



Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges

A Research Report

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ABSTRACT

Recently, Country Branding is increasingly becoming a hot topic as countries are competing to appeal to investors, visitors, expatriates and exports. As global forces of change composed of rapid technological changes, global competition and intergovernmental power shifts are becoming the order of the day; places are required to proactively design strategies to ensure a better economic destiny for themselves. Countries have engaged in branding themselves to set right their image in the global arena which suffers from stereotypes of some sort either from their past or the region they are found.

Accordingly, Ethiopia even though having various resources, heritages and glorious history, its recent image is suffering from the near past images of drought, famine, war and poverty that occurred in the country. In order to come out of poverty, the country needs to rebrand itself as the current negative image it has will affect the way it does business with other countries, affecting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) coming to the country, tourist inflow, attracting capable entrepreneurs and export of products originating from the country. Hence, this research in an exploratory approach tried to address the research problem of **assessment and evaluation of the potential role that Country Branding could play in increasing the Country's economic development and income**. Thus, the opportunities and challenges of Branding Ethiopia endeavour to reflect the country's true image and correct the misrepresented attributes associated to it before embarking on re-branding has been explored and found as beneficial and it is high time to embark on Re-Branding Ethiopia. The research will be useful to the government of Ethiopia to see how it can approach the Branding Ethiopia endeavour and learn from other countries' experience cited in this research.

Key Words: Branding, Country Branding, Ethiopia, Branding Ethiopia, Place Branding, Destination Branding, Marketing, Image, Foreign Direct Investment, Growth and Transformation, Tourism, Poverty Reduction

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DECLARATION

To Whom It May Concern

I Getu Kebede Kidane (Student number: 43089488) declare that this research report is the product of my work as a Master of Business Leadership student of the School of Business Leadership (SBL), University of South Africa (UNISA). Where other sources, both academic and non-academic have been consulted, these are acknowledged in line with the University of South Africa, School of Business Leadership referencing requirements.

Signed: _____

GETU KEBEDE KIDANE

Dated: 16/12/2010

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abyssinia:	The ancient name of Ethiopia
Amharic:	One of the local languages of Ethiopia and the working language of the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Brand:	Product or service plus value that differentiates it from the competition
Country:	In this research wherever it is not clearly mentioned, Country is meant to be the country in the case study; i.e., Ethiopia
Gilada Baboon:	A species of monkey, endemic to Ethiopia only
Walia Ibex:	A highland goat like animal, only found in Ethiopia and under the threat of extinction (believed to be below 400 in population)
Pan-African:	Related with Pan-Africanism which is a sociopolitical world view philosophy and movement which seeks to unify native Africans and those of African heritage into a “global African community”
Rastafarians:	Followers of the Rastafarian movement which is a way of life that arose in a Christian like culture in Jamaica and worship former Emperor of Ethiopia (earlier called Ras Tafari and later crowned as Emperor Haile-Sellassie I) which spread in the world through the reggae music
Rebranding:	Reborn of a brand
Sabean:	related to the land of Sheba used in same way as “Queen of Sheba”, the ancient land of Ethiopia used to be known as Saba.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AU:	African Union
asl:	above sea level
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
BRICs:	Brazil, Russia, India, China
bsl:	below sea level
CAGE:	Cultural, Administrative, Geographic, Economic
CB:	Country Branding
CIA:	Central Intelligence Agency
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COO:	Country-of-Origin
CNN:	Cable Network News
ECA:	Economic Commission for Africa
FDI:	Foreign Direct Investment
GCC:	Gulf-Cooperation Council Countries
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GNI:	Gross National Income
GTP:	Growth and Transformation Plan
G8:	Group Eight Countries (USA, UK, France, Canada, Italy, Germany, Japan, Russia)
IGAD:	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development

LDC:	Least Developed Countries
MW:	Mega Watt
NBDO:	Nation Brand Dual Octagon
NEPAD:	New Partnership for African Development
NGO:	Non Governmental Organization
PESTLEG:	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental, Global
PPP:	Public-Private Partnership
PCNB:	Presidential Council on Nation Branding
RP:	Research Proposition
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
SERI:	Samsung Economic Research Institute
UN:	United Nations
USA:	United States of America
UK:	United Kingdom
VOA:	Voice of America
°C:	Degree Celsius
\$:	United States Dollar

CHAPTER ONE

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

“... the Ethiopians slept near a thousand years, forgetful of the world by whom they were forgotten”

-Gibbon, quoted by Greenfield (1968)

The above quotation is taken from the famous phrase made by Edward Gibbon in his book entitled *“The Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire”* published in London in the year 1788 and quoted by many history books written about Ethiopia. One might be curious and ask “how far the Country has changed to reverse the above situation after nearly 222 years have passed?” The saddening and surprising but truthful answer is “not much” which supports the claim for the necessity and importance of the study topic undertaken by this research; i.e., **“Branding Ethiopia”**.

1.2. Research Objectives

Despite its long history of independence, having its major inhabitants practicing the world’s three religions (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) and historical heritages of many more uniquely differentiating characteristics like its own calendar and its own clock system, Ethiopia is unknown by many people of the globe. If anyone has a glimpse of Ethiopia, it is usually for the poverty stricken population it has. In fact, poverty has been labeled, by the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as the Country’s formidable enemy number one.

Being labeled as “*The Water tower of Africa*”, Ethiopia should have a lot of irrigated agriculture and ought to have secured the once envisaged plan of becoming “the bread basket of Africa”. But, Ethiopia’s irrigated agriculture output is at a very low level out of the total agricultural output while most of the agricultural produce is produced by rain-fed agriculture. This has contributed a lot to its over publicized negative image of famine and drought (which happens when there is shortage of rain) and made Ethiopia dependent on Aid.

According to the World Bank Report (2008), the Foreign Direct Investment to the Country amounts to a mere \$109 million in the year 2008 and is one of the lowest in sub-Saharan Africa compared to Uganda (\$788 million), Congo (\$1000 million), and Mozambique (\$587 million). The Countries which are believed to be getting low FDI such as Somalia and Zimbabwe are getting \$87 million and \$52 million respectively while Egypt got \$9,495 million which shows how low the level of FDI coming to Ethiopia is. The research will try to assess ways in which Branding Ethiopia will increase FDI which will play a great role in increasing the economic development and reducing the poverty in the Country.

The Country has a lot of tourist attractions which could be cited as endemic animals (Walia Ibex, Red Fox, Gilada Baboon) and many other endemic birds. The Country is using the now unique “Julian Calendar” with its 13 months as its official calendar and its Sabean Alphabet makes it the only country in Africa with its own Alphabet. The all the year pleasant weather of many places in the country (usually ranging 15- 25 °C) makes it “naturally- air conditioned” and could be an ideal place to build retirement homes for wealthy people in the world.

From what has been observed and from the literature survey conducted, the researcher believes that little is done to show to the world what the country has. While so many other Countries are competing for the world's mobile and scarce resources (such as capital and people in the form of FDI, tourists and export incomes) by improving and communicating their country image and appeal; like many African countries, Ethiopia is still unawake (if not ignorant) about the Country Branding activity which has now become ubiquitous in the world. This is proved by the fact that so far only one news-paper article (The Reporter, May 2010) is found to discuss about "Branding Ethiopia".

When travelling out of the Country, the citizens of Ethiopia learn the hard fact (to their dismay) that many people do not know even where Ethiopia is located on the globe let alone know what the country is endowed with. If by chance they find some people who know Ethiopia, it is mainly for the famine which frequently is over-publicized by the international media and aid-agencies.

Thus, it is believed that by properly branding the Country and communicating to the world the real image of the Country, the Country's economic structure will change for good.

The objective of the research is to assess the opportunities unutilized and missed to foster the positive brand image of the Country and propose the necessary strategy to be implemented by all stakeholders to contribute their fair share in assisting the economic development and alleviating the Country's poverty. This research seeks to answer the question- **"How Country Branding can be used to enhance the economic development of Ethiopia and assist its poverty reduction effort?"**

1.3. Statement of the Problem and Sub- problems

The research problem for this research is to “**assess the Country Branding potential contributions to economic development and to reduce the poverty in Ethiopia**”.

Thus the research will have the following sub-problems:

- investigate what benefits Country Branding (CB) has brought to other countries,
- assess the current level of standing of Country Brand image of Ethiopia,
- evaluate the potential of Country Branding to facilitate economic development and poverty reduction effort in Ethiopia.

1.4. Definitions

The definitions of key terms in this research are stated below.

Brand: is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors (The American Association of Marketing);

Branding: is reborn of a brand (Stuart, 2004);

Country Branding: is the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, social, political and cultural development of countries.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The research is a focused assessment of what CB effort will play on reducing the poverty of the country by using the perceptions of people

(natives & foreigners) living in the capital-Addis Ababa and literature assessment of impacts of CB efforts of other countries.

This research is delimited by the following points:

- It is limited to the use of qualitative methodology only;
- Sampling frame is taken as the residents of the city of Addis Ababa only, which will have a limitation on the generalizability of the finding to the whole Country's respondents;
- Regarding embassies, media and aid agencies, convenience sampling is used since some of them were not willing to give information;
- The time frame is very limited which limits in-depth treatment of the research topic which could have been done by increasing the number of samples (interviewees & respondents);
- There is also limitation of resource especially with respect to finance to travel to the regional states to find more balanced view;
- The research will not deal with the detail evaluation of government plans because of time limitations.

1.6. Importance Of The Study And Potential Benefits

The research is carried out as an exploratory study and concentrate and believed to elucidate the following important points:

- a) the impacts and benefits of Country Branding efforts conducted by other countries;
- b) the current perception and brand image of Ethiopia from the perspectives of Citizens, foreigners residing in the country, Government Officials, and media;

- c) evaluate the legitimacy and adequacy of the reasons supporting the Country Branding effort;
- d) check the relationship of the brand image and brand equity on the one hand and impacts on the economy on the other hand;
- e) evaluate the impact and extent of influence of the outside and internal factors affecting Country Branding;
- f) find out the influence of the country's level of development, political situation, culture, etc. on the acceptance of the Country Branding effort.

The research study is expected to give the following benefits:

- I. show the relationship between Country Brand image and economic benefit in the Ethiopian context;
- II. explore (in the context of the Ethiopian environment) the significant factors affecting Country Branding efforts;
- III. create awareness of Country Branding roles on the country's economy;
- IV. identify and provoke various stakeholders by showing the roles to be played by them in Country Branding;
- V. initiate the Ethiopian government to embark on Country Branding Project;
- VI. serve as a spring board for further researches on the topic; and

- VII. recommend strategies to implement Country Branding Project in Ethiopia.

1.7. Outline of the Research

The research is carried out with the assessment of the theoretical foundations in chapter two and the available relevant literatures related with Country Branding are discussed in chapter three. Chapter four deals with discussion of the problem statement and selection of the suitable methodology utilized to answer the research question. Reporting and interpretation of the research results found by using the appropriate instruments for the methodology selected will be dealt in chapter five. The final chapter six will cover the discussion of results, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND FRAMEWORKS

2.1. Theoretical Concepts Underpinning the Study

The research is intended to utilize the potentials of Country Branding (CB) to increase Ethiopia's income and economic development and reduce the prevailing poverty in the Country. Thus branding could only be done after evaluating and deciding what is going to be branded, defining to whom the branding messages shall be targeted, in what way it is going to be branded and what its appeal look like. Thus selecting the Country's target audience, knowing the target groups' needs, likes and dislikes and promoting what is available within the reaches of the Country needs to be evaluated and identified based on the theories, frameworks and models of marketing, destination branding and strategy formulation drafts by many academicians, practitioners and authors.

Countries are in competition for the mobile capital, people and companies in the form of tourism and attracting FDI and retaining existing ones (Kavaratzis, 2005). Thus, Countries shall develop appropriate strategies to utilize opportunities and to maintain the existing businesses and resources they have by formulating appropriate strategies. In this research, appropriate country branding strategies to exploit the available opportunities will be recommended with relevance to the context of Ethiopia.

In dealing with the topic, the following concepts are underpinning the study:

View Point One: SWOT Analysis

View Point Two: Porter's Diamond: Determinants of National Competitive Advantage (Hill, 2007)

View Point Three:
Resource Based View of Strategy Formulation (Grant, 2008)

View Point Four:
The CAGE model (Ghemawat, 2001)

View Point Five:
Country Branding Framework (Gilmore, 2002)

View Point Six:
Positioning Diamond (Gilmore, 2002)

View Point Seven:
De Chernatony's **The Brand Box Model** (Caldwell and Frere, 2004)

View Point Eight:
The Nation Brand Hexagon (Anholt, 2000)

2.2. Review of Theories and Conceptual Frameworks

The conceptual frameworks relevance to the study is explained hereunder.

2.2.1. View Point One: SWOT Matrix Analysis

SWOT analysis could be taken as the starting point to analyze and focus what the Country's potential are and what the available opportunities are available. This will serve as a basis for formulating the country branding strategy.

2.2.2. View Point Two: Porter's Diamond- Determinants of National Competitive Advantage (Hill, 2007)

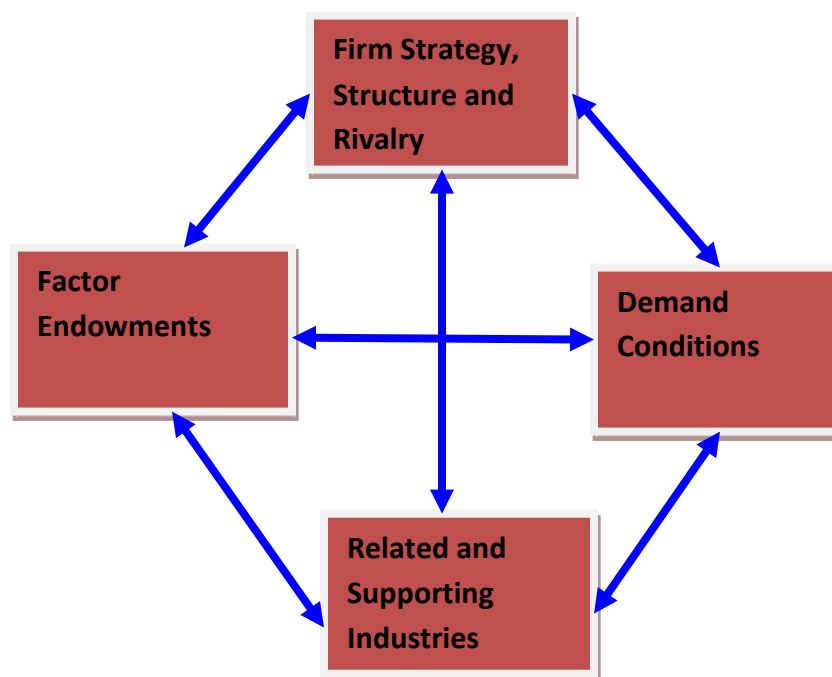


Fig. 2.1 Porter's Diamond- Determinants of National Competitive Advantage

Porter's diamond theorizes that the four attributes promote or impede the competitive advantage of nations in international competition. These four factors are at the corners of the diamond and are namely:

- Factor endowments: a nation's position in factors of production such as skilled labour and infrastructures;
- Demand conditions: the nature of demand in home country for the service or product;
- Related and supporting industries: presence/absence of related supplier industries which are internationally competitive;
- Firm strategy, structure and rivalry: the conditions which govern how companies are created and managed affect the state of rivalry in the country.

Porter's diamond will be used to evaluate and show the Country's competitive advantage.

2.2.3. View Point Three: Resource Based View of Strategy Formulation

This approach will be employed to identify the resources and the capabilities the Country have and hence focus the branding efforts around those attributes which will give the Country a competitive advantage.

2.2.4. View Point Four: The CAGE model (Ghemawat, 2001)

The Country Branding effort cannot be wildly thrown to the world without evaluating and selecting its potential users and target audience. One of the models used to select the target audience

is “the CAGE distance framework” developed by Professor Pankaj Ghemawat.

Table 2.1. The CAGE Model as applied to Ethiopia

	Cultural Distance	Administrative Distance	Geographical Distance	Economic Distance
Potentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Culture • Long History • Innocent & Honest people • Respect for self and others • Proud of being independent • God-fearing people • Holy land and basis of belief for “Ras-Tafarians” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic state • High level of security • Dependable military force • Stable political environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the centre of the world map • Favourable time zone • Central hub to many airlines • Archeological findings abound • Pleasant Climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High economic growth rate • Heavy infrastructure development & construction underway
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservative society • Suspicious mentality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven playing field of tax enforcement • Moderate level of corruption • Low level of communication technology penetration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessible by sea- land locked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low per capita income • Some areas of investment are reserved for natives only

(Source: Distance Still Matters, Ghemawat, 2001)

The CAGE model argues that there are four distances - Cultural, Administrative, Geographic, Economic- which affect Countries’ business with foreign countries Ghemawat, 2001).

Thus, in their Country Branding effort countries shall evaluate their internally available favorable situations/features and their corresponding “distance” and focus on those features which shall give them a competitive advantage and target their promotion towards the favorable target audience.

In its framework, Ghemawat (2001), discussion of the four distances mentioned in the CAGE model is briefly treated as follows.

- Cultural Distance determines the interaction of people with each other and with companies and institutions. The cultural distance evaluates the impact of differences in language, religion, social norms, race, etc. on the economic interaction between Countries.

In this aspect, Ethiopia’s culture has similarity with the Arab world, Jew traditions (there are Jew Communities- known as “the Felasha” in Amharic meaning the exiled), India, Japan and China.

- Administrative/Political Distance is involved with the historical and political associations or differences between Countries. For example colonial ties, common currency and political union increase business and interaction between countries in the magnitude of 300%, the CAGE model asserts. Ethiopia’s membership of regional organizations like COMESA, AU, NEPAD and IGAD will be helpful in this regard.
- Geographic Distance deals with not only the physical distance but also other infrastructural facilities such as transportation, telecommunications, access to the

sea/waterways, topography, etc. which in one way or another affect the time to communicate with one another.

- Economic Distance is concerned with the wealth of consumers and is the most important economic attributes among the four attributes.

In light with the theory of the CAGE model, the potentials and the negative aspects existing in Ethiopia are evaluated and presented in the Table 2.1.

From Table 2.1, we can understand that the Cultural distance and the Geographic distances though they have some areas to be improved are mainly in favorable position to be promoted and to base the tagline.

On the other hand, the Administrative/political distance and Economic distance needs to improve so that it will not be a hindrance to the branding effort.

2.2.5. Theory of Place Marketing (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993)

The theory of Place Marketing (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993) in crafting the strategy for marketing places involves the following major elements (see Fig. 2.5)

- i. formation of planning group
- ii. Improvement of marketing factors
- iii. Attracting and satisfying target markets.

As depicted by Kotler, *et al.* (1993), there is a shift in the market and changes occur faster than the time taken by places and countries react to combat the effect of the changes or utilize the opportunities that arise. Thus, places and countries shall be engaged in marketing themselves by focusing on the following four

factors. According to Kotler, *et al.* (1993) the distinct elements involved in the three levels of place marketing are as shown in the following diagram.

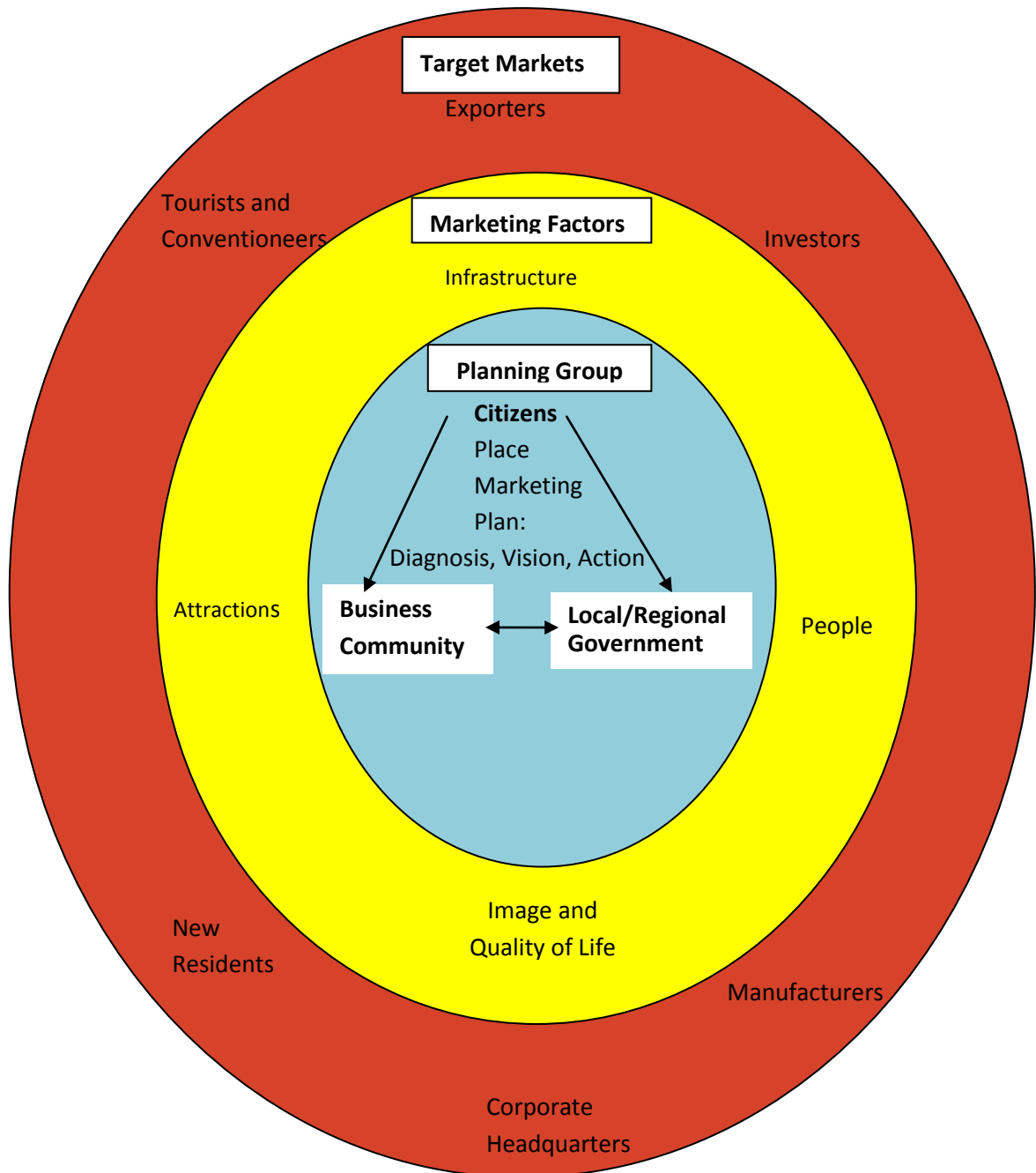


Fig. 2.2 Levels of Place Marketing (Source: Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993)

Kotler, *et al.* (1993) explain in marketing places, the initial step is to form a public-private partnership planning group drawn from the citizens, business people, and government representatives. The task of the planning group shall be to diagnose the condition of the place (which in this research is the country), identify its major problems and causes, develop a vision to guide the long term solution to the problems based on the real evaluation of the values, resources and opportunities and design a long-term plan of action involving stages of investment and transformation.

