

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSTIY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN
AN INSTITUTIONAL CARE: THE CASE OF SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES, ETHIOPIA**

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AN INSTITUTIONAL CARE: THE CASE OF SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES, ETHIOPIA**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
SOCIAL WORK**

By: Weinsnet Walegne Hailu

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN AN INSTITUTIONAL CARE: THE CASE OF SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES, ETHIOPIA** submitted by me for the partial fulfilment of the MSW to Indira Gandhi National Open University, (IGNOU) New Delhi is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier, either to IGNOU or to any other institution for the fulfilment of the requirement for any other programme of study. I also declare that no chapter of this manuscript in whole or in part is lifted and incorporated in this report from any earlier work done by me or others.

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Weinshet Walelgne

Acronyms

| | |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------|
| AIDS: | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| FBC | Family Based Care |
| FHAPCO: | Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office |
| FMOH: | Federal Ministry of Health |
| FS | Family Strengthening |
| HIV: | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| IFSW: | International Federation of Social Workers |
| IPU: | Inter-Parliamentary Union |
| MoWCYA: | Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs |
| NGOs: | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| OVC: | Orphans and Vulnerable Children |
| UN: | United Nations |
| UNAIDS: | The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS |
| UNDP: | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNECA: | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa |
| UNICEF: | United Nations Children's Emergency Fund |
| USAID: | United States Agency for International Development |
| WHO: | World Health Organization |

Abstract

Social Workers play a tremendous role in the lives of vulnerable children and youth in an institutional care. Children's development, especially the development of children who come from the weak parts of society, will ultimately have a wider effect on the well-being of the entire nation. However, the status of social workers and the profession itself has received little attention and recognition in most parts of the world to this day. Therefore, this research paper aimed at examining the role that social workers play in the specific institutional care, SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia in provision of service to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and the challenges they face within the institution. Further, the research paper hopes to put forth recommendations for the management for addressing those challenges with the aim of creating a positive environment for vulnerable children that allows them to reach their full potential.

Methodology employed to conduct the study was qualitative where, in-depth interviews with 5 social workers, 5 SOS mothers and 4 key informants in four selected SOS Children's Villages were conducted.

The research findings suggest that social workers play a crucial role within SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia and within the lives of vulnerable children and youth. The various challenges of the social workers and measures that had been taken by the management were carefully analyzed.

The challenges can be described as follows: (1) Social workers suffer from heavy workloads, and emotional burden/distress (2) Due to the limited number of staff but high number of beneficiaries, the scope of responsibilities for social worker is in proportionally high. (3) While social workers hope to positively impact children and their healthy development, there are certain constraints in meeting the needs of the children that are beyond the social worker's control. (4) Social worker's

in SOS Children's Villages believe that there is lack of recognition of their work by the management. (5) The SOS mothers and the key informants stressed that there is a huge demand for improving teamwork and collaboration with the different the stakeholders within and outside of the institution.

The above mentioned findings and many more have been thoroughly discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Social Workers are an integral part to a well-functioning society and well-fare system of a country. Amongst other elements, a functioning society is compromised of effective institutions, safety net programmes, social services, policies and regulations that ensure the well-being of its citizens. Social workers play a vital role within social welfare systems. They work for the rights and well-being of vulnerable groups within a society such as children, women and elderly people by addressing problems like child abuse, homelessness, mental illness, poverty, unemployment, economic issues and the psychological and physical consequences of events that they have faced such as war, disruption, natural disasters.

Social workers are employed in a variety of settings including private practice, health care facilities, public welfare agencies, child welfare agencies, public and private schools/universities and community organizations.

Depending on the settings mentioned above social workers are responsible to facilitate access to shelter, health care, education, and economic opportunity and protection services; supervise residential care facilities, foster care and adoption placements; investigate allegations of abuse, violence and neglect; and process and monitor government welfare grants. Social workers also provide social service support in a more indirect way, through community mobilization, administration of government agencies and non-governmental organizations, policy development, research, workforce education and training, and advocacy.

While there is a wide range of professional settings, social workers play a crucial role in child welfare. Child welfare has always been paramount in the social work profession. With millions of children living in poverty and other at-risk conditions, homeless, abuse and neglect are constant specters. According to UNICEF, there are over 151 million orphans as of 2011 in the world who have lost one or both parents to any cause (UNICEF, 2013). Furthermore, children are exposed to abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect. The statistics from USAID shows that: 413,000,000 children are living in extreme poverty; 302,000,000 children have experienced severe physical punishment at home; 150,000,000 girls have experienced sexual abuse and 115,000,000 children are involved in hazardous work (USAID, 2007).

Therefore, social workers are often the first line of defense for getting children into a better situation through family counseling or via out-of-home care by foster families or institutional care. Subsequently, the main responsibilities of the social worker in provision of service to orphan and vulnerable children in an institutional care includes: working for the holistic development of children, monitoring the safety of vulnerable children and providing resources that promote child well-being. They also play a crucial role in having the children's voice heard and also responding appropriately. In doing so, social workers are expected to be equipped with values and knowledge of child development as well as knowledge and experience of the profession.

USAID reports that "around the globe social work is one of the most misunderstood and underappreciated professions. Vacancy rates for established professional and para-professional positions within Africa range between 50%–60%, and half those employed leave their jobs within five years (as compared to seven years for healthcare workers). These statistics indicate a global crisis within systems of care and support for vulnerable children and a serious threat to global development." (USAID, p.6, 2007)

While the demand for skilled social workers across the globe is increasing, the study of social work is a fairly new academic field and has remained mainly unexplored in Ethiopia. Social work as an academic field was first introduced in Ethiopia in 2004 as a master's programme at the Addis Ababa University in collaboration with University of Illinois at Chicago thereafter the country's first Ph.D. program in 2006 and a bachelor's degree program in 2008.

Although, social workers strive to bring tremendous impact on health, education, economic and other development outcomes of the vulnerable communities within a given society, less attention is being paid to the challenges social workers' face within their field. Social workers tend to experience "burnout" and/or, "compassion fatigue" due to unclear, unrealistic job descriptions, heavy workloads, low salaries and other incentives; poor workplace conditions; insufficient job tools; long hours, time constraints and deadlines, large and professionally challenging client caseloads, limited or inadequate resources, crises and emergencies, safety concerns and, a lack of appreciation for the difficult tasks carried out by social workers (Whitaker, Weismiller, & Clark, 2006). The common characteristic of these challenges is that they represent the negative, unwanted, psychological effects of the experience of helping and therefore, uniquely affect the profession and its impact itself. Therefore, if these challenges of social workers are not properly addressed; the social workers will not be in a position to bring the necessary change on the lives of vulnerable people.

For this study SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia, whose mission is to build families for children in need, help them shape their own futures and share in the development of their community, has been selected as a case study.

Therefore, this study will focus on the role of social workers in provision of service to orphans and vulnerable children in an institutional care and the challenges the social workers face within the given institution, SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Social Workers in an institutional care with focus on orphans and vulnerable children are responsible for ensuring basic human rights, physical, psychological, emotional and social development of the children and to protect them against neglect, abuse and exploitation. They ultimately promote the well-being and welfare of children orphaned and made vulnerable by challenging circumstances.

Despite the magnitude of social workers' contribution to the betterment of children, families and community as a whole they are facing various challenges in provision of service to the most vulnerable part of the society. The responsibilities of today's social worker are more involved than ever before and require various skills, knowledge and experience in the area. In addition, the complexity of the human condition has never been more challenging. Many of the difficulties being experienced are out of the scope of individual control, creating greater feelings of hopelessness. Furthermore, social workers have a tendency of "burnout" and/or "compassion fatigue (secondary traumatic stress)" due to various reasons such as heavy workloads, unrealistic job description, heavy and challenging client caseloads, excessive adhoc requests, tight deadlines and so on. Therefore, special attention should be paid for the challenges of social workers, who are responsible for a well-being and protection of disadvantage individuals and families.

In light of the above, this study will systematically assess and explore the following main research questions:

Basic Research Questions

The following main research questions will be explored:

1. What is the role of the social workers in SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia?
2. What are the challenges of the social workers in provision of service to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in an institutional setting with the case of SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia?
3. What is the effect of the challenges on the social workers' performance?
4. What measures has been taken by the management and other stakeholders to address the challenges?

1.2 Objectives of the Study

General Objectives

The main objectives of this study are to assess and understand the role of social workers in an institutional care - SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia and the challenges that the social workers face in provision of care and support to OVC.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Assess the responsibilities and workload of the social workers within the institution
2. Examine the effect of the challenges on the social workers' performance;
3. To examine the existing work environment of the social workers;

4. Assess measures taken by the management and other stakeholders to address the challenges.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to add to the existing knowledge and information of the role of social workers in an institutional care with the case of SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia by focusing on the challenges the social workers face in provision of care and support to orphans and vulnerable children.

