong bonds among the girls who are working as commercial sex workers. These girls will not allow any girl to be stopped doing commercial sex work. For example, we tried to convince one child to stop doing commercial sex work and to accept the support services we are giving. We told them how they can change their lives and that there is a different kind of life, but her friends who were working as commercial sex workers won’t let her join the support programme by giving her the wrong information about the support programme. Or when they are trying to change their lives also they are very attached to each other. I can say that they have their own social life and social circle and they don’t allow other persons to get into their circle. They have their own social life and they are very attached to each other.”

Yohannes expressed the following views about the social status of the children engaged in commercial sex work in the society:

“I think the social status is determined by the social bonds they have with other people, right? So, if it is like that they are usually very detached from the people in the community. They spend their daytime using “chat” until they start their work and it goes like this every day. And also they have a low self-esteem and they vent their feelings of frustration. For example, when they face a problem, they start a huge argument, [accompanied by] verbal abuse and they solve the problem unethically because of the things they have gone
through. They are sad, they are not happy with their lives and I have never seen any of them happy with their work. Also the view they have of themselves is very low. I think a lot should be done regarding their life skills.”

Zena explained:

“If the people in the neighbourhood think of them as street children then the children [engaged in commercial sex work] will see themselves in a bad light. Because of this, they do not want to be close to the people in the neighbourhood. Most mothers have a great love for their children, so they come close to the street children and say, ‘please go back to your home,’ but some people won’t push them to get them back home by being positive and by assuming that these children had left their homes by mistake.”

Derej responded regarding the social status of the children by saying:

“The biggest impact on them is the lack of social acceptance. For instance, these children can’t attend funerals, Idiers or meetings and make comments. Sometimes I think this is why they become addicted [to different drugs]. Research shows that people become addicted to create a different world simply because they want to forget what is around them.”

Derej also discussed the children’s social bond with the people in the community:

“You can’t have a bond with a community that does not respect you. You give respect only when somebody gives it to you and mingle when the doors are opened to you. There may be cases of working at night and socially interacting by day. But once it is officially known that she is a commercial sex worker, she will be marginalised. The community is not willing to socialise with them. The fact that they are socially unaccepted is a good thing in one
way because it is a constant reminder that this kind of life style is basically bad for their health and is not to be encouraged. They also realise this. If we look at it from a different perspective and claim, why not accept them as they are and thereby create a sort of acceptance, the children may feel it is acceptable to do this kind of work.”

In addition, Habtamu referred to the social status of the children engaged in commercial sex work as follows:

“They were given the lowest social status and they were considered [to belong to] the worst sector in society. But nowadays they are not given such a social status as before, except the children themselves assumed that they are in the lowest social status which we see when we give training.”

Habtamu also stated that the children had better social bonds than before:

“To know how their social relationships are affected, maybe it might be necessary to check the statistics. But as per the report we get in our office nowadays, they have good social bonds with people in the community since the awareness raising work has started.”

4.3.3.7.3 Psychological impact

Some of the children have also mentioned the psychological impacts that they have encountered because they were engaged in commercial sex work:

“In every way, they have made me to lose my confidence and not to trust myself.” (Marta (ISP))

“Because I do this work [commercial sex work] I have lost what I want. I want
to learn at night and work at a shoe making shop during the daytime. There was a lady who promised me that she would help me to get hired at a shoe shop. And one day she saw me while I was doing this work and the lady said, ‘How can I help you work at the shoe place when you are doing this work?’ Then I lost this chance. But I want to work in a shop, so this is what I have lost.” (Almaz (ISP))

“The first thing is I have lost is my name, emmm……secondly I think I have lost my aim to learn lots of things and my capacity to do lots of things because my mind is dull due to the work I do.” (Genet (ISP))

Similarly, some of the key informants mentioned the psychological impact that commercial sex work has on the children engaged in this industry. Yohannes who was one of the key informants, described the impact of commercial sex work on the children as follows:

“Psychologically she won’t be in a good state to become integrated with the people in the community. She also will not have a good self-image. The other thing she is very exposed to alcohol and drugs because it is difficult for them to do this work so they use alcohol and “chat” [a local drug] in order to forget the whole situation.”

Tamirat who worked at the FSCE as a social worker mentioned the psychological impact on the children who were engaged in commercial sex work:

“…these children do this kind of work in the first place because they want to earn money. When they are engaged in commercial sex work it has a psychological impact because the people in the neighbourhood do not accept this kind of behaviour.”
4.3.3.8 Summary of social dislocation

As described above street children particularly female street children engaged in commercial sex work have been socially dislocated from the major institutions, physically and verbally abused and considered as a bad sector of the society. The social dislocation of street children has also been described by Hai (2014) and Shah et al. (2005) in their studies of street children in Bangladesh and in Africa respectively. Similarly the study of FSCE (2003) and Schmidt (2003) explained the situation of street children and that they are socially dislocated from the wider society.

4.3.4 Needs of the children

Every human being has needs that he/she wants to be fulfilled in his/her life. This applies to street children engaged in commercial sex work as well. Their needs will be discussed in the following sections.

4.3.4.1 Provisions important in the children’s life

Both the children who were in the support programme and those who were not in the support programme described the important needs in their lives. Four of the participants from the support programme indicated that their most important need was shelter:

“The first important thing is a house and I still don't have my own house but on the beginning I had carton house, then heeee.... a house which is not cold and a place where you can put your bed and sometimes you rent a house that is very dirty because of the money shortage. I need a house which is in a good condition and of which I won't be ashamed. I also need a bed which is a spring bed and not a metal bed.” (Meron (ISP))
“...help to rent my own house and have household materials as well as to have a job.” (Tsega (ISP))

“I need shelter where I can live after I have completed the program at the safe home. Also, I want to be reunited with my family and a place where we can live because my family used to live in an old house which is owned by the Kebele.” (Marta (ISP))

“What I dream is to have my own house. I still don't want to live with my family; I just preferred family home rather than being on the street and doing this work.” (Almaz (ISP))

Two other participants from the support programme revealed that the important need in their lives was to have good social relationships with the people living in the neighbourhood:

“...I want good relationships with the neighbours. I want them to let me gather together with them and to be included and to participate in whatever ‘Idier’ [small community association] or ‘Iqube’ [it is local system of saving money within a group of people] they have.” (Senite (ISP))

“What I need the most in the first place was to have good contact with the people that live around me. Secondly to live freely from any kinds of worries, I want to live comfortably without hiding my face from the people that live around me.” (Genet (ISP))

Senite (ISP) has also described the household goods that she needed in life:

“The materials I need are things where I can prepare food like a stove as well as a bed and clothing. I need all the household materials which wealthy
Tigist (ISP) mentioned that she needed:

“Clothes, shoes and the like; I need clothes and shoes for myself.”

In turn, Meaza (ISP) declared:

“I wanted to stop doing this work and to find other alternatives. I have found one opportunity at the safe home [FSCE safe home] so I will try to go on with the opportunity I got.”

The participants who were not in the support programme were also asked which needs they had. Seble stated:

“What I need very much is a family, that is it.”

Seble also mentioned the goods she needed in life by saying:

“I need clothing, shoes and a house; regarding this I face a big problem.”

Half of the participants mentioned that they wanted to have good relationships with the community. This was evidenced by:

“What I need most is a work that I consider as respectful and to live as everybody else by working to change my life” (Rahel).

Rahel further indicated her needs as follows:

“I need food, drinks and I need good contact with the people.”
Other participants articulated their needs as follows:

“I need shelter, I want to continue my education and I want to have good relationships with the people around me. I want them to be good to me and understand me.” (Asnackech)

“I want to have good relationships with the people in the community. I want them to let me gather together with them and be included in their lives and know me, to participate in their lives to be considered as one child in the community. In general, I need all the school materials and clothes that a child needs while she lives with her parents.” (Kalkidan)

“I need the community to consider me as one of them and help me in whatever way they can by believing that I can change. I need to be considered as one of the neighbours in my neighbourhood.” (Fekerte)

“I want to be treated as everybody else is being treated and to be loved. I need to change my work and go back to school and then live a proper life with my family as every child in my neighbourhood does who is living with his/her parents.” (Sina)

A further two participants mentioned education as an important need in their lives when they explained:

“I need education, shelter and I want to change myself and be independent. I want very much to have a different work so that I can get money and live a good life.” (Kalkidan)

“What I need is education; since I decided to leave my family I [have] never had family love. I have been going to many places. The main thing is
education, before I liked to learn but when I left it I didn’t like it, but now I would be happy if I could be learning. I would like to leave everything and start my life anew and feeling responsible and managing my own life.” (Wubit)

Hiwot mentioned that food and cooking utensils food are what she needed in her life. Fekerte also declared:

“I need clothes and money to buy what I need in life.”

Likewise, the participants in the focus group discussions were asked which needs were important in their lives. Those children who were involved in the support programme provided answers regarding which needs are important in their lives as follows:

“Previously all that I needed was to get out of that life and change. I always thought about when I was going to get out of this life. But now, when I think about before, I feel disgusted. Now all I need is a better job than I have now.” (Aynalem (ISP))

“While I was in that life I was always thinking when I was going to change, all I wanted before was to change from that shameful work and now I want to change even more, and need to have another job.” (Saron (ISP))

“In that life all I thought about myself was not good but now I have changed and I can think about myself and I will try to think about myself more than them [those that are still engaged in commercial sex work].” (Ayda (ISP))

“What I need in my life is [because] in the first place, I didn’t get an education and in the second place, while I was at home there were more burdens placed upon me by my family. While I was a sex worker, I always got very
frustrated and kept asking when was I going to get out of this work?” (Nebyat (ISP))

“All that I need is to continue the education I stopped.” (Meri (ISP))

“What I need in life is to change; now I want to change more and want to have another job. I want to continue my education from where I stopped and after I finishing my education I want to help children who are sex workers by opening an organization for those who are engaged in commercial sex work and for the street children and to help them change their lives.” (Selome (ISP))

“What I need in my life is a change and now I am changing and I want to change more than this and have a job. What kind of work I want parallel to my education is [the kind] where I want to help those who are on the street and those who do sex work. In the second place, I want to be a translator after I have finished my education.” (Wedase (ISP))

“While I was a sex worker all that I needed was to reconcile with my family and to continue my education and be with them. And now, all I need is to reconcile with my family and continue my education by doing some work and that is what I need the most.” (Konjit (ISP))

“What I needed in my life, while I was a sex worker in the first place, was shelter and my own things and a job. And now in this life, what I need is my own shelter and in the second place, I want a fixed term job in the field that I have been trained in and to be successful. For the future, my wish is to create awareness in the rural areas about the importance of education to children and women who got into child marriage and child labour, and to open schools for these children. Also to make their parents aware of not making them do
hard work and help them to be successful in life.” (Mesrake (ISP))