The second level in place marketing according to Kotler, *et al.* (1993) deals with improvement of the four marketing factors in the community. The marketing factors which needs to be improved to increase the appeal of the place are comprised of infrastructures (which must assure the satisfaction of citizens, businesses and visitors by providing basic services), increasing new attractions which improve the quality of life in the place, way of communication and appeal through image building programs portrayed by the community, and mobilizing the support of the people, the existing institutions and the leaders to attract new businesses and visitors and maintain the existing ones by making the place attractive and hospitable.

Improvement of the above four marketing factors (infrastructure, new attractions, image and quality of life and support from the people) are critical in attracting the six target groups shown in level three. The target groups for a place or a country are goods and service producers/manufacturers, corporate headquarters/ regional offices (appeal to relocate them), new residents, tourism, new investment, and exporters (improve acceptance of COO effects).

Kotler, *et al.* (1993) assert that a place's potential and appeal depends much on the people's will, skill, values and organization than its natural resources, climate and location. Since no two countries have same values, histories, cultures, leadership, and way of organizing public-private partnerships, no simple solutions/panaceas, formulas, or magical elixirs exist to solve the places' problems alike. Each Country must try to solve its problems in adaptive and productive approach guided by a combination of political, economical, demographic, technological factors using own practical experiences and cases to be benchmarked.

In a nut shell, place marketing or Country Branding strategy shall be crafted based on understanding of the global forces and trends and the places unique capabilities.

2.2.6. View Point Five: Country Branding Framework (Gilmore, 2002)

Gilmore (2002: 285) in the framework for country branding asserts that "the brand of a country shall sit at its heart". As shown in Fig. 2.2, Gilmore (2002), shows that the spirit of the people is the core of the Country Brand for it is deeply connected with the place.

This is because as Gilmore (2002) explains, the peoples' spirit is deeply connected with long lasting value system which endures the test of time and beliefs of the people which is shaped and affected by the environment, the history, the culture, the resources, the economy and the experiences of the people. Thus the spirit of its people is unique to each country and encompasses all aspects which shape the country brand.

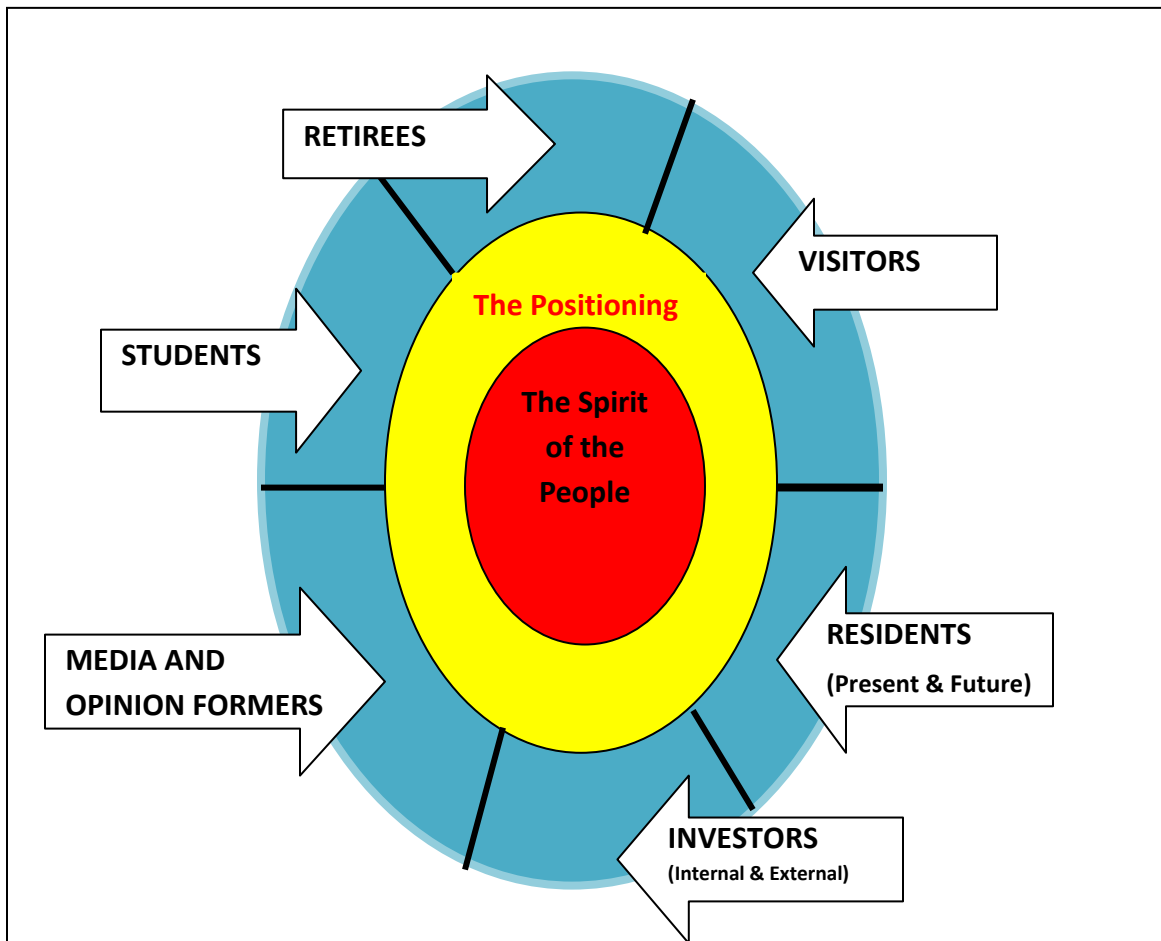


Fig 2.3 Country Branding Framework (Source: Gilmore, 2002)

The positioning of the Country (shown on the second layer) emanates from the spirit of the people and needs to be aspirational, inspirational, challenging and differentiated. And the positioning message shall be sufficiently rich and deep and translatable to the diverse stakeholders on the outer layer. There has to be meaningful

sub-positioning which is derived from the positioning. Among the stakeholders, the residents' belief and information affects the image of the country, their loyalty and their level of migration. This Country Brand framework is a very helpful mechanism which is in agreement with the other models to design a proper Country Brand.

2.2.7. View Point Six: Positioning Diamond (Gilmore, 2002)

The Positioning diamond of SpringPoint (a branding consultancy) as stated in Gilmore (2002) is helpful in making easier the difficult task of developing positioning. As shown below, the four corners of the positioning diamond show the essential factors to be considered during country branding.

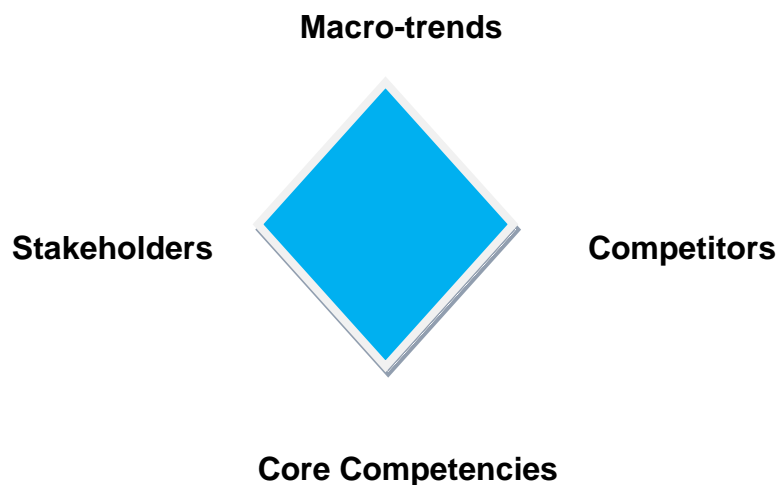


Fig 2.4 Positioning Diamond (Source: Gilmore, 2002)

Macro-trends: are trends which highlight the future situations that the country might face. They include trends such as socio-economic trends, population trends, political and legal situations, lifestyle trends, etc. Evaluation of the macro-trends helps to analyze the current and future situations of the Country. It is similar to PESTLEG analysis of strategy formulation.

Stakeholders/ Target Audiences: the stakeholders of a Country are many and include its present and future residents, retirees, students, tourists, media and opinion formers, foreign governments and foreign economic development bodies, export purchasers, etc. Selecting and focusing the target audience is very critical to determine the scope of the Country Branding project and decide on the message to be conveyed.

Competitors: selection of the target audience will define which other countries will be the competitor and it will be critical to find information about the competing countries which could easily be found from publicly available statistics and information.

Core Competencies: the assets (mainly physical and human, but could be many too) which could be taken as the differentiator and the substantiator factors shall be identified and strengthened by stories. Examples could be taken as the mineral wealth of a Country as Physical assets and Human assets (such as the long distance runners of Ethiopia).

Proper analysis and evaluation of the macro-trends, core competences, stakeholders and competitors will help to decide where and how to work the Country Branding exercise to get the sought position in the mind of the target group.

The above two models found from Gilmore (2002) will be a direct application of the marketing strategy analysis, segmentation, targeting and positioning. Thus, it will be used in place of the

marketing strategy formulation template which could have been used otherwise.

2.2.8. View Point Seven: De Chernatony's The Brand Box Model (Caldwell and Frere, 2004)

The strength of the brand could be analyzed and managed using "The brand box model". The brand box model helps to analyze and clarify the strength of the brand using two factor grids. The two factors are representationality (which shows the expressive value of the brand about the consumers) and functionality (which shows the utilitarian values of the product defined by the product). The four cells of the matrix created by the two factors of the brand box model are shown below.

This model will be used to check the strength of the brand.

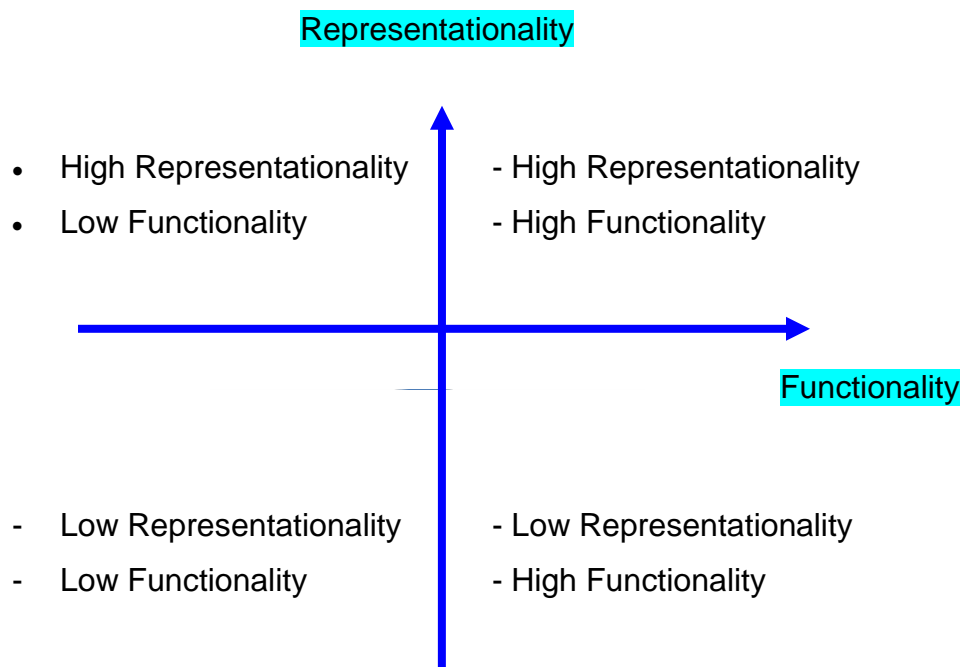


Fig. 2.5 De Chernatony's "The Brand Box Model"

2.2.9. View Point Eight: The Nation Brand Hexagon (Anholt, 2003)

The nation brand hexagon as dealt by Anholt (2003) shows the necessity of a brand strategy to integrate the various messages sent through various elements influencing the country brand message. As shown in Fig. 2.6 in the nation brand hexagon, the messages sent by the people, the culture as in films, sport and literature, the brands of export products, the policies and the investment shall be harmonized and aligned with the brand strategy.

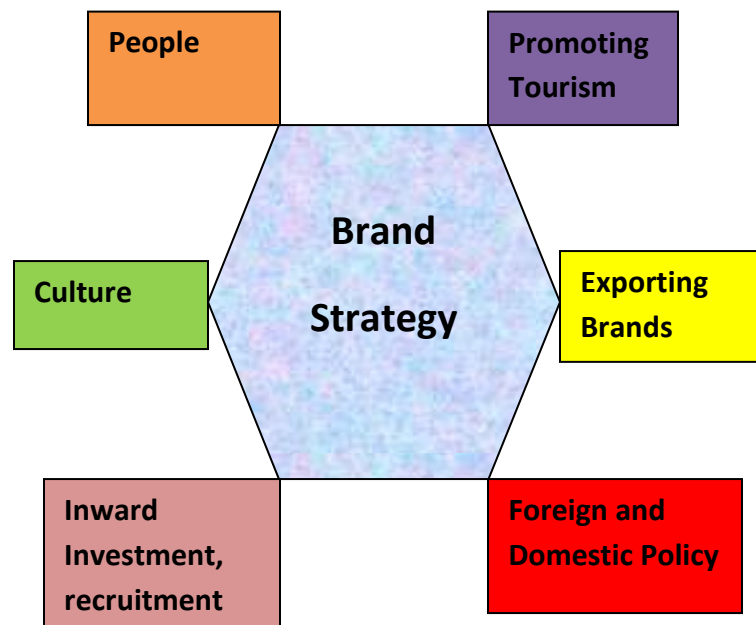


Fig. 2.6 The Nation Brand Hexagon (Source: Anholt, 2003)

2.3. Contextual Background

As described by an article on the website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ethiopia entitled “Ethiopia a Tourist Paradise” (www.tourismethiopia.com), Ethiopia is a Country with the ancient “Abyssinian” civilization of 3000 years of age. Despite its ancient civilization, its untapped natural resources and diversity of culture, Ethiopia is still unknown to the majority of the world population and is one of the poorest nations on the face of the earth.

Ethiopia’s per capita income amounts to \$280 which makes it one of the lowest in the world which is only better than that of Guinea-Bissau (\$250), Liberia (\$170), Democratic Republic of Congo (\$ 150), and Burundi (\$150) (World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2008). According to the above report, Ethiopia’s Gross National Income (GNI) amounting \$22.424 billion is standing at the rank of 89 among 216 countries. As per the World Fact Book of CIA (www.cia.gov), out of Ethiopia’s total population of 88 million, 38.7% live below the poverty line which is set as to be below \$1 per day income. This situation could significantly be reduced if the country is properly branded to convey its true image and show the potentials of natural resources, culture and heritage.

Ethiopia is found in the eastern part of Africa (to be specific in the Horn of Africa) between latitudes of 3⁰ and 18⁰. Despite its location of being in the tropics, the climate of Ethiopia is pleasant and agreeable (year-round usually ranging between 15⁰C and 25⁰C in many places), owing to its highlands, unlike other countries in the tropics.



Fig. 2,7 Ethiopia on the Globe

Ethiopia is found in a favorable time zone for financial markets as it is situated at GMT+3:00, 8:00 Hrs. ahead of New York and 6:00 Hrs. behind Tokyo.



Fig. 2.8 Map of Ethiopia with its neighbouring countries

The Capital city of Ethiopia- Addis Ababa and many other cities in Ethiopia are located at an altitude of above 2000m asl making them one of the few cities situated on highlands as high as above 2000m asl. This makes them very attractive sites of training for sports requiring stamina and endurance since training in highland areas is scientifically believed to increase the

hemoglobin which is part of red blood cells responsible for carrying oxygen to the cells. Of course, Ethiopia is the land of record breaking long distance athletes such as Haile Gebresellassie, Abebe Bikila, Kenenisa

Bekele among the males; Derartu Tulu, Meseret Defar and Tirunesh Dibaba among the females to mention the few.



Fig. 2.9 Mountainous Landscape of Ethiopia

The archeological findings of the ancient Homo-Sapiens (the skeletons named “Lucy” and “Ardi”) have made Ethiopia to be considered as the origin of mankind. This gave the nick-name the “Cradle of Mankind” to Ethiopia.

In fact, Ethiopia is mentioned more than 50 times in the Holy Bible. It is believed by Ethiopians and suspected by many others that the lost Ark of the Covenant (upon which the Ten Commandments of God are believed to be written according to the Christian religion) is in Ethiopia, at Axum in the church of St. Mary of Zion as mentioned in the controversial international bestseller book entitled “The SIGN and The SEAL” by Graham Hancock (1993). It is also claimed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that part of the cross upon which Jesus Christ was crucified is

found in the Church of St. Mary at Ambassel. It is also stated in the Holy Bible that the Garden of Eden used to be watered by four rivers one of which is the river Nile originating from Ethiopia.

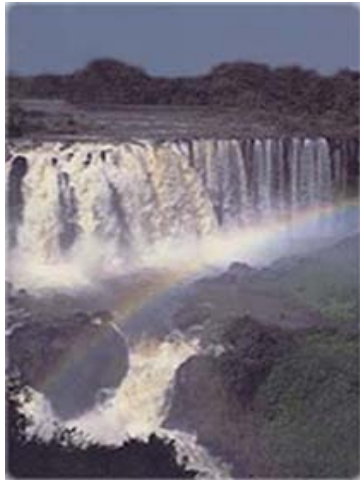


Fig. 2.10 Blue Nile Falls

Ethiopia is termed as “the water tower of Africa” for it is endowed with many rivers. Many tributaries of the Nile originate from Ethiopia and 86% of the water of the Nile is supplied by the rivers originating from Ethiopia. Many of these rivers have magnificent water-falls which makes them a good tourist attraction sites and hold a good potential (estimated to be capable of generating 45,000MW) for a “green” source of electric power generation. The “13 months of

Sunshine” in Ethiopia is also another source of green energy along with the available geothermal energy sources and abundant wind.

Ethiopia’s unique continual usage of the Coptic “Julian calendar” also known as “Ethiopic Calendar or Enochian Calendar” with its 13 months (12 months of 30 days and 1 month of 5 days or 6 days in leap year) and being the only African Country with its own Alphabet holds an interesting situation to be studied if promoted to people interested in human culture and history.

Owing to its being not colonized (except the five years “occupation” by the Italians) and its support for the freedom of many African countries, Ethiopia is perceived as the “Symbol of Black Freedom”. As a result, its tri-colour flag of Green-Yellow-Red have been adopted by many African countries to be taken as their new flag (with rearrangements, identifying

symbols and marks) and the colors have been termed as the “pan-African colors”.

It is interesting to note here that the “Ras-Tafarians” of Jamaica who use these pan-African colors during their famous reggae music shows have based their belief on and named after Ras Tafari Mekonen (later crowned as Emperor Haile Selassie I) of Ethiopia (www.wikipedia.org). The Rastas, as some times nick-named, have been given vast area of land to live in Ethiopia. As a result, there is a “Ras-Tafarian” community living some 250kms south of the Capital- Addis Ababa in a place known as Kuyera just before the town of Shashamane. This shows the welcoming nature of Ethiopians, who have accommodated the Jamaicans as far from the Caribbean like they have done it in the past for the Armenians, Jews and the first Muslim refugees.

Ethiopia is also considered as the origin place of Coffee (though some say it is Yemen), as the word coffee itself is derived from one of the regions of Ethiopia – Kaffa found South west of Addis Ababa (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/coffee). The Country is ranking fifth among the world exporters of coffee and produces one of the preferred variety– “Coffee Arabica” which fetches huge sums of profit for Starbucks which used and exploited the concept of branding. “Yirgachefe coffee” (Yirgachefe being one place of coffee Arabica source in Ethiopia) is one of the brands which is used by Starbucks which had taken the company into confrontation and series of negotiations with the Ethiopian government.

Despite these resources and heritages which could have helped in boosting the country’s image in the world arena, and which could have made it one of the preferred tourist destinations and attractive place for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), it still remains paradoxically one of the

poorest nations on the face of the earth. Lack of Country Branding exercise might have contributed its fair share for this paradoxical poverty while the country is endowed with many natural & cultural resources and historical & archeological heritages.

From what popularity has been achieved by about one million followers of the Rastafarians in promoting their ideology or “way of life”, the traditional flag of Ethiopia, and Amharic (the working language of Ethiopian government) without the backing of any government, it is motivating and encouraging that Branding Ethiopia could achieve much higher objectives with the backing of the Ethiopian population and the Ethiopian government.

This paper deals with the research problem directed to **“assess and evaluate the potential role that Country Branding could play in increasing the Country’s economic development and income”**.

It is believed that the research will help the Government of Ethiopia, Ethiopian Tourism Commission, Tour Operators, Ethiopian Investment Commission and the People of Ethiopia by increasing the inflow of tourists, FDI, expatriates and immigrants, and demands for the products exported from Ethiopia.

CHAPTER THREE

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Country Branding Concepts

Brand and branding are widely used by many but with different meanings: from a simple one to all inclusive. Thus, before discussing Country Branding concepts, it is appropriate and relevant to define what is meant by brand and Country Branding in particular.

The meaning of brand holds different meaning for various speakers of the term. Some associate it with a logo and a name and sometimes including tag line/slogan. But, a brand is much more than a logo, a name and a tag line and a brand shall have meaning to all external and internal stakeholders alike (Daly and Maloney, 2004).

A simple definition of brand goes like “brand equals product plus values” (Bernstein, 2003: 1134). In a more elaborated form, a brand is defined as referenced by Rooney (1995) to O’Malley (1991: 107), “a name, symbol, design, or some combination which identifies the product of a particular organization as having a substantial, differentiated advantage.” But this definition is attached and limited to product only which will not accommodate the branding concepts related to intangible ones like service and personality which are the main issues in branding of places/Countries.