The study may benefit the management of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia to understand the social worker's challenges, and how the barriers can be reduced or rectify if possible with the overall goal of creating a more productive work environment that meets the institution's objectives.

Since, the academic field of social work has only been launched recently in Ethiopia; this research paper might also be used as a reference in the area of social work particularly in child welfare setting.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the role of social workers in SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia and the challenges that the social workers face in provision of service to OVC. The main office of SOS Children's Villages is located in Addis Ababa and there are six SOS Children's Villages' located in different parts of Ethiopia, namely in Mekelle, Harrar, Hawassa, Bahir Dar, Gode and Jimma. In almost all of the above mentioned program locations, SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia is providing care, health and education services to needy orphan and vulnerable children. Consequently, out of the seven SOS Children's Villages, the study area is limited to four

programme locations (Harrar, Hawassa, Bahir Dar, and Jimma) and the national office in Addis Ababa, which comprises of 5 social workers, 5 SOS mothers, one Deputy National Director, two Village Directors and an Advisor.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

It is believed that the study would have been done in an extensive manner. However, due to time and cost constraints the study is confined only to one organization, SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia. The researcher faced few problems while conducting the research like having access to programme locations to conduct interviews. To mitigate this problem the researcher instead of conducting face to face interviews and observation to gather information, other communication media such as telephone, e-mail, chatting via Skype etc was used.

Since the research is designed to explore one particular organization, it is difficult to make overall generalizations with regards to other institutional cares. In addition, some sections are more detailed than others, often due to the availability of information. Last but not least, the study primarily used qualitative research method that results will not be generalized and/or representative.

1.6 Structure of The Study

The content of the research paper is organized in five chapters beginning with the chapter that introduces the research and relevance of the object of study. The second chapter contains the review of related literature. The third chapter discusses the methodology applied in the study, while the fourth and fifth chapters discuss the findings of the study followed by conclusion and recommendations.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

- Burnout: long-term exhaustion and diminished interest in work.
- Capacity development: is a conceptual approach to development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations from realizing their developmental goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results.
- Child development: is a child's growth, learning and development from birth to adulthood.
- Compassion fatigue or secondary traumatic stress: emotional distress or apathy resulting from the constant demands of caring for others.
- HIV/AIDS: is a disease of the human immune system caused by infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Household-based care: orphan children living within family lines; living with the surviving parent; care giving by the extended family and living with unrelated families.
- Institutional care: Child protection system built for orphans and vulnerable children, disabled and homeless.
- Orphan: is a child who has lost one or both parents
- Orphanage: the most formal type of institutions that care for orphans.
- Role: person's task or duty in an under-taking.
- Social work: is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people.

- Social workers: professional and academic discipline that seeks to improve the quality of life and subjective well-being of individuals, groups, and communities through research, policy, community organizing, direct practice, crisis intervention, and teaching for the benefit of those affected by social disadvantages.
- Vulnerable children: are defined as those whose safety, well-being, and development are, for various reasons, threatened.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Who Are Orphans And Vulnerable Children?

According to the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA), a vulnerable child is one 'whose survival, care, protection or development might have been jeopardized due to a particular condition, and who is found in a situation that precludes the fulfillment of his or her rights (MoWCYA, 2011). Orphan usually refers to a child under the age of 18 years (or 15 years) whose mother (maternal orphan) or father (paternal orphan) or both (double orphan) have died (World Bank, 2004). Of the many factors that accentuate children's vulnerabilities, the most important are lack of care and affection, adequate shelter, education, nutrition, and psychological support.

Bearing in mind the socio-cultural, economic, and country context, one could include the following under the rubric of orphans and vulnerable children: orphans, abandoned children, street children, handicapped children, child soldiers and those affected by war (displaced and refugees), children exposed to hazardous work, children who are victims of trafficking and various forms of abuse and neglect, and children living in extremely poor conditions. All these types of children are vulnerable in a sense that they face a great risk of not being raised in an environment conducive to an appropriate physical and mental development.

2.2 Statistics on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in the World

Globally, as of 2011, an estimated of 151 million orphans who have lost one or both parents to any cause. Of the more than 151 million children classified as orphans, around 17.3 million have lost one or both parents due to AIDS (UNICEF, 2013). The HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in many

children losing their parents or living with the disease. Every minute of every day, more than one child under the age of 15 dies of AIDS-related illness. Children affected by HIV may experience poverty, homelessness, school drop-out, discrimination, loss of economic and social opportunity, and early death. (UNDP, UNAIDS & IPU, 2007). Besides depriving children of their basic needs and exposing them to extreme vulnerability, AIDS increases the risk that children will end up on the street, where they will be sexually abused or infected with HIV (Ramphele 2001) or caught up in criminal activities (Schoenteich 2001).

In many African countries internal and external armed conflicts, poverty, drought and natural disasters have resulted in the displacement and separation of hundreds of thousands of children and families. Children lack protection during emergencies, and many children get exploited physically, sexually and psychologically.

Many sub-Saharan African countries have been devastated by HIV/AIDS. There are more than 34 million orphans in the region and some 11 million of them are orphaned by AIDS. Eight out of every 10 children in the world whose parents have died of AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa. During the last decade, the proportion of children who are orphaned as a result of AIDS rose from 3.5% to 32% and will continue to increase exponentially as the disease spreads unchecked. As a result, the disease is in effect making orphans of a whole generation of children, jeopardizing their health, their rights, their well-being and sometimes their very survival, not to mention the overall development prospects of their countries (UNDP & UNICEF, 2006).

Ethiopia found in Eastern Africa is no exception when it comes to being affected by the above issues. Ethiopia counts as one of the largest populations of orphans in the world: 13 per cent of children throughout the country are missing one or both parents. This represents an estimated 4.6 million children. From the 4.6 million children, around 950,000 have lost one or both parents due

to HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2013). In the past, famine, conflict and other diseases were the main factors that claimed the lives of parents. But now HIV/AIDS is one of the greatest challenges to the Ethiopia health system, as it has remained among the major causes of deaths of adults over the past two decades (FHAPCO, 2009).

Since, countries are not adequately fulfilling their commitments to provide care and support for these vulnerable children- the gap needs to be filled by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), institutes and foundations.

2.3 Risk and Vulnerability

There is a need to assess the risks faced by orphans as it ranges from economic and social risks to psychological risks and trauma. The degree and type of vulnerability faced by children are shaped by the risk and stress characteristics (i.e. magnitude, frequency, duration, and history) to which they are exposed, and these tend to vary between countries and over time (Holzmann and Jorgensen 2000; Heitzmann, Canagaraja, and Siegel 2002). On the same note, understanding the risks of orphans and vulnerable children is critical for attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) set by the United Nations for education, health, nutrition, and poverty. This is due to the exposure of these children to risks has a critical impact on the school enrollments, health, and nutritional status of several million vulnerable children.

It is possible to classify the major risks and vulnerabilities affecting orphaned children into two broad categories (a) economic and social risks and vulnerabilities and (b) psychological risks and vulnerabilities. Therefore, before designing and implementing any interventions on behalf of OVC, agencies and organizations must ensure that they are aware of these children's risks and need.

2.4 Social work

Social Work is a cross-cutting professional field that work can be defined as “a profession which promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work" (IFSW/IASSW, 2000).

From the above definition, it follows that social work consists of organized and systematic efforts to secure the highest personal and social satisfaction for individuals, groups and communities. Professional social work strives towards human and social development; fights against inequality and injustice and serve as a change agent in the lives of the individuals, families and the communities they serve. Social work can be defined in relation to professional activities that involves in helping individuals, groups, or communities to enhance their capacity for social functioning and to improve the quality of life for every one by working toward the enhancement of the social and physical environments.

Social work globally embodies four value dimensions, which are the moral goals of the profession: social change, social well-being, human rights and social justice. Unless social workers are equipped to grasp the values dimension of theory and practice, then they will be poorly prepared for the complexities of their role.

According to UNICEF’s report, orphans and other vulnerable children need a number of services to ensure their rights and well being, including education, shelter, birth registration, health care and nutrition, psychosocial support, safe water and sanitation, and strong and independent justice systems (UNICEF, 2005). The clinician or health worker is usually ill-prepared to arrange and

integrate the collection of services needed by these children. As a result, these are the skills of the social worker. Social workers and agencies have an absolute obligation to monitor the safety of vulnerable children and to provide resources that promote child well-being.

2.5 Social Work and Human Rights

The idea of 'human rights', central to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), applies to all people, irrespective of their origins or location. These rights include the right to life, the right to education, the right to freedom from slavery, the right to protection in law, the right to freedom of conscience and religious belief, and the right to freedom of movement.