The participants in the focus group discussions that were not in the support programme, also provided answers to the question regarding which needs were important in their lives. Three participants indicated that it was important to them to be reunited with their families:

“What I need now is to live with my grandmother and without the influence of my aunt; I want to continue my education properly.” (Meheret)

“At this time, all that I need is to reunite with my family and continue my education.” (Brhan)

“At this time, I want to reunite with my family and live there.” (Meseker)

On the other hand, one participant stated that she needed to support her mother:

“I want to finish my education and I want to change my mother’s life from what it is like and I want to change my life.” (Beza)

However, the majority of the participants explained that it was important for them to be independent:

“What I need now is to rent my own house and live alone.” (Lensa)

“What I need now is to rent a house, to buy the food I need and to start a job and to continue living my own life and then to marry [laugh].” (Donat)

“What I need now is also to have my own things and having enough money and to gather the children who are like me, ‘dureye’ from the street and let
them live with me. But what I need now is money.” (Selam)

“I want to sell boiled potatoes and I want to rent my own house and live my own life.” (Gelila)

“I want to rent my own house and do a job that will not harm me.” (Mime)

4.3.4.2 Day-to-day concerns of the children

The participants mentioned different aspects that worried them in their everyday lives. Four of the participants who were in the support programme, revealed that they had concerns about money:

“There is nothing that worries me but it is money that worries me. Now I live in a rented house and if I stop the current job [she works at a hair salon opened by the FSCE] it would be hard for me until I get another job. So I am very worried about money.” (Meron (ISP))

“While I was on the street, I worried about money, money to pay for the ‘alga bete’ [small rented rooms] but now I have no worries.” (Marta (ISP))

“My worries are about my home. Just to earn money and change my family home.” (Tigist (ISP))

“To get money to pay for the ‘alga bete’ so that I won't sleep on the street.” (Meaza (ISP))

The other participants mentioned that they were concerned about how they could change their lives, continue their education or what kind of customers they would encounter in their day-to-day lives while they were engaged in commercial sex work:
“My worry is to change myself and to live with my child. That is the major one that worries me.” (Senite (ISP)).

“There is nothing that worries me except my education.” (Tsega (ISP))

“How I can help my family, how I can go back to my family house, how I would continue my education?” (Meaza (ISP)).

“In my day-to-day life, I worry by saying ‘what kind of person will I face today’ or ‘what kind of person is he going to be’ or ‘what kind of a bad person is he going to be’ and these things makes me to live a scary life.” (Genet (ISP))

One participant stated that she had no worries:

“Now I am not worried about nothing [anything], I have no problem with food and I am staying at my grandmother’s house so I clean the house and I will stay until the day I wish to get back home.” (Fekerte (ISP)).

Those participants who were not in the support programme also mentioned their day-to-day worries. The majority of the participants indicated that the money that they had to pay for the ‘alga bete’ worried them the most in their everyday lives:

“When I have no money to pay for ‘alga bete’, I worry about staying on the street [very sad face and slow voice].” (Seble)

“What worries me the most is the payment I have to do for 'alga bete' and ending up on the street.” (Asnackech)

“I worry about money by saying ‘will I have money to pay today's 'alga bete' rent and I worry about getting HIV.” (Kalkidan)
“Paying for my bed.” (Hiwot)

“When I have no money to pay for the ‘alga bete’, I worry about staying on the street [said with a very sad face and slow voice] and I worry very much about my family.” (Fekerte)

“The money that I have to pay for my ‘alga bete’.” (Sina)

The other participants also explained their day-to-day worries:

“What worries me is my mom's condition, I don't worry about another thing and I only think about her. I say ‘when am I going to have a good work so that she could have a good life?’ That is what worries me.” (Rahel)

“My worry is how I am going to leave this life and start a normal life.” (Kalkidan)

“The thing that stresses me is when I am going to be happy. If I was educated I could be happy but because I am not educated I will not get it, I just want a day of happiness every day.” (Wubit)

In turn, Seble, Asnackech, Wubit, Fekerte and Sina described their concerns as follows:

“My other worry is because I am on the street and sometimes I cry about it [her voice was breaking and this was said with a very sad face]. And when I see my friends, especially those who have families, I feel very sad because I have no family.” (Seble)

“Emmm…I worry about what will happen to me in the future.” (Asnackech)
“Nothing worries me but I think about going to my family. I worry about today’s happiness and I worry today might be happier than tomorrow or tomorrow will be less happy than today. Every day I have different emotions. Even if it is good or bad I will let it pass because I am alone and I don’t have anyone to talk to, so I let it pass through music or other things.” (Wubit)

“How to have a better life, I think that I cannot live like this any longer.” (Fekerte)

“The situation that I am in and when I am going to change my life and how I am going to be treated like everybody else.” (Sina)

4.3.4.3 Expectations of the children

The children that participated in the interviews described their different expectations from people in the neighborhood, officials of the sub-city, non-governmental organisations and others such as small community associations. The majority of the participants declared that they needed more social contact and acceptance from the people who lived around them:

“Nothing, just to help me and to avoid their [people in the community] marginalisation and to show me love by considering me as their sister. Now my behaviour has improved so I want them to let me participate in the social life and to be treated like a normal person.” (Meron (ISP))

“I expect good things from them [people in the community], like for me I want them not to marginalise me and I want them to see me like other people in the community. I want them to see me as an equal. I would like to be included in the ‘Iqube’ to save money and in the ‘Idier’ to participate in the funeral times, good times and in weddings. I want to be equal with the people in the
community.” (Senite (ISP)).

“I would be pleased to participate in the funerals or weddings.” (Tigist (ISP)).

“Not to marginalize me and to see me as equal to other people in the neighbourhood. I also need them to help me with my education so that I can go back to my school and help my parents in their work as well as give them advice, which can help them [people in the community] in whatever decisions they take. In general to give me advise rather than seeing me as a criminal.” (Meaza (ISP)).

“I need them to see me like I am their neighbour, not as a commercial sex worker. I want them to understand me rather than marginalising me. For example my neighbour asked me what I was doing while I was living on street then I told her that I was doing nothing [laugh] and that I used to eat ‘bule’ because I have heard that this lady hates those who work as sex workers. So I said to her I lived by eating ‘bule’ so that she won't marginalise me.” (Almaz (ISP)).

“I want from the people in the neighbourhood to yell at the boys who try to create a problem for me emm…I want to be known by them and drink coffee with them and be close to them.” (Genet (ISP)).

“I need them [the people in the community] to help me and treat me as if I am one of them. I need them to give me advice on what I can do and can't do as well as searching for a job where I can live by myself and if possible, to help me to continue my education.” (Asnackech)

“I need them to view me as one of their children and not to marginalize me.” (Kalkidan)
“I just want them [the people in the community] to treat me nicely and help me to change my current work instead of treating me as if I am a criminal. I really wish I could find another job and that they could let me be somebody and see me as one of the neighbours.” (Fekerte)

The other participants also described their expectations from the people around them, which were indirectly related to their need for support and to be part of the social life of the community:

“I want them to help me continue my education and find a respectful job.” (Tsega (ISP))

“I want them to understand my situation and help me to reunite with my family and support my family in whatever they can. I need them to provide us with a work so that it would be as source of income for our family, to give us advice, not treat me as if I am different from other children. I need them to help my mother by standing beside her.” (Marta (ISP))

“Most of the people provide help to me; they give me clothes, shoes and what they have. I need a house where I can live in and a job where I can work.” (Seble)

“I need them to give me advice about the good and bad things. I want them to make me aware of those things that I don’t know.” (Rahel)

“To help me to get work in the shoe shop.” (Hiwot)

“I want to start selling chips and if they can help me buy the material [stock] and pay the rent I can start working. I can change my life and if they can help me to rent a house and I can work and pay for it.” (Wubit)
“I hope that they will help me to change my life by giving me all the support they can and help me to get rid of my addictions so that I can return to my parents’ house and start my education again.” (Sina)

Similarly, the participants talked about their expectations regarding the officials in the sub-city. Half of the participants mentioned that they needed help with the problem of shelter:

“In the first place, I need a home where I can live. From [regarding] the sub-city in the Kebele, I need a Kebele house as well as opportunities that could help me to pay house rent, for my ‘eqube’ [Local way of saving money] and other necessities in my life such as for ‘asbesa’ [food stuff].” (Senite (ISP))

“If they can, I would like them to take me to live with them or to help me to rent my own house.” (Tsega (ISP))

“I want them to help my family to find a house and a work so that we can live like other people in our neighbourhood. I want them to help me continue my education and help my sisters in whatever way they can so that they will not see the life I have seen.” (Marta (ISP))

“I want them to help us find shelter for me and for my family and financial support for my family, it could also be advising them regarding farming. I also need them to facilitate a situation for me [to make it possible for me] to go back to my school.” (Meaza (ISP))

The other participants from the support programme explained their different expectations about the government as well those about the community as follows:

“Help with money, advice. Most of the time money could be lost but people’s
help or ideas you can always use, like you share your ideas and if the people support your ideas, it will be a big strength for you." (Meron (ISP))

“I need them to help my little sister and to send her to school, because I don't want her to become like me.” (Tigist (ISP))

“I want them to understand all the sex workers. A girl is not wanted if she is ruined once, so if they can understand us. Besides we will not go on doing this work throughout our life, we will get tired of the work. For example, I could do another job by living in my grandmother’s house. My problem is I could not stand the arguments we had in the house so it is impossible for me to live with them. At this time, you don't have an aim to do this work but there is no government or another person that will help you. So if we are provided with other work we will do that work.” (Fekerte (ISP))

“What I expected from the people in the sub-city in the first place, was I need them to help me leave the previous job and secondly, I want to be considered one of the good people in the community and participate with others.” (Genet (ISP))

On the other hand, all the participants who were not in the support programme expected the officials of the sub-city or the employees of the sub-city to help them in finding another job, to help them to find shelter or help them to continue their studies. They indicated their different expectations as follows:

“What they need to do for us is to help me get off the street and to find me a good place and to help me to start another work.” (Seble)

“For example, at this time I don’t have a decent job, I want to leave this work and join another work [get another job] and that money might not be enough
for all my house rent, food and with all of my necessities so I need them to support me in some sort of way.” (Rahel)

“I need them to help me to continue my education and help me find a job which helps me with my financial problem.” (Asnackech)

“I need them to take me out of this life and make me start my school. And be there for me when I need them.” (Kalkidan)

“Work related aid.” (Hiwot)

“The sub-city…emmm… I want them to help all the children who are like me to get rid of their addiction and help us to start another job so that it will be easy for all of us to go back to our family’s houses.” (Sina)

Regarding their expectations regarding the NGOs working in the Addis Ketema sub-city, the majority of the children who were involved in the support programme explained that they needed help that would make them more independent, such as a schooling opportunities, help with regard to reuniting with their families, getting advice and being informed about employment opportunities and other similar opportunities:

“Now I am seeing some changes in my life even though I have passed through [experienced] many problems, so now I am fine. And now what I worry about is that I didn’t finish my school and if God helps me I am left with one year to join the university but there is no one who can help me at this time. I need material support and if I don’t pass, I need help with paying money to the private college school and if I pass [at the government university] I need help with covering my university expenses.” (Meron (ISP))
“Now the FSCE has helped me to get a vocational skill. Since the FSCE is going to stop the support somewhere I still need advice as usual from them but not from another organisation. I need to discuss my problems with them until I become independent and I need them to be with me [support me] with their ideas even though they are not going to continue with their support.” (Senite (ISP)).