The American Association of Marketing defines a brand as

“a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (Kotler, 2006: 274).

Thus taking the above definition, brands make the product or service stand out of the crowd and be perceived differently in its own and unique way. As stated by Kotler and Gertner (2002: 249) “brands differentiate and represent a promise or value. Brands incite beliefs, evoke emotions and prompt behaviours.”

Anholt (2003), states that countries/ places in many ways behave like brands. Place branding as defined by Anholt (2004) and quoted by Kerr (2005) is stated as:

“the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, social, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries.”

Due to the global competition faced by places in external and domestic markets, branding techniques application to places has increased in frequency (Hanna and Rowley, 2007). Anholt (2003) argues that places are perceived rightly or wrongly being associated with certain qualities and characteristics. The perception of other peoples towards the country is important as it affects a lot many aspects of other people’s relation with that country- tendency to invest and trade with that country, desire to visit the country, etc. Thus others see and treat a country based on its image and managing and looking after one’s image is important to that country.

According to Kotler, Haider, & Rein (1993), every place is subject to internal growth and decline cycles as well as to external shocks and forces beyond its control. And to manage the internal forces and external forces such as global competition, rapid technological change and intergovernmental power shifts place marketing is necessary.

As explained by an article entitled “Branding a Country” on the website of a consulting firm-Interbrand (www.interbrand.com), Countries with poor image will be left marginalized from businesses circulating around the world and even those countries which do not manage their image/reputation will be at the edge/bottom on the sphere of influence. Thus it is at the discretion of Countries to get involved or not in the competition to make them known and appealing to utilize the opportunities looming around them.

As cited by Papadopoulos (2004), Country Branding campaigns are aimed at encouraging domestic buyers to buy local products; influencing the decision of tourists; marketing agricultural produces like wine, coffee, etc.; attracting FDI; promoting exports; attracting highly qualified foreign students at the college and university level; attraction of new immigrants with skills in new technologies such as biotechnology, telecommunications and computer technology.

To this effect, branding is the most powerful weapon that could be used to promote what Countries’ have. Branding will also play a significant role to outshine and downplay the negative perceptions held about the Countries’ image which are sometimes based on stereotypes and are overemphasized by the international media.

The success and popularity of marketing and branding, not only in product branding but also in corporate branding, has created a wide interest in the concept of place branding (Kavaratzis, 2005). With globalization, countries have become competing with one another for the footloose resources such as capital, immigrant labour & skill, investment and markets for exportable products. Thus in government circles around the world,

place/Country Branding is becoming a commonplace (Papadopoulos, 2004; Hankinson, 2009).

There are many people and scholars alike who question whether branding/rebranding could really be appropriate for a country (Gilmore, 2002; Olins, 2002). But, there are many success stories (even though there are failures too like Branding Ontario-in Canada) which motivated many countries to embark on Country Branding projects. The success stories of Spain (Gilmore, 2002) and New Zealand (Lodge, 2002) are one of the few which fuelled the interests of countries vying for resources across their borders. Olins (2002: 246) goes further to warn that “the nation that makes itself the most attractive wins the prizes-others suffer.”

In fact, Country Branding is more relevant for developing countries which are fighting hard to come out of poverty and sell themselves by redefining their social, political and economic roles (Florek and Conejo, 2007; Lebedenko, 2004). As Gilmore (2002) asserts investing in country branding to bring in investors and tourists supported by the government and sound policies undoubtedly will improve the well being of its citizens for which the government has the responsibility.

3.2. Country and Destination Branding Trends

Recently, place branding has become increasingly important (Florek and Conejo, 2007, Hemingway, 2007). Even though Countries have long established images, many countries are currently competing to attract the mobile resources of the world; viz. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and tourists. Besides, the Country Branding (CB) efforts undertaken by Countries are trying to increase the acceptance of Country-Of-Origin (COO) effects and attraction of skill.

As cited by Olins (2001), some scholars such as Girard has opposed to the concept of re-branding a nation stating that a nation is not like a corporation or a product and extending the concept of branding to states is not acceptable. In like manner, Ritson (2010), complains that countries are not brands and marketing specialists shall refrain from using their skill where it is not required just like having a hammer doesn't warrant to shape every problem like a nail. To use his own words " an effective country brand strategy would have to change laws, policing, street names, unemployment benefit, health policies, family planning guidelines- all to fit the country brand positioning, Insanity. Many of the nations seeking a stronger country brand have much more endemic, structural problems and vital resources are spent on non-sense quest rather than essential and practical solutions."

But Olins (2002) argues that almost every nation has reinvented itself as the circumstances and the governments have changed. Examples are Kemal Ataturk's branding operation of the Ottoman Empire to change it to modern Turkey, and others being the liberated independent Countries that even went to the extent of changing their names such as Ceylon to Sri Lanka, Gold Coast to Ghana, Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, Congo to Zaire and again to Congo, etc. This argument shows that whether we are using the term "Country Branding" (which is coined by Simon Anholt in 1998) or not, countries are making these changes including name changes which is exactly alike with the corporate efforts and practices to acquire a new image and hence new brand.

The Country Branding motives are also strengthened by Papadopoulos (2004) which states that there are four objectives of Country Branding:

- Enhance exports,
- Protect local businesses from foreign competition,

- Attract/retain factors of development, and
- Position the place for advantage domestically and internationally in socio-economic and political terms.

Balakrishnan (2008) has cited that more than \$ 2 billion is earned daily from international tourism. A nation's economic destiny becomes difficult to control unless the country takes a proactive role in branding itself as there are so many competing countries which are in the process of branding themselves to grab the opportunities (Gilmore, 2002). Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott (2001), claim only 10 countries are visited by 70% of the international tourists.

As pointed out by Florek and Conejo (2007), the image of countries often determines their success in attracting Foreign Direct Investment, inflow of tourists and acceptance of their export products. Florek and Conejo (2007) add that Country Branding is especially important for developing countries to define their political, economic and social roles. Among the developing nations, this is mainly true for African Countries as peoples' perception of African countries is full of stereotypes created by the media and billboards with malnourished child seeking aid (Wanjiru, 2006).

Thus, most of the authors agree and highlight that Country Branding is important to promote the Country and (except in few cases like Ontario city of Canada) in most cases the Country Branding efforts have been found very rewarding. Gilmore (2002: 283) points out that many countries are currently engaged in branding themselves and any nation which wants to control its economic destiny shall engage in branding itself proactively to avoid the risk of being positioned in any way by its competitors. In conclusion, as stated by Aaker (Aaker, 2004: 35), " The next branding arena will involve places- countries, in particular, need to understand

branding as they establish their positions in a world that is increasingly interdependent.”

3.3. Other Countries’ Country Branding Experience

Caldwell and Freire (2004) have pointed out that many countries such as Australia, Croatia, Greece, Malaysia, and Spain (to mention the few) have adopted the country/destination brand building concept.

Countries use slogans/ tag lines to highlight their differentiating feature and attract their target group. As mentioned by Baker and Cameron (2008), some of the tag lines used by countries are as follows:

- New Zealand 100% Pure New Zealand
- Australia Australia: a different light
- Spain Everything Under The Sun
- India Incredible India
- Scotland Silicon Glen
- Singapore Live it up in Singapore
- Cyprus The Island for All Seasons
- South Africa Alive with Possibilities
- Malaysia Malaysia Truly Asia.

Currently, it is becoming a common practice among countries of the world to engage in the country branding effort. This effort is witnessed both in the developed and least developed countries (LDCs). Germany established a Public-Private Partnership committee to make a fresh and exciting outlook of the country under the slogan “Germany: Land of Ideas” to overcome its tarnished image due its role in the World War II (Lee Dong-Hun, 2010).

Even African countries such as South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria have established Nation Branding offices and it is high time for Ethiopia to evaluate its potential benefits.

In Country Branding practice, as there are many countries with success stories, there are also some failures. For example, Kenya has started CB in 2007 but it was interrupted, allegedly for lack of fund and for lack of a supporting champion in the government though it has restarted again. Thus it is important to engage in the task of CB after making a thorough analysis of the requirements and after getting the commitment of the key stakeholders (such as the Government) to be involved.

Because of the limitations on the capacity of the models to reflect reality on the international rankings of Country Brands, there is a trend to develop models to base country brand rankings by using the soft and hard aspects. As per Lee Dong- Hun (2010) evaluation, the existing nation brand indices tilt either towards substance or image. The competitive rankings of International Management Development (IMD) and World Economic Forum (WEF) lean to focus on substance while the Anholt's Nation Brand Index (NBI) and FutureBrand's Country Brand Index (CBI) focus on image. The new Nation Brand Dual Octagon (NBDO) developed by Samsung Economic Research Institute (SERI) and Presidential Council on Nation Branding (PCNB) –both of which are South Korean institutions– deals with both aspects whereby the substance aspect is measured statistically while the image is measured by surveys. The Octagon in NBDO refers to the eight categories of economy, science & technology, hard infrastructure, institution, heritage, modern culture, citizenry, and celebrity.

3.4. Best Practices

Among Countries engaged in Country Branding effort some are successful and some have failed. Out of the successful ones, the experience of

Dubai, Spain, South Africa and New Zealand could be cited as best practices.

As well explained by Gilmore (2002), Spain has engaged in Country Branding to bring itself out of the shattered image imposed upon it by the dictatorial regime of General Franco. By engaging in Country Branding effort, Spain was able to reach to the level of a well-developed nation from its previous quagmire situation. In its nation branding effort, Spain has rebuilt the city of Bilbao, managed to successfully host one World Cup tournament and Barcelona Olympic which has in return helped to enhance its brand image and of course its economic benefit. Spain's GDP grew by 23.3% during the period of 1991-2000. This growth was more than 5% ahead of France and 4% more than the Euro-zone average (Gilmore, 2002).

As to New Zealand with its 100% Pure New Zealand slogan, it managed to increase its tourist influx by as high as 53% while its wine exports have become seven times higher (Dong-Hun, 2010).

At this point it is worth to invite the readers of this proposal to successful Branding of Dubai which has brought tremendous change in positioning of Dubai from a simple fishing village to a world trading hub (Balakrishnan, 2008). Balakrishnan (2008) states that the no direct tax policy of Dubai is believed to have encouraged investment, its skies are open to any airline which has increased transit traffic.

In fact, America is the most powerful public domain brand which was nurtured and supported by the Hollywood movies of 2-hour cinema which consumers around the world happily paid to the Brand America commercials mixed with entertainment (Anholt, 2003).

In the African continent too, even though it is premature to conclude, the Country Branding effort of South Africa could be taken as one of the

successful ones as it has got a positive remark from FIFA and celebrities who have attended the 19th world cup.

3.5. Evaluation of Literature Surveyed

Many of the literatures reviewed have been found to use with excessive repetition of reference to few authors. In many of the papers reference to Anholt, Kotler, Gilmore, Aaker and Papandolous have been used repeatedly. This shows the lack of well developed theories in the field and influence on the sector by few professionals and academics. It was also found many theories tend have used the case study methodology which might have the risk of lacking validity as they might have an element of subjectivity. Researches using empirical data or using quantitative methodology are very limited in number. The researches using the qualitative methodology are found to be context bound and made it difficult to use each recommendation. Lack of uniform and widely applied theory is one of the limitations in this field.

3.6. The Ethiopian Case: Opportunities and Challenges

Despite its challenges, developing countries (where Ethiopia is one of them) can't afford to ignore Country Branding in their struggle to come out of poverty (Florek and Conejo, 2006). Florek and Conejo (2006) have given a concluding remark that since consumers around the world tend to have images of countries based on perceptions and stereotypes it gives developing countries an area to start their branding effort.

Travel and Tourism is the largest industry in the world in terms of employment. It created nearly 200 million jobs and generated 11.7% of the world's GDP in the year 2000. It ranks first becoming ahead of petroleum or any other export commodities such as motor vehicles in terms of export (Caldwell and Freire, 2004).

The results from Wanjiru (2006) interview has pointed out that while branding African countries the following potential challenges are stressed:

- Corruption and similar negative images
- Limited resources
- Unnecessary competition among African nations

The Continent brand defect is also one of the challenges mentioned by Wanjiru (2006) for African Countries which creates a “band-wagon effect”.

“The Ethiopian Millennium” celebration (celebrated on Ethiopian New Year’s day-September 11’ 2007, owing to the Country’s different calendar) have neither been widely promoted to the international community nor properly and professionally handled. Like the millennium celebration, many opportunities are still lingering without being effectively utilized. Thus, creating an attractive image for Ethiopia could be said as challenging while there are opportunities which make the branding Ethiopia endeavor very easy. Few of the opportunities and potentials of Ethiopia could be cited as follows:

- The availability of African Union (AU) headquarter, many embassies and international organizations in the country;
- The all-the-year sunny and comfortable climate in many parts of the country;
- English speaking people are abundantly found almost in every cities (English could be taken as the Country’s 2nd or 3rd language);
- Source of many rivers and endowed with waterfalls;
- Untapped mineral resources and unexploited potential of natural gas;
- History of independence and support for the struggle of independence of many African countries;

- Icon of Black's freedom reflected by the adoption of its tri-colour flag of Green-Yellow-Red as the pan-African colours;
- Basis of Belief for the Ras-Tafarians of the Jamaica people (Ras Tafari is the name of the late Emperor Haile Selassie which was perceived by the Jamaicans to be holy and who had given a place to live for the Jamaican Community in Ethiopia);
- The hospitality of its people;
- The age-old democratic tradition of power transfer cultural practice among the largest ethnic population of the "Oromo" ethnic group in Ethiopia whereby clan leadership power is ceremonially transferred every eight years;
- The high population of the country;
- Being in the suitable and central geographical location where Asia, Africa, & Europe meet;
- Located in a favorable time zone (GMT+3:00) for financial markets where it is 8:00 Hrs. ahead of New York and 6:00 Hrs. behind Tokyo;
- Peaceful (whereby Churches and Mosques share the same neighbourhood and their followers are friends) and dependable security;
- Diverse culture;
- Diverse landscape of highlands and lowlands;
- Land of ancient churches, obelisks, mosques and mysteries;

But this is not without its challenges which could be cited as follows:

Papadopoulos (2004) identified that developing countries face a multitude of challenges in their effort of Country Branding. These are lack of expertise in branding and marketing of this sort, limited range of resources which require to focus on niche segment requiring a higher expertise of

marketing, they are given less time by the media and get much smaller attention by investors, tourists and buyers and lack political stability.

In addition to the above mentioned universal challenges for LDC's the following are additional challenges to the Ethiopian case of Country Branding.

- Policies tend towards control rather than favoring investors;
- animosity with some of bordering countries (Eritrea & Somalia);
- citizens' unrealistic knowledge about the country's level of popularity in the world (many doesn't know that Ethiopia is unknown by the majority of the world population);
- conservative people.

Incidentally, Ethiopia is similar in many aspects with the European country of Switzerland and it could be worthwhile to see if it could follow in the footsteps of the latter. Their similarity goes like

- Both are situated on highlands, Ethiopia is also nick-named as “the Switzerland of Africa”;
- Both are landlocked countries;
- Like Switzerland is the seat of many UN affiliated organizations, Ethiopia is its African equivalent where AU and other affiliated organizations like ECA are located;
- Their citizens are conservative.

This might show a potential to follow in the footsteps of Switzerland and become a financial hub, a centre of secret banks, a centre for international organizations and multinational companies, and home for retirees, and focus areas for luxury products and high class entertainment.

In the past, Ethiopia's Country Brand is overemphasized to convey a negative image. A country which wants to change the negative

perceptions attached to it shall help investors, tourists and other target groups discover that image (Gertner and Kotler, 2004).

3.6. Research Propositions

The research attempts to test the following propositions:

- RP1.** Country Branding plays a positive role in increasing economic benefits of a Country (Gilmore, 2002);
- RP2.** The current Country Brand image of Ethiopia is based on stereotypical images of the past and the geographic region (Wanjiru, 2006);
- RP3.** Country Branding holds a potential to facilitate the economic development and poverty reduction scheme in Ethiopia (Gilmore 2002; Kotler, *et al.* 1993; Anholt, 2003);
- RP4.** Media and aid-agencies affect the Country Brand of Ethiopia (Gilmore, 2002);
- RP5.** Citizens of Ethiopia affect the positioning of the Ethiopia Brand (Gilmore, 2002; Kotler, *et al.*, 1993; Anholt, 2003)

Thus evaluating the importance of CB in its effort to enhance economic development and reduce poverty is a task which Ethiopia can't afford to ignore. Hence, the research methodology to be followed in pursuing the research shall be selected in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

The literature review has shown the necessity to research the importance and suitability of Country Branding in the Ethiopian context. The research methodology and the sampling method to be used for this research along with other relevant topics such as the data analysis steps will be discussed in this chapter.

4.1. Statement of the Problem and Sub-Problems

The research problem for this research is to “**assess the Country Branding potential contributions and challenges to enhance economic development of Ethiopia**”. Thus, the research will have the following sub-problems and the corresponding research propositions stated below:

- investigate what economic benefits Country Branding (CB) has brought to other countries,
 - **RP1.** Country Branding plays a positive role in increasing economic benefits of a Country (Gilmore, 2002; Anholt, 2002);
- assess the current level of standing of Country Brand image of Ethiopia,
 - **RP2.** The current Country Brand image of Ethiopia is based on stereotypical images of the past and the geographic region (Wanjiru, 2006);
- evaluate the potential opportunities of Country Branding to bring economic benefit to Ethiopia,

- **RP3.** Country Branding holds a potential opportunity to bring economic benefit to Ethiopia (Gilmore, 2002; Anholt, 2002; Kotler, *et al.*, 1993);
- Assess the challenges that might come in implementing a Country Branding strategy,
 - **RP4.** Media and aid-agencies affect the Country Brand of Ethiopia (Gilmore, 2002);
 - **RP5.** Citizens of Ethiopia affect the positioning of the Ethiopia Brand (Gilmore 2002; Kotler, *et al.*, 1993; Anholt 2003).

4.2. Research Methodology

The methodology used in this research is qualitative method. The chosen research methodology is of qualitative nature because the nature of the research problem does not have a single objective reality and the research process is context-bound and involves personal views.

The research problem deals with exploring and describing the benefit of country branding to the Ethiopian situation to reveal its impact on the Country's economic development and in away to support poverty reduction strategy. Besides it is based on personal views of limited number of individuals. Thus it is found feasible and suitable to use qualitative methodology.

4.3. Research Design

The research design used in this research is based on a case study of an exploratory nature. Case study approach is selected because the research deals with exploring and understanding the country branding program undertaken by many countries with a purpose of evaluating its benefit to the Ethiopian case in its own context. Since the research involves around

a particular program; i.e., Country Branding for Ethiopia, case study is found suitable.

From the literature review it was also observed that the research approach employed in many of the studies involved around Country Branding are based on Case Study approach which confirms the suitability of the case study approach for similar research endeavors.

The data collection mechanism involves interviews and focus groups. It also involves secondary data from local and international organizations.

4.4. Sampling

The population taken for sampling is limited to the geographical location of Addis Ababa due to time limitation, convenience and resource constraints. The sampling used was convenience sampling from a sampling frame of expatriates, media professionals, investors, residents (locals & foreigners) of the capital (Addis Ababa) and others residing abroad which are contacted and who responded through e-mail. The educational background of samples is taken to be at least having first degree. The minimum age limit is made to be 25 years so that respondents will have at least some experience with effects associated with country branding. Whenever possible, preference was given to get the people who have travel experience to a foreign country.

4.5. Data Collection Instruments, Validity and Reliability

The research used observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and documents/news papers as instruments of data gathering which are found to be relevant to the case study approach.

The validity and reliability of the qualitative research is ascertained by *triangulation*. This is achieved in this research by using multiple data sources (different citizens, government officials, foreigners, media, etc.)

and multiple data collection mechanisms (interviews and discussion with focus groups) and checking for common themes in the data collected. The interview questions had been shown to the study leader and two colleagues of the researcher and were improved as per their comments to enhance the validity of the instrument. Besides the results of the interview were given to two other colleagues for validation and it has earned their consent.

The external validity of the research to make generalizations is limited by the small number of samples taken due to time limitation shall be ascertained in the future by conducting quantitative research for a larger sample. In addition to this a qualitative research having different setting and targeting foreign investors, tourists and government policy makers shall be conducted to ascertain its external validity.

The reliability of the research is enhanced by using the same interview guideline for all respondents and using test-retest i.e., repeating the interview with selected 2 individuals. Besides the different instruments used (interviews focus group discussions) and the results from different individuals interviewed maintain and enhance the reliability of the research. A questionnaire is also used to re-test the prior respondents to confirm the reliability of the data collected.

4.6. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique employed involved organizing the details about the case, categorizing the data into meaningful themes, looking for and identifying patterns. This was followed by making logical analysis and finally reaching at conclusions by evaluating the implications of the data which support the research propositions.

Owing to the relatively small number of samples used in this study, generalization shall wait for further studies of quantitative research based

on larger samples and qualitative research in a different setting mainly involving policy makers, foreign investors and tourists. But, the tentative generalization could be made as stated in Chapter 6 of this report till other similar studies which eliminate the limitations in this report support it.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

To maintain ethical considerations in conducting this research, principle of voluntary participation is applied and no respondent is coerced to respond to the interview. All respondents have responded voluntarily. And the case of informed consent is used while conducting interviews. The respondents are informed from the outset the purpose and use of the data collection and they are given the liberty to have access to the report, if they wish. Codes are used to maintain anonymity of respondents as some of the responses might have political implications.

Besides, to maintain their right to privacy, no audio and video recording was used as it invades their right to privacy and invites suspicion of respondents. However, written records of their response are kept for further confirmation and verification. On each interview the respondent is requested to verify and e-mail back the written record and put his contact address on the written record to verify the data whenever it is found necessary and has done so.

The next chapter deals with the reporting and interpretation of research results found following the research methodology and instruments as described in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

The research was conducted following the qualitative methodology as presented in the previous chapter. The research results pertinent to the five research propositions are found using the following five instruments as stated below. The responses to each of the instruments and the interpretation of the results are stipulated hereunder in this chapter.

5.1. Discussion of Measuring Instruments Applied

The measuring instruments applied are 4 different types of interview questions guide prepared for different target groups and 1 focus group discussions guide line. The interview for Ethiopians targeted and involved around opinion leaders of the Ethiopian society drawn from prominent Ethiopians living in the country and in diaspora (which were interviewed through e-mail), media professionals and government officials including those who have been involved in the past in activities related to image building of the country.