Human rights are "rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled." For Ife (2001), the value of human rights is the core of social work. A rights perspective begins from the moral claim that to deny human rights is to deny people their humanity.

The IFSW Manual Human Rights and Social Work (1992) explains that: Social work originates variously from humanitarian and democratic ideals. Social work practice has, since its beginning, been focused on meeting human needs and on developing human potential and resources. Social work is about change: in the individual; in family and group living; in policies and services; and in laws and social attitudes. It is not simply direct work with the individual. It also involves services and action for groups and communities, with the aim of enhancing the quality of life of all citizens, including children and young people.

2.6 Services for the Orphans and Vulnerable Children

The caregivers for orphan and vulnerable children can be classified into two broad categories: household based care and institutional care. Household based care is provided by a living parent, the extended family, a household headed by a child or adolescent. The institutional care is

provided by a foster home or surrogate family groups integrated in a community; a children's village; or an orphanage.

The caregivers for these vulnerable children can be classified into two broad categories: household-based care and institutional care.

- I. Household-based care includes living within family lines; living with the surviving parent; care giving by the extended family and living with unrelated families. It is the dominant form of caring arrangement for orphaned children throughout Africa. Staying with known relatives and other children, orphans may grow up in a more stable and secure environment. However, when resources are allocated to meet basic needs (e.g., food, education, or clothing), they may suffer from discrimination. Foster parents may favor their biological children first either because of the resource dilution effect (i.e., the decrease in per capita household resources after orphans enter the household) or because of other reasons. Therefore, it is unlikely that social workers effectively uncover abuses of fostered children within households; peer and community pressure seem to be much more reliable in this area.

- II. Institutional Care: This is another type of protection provided for the disabled, homeless and delinquent children. In Africa, institutional care for orphan is quiet limited; according to MacLeod (2001), only 1-3 percent of orphans are cared for in institutional settings (and up to 5 percent in some specific zones). With the sharp increase in orphans in Africa and the process of deinstitutionalization, new and innovative forms of institutional or semi-institutional care have emerged, such as children's homes and children's villages. Institutional care includes the following:

- i. Statutory residential care refers to the accommodation of orphans in institutions removed from their community (MacLeod 2001). Orphanages are by far the most formal type of institutions that care for orphans. In this setting, orphans are cared for by social workers, and their basic needs such as shelter, food, clothing and education are met.
- ii. Family-Like Setting: In recognition of the adverse impacts of residential care on the development of children, a growing number of countries (such as Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Uganda) have begun to deinstitutionalize orphanages and rely on alternative forms of institutional arrangements that tend to re-create a family-like setting. Children's group homes and children's villages are the most popular forms developed.
 - a. Children's Homes: A children's home is an arrangement in which a paid and usually trained foster mother lives with a group of orphans (generally from 4 to 10 children) in an ordinary home (rather than an institutional building) within the community. By providing children with family-like setting and a trained mother, these homes should adequately meet orphans' basic material, safety, and psychological needs. However, lack of a father figure may be a problem, especially for the socialization of male orphans.
 - b. Children's Villages: Different concepts of the children's village have emerged in the recent past. SOS Children's Village usually consists of a group of about 10-20 houses, which form a community and provide a family-like setting for vulnerable children. Each house is headed by an SOS-trained mother, who takes care of 8-10

children. Children grow up in conditions comparable to those in “normal families” in, children are enrolled in public schools, and all children are strongly encouraged to maintain contacts with the community. The village director (a male) along with the social worker supports the mothers and represents a father figure to the children. SOS Children’s Villages are sponsored by an NGO, sponsors and donors as they are not self-sustaining.

These villages have often been criticized for separating children from the community and for providing a standard of material well-being so much higher than that of the surrounding community that it causes the children significant difficulties with social reintegration once they leave the village.

2.7 Role of Social Workers –Working with Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Social workers believe in a society that takes care of its vulnerable members, in a world where children do not suffer from hunger, abuse, cold, illness and hardship. Social workers provide timely services to orphans and vulnerable children before dysfunction develops and include programs and activities such as parent education, nutrition education, family planning and premarital counseling.

Today, social workers provide a wide range of services to orphans and vulnerable children. Some of the roles social workers perform include; the role of broker of human services, the role of a teacher, counselor, an advocate, a case manager, facilitator, enabler and the role of an activist. Social worker as a broker links the orphans and vulnerable children to appropriate human services and other resources. The social worker is always placed in a position of being the professional person most likely to facilitate linkage between the orphans and vulnerable children and community resources. According to Sheafor et al (1994:17) as a human services broker, the social

worker must be knowledgeable about the various services and programs available, maintain an up to date assessment of each one's strengths and limitations.

The social worker as a teacher prepares the OVC with knowledge and skills necessary to prevent problems or enhance social functioning. The purpose of social work practice here is to help OVC change dysfunctional behavior and learn effective patterns of social interaction. An effective service plan to orphans and vulnerable children is a part of social work practice because it is an agreement to guide the shared efforts of household members and the resources that are present to support them in achieving change around specific behaviors that contribute to conditions that make their children vulnerable (AIHA; 2008)

Social worker as a counselor or clinician helps the OVC to improve their social functioning by helping them better understand their attitudes and feelings modify behaviors and learn to cope with problematic situations. The OVC's situations must be thoroughly understood and their motivation, capacities and opportunities for change assessed.

Social worker as an advocate becomes the speaker for the OVC by presenting and arguing their cause. Advocacy is becoming an increasingly popular role of social workers. Social worker as an advocate plays an important role of reconciliation, liberation, and recovering of deprived properties and rights of people especially the disadvantaged groups such as the orphans and vulnerable children (Coulshed et al 1998).

Butrym (1976) claims that social work in common with other helping professions aims at promoting human welfare through the prevention and relief of suffering. Social workers participate in planning programs, identifying the needs of certain high – risk groups such as OVC, and organize services for such problems as child abuse, rape and high risk infants. According to Brieland, Costin and Atherton (1980:272), social workers can play a preventive as well as

therapeutic role. Through an understanding of implications of various high-risk situations, the social work can aid the orphans and vulnerable children and their families to anticipate problems and cope more effectively. The social worker's role is to emphasize the functioning capacities of the orphans, help reduce pressures, promote rehabilitation and prevent unnecessary dysfunction.

Where there are social and emotional factors which complicate the OVC's physical adjustment, the social worker is part of the team which evaluates the OVC's ability to maintain themselves. Where recovery is impeded because of economic deprivation, inadequate housing, family tension or lack of understanding, the social worker will be called upon.

2.8 Common Challenges of Social Workers

The profession of social work offers unique challenges that are both rewarding and potentially overwhelming for the professional social worker. A quarter of the respondents in a 2007 National Association of Social Workers Membership Workforce Study reported that the heavy workload was a major job-related stress. Authors such as Munson (2002) and Shulman (1993) discussed the importance of understanding the stress reactions of social workers and the role that supervisors may play in helping social workers to prevent or overcome stress. Numerous stressors are prevalent in the social work arena such as long hours, time constraints and deadlines, large and professionally challenging client caseloads, limited or inadequate resources, crises and emergencies, low pay, safety concerns (Whitaker, Weismiller, & Clark, 2006), and lack of recognition and autonomy.

Many early authors connected with the work of Maslach (1993, 2003) who defined burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind. Later definitions included a loss of enthusiasm for the work, a loss of a sense of commitment to the profession, and

disengagement and distancing from clients (Conard & Joseph, 2003; Joseph, 1988). Later research helped to enlighten social workers and other helping professionals about conditions that could result from the process of listening to the clients' stories and the therapeutic conversations, with themes of helplessness and hopelessness. Frameworks have been developed for understanding specific experiences such as compassion fatigue (Figley, 1995, 2002) or secondary traumatic stress (Figley, 2002; Stamm, 1999) defined "as the natural, predictable, treatable, and preventable unwanted consequence of working with suffering people, that is, the cost of caring" and vicarious traumatization refers to a "cumulative transformative effect or condition experienced by trauma therapists as they work with specific populations of survivors of traumatic life events" (McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Pearlman, 1995; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

While it is the duty of an organization to ensure that staff is supported appropriately, line managers are themselves under increasing pressure to meet targets. This is a practice reality and, while not condoning this, individuals are advised to know how best to help themselves manage these pressures. The critical key to prevention and management of adverse conditions such as stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress or vicarious trauma is the practice of self-care. Baker (2003) conceptualized self-care as the combination of three processes: self-awareness, self-regulation, and balancing connections between self, others, and the larger community. These included making opportunities for further training, maintaining realistic expectations of oneself, others and the job, career-planning and balancing work, family and leisure. Importantly amongst these was developing 'organizational negotiation skill', defined as an ability to get the most out of a job. In order to practice successfully, social workers must be aware of the pressures on the organizations within which they operate, and the political imperatives to which they are subject.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Study Area

The organization where the study conducted is the main office of the SOS Children's Villages in Addis Ababa and its four programme locations offices which include, Hawassa, Jimma, Harar and Bahir Dar. SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia was chosen as a study area since it has a valuable experience in building a family for children in need by promoting long-term and all rounded development for children without parental care. SOS Children's Villages was first established in 1949 in Austria and in 1974 in Ethiopia. Based up on its long existence, the institution is equipped with valuable experience in building a family for children in need. The number of beneficiaries profiting from the services that the institution provides has increased over the past years (SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia official website, 2009).