“To give me training as the FSCE has done and to open my own hair salon.” (Asnackech (ISP))

“I need them to help me with regard to what they can, like the safe home [FSCE] has done for me and to support my family so that we can live together again. To give me a chance to continue my education as well as assigning me to a work after the training I am taking now.” (Marta (ISP))

“I need them to help me like with a safe home [the FSCE safe home] and help me to achieve my goal to be a good citizen with whatever support they can provide.” (Meaza (ISP))

“They have already supported me, emm…but I want to go to school, that is what I want now.” (Almaz (ISP))

One participant indicated that she did not need any help:

“I don't expect anything from them. Because when you expect something from them, they gossip about you behind your back.” (Tigist (ISP))

On the other hand, the majority of the participants that were not involved in the support programme reported that they hoped that the NGOs would help them to stop doing the sex work in which they were involved at present:
“I need them to help me find work, like the FSCE is doing.” (Rahel)

“In whatever way they can as long as it helps me get out of this kind of work.” (Asnackech)

“I need them help me find a job so that I can get out of my current situation and continue my education.” (Kalkidan)

“If they help me in whatever way so that I can get out of my current life and change my work to another job and help me to continue my education.” (Fekerte)

“To help me to participate in the 'Idier' and help me change my life, like helping me to get another job.” (Sina)

The other participants also declared that they needed help to change their current lives:

“I need to live in a house with my friends or with other children who are on the street and to find another job, that is it.” (Seble)

“By working in my field [refers to the work she is capable of doing], I want them to support me by giving me the initial funds.” (Hiwot)

4.3.4.4 Summary of needs of the children

Children who have participated in this study had many expectations and needs in life. These expectations and needs children have also been specified in the literature review. Volpi (2002), Abate (2004), Hong and Ohno (2005) and Consortium for
Street Children (2009) have specified the needs of street children in their studies as similar as described above.

4.3.5 Support

Various types of support were provided to the street children as will be shown next.

4.3.5.1 Relevance of the support programmes

The majority of the participants that were involved in the support programme stated that they had a positive perception of the support that was being given to girls who were commercial sex workers:

“The services I received helped me to stop doing commercial sex work and in addition, it helped me to see myself and check who I really I am and helped me to know my real personality. I didn't have confidence before and now it made me to have confidence. And they taught me that I can't live all the time with donations and that I have to take the direction.” (Meron (ISP))

She further explained the changes she had seen in her life because of the services and support she had received:

“There are many changes I have seen. The first thing that I was eager about was my school where they showed me the direction and I followed it. And in the second place, they gave me a work to do according the vocational training I have taken on the side of my school. The vocational skill they gave me was hair dressing and I am now working at the hair salon. So, this kind of support has been given to me.”

In addition, Senite (ISP), Tsega (ISP) and Marta (ISP) explained the changes in their
lives by comparing their past and their current situations, that is, after they had joined the support programmes as follows:

“I have seen many changes in my life, for example heee... when I was outside [on the street] and when I was here [Forum for Sustainable Child Employment (an NGO) safe home] it was not the same. While I was outside, my face was not like this, my look was not clear, but while I am here my face looks good as well as I am getting all the good treatment that I haven't seen after I left my parent's house. Heee...I don't do other work, I work in that place [shoe factory] only and I get back home, that are the changes I see in my life.” (Senite (ISP))

“I changed a lot after I joined the forum [FSCE]. Before, I used to insult people a lot and now I have stopped that. It also helped me to start a different job and earn a salary.” (Tsega (ISP)).

“I am getting hair dressing skills, which opened a door for me to leave my previous work. Moreover, I used to smoke, take 'chate' [a local drug] but I got rid of all my addictions after I joined the safe home [FSCE safe home]. I received counselling, have a clean bedroom, clean bed sheets, food and different things which makes me happy because I am in the safe home.” (Marta (ISP))

Marta (ISP) explained:

“After I joined the support program I have started to see hope for my future life. I am going to find a work with the training I am getting now. I have a chance to reunite with my family again and I could give a hand to my mother by providing support with money, which I am going to get from my new work. Now I have no addictions. I used to sleep on the street, I used to stand in the
rain or in cold weather waiting for customers and there were times when I got hungry but now all this are gone, I have a home where I can sleep and eat without worrying about the money that I have to pay.”

Tigist (ISP) commented on the services she was receiving:

“I received a lot of training and they do not let you go back to street life. We used to smoke cigarettes and drink a lot but after we joined here, we got rid of everything.”

She also described her current circumstances as follows:

“Oh I have seen so many things. They taught me and I changed and they let us communicate with our family more frequently.”

Meaza (ISP) indicated that she had previously joined another support programme before she joined the support programme delivered by FSCE. She explained that she could not continue in the first support programme because she did not get on with the other children who were also receiving the support services. However, she described the advantages of being in the current support programme:

“Oh... it has many advantages, I have received a lot of training regarding personal hygiene, HIV, STDs and other related things. I received vocational training on hairdressing which helps me to change my livelihood for good. I am very happy in the safe home [FSCE]. I feel like I am in my own home I also get family love, food, clothing, shelter from here.”

Almaz (ISP) also mentioned the benefits she received from the support providers:

“Hoodoo... lots of things for example while I was doing commercial sex work I
had no clue about STDs. So I didn’t know that much and I asked what STDs are lots of times, but after I joined the forum [FSCE] I got the chance to know about STDs and other related things.”

She further explained the benefits of being involved in the support programme:

“I received vocational skills and how I have to communicate with people. Before when somebody talked to me, I showed them a very angry face and there were times that I was beaten because of my angry face. So it was after I joined the Forum [FSCE] that I started to smile. For example when you talked to me I will show you a very sad face had it been before. So while I was at the Forum I was told that I don't have to show this because people will consider me as bad person. So after I joined the Forum I have seen lots of changes.”

Almaz (ISP)) also explained the benefits she had received from being involved in the support programme:

“The advantage I got after I become involved in the support program was before I was in a situation that I didn't ask about myself but now I have started to turn and see myself, I have started to give advices to other people let alone to give advice to myself. So I could say I have started to have a big mentality.”

She further compared her previous life with her current life:

“Before I joined this organisation, I did not communicate much with other people and I did not get close to anyone and talked to them because they treated me as dirt and because I use to do commercial sex work. But now when we work at the hair salon I spent my time by communicating with the people that come to the hair salon and I started becoming close to people.”
During the focus group discussions, the participants were asked what differences they have noticed with regard to the perception of the community towards them after they joined the support programme. The participants responded as follows:

“For example, the previous and current life is not the same. That means the way I talk is not the same as before. Like before, I used to wear dirty clothes but now I wear clean clothes and I go out as a normal person and I walk equally, so I have good contact and I am part of the society.” (Aynalem (ISP))

“….now I’m a decent home girl but before I was not. So, now since I’m a decent girl, I can ask whatever I need just like any other person. We are living with people with love and patience now. But before, we used to be misbehaved children.” (Saron (ISP))

“Before, since we did dirty jobs, people’s attitudes towards us were not good but now we changed our lives and the attitude of people towards us also changed and it’s very good. Since we strived to change on our own initiation, I think they do respect this as well.” (Ayda (ISP))

Ayda (ISP) described their current lifestyles:

“I can say we are part of the community, we now wear and eat as properly [well] as any other person and emm... even education, we can learn as other ordinary people and have anything else as others in the community.”

Nebyat (ISP), Selome (ISP), Wedase (ISP), Konjit (ISP) and Mesrake (ISP) indicated that because of the support services they had received they were seeing many changes in their lives. They explained their experiences by comparing their previous with their current circumstances as follows:
“…we are equal with other girls now. First of all, the thing that makes us equal with others is the way we dress up. Now we are wearing clean clothes and we have work, actually now we are trainees and immediately after we finish our training, we will start a job in the field that we took training in. Therefore, we are not different from other trainees or people in the community, we are already one.” (Nebyat (ISP))

“… the people were disgusted by me before I joined here because they insulted me; people looked in another direction when they passed by whenever they saw me. But now when they see me they get amazed and say ‘is that her or not’. ” (Selome (ISP))

“Before I joined this organization, my family did not want to come near to me and they pointed at me saying ‘this girl ahh...’ but now they all accept me and give me love.” (Wedase (ISP))

“….before I joined this organisation, the people who use to belittle me were my own relatives, not other people. But after I joined this organisation, I have changed and when they see these changes, those relatives of mine would start saying that ‘this change is good for her and we should also support her’.” (Konjot (ISP))

“Before I joined this organisation, I had little communication with other people. But after I joined this organisation, a big change occurred. For example, I can now communicate well with all the people who work with me at the hair salon. I feel that their perception towards me is different and they don’t consider me as before.” (Mesrake (ISP))

Meri (ISP), Wedase (ISP), Konjet (ISP) and Mesrake (ISP) also explained the difference between them and a girl who was not involved in a support programme:
“For example, maybe nobody would want close contact with her in the community if she is doing commercial sex work. Even if we both go to get employed, people may not treat us equally. They would consider my request but they may insult or belittle her because of her job. So they will not see her equally with me.” (Meri (ISP))

“Yes, there is a difference between me and one other girl. Since I’m here now being differently and people may point out at that girl saying that ‘she is like this and she is like that’ by pointing at her but for me, they may say ‘she is a good girl’ they smile for me and thing like that.” (Wedase (ISP))

“There is a difference but some relatives and other people may also consider my previous work and they won’t forget the life I had before. In some cases, they say ‘this girl also had the same life as the one on the street. She also had the same addictions as this one and she has been in that life and she has seen lots of things by saying so and so, they may consider me as one. But the difference since I joined the organization is that I am being trained and could get a job through the training I took at the hair salon. Also I live in house that makes me different but she may not have this. So our difference may be that I live in a house and she does not.” (Konjet (ISP))

“For example I used to have the same disgusting life but then I made a decision to change that life and get along with the community and do another job. Emmm... I can also be able to support myself by working as a result of the training I have received. But that girl is still in that same bad life so I think that we are not the same.” (Mesrake (ISP))

Wedase (ISP) and Mesrake (ISP) also indicated that they felt that they were now more included in the community in which they lived because they were involved in the support programme:
“I am included because now, I can wear the same clothes, I can look as great as others that means, I can do everything equal with other people. I eat clean food as others, emmm... and I’m living a good life.” (Wedase (ISP))

“Previously, I never considered myself as equal with others but now my communication with people is also good and I think that I can live in the same way as others.” (Mesrake (ISP))

Konjet (ISP) explained that she would be better accepted in the community once she left the safe house:

“I would think that I will be involved in the community when I get out of this organization and start living on my own. I don’t mean that I am not getting what’s necessary for me here. But I know I will be more involved in the community when I live among the community.”