Foreigners were also other groups who have been interviewed to get an outsiders point of view. Though the interview was targeted to get the opinion of foreigners who have never been to Ethiopia, none responded to the request. The foreigners interviewed are those who have been to Ethiopia and include those working in embassies, foreign business organizations and aid-agencies and journalist.

The two focus group discussions held involved one group of 5 professionals who have a clear picture of what branding is who have experience in foreign countries. The other focus group involved around 5 young artists engaged in acting and directing of films and who have never been out of Ethiopia. The focus group discussion participants were all male and aged between 28 and 50 years, while

those interviewed includes 4 ladies among the whole groups. Thus the study is lopsided with male respondents.

Instrument 1- Interview Questions for Ethiopians residing in the country and in Diaspora

Owing to the political sensitivity of the topic and the low openness of the Ethiopian culture, the domain of interviewees was made large from the outset. Thus, the request for interview was sent to 20 Ethiopians and only 12 were willing to give the interview which made a response rate of 60%. Out of the 12 Ethiopians willing to be interviewed, 2 of them did not make it while 10 were interviewed. Out of the 10 Ethiopians interviewed 2 of them who are living abroad responded via e-mail. The remaining 8 were residing in Ethiopia and were interviewed face to face. The age group of the respondents ranges from 27-48 yrs and 70% are male while 30% are female.

Instrument 2- Interview Questions for Foreigners in Ethiopia and outside the country

Fifteen (15) foreigners were requested for the interview and 6 gave a favorable reply. Three (3) of the respondents are residing outside Ethiopia to whom the interview questions were sent by e-mail and they too responded by e-mail. The other 3 respondents were in Ethiopia and gave the interview ranging from as brief as 45 minutes to an elaborated one close to 2 Hours. The respondents were 17% female and 83% male.

The foreigners were relaxed while giving the interviews except when they were asked about aid agencies. When they were asked about the sincerity behind fund raising for aid, most tried to justify it at first, while some claiming that the problem is real and not a theatre. But after a series of related questions, many admitted that aid programmes have their shortcomings and commented that it is up to the government to come up with genuine and non-political control mechanisms.

Instrument 3- Interview Questions for Media

The interview appointment was requested from 6 local media and one prominent journalist gave the appointment and the interview was conducted in a really interesting manner and gave his responses which were enlightening. The interview was conducted for 1 Hour and 40 minutes. Others have given various excuses apparently for fear of being accused for the topic has connection with political views, despite the disclosure of confidentiality of the ethical consideration of the research. Some gave an appointment as far as 3 months which obviously is out of the research period.

It was really surprising to notice that how the media which is supposed to respect the freedom of getting information will refrain to give information for research purpose even while confidentiality is promised. It shows how the information is perceived to be highly sensitive and how tense the environment is.

On the other hand, the interview questions were sent to a controversial Ugandan journalist whose articles about Ethiopia have been posted in the Ethiopian local newspapers and created much discussion. His response gave colour to the topic at hand and elucidated a different perspective and fresh insight.

Instrument 4- Interview Questions for Ethiopian Government Officials

The structured interview was sent to 8 government officials at different levels and government organizations and an appointment was requested. But most were not willing even to respond let alone be interviewed for the apparent reason of fear of being politically incorrect in a centralized information dissemination scheme in a one party dominated country. But, one government official who was on a mission outside the country and another who recently was relieved from his assignment were willing and the interview was conducted one through e-mail and the other face to face in a very jovial manner.

Instrument 5- Guide line Focus Group Discussion

Two focus groups were held for discussion. One group is composed of Ethiopians having wide international travel experience and an academic level of mainly master degree. The other focus group is mainly composed of opinion leaders such as film directors, script writers, artists and media. The age group for both focus groups is 30-50 and all are male.

In both groups, the discussions were tense at first. But, as the discussions proceed, participants became more relaxed and the debates and discussions heated up reaching at conclusions for some questions while going with more doubts and questions for the others. Both discussions were loveliest and some group members were much fascinated and were discussing even while the discussion was adjourned for a break.

Reliability Testing Instrument – Questionnaire for testing reliability for Ethiopians

The questionnaire (planned to retest for the sake of assuring reliability) having 12 questions of the interview was sent to 5 Ethiopian respondents after two weeks have passed from the interview session. Out of 5 respondents to whom the questionnaire was sent 4 have responded back which is a response rate of 80%. From their response to the questions, minor differences in response have been observed on 2 questions each from 2 respondents.

5.2. Research Results

The interview questions were placed in a way that will give a natural flow to the respondents rather than following the sequence of the research propositions. The results reported hereunder are the ones which are found most important and relevant. Some irrelevant questions (which are incorporated in the annexed guidelines) and answers have been omitted from this section.

5.2.1. Responses from Ethiopians

- 1) *What do you think the significance and the role of Country Branding to economic development and poverty reduction scheme in Ethiopia? In your opinion, what could be the possible advantages of Branding/re-branding Ethiopia? (Based on RP3)*

Many responded that Country Branding will be useful to the country's economic benefit and they cited increased tourist inflow and increased foreign investment as examples of benefits to the country. The increased employment and other multiplier effects as a result will also be a benefit to the country. As to the poverty reduction scheme, they responded that it has a positive correlation with economic development, but is highly dependent on other factors such as level of corruption and other related policies of governance.

- 2) *Is Ethiopia well known in the world? Have you ever been surprised by meeting an educated person who haven't heard about Ethiopia? Please cite your experiences with foreigners in a foreign country. (Based on RP 2)*

The responses are quite mixed as each person's experience is different. Those who did not have travelled out of Ethiopia perceived Ethiopia is well known in the world for its ancient history and independence from colonial forces. But, those who have travelled abroad have faced diverse incidents from foreigners who do not know Ethiopia to those who know for its negative image of emaciated pictures of children affected by famine. Respondents have cited also their experience whereby Ethiopia have positive images of people mainly associated with Emperor Haile Selassie I and the long distance runners such as Abebe Bikila. But, many agreed

that Ethiopia's current image is either totally unknown or if known is mainly negative associated with poverty, draught, famine and war.

- 3) *What is the current brand of Ethiopia in the global arena? Do you think Ethiopia's image is fairly represented? If not what is not mentioned or what needs to be corrected?*

Many respondents perceived the current brand of Ethiopia is associated with poor people and skinny children. Many have the opinion that the current image is affected by the negative stereotype from the past, especially from the 1985 famine. Many sadly commented that it is a disgrace to the citizens that many foreigners assume that Ethiopians are still starving and Ethiopian refugees are out of the country in search of food rather than for political reasons. The diverse culture, the politeness and the beauty of its people, and the enjoyable weather in many cities is believed by many as not well promoted.

- 4) *As a citizen of Ethiopia, do you believe that you can improve the image of Ethiopia? If yes, in what way?*

Many responded to this question affirmatively and some said "BIG YES" about their capacity to improve the image of Ethiopia. Many expressed that the common behaviour of the citizens of the country becomes somehow the brand of the country as perceived by the people around them.

- 5) *Are you proud of being Ethiopian? If yes, what made you proud? If not, why not?*

Respondents said they are happy rather than be proud as there are no big achievements for the current generation to be proud as such. Rather it is

after changing the image of Ethiopia for the better that anyone could become proud they asserted.

6) *If you get the chance, will you change your citizenship? Kindly elaborate your reasons?*

Most of the respondents responded to this question negatively stating that changing your citizenship is just like changing your mother and father. Some weakly indicated that if they change their citizenship, it is mainly for economic reasons and that too will not affect their belongingness to Ethiopia.

7) *What do you think Ethiopia's image in the world? Is it positive or negative? What do you think was the turning point?*

"It is really bad" was the reply most gave with uneasiness and discomfort in their attitude. The turning point is believed by many the 1985 draught and famine in the country and added the repetitive war the country was in has played its part too.

8) *If you have to rate their impact (+/-) on a scale of 0-10 ('0' for low and '10' for high), how do you rate the following for the negative image associated with Ethiopia. (The most frequent result is filled)*

- *Jonathan Dimpleby's film on the 1973 famine in Ethiopia*
- *The internal politics and the "Red- terror" in the late 1970's*
- *The Drought and famine in 1985*
- *The low Per Capita Income and Poverty in the country*
- *The adoption of Socialism as the Government's Philosophy*

Most responded that the draught and famine of 1985 have played great role in portraying the current negative image of Ethiopia. A considerable

some also associated the low per capita income and poverty as a great force behind the current image.

9) *Does your individual perception about Ethiopia influence the Country's image? In what way?*

The influence of the individual citizens is well acknowledged by the respondents. Some said that though they acknowledge that individuals have a role to play, they asserted that its significance is very low.

10) *Does Ethiopia have the necessary assets (both physical and human) to be one of the best tourist destinations in the world?*

Here significant number of respondents said that Ethiopia has the necessary historical and archeological heritages but all have differences on the capability of the human resource that the country has. Lack or low level of proficiency in international languages is cited as the critical problem. One respondent remarked the comment made by his Sierra Leonean friend who said that “you [Ethiopians] are not Anglophone, or Francophone and neither Arabophone, how do you expect to communicate with the rest of the world”. As to the physical assets or infrastructures such as roads, transport, hotels and recreation sites; almost all agreed, though it is developing, it is far below what is expected to claim that it is fit to support the tourism industry. All respondents strongly complained about the low level of internet connectivity and speed combined with its high service fee and it puzzles many how the country plans to go with the forces of globalization in the information age. They also questioned with the current frequent power failure, it is not clear how the country could be able to attract FDI.

11) *What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?*

Three different categories were mentioned for this question. The first one is the natural gifts & traditions of Ethiopia including the historical sites, churches, enjoyable food, beautiful people, dances, diverse ethnic groups, water-falls, lakes, comfortable weather.

The second one can be the new leisure activities that can attract tourists like cheap spa, massages, and international standard hotels. The third one is the emerging economy of the country coupled with the security in the country...which is believed to attract investors.

12) *How is Ethiopia perceived by the Africans? Is there anything which calls for "political correctness"? Do you share the assertion that Ethiopia is the Icon and spirit of the Black people? How do you perceive the "Rastafarian movement"?*

Some said that Ethiopia used to be the icon during the formation of the OAU since it is never colonized. However the present Ethiopia is rather known by the beautiful women and as a hub for regional meetings among Africans. As to the Rastafarians- many feel that they should be thanked for promoting Ethiopian flag colours of Green-Yellow and Red (also termed as pan-African colour) as a symbol of black freedom all over the world. But, on the other hand they are labeled by some with drug and narcotics which is believed to impart negative image on what they promote.

13) *Do you think Media and aid agencies had an influence on Ethiopia's image? If so, in what way did they affect the Country's image?*

Except some uneasiness witnessed on those who work for NGO's many other respondents said Media and aid-agencies had a big influence on the country's image. Even though poverty is a real problem in the country, many believed that it has been magnified and talked repeatedly to spoil the image rather than to solve the problem. As mentioned by one interviewee, the worst part is the aid money that comes to the country trickles down like the rain during a draught. For the media too, respondents claimed that NEWS by nature focuses on negative aspects unless it is from a government owned media which shows its development sometimes mixed-up with propaganda. With no exception, all participants stated that all the documentaries presented by the international media they have seen so far are about famine and slum areas which are so demeaning for Ethiopia.

14) In your opinion, who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? The Government or any other body? How do you see the importance level of Government participation in Branding Ethiopia? Some say Government shouldn't be involved in Branding of the country it leads as it might tend to a cosmetic application. What is your opinion?

With no exception, all respondents have asserted Government shall be the prior stakeholder in this because it will be needed in facilitating good policies, working on standards for hotels, schools, training institutions and also create a better face for the international community. They also warned that the other stakeholders can only play their role properly if there is willingness from the government. On the other hand, there is a difference in the role government takes; some say it shall spear head while others claim it shall play a regulatory role for if it takes the leading role it will tend to be propaganda of the state and will not get the support of the people. Past experience of the Ethiopian millennium celebration

was raised as one of a failed case for it didn't get the full energy and support of its people while being entangled by the state bureaucracy.

15) Will the internal politics have a significant influence on the country's brand? How could it be made to play a positive role on the brand image of Ethiopia?

Many faces were showing agony while discussing the internal politics in Ethiopia. Many are not happy with the experiences they have or they heard about the internal politics in Ethiopia. And many even do not want to express their opinion about it. Most do not have an appreciation for neither the current government nor the opposition parties. They say all of them are the remnants and rather the survivors of the past highly politicized era of the 1960's who have contributed to the massacre of their genuine and brave friends by being on either side of the fighting political parties in the country. Most asserted that what is raised by the current politicians is the legacy of the 1960's and doesn't suit the current political order. Almost most of them affirmed the revenge laden internal politics is outdated and it is one of the great features of Ethiopia affecting its own image. To play a positive role, one young lady said "yes! Good leadership is about being trustworthy to the people it leads; it is not about making your people docile. Good leadership can bring a lot of change in terms of creating a suitable environment for work, tourism and also in creating a good national view about Ethiopia. This is achieved by being open, merciful and kind hearted. For this, it requires bravery than bravado and arrogance. It is for his reconciliation effort that Nelson Mandela of South Africa is appreciated by many as a great leader. After all the day of the warrior is over", she argues. This is found to be the most sensitive and sad topic for most Ethiopians interviewed. Many respondents asked the researcher to urge any Ethiopian from the leadership group, who happens to read this report

to take independent interview of the citizens to have a clear picture of the internal politics in the country instead of consuming without brewing what the media usually tells.

16) What do you think the impact of “Ethiopian Millennium” on the image of Ethiopia? Could it have been better? In what way?

Many stated they didn't really observe much impact of the Ethiopian Millennium celebrations because it focused more on entertainment than on education and building national feeling. It was felt by many as it was targeted more for foreigners and for Ethiopians in diaspora and had less effect on the citizenry residing in the country. Thus respondents asserted unless the mindset of the majority isn't changed, rebranding is impossible.

17) Does the tagline “Thirteen months of Sun-shine” need to change or shall it remain as it is? If you are asked to propose a new tagline what do you propose?

Even though, it creates a puzzled feeling for one who hears about “thirteen” months and all the year sunshine, many believe it is outdated. Some joked the weather has already been changed due to global warming. But many still do not share this. And even though the weather in most of Ethiopian cities and towns is all the year pleasant, the current slogan shall be crafted to suit the needs of the target group, they recommend. Many proposals were given by respondents such as “Unique & Diverse”, “Come to the land of your origin”, “The original beauty paradise”, “Discover your origin in tropical paradise”, etc. to serve as a new tagline while some refrained from proposing a slogan recommending that it shall be based on a research and contest to appeal to the target group. One respondent recommended the previous dergue regime slogan

of “Ethiopia First!” as appropriate for domestic campaign and mobilization and “why not?” he challenges.

18) What do you think is very critical to have an acceptable brand image of Ethiopia? How shall it be achieved?

Respondents were very keen about changing the brand image of the country. They said that changing the mindset of the people in the country is very critical. This could be achieved as proposed by respondents through education, trainings, and awareness creation programs for those who are travelling abroad, making easy for locals to know the historic sites, etc.

19) Is it necessary to Brand Ethiopia? How soon the country shall embark on re-Branding itself? What shall be done in Branding Ethiopia? What benefits do you expect?

Almost all said it shall be started now. As one respondent replied “tomorrow will be very late”. They commented that the current day-to-day unsynchronized “talks” by many Ethiopians in the local media about image building of Ethiopia is feared that will rather confuse and spoil the image. How could a person who doesn’t have enough knowledge about the customers’ needs go out and convey a plausible brand image? They ask. They think it would be fruitful to start the rebranding effort bit by bit but in integrated manner and start from educating the citizens and making them learn and express themselves professionally in international languages.

20) What type of images Ethiopia could possibly have? How could Ethiopia best position itself? What aspects shall uniquely define Ethiopia? Which is best out of them? Why?

Many raised the following as aspects on which the future image of Ethiopia shall be founded: the historical heritages, the colourful festivities, Orthodox Christian church traditions deeply rooted to Old Testament practices, the diversity of people (looks, language, traditional clothes, diets and dances), the safety and security in Ethiopia. Many proposed the Gulf countries rich with their oil money shall be the immediate target group as Ethiopia has similarity in culture and unique features such as pleasant weather along with absence of restriction on entertainment which is appealing to them. The unutilized but irrigable land is also a good potential for agro-investors, they recommend.

5.2.2. Responses from Foreigners

- 1) *What comes first to your mind, when one mentions about the Country Brazil? And what about Congo? In like manner, what is the first thing that crosses your mind when the Country Ethiopia is mentioned? Why?*

The male respondents' image about Brazil is about football, sea beaches, and carnival. While the female respondent mentioned about the statue of Jesus at Rio de Janeiro, salsa dance and carnival. Both, male and female, mentioned about the emerging economy of Brazil and none has raised about any negative images of Brazil.

When asked about Congo, respondents' feeling changed from bright to somehow agony. Both groups mentioned about conflict, war and mineral resources.

When asked about Ethiopia the females raised about the good part of Ethiopia: beautiful and polite people, while the males have the image of draught, famine, poverty, connection with Israel, emphasis about religion

and long distance athletes. All stated coffee, beautiful girls and best long distance runners are the positive images of Ethiopia.

- 2) *Do you know a Country named Ethiopia? Where did you first get the images about Ethiopia? By Whom? Do you still think the image you have is correct?*

All interviewed know Ethiopia and their first image before coming to Ethiopia is different. The younger ones have an image of famine while the not younger respondent's first impression is about Abebe Bikila winning the marathon in Olympic running shoeless (which created for him the image of poverty). After coming to Ethiopia, many acknowledged their image have become somehow balanced.

- 3) *For how long did your Country have the relationship with Ethiopia? Were there any controversies/misunderstandings in the past? How is your Country's relationship with Ethiopia? Is there anything to be improved? What significant opportunities are there?*

The respondents' countries have long relationship with Ethiopia. They stated that the relationships are not always good for various reasons related with politics such as human rights abuse. Many believed there are many opportunities to be exploited but it seems that the government is busy with internal political issues, they commented.

- 4) *Have you ever been to Ethiopia? If yes, how long have you been in Ethiopia? How do you classify the Collective character of Ethiopians? What are the good things about Ethiopia and the people? What do you want to see changed?*

Most respondents assured that the people of Ethiopia are very friendly and warm, but they are also "docile", fearful of authority, and willing to conform while one respondent claimed Ethiopians as racist, irrational,

arrogant and narrow-minded. All respondents admired the beauty of Ethiopian women which they said are one of the beautiful in the world.

- 5) *What do you think are the reasons for the low amount of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) coming into Ethiopia? What measures shall the Ethiopian government take to attract FDI from your Country?*

All respondents have stated that the primary obstacle to FDI is the monetary policy of the Government that restricts access to hard currency and limits the repatriation of profits in hard currency. As one very critical respondent have mentioned it the country's current brand is "Come to Ethiopia and solve our poverty problem", although the new 5 year plan of Growth and Transformation is a very important break from this beggar bowl approach to economic development. Almost all said there is a huge disconnection between the Government's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) and the delivery system on the ground (e.g., laws, policies, traditions, corruption, cronyism, etc.). Until those are either changed or allowed to be more flexible and market-driven, the country will be dependent on the inefficient "inside deals" that are so obvious in the country, they alarmed.

- 6) *Are there any tourists coming from your Country to Ethiopia? What shall be done to increase the tourist inflow to Ethiopia?*

With no exception, the respondents said the potential of tourism is perceived to be minimal as the country is a landlocked country. The religious sites are more attractive to Ethiopians in the diaspora and marginally relevant to others, they said. Surprisingly two of the respondents which are westerners raised the concept of "Adoption tourism" which could flourish had it not been for the control from the government.

- 7) *Does your Country import items from Ethiopia? Which ones? How is the trend, increasing/ decreasing? What shall be done to increase the outflow of Ethiopian exportable items?*

Many said their countries import coffee and it is increasing, but with lots of competition from Kenya. The recent branding exercise to secure intellectual property right for the Ethiopian coffee in many countries in the brand names of “Harar”, “Yirgachefe” and “Sidama” based on their place of origin is useful while it might go against branding Ethiopia, they commented. A respondent also pointed out the high attachment of the country to Christian traditions is believed to deter the possible development of exportable food items such as meat to the potential consumers in the gulf countries which are serious about halal meat. In addition, they highlighted the traditional clothing is perceived by foreigners as a curiosity item not an item that will increase volume exports. Finally, they suggested the cheap labor here indicates that exports could be possible for industrial goods but only if FDI can be increased (which depends as stated on a less restrictive and more encouraging repatriation in foreign currency and other conducive policies which have global perspective).

- 8) *Are there any expatriates from your Country who are working in Ethiopia? In what professions they are working currently? What attracted them to Ethiopia? What is their contribution to Ethiopia? What shall be done to attract more expatriates?*

The perception of many foreigners as responded in their interview is that they believe the country is very suspicious of foreigners specially the whites. As they described it, the country makes it difficult for foreigners to enter, stay, live, work and enjoy. It might be very surprising to the Ethiopians who are confident about their hospitality that Ethiopia is perceived by the respondents as a “closed” country that is distrustful of

foreigners and communicates that in almost everything, but it is a hard fact which needs to be corrected, they stated.

- 9) *Some argue that aid-agencies are creating a bad image of Ethiopia. What is your opinion about this proposition?*

The respondents seem un-happy about this question and some say that Ethiopians are showing false pride. Some did not deny that there are many aid-agencies who still use age old emaciated pictures from the periods of the famine in Ethiopia to raise funds which is unethical. Though some continued in their comment that it is up to the Ethiopian government to control the fund raising activities of the aid-agencies and show the real image of Ethiopia to the world like in “Re-Branding Ethiopia”

- 10) *Some call aid-agencies as “Lords of Poverty” stating that aid –agencies are consuming much of the aid money they are getting. As a result, they encourage the bad image of Ethiopia to get more aid money. What is your opinion?*

Many believed that many of the NGOs are just companies that are dodging taxes in their own country by passing themselves off as “humanitarian”, non-profit organizations. But Ethiopia’s decentralized Government institutions are perceived to be so weak and so dependent on instructions from the center that NGOs have an avenue to essentially be parallel government. NGOs are also in the money raising business and they can gain funding by portraying that specific aspect of Ethiopia – poverty - by which they gain an advantage. On the other hand, they commented it is not the entire picture, for sure, and that is an unfortunate reality where Ethiopian poverty is not just theater; without contributions from abroad millions of people would be dead, they asserted.