To further underline the impact of the institution, SOS Children's Villages is the largest non-governmental, non-political, non-denominational charitable child welfare organization in the world. SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia is a member association to SOS Children's Villages International, which was founded by Professor Hermann Gmeiner in 1949 with a view to give family for children left without parental care after World War II. With the support of many donors and co-workers, the organization has grown to help children all over the world.

SOS Children's Villages was established in Ethiopia in 1974 and consequently the first SOS Children's Village was established in Mekelle, Tigray Region. Six years later, the second SOS Children's Village became operational in Harar. This was followed by the establishment of the third children's village in Addis Ababa in 1981. Between the years 1985- 2004, additional three

SOS Children's Villages were established in Hawassa, Bahir Dar, and Gode, consecutively. The seventh SOS Children's Village Programme was also officially inaugurated in Jimma in March 2013.

Currently, SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia cares for 1,645 children in SOS families and nearly 3,448 children in families of origin. The education and training programme unit has also benefited over 3400 children and youth under our programmes as well as children coming from the neighboring communities. SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia offers an effective alternative foster care through its services in the Family Based Care (FBC), and Family Strengthening (FS) Programme Units in 134 countries and territories around the world. It also supports educational programmes and medical centers and it is active in the field of child protection and child rights.

3.2 Research Design

This study is a qualitative study; each study component is exploratory and descriptive in nature to gain in-depth information of the role and challenges of the social workers. The study can be considered as a formative assessment that employs exclusively qualitative research methods. This is because the qualitative method helps to develop an in-depth understanding of the individuals, beliefs, attitudes and behavior (Chawla and Sondhi, 2011). Moreover, this method was selected as it helps to address both the main and specific objectives of this study with more nuance than quantitative. It also offers a great opportunity to elicit concepts and perspectives of different ideas on social work.

3.3 Universe of the Study

This study is conducted in the main office of SOS Children's Villages located in Addis Ababa and four purposively selected programme locations of the institute. Accordingly, SOS Children's

Villages in Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Harar, Hawassa, and Jimma are selected for this study. The study targets are 5 professional social workers, 5 SOS mothers, and 4 key informants.

3.4 Sample Size and Sample Techniques

The SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia has six programme locations in different parts of Ethiopia, which is in Mekelle, Gode, Bahir Dar, Harar, Hawassa, and Jimma and the national or the main office is located in Addis Ababa. Of the seven SOS Children's Villages, four programme locations (Harar, Hawassa, Jimma and Bahir Dar) and the national office in Addis Ababa have been selected for this study. The criteria for this selection are availability and experience of the social workers, access to information and fast internet connection.

The researcher had chosen the social worker of the main office of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia as the focal person to facilitate this research. Availability sampling was employed to select the research respondents for the interviews considering experience of the social workers in each programme locations, documentation and internet access of the offices.

The sample size and study sites are stated in the table below:-

Table 2: Study sites and sample size of subjects (Interview and observation)

| INTERVIEW | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Study sites | Social workers | SOS mothers | Key informants | Remarks |
| Addis Ababa | 1 | 1 | 3 | Observation will be made |
| Bahir Dar | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Hawassa | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Jimma | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Harrar | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 5 | 4 | |

Personal observation was used to study the behavior and perspective of the social worker in the main office by examining the gestures and body languages used.

3.5 Data Collection Process

An interview guide was developed in such a way as to allow participants to provide as much detailed information as possible and to rely on anticipated and spontaneous probes to elicit additional detail. The guide was written in English and then translated into Amharic (local language). The researcher conducted the interviews and ensured complete capture of the response using digital recorder and short note.

3.6 Data Collection Tools

Both primary and secondary sources of data had been tapped. The primary source of data was used to examine the role of the social workers as well as challenges they face in the provision of service to the orphans and vulnerable children in an institutional setting. The primary sources of data are professional social workers and SOS mothers who are currently working in SOS Children's Villages of Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Bahir Dar, Harrar and Jimma. In addition, interviews with key informants- two Village Directors, and one Deputy National Director and one National Family Strengthening Programme Advisor were conducted. This was done to acquire information whether the stakeholders are aware of the social worker's challenges or not and to investigate measures taken by the management to solve the problem.

Books, journals, internet sources, relevant documents of the SOS Children's Villages as well as policy and programme documents of governmental and non-governmental organization were used as secondary data sources. The objective of using secondary source of data is to show, the standpoint of other studies and researchers, which will add value to the research.

IDI- allows person to person discussion using flexible interview approach. It allows studying population to explain their life experiences and beliefs in their own words, without being bound by

existing response choices or categories. This type of interview is often unstructured and therefore permits the interviewer to encourage participants to talk at length about the topics towards answering the objectives of this study.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

Maximum effort has been done to maintain the quality of data. Among others the following measures was done: formulating of interview guide, translation of the final version of the interview questions into Amharic language and reviewing to ensure its validity and consistency and translation of in-depth interview back to English, etc.

The interviews were tape-recorded and records were transcribed immediately after each interview and later translated into English. Interview transcripts were coded according to the codes for qualitative studies in MS-word document using thematic analysis, a process where codes of the same theme are put together and later the coding was verified.

3.8 Ethical Issues

The interview questions were designed keeping in mind the research objective and ethical issues. The questions were designed to address the research questions properly and respect the privacy of the respondents. The respondents' informed consent was sought first and they were notified about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses. To keep confidentiality, the researcher did not show name of the respondent on any of the notes and in the final research paper. All data on this research was reported in aggregate form, and no individual respondents were identified. The researcher also applied the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (2008).

CHAPTER FOUR

MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Education and Professional Experience

Every profession requires theoretical and practical training, so that the employee has basic knowledge and the necessary skills to deal with the day to day tasks of a given job. The field of social work is no different and requires trained and knowledgeable staff to handle the wide range of duties that are part and parcel of the job as a social worker. This previously obtained knowledge helps the social workers to tackle challenges and offers solutions to problems that may arise within a job. Hence, in order to fully understand whether social workers within SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia are equipped with such knowledge, the social workers were asked to give an overview of their academic and professional background as well as previous experience related to the field. Moreover, the social workers were asked about their overall motivation for entering this specific professional field of social work. Shining light on this, helps to add a dimension to understanding the expectations that the social workers have before entering this job field and how these expectations and the realities on the ground meet and what challenges arise from this intersection.

Compared to other helping professions like medicine, psychiatry and nursing, social work is a relatively young profession. In Europe and North America, social work emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Africa social work is even younger, essentially a product of European colonialism (Midgley, 1981; Macpherson & Midgley, 1987). Despite its recent development, social work is a rapidly growing field. The profession's phenomenal growth and development throughout the world is a clear indication of its contribution to the alleviation of social problems. However, social work is still a fledgling and struggling profession, whose theory

and practice are shrouded in mystery and controversy. As mentioned previously in the introduction, the academic field of social work is fairly new in Ethiopia. While all asked interviewees have obtained an academic degree related to social sciences, namely sociology, psychology, only one of the interviewees who has obtained a master's degree, in social work. This means that the social workers at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia prior to entering the institution as a staff member might not be familiar with specific theories related to social work but more with those of related fields. It is important to note that the interviewees, however, have up to five years of work experience within SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia and also gained related work experience in other similar institutions.

Given the wide range of social problems within Ethiopia, the main objective that almost all social workers, who were interviewed, state for entering the field of social work, is the desire to help people, to work for the weakest part of the society and to be a positive force within the community. While the previous academic knowledge has been judged as helpful, the social workers have mentioned that the theoretical knowledge obtained has not prepared them for the wide range of responsibilities and skills such as emotional intelligence that the job requires. Moreover, social work itself hasn't received high recognition within the Ethiopian society. The status of the profession and lack of recognition complicates the understanding of it and therefore, the needs and requirements of the social workers are not adequately addressed. The complex nature of issues of the beneficiaries (children and youth) of institutions like SOS Children's Villages are underestimated and the various constraints in addressing them, make social workers in return often times feel helpless and ineffective. Hence, the expectations of the impact of social work might not meet with the reality on the ground in delivering social work. An in depth analysis of the challenges encountered by social workers will further be explored in Section 5.