On the other hand, the majority of the children who were not involved in the support programme and who participated in the focus group discussions responded that they had seen good changes regarding the lives of the children who became involved in the support programme by saying:

“They are hired in hair salons and are working there.” (Meheret)

“….I have seen them hired in the hair salon.” (Lensa)

“My friends have opened their own hair salons by being organized in a team.” (Donat)

“Well they have changed, some have opened hair own salons.” (Beza)
“Those friends who were with me are different now; they are working still [refers in the hair salon]” (Mime)

“Just they wear clean clothes and shoes and they are better than me.” (Meseker)

However, two of the participants commented that they had not seen any benefits ensuing from joining the support programmes:

“Well, for a little while we see them dressed well but after a few times they get back to us and continue to do what they have done before.” (Meherte)

“Yes there are some who have joined and there are others who didn’t join but I didn’t see that much change in them.” (Selam)

Two of the participants indicated that they did not know anybody who joined a support programme:

“I don’t know anyone.” (Gelila)

“I have no friends that have joined any support group.” (Brhan)

4.3.5.2 Availability of support

All the participants were asked whether the community in Addis Ketema sub-city were willing to help them when they faced problems. The majority responded that most of the time they received help from the people in the neighbourhood. The neighbours of the participants who helped them most often were children who were also engaged in commercial sex work, the people who facilitate the ‘alga bete’ for
rent, criminals who lived in the Addis Ketema sub-city or people who were passing by on the street. Meron (ISP) described the kind of help she received:

“Like taking you to the police or if you have an injury on your body there are some who can give you money so that you can get treatment at the hospital. And there are also some people who provide their private cars to take you to the hospital quickly. Sometimes you might need blood transfer and other medical treatment, even I know a girl who has been helped with blood transfer [refers to people whom she encountered on the street or in the neighborhood, she generally categorised them together].”

Senite (ISP) responded as follows:

“I have never faced a problem while I was in that area but if I had a problem, I think they [those people who live around the rented rooms where most of them are commercial sex workers, criminals, street children and ‘alga bete’ owners etc.] will help me as they do for other people. For example I saw them helping other girls [sex workers] like me.”

She also explained how her friends had helped her:

“If you need money for medical treatment, they will contribute money and take you to the hospital. If it is to help you by being beside you while you are sick, they will rent one ‘alga bete’ and assign one friend of yours if you have one and provide everything to that friend to help you with everything.”

Tesga (ISP) also indicated that she received financial support when she had a problem:

“The people who live in the same area, I am sure if we face any challenges
they will not be ignoring us because all of them have seen it [the challenges in life]."

She further explained:

“People who are passing on the street may be in the neighbourhood but if it is not in the neighbourhood nobody will leave you seeing you that you have a problem, they probably provide you help.”

Marta (ISP) reported that she received assistance from her friends whenever she needed it:

“If I am sick for example they contribute money and they will take me to hospital or if I don’t have money to pay for ‘alga bete’, one of my friends will let me share her ‘alga bete’. Emmm...we also share food when one of us has money. This is how we help each other.”

She further explained who these friends were:

“My friends are those who are ‘dureye’ and they do some manual labour and also some of them do commercial sex work and ‘kefera’.”

Tigist (ISP) revealed that nobody would help her apart from her friends that were engaged in commercial sex work:

“Probably by calling the police and my friends may contribute money if I’m hurt.”

Similarly, Meaza (ISP) also described that the only help she got was from her friends, her neighbours or the ‘alga bete’ owners when she encountered any
problems:

“My friends will help in whatever way they can. Maybe some of the people who are living in the neighbourhood might help me or the ‘alga bete’ owners.”

Almaz (ISP) reported that she might get help from some of the people living in the community:

“Maybe some of them [people in the community] but I don’t know, you don’t know what people think. There are some that will help and there are some who say ‘I won’t’, they say ‘why do I care’?”

She also described the help she might get from the people who did the leasing out of the ‘alga bete’:

“...those who facilitate the ‘alga bete’ for rent are not [always] the ‘alga bete’ owners, most of the ‘alga bete’ owners hire facilitators. They are those who also do commercial sex works like me. The ‘alga bete’ owner will talk to her if she wants the work of facilitating to rent the ‘alga bete’ for him for a salary. So this girl if she is willing to help me she might help me by letting me sleep in the ‘alga bete’ for free by saying that she will pay it from her salary, otherwise the ‘alga bete’ owner will not help. So the girl may help you because she understands you.”

Genet (ISP) reported at the beginning of her explanation that she did not get any help from anyone:

“There is no one that looks after me.”

When probed further, she described the people that might help her:
“Probably those who own the ‘alga bete’ could help me if I was sleeping in the ‘alga bete’ during the night and those who sleep in the ‘alga bete’ next to me, since the partition is made from thin material they could hear me so they might reach for me quickly.”

The majority of the participants who were not involved in the support programme also reported that their friends engaged in commercial sex work, would help them if they encountered a problem. They also indicated that the community in the Addis Ketema sub-city might provide help if they saw the children having problems. The people that lived in the Addis Ketema sub-city, specifically around the areas where there were a number of rented rooms (‘alga bete’), were mostly children who engaged in commercial sex work or people who facilitated the renting of beds and sometimes people who lived in the sub-city that were engaged in other work than commercial sex work. Seble mentioned the help that she might get from the community that lived in the Addis Ketema sub-city:

“They might call a police. But I don’t know, they might not help me in any way because till now nobody had helped me when I was sick.”

And she also indicated how her friends helped her:

“They will contribute money. If one of us gets sick we will get medical treatment by getting money from the people passing by and there are many people who give us money on the street so we get medical treatment in this way.”

Rahel and Wubit explained that there was no one who could help them if they encountered any problems:

“To talk about my area I don’t even want to communicate with the people
around me so nobody knows me but I think they will not help me - this is my personal opinion.” (Wubit)

Similarly, Asnackech announced that the people in the neighbourhood were not willing to help her:

“No they are not willing to help me. How come a person who does not want to say hello to me will be willing to help me, it is very impossible to get help from my neighbours. Even more, I will even be more excluded than before if I get sick so I will not tell them even if I was sick. If I am sick and need their help I won’t ask their help at all. But probably the 'alga bete' owners might help me if I needed help.”

However, she stated that her friends who did commercial sex work, might help her by contributing money to take her to hospital when she was sick or by sharing any money they had. The ‘alga bete’ owners might help her too in other ways:

“They might help me if the customer tries to abuse me or hit me and sometimes they help us to sleep in the 'alga bete' for free and to bring the money by tomorrow. So they do such kind of favours for us.”

Similarly, Kalkidan, Hiwot, Fekerte and Sina indicated that there was no one that could help them when they faced a problem other than their friends who were engaged in commercial sex work:

“If I need money for medical treatment, they [friends engaged in commercial sex work] will contribute money and take me to the hospital. And they will share their food or the 'alga bete' if I don't have money.” (Kalkidan)

“They give me money, they help me out.” (Hiwot)
“Friends will lend me money when I don’t have money emmm...they will let me share their beds when I don’t have money. I have one friend called Terhase, we help each other most of the time and I am close more to her than the others.” (Fekerte)

“My friends will contribute money and take me to health centers if I don’t have money or they will let me sleep in their ‘alga bete’ until I get well.” (Sina)

Fekerte and Sina also mentioned the help they got from the ‘alga bete’ owners:

“They allow me to sleep in their ‘alga bete’ for free and I will give their money back after two or three days. And if I have problem with the guy I am with they will reach for me if I shout.”

“They will come and help me when I shout for help or they will lend me money when I am in a shortage of money.”

The key informants described the support services provided to children engaged in commercial sex work. Adanech, who worked for a non-governmental organization called the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE), explained the services the organisation provided as follows:

“Well, the support given to children by our organization is firstly psychosocial support. Under this, there are many programs. Some of them are counselling, group guidance and art therapy. Art therapy means a program that is designed to provide entertainment through music and drama. And then there is a program called Heart to Heart. The Heart to Heart program is a kind of a game, where children in the support programme play to learn in open discussions.”
She further gave details of the support they provided to the children engaged in commercial sex work by saying:

“......The other program is health education or training that focus on HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, environmental and personal hygiene and other health issues related to street life, which are given by health workers and house mothers. In addition, along with these education programmes, there are recreation programmes facilitated inside [the safe home] as entertainment activates such as dance training, watching movies and playing different games. And sometimes recreation programmes outside [the safe home] will be provided which include taking them to the museum, cinema, zoo etc. In addition to this there is a food provision service.”

She also mentioned that they provided health services and vocational training in three fields, namely, hairdressing, leather processing or shoe making and food preparation training based on the child’s interest and educational background. Abebe who was the community representative of the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) project committee in the Merkato area, indicated that the support they delivered to street children engaged in commercial sex work as follows:

“We give support to these children first by doing an investigation on how and why they are on the street and how and why they left their family house. In addition, also on how and why they end up working as a commercial sex worker. After the investigation if it is the result of any problem that makes them to go out on the street we will try to address their problems by giving them counselling, education and vocational training, which helps them to stop doing sex work and to support themselves by being engaged in a field of work according the training they have undertaken. On the other hand, if they want to continue their formal education, which they have stopped, we make arrangements for them to continue their education. If they quarrelled or if they
started living on the street because of different reasons and maltreatments they faced at their family’s home and still want to reunite with their families, we will arrange all the necessary things for them to go back and reunite with their families, as well as giving advice to their families and to the children to learn to live together.”

He also explained that support was given in collaboration with FSCE:

“The project committee [Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) project committee in the Merkato area] is an association created by the representatives of people in the community of the Addis Ketema sub-city. So this committee knows all the problems among the people in the community because they are part of the community. In most cases FSCE only gives us support and we work among the community.”