- 11) *In your opinion, during the past five years, is Ethiopia's image improving or declining? What are the reasons?*

The perception of the foreigners is that on the economic sphere, there is growth though they state it is not the growth rate that one should focus on but rather it shall be the real amount of growth on the GDP. On the political sphere, Ethiopia's image has declined after the 2005 election. On the other hand on the political leadership sphere, Ethiopia's Prime Minister is doing better and he has become a very high profile on global warming and related environmental issues. So it depends on whether you want to brand Ethiopia to the politicians or to the public, they question.

- 12) *What do you think about the impact of the recent "Charities and Societies Proclamation" by the Ethiopian Government on Ethiopia's image? In what way will it affect the Country's Brand? Why?*

Some respondents said they are unaware of the recent proclamation. Those aware explained that the genesis is wrong and it comes from a very negative thinking. They accepted the part of the proclamation which deals with registering organizations in order to facilitate partnerships and similar arrangements, but the way that the law is being implemented is a manifestation again of a closed, anti-foreign mentality, as per their perception. They also stated that investors hate surprises and aggressive Government behavior. This will hurt the image of Ethiopia. As per the respondents view, the Ethiopian government is perceived as aggressive by many. In continuation they furiously stated in their own words "the Proclamation could be a positive way of creating avenues for foreigners to work for the benefit of Ethiopia, but in the hands of autocrats....this could be a problem".

5.2.3. Responses from the media

- 1) *What is your experience about Ethiopia's image in the world? Is Ethiopia well known in the world?*

The respondent from local media has responded that it is difficult to answer this question as image could be expressed in many ways. But, from his experience, Ethiopia's image is different along the time line. In the past, it was being un-colonized, Emperor Haile Sellassie I, famine & hunger and now constitutional government, beautiful ladies are the one talked about. As to being known they responded that in Africa Ethiopia is well known as it has served as a symbol of freedom. Some African countries have included the history of Ethiopia in their school curriculum and in many countries, for example, Ghana there are streets named after Emperor Haile Sellassie I.

- 2) *Does the country image in the global arena have any impact on its economy? If it has, in what way?*

Yes it has they responded. The local respondent said that previously they have run a NEWS in the radio and they interviewed the Minister of Culture & Tourism where he accepted the necessity of Branding Ethiopia.

- 3) *Do you believe that the media (both local and international) can affect the Brand image of a Country? If so, in what way?*

The current world is highly globalized and connected. Thus whatever is done is communicated to the outside world with in real time. For example BBC has got a monitoring service of all the local news, especially the

negative ones. Thus, media's influence is very high for the brand of a country.

- 4) *Does NEWS by its nature tend to focus on negative news? Does international media in particular tends to focus on negative information?*

Both responded in a certain way, media focuses on news related to its customers' attention. Thus, people are not that much interested in the day to day life of ordinary people. But, when there is some disaster or something unique or abnormal it catches the attention of many people. Western media sometimes focuses on negative parts of other countries to so that their citizens will appreciate their supremacy.

- 5) *Did the local Media negatively affect Ethiopia's image unknowingly? Does the "Free" press shall tell everything even if it damages the country brand? Did the international Media negatively affect Ethiopia's image intentionally? If yes, please substantiate it with your experiences.*

In fact journalists can't create image out of the blue. The image created is somehow based on a grain of the truth, facts on the ground. As to the western media, some of them are parachuted in areas of conflict prone and they focus on conflicts. But they have also given coverage about the Rock-Hewn Church at Lalibela and the Ark of the Covenant at Axum Zion Mary church.

- 6) *Does Ethiopia have enough positive images, activities and situations to be told by the media? Aren't they known so-far?*

The peace in the country, being a country in transition, the effort to put in place good governance, the work ethic of the people are the one to be mentioned as cited by the respondents.

- 7) *What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?*

Ethiopian history is not well promoted to the outside world. Long before Columbus discovered America, Ethiopia had its own culture and ancient history. The endurance of the people is another aspect to be shown to the world. All the images so far shown to the world are produced by international production companies. We have to do it by ourselves, as the saying goes “ the heroes shall tell their own story.”

- 8) *Will the internal politics have a significant influence on the country's brand? How could it be made to play a positive role on the brand image of Ethiopia?*

All the leaders have to be perceived as the reflections of the knowledge, ideology and practice of their period. The Ethiopian leaders and journalists act with vengeance. Their thinking is nihilist. They destroy the previous leaders which damages the country brand too and enflame the internal politics. For the internal politics made to play its role we must leave the action of the previous leaders to history and we should promote on what they have done right. We shouldn't dethrone our heroes; rather we must create our heroes. For example in Ghana, they have left the mistakes of Nkrumah to history and represented him well as his mistakes are already legally corrected. One cited what he has read on page 245 in the book by Thomas Friedman entitled “The Lexus and the Olive Tree” quoting as “this

days, every country has to care about its brand and even the petty thieves understand that” and completes with the associated story thereafter and asserts every politician should think far ahead and more about the national image than his short lived self interest.

- 9) *What do you think the impact of “Ethiopian Millennium” on the image of Ethiopia? How do you rate its success, if any? Could it have been done better? In what way?*

The foreigner doesn't have much information on this question. According to the local respondent, the millennium celebration preparation was started just months before the turn of the millennium, unlike others who have started it some even ten years before. Its abrupt stoppage also is another shortcoming. The Ethiopian Millennium celebration could have served as a point of reinventing history such as by reproducing old music, theatres, etc.

- 10) *What do you think the role that could be played by the local media and the international media in building the country brand of Ethiopia? How could this be achieved?*

The local media shall be taken as an ornament. It shall report without interference from anybody. In Ethiopia governments are afraid of Draught and famine because it is what overthrows them as seen from the past. Thus, they don't tell the real pictures. If it is there, we have to accept. We have to accept it but show the progress that has been made.

- 11) *Shall we maintain the tagline “Thirteen months of Sun-shine” or change it? If you are asked to propose a tagline to fit the aspired image of Ethiopia, what would you propose?*

Global warming has already changed the attachment of “Thirteen months of sun-shine”. To base the slogan of Ethiopia on tourism is a risky foundation because of instability in the region. The slogan could be based on appealing of vibrant young labour force.

- 12) *What are the possible and feasible images Ethiopia could create? Which one you prefer most? Why?*

The ancient historical heritages, Adowa as a symbol of equality of black and white, the peaceful power transfer of Geda system of the Oromo ethnic group, could serve as a starting point. But it should be based on research and shall appeal to the people. The main underlying point before going to country branding is understanding the importance of getting united on the common public interest without losing one’s individual interest.

5.2.4. Responses from Government Officials

- 1) *Does the country image in the global arena have any impact on its economy? If it has, in what way?*

The respondents recognized the positive impact that CB could bring and negative image associations and subsequent stereotypes could negatively affect on mainly tourism, trade and FDI.

- 2) *In your opinion, what could be the possible advantages of Branding/re-branding Ethiopia?*

Interviewees replied Branding Ethiopia would give the country a better leverage internationally to engage in attracting investments, promoting tourism and exports of products made in Ethiopia.

- 3) *Is Ethiopia well known in the world? Have you ever been surprised by meeting an educated person who haven't heard about Ethiopia? Please cite your experiences with foreigners in a foreign country.*

One respondent replied, "By and large people I have met know about Ethiopia. If they are old enough to have lived pre-1974 they talk about Emperor Haile Sellassie I. The younger generation, has more information on the famine and starvation of the 1980s and talk about the country's athletes and their fame internationally". The other respondent has shared his experience and surprise when he first recognized that there are people out there who have never heard the word "Ethiopia" let alone know it as a country. After this incident, he said it is not surprising for him for he has met many people who know Ethiopia very well and who doesn't know it at all.

- 4) *What do you think the current country image of Ethiopia is in the world? Is it positive or negative? Does it need any uplifting? What was the turning point for the current image of Ethiopia? When was it?*

One respondent replied he doesn't have the statistical evidence to back his answer that measured the country's image. However, anecdotal evidences are plenty that the country's image is indeed negative and needs a serious intervention to change that to which the other respondent also agreed.

- 5) *What are the factors influencing the Brand Image of Ethiopia? Which of them are under the control of the Government?*

Numerous factors were raised by both of the respondents. The factors raised were being unable to engage in the international media, uncoordinated information flow, low quality of export products, etc. They said many of them could be reduced if the government intervenes with the appropriate strategy.

- 6) *If you have to rate their impact (+/-) on a scale of 0-10 ('0' for low and '10' for high), how do you rate the following for the negative image associated with Ethiopia.*

- *Jonathan Dimbleby's film on the 1973 famine in Ethiopia*

8

- *The internal politics and the "Red-terror" in the late 1970's*

8

- *The Drought and famine in 1985*

9

- *The low Per Capita Income and Poverty in the country*

7

- *The adoption of Socialism as the Government's Philosophy*

3

- 7) *Do the aid agencies, the internal politics in the country and the media (local and international) have any role to play for the positive or the negative image of Ethiopia? If yes, please explain. In what way shall they be made to assist to Branding Ethiopia?*

They replied branding should be done with the participation of all stakeholders Government, NGOs, private and public enterprises, media etc...it should benefit all participants. A Public Diplomacy Board where the country's major businesses, ministries, NGOs, media organizations and associations could take part could be a possible way, one of them recommended.

- 8) *Were there any efforts so far to Brand/re-brand Ethiopia? If yes, please state them and mention the benefits gained so far and the challenges faced.*

There hasn't been an all encompassing or comprehensive branding done so far, as we know of it today, thus far one replied. The other respondent commented that the Ethiopian Millennium Office and the Addis Ababa Millennium Office were some of the efforts to improve the image of the country though it had its own problems associated with the government bureaucracy.

- 9) *How is Ethiopia perceived by the Africans? Is there anything which needs to be corrected?*

One of the respondent said one has to do a survey to comment on this while the other commented that previously the Africans' view was to see Ethiopia as a symbol of freedom but recently they have confused feelings of poverty, development and somehow unapproachable people.

- 10) *Are the previous efforts (if any) of Branding Ethiopia integrated? If not what is lacking and what needs to be corrected?*

One respondent has raised the Ethiopian Millennium celebration. They both said they can't think of any other major effort.

- 11) *What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?*

Diversity, landscape, tourist attractions and the efforts to come out of poverty and the values that the country advocates shall be the appealing

aspects as stated by the respondents. The already known facts about coffee and other products need to be rebranded and presented in a more contemporary consumer friendly way, they recommended.

- 12) *Who shall be the target group in marketing terms for “Branding Ethiopia” effort? How shall the image of Ethiopia be positioned and presented?*

The geographical target groups of European countries, African countries Gulf countries, emerging economies of BRICs and USA etc could be possible targets they commented.

- 13) *Some argue that the Country Brand depends on the Government, some say no. What is your opinion? Shall Ethiopia’s image remain constant as the type and form of the government change or shall it change as the type of Government changes? Why?*

Bothe agreed, the brands shouldn’t be something static it should change with time whether the government changes or not.

- 14) *In your opinion, who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? The Government or any other body?*

The government should spearhead the project but definitely it should include all stakeholders as mentioned above, one of the respondents replied. The other respondent who had an experience in leading an image project of the country said it should be led by an organization free from government bureaucracy.

- 15) *What type of images Ethiopia could possibly have? What aspects shall uniquely define Ethiopia? Which is best out of them? Why?*

They passionately raised the point of being un-colonized (care should be made not to offend others they alerted), economically home of good quality products and services such as coffee and Ethiopian Air Lines, etc. Religiously home to the oldest religions of the world (Christianity, Islam, Judaism) could be thought.

- 16) *What do you think the role of the Government in Branding Ethiopia? Which Government body is responsible to handle the Government's role of Branding Ethiopia?*

One respondent said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could be a focal point for that while the other thought of a Public Private partnership. He added, in a government bureaucracy the image you foster will be a frustrating one demonstrating inefficiency.

- 17) *How soon the country shall embark on re-Branding itself? What shall be done in Branding Ethiopia? What benefits do you expect?*

Both replied the sooner will be the better.

- 18) *What was the impact of "Ethiopian Millennium"? How do you rate its success? Could it have been done better? If yes, in what way?*

They replied, it has attracted quite a lot of international media attention. Had it been followed up with Branding it would have multiplied its effect. The sudden rush to close the office is a manifestation of lacking long term vision and deliberation regrets one of them.

- 19) *In the past five years, how do you see the trend in the image of Ethiopia going? What are the possible reasons?*

Both stated internally a lot has changed and improved but they are not sure to what extent this is reflected in the image abroad.

- 20) *Shall we maintain the tagline “Thirteen months of Sun-shine” or change it? If you are asked to propose a tagline to fit the aspired image of Ethiopia, what would you propose?*

That has served its purpose and it’s time to change, they replied.

5.2.5. Results from Focus Group Discussions

- 1) *Does the Country’s image have any bearing on its Economy? If yes, in what way and how significant? If not, why not?*

Both groups have agreed that the country image is important for the economy while pointing out there are other factors such as government policy which have influence. As an example, good image of hospitality pulls a lot of visitors to the country one participant raised. In one of groups, it was raised that the mutton from Ethiopia is sold in Dubai as “*meat from East Africa*” without mentioning the name Ethiopia for fear of negative effects of COO.

- 1) *Is Ethiopia well known by the international community? Cite your experience.*

The two groups have differences in their answers apparently because of their difference in their experiences. One group took much time to realize that Ethiopia is not well known in the world. The example of Ethiopian contestant in Kora music competition was the one who made them realize the low publicity Ethiopia receives. In the other group, it was raised that, in Japan Ethiopia is well known because Emperor Haile Sellassie was the first head of state to visit Japan after the WW II and also because of Abebe Bikila who won the marathon in Tokyo Olympic. French people are also cited as well knowledgeable about Ethiopia as they are people sensitive about culture and

the like people with ancient culture, in both Koreas Ethiopia is well known, etc. The noted exception raised is in USA, as Americans are cited as ignorant of many countries in the world.

- 2) *Does Ethiopia's image well and fairly represented in the world arena? If yes, how? If not, what is missing, what went wrong and who affected it and why? Is there any untold/ misrepresented truth? How shall it be corrected?*

All participants agreed Ethiopia's image in the world is distorted by the media like CNN, BBC and VOA. They stated that they always raise negative news for political reasons. To combat this, one has raised the idea of establishing an African media like what Aljazeera is doing to the Arab world to convey genuine African NEWS to one another. To be credible, they commented it shall be free from political propaganda and shall avoid political intervention. The media shall also go on to show the untold stories of our Heroes. They concluded media is the key demeaning factor.

- 3) *In what way could the Citizens affect/ change the Country's image? What shall be done to make them play a positive role?*

The impact of the citizens is quite well acknowledged by both groups. All agreed the citizens in diaspora and in the country shall work as the promoter of the country brand being guided by a central office reminding them consistently in a quality way free from propaganda and in a realistic way. To realize this, working proactively is a requirement many asserted. The Ethiopians who are going out of the country for the first time shall be given some sort of training since they affect the country image. The government authorities shall give interviews to prominent media in the country and public lectures in the universities so that the people living in that country will have

bits of positive information about the country which will have an impact on the image of Ethiopia.

- 4) *In the past, what role the media had played in influencing the current image of Ethiopia? Were there any crucial events that affected Ethiopia's image? How could the media be influenced to help in branding the country image properly?*

Western media is criticized as being pro negative information. But, the input is given by the citizens themselves and by the government which should be given proper attention. For example, lack of consensus among the Ethiopian community in diaspora, lack of political civility among the Ethiopian politicians, the associated image with mass migration and the immigrant psychology itself combined with the poverty at home are the food the media are feeding themselves. Thus, many commented it is necessary to change the fact on the ground.

- 5) *Are the aid agencies helping or damaging Ethiopia? How do you justify your position? What shall be done to make them have a positive influence?*

Focus group participants unanimously acknowledged that the aid-agencies even though they have saved the lives of millions in the past their current existence is unjustified and spoils the image far beyond the benefit they bring. Except few like Oxfam who are genuinely working, most are working to satisfy their donors devious motives, participants argued. The recent regulatory proclamation about aid-agencies is perceived by many as long overdue despite its unpopularity among the aid-agencies.

- 6) *Were there unutilized opportunities to enhance Ethiopia's Brand? What role the Ethiopian Millennium celebration in 2000 E.C. (Sep. 11'2007) did play?*

The impact the Ethiopian Millennium celebration have brought, if any, is not recognized by the participants in the discussion. They reasoned out that it was not done professionally. It could have been outsourced, if there were no professionals at home they commented. It didn't include prominent personalities in the country. This is always the problem of doing things in a way of campaign which many agreed represents the way the Ethiopian Millennium celebration is done.

- 7) How long will it take to improve the brand image of Ethiopia? How easy or how difficult are the tasks? Who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? And on what shall it be based on?

Many agreed that the current brand image of Ethiopia did not arise within one year or two. In a like manner, working to re-brand the Ethiopian image shall take longer time. It shall start soon but while working on it shall not be hurried on. It shall be worked on gradually. The government role in the branding work is irreplaceable as all participants agreed but it shall not be run as a government organization guarded by procedures and bureaucracy which will kill the dynamism it shall have. The branding could be made to be based on the weather, the historical heritages, diversity of the culture, coffee, etc. Ethiopia is the land of colours as one commented there are countless things to be raised, what has to be selected is its relevance to the target group to be selected

5.3. Interpretation of Research Results

The research has revealed that the views and opinions collected from the interview and the focus groups gravitated to the following themes:

Theme 1: Country branding brings economic benefits to the country

None of the people interviewed has doubted the economic benefits that Country Branding will bring to the country branded. In fact, some of them pointed out that the CB endeavor shall be carried out in the first place after making sure that the country has some unique feature to be used in branding. Otherwise if it lacks the unique features to show to others a country should not embark on the branding exercise as it will bring a rather negative effect. The research result from the interviewees revealed that what you tell to people shall be the truth and it shall never sound like propaganda of the state. Branding a country will bring economic benefits to the country as long as the country has unique features to be told to the rest of the world and it shall be based on the truth. Its aim is to set the distorted or negative image based on stereotypes of any sort arising either from the past or from the region the country is found. As one of the respondents has pointed out CB shall be based on the notion that “**the truth shall set you free.**”

RP1. Country Branding plays a positive role in increasing economic benefits of a Country (Gilmore, 2002; Anholt, 2002);

Finding: Yes, Country Branding plays a positive role to country in increasing economic benefits of a Country. As to its impact to poverty reduction, it could not be ascertained as Poverty reduction is based on a number of factors even though it has a positive correlation with economic benefit of the country.

Theme 2: Current image of Ethiopia is based on negative stereotypes

The current image of Ethiopia is different for different people who have an image of Ethiopia. In fact, the response also differs based on the respondents' international experience.

Those respondents who do not have gone out of the country held the opinion that Ethiopia is well known in the world and known mainly for its ancient history and independence (not colonized), origin of mankind, successful long distance runners including marathon, ancient Orthodox Christian churches and Stella, and long and peaceful coexistence of Muslim and Christians, etc.

Those who have been out of Ethiopia to a foreign country have different response based on their experiences of meeting foreigners differing in age, country, and interest. From the responses it was observed that most of the current generation does not know where Ethiopia is. As described by one of the respondents whom I would like to call Asat that ninety percent of the people he met in USA do not know where Ethiopia is on this planet. This opinion is shared by many of the respondents and it took them by surprise when they first encountered it. One exclaimed as "shocking!" because of the different belief he had before going out of the country. Contrary to this, those who have travelled abroad and met old persons told that Ethiopia is known positively by those foreigners who are old. They mainly know Emperor Haile Sellassie I (the last emperor of Ethiopia who was dethroned in 1974 by a military junta) for his important contribution to realize the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In Japan along with the Emperor Haile Sellassie I, Abebe Bikila is well known for he has won the two consecutive Olympics held in Rome and Tokyo.

The current generations of foreigners either do not know a country named Ethiopia or if they knew the image of emaciated pictures of poverty

stricken children affected by famine. This gave the image of poverty, draught and famine to the country.

RP2. The current Country Brand image of Ethiopia is based on stereotypical images of the past and the geographic region (Wanjiru, 2006);

Findings: From the various experienced responses, it was found that the current image of Ethiopia is based on the negative stereotypical images of famine which arose from the 1985 famine and used to date by many aid agencies.

Theme 3: Country Branding holds a potential opportunity to bring economic benefit to Ethiopia

As shown in Theme 1, all respondents with no doubt affirmed that Country Branding holds a great potential to bring economic benefits to any country which have got the necessary precursors to improve the country's brand. Coming to the Ethiopian context, many believed that Ethiopia has the necessary conditions to serve in branding the country. In fact, many has pointed out that the religious and cultural festivities which are deeply rooted to old testament traditions are one of the images to be portrayed to show to the world that Ethiopia is a country of culture and ancient history. On the other side, the current infrastructural development in roads, bridges, hotels and the consecutive double digit economic growth of the country are some of the points perceived by many respondents to show that there is a potential for any investor in the world as the country is registering one of the fastest growth rates in the world. Thus, if the other policies of the government such as the monetary policy and investment policy are conducive enough, many believed that it can be taken as a point to base branding of the country and improve the brand image of the country.

RP3. Country Branding holds a potential opportunity to bring economic benefit to Ethiopia (Anholt 2002);

Finding: Many of the respondents perceived that country branding will bring economic benefit to the country. But when challenged about the competitive advantage of the points raised as of the country's branding point it was found that they are not that strong.

Theme 4: Media and aid agencies affect the Country Brand of Ethiopia

Respondents have shown mixed feelings about the impact of media and aid-agencies on the Brand of Ethiopia.

Aid Agencies

Many believed that even though the aid agencies have played a vital role in saving people's life during the period of famine, their benefit after that is far outshined by the image they destroyed. Some of the foreigners have argued that the problem in Ethiopia is not a theatre but it is rather real. But others have gone to the extent of claiming it as a theatre as the aid-agencies usually use an age old emaciated pictures of children from the periods of the famine in their fund raising programme. Keeping on their opinion, aid-agencies also try to dig for problems which are unusual and try to capitalize on it for their fund raising as if it is a day-to-day problem in the country. The very saddening point as one in the discussion group has mentioned is the amount of the aid money that trickles down to the needy is less than 10% of what is collected. One also noted that aid-agencies are the highest payee institutions in the country (even far beyond the private organizations) and this resulted in an "internal brain-drain" of the country's most capable work force from the productive sectors to the aid-sector.