4.2 Capacity Development

Employees are a core pillar of an organization and while prior education and professional experience may equip employees for the duties of the current job, capacity development for staff is a valuable measurement and high return investment for the organization to ensure that the objectives and the institution's goals are met. All interviewed social workers at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia expressed their satisfaction with the trainings that are provided by the institution. Every year, the social workers of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia have meetings and trainings for the staff. The trainings are designed according to a needs assessment by the organization and are provided by the organization annually or twice a year. The areas of training include project monitoring and evaluation, leadership management, trauma healing, counseling and crisis care training and so on. Further opportunities such as in-house training and training from partners such as the Federal Government of Ethiopia may also arise for individual workers as well as trainings outside of Ethiopia. The interviewees expressed that the trainings provided with regards to children and youth development strengthened the knowledge and skills base in this respective area and as a result the social workers feel more confident and equipped to handle related situational tasks. The interviewed social workers emphasized that dealing with the complex issues of the children and youth can overwhelm or emotionally drain them. Adequate in-house capacity development also heavily depends on a set of regulations that the institution provide.

Every institution, especially institutions related to social work, operates on the basis of guidelines, policies, rules and regulations. SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia provides newly arrived staff with policies as well as overall guidelines for the job on cross cutting issues like child protection, family care, format (template) on Individual Development Plan (IDP), HIV protection and SOS Policies and the institutions mission's statement. Centralized guidelines are prepared from the headquarters

office and customized and implemented on national level. The orientation for new staff takes a week and is conducted in all SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia facilities. The social workers believe that centralized guidelines are helpful to provide services uniformly. While the existence, application and adherence of guidelines was highlighted as strength of the organization, the lack of specific guidelines on child development was criticized. Here, the Child Development Team (CIDT) has been emphasized as helpful for providing centralized decisions and solutions to such issues.

4.3 Roles and Responsibility

Every institution, organization or company benefits from a clear division of labor. It is required that within job description the terms of references are outlined and the employees are clear about the areas of responsibilities and the specific activities that fall underneath that. The increase in man-power is directly linked to the division of labor and allocation of roles and responsibilities. "Social workers are expected to do a little bit of everything. I think that the schools, the academic institutions, are being challenged more and more. They need to be up to the challenge to adequately prepare the students for an ever-changing environment because there're all types of demands being placed on social workers (C. Rivera, 2011)".

SOS Children Villages Ethiopia in Addis Ababa is currently hosting 150 children. The institution has employed one social worker and ten SOS mothers. Other SOS Institutions within Ethiopia have a similar numbers of beneficiaries and employed staff. The SOS mother leads the SOS family and is directly responsible for the care and development of each child. The major tasks and responsibilities of SOS mother includes:

1. Family development: The SOS mother creates a family together with the children who grow up as brothers and sisters in an atmosphere of security and joy
2. Child Development: The SOS mother ensures the holistic development and well-being of each child in her family
3. Self-development: The SOS mother leads her personal and professional growth
4. SOS Children's Village organization: The SOS mother cooperates with the organization

On the same note, the social worker is responsible to work on social, psychological and emotional development of the children at SOS Children's Village and follow-up with the health matters of the children. In general, the social worker is responsible for the holistic development of children and youths including physical and behavioral.

All of the asked parties from SOS Children's Villages have mentioned the heavy workload of social workers and the wide scope of responsibilities, which range from the children's psychological, mental, emotional and physical development, guidance counseling services to the SOS mothers, hygiene of the children, monitoring and evaluating the children's Individual Development plan (IDP) to family reunification. One of the interviewees particularly emphasized that social workers might be uncomfortable in handling health related matters of the children because they fear that they do not possess sufficient knowledge of the medical subject matter. Furthermore, the social workers noted that they deal with different beneficiary groups all at the same time, namely children, youth and SOS mothers or aunties.

Monitoring and identifying the gradual behavior change is also a big part of the job as a social worker at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. This includes the identification of mental and health

related problems and proposing possible solutions to the management and coming up with intervention programmes. The social workers were asked if the job description matched the duties and responsibilities that they are carrying out. All parties agreed while the job description is realistic, the scope of responsibilities is much wider than indicated in the job description. The workload is beyond the expectations and requires more time and attention as outlined in the work plan for the individual social worker. This is mainly due to the fact that social workers are involved in a wide range of roles and responsibilities that encompass administrative work, direct interaction with beneficiaries and other adhoc requests.

4.4 Work Environment

All interviewees have noted that they enjoy the work environment of SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia and described the overall atmosphere as friendly and active. Furthermore, the quality of the air, the low noise level, and the overall cleanness of the compound were praised by all social workers. Additionally, the social workers emphasized the great employment benefits, which also add to the positive work environment and which contribute to the overall job satisfaction of the social workers within SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. Staff members receive great benefits from SOS Children's Village such as 80% of medical insurance and life insurance; transportation allowance and the provision of tuition fee for children. Salary increment depending on work performance is also offered to staff members. In addition, if the staff would like to pursue their studies in the area they work in, particularly for those who would like to obtain a diploma, the organization covers the college fee. If a staff member would like to obtain higher education such as a master's programme, the request has to be first included in the staff development plan and the first round of opportunity will be given to those who are in the management position followed by other staff members including social workers. In order to keep the staff members motivated, the

institute also designated one day as a staff appreciation day where the staff's work is recognized for their work SOS Children's Village Ethiopia. Any organization desires to have capable employees who are highly motivated. On the same note, employees have common basic needs that must be addressed by the organization that they work for. The social worker's in SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia are no different- they become motivated when their work is recognized by colleagues and the management; the team spirit can only thrive through co-operation amongst staff members and when their workload is understood by clients and the management. Ultimate job satisfaction amongst social workers is achieved when children reunite with their biological parents; when they see the progress and behavioral change patterns within a child; when a weak or malnourished child gains his/her own strength back; when a child faces difficulties and through counseling tackles his/her issues and regain confidence.

As mentioned above, beyond the relationship with the team members and clients, a good relationship with the management and supervisors is also of up most important to the social workers. All of the interviewed parties believe that they have a very good relationship with their supervisors or the management. While the supervisors are very much involved on issues concerning the children and the mothers, the respondents, however, have expressed concern over the lack of understanding by management on what the social workers' are going through on a day to day basis in dealing with vulnerable children and sometimes the mothers. As a result of the high levels of stress and high workload the social workers go through burnout and/or compassion fatigue and other stress related symptoms, all phenomena that are scientifically proven and are especially apparent in the field of social work and related fields.

4.5 Challenges of Social Workers

The main objective of the research paper is to assess the role of social workers and identify the challenges that social workers face at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. The main challenges, which have been outlined by the social workers during the conducted interviews, can be categorized as follows: (1) Work overload (2) Emotional burden/Distress (3) Scope of responsibilities (4) Constraints in meeting the needs of the children (4) Lack of recognition for the profession (5) Teamwork & Collaboration

4.5.1 Work Overload

“One of the most significant challenges is this concept about doing more with less. The range of responsibilities for social workers continues to grow exponentially, but the number of employees doesn't grow. Each social worker has to be both a micro and a macro person”, (R. McHaelen, 2011).

All interviewees have mentioned the heavy workload as one of the key challenges that they face working at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. It should be highlighted that there is only one social worker in the main office of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia and the programme locations in Jimma, Harrar and Gode who are responsible for 150 children, 10 SOS mothers and 5 aunties (who replace the mothers in their absence). The workload increases especially around peak events such as Mother's Day, and during the summer, which includes a multitude of activities such as skill training, family integration, family visit, sport programmes. The special events include children's festivals with SOS office in Addis Ababa and other programme locations, a period which has been described as very hectic as the social worker is responsible for organizing the event and facilitating the programme.

The increased workload around the special events as well as during regular seasons creates pressure for the social worker to perform all tasks and duties sufficiently and in a timely manner. The high workload results in a lack of work-and-life balance for the social workers and therefore affects the personal relationships of social workers with their friends and family. It is scientifically proven that employees and staff members are negatively affected by inappropriate levels of stress resulting from high workloads, negatively impacting and even jeopardizing social relationships and the health of the social workers. This in turn affects the overall performance of the social worker at the SOS Children's Village negatively. When the daily demands of the job result in unsustainably high levels of pressure, the result is stress. Arroba and James (cited in Thompson et al., 1994: 2) make the point that stress and pressure are not the same; a certain amount of pressure can actually be beneficial as it enables the employees to feel energized and ready to face the challenges on a day to day basis. However, it is widely known, that the field of social work exposes practitioners with high levels of stress that results from an inappropriate level of pressure (Wainwright and Calnan, 2002).