Yohannes, who worked in the Addis Ketema sub-city HIV/AIDS prevention control office, explained how their offices provided support to the children engaged in commercial sex work through different support programmes designed to reach a wider range of children:

“Based on this smart journey programme [refers a name given to one of the support programmes that is being delivered in the sub-city] there is peer-to-peer discussion where we try to find these children in the first place. We first select peer groups, which are educated a little bit - those who could be reached. So, in this case they might not be street children because usually it is very hard to find children on street. So we select those who are working in hotels and those who are standing on the street but they have homes. After we selected among these children we will ask them to help us reach to the other children. They will be trained and one girl will reach to 10 to 20 peers or cascade the trainings she has taken. So after she gathers the other children,
we give them training and after the training they take a biomedical test which is an examination for STDs and HIV/AIDS and others. In between this there are children who will stay in the programme. These ones we try to involve them slowly in to a program of saving [saving money]. There is an economic strengthening component finally. So at end they will be involved in savings and then they will be given matching funds [refers a name given to one of the support programmes - to giving out initial funds to the participants of the support programme] but it is not for all of them.”

Habtamu who worked in the Addis Ketema sub-city women’s, children and youth affair’s office, stated that they were not directly involved with providing support to the children engaged in commercial sex work but did facilitation work as follows:

“Here you can say that we are doing more or less facilitation work. We provide awareness about the situation they are in that it is not a good one, make arrangements to connect them with other support programmes available in the area and we also try to make an arrangement so that they could get other different necessary services.”

Similarly, Zena who was the head of finance of the councils of the 10 ‘Idier’ of the Kebele 10, 11, 12 indicated that the ‘Idier’ had no direct involvement regarding giving material and financial supports rather they work on counselling:

“Actually what the ‘Idier’ gives as support is giving advice and counselling but it does not have the capacity to give material support. Because it does not have this capacity it only gives advice and counselling so that they restrict themselves from working as commercial sex workers.”

Derej, who worked as a project coordinator at an organisation called the Organization for Child Development and Transformation Ethiopia (CHAD-ET)
revealed what the support they gave to sexually abused children in general entailed:

“First is the skills training and then second there is IG [Income Generating], a method of income generating which involves short training on basic business skills. There is also minor financial aid given to them. The third is group guidance and individual counselling. Fourth is the sanitary services and fifth is library. Many of the children here are out of school, the library is opened to help them get back to school and to develop their reading culture.”

4.3.5.3 Summary regarding support delivered for street children

As discussed above the support programme that is being deliver for street children specifically for female street children engaged in commercial sex work have provided them with food, education, health care, a better place to live than their homes and the streets and protection. Studies of Abate (2004) and FSCE (2007) stated that street children need a stable lifestyle rather than the temporary lifestyle that they are living and that they should be supported in whatever means possible.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings of the study as well as the themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews and focussed group discussions were identified and discussed. The themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews and focus group discussions pertained to the children’s needs, social dislocation, social integration as well as social support that they received.

In this study, various themes and sub-themes were identified. The reason for coming to the Addis Ketema sub-city was identified as one of the main themes. Under this main theme, a number of sub-themes were identified, namely the push factors and pull factors associated with the Addis Ketema sub-city. The second main theme
pertained to the reasons for becoming involved in commercial sex work. The sub-themes of this main theme were the challenges faced by and experiences of the children after arriving in Addis Ababa, the problem with generating an income, peer pressure and the benefits of doing commercial sex work. The third main theme was marginalisation that had sub-themes of contact with family members, perceptions towards commercial sex work, perceptions of the community towards the children, physical and verbal abuse, social exclusion and social relationships of the children and the impact of commercial sex work on the children. The fourth main theme was the needs of the children, which had sub-themes, namely, necessities important in the children’s lives, day-to-day concerns of the children and expectations of the children. The fifth main theme was support, which had sub-themes, such as the relevance of the support programmes and the availability of support.

In the following chapter, the summary and recommendations emanating from the study will be discussed, as well the limitations of the study will be presented.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This chapter indicates how the research was able to meet the objectives of the study. The purpose of this study was to explore the social dislocation and needs of and social support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work.

For this study, face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with 16 children aged 15 to 18 to gain insight into their perceptions and experiences regarding their needs, social relationships and the social support they received from the people in their community. In addition, two focus group discussions were conducted with two other groups of female street children, one with children who were involved in a support programme and another one with children who were not involved in a support programme. Each focus group discussion had nine participants. Furthermore, seven key informants were interviewed to provide insight into the lives of the children, especially with respect to the support given to them.

The findings of the study will be summarised in the following sections in terms of the three specific research objectives of the study as highlighted above.

5.1.1 Research objective 1

There were a number of reasons why the children came to Addis Ababa. Among the major causes of children living on the streets in Ethiopia mentioned in the literature, the issues of poverty, neglect and abuse by their families as well as peer influence were the dominant reasons for dislocation of children from their families. This is confirmed by the findings of this study. These will be discussed below.
It was found in this study that children migrated to the capital city of Addis Ababa mainly because of poverty in their parental homes. The FSCE (2006) validates this finding in that it asserts that children tended to migrate to the cities because of the weak financial status of their family and in search of a better life. A number of the children who participated in this study migrated to the Addis Ababa city in the expectation that their dreams and aspirations might be fulfilled. This study explored the expectations the participants had about the conditions in Addis Ababa before they came to the city. It was found that because of the unbearable conditions of poverty in their families' homes, all the children who had come from other regions of the country, had unrealistic notions regarding what it would be like to live in Addis Ababa. This finding corroborates the findings of Ballet et al. (2013), Shah et al. (2005) and FCSE (2006) in that poverty is one of the major reasons for children to come to Addis Ababa.

On the other hand, this study found that conditions, apart from poverty, in the family home were also important reasons for the participants' migration to the city. The majority of the participants who came from other regions of the country had experienced neglect in their family homes. It was found that the participants lacked most of the basic necessities that children need when they lived with their families. It was also found that the majority of the children who participated in this study had experienced abuse when in their family homes. Furthermore, it was found that poverty at home contributed greatly to the abuse and neglect of the children. Because the needs of the participants were not met, this influenced them either directly or indirectly, to choose a life on the streets and to be socially dislocated. This finding confirms the findings of Balachova et al. (2009) and FSCE (2003) that children are led to join the street life because of the violence and neglect they face at home.

This study found that the children engaged in commercial sex work preferred to dislocate themselves because of the distinctive names given to them by the
community, which, in turn led them to having weak social networks. This finding confirms the notion of labelling theory in that labelling the children as sex workers put them into a specific category in the society and contributed to them isolating themselves from other members of the society (Shah et al. 2005). This finding also confirms the findings of the studies done by Smart Consulting Associates (2007) and Shah et al. (2005) in which they state that street children have difficulty to have close relationships with the members of the community they live in. This factor was identified in the findings of this study as being one of the major indications of the social dislocation of the children.

The researcher’s night observations took place in Kebele 32 (which is one of the sub-divisions of the Addis Ketema sub-city) where she observed that there were numerous street children engaged in commercial sex work. She also noted that the passersby paid no attention to these children when they were waiting in line for their customers. This situation implicates that the issue of children engaged in commercial sex is deemed a normal situation and that the Addis Ketema sub-city residents and passersby, particularly in some of the Kebeles such as Kebele 32, are used to the idea of child sex workers or turn a blind eye with regard to the situation of these children. This finding confirms the assumption of the labelling theory in that the community has already labelled them as sex workers and has acknowledged that they belong to a specific category (Shah et al. 2005).

On the other hand, it was found in this study that the relationships that the children could have other people (rather than with each other), usually were with the people who rented them rooms. The researcher found that these children exchanged greetings with their proprietors when they encountered them but not with the other residents in the area where they worked, especially if the residents were aware of the work they were doing. This finding confirms the social bond theory in that the weaker the social attachments of a person with his or her community, the more likely she/he is to become involved in delinquent behaviours (Hirschi 1969). This finding is
also in line with the findings by Shah et al. (2005), Smart Consulting Associates (2007) and Schmidt (2003) in that street children do not have good relationships with the people in the community where they are excluded from mainstream society.

The findings of this study confirm the findings of Shah et al. (2005) in that the social dislocation of children engaged in commercial sex work is keenly felt by these children, who had no sense of belonging to the society in which they were living. Shah et al. (2005) indicates that street children are stigmatised and not considered part of society. Similarly, the key informants as well as the children that participated in this study mentioned that being a street child and being engaged in commercial sex work leads to him/her being regarded as different from other members of society. Furthermore, this research found that the research participants were exposed to verbal abuse by passersby or the police while waiting for customers. Sometimes, these children even experienced physical abuse especially at the hands of the police and their customers. These findings corroborate the findings of Ray et al. (2011) and Schmidt (2003) that street children experience physical, emotional and sexual abuse inflicted by the people in the community such as the police, customers and passersby.

This study also explored the social relationships the children had in their lives and found that the only significant relationships were between the children themselves, because of dislocating themselves and being socially dislocated by others from the wider community. This finding confirms the assumption of the social bond theory in that a weak social bond with society leads to deviant behaviours (Hirschi 1969). The daily lives of participants were explored in this study, in terms of how they spent their days together, ate together and went to work together in a group. In fact, it was found that most of the support and advice came from amongst themselves rather than from outside people in their community. This finding confirms the studies of Schmidt (2003) and Wernham (2004) as well as the assumptions of the labelling theory. This appears to indicate that street life was not only a place of exclusion and
social dislocation; it was also a place of socialisation and social integration for some of the children who lived on the streets and who were labelled street children.

According to the findings of Smart Consulting Associates (2007), the experience of being rejected over a long time by members of their immediate community leads to the children creating a protective shield to defend themselves against abuse and maltreatment. The findings of Smart Consulting Associates (2007) and the assumptions of the labelling theory confirm the findings of this study, namely that there is a tendency by the community to attach negative labels to children engaged in commercial sex work. This leads to them isolating themselves by forming their own groups and hiding themselves in that group to avoid the social dislocation they are facing from the community. Moreover, the participants in this study explained that the longer they stayed on the street, the more dependent they became on the group and the more difficult it became to escape from sex work.

5.1.2 Research objective 2:

The UNCRC (1989) was formulated by the United Nations to protect the rights of children and to ensure their well-being. Unfortunately, it was found in this study that street children and those engaged in commercial sex work in particular, could not access their rights or fulfill their basic needs. This study has probed the needs of children engaged in commercial sex work and found that the need for shelter eclipses their other needs and therefore, street children join the commercial sex trade to avoid sleeping on the streets. The other core findings of this study pertain to the other unmet basic needs of street children engaged in commercial sex work. In reality, street children faced the problem of a lack of healthy food, protection problems and health problems while they were with their families. However, street children chose the streets to fulfill these needs even though meeting their basic needs in life and social services are beyond the reach of most street children. Street children have little, if any access to health, food, shelter, education or social
services. It was found that the main needs of children engaged in commercial sex were the need for shelter, food, clothing, education and family love, amongst others - all of the needs spelled out in the UNCRC (1989). These findings confirm the findings of FCSE (2003), Kopoka (2000) and Ray et al. (2011) that street children’s needs are similar to every other child’s needs as listed in the UNCRC (1989).