It is worth noting here that foreigners and locals working or having contact with aid-agencies have shown uneasiness to freely and openly discuss on this specific topic.

Media

The media response though it is from one person only, is collective information of his experience on the topic. He has such a love and prior deliberation on the topic that he acknowledged during the interview that if there is a competition on the topic, he will be the winner. He gave his interview on a holyday as he was busy most of the time.

RP4. Media and aid-agencies affect the Country Brand of Ethiopia (Gilmore 2002);

Finding: Though it is based on a grain of truth, media and aid agencies are focusing mainly on negative information which damages the brand image of the country which benefits their target groups. It is up to the stakeholders to show the other side of the coin.

Theme 5: Citizens of Ethiopia affect the positioning of the Ethiopia Brand

Almost all Ethiopian respondents and focus group participants have agreed that as a citizen of Ethiopia, their individual perception and action has an influence in the Brand of the nation. The work ethic, the way they behave while in other countries, the way they treat and behave towards foreigners in their country, the cultures they demonstrate, etc. are important and highly influential in creating their country's image. One respondent explains, during the times of Emperor Haile Sellassie I, Ethiopians travelling abroad used to be given orientation and training on how to maintain and improve the country's image. He went on explaining how capable professionals abroad

are improving the images of Ethiopia. The individual behaviours when reinforced by common group behaviour, it has a very strong impact in wielding the image.

RP5. Citizens of Ethiopia affect the positioning of the Ethiopian Brand (Gilmore 2002).

Findings: The citizenry have a great influence on the country's image and brand.

The research results described in this chapter have been summarized and interpreted in five themes as shown above. In the following chapter, the results will be discussed with relevance to the research propositions, to make the conclusions.

CHAPTER SIX

6. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

“The way to achieve a better reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.” - Socrates

In the previous chapters the research results found through interviews and group discussions gravitated into five themes which support the research propositions of this research. The discussion of the five themes follows as given hereunder.

6.1. Discussion

To discuss about the research proposition RP1-RP5, it will be useful to restate the RP as stated below.

- RP1.** Country Branding plays a positive role in increasing economic benefits of a Country (Gilmore, 2002; Anholt, 2002);
- RP2.** The current Country Brand image of Ethiopia is based on stereotypical images of the past and the geographic region (Wanjiru, 2006);
- RP3.** Country Branding holds a potential opportunity to bring economic benefit to Ethiopia (Gilmore, 2002; Anholt 2002);
- RP4.** Media and aid-agencies affect the Country Brand of Ethiopia (Gilmore 2002);
- RP5.** Citizens of Ethiopia affect the positioning of the Ethiopia Brand (Gilmore 2002; Kotler, *et al.*, 1993; Anholt 2003).

In the current globalized world, the world is being shaped by many global forces (Kotler, *et al.*, 1993). Similarly, countries are increasingly facing the global forces changing the world along side with their inherent internal forces. Except few (Olins, 2002) who questioned about the applicability of the term “branding” to countries, almost all of the literatures surveyed agree that changing the image of countries as known in country branding is important for a country’s economic benefit.

From the data collected, it is summarized that country branding has a positive and significant role to play for the economic benefit of any country as long as it is done in a proper and integrated manner. Many of the respondents has emphasized the harmonized and integrated manner it should be conducted which if not done in such manner will result in confusion and may not bring in the desired result. This agrees with the literature surveyed.

In line to the literature, except as a sideline remark in one focus group discussion, all interviewed and all members of the focus group has agreed that Country Branding is important for Ethiopia. In harmony to the literature (Wanjiru, 2006), participants in the interview and in the focus group discussion have agreed that Ethiopia’s image in the world is distorted and negatively portrayed as it is affected by stereotypical information such as the famine from the past.

Even though all interviewees and focus groups agree on the fact that Ethiopia’s image is not fairly represented in the global arena, they don’t unanimously agree on the gravity of the causes for the negative image the country has. Some give much weight for the consecutive draught and famine which happened in the past and which they believed has significantly reduced the country’s image. They argued that its associated

amplifications by aid agencies played a vital role apart from the image created by the drought and famine per se. A considerable others give greater emphasis for the internal politics which capitalizes on each small problems at home to use it for political gains; of course, underlining the tight political environment which hovers an environment of fear and secrecy to have accentuated the situation. However, the results of the research supported that aid-agencies are negatively affecting the image of the country which deters investment, export and tourism as also stated in Anholt (2003).



Fig. 6.1 Axum Obelisk

The Axum obelisk- a monolithic Stella standing at Axum and the rock-hewn churches at Lalibela are the ones raised as other points to be magnified.

As to the way the Branding Ethiopia project is to be done, diverse opinions were raised. Some said it shall be handled by the Government. Among

As to what is to be shown to the world and emphasized to improve the brand image of Ethiopia, diverse opinions were raised. The religious and cultural heritages along with the ancient rituals and celebrations and the accommodative culture in the country are the ones frequently raised. Specially with the current hostility among Christians and Muslims in many countries, the way Christians and Muslims live side by side harmoniously and affectionately is an amazing culture to be shown to the world whereby the world will learn to make a lasting peace among the two religions.

who said that it shall be handled by the Government, when asked about who among the Government organs shall handle the task, all gave different opinions; viz., Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of Government Communication Affairs and some said a separate government entity shall be established.

On the other hand, strong opinion was raised from many others who firmly stated that since every citizen affects the country brand either positively or negatively as supported by many literatures in the literature review (Gilmore, 2002), it shall be established in a public- private partnership with the government playing a regulatory role and with a budget allocation from all stakeholders including the government. If not done in such way, because of the high friction prone internal politics in the country, the Branding Ethiopia project will be considered as a political propaganda of the state and will be doomed to fail without bringing the desired result just like the Ethiopian millennium celebration coordination office has closed without bringing a noticeable impact.

Unsurprising Opponents of Country Branding

Some argued that it is better to spend the money to be used for the branding project in the real problem solving activities such as providing clean water, improving health service, providing education for the children, and providing medicine, etc. They also assert that it is improving the real picture on the ground that will be useful rather than the cosmetic application of rebranding what is not there. Their disagreement is not with the concept of Country Branding as is evident from their argument, but rather in its difference in the meaning of branding. They took branding to mean simple advertising in TV and print media. But, after getting explanations that branding involves changing the real situation on the

ground and focuses on telling the truth to set the distorted image right, they agreed on the importance of branding. This has also shown the importance of setting up a guiding office to give the right concept behind branding.

6.2. Limitations of the study

The study was limited by the time constraint faced to handle such a vast task which was un-attempted in a similar geographic environment. The samples are relatively small in number which needs to be increased in the future if the same research topic is undertaken. The small number of response from Government officials and the local media was astounding and alarming as it reflects an environment of lack of self confidence and/or transparency and could be interpreted in many ways. Thus, the research is limited by lack of government opinion and enough media responses.

Similarly, the people interviewed were uncomfortable and unwilling for the use of audio-visual recording instruments. Hence, the interview was mainly based on using written records which is worth mentioning here. In addition the responses and discussions are based on personal views and recourse to the theoretical assessment of competitive advantage is missing. Thus, to correct this last missing part and augment acceptance of this research, treatment of SWOT analysis is conducted hereunder.

6.3. SWOT Analysis to Assess Branding Ethiopia Potentials

The research results of the interviews and focus groups discussions well support the economic benefits of Country Branding to Ethiopia. In fact, many proposed for an immediate start up of the Branding Ethiopia effort and to establish an international marketing office which guides the branding mission in an integrated manner, having organized structure of public-private partnership. In fact, this resembles with the Country

Branding of South Africa which is successful and which could be benchmarked.

The Branding Ethiopia endeavor shall take into consideration the Ethiopian contextual situation as described by the following four factors; viz., the Isolation factor, the Geographic factor, the Independence factor, and the Resource factor while making the analysis to make the conclusions and recommendations.

6.3.1. The Contextual Situation

The Uniqueness and Isolating Factor

It is evident that Ethiopia is different from many other countries in its language, religion, calendar, time count and culture. All these factors which are described hereunder have made Ethiopia different and in a way contributed to isolate it from the world. A friend of the researcher used to joke while citing the remark of his Jordanian friend who used to frequently ask “Are you part of the world?” whenever the friend tells him the Ethiopian distinct features.

Language

Ethiopia does not have an official language and Amharic (one of the local languages with its unique Sabeian alphabet) is the working language of the Federal Government of Ethiopia while the different regional governments have different working languages.

The English language is used in government offices and high schools and higher education. However, its wide use, practice and competence of its users is under question. If a foreigner on walking on the streets of Addis Ababa (the capital of Ethiopia) asks an ordinary pedestrian selected at random, its chances of getting one who understands English is very

minimal. One interviewee experienced that a Sierra Leone class mate he met in training has commented to him that “you Ethiopians are neither Anglo-phone, nor Franco-phone even not Arabo-phone, how do you expect to communicate with the world?”. This is not a remark to be taken lightly. Even though there are some “educated” citizens who can speak English a vast majority of Ethiopians can’t communicate even verbally using one of the international languages. In the current global world, this is a serious matter which can’t be ignored whereby each citizen makes an impact in the development and competitiveness of his country.

Religion

The religions in Ethiopia have got the cultural colour upon them. For example, one of the major religions in the country – Orthodox Christianity is quite different from Christianity practiced in other countries. It rather resembles Judaism as its practices and rituals are closely tied to the Old Testament.

Despite their difference in Religion, intermarriage in the members of different religions is not a surprise. There are families who are living under the same roof but practicing different religions especially Christianity and Islam. While preparing feasts in marriages or any celebrations, they prepare different foods for their guests from the other religious group taking care of all the religious rituals such as halal. The cohabitation in the same neighborhood maintaining good friendship among the different religions is a common experience among Ethiopians. A standing example is the side by side existence of the Grand Anwar mosque and the St. Raguel church in the Capital.

Ethiopia is the first foreign country during the times of Prophet Mohammad to receive Muslim refugees during the times of the king named “Nejashi” or “Armah” and many Jews used to live in Ethiopia till they were taken

back to Israel some 20 years ago. Ethiopia's resemblance with Israel could easily be seen that the three religions of Christianity-Islam-Judaism existed for quite a long time in the country - surprisingly in peace.

Calendar and Time Count

The Ethiopian calendar is quite different from what the rest of the world uses. The Ethiopian New Year starts at September 11(no relationship with the attack on world trade centers in USA) and none of the Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter fall on the same date. According to the Julian/ Enochian/ Ethiopic calendar, there are 13 months; hence the tagline "13 months of Sunshine" serves as the slogan of Ethiopian Tourism Commission. Among the 13 months, 12 months are of 30 days and 1 month is 5 days (which will be 6 days in a leap year and 7 days once in 600 years).

The time count starts 12 hours counted from dawn to dusk and .again 12 hours counted from dusk to down. The visible barrier of the two 12 hours in a day is the daylight. Its proximity to the equator makes the day and night nearly equal 12 hours with minor seasonal variations.

Culture

The unique feature of Ethiopian cultures is that it is diversity. Each ethnic group has its own culture manifested in its diet, way of living, celebrations, dressing and dances. Each group has contributed to the widely practiced cultural manifestations at the cities (such as in national foods, dresses and dances) and the cultural fabric intertwining is still continuing.

The culture for its lack of colonial ties and suspicious nature of Ethiopians were maintained through its history unadulterated with western, African or Arab culture which is visible in many countries in the vicinity.

The Geographic Factor

The Highlands and the Lowlands

Ethiopia's landscape ranges from the highlands which enjoy the mild and sometimes cold weather to the lowlands which are very hot deserts. The highlands which inhabit the majority of Ethiopian population and the endemic animals such as Walia Ibex, Gilada Baboon and Red Fox go as high as 4460 m asl at mount Ras Dashen and the low lands have one of the world's lowest place which goes as low as 120 m bsl at Dalol depression.

The Great rift-valley splits Ethiopia into two and is filled with various lakes and endemic birds. The virgin forests at the South-west of Ethiopia are worth mentioning and are filled with local and endemic trees.

Seasons and Climate

Though Ethiopia is found in the Northern hemisphere, its seasons are different. Ethiopia's coldest and rainy season is from June to August while its dry season resembling summer is December, January, February.

Unlike other many countries in the tropics, its climate is not that hot. It is "naturally air-conditioned" as stated by one interviewee owing to its many cities are located at high lands as high as 2000m asl. The weather of Ethiopia is fantastic as described by many neighboring Sudanese which is not well promoted and could serve as a suitable area for retirement houses.

The History and Heritage Factor

History

Ethiopians are proud of their ancient history filled with legend and the attachment to the holy books of Bible and Quran. On the other hand,

Ethiopia's history is interwoven with the war with other neighboring people and among people of its citizen. Fighting for the motherland is still a highly valued and virtuous affair for an ordinary Ethiopian.

Lack of Colonial Ties

Ethiopia is one of the two African countries who have not been colonized. Despite its being occupied for a period of five years, the Italians did not manage to fully conquer and administer Ethiopia. This lack of colonial ties has its foes when viewed from the current era. These are manifested in lack of cooperation, cultural assimilation, and have created a sort of suspiciousness of foreigners.

Heritages

The historical heritages of Rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, Axum obelisk, the ancient town of Harar, the Konso civilization are among those registered by UNESCO.



Fig. 6.2 Rock-Hewn Churches at Lalibela

Archeological Sites

The archeological sites in Afar region of Ethiopia and Melka Kunture in Southern Shoa are one of the places where by the evidences for the origin of mankind is believed to are based. The place of Hadar is where the 3.2 billion years old skeleton of “Lucy” is found.

The Resource Factor

Energy

Ethiopia could be taken as having potentials for green sources of energy. The sun shines almost throughout the year in most parts of Ethiopia, which could serve as a potential source of large scale solar energy. On the other hand, Ethiopia is endowed with many rivers and water-falls which have started to serve as Hydro-Electric Power sources. The geothermal energy sources and the potential to drive wind mills will make it a good source of green energy. Apart from the green energy, the coal reserves found in western parts of the country (Dilbi and Moye area about 44 kms from the town of Jimma) and the natural gas and petroleum prospects (in Gambella and Ogaden regions) are holding a good potent to make the country a source of sustainable energy.

Mineral

The gold mine in the Shakisso area and Wellega are well known. But as to the other minerals, their exploration and exploitation is at its infancy. The preparation of geological map of the country should be given focus as the country can't afford to sit on its potential mineral reserves. Along with the recent excavation of tantalum (which is a mineral used in mobile phones), the uranium, the iron ore, the potash, the phosphate rocks have been identified to exist and appraising their economic use is to be sought after.

Population

Ethiopia with a population of more than 80 million, is the second populous country in Africa, next to Nigeria. Thus, Ethiopia has a huge potential for labour intensive activities if it could increase the productivity of its labour. The productivity of any labour could be leveraged significantly by the use of technology for which education, training and exposure/ communication are quite essential. The people of Ethiopia are polite and peaceful emanating from their attachment to religion which made them God-loving and God-fearing people. It is an established fact in the Gulf countries that Ethiopians are loyal and are not prone to steal other people's properties.

6.3.2. Resources and Capability Assessment

6.3.2.1. Strengths

The following points are the summarized highlights of strong points which serve in building unique competitive advantage:

Historical and Cultural Heritages

- Ancient civilization;
- History of Long Independence;
- Historical Heritages such as Axum obelisk, Rock-Hewn churches at Lalibela;
- Harmonized community of Muslims and Christians;
- History of peaceful refuge for Muslims, Jews, Jamaicans, Armenians during times of trouble;
- Colourful religious festivities rooted to Old Testament traditions;
- Unique and Diverse Culture;

Geography and Resource

- Pleasant and hospitable Weather;

- A gate way to Africa: found at the bridging point of Asia (Gulf) and Africa;
- Favourable time bridge between the east and the west;
- Diverse landscape :As high as 4433m asl to as low as 120m bsl;
- Huge source of “Green” energy;
- Origin and source of aromatic Coffee Arabica;
- Huge livestock;

Government and Development

- Willful and determined government to development;
- Age old democratic power transfer culture of the ‘Geda’ system of the Oromo ethnic group;
- Astounding development growth rate;
- Seat of AU and many embassies;

6.3.2.2. Weaknesses

Poverty

- Extreme level of poverty in some areas;
- Majority of uneducated people;

Language

- Absence or weak use of international language;
- Too much focus on sticking to the origins;

Politics

- Intense internal politics messed up with animosity and revenge losing the sight of the big national picture;
- Wasting too much energy and scarce financial resource in fighting each other;

- Located in a war-prone region;

Infrastructure

- Undeveloped infrastructure such as roads, health centres, communication net work, power supply;
- Poor level of service in internet connection, hotels, government services , transport;

Policy

- Restriction on foreign participation of financial sectors;
- Monopoly by Government of some important services for development such as internet;
- “Surprises” in issuing new regulations;

Human Resource Skill

- The low skill level of the human resource in the newly required spheres of technology, marketing, financial markets and communication;
- Restrictive regulation for foreigners to open schools for natives except for their communities;

6.3.3. Opportunities and Challenges to Branding Ethiopia

6.3.3.1. Opportunities

The opportunities for Branding Ethiopia are numerous if it is done in integrated manner free from Political propaganda. To mention the major ones

- The globalization of businesses promotes outsourcing and off-shoring which could target Ethiopia;
- The newly emerging state of neighbouring Southern Sudan;

- The geographical vicinity of the oil rich countries of the Gulf countries and neighbouring Sudan;
- The increasing concern for environmental pollution and acceptance of “carbon trade”;
- The acceptance of intellectual property rights of Ethiopian coffee from three locations “Harar”, “Yirgachefe” and “Sidama” by many countries;
- The increasing need of Ethiopians to unite under the same umbrella and rise up to increase acceptance of export produces and goods from local companies; i.e., it will improve the acceptance of COO,
- The favourable time zone for various multinational companies and stock exchanges as the country is situated in favourable time zone being at the financial centres of the east (Hong-Kong, Korea, Japan) and the west (New York),
- The increasing need of high level professional such as pilots and accountants by the near- by countries;
- The increasing need for cheap labour.

6.3.3.2. Challenges/ Threats

- It might be a spot for “dirty” investment which pollute the environment such as the flower industry;
- The cultural identity of the country might be lost;
- Government might not support the idea of liberalization and might pursue its revolutionary democracy approach which supports government intervention whenever it finds it necessary;
- The threat of disturbance from Islamic fundamentalists and some neighbouring countries;
- Might result in internal political sabotage of government organs.

6.3.4. SWOT Analysis

Table 6.1. SWOT Matrix to Branding Ethiopia

	<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for cheap labour • Increased environmental concern • Need for agricultural food self sufficiency by foreign countries • Emerging state of Southern Sudan 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat of Islamic fundamentalists • Competition from many other countries engaged in similar country branding projects
<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant weather • Diverse and rich culture • Central time zone • Historical Heritages • Low level of crime • Beautiful people • Rich Festivities • Friendly People • Cheap Labour 	<p><u>Key Advantages</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Economic Growth Rate • Pleasant Weather • Central Time Zone • Cheap Labour • Peaceful and Secured • Diverse Culture 	
<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low speed of internet • Poor access roads • Frequent Power failure • Low Health support • Low level of education • Lack of international language proficiency • Weak track record on human rights • Image of poverty and famine 		

6.3.5. Strategic Key Competitive Advantages and Focus Points

The key strategic points to be focused on and as identified to give competitive advantage in Branding Ethiopia are

For Investment related activities

- Safe, peaceful and cheap labour for labour cost sensitive investments;
- Huge opportunity for irrigable land;
- Good opportunity for developing “Green” energy sources;

For new residents

- Hospitable, “naturally air-conditioned” weather for retirement homes and resorts;

For Tourism Activities

- Historical Heritages
- Friendly and Beautiful people
- Religious and Cultural festivities.

The detailed discussion is dealt in the recommendation section following the conclusions.

6.4. Conclusions

Anholt (2003) has affirmed that if there is political will of the government and if it has sound policies that really support and encourage export and investment, a consistent, imaginative and well managed *national brand strategy* can make a real difference for the long-term economic well being of the country. Continuing his argument, Anholt (2003) referring to a political scientist Joseph Nye states intelligent observers of world politics understand that the influence and success of countries is always dependent on the balance of “hard” and “soft” power. The hard or coercive power could only be applied (putting the moral issues and its sustainability aside) only when you are high up in the hierarchy of nations power. But as Nye says “a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in the world

because other countries want to follow it, admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness. Soft power is making people want to do what you want them to do". Nation branding is the modern example of soft power and for emerging nations the only power they can wield is soft power or nation branding (Anholt, 2003).

Since Ethiopia is branded as a country associated with famine and poverty, everyone is pointing to that image even though more than 20 years have elapsed since the famine occurred in 1984/85. And if the country doesn't engage in managing its brand, all its economic activities from FDI to exports will be affected as they are left to whatever bits of information communicated through competitors, media and words of mouth. Thus, it is concluded in this research that the research results along with the SWOT analysis support the research propositions and embarking on Branding Ethiopia is found to be beneficial for its economic development. The steps to be taken in Branding Ethiopia are stipulated in the following recommendation section.

6.5. Recommendations

Ethiopia is a country with ancient historical ties even though its current image has been shaded by events that have happened in the past 35 years. As one participant in a focus group has asserted an image spoiled in a generation will be repaired when another willful and responsible generation comes. As stated by many of the respondents, Branding Ethiopia shall be undertaken as a project. The question is as pointed out by Balakrishnan (2008) that there are approximately 200 countries and 2 million destinations to visit and it is how to distinctly stand out of the crowd? As many Ethiopians have responded affirmatively to change their citizenship if a better option comes despite their love for their country, shows people have learned that change is the only constant and places have to strive to keep their citizens and attract new ones.

It is no doubt that Ethiopia has the necessary resource base both human and physical to improve its image and set it right. In this regard how to approach the Branding Ethiopia project, what shall be its main objectives, who shall handle it and the roles stakeholders ought to play are described hereunder.

The steps of branding as stated in Florek (2005) are

- **Searching for identities:** engaging all the stakeholders to find common national identities which is appealing to all citizens;
- **Identifying unique identities:** among the national identities identified the unique and appealing identities to the target group shall be selected
- **Making the identities visible:** making the national identities visible to the target groups for example by preparing films,
- **Communicating appropriately:** establishing a guiding and harmonizing press conferences and public lectures of government officials to a foreign media and university.