4.5.2 Scope of Responsibilities

The high work overload is directly linked to the wide range of responsibilities that the social workers are expected to perform. From organizing events to one-on-one counselling of the children, to family reunification and providing solutions to problems of the children and support and provide guidance to SOS mothers, the social worker is expected to perform all of these duties efficiently. Due to the wide spectrum of responsibilities, the social worker cannot focus on the essential part of its profession. Social work is a multi-disciplinary field by nature and requires social workers to be highly organized and to prioritize catering to immediate needs with admin requests and other monitoring and evaluation duties. Moreover, while SOS Children's Village

offers a home and guidance to orphaned children to enable them to grow up in a safe environment, there is no clear division between the institution as such with its rules and regulations and “the home” for the children. This in turn creates confusion and problems in addressing children’s needs uniformly, communicating with other team members like the SOS mothers and at the same time adhering to the policies and guidelines of SOS Children’s Villages.

4.5.3 Emotional Burden/Distress

By nature, social work is charged with emotional challenges as the staff deal with children and youth that may come from difficult, hardship environment. Listening to the problems of the children may affect the social workers emotionally. The potential for stress in social work is high; practitioners work with some of society’s most disadvantaged, damaged and, occasionally, dangerous individuals. They are under constant pressure to maintain procedural efficiency through form-filling and record keeping while managing rising caseloads (Cherniss, 1995).

Social worker’s are expected to be resilient and have a high frustration tolerance. They will mainly work in situations involving child abuse and neglect, investigating and evaluating the safety of children and adolescents. The social worker’s in SOS Children’s also face similar cases when they admit new children to the institute. It is challenging to the social workers as well as the mothers when children misconduct or have bad performance in school. For this proper intervention programmes are needed. Disputes amongst the social workers and mothers may arise. Whether or not engaging with conflict results in a positive outcome, ignoring it is one of the factors that can increase pressure on individuals. Pressure can lead to stress and ultimately burnout (see Cherniss, 1995).

Also disputes amongst mothers with children and other conflicts may arise. Here, the social worker is asked to play a key role in the reconciliation and healing process. Moreover, orphaned children naturally want to know their biological parents, a quest that can also become a burden for the social workers. Efforts are being made to reunify the children with their parents but not all cases are successful and hence, social workers need to lend psychological support to children who cannot be reunified with their parents. As mentioned previously, children at the institution come from hardship areas and some of them may be HIV/AIDS carriers and here, the social worker plays a crucial part in the counseling process.

The problems that the children and mothers face impact the social workers directly and often remain with them after they leave the office with no appropriate outlet or mechanism available to deal with these emotions. As a result social workers might experience the burn-out-syndrome and or compassion fatigue, which is a term used to describe the feeling of frustration, emotional distress and sorrow that one might feel when working with clients. These symptoms are also referred to as secondary post-traumatic stress disorder and it's different from burnout caused by job stress. Compassionate fatigue involves emotional, physical and spiritual exhaustion caused by witnessing and absorbing the problems and suffering of others – a key concern to the profession of social work. Having said that, managing compassionate fatigue can be challenging and involves being able to develop proper boundaries and put aside personal issues and feelings in the best interest of your clients. The interviewees highlighted that spending too much time with traumatized people; hearing depressing issues and working for vulnerable people may sometimes leave them to experience the above mentioned phenomena. ‘Containing’ work settings enable practitioners not simply to survive but to thrive in practice. The associations between practitioners not being able to cope with the demands of the job, not least its emotional impact, and levels of

stress, long-term sickness and burnout are well documented (Charles and Butler, 2004). Furthermore, children might be mentally challenged or have other health related or psychological issues. Therefore, social workers need to possess the appropriate skills set to deal with those issues and to cater to each child individually.

4.5.4 Constraints in meeting the needs of the children

It is challenging when the rules and regulations do not accommodate exceptional cases and it is an additional burden for the social worker to appeal the specific cases, where children become rebellions or reject certain rules, to the management and propose or discuss alternative intervention programmes. The social workers have to have comprehensive knowledge of the background and history of the children, to understand them and ultimately be able to address negative behavior patterns of the children. The interviewed parties also mentioned that the social workers and the institution as a whole is expected to transform the child, however this expectation fails to acknowledge that some children's behavior and performance in school can't not be positively affected by SOS Children's Villages. Regardless of the efforts of social workers, it is difficult to satisfy all 150 children equally. This can lead to disappointment amongst social workers. If all efforts fail to reach a child or bring about a positive impact in the child's life and negative behavior patterns remain, the child might even be terminated from the institution in order to protect the well-being and progress of the other children. Favoritism for some children also poses a difficulty. Some kids were admitted while they were infants whereas some joined when they are 5-6. This by itself has an impact on the relationship between the SOS mother and the children.

While social integration of the children is a big part of the institutions' objective, the social workers mentioned that financial resources sometimes limit the possibility of creating an opportunity for every child to attend social gatherings such as weddings, funeral ceremonies and

other social activities. Furthermore, the social workers mentioned that taking the children outside the compound requires full accountability and responsibility for any risk that may arise.

4.5.5 Time Constraints & Team Work

The time constraint due to the heavy workload and wide range of responsibilities was also mentioned as one of the key challenges that social workers face. While the social workers need to perform the interactive tasks with the clients they are also expected to adhere to the policies and guidelines of the organization, which include monitoring and evaluation tasks. Therefore, the social workers are also tasked with administrative work, which adds even more components to the already demanding job. Prioritizing tasks and ensuring that all deadlines are met accordingly is therefore an important skill that social workers have to master. Some of the interviewees mentioned the lack of work and life balance as a result of the heavy workload. The workload and quality of delivery of social workers also depends heavily on the cooperation and collaboration amongst all staff members in the entire team. While some SOS mothers receive many assignments and trainings, a means of empowerment and education, some of the mothers might not be open to embrace them due to holding on to traditional values of raising children and the increasing workload that may arise from new rules and regulations. The rejection of new methods and teaching methods by SOS Mothers, however, hinders the holistic development of children. As mentioned above, SOS Mothers, due to their status and for having been involved in the profession for a long time, have difficulty in embracing new ways of educating and raising children. The mothers bring their past experience into the institute and it is difficult for them to replace traditional methods with new techniques. As previously highlighted, social workers also emphasized that there is no clear boundary between the roles and responsibilities of the social workers and that of an SOS Mothers. SOS mothers might request support for every little task or

issue even with tasks that do not even fall with their realm of responsibilities. Additionally, social workers are also involved in other administrative tasks that should be taken care of by the administration office. These things are time consuming and do not allow the social worker to focus on the development of children and other substantial work.

4.5.6 Lack of Recognition

Social work is a profession that is underestimated and not widely understood. The results of the hard work contributed by social workers are not necessarily tangible and therefore efforts might not be recognized by the institution and the society at large. Working with orphaned children, means that you have to pay attention to many different elements of the children's behavior and change only occurs gradual, if at all. This might make the social works feel powerless and not valued. Even within the institution, the discipline of social work is not given much attention especially amongst the management, and the SOS mothers. The management focuses heavily on the work of the sponsorship department so that reports can be sent to the donors in a timely manner and that new funding can be secured. However, the social workers noted that less attention is paid to the core objective of the institution, namely holistic development of the children. The interviewees also expressed that while the management is aware of the challenges that the social workers face, such as heavy workloads and emotional distress, little is done, as a result of resource constraints, to provide solutions to these structural problems.

4.6 Effects of the Challenges on the Social Workers

Work-life balance is a concept that describes the balancing act of work hours and time spend on areas of the personal and social life, leisure activities, family and spiritual development. All social workers have highlighted the high workload that they are facing and as a result less time is spent with their own families. Moreover, their social life is very limited due to lack of time they have at

hand, spending long hours in the office to fulfill administrative procedures or other requests. Compounding this, social workers have to remain confidential on the children's problems and do not have a system to overcome the stress/pressure and don't have an outlet to share their concerns and issues that they encounter during the working day. The Economic Commission for Africa states that without properly planning a work-life balance, employees run the risk of poor family relationships, deteriorating health, illness and disease (UNECA, 2011). Consequently, this will impact the effectiveness and productiveness of the social workers within their job.

The social workers also mentioned that daily administrative routine work hinders them to concentrate on strategic and effective measures to bring about positive change in the development of the children.

4.7 Mechanisms Provided by the Management

In order to examine how the management addresses the challenges of the social workers-the management team was interviewed with regards to the following areas: staff benefits/incentives; guidelines and policies, mechanism for overcoming challenges of social workers. The Deputy National Director, the Officer in Charge of the National Village Office, Village Director of SOS Children's Village Hawassa and National Family Strengthening Programme Advisor were asked to give an overview of the above mentioned areas that are directly linked to the well-being and job satisfaction of the social workers. The questions also help to clearly understand whether the challenges of the social workers are recognized by the management team and what mechanism, if any, are put in place to address those.