The children that participated in this study also mentioned that they wanted to have good social relationships with the people in the community because it was extremely important for them to be considered part of their neighbourhood and not to be treated like criminals. In addition, the children who participated in this study who were involved in the support programmes (that were delivered by the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment), made it clear that they wanted to be accepted by their community, not be blamed for their past work and be included in family life like other children who still lived with their families and were therefore considered “decent” human beings. The majority of the participants in this study wanted to be accepted and understood by the people who mistreated and belittled them. They wanted society to understand that they became commercial sex workers not out of choice, but out of dire necessity. This finding confirms the studies done by FSCE (2003) and by Ray et al. (2011) in that these children need protection and good social contacts with the community in which they are living.

This study also found that the majority of the participants were influenced to engage in sex work because they had been living under the direst conditions before they joined the commercial sex work profession. They had to start with commercial sex work in order to avoid the hardships they were facing on the streets. Even though the situation and life experiences of each participant was different, there was one similarity in that the majority of the participants felt themselves to be in a situation where they had no other option other than to engage in commercial sex work. The Consortium for Street Children (2009) and Shah et al. (2005) confirm that street children face specific problems while they are living on the streets, such as a lack of
health services, a lack of education, a lack of shelter, a lack of food, social dislocation and sexual abuse, each of which, had its own consequences in their lives.

This study further revealed that children engaged in commercial sex work in order to meet their basic needs. The participants in this study were forced to survive the street life and, if possible, to avoid homelessness. It was also found that there is a high demand for under-aged sex workers, who earn more than street children engaged in other income-generating activities in the same community. The participants of this study initially responded by asserting that they had received no benefits from working as commercial sex workers but upon further probing, all the participants admitted that it allowed them to avoid sleeping on the streets, made it possible for them to have a daily meal and it enabled them to buy clothes occasionally.

This study also explored the feelings of the participants about commercial sex work. All the participants indicated that they did not like doing commercial sex work, despite the high expectations regarding the money they would earn and the improved living standards some initially had. Similarly, the FSCE (2003) and Abate (2004) state that the majority of street children choose their work in order to support themselves or their families.

Stephenson (2001) in her study of street children in Moscow and Shah et al. (2005) in their study of importance of social interaction in African context, they have describe how street children seek alternative ways to integrate themselves into society or try to seek another way of integrating themselves in the street life. This study also highlighted the fact that the participants of this study hid the work they were doing in order to secure a kind of "normal" attachment to society. Moreover, some of them regarded sex work as an option to integrate themselves in the street life and to engage in similar activities as other street children did.
5.1.3 Research objective 3:

Human beings have many needs that should be fulfilled and in the case of children, these needs are expected to be met by their parents or guardians. In the case of street children, it was found that in this study that they were dependent upon themselves to provide for their own needs. Therefore, it was found that some street children were engaged in commercial sex work to provide what they needed in life since there was no one else to do that. Hatloy and Huser (2005) and Volpi (2002) confirm this finding regarding the fact that street children support themselves as they have no one else to support them in life.

On the other hand, this study has explored the relevance of the support services in the Addis Ketema sub-city where the participants who were involved in support programmes confirmed that because of the support they had received, they were beginning to feel that there was hope in their lives. In contrast those participants who were not involved in support programme described that they feel no hope in their life. FSCE (2003), Balachova et al. (2009) and Abate (2004) confirm the findings that support services are extremely important to these children since they are unsupervised by adults and facing many different kinds of problems.

UNICEF (2005) states that society has a responsibility to make sure that children know their rights and exercise them in their lives. This study found that there were some support structures for street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city, for example, rehabilitation centers such as the safe home founded by the FSCE. This is an NGO that provides psychosocial support and all the necessary facilities that a child should have in a family home, as well as different rehabilitation programmes that help children recover from the trauma they have experienced. This study has also found other support structures exist for street children engaged in commercial sex work that consist of small community associations that have started working on the issues of street children engaged in
commercial sex work as well as providing counselling to those children on the verge of going to live on the streets. In addition, it was found that there were some community representatives appointed by the FSCE to identify children that were on the verge of embarking on street life and being exposed to physical abuse. Accordingly, the literature review revealed that a variety of organisations were established in the country (Ethiopia) to support street children and specifically street children engaged in commercial sex work. As Abate (2004), the Italian Cultural Institute 2005, FCSE (2007) and ANPPCAN Ethiopia (2007) confirm, different organisations were established to work for the support of these children in different parts of the country.

On the other hand, it was found that a major part of the Addis Ketema sub-city community does not accept the idea of street children being engaged in commercial sex work and thus, they exert a great deal of pressure on the children who are not involved in support programme. Consequently, these children are often mistreated and are not considered to require adult protection (Smart Consulting Association 2007:1). It is interesting to note that the participants in this study who were involved in the support programme declared that there were negative perceptions towards them before they joined the support programme. Not only did the participants in this study experience verbal, physical and emotional abuse, they also received mistreatment and abuse at the hands of their sex work clients before they joined the support programme.

5.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

As the findings of this study indicate, street children engaged in commercial sex work have chosen to engage in commercial sex work either because of peer influence or the pressure of having to survive and fend for themselves. The findings of this study also show that street girls are unlikely to continue sleeping on the streets for a long time once they have started doing commercial sex work. The
reason is that there are certain benefits such as of earning money and being able to pay for rented rooms, which, in turn, helps them to avoid sleeping on the streets and enables them to buy food and clothing for themselves. In addition, it was revealed that the majority of the participants accepted that it would be difficult to get that amount of money by staying on the street without doing sex work, which was found to be one of the incentives to continue doing sex work in spite of all the negative consequences.

The researcher has concluded that once a female street child starts to become engaged in commercial sex work, she will be dislocated from the community and she will be stigmatised because of the work she does. The two major reasons for the dislocation and stigmatisation are firstly, an assumption that she has acquired a sexually transmitted disease such as HIV/AIDS and secondly, the fear that she might “taint” others and exert a negative influence on other children. This indicates that children engaged in commercial sex work have few and weak social relations or contact with society, except with their clients and other sex workers, which is considered “normal,” but this, in turn, re-affirms the closed nature of their own, closely-knit groups and their decisions to cut off contact with other people in the community. Moreover, weak social relationships and social bonds indicate that little valuable social support is offered by society. Furthermore, the researcher has concluded that these children lack all the basic needs in life such as shelter, food and clothing. Moreover, these children need a strong social bond with the community and support in order to give them an opportunity to leave the sex work industry. Although there are some initiatives and projects to change the attitudes of society towards the children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city and some involvement of society in helping children engaged in commercial sex work, either directly or indirectly, much more still needs to be done.

The findings of this study illustrate that the children engaged in commercial sex work
are dislocated from the society and even though the support that is currently offered is relevant, the findings of the study show that there is a limitation with regard to the capacity of this support as mentioned above. The support programmes currently in existence in the Addis Ketema sub-city have a limited capacity and cannot accommodate all the children engaged in commercial sex work.

Finally, the researcher concludes that there should be further research in order to design well-structured support programmes to address the problems of children engaged in sex work in a wider range. In addition, the researcher concludes that there should be more participation of NGOs and government organisations in the work of the support programmes that are being delivered currently.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that the following should be considered in policy formulation and programme development, implementation as well as in future research.

5.3.1 Recommendations for policy and practice

Children at risk of homelessness and children engaged in commercial sex work in particular, should receive attention and help from the government especially. The government should not relegate these problems to charitable organisations and other concerned bodies. Instead, the government needs to have an improved approach and policies to address the problems of street children and those engaged in commercial sex work in particular, to create a better life for them and develop citizens that are well-balanced and live meaningful lives.

The role of the family is of fundamental importance in protecting children from being drawn into commercial sex work and from being exposed to sexual abuse. In this
regard, the researcher recommends that a system be implemented by the government in conjunction with NGOs to control children’s migration to the city. In addition, a programme should be introduced where parents or caregivers can receive guidance and receive help with parenting skills. The government should assume a further major responsibility with regard to developing a system to identify families with financial problems and support them with the necessary means before the family disintegrates.

Society, on the other hand, also plays a major role in supporting families that face problems with regard to raising their children. Based on the participants’ responses, it is evident that families should be given support in the form of advice, monetary support or counselling by community associations. Accordingly, community associations such as the “Idier” (a small community association), should have more far-reaching mechanisms at their disposal to address issues such as under-aged children who are on the verge of leaving home or children who are being abused in their homes, instead of only concentrating on organising funeral ceremonies and other related issues.

In addition, children engaged in commercial sex work require a national focus so that the number of organisations reaching out to female street children engaged in commercial sex work can be increased to make a tangible impact on society at large.

5.3.2 Recommendations for future research

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher suggests that further research should be conducted to investigate the needs of street children who are engaged in commercial sex work with regard to the available support services. Further research to evaluate the available support programmes and the capacity of these support programmes in addressing the needs of all street children involved in commercial
sex work would also be very valuable. The majority of the respondents indicated that the longer they remained sex workers, the more difficult it would be for them to abandon that life, therefore an investigation into the duration of the support and rehabilitation programmes could form an important part of future research.

In addition, further qualitative studies and field observations should investigate why these children are pushed into commercial sex work even though it is strongly censured by society. These further studies could help with the designing of effective prevention programmes that could minimise the number of children drawn into the world of commercial sex work. The majority of the key informant participants were of the opinion that prevention programmes would be more cost effective than rehabilitation and rescue programmes.

It can also be advantageous to have further studies regarding family welfare services and the financial support they can provide to keep children in their family homes. Furthermore, conducting further research could help to provide more extensive knowledge about family problems regarding raising their children themselves as well as providing support services concerning addressing specific family problems so that children can be prevented from leaving home and start living on the streets.

According to the participants’ responses and the literature review, there seems to be a lack of information on the living conditions on the streets because the majority of participants had left their homes without knowing what kind of lives they were going to experience on the street devoid of adult supervision. In this regard, the researcher recommends that awareness raising programmes should be presented in schools and in small community associations to make children aware of the conditions and hardships associated with homelessness.
LIST OF SOURCES


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ANNEXURE-A

**Interview schedule** - Individual interviews with female street children engaged in commercial sex work.

1. Age of the child ___________
2. Educational background: (Probe for reasons if the child is not attending school, or has dropped out of school).
3. Place of origin: (Did you come from another region of the country, if so, when did you arrive here?)
4. Why did you come to the capital city of the country?
5. Was there anyone who helped you to get here?
6. What were your expectations before you came here?
7. What were your experiences when you arrived here?
8. Family background: Probe to determine the situation of the parents before the child left her home/place of origin and the parents' present status, employment status, livelihood, the child’s birth order among the siblings and family size.
9. Do you have contact with your family? If the answer is “No,” is it because of the work you do? If the answer is “No,” what are the reasons? If the answer is “Yes,” please tell me more about this (where they live, their livelihoods, their living conditions).
10. Have you ever been married, engaged to someone to be married before you entered into this line of work? Probe for the age when the child got married, the type of marriage, how it was arranged and her current marital status. If separated or divorced, what was the reason for the separation or divorce?
11. Where do you live and with whom do you live at present? Do you prefer this kind of living arrangement? What are the reasons?
12. When and how did you start (the age/year) to be engaged in commercial sex work?
13. What were your initial feelings towards commercial sex work?
14. What are your present feelings towards commercial sex work?
15. What kinds of benefits do you get out of your job as a commercial sex worker?