In the current globalized world, where idea appealing rather than might is the deciding factor, those who lead the country have to win the hearts and minds of the following stakeholders unlike the past. Thus leadership on voters will have become an action resembling more of marketing as opposed to its similarity to a military commander in the previous world order. Thus those who lead or manage places/countries branding shall craft a strategy which is appealing and beneficial to residents, visitors, investors, and foreign buyers. Trying to communicate a country branding image will only confuse the target group as it will be unorganized and contradictory sometimes. A common and unifying integrated Country Branding strategy is analogous to a magnet which pulls and aligns thousands of iron filings which resemble the un-harmonized messages.

It is recommended that the Branding Ethiopia endeavour shall be conducted identifying the focus area for the preparatory ground work, how to do it the Branding, by whom and so on as stipulated in the following paragraphs.

6.5.1. Ground Work Focus Area

The focus area to be addressed and improved before embarking on a full scale Branding Ethiopia endeavour are infrastructure, internal politics, language, barrier and income distribution. These four focus areas for improvement as a ground work are discussed hereunder.

Infrastructure:

Improving roads, hotels, sanitation, hospitals, telephone, internet, financial institutions, etc. shall be given the highest priority as it is being done now. The one thing which many interviewees has raised is the low speed of the internet connectivity and its high cost by the monopolistic government owned Ethiopia Telecommunications Corporations. Allowing competitions, which the government is not willing to do it in the near future (reasoning out the revenue will be used for financing the building of other infrastructure) doesn't give sense since the investment opportunities lost and its multiplier effects are not affordable to ignore. It is just like to enjoy and be proud about the speed of a helicopter, for a simple reason of being airborne, while others are moving fast in a space shuttle.

The absence of foreign banking in Ethiopia is another concern for many of the interviewees and the government shall really weigh its disadvantage vis-à-vis its benefit. Many foreigners interviewed have raised the suspicious nature of Ethiopians and the government really has to check whether it is because of the clear disadvantage or simply because of the suspicion that foreign banks are not allowed. If it is that dangerous, one may wonder why others countries like Dubai and even Kenya are doing it? And what did they lose?

Internal Politics:

Creating an environment of reconciliation for past mistakes and common national understanding is critical to mobilize the whole nation. Using the

widely acclaimed concept of “Ethiopia First” (which was used during the Dergue era), for domestic mobilization of the people will give a sense of pardon and camaraderie for the people. An internal politics of revenge lingering from the past shall be stopped here and here only. One must be courageous enough like the South African nation to breed love and reconciliation among its citizenry.

Breaking the Language Barrier:

The unique languages of Ethiopia have made a formidable barrier to communicate the stories, poems, music, mystiques, philosophies and legends of Ethiopia to the other communities of the world. As a result, it has made Ethiopians, to form relationships and friendships among themselves only which made them to be perceived as unwelcoming of foreigners and sometimes racist. Thus, it is necessary to encourage the education system at least to teach two international languages competently. Breaking the international language barrier is a long overdue solution to address the nation’s long standing problem of being a closed society.

Fair Income Distribution:

Taking measures to ensure the authenticity and reliability of the data fed to check the Gini coefficient so as to reflect the reality on the ground and ensure to the public that there exists a fair income distribution in the country is crucial. This will have an impact for the public to identify itself with the branding effort as the people are the determining factor for the branding of the country (Gilmore, 2002).

The ground work focusing on the above four factors if done properly will create a solid foundation to base the Branding Ethiopia endeavour as it will be easy to mobilize the citizenry on a carefully selected unifying identifying branding points.

The next point will be selecting the target groups to whom the branding is targeted.

6.5.2. Resources and Competitive Advantages

The resources and competitive advantage upon which the Branding of Ethiopia could be based are recommended as various “green” sources of energy, vast irrigable land, pleasant weather, large population and cheap labour force, friendly and beautiful people, cultural and historical values and festivities.

The resources and competitive advantages are listed in detail earlier in section 6.3.2. which covered Resource and Capability assessment.

6.5.3. Target Countries/Regions

The countries or regions to be targeted are selected based on three factors:

- their need for the resources and values in Ethiopia,
- their proximity to Ethiopia and
- their financial capacity.

Thus the countries selected are Gulf countries (for their proximity, for their rich petroleum based economies, related culture and their need for labour force and agricultural land), G8 countries (mainly for their need of labour intensive products due to the huge labour cost in the member countries), the newly emerging nations termed as BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) for their developing economies in need of expansion and investment to other countries, and of course African Countries building on the competitive advantage of Ethiopian Air lines among the African Air Lines.

As shown in the next figure, Fig. 6.3, the recommended types / sectors of relationship to be formed are as shown in the arrows. The direction also shows to or from the country the specific sector commodity/ service flows.

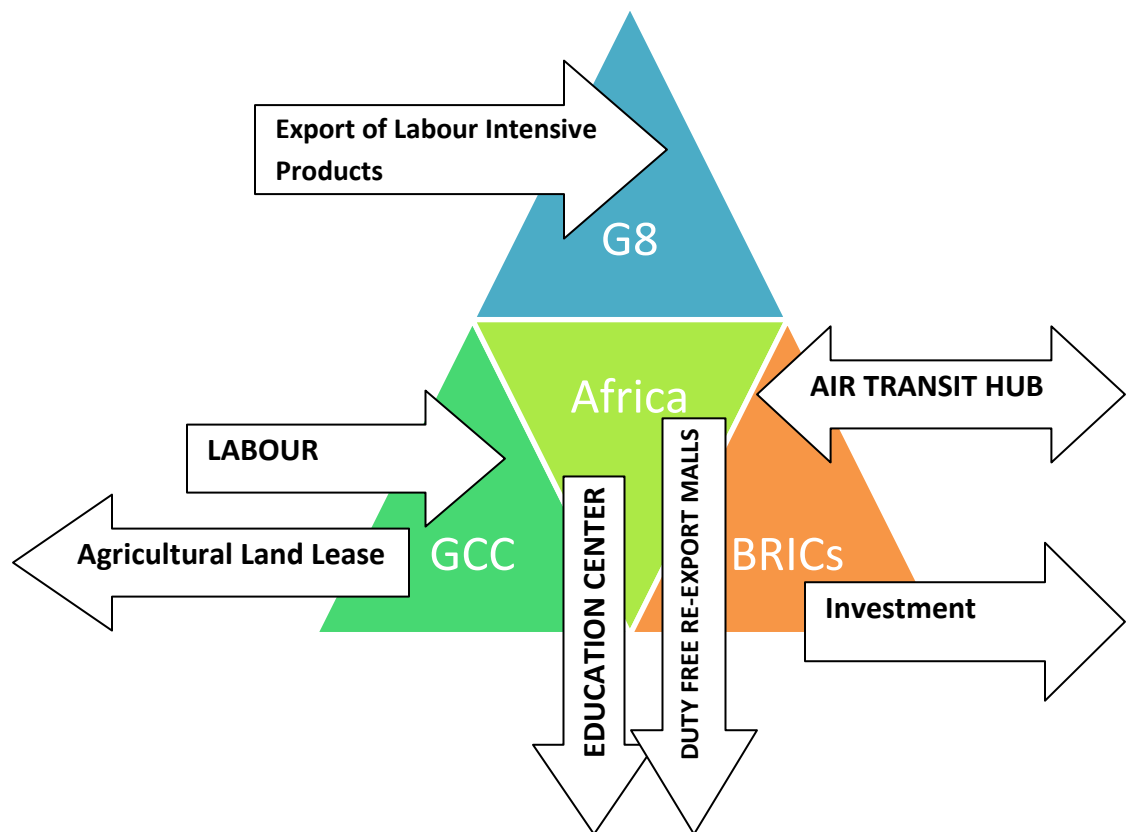


Fig. 6.3 Target Countries/ Regions

6.5.4. How to do it?

The Branding Ethiopia project shall be done in a gradual and stage-wise approach. The International Marketing Council (IMC) has a good track record working on Branding South Africa since August 2000. Unlikely, the Ethiopian Millennium Bureau which was established in mid 2007 was closed in end of 2008. The response from one interviewee was Ethiopians are perceived as lacking patience. From the theoretical foundations studied, Kotler, *et al.* (1993) states in the three levels of marketing: planning, improving the market factors and selecting and focusing on the target markets.

Public Awareness:

Building a common National Social Psychology is very important to build a sustainable brand. A sustainable national brand, whether there is a change in government or not is essential for continual development. For

this purpose creating a public awareness to build a common social psychology of the nation is important and shall not be neglected.

Media:

Trying to influence the “agenda setting” and “framing” of news by local and international media is important for CB, as the agenda setting and framing are the ones used by the media to influence peoples’ perception (Jun, Lee & Park, 2009). In agenda setting, the media influences people what to think about; and in framing, the media makes the particular issue salient by selecting some aspects of the perceived reality. There should also be an effort to produce many competent journalists and writers who could write in the major international languages so as to produce as many articles as possible to fully expose Ethiopia’s endowments and achievements to the world. Along with this, developing Ethiopian affiliated journalists shall be pursued by inviting renowned journalists from journals widely readable by target groups to make them periodically visit the accomplishments Ethiopia have made. If possible trying to establish African TV channel or participating in the existing one is helpful as it will have a cost sharing advantage and along with its wide coverage area to disseminate the truth about countries. As the saying goes, *“it is not enough to be in possession of the truth, the truth shall be told and truth will set you free”*.

Aid Agencies:

Developing a step-by-step approach to evaluate and putting a deadline to stop being recipient of aid. As much as possible, surprises shall be avoided. Surprises will always invite unhappy retaliations by the losing side [Aid-Agencies] to equalize its pains which are dire to the country. The African Brand of which Ethiopia is the major one is shadowed by the ongoing catastrophic image of poverty promoted by aid-celebrities like Bob Geldof and Bono, Anholt (2007). Even though the aid is based on existing hard facts, its prolonged use is not warranted by its benefits. But,

rather the problems it creates have a pronounced effect as no one will prefer to employ people from aid recipient countries or people are not inclined to invest in countries which need aid. Thus being dependent on shall be phased out on step-by-step basis avoiding any surprises.

Sport & Entertainment:

Entertainments based on our literature, music, dances, films shall be presented, demonstrated and promoted to the near and far regions. The humor of Ethiopia and literature shall be translated and published to be read by foreigners. The music shall be recorded again with clips showing its message in the way reflecting Ethiopian reality. The country's diverse landscape shall be used and promoted and serve Ethiopia as the film production center of East Africa. For this various films shall be produced with English and Arabic subtitles on them to make suitable for the outside world.



Fig. 6.4 Walia Ibex at Semien Mountains

The spirit of the local and the international community is highly and easily influenced by the leverage that is created even though it is short lived. To create the winning spirit, the name of the national football team “**Walia**” named after (see Fig. 6.3) the endemic but timid, fearful and extinct animal of the Semien Mountains needs to be changed. Similarly the name of the women national football team “**Lucy**” (named after what is believed to be the oldest archeological evidence found about the origin of mankind or its closest link) needs to change as it brings to mind a horrific skeleton image of a remotely related human species. The names of foot

ball teams shall reflect strength, power and a winning spirit as football is a zero sum game and winning is its essence. Proposals could be given like **“Red-Fox”** to show their being witty and clever related to their technical beauty of the team and remind also the other endemic animal to Ethiopia. The women team could easily be named like **“Queen of Sheba”** to symbolize the cleverness of the ancient queen of Abyssinia.

6.5.5. When and how long to do it?

As stated by Anholt (2003), nation branding is like the proverbial super tanker which takes 5 miles to change its course and 8 miles to stop it. Hence, though it is required for Ethiopia to embark on CB with no delay, it shouldn't be hurried as an image soon established will not have a lasting impact. It will be forgotten soon. Thus, expecting a fast impact is being too naïve about nation branding. One first needs to identify the national identities that engage all stakeholders. And the nation branding strategy shall be harmonized with the government strategy and it needs a consistent and quality communication to reveal to all local end external target groups. As an ocean is made of drops, an organized and well structured real message communicated through appropriate delivery mechanism will bring its result after some time. It shall take at least two election terms (even more as seen from other countries experience).

6.5.6. Who shall do it?

Government

If such an endeavour is given to be spearheaded by a government organization only, it tends to go highly bureaucratic and will lose its dynamism. Control will become its main focus rather than effectiveness and efficiency. As a result, the moral of those involved in the Branding endeavour tends to be low. Besides, its potential to mobilize will be lowered as the political differences of some groups will come in between.

Private Sector

Running such a national undertaking as a completely private organization will face a danger of not getting the full cooperation and support of the different government organs. This is what actually happened in the failure of “Branding Kenya” project of 2007. “It[Branding Kenya] lacked a champion inside the government” as stated by Julius Kipngelich, Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS) Director. It will be very easy to give various “negative” labels which hampers cooperation unless government has some stake in it. Some might go to the level of accusations of spending public money on unnecessary endeavour.

Public-Private Partnership

This is the most recommended way of handling this endeavour of Branding Ethiopia. This is the organizational method used by International Marketing Council (IMC) in branding South Africa. It will mobilize the whole private sector with its potential of effectiveness and efficiency while securing the support of the different government organs. A Public-Private Partnership arrangement to do the Branding Ethiopia project is the recommended organization to spearhead the endeavour since it will mobilize the whole nation without the fear of slipping into either a state propaganda or a narrow sectarian interest of the private units.

6.5.7. Resources and Funding

The resources and funding to the Branding Ethiopia endeavour shall be from budgets drawn from the government, the different organizations (public and private), tour operators, hotels, air lines, exporters and selling of a label of “Brand Ethiopia” to identify products with the project and give them discount benefits from services of advertisements.

6.5.8. Proposed Strategy Framework

The following figure Fig. 6.5 shows the framework of Branding Ethiopia Strategy. The Branding strategy shall be in harmony with the plan of the

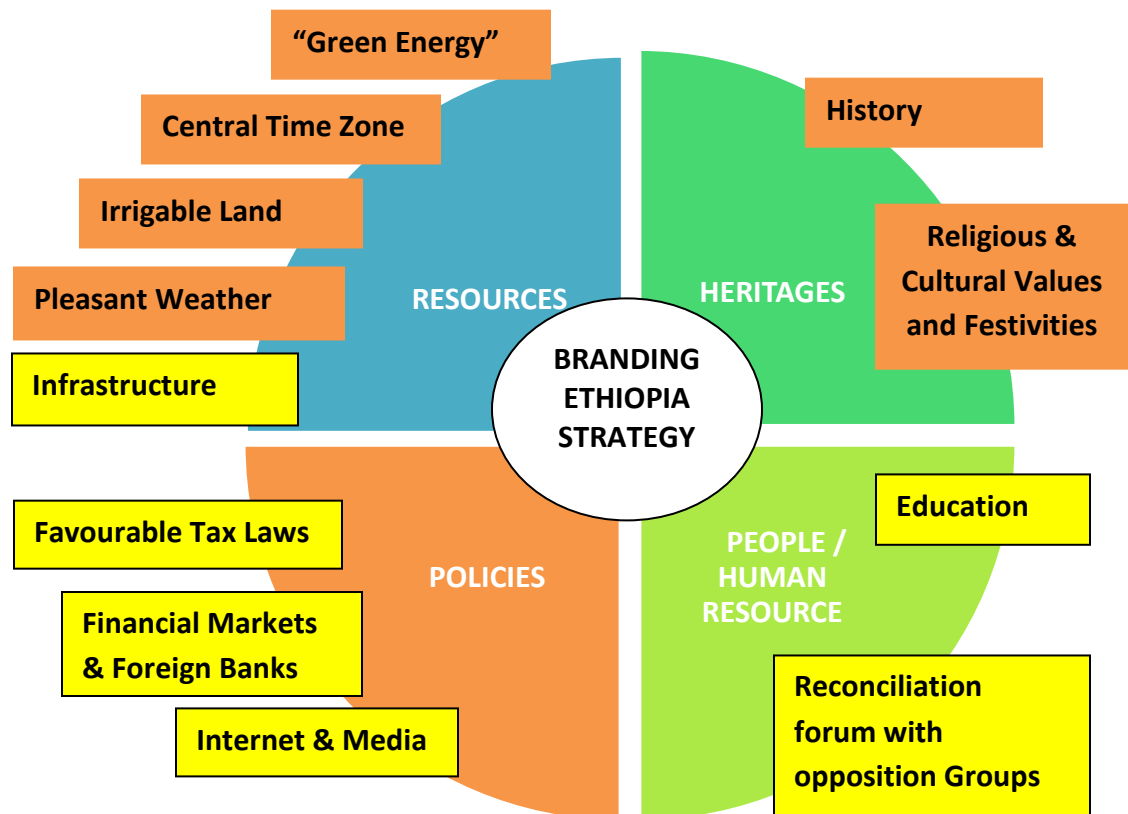


Fig. 6.5 Branding Ethiopia Strategy Framework

country, in this case the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of Ethiopia. The framework as depicted in Fig. 6.5 shows the four components (Resources, Heritages, Policies, and People) in which the Branding Ethiopia is to be based. Each component's competitive advantage element is shown as emanating from each component. Thus, the Resource component deals with the development related activities of the elements "Green energy" sources development, awareness creation of

the “central” time zone to appeal for basing headquarters of international companies and financial markets, preparation of irrigable lands for investors, promotion of the pleasant weather to retired people. But, it is worth mentioning here that the infrastructure (power supply, roads, communication and internet connectivity, hotels, good governance from government offices, etc.) has to be developed and improved significantly to support the appeal of the resource factor.

As to the Heritages component, it shall deal with the recording and production of religious and cultural festivities and documentaries to be shown in international TV programs to show their tourism appeal. Various films and literature based on the cultural heritages, mystiques and glorious history of Ethiopia shall be produced and distributed to the world in international languages such as English and Arabic. Attachment of the local media with some international TV channels will also bring leverage. A periodical sport tournament of some sort like the current “Great Run Ethiopia” will also add to the colour. A vibrant urban life (including philharmonic orchestra) shall also be encouraged to pull as many visitors as possible and create a modern city culture.

People are the major component to realize the strategy. Currently, the human resource in Ethiopia is fit mainly for labour intensive industries, even though few sectors such as air craft pilots and technicians are also quite fit and competitive by the international standards. But, the strategy should focus on to change this feature within a few years period to educated people. Thus, it has to encourage the realization of special technology training centers to appeal to technology companies to invest in Ethiopia. Encouraging education centers to teach international languages proficiently is very important to create a cosmopolitan city hospitable to foreign investors and visitors as communication is at its foundation.

On the other hand, encouraging world celebrities to visit and buy summer houses in Ethiopia will have a multiplier effect as media tracks the celebrities and will give it a coverage giving bits of information to boost the image of the country. The first time travelers shall also be given orientation training to train them how to behave in a foreign country. Government authorities, while travelling abroad, shall also be encouraged to give interviews to prominent media in the foreign country they are travelling and also give public lectures in universities and colleges on a subject of interest to the audience.

Here it is worth mentioning such kind of work will be significantly affected if the people do not engage with full heart. Thus, it will add to the image and reduces the risks of failure of the country branding strategy if reconciliation of the previous political misdeeds are pardoned once and for all and thrown to history.

As to the policy component, it is the foundation to realize the country brand strategy. The policies related to income repatriation in foreign currency, the labour law, the monopoly status of telecommunication & and power generation sectors in the hands of the government need to be changed. The policy prohibition for foreign banks and to establish schools needs to be liberalized. The state monopoly of TV shall be lifted and allow other private TV stations to be opened. As many have commented in the interview, the country is blamed to be “closed”. The policy of closed door policy hasn’t taken the country forward and hasn’t helped it much. It left it where Edward Gibbon has commented (see the quotation at the beginning of chapter one) 222 years ago. Here it will be worthwhile to check and learn from the experience of Dubai as to the application of low tax rates and duty-free zones. It is on this component the role of the government is highly required.

6.5.9. Partners in the Public- Private Partnership

The recommended organization format is a Public-Private Partnership which is to be reporting to the head of the executive body of the government, in the case of Ethiopia-the Premiere. The Branding Ethiopia Project will be led by CEO. The CEO will be reporting to the Board of Directors/Council made up of the following key stakeholders:

Government Appointees

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Trade
- Ethiopian Investment Commission
- Ethiopian Revenue & Customs Authority
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ministry of Education
- National Bank of Ethiopia
- Commercial Bank of Ethiopia
- Federal Police Commission

Public Partners

- Chamber of Commerce
- Ethiopian Air Lines
- Ethiopian Tourist Trading Enterprise
- Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions

Private Partners

- Two Representatives from Hotels
- Representatives from two share companies
- Two Representatives from Taxi Drivers Associations
- Four representatives from Private Investors

6.5.10. Recommended Permanent Yearly Activity Calendar

September: New Year Celebration & Cultural Festivals

October: Great Ethiopian Run

November: Culture Festival & Art Exhibition

December: Agricultural Produce Trade Fair
Literary works competition among Ethiopian works translated to foreign language

January: Religious Festival
Philharmonic Orchestra

February: Foot Ball Tournament between Colleges
Chamber of Commerce Expo

March: “Zour d’Amba” (equivalent of Tour d’ France) Cycling Tournament

April: Addis Concert

May: Beauty Contest & Entrepreneurship competition

June: Recruitment & Education Trade Fair

July: Green Week (Planting Seedlings)

August: Investors’ Conference

6.6. Points Learnt

This research has evaluated and elucidated many points required to Brand Ethiopia. The researcher has learnt the success and failures of many country branding activities and the ongoing country branding activities in the world. The research topic which has been started as a marketing endeavour has been found to have close ties and links with many disciplines such as politics, social psychology, strategy and development issues. In fact, the researcher has also learnt the lack of information and data in the country and the fear of many respondents to discuss on issues which have some link with politics. Many organizations do not have a web site even, it was discovered.

It goes without saying that this is the first attempt to explore the Country branding aspect in the Ethiopian context. It is hoped that this will not be the last and further researches are important, unlike the previous Ethiopian Millennium Celebration Project, before embarking on a meaningful and serious activity. It is hoped that this study will serve as a spring board for future research. This will fulfill the saying that a journey of a thousand kilometers is started with the first step taken.