Monitoring and evaluation is one of the key methods for ensuring t high quality of work performance of the employees. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) Department has been

established recently in SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia, and much attention is being paid to M & E. The management understands that most of the work of the social workers is intangible and that the work in nature requires a lot of soft skills as they deal with children and their development. As a result, it is difficult to recognize and evaluate their work. However, the institute uses individual work plans or action plans as a monitoring tool which includes following up on the work of each staff member every six month and annually. SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia is now in the process of revising its strategic plan, so that it can be well structured and systematic. This way the performance of the social worker's can also be measured and recognized.

The organization is also in the process of developing a proper child development plan, which would clearly explain standards for the growth and development of children i.e. what to expect when a child reach the age of 2, 5 and so on. Once this plan is implemented, it would ease the process of evaluating/monitoring the work progress of the social worker.

The management admits that the performance evaluation might not be 100% free of bias but the institute holds a conference on staff performance to discuss the ratings. Each supervisor will explain how they rate the supervisee and for this they need to provide substantial evidence to support their argument. Once the office work plan is formulated the staff will prepare the individual work plan. Every six month the staff sit with their supervisor to assess progress of the activity and if there is a need to amend the work plan.

The management mentioned that effort is being made to motivate and recognize the work of staff. Having a staff recognition day is one of the initiatives to motivate staff to strive to perform professionally. The organization celebrates staff appreciation day at the national office and also at different programme locations and awards will be given in the following areas: leadership award,

euro service award (high level of experience) and excellence award. Staff recognition is witnessed through training opportunities outside of Ethiopia. Salary increment is another component that is being used to motivate staff.

The management of SOS Children's Villages is aware of the importance of the field of social work and acknowledges the social worker's contribution within the institution. However, the management lacks deep knowledge of the social work profession and its discipline. This is due to the misperception of the field in itself, as it only has recently been introduced in the country. Further, both the management as well as most of the social workers come from different academic and professional backgrounds and their previous studies range from subjects such as sociology, psychology to management and so on.

The management confirms that previously, less attention was paid to the social work profession but later the organization realized the importance of the social workers and the role they play in the lives of vulnerable children and mothers. As for any relationship it takes the understanding and cooperation of both parties to make the relationship fruitful and beneficial. The management intervenes whenever there is conflict of interests.

The management understands that the social workers have a high workloads but it believes that the holistic development of children does not only lay with the social worker but also with other stakeholders such as the mothers, village directors, educators, and teachers. However, based upon the observations it can be noted that the major tasks lay with the social workers as their job descriptions clearly states that they e responsible for the holistic development of 150 children and provide support to 10 mothers and 5 aunties. In addition, he/she is also expected to provide assistance to 60-80 youths and handle administrative works and reports. The social worker's in

SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia are also broker, educator, even organizer/facilitator, counselor and so on.

The management also understands that the workload of the social worker's might be high in some programme locations whereas medium in others. This is due to the number of villages and children. As a result, to alleviate this problem the organization has recruited counselors in some programme locations i.e. in Hawassa, Mekelle & Bahir Dar. In addition for children and mothers who are traumatized, the management tries to hire counselor whenever possible. But due to resource limitations it is difficult to hire counselors in every SOS Villages.

The management discussed the strength, weakness, opportunity and threats (SWOT) analysis of the social workers. The strengths of the social workers is that all of the employed hold B.A degree in social science and that they are very committed and try to develop and upgrade themselves by continuing their studies. The institute also acknowledges the fact that the social workers try to network and come up with outreach initiatives to foster partnership with other stakeholders. Weaknesses of social workers are the lack of documentation methods; lack of focus on specific key areas as they are responsible of handling various tasks all at the same time.

The management also discussed its opportunity of hiring well equipped and experienced social workers and that SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia can work in partnership with governmental and non-governmental organization to provide support to the weakest part of the society. However, the lack of attention being paid to the social work profession by the outside world and within the institution itself creates a lack of understanding for the social workers, which makes it more difficult to address their challenges and adequately solve them.

The national office is very much involved and play great role when new guidelines/manuals are formulated at the international level. There are various guidelines manual adapted at the national level and the processes were participatory, which empowers the social workers to play a vital role in formulating and implementing guidelines.

The management acknowledges the challenges/concerns of the social workers' in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia and discussed them as follows: workload, attitude of mothers towards the social workers, under staffed, competency issues. In addition, problems might arise if village directors are not fully supporting the social workers due to lack of experience and knowledge in the area as well as when the social worker is not taking the initiative to perform his/her own duties. The management also believes that the background and behavior of the children may create pressure for the social workers.

The measures that had been taken by the management to rectify the social worker's challenges includes: establishment of child youth development team/committee, which admits new children, discusses and resolves issues related to children and SOS mothers. Second, inviting an expert who advises/trainees the social workers to deal with spiritually, psychological and emotional issues and guide them on their career development. Even though, there is limitation of resources, the management now understands the work cannot be done by one person. Therefore, the organization has developed a new structure in some of the programme locations by hiring counselors and programme Directors, which would allow the village Director to focus on the work of the villages only and the social worker on the children.

The management also clearly states that a lot has to be done of building the capacity of the social workers so that they can be more creative, innovative and strengthen the ability to convince the mothers to implement new strategies.

The management agreed that there is no guiding manual/document for the social worker or the mother on how to raise a child. Social work in the SOS context should also be clearly defined. Every social worker has a different background and understanding of the work and there should be a standard way of delivering the services.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

A well-functioning social welfare system serves as a vital safety net for children and families made vulnerable by challenging circumstances. When a system functions effectively, families and children have access to an array of quality services to promote well-being and protect them from harm. The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Although, social workers strive to positively affect the lives of those who belong to the weakest part of the society, less attention is paid to the challenges they face in provision of service to these vulnerable people. Subsequently, this research paper looked into the following research questions:

1. What is the role of the social workers in SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia?
2. What are the challenges of the social workers in provision of service to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) with the case of SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia?
3. What is the effect of the challenges on the social workers' performance?
4. What measures has been taken by the management and other stakeholders to address the challenges?

The main objectives of this study are to assess and understand the role of social workers in an institutional care - SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia and the challenges that the social workers face in provision of care and support to OVC.

A qualitative study was used in order to address the above mentioned main and specific objectives of this study. Out of the seven SOS Children's Villages, the researcher selected a sample size of 4 programme locations (Harrar, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Jimma) and the main office located in

Addis Ababa, which comprises of five social workers, 5 SOS mothers and 4 key informants. In-depth interview were conducted and the interview transcripts were coded using thematic analysis that is by putting codes of the same theme together.

In line with the objectives of the study and the research methodology described above, the analysis of data collected has led to the findings described in this chapter. The research findings suggest that social workers play a crucial role within the institution SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia and within the lives of vulnerable children and youth. The challenges can be described as follows: (1) Social workers suffer from heavy workloads and often work after office hours. (2) Social Workers may suffer from emotional burden/distress due to dealing with beneficiaries who have experienced traumatic events or come from hardship environments (3) Moreover, due to the limited number of staff but high number of beneficiaries, the scope of responsibilities for social worker is in proportionally high. Social workers have to cover multiple tasks that range from administration, to counseling and organizing events and programmes (4) while social workers hope to positively impact children and their healthy development, there are certain constraints in meeting the needs of the children that are beyond the social worker's control. This can lead to a feeling of powerlessness and compassion fatigue (5) The lack of recognition for the profession of social work and their crucial role within the lives of children directly translates into the fact that there is lack of resources attributed to supporting the work of social workers. (6) Least but not lastly, the social workers, the SOS mothers and the key informants stressed that there is a huge demand for improving teamwork and collaboration with the different the stakeholders within and outside of the institution.

5.2 Conclusion

This research paper aimed at assessing and understanding the role of social workers in an institutional care - SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia and to shine light on the challenges that the social workers face in provision of care and support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). As mentioned in the introduction, social work as an academic field is fairly new in Ethiopia, therefore, it is hoped that the research and suggestions put forth in this paper will not only serve the institution itself but the broader research field of social work.

Throughout the research it became evident that the social workers play a crucial role within the institution and in the children's' development. Social workers at SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia cover a wide range of areas and are responsible for the social, psychological and emotional development of the children and follow-up with the health matters of the children. In general they ensure the holistic development of children and youths including physical and behavioral.

All interviewed parties, namely the social workers, the SOS mothers and the key informants were highly cooperative and have helped to crystallize the major challenges of the social workers by expressing their personal views and experience in the areas of concern under this research project. The research findings suggest that the following points are the core challenges for the social workers: (1) Work overload (2) Emotional burden/Distress (3) Scope of responsibilities (4) Constraints in meeting the needs of the children (4) Lack of recognition for the profession (5) Teamwork & Collaboration.