16. If the girl has migrated from another region of the country, ask her to explain the pathways she took, starting with her departure from her family, the situation with regard to transport/travelling and the kind of living arrangement at the destination until she started her current job.

17. How would you describe your regular customers? Probe the types of customers, their ages, social status, their family status, the work with which they are engaged.

18. How do you find working with your different customers? Which coping mechanisms do you use to handle the difficult customers and the stress and anger related to unhappy situations as well as the varied needs of customers?

19. Have you ever encountered maltreatment or abuse in the context of your work? (Probe for explanations for each type of maltreatment and abuse by customers, traffickers and madams).

20. How do you deal with your maltreatment?

21. What is your view about the perception of the people in your neighbourhood towards you and your friends engaged in commercial sex work? (Probe the nature of the life of the girl/s regarding social events and the relationships they have with the people living in their neighbourhood and stigmatisation, amongst others)

22. Describe how you feel about the society in which you are living? (Probe further. If the reply is “Yes,” she feels marginalised, ask in what way do you feel marginalised, is it materially, emotionally, physically, etc? If the answer is that she feels socially integrated, ask: in what way do you feel you belong to the society?)

23. Does the perception of the people living in your neighbourhood towards you have any impact on your life? If it has, in what way does it affect your life? To what extent does it affect your life? If it does not have an impact, what are the reasons for this?
24. Have you ever been attacked physically or emotionally because of the work you do? (Probe for the experiences they had).

25. Have you ever been treated unfairly because of the work you do? (Probe for the experiences they have had).

26. Please describe the state of your health. If you have health problems, do you think it is related to the nature of your work? If “Yes,” why do you think so?

27. What other consequences have you experienced because of the nature of your work?

28. When you experience a problem, are the people in your neighbourhood willing to offer you any help? In what ways?

29. Who else helps you when you have a problem? In what ways?

30. Who gives you advice, first aid services or any other help?

31. In your opinion, do you think you have good social relationships with the people in your neighbourhood? (Probe the reply, if the answer is “Yes,” ask, how are these manifested? If the answer is “No,” ask, what are your experiences with social relationships?)

32. Which social events (holidays, coffee ceremonies or bonfire ceremonies, etc) do you partake in or in which small community associations, such as the “Idir,” are you involved in the Addis Ketema sub-city?

33. In your view, do you feel that you are included in the social life of the people in your neighbourhood? (Probe the question if the answer is “Yes” ask, why do you think you are socially included? If the answer is “No,” ask, what gives you the impression that you are socially excluded? What are the reasons for this?)

34. To what extent are you socially included with the people in your neighbourhood? (Probe the experience they have had).

35. What is your view about the risk of getting HIV and AIDS or STDs? Do you have any chance of getting first hand training and/or sources of information to know about HIV and AIDS or STDs? If the answer is “Yes,” from whom do you get the first hand training?
36. What kind of physical or emotional protective measures did the people in your neighbourhood provide you? In addition, what kinds of physical or emotional protective measures did the officials in this sub-city provide you? Furthermore, with which physical or emotional protective measures did the NGOs working in the sub-city provide you? Did other associations working in this sub-city help you in any way; if “Yes,” ask in what way did they provide the help? If “No,” what do you think are the reasons?

37. What are your major worries in your day-to-day life? (Probe to explore all her worries.)

38. Which needs are important in your life? (Probe to determine physical, psychosocial, emotional and material needs. Probe the question and ask, how do you try to get these needs fulfilled that are important in your life?)

39. What are your expectations of the following entities with regard to them helping you?
   a. People from your neighbourhood?
   b. Officials of the sub-city?
   c. NGOs?
   d. Other governmental or non-governmental or community associations (such as, the “Idier”) working in this sub-city?

40. Have you ever heard of rescue, recovery and integration activities for sexually abused girls?

41. Have you ever accessed any programmes (such as, services provided to sexually abused girls)? Which ones do you think that the existing policies or laws are adequate to protect children from sexual abuse? Why do you say this?

42. If you have accessed the services provided to sexually abused girls, what is your impression of the relevance of the services provided to you? (Probe the experiences they have had and the changes they have seen in their lives after they joined the support programmes)

43. In general, how do you compare your life before and after you engaged in commercial sex work?
44. Would you make use of any opportunity to get out of this type of work? Please give reasons for your response. What kind of potential do you have to change your livelihood?

45. What do you suggest can be done to protect or prevent girls from being engaged in commercial sex work in terms of the following:-
   a. The exposure of girls/children to commercial sexual exploitation?
   b. The role of families?
   c. The role of the society?
   d. The role of the government?

46. What do you suggest can be done to reunite girls with their families in terms of the following:-
   a. The role of girls/children exposed to commercial sexual exploitation?
   b. The role of families?
   c. The role of the society?
   d. The role of the government?

- I appreciate the time you took for this interview. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know?
- I should have all the information I need. Would it be alright to call you again if I have any more questions?

Thank you for your participation!
ANNEXURE-B

Focus group discussion 1
FGD1 schedule - Female children engaged in commercial sex work recruited from one of the support support programmes offered by services providers.

1. How did you get to the city of Addis and when did you arrive? Who facilitated the recruitment for your current job?
2. Could you explain the reasons why you and your friends became involved in commercial sex work?
3. How did you become involved in sex work?
4. Please tell me about your work and your feelings about your way of living.
5. What are the most important needs you have?
6. What are the problems most commonly faced by commercial sex workers because of the nature of the work?
7. What is your view about the perception of the people in your neighbourhood towards you and your friends engaged in commercial sex work?
8. What is your opinion regarding the extent of the bias, abuse and unfair treatment with regard to the people in your neighbourhood because of the work you do?
9. What impact does it have on you what the people in your neighbourhood think of you?
10. Could you describe the attitudes of the people in your neighbourhood towards you (a) before and (b) after you started working as a commercial sex worker?
11. What kinds of services did you receive from services providers? Who are these services providers?
12. Why did you join the support services in the beginning? In addition, what was the reason that made you continue using the services?
13. What kinds of benefits did you get from the services you have now received?
14. Have you experienced changes in attitudes towards you after you join the support services? What changes have you seen in the attitudes of the people in
your neighbourhood towards you after you joined the support services? When did you notice the changes?

15. In general, are there any differences in the social relationships you have experienced after you received the service and before? In addition, are there any differences in your social relationships with the people in your neighbourhood in comparison with those who are not involved in the services? Probe the question in what way are they expressed?

16. The general impressions of and feelings about your work and the life you are living now?

17. Can you explain the degree to which you are part of the social life in your neighbourhood? How did your involvement in the social life of the neighbourhood change after you joined the support programme compared to the time you were working as a commercial sex worker?

18. What do you feel about your social relationships with the people in your neighbourhood? (Probe the difference between when they were engaged in commercial sex work and now)

19. Do you feel you belong to the community living in the Addis Ketema sub-city? (Probe the experience they have)

20. Could you please give me your opinion regarding the measures that could be taken to rescue girls from the sexual exploitation?

Thank you for participating in today’s group!
Focus group discussion 2
FGD2 schedule - Female children engaged in commercial sex work not involved in one of the support programmes offered by support providers.

1. How and when did you get to the city of Addis? Who facilitated the recruitment for current job?
2. Could you explain the reasons why you and your friends become involved in commercial sex work?
3. How did you become involved in sex work?
4. Please tell me about your work and your feelings about your lifestyle.
5. What are the most important needs you have?
6. What are the problems most commonly faced by commercial sex workers because of the nature of the work?
7. What is your view about the perception of the people in your neighbourhood towards you and your friends engaged in commercial sex work?
8. What is your opinion on the extent of the bias, abuse and unfair treatment from the people in your neighbourhood because of the work you do?
9. What impact does it have on you what the people in your neighbourhood think of you?
10. Could you describe the attitudes of the people in your neighbourhood towards you (a) before and (b) after you start working as commercial sex worker?
11. Have you ever been approached by any governmental or non-governmental support providers for sexually abused children or have you tried to contact any of the support providers? What were the reasons that prevented you from joining the support services?
12. What kinds of benefits do you not receive that are provided by support providers? What is your experience regarding the attitudes of the people in your neighbourhood towards you because you are not in the support services?
13. In general, do you see any differences regarding the social relationships of the girls who have joined the support services? (Probe: before they joined the service and after joining, in what ways are they expressed?)
14. What is your general impression of and feeling you have about your work and the life you are living now?

15. In your opinion, can you explain the degree to which you are part of the social life of the neighbourhood? How do you compare the way in which you were part of the social life of the neighbourhood before and after you joined commercial sex work?

16. How do you feel about your social relationships with people in your neighbourhood? (Probe the difference between when they were engaged in commercial sex work and before)

17. Do you feel you belong to the people in your neighbourhood? (Probe their personal experiences)

18. Could you please tell me your opinion regarding the measures that could be taken to rescue girls from sexual exploitation?

Thank you for participating in today’s group!
ANNEXURE - C

Interview schedule - Key informants (sub-city employees, small community association members and non-governmental organisation members involved in support programmes)

1. Name of the institution/organisation__________________________________________.
2. Your position in the institution/organisation ________________________________.
3. What are the support services that your institution/organisation delivers to sexually abused and exploited girls?
4. What support services does your institution/organisation deliver to street children engaged in commercial sex work specifically in the Addis Ketema sub-city?
5. In general, what is your point of view regarding the social relationships of female street children engaged in commercial sex work with the people in their neighbourhood?
6. In the context of the Addis Ketema sub-city, what do you think is the perception of female street children engaged in commercial sex work regarding the social relationships they have within their neighbourhood?
7. What do you think is the perception of the people in the neighbourhood towards the female street children that are involved in commercial sex work? Are there certain myths or misconceptions traditionally rooted in the neighbourhood, which in one way or another, exacerbate the situation of street girls engaged in commercial sex work?
8. What kind of social, economic, moral and institutional arrangements exist to protect girls/children from any type of abuse in Ethiopia and specifically in the Addis Ketema sub-city? Probe the question: what are the measures taken for each type of abuse?
9. What are the existing declared laws that protect these girls against all types of abuse and exploitation in Ethiopia? Probe- do you think the existing declared laws are exercised properly to protect these girls?
10. Is there any connection between being engaged in commercial sex work and not being accepted in the society in your opinion?