The researcher has learnt the joy and frustration of conducting a research. The topic which was taught as just one aspect of marketing at the beginning of the research now overwhelmed and interested the researcher to the extent of conducting further research on the topic. However, the topic was found to be vast and to be in lack of information, in the Ethiopian context.

6.7. Summary

In a nut shell, Branding Ethiopia shall be done in a public-private partnership project mobilizing every citizen and communicating the changes in a quality and consistent manner. The support from a responsible government is found to be crucial in crafting the strategy, providing policy support and the necessary budget

but without the political interference and bureaucracy. To do it consistently a frequent change in government seems prohibitive of the branding effort as the government policy support plays the key role. Thus, it seems important to increase the numbers of years of service for the government in one election to at least 8-10 years just like the power transfer tradition of the local Oromo Geda system (or to two election terms). This is recommended because unlike in the developed world, the preparatory works take much time in the developing countries as there are a lot of infrastructural problems. Thus one group might leave the office with the preparation work only and when the new group comes the same situation will be continuing.

Branding Ethiopia shall be done in away free from political and religious interferences. Crafting sound policies, strategies and providing dependable infrastructural support to attract investors, visitors, entrepreneurial new residents, celebrities, and encouraging exports are the major support activities required from the government.

For this to happen, equal treatment of citizens, application of rule of law avoiding any sort of surprises in issuing laws and regulations shall be the way forward. It is quite unaffordable for Ethiopia to still miss the steps to development and continue to stagger in the quagmire of poverty. And eradicating extreme poverty requires development partners (as opposed to the aid-partners) from local as well as foreign investors which have to be confident from what they see on the ground. As Anholt (2007: 73) states it “when you haven’t got time to read a book, you judge it by its cover.” Thus not to be judged by the picture painted by the media and other stakeholders, a responsible government shall discover how the country it leads is perceived by the world and do what is necessary to manage it, Anholt (2007). Managing the country’s image is far from advertising on international TV channels or repetitive PR programs even though they have some importance. As the old saying of “Action speaks louder than voice”, it is what you do and not what you say or promote that changes the attitude and

opinion of people about the country. In any case you can't rebrand a hyena by just changing the colour of its skin without changing its behaviour, Stuart and Muzellec (2004). Hence, the government, the citizenry, the investors and everyone concerned shall do the branding task harmoniously and in integrated manner. Thus as all the discussions, interviews and literatures support, it is time to go for establishing a public-private partnership council for Branding Ethiopia to guide and manage the country's brand to bring the aspired economic development and to take the country out of poverty.

As ethnic egalitarianism in Ethiopia is believed to be ascertained after a long and brutal fight, the quest for equality shouldn't stop there alone. But, rather the struggle for equality shall continue to make the country stand proudly and confidently alongside other countries of the world. Hence, this time the fight for equality will be with the countries of the world but, in a different perspective. The difference will be, unlike before, in the medium of fight. This time the medium of fight will be marketing/branding/public diplomacy as you might call it and not guns. The age of guns has gone and the age of public diplomacy/nation branding or international marketing is dawning.

It is hoped that this generation along with the next generation will assure Ethiopia's renaissance, restore it to its ancient glorious position and assure its legitimate and rightful position in the globalized world with increasing connectivity. Using knowledgeable team of professionals and giving them the space with abundance of patience, carefully treading but continually improving to realize the goal of transformation (as planned in the GTP of Ethiopia) is what is required to relieve Ethiopia from its poverty and aid dependency. That way it is easy to see the ugly caterpillar transformed into a beautiful and free butterfly lovable to see flying up in the sky.

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APPENDICES

Annex 1) Measuring Instruments Used

The following measuring instruments are used in this research:

- I. For Ethiopians– Interview Guideline 1;
- II. For Foreigners– Interview Guideline 2;
- III. For Media – Interview Guideline 3;
- III. For Government Officials – Interview Guideline 4.
- IV. For Focus Group Discussions – Discussion Guideline 1;
- V. Re-test Questionnaire to check reliability-For Ethiopians.

Interview Questions for Ethiopians

Dear Respondents,

I am Getu Kebede from Ethiopia a graduate student at UNISA. Currently, I am conducting a research study on “**Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges**” in partial fulfillment of the Masters Degree of Business Leadership programme at University of South Africa (UNISA). I request your help to spend some minutes of your time by giving me interview on the attached interview questions.

The research is geared to evaluate the potential benefits of Country Branding (CB) to contribute its share in alleviating/reducing the poverty in the country. Many Countries are currently engaged in branding/re-branding their country so that their country’s image will be properly and fairly set on the international arena and contribute its fair share in poverty reduction.

In this regard, some countries like Spain, New Zealand and South Africa have managed to improve their countries’ image while others like Canada and Kenya have failed even though Kenya has re-engaged itself in the rebranding effort. In the past, the World Cup tournament prepared in South Africa and Spain and the Barcelona Olympic are the results of the Country Branding effort.

Some of the benefits gained by Country Branding efforts are increased tourist inflow, increased foreign direct investment (FDI), acceptance of country of origin (COO) effects on export, and increased inflow of expatriates.

Simon Anholt, the famous author in the field of Country Branding or Public Diplomacy (as it is sometimes called), has commented that some countries are entangled with past negative images, stereotypes of some sort, or are totally unknown. This has an impact affecting the inflow of investment and capital to the country. Thus, Country Branding is believed to set right the image of Countries as opposed to cosmetic application of branding as some might believe. In any case whatever truth is there, the truth has to be told.

Your response will be kept absolutely confidential and will be used for the research purpose only. If you are interested to have a copy of my report, please feel free to request me and I will send you the electronic copy.

I appreciate your cooperation and will appreciate it if you give me the appointment before the first week of September 2010.

Thank you and very sincerely yours,
Getu Kebede

**Interview Guideline 1) For Ethiopians residing in the Country and in
Diaspora**

Respondent Full Name:

Sex: Age: Telephone:

Educational Level:

e-mail:

Country of Residence :

Nationality:

Signature:

Honourable Respondents, I kindly request you to respond to the following questions on the topic of “**Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges**”. Your response will be used for the study purpose only and it will remain absolutely confidential. By no means, it’ll be taken as a formal stand of your organization and it will only be taken as your personal view.

- 1) What do you think the significance and the role of Country Branding to poverty reduction in Ethiopia? In your opinion, what could be the possible advantages of Branding/re-branding Ethiopia?
- 2) Is Ethiopia well known in the world? Have you ever been surprised by meeting an educated person who haven’t heard about Ethiopia? Please cite your experiences with foreigners in a foreign country.
- 3) What is the current brand of Ethiopia in the global arena? Do you think Ethiopia’s image is fairly represented? If not what is not mentioned or what needs to be corrected?
- 4) As a citizen of Ethiopia, do you believe that you can improve the image of Ethiopia? If yes, in what way?
- 5) Are you proud of being Ethiopian? If yes, what made you proud? If not, why not?

- 6) If you get the chance, will you change your citizenship? Kindly elaborate your reasons?
- 7) What do you think Ethiopia's image in the world? Is it positive or negative? What do you think was the turning point?
- 8) If you have to rate their impact (+/-) on a scale of 0-10 ('0' for low and '10' for high), how do you rate the following for the negative image associated with Ethiopia.
- Jonathan Dimpleby's film on the 1973 famine in Ethiopia
 - The internal politics and the "Red- terror" in the late1970's
 - The Drought and famine in 1985
 - The low Per Capita Income and Poverty in the country
 - The adoption of Socialism as the Government's Philosophy
- 9) Does your individual perception about Ethiopia influence the Country's image? In what way?
- 10) Does Ethiopia have the necessary assets (both physical and human) to be one of the best tourist destinations in the world?
- 11) What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?
- 12) How is Ethiopia perceived by the Africans? Is there anything which calls for "political correctness"? Do you share the assertion that Ethiopia is the Icon and spirit of the Black people? How do you perceive the "Rastafarian movement"?
- 13) Do you think Media and aid agencies had an influence on Ethiopia's image? If so, in what way did they affect the Country's image?

- 14) In your opinion, who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? The Government or any other body? How do you see the importance level of Government participation in Branding Ethiopia? Some say Government shouldn't be involved in Branding of the country it leads as it might tend to a cosmetic application. What is your opinion?
- 15) Will the internal politics have a significant influence on the country's brand? How could it be made to play a positive role on the brand image of Ethiopia?
- 16) What do you think the impact of "Ethiopian Millennium" on the image of Ethiopia? Could it have been better? In what way?
- 17) Does the tagline "Thirteen months of Sun-shine" need to change or shall it remain as it is? If you are asked to propose a new tagline what do you propose?
- 18) What do you think is very critical to have an acceptable brand image of Ethiopia? How shall it be achieved?
- 19) Is it necessary to Brand Ethiopia? How soon the country shall embark on re-Branding itself? What shall be done in Branding Ethiopia? What benefits do you expect?
- 20) What type of images Ethiopia could possibly have? How could Ethiopia best position itself? What aspects shall uniquely define Ethiopia? Which is best out of them? Why?

Interview Guideline 2) For Foreigners (in Embassies and International Organizations/ aid agencies and others outside Ethiopia)

- 1) What comes first to your mind, when one mentions about the Country Brazil? And what about Congo? In like manner, what is the first thing that crosses your mind when the Country Ethiopia is mentioned? Why?
- 2) Where did you first get the images about Ethiopia? By Whom? Do you still think the image you have is correct?
- 3) For how long did your Country have the relationship with Ethiopia? Were there any controversies/misunderstandings in the past? How is your Country's relationship with Ethiopia? Is there anything to be improved? What significant opportunities are there?
- 4) How long have you been in Ethiopia? How do you classify the Collective character of Ethiopians? What are the good things about Ethiopia and the people? What do you want to see changed?
- 5) What do you think are the reasons for the low amount of FDI coming into Ethiopia? What measures shall the Ethiopian government take to attract FDI from your Country?
- 6) Are there any tourists coming from your Country to Ethiopia? What shall be done to increase the tourist visitors inflow to Ethiopia?
- 7) Does your Country import items from Ethiopia? Which ones? How is the trend, increasing/ decreasing? What shall be done to increase the outflow of Ethiopian exportable items?
- 8) Are there any expatriates from your Country who are working in Ethiopia? In what professions they are working currently? What

attracted them to Ethiopia? What is their contribution to Ethiopia? What shall be done to attract more expatriates?

9) Some argue that aid-agencies are creating a bad image of Ethiopia.

What is your opinion about this proposition?

10) Some call aid-agencies as “Lords of Poverty” stating that aid – agencies are consuming much of the aid money they are getting. What is your opinion?

11) What do you think about the impact of the recent “Charities and Societies Proclamation” on Ethiopia’s image? In what way will it affect the Country Brand? Why?

Interview Questions for the Media

Dear Respondents,

I am Getu Kebede from Ethiopia, Horn of Africa. Currently, I am conducting a research study on “Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges” in partial fulfillment of the Masters Degree of Business Leadership programme at University of South Africa (UNISA). I request your help to spend some minutes of your time to give me interview to the attached interview questions.

The research is geared to evaluate the potential benefits of Country Branding (CB) to contribute its share in alleviating/reducing the poverty in the country. Many Countries are currently engaged in branding/re-branding their country so that their country’s image will be properly and fairly set on the international arena and contribute its fair share in poverty reduction.

In this regard, some countries like Spain, New Zealand and South Africa have managed to improve their countries’ image while others like Canada and Kenya have failed even though Kenya has re-engaged itself in the rebranding effort. In the past, the World Cup tournament prepared in South Africa and Spain and the Barcelona Olympic are the results of the Country Branding effort.

Some of the benefits gained by Country Branding efforts are increased tourist inflow, increased foreign direct investment (FDI), acceptance of country of origin (COO) effects on export, and increased inflow of expatriates.

Simon Anholt, the famous author in the field of Country Branding or Public Diplomacy (as it is sometimes called), has commented that some countries are entangled with past negative images, stereotypes of some sort, or are totally unknown. This has an impact affecting the inflow of investment and capital to the country. Thus, Country Branding is believed to set right the image of Countries as opposed to cosmetic application of branding as some might believe. In any case whatever truth is there, the truth has to be told.

Your response will be kept absolutely confidential and will be used for the research purpose only. If you are interested to have a copy of my report, please feel free to request me and I will send you the electronic copy.

I appreciate your cooperation and will appreciate it if you could give me an appointment before September 2010.

Thank you and very sincerely yours,
Getu Kebede

Interview Guide line 3) For the media

Respondent Full Name:

Sex: Age: Telephone:

Educational Level:

e-mail:

Country of Residence :

Nationality:

Signature:

Honourable Respondents, I kindly request you to respond to the following questions on the topic of “**Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges**”. Your response will be used for the study purpose only and it will remain absolutely confidential. By no means it will be taken as a formal stand of your media and it will only be taken as your personal view.

- 1) What is your experience about Ethiopia’s image in the world? Is Ethiopia well known in the world?
- 2) Does the country image in the global arena have any impact on its economy? If it has, in what way?
- 3) In your opinion, what could be the possible advantages of Branding/re-branding Ethiopia?
- 4) Do you believe that the media (both local and international) can affect the Brand image of a Country? If so, in what way?
- 5) Which of the news broadcasted in the past about Ethiopia had a significant and lasting impact in affecting Ethiopia’s image? In what way did they affect the Country Brand?
- 6) Does NEWS by its nature tend to focus on negative news? Does international media in particular tends to focus on negative information?

- 7) Did the local Media negatively affect Ethiopia's image unknowingly? Does the "Free" press shall tell everything even if it damages the country brand?
- 8) Did the international Media negatively affect Ethiopia's image intentionally? If yes, please substantiate it with your experiences.
- 9) Is the media focus balanced and neutral by its nature or does it naturally have a tendency of bias?
- 10) Is the story/news so far portrayed by the media about Ethiopia fairly balanced? Or is it biased? If biased in which direction, negative or positive?
- 11) If you have to rate their impact (+/-) on a scale of 0-10 ('0' for low and '10' for high), how do you rate the following for the negative image associated with Ethiopia.
- Jonathan Dimbleby's film on the 1973 famine in Ethiopia
 - The internal politics and the "Red- terror" in the late 1970's
 - The Drought and famine in 1985
 - The low Per Capita Income and Poverty in the country
 - The adoption of Socialism as the Government's Philosophy
 - The external political stand of the Country
- 12) Does Ethiopia have enough positive images, activities and situations to be told by the media? Aren't they known so far?
- 13) What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?
- 14) Do the aid agencies have any role to play for the positive or the negative image of Ethiopia? If yes, please explain. In what way shall they be made to assist to Branding Ethiopia?
- 15) What is your opinion about the perception of Ethiopia by other African countries? Is there anything which needs to be corrected?

- 16) Will the internal politics have a significant influence on the country's brand? How could it be made to play a positive role on the brand image of Ethiopia?
- 17) What do you think the impact of "Ethiopian Millennium" on the image of Ethiopia? How do you rate its success, if any? Could it have been done better? In what way?
- 18) What do you think the role that could be played by the local media and the international media in building the country brand of Ethiopia? How could this be achieved?
- 19) What do you think about the impact of the recent "Charities and Societies Proclamation" by the Ethiopian Government on Ethiopia's image? In what way will it affect the Country's Brand? Why?
- 20) Shall we maintain the tagline "Thirteen months of Sun-shine" or change it? If you are asked to propose a tagline to fit the aspired image of Ethiopia, what would you propose?
- 21) What do you think is very critical to have an acceptable brand image of Ethiopia? How shall it be achieved?
- 22) What are the possible and feasible images Ethiopia could create? Which one you prefer most? Why?

Interview Questions for Government Officials

Honourable Respondents,

I am Getu Kebede, an MBL student at UNISA. Currently, I am conducting a research study on “**Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges**” in partial fulfillment of the Masters Degree of Business Leadership programme at University of South Africa (UNISA). I request your help to spend some minutes of your time and give me an interview to the interview questions in the following pages.

The research is geared to evaluate the potential benefits of Country Branding (CB) to contribute its share in alleviating/reducing the poverty in the country. Many Countries are currently engaged in branding/re-branding their country so that their country’s image will be properly and fairly set on the international arena and contribute its fair share in poverty reduction.

In this regard, some countries like Spain, New Zealand and South Africa have managed to improve their countries’ image while others like Canada and Kenya have failed (even though Kenya has re-engaged itself in the rebranding effort). In the past, the World Cup tournament prepared in South Africa and Spain and the Barcelona Olympic are some of the results of the Country Branding effort among the many other.

Some of the benefits gained by Country Branding efforts are increased tourist inflow, increased foreign direct investment (FDI), acceptance of country of origin (COO) effects on export, and increased inflow of expatriates.

Simon Anholt, the famous author in the field of Country Branding or Public Diplomacy (as it is sometimes called), has commented that some countries are entangled with past negative images, stereotypes of some sort, or are totally unknown. This has an impact affecting the inflow of investment and capital to the country. Thus, Country Branding is believed to set right the image of Countries as opposed to cosmetic application of branding as some might believe. In any case whatever truth is there, the truth has to be told.

Dear respondent, your response will be kept absolutely confidential and will be used for the research purpose only. If you are interested to have a copy of my report, please feel free to request me and I will send you the electronic copy.

I appreciate your cooperation and will appreciate it if you could give me the appointment before September 2010.

Thank you and very sincerely yours,

Getu Kebede

Interview Questions 4) For Government Officials

Name: Sex: Age: Educational Level:

e-mail: Tel: Position:

Honourable Respondents, I kindly request you to respond to the following questions on the topic of “Branding Ethiopia: Opportunities and Challenges”. Your response will be used for the study purpose only and it will remain absolutely confidential. By no means it will be taken as a formal stand of the Government and it will only be taken as your personal view.

- 1) Does the country image in the global arena have any impact on its economy? If it has, in what way?
- 2) In your opinion, what could be the possible advantages of Branding/re-branding Ethiopia?
- 3) Is Ethiopia well known in the world? Have you ever been surprised by meeting an educated person who haven't heard about Ethiopia? Please cite your experiences with foreigners in a foreign country.
- 4) What do you think the current country image of Ethiopia is in the world? Is it positive or negative? Does it need any uplifting? What was the turning point for the current image of Ethiopia? When was it?
- 5) What are the factors influencing the Brand Image of Ethiopia? Which of them are under the control of the Government?

- 6) If you have to rate their impact (+/-) on a scale of 0-10 ('0' for low and '10' for high), how do you rate the following for the negative image associated with Ethiopia.
- Jonathan Dimpleby's film on the 1973 famine in Ethiopia
 - The internal politics and the "Red- terror" in the late1970's
 - The Drought and famine in 1985
 - The low Per Capita Income and Poverty in the country
 - The adoption of Socialism as the Government's Philosophy
- 7) Do the aid agencies, the internal politics in the country and the media (local and international) have any role to play for the positive or the negative image of Ethiopia? If yes, please explain. In what way shall they be made to assist to Branding Ethiopia?
- 8) Were there any efforts so far to Brand/re-brand Ethiopia? If yes, please state them and mention the benefits gained so far and the challenges faced.
- 9) How is Ethiopia perceived by the Africans? Is there anything which needs to be corrected?
- 10) Are the previous efforts (if any) of Branding Ethiopia integrated? If not what is lacking and what needs to be corrected?
- 11) What are the uniquely differentiating and appealing aspects of Ethiopia that need to be told/shown to the world? Aren't they known so far? How shall we present them?
- 12) Who shall be the target group in marketing terms for "Branding Ethiopia" effort? How shall the image of Ethiopia be positioned and presented?
- 13) What shall be done to improve the Country's image? Please State each relevant stake holders' role.

- 14) Some argue that the Country Brand depends on the Government, some say no. What is your opinion? Shall Ethiopia's image remain constant as the type and form of the government change or shall it change as the type of Government changes? Why?
- 15) In your opinion, who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? The Government or any other body?
- 16) Do you think Ethiopia's image is well represented in the world? If yes, in what way? If not, what shall be done?
- 17) What type of images Ethiopia could possibly have? What aspects shall uniquely define Ethiopia? Which is best out of them? Why?
- 18) What do you think the role of the Government in Branding Ethiopia? Which Government body is responsible to handle the Government's role of Branding Ethiopia?
- 19) How soon the country shall embark on re-Branding itself? What shall be done in Branding Ethiopia? What benefits do you expect?
- 20) What was the impact of "Ethiopian Millennium"? How do you rate its success? Could it have been done better? If yes, in what way?
- 21) In the past five years, how do you see the trend in the image of Ethiopia going? What are the possible reasons?
- 22) Shall we maintain the tagline "Thirteen months of Sun-shine" or change it? If you are asked to propose a tagline to fit the aspired image of Ethiopia, what would you propose?

Discussion Guideline1) For Focus Groups -2 Groups each for 3:00 Hrs. of discussion

- 1) Does the Country's image have any bearing on its Economy? If yes, in what way and how significant? If not, why not?
- 2) Is Ethiopia well known by the international community? Cite your experience.
- 3) Does Ethiopia's image well represented in the world arena? If yes, how? If not, what went wrong and who affected it and why?
- 4) Are the aid agencies helping or damaging Ethiopia? How do you justify your position? How shall it be corrected?
- 5) In the past, what role the media had played in influencing the current image of Ethiopia? How could the media be influenced to help in branding the country image properly?
- 6) Who has the responsibility to change the Country's brand?
- 7) In what way could the Citizens affect/ change positively the Country's image?
- 8) During the past five years, is the brand image of Ethiopia improving or declining? What are the possible reasons?
- 8) How long will it take to change the brand image of Ethiopia? How easy or how difficult are the tasks? Who shall handle the Branding Ethiopia task? Why?

Questionnaire 1) Re-test to test Reliability- For Ethiopians

- 1) Country Branding could play significant role in poverty reduction of Ethiopia

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 2) My perception is that “Ethiopia is well known in the world”.

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 3) As a citizen of Ethiopia, I can change the image of Ethiopia

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 4) I am proud of being Ethiopian

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 5) If I get the Chance I will change my citizenship

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 6) The image of Ethiopia in the world is negative

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 7) My individual perception about Ethiopia influences the Country's image

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 8) Ethiopia has the necessary assets both physical and human to be one of the best destinations in the world

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 9) Media and aid agencies had influenced Ethiopia's image negatively

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 10) Ethiopia has the capacity to change its image

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 11) Government participation in Branding Ethiopia will be helpful

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	

- 12) The internal politics have an influence on the country's brand

1	Strongly Agree	
2	Agree	
3	Indifferent	
4	Disagree	
5	Strongly Disagree	