Effort is being made by the management to improve provision of service to the orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) and also address some of the social worker's challenges. Some of the

initiatives are reforming the organization structure by hiring counselors and programme Directors in three programme locations i.e. in Hawassa, Mekelle & Bahir Dar, which would allow the village Director to focus on the work of the villages only and the social worker on the children. This structural change should also be applied on the remaining SOS Children's Villages. Secondly, the institute is now in the process of revising its strategic plan, so that it can be well structured and systematic. This way the performance of the social worker's can also be measured and recognized.

Overall, in order to reach the institutions core objective and mission – to build families for children in need, help them shape their own futures and share in the development of their communities it is highly recommended that the management team addresses the core challenges of its social workers, which will have a positive impact on the children's development. In order to address the challenges mentioned above, the research paper, suggests the recommendations listed below.

5.3 Recommendations

The main objectives of the paper are to assess the role of social workers and challenges they face within their everyday work life and based upon that put forth recommendations to the management team in order to improve the overall effectiveness and productiveness of the SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. Satisfied and effective employees with clear roles and responsibilities constitute a key pillar of every successful institution. Therefore, this paper aims to contribute in making SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia more effective of reaching its goal of positively contributing to children's development, especially those who are at a disadvantage in Ethiopian society.

Recommendations for the Management of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia

1. The study suggests that the management gives due attention to the issue of work overload and increase volunteer and paid skilled man power within the institution in the areas of administration, health work and psychology. In addition, clear division of labour between the social workers and the administrative staff so that the social workers spend less time in administrative works and focus on specific tasks related to their field of expertise.
2. The management should hire well equipped SOS mothers who are open to change and have the ability of raising children. The management should also empower the SOS mothers to become decision makers. Furthermore, the institute should organize continuous informal trainings to the SOS mothers so that they fully accept their responsibilities and those of the social workers.
3. The management should work on building the capacity of the social workers so that they can be more creative, innovative and deal with issues in a rational manner. In addition, the management should put a coping mechanism in place, which allows the social workers to deal with work related stress, 'burnout', and 'compassion fatigue' in a meaningful manner.
4. The adoption or establishment of a child development of plan (CDP) that outlines the different stages of child development so that the SOS mothers and the social workers have a reference guide as to how to monitor individual cases.
5. The staff and the management attitudes and views towards the profession of social work should translate into a paradigm shift of acknowledging social workers as a crucial part of the institution.

6. The institute should assess ways in which the work of the social workers can be recognized, evaluated and monitored as the nature of the work is intangible. The institute also needs to promote the concept of work life-balance of the social workers so that they can fully maintain their sanity.
7. The paper also suggests fostering partnerships with similar institutions to allow for experience exchange amongst social workers and conducting workshops on 'best practices and lessons learned'.
8. It would be of up most importance to diversify resource mobilization strategies and to look at alternative ways of fundraising through the UN system and private-public sector partnership to address the increasing demand of human resources.
9. The management should establish firm committees and engage volunteers to facilitate the institute's yearly events and programmes. This will reduce the workload for the social workers so that they can be focused on substantial works.

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ANNEXURE I

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Interview Guide for Seeking Information from Social Workers and SOS mothers in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for your willingness to be interviewed. My name is Weinshet Walelgne. I am doing my master in Social Work at Indira Gandhi National Open University through distance study with St. Mary's University. I am currently doing my thesis with a title 'the role of social workers and challenges they face in an institutional care: the case of SOS Children's Villages, Ethiopia'.

1. Purpose

This study will help me to get familiar with social/community situations and gain practical knowledge required in preparing a research proposal. In addition, the results of this study may assist the management of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia, to understand the social worker's challenges, and what can be done to reduce the barriers or rectify the problem if possible. Your selection to participate in this study was based on your willingness expressed, and your rich knowledge and experience as a social worker.

2. Benefits of Participation

Participating in this study will have a direct and indirect benefit to the social workers, mothers as well as the management in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. This is because the study will assess role and challenges of the social workers in provision of service to the orphan and vulnerable children in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia. Furthermore, it alerts the management with the challenges and frustrations the social workers face. Therefore, the information you

provide will contribute to the services provided by the organization and most importantly it eases the burden of the social worker's of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia.

3. Risks of Participation

There is no risk involved in participating in this interview. For any topic that makes you uncomfortable, you don't have to answer the question.

Procedures

Therefore, if you agree to participate in the study, I will have a personal interview with you covering questions about yourself; your role and work experience as a social worker and your challenges in provision of service to the needy. These conversations will take approximately 60-90 minutes and I will take notes. Your opinions and experiences are very important. The interviews are strictly confidential. Your name will not appear on any of my notes or any of the reports. All data on this research will be reported in aggregate form, and no individual respondents will be identified. You may request for clarification if the questions are not clear. The interview will be conducted in Amharic, which is the working language in Ethiopia and will be translated into English later by the interviewer.

If you have any doubts or questions in future, you may contact me, Ms. Weinsnet Walelgne at 0911-193953.

Would you be willing to participate in the study?

Do you have any questions?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

[Interviewer Read]

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION- WARM-UP QUESTIONS

To begin, I would like to get some basic information about your background

1. Tell me about yourself. (education and work experience)
2. Why did you choose to work in the field of social work?
3. What were your expectations of the profession?and what is on the ground?
4. How do you describe a typical work day/week?

SECTION 2: ROLE, WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE

5. What training and experience do you have in the area of social work?
 - After the training, did you feel equipped and confident to enter the professional field of social work? If so, how?
6. What kind of guidelines and rules and regulations were you given by the organization as guiding documents?
 - What do you think of the organization's policies, guidelines and rules and regulations?
7. What are your responsibilities?
8. How do you describe your job description (JD)/responsibilities? Is it realistic or unrealistic? (Please elaborate)
9. How do you describe the workload in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?
 - If it is too much, what is the reason behind?
 - How do you balance your work and personal life?
10. What do you like or dislike about your job?
 - What motivates you?
11. Is there any capacity building programme in your organization?
12. How do you describe your work environment?

13. What kind of benefits/incentives do you have? (employees' reward, recognition, and motivation mechanisms)
14. How do you describe your relationship with your manager, colleagues and clients?
 - - Do you have any concerns or issues related to the management, your clients and/or the environment? If so please, rank your concerns according to their importance.
15. What types of clients do you find the most difficult to work with? Why?

Now I would like to ask you more questions about your challenges as a social worker and how you are dealing with them.

SECTION 3: CHALLENGES

1. Tell me about the most difficult case you ever worked on. How much were you affected by the pressure?
2. If you are faced with shifting priorities and working in a fast-paced, pressured environment, what would you do?
 - How do you keep track of a lot of information at once?
3. What kind of issues/concerns make you feel powerless when it comes to helping the orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) in SOS Children's Villages?
4. Knowing what you know now, is there something you would do differently in the management of one of your fieldwork cases especially with helping the OVC?
5. What major challenges and problems are you facing? How do you overcome your challenges?
6. What do you think are the causes of the challenges?
7. How do you describe the effect of the challenges on your work (particularly on the OVC) as well as on your personal life?
8. What do you think of the management response towards your issues and challenges?
9. Have you ever experience burnout and/or compassion fatigue? If so, how did you handle it? How do you handle or overcome stress and pressure?
10. Have you ever received any kind of external supports such as government, community and other stakeholders to overcome your challenges/concerns?

11. What structures or mechanisms, rules or regulations do you think are necessary to address your main challenges?

ANNEXURE II

Interview Questions for the Management of SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ETHIOPIA

1. How long have you been working in the management position in SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia?
2. What kind of benefits/incentives do staff members in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia have? (Employees' reward, recognition, and motivation mechanisms)
3. Is there any capacity building programme in your organization?
4. How do you adopt and implement international guidelines, and rules and regulations at the national level?
5. What do you think of the social work profession?
6. How do you describe the relationship between the management and the social workers in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?
7. How do you describe the social worker's workload in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?
 - If it is too much, what is the reason behind?
8. What are the challenges/concerns of the social workers' in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?
 - How are the social workers' affected by these challenges?
9. What kind of measures has been taken by the management of the SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia to rectify the challenges?
10. What structures or mechanisms, rules or regulations do you think are necessary to address the social worker's main challenges?
11. How do you recognize/ monitor/value the work progress of social workers?
12. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the social workers in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?
13. What are the threats and opportunities in SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia?

ANNEXURE III

Interview Questions for the SOS Mothers

1. How long have you been working in SOS Children's Villages?
 - What is the age range of the children's you are raising?
2. When you first join SOS Children's Village Ethiopia as a mother- did you take any training?
 - After the training, did you feel equipped and confident to take responsibilities and raise children?
 - What kind of guidelines and manuals were you given by the organization as guiding documents?
3. What are your responsibilities?
4. How do you describe support provided by the social worker?
5. How do you describe your relationship with your manger, social worker and the children?
6. What major challenges and problems do you face?
 - - How are you handling them?
7. How often do you discuss your challenges or concerns with the social worker?