11. In your opinion, in what way does being involved in commercial sex work affect the children/girls? Probe the social status, the social attachment and psychosocial needs of female street children engaged in commercial sex work.

12. Are rescue, recovery and integration measures part of the support programmes provided to the sexually abused girls in the Addis Ketema sub-city by your institution/organisation?

13. Are health and psychosocial rehabilitation services part of the services rendered to the sexually abused girls in the Addis Ketema sub-city by your institution/organisation?

14. Do you think the existing legal provisions, policies and laws in Ethiopia are adequate to protect children from sexual abuse? Could you please tell me your reason for your answer?

15. In general, which opportunities exist to enhance efforts to protect children from sexual abuse? What are the threats, which could thwart this effort?

16. What are your final reflections on what can be done regarding the protective measures that will meet the specific needs and experiences of female street children engaged in commercial sex work? Probe the most effective, culturally appropriate and acceptable measures possibly.

17. What type of roles should be played by the following stakeholders in order to prevent a child from being engaged in commercial sex work?
   a. The government
   b. People in the neighbourhood
   c. Children
   d. Non-governmental organisation
   e. Families

Thank you for your participation!
ANNEXURE - D

Interview consent form - key informants

You’ve been selected to take part in an interview that could help me to obtain information with regard to the social dislocation and integration of female street children engaged in commercial sex work, as well as the social support programmes available to female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city. I wish, with your permission, to interview you. However, you may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. Maintaining confidentiality is a priority for this researcher and all practical precautions will be taken to disguise your identity. There will not be any identifying information on the transcripts of this interview and I will ensure that no person other than the research supervisor or examination panel has access to any audiotape of your voice or reviews a transcript of this interview. All materials generated from this interview (for example audiotapes and transcripts) will remain in my direct physical possession and will be locked safely away.

The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes.

________________________________________________

(Signature of interviewer and date)

This consent form outlines my rights as a participant in the study on the social dislocation of and social support to female street children engaged in commercial sex work conducted by Ms. Lude Abiy, Department of Sociology, University of South Africa, South Africa.

I understand that:

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is my right to decline to answer any question that I am asked.
3. I am free to end the interview at any time.
4. I have been assured that my name and identity remain confidential in any publications or discussions.
5. I have been assured that my name does not to appear on any transcripts resulting from the interview.

I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND.
ANNEXURE - E
Letter requesting permission to conduct field work

To Mr. Abebaw Bekele
Programme Director of the Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment
P. O. Box 9562 A.A Ethiopia
Tel. +251 115 534 722

Subject: - Requesting Permission to Conduct Field Work

My name is Lude Abiy. I am a Masters student at the University of South Africa in the Sociology Department. I have selected the Addis Ketema sub-city to conduct a study that explores the social dislocation of and support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work. This is an important study since it could contribute to an understanding of these girls' point of view about their social dislocation and integration, the support programmes available to them as well as their social status in society. Furthermore, this information could help the government, non-government organisations and other concerned bodies with directing and facilitating the support they are giving to these girls.

The study will include individual interviews and focus group discussions with female street children engaged in commercial sex work, in addition to the observations done by the researcher around the Addis Ketema sub-city where there is a high concentration of street girls engaged in commercial sex work. The individual interviews will take approximately 60 minutes. I would like to assure you that no pressure will be put on the girls to answer the interview/focus group discussion questions and the girls have the right to decline to participate in the study. Moreover, maintaining confidentiality about their identity is a priority and practical precautions will be taken to ensure the anonymity of their identities.
Your permission to conduct this study is very important since this study could contribute to the development of effective activities and strategies in the fight against the sexual abuse of female street children.

In order to do the study, I kindly request the permission of your institution to conduct the study in the sub-city of Addis Ketema.

With best regards,

Lude Abiy  
*Telephone No. +251911463153*  
P.O. Box 7462  
*Bole Sub-city, Wereda 4, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*
ANNEXURE - F
Assent form for female street children engaged in commercial sex work – participants for the interviews

Introduction

I appreciate that you are willing to take the time to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary and I (Lude Abiy, a Masters’ student in the Department of Sociology at the University of South Africa, together with a professional social worker and a facilitator) in turn, will maintain confidentiality as far as your identity is concerned. I encourage you to share any information with us you have that will enable us to understand the experiences you have regarding your social contact, with other members of the community as well as your needs and the social support you receive.

There will be two facilitators; one will ask questions and the other will translate words and phrases that you may need to understand better into a more familiar language.

I request permission to record the information you give me on tape/digitally to assist in the analysis of this information.

The interview will take about 60 minutes. Please contribute fully and ask for clarification of questions that may not be clear to you. As I want to include everyone’s ideas and suggestions, do not hesitate to voice your own opinions. In addition, I want you to tell me about your actual experiences. Different opinions are important in the process of understanding your feelings and experience.

I want to assure you that this is a confidential discussion and that the results of this interview will be included in the results of the final research report. However, once again, I want to assure you that no one’s personal identity will be revealed in this research report.

I understand that:

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is my right to decline to answer any questions that are asked.
3. I am free to end the interview at any time.
4. I have been assured that my name and identity remain confidential in any publications or discussions.
5. I have been assured that my name will not to appear on any transcripts resulting from the interview.
I HAVE READ THIS ASSENT FORM. I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

_______________________  ________________________
(Signature of interviewee and Date)  (Printed name of Interviewee)
ANNEXURE - G

Assent form for female street children engaged in commercial sex work – participants in the focus group discussions.

Introduction

I appreciate you taking the time to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary and I (Lude Abiy, a masters’ student in the Department of Sociology at the University of South Africa, and assisted by a professional social worker and a facilitator) in turn, will maintain confidentiality as far as your identity is concerned. I encourage you to share any information you have with us, as this will enable us to understand your experiences regarding your social contact, with other member of the community, as well as your needs and the social support you receive.

There will be two facilitators; one will ask questions while the other one will translate words and phrases that you may need to understand better in a more familiar language.

I request permission to record the information you give me on tape/digitally to assist with the analysis of this information.

The focus group discussion will take between 50 minutes and 1 hour. Please contribute fully and ask for further clarification of questions that may not be clear to you. I want to include everyone’s ideas and suggestions, so please do not hesitate to voice your opinions. Importantly, I want you to tell me what you have actually experienced since different opinions are important in the process of understanding your feelings and experiences.

I want to assure you that this is a confidential discussion and that the results of this focus group discussion will be included in the results of the final research report. However, once again, I want to assure you that no one’s personal identity will be revealed in this research report.

I understand that:

1. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.
2. It is my right to decline to answer any questions that are asked.
3. I am free to end the interview at any time.
4. I have been assured that my name and identity remain confidential in any publications or discussions.
5. I have been assured that my name will not to appear on any transcripts resulting from the interview.
I HAVE READ THIS ASSENT FORM AND HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY AREAS THAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

(Signature of interviewee and date)   (Printed name of interviewee)
ANNEXURE-H
Letter requesting for permission to participate in an individual interview

To ____________________________

Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Subject: - Requesting permission to participate in an individual interview

My name is Lude Abiy Melaku. I am a Masters student at the University of South Africa in the Sociology Department. I have selected the Addis Ketema sub-city to conduct a study that explores the social dislocation of and support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work. This is an important study since it could contribute to an understanding of these girls’ point of view about their social dislocation and integration, the support programmes available to them as well as their social status in society. This information could help the government, non-government organisations and other concerned bodies with directing and facilitating the support they are giving to these girls.

The study will include individual interviews and focus group discussions with female street children engaged in commercial sex work. In addition, the study will include individual interviews with key informants who represent organisations such as yours to obtain additional information with regard to the social dislocation and integration of female street children engaged in commercial sex work, as well as the social support programmes available to female street children engaged in commercial sex work in the Addis Ketema sub-city. Your participation in this study is very important since this study could contribute to the development of effective activities and strategies in the fight against the sexual abuse of female street children.

I kindly request that you assign one person from your organisation to who could participate in an individual face-to-face interview and whom you think has sufficient experience to contribute to this study.

Thank you very much for all your support.

With best regards

Lude Abiy
Telephone No. +251911463153
P.O. Box 7462
Bole Sub-city, Wereda 4, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
ANNEXURE-I
Letter of permission to conduct field work in the Addis Ketema sub-city

To Lude Abiy
Student no. 46922512
Tel. no. 251911463153
Bole sub-city, Weroda 4, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

 Subject: Permission to Conduct Field Work in Addis Ketema Sub-city

This is a letter that certifies Ms. Lude Abiy, a master’s student at the University of South Africa in the Sociology department, to conduct a study that explores the social dislocation of and support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work in Addis Ketema sub-city, Addis Ababa for the purpose of completing her master’s study.

We grant her a permission to conduct a study on female street children engaged in commercial sex work in Addis Ketema sub-city that includes an interview and focused group discussion as data collection instruments as follows:

- 20 research participants for the individual interview which is half from girls who are already involved in the support programs and half who are not involved in the support program.
- 2 focus group discussions (10-12 participants) one for girls in the support program and one not involved in the support program.
- Face to face interview with the representative from NGO, GO, CBO and Community Committees

We also permit her to do a pilot study to test her research instruments prior to the main fieldwork.

With Best Regards,

Abubekar Naser
Area Program Manager

Vision: To see the wellbeing and protection needs of children fulfilled
Mission: striving for sustainable protection, and development of vulnerable children
ANNEXURE-J
Letter of permission to conduct individual interview at Addis Ketema sub-city Administration Women’s Children and Youth Affair’s Office

To Lude Abiy Melaku,

Subject: - Permission to Conduct an Individual Interview

As per the letter we received from the University of South Africa (UNISA) we certify Ms. Lude Abiy a master’s student at the University of South Africa in the Sociology department, to conduct an individual face-to-face interview with who we think has sufficient experience to contribute for her study that explores the social dislocation of and support for female street children engaged in commercial sex work in Addis Ketema sub-city, Addis Ababa for the purpose of completing her master’s study.

We grant her a permission to conduct an individual face-to-face interview with our staff which could contribute for her study on female street children engaged in commercial sex work in Addis Ketema sub-city.

Regards,

[Signature]

[Stamp]

Child Right Protection Support & Care Care Process Coordinator
ANNEXURE-K

Letter of permission to conduct individual interview at Addis Ketema sub-city HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Core Process

To University of South Africa /UNISA/

Addis Ababa

Dear Sir / Madam

This is to confirm that Addis Ketema sub city HIV/AIDS prevention and control office kindly offered all necessary information regarding street children engaged in commercial sex work based on a request from Ms Lude Abiy Melaku a student from University of South Africa /UNISA/.

Thus we would like to verify the University that, Ms Lude Abiy had interview technical staff of the office and; also received a permission to access required potential information for the fulfillment of Master’s thesis.

Regards,