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**The Impact of Basha Wolde Chilot's
Relocation Programme on Assets
Associated with Housing**

by

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Abstract

This research aimed at exploring the effects of a government relocation program on the productive assets of poor households relocated from Basha Wolde Chilot, one of the poor urban neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa. The article argues the relocation programme implemented at Basha Wolde Chilot has detrimentally affected the assets of poor households associated with housing, which has had a tremendous impact on employment opportunities, access to social service provisions, transport costs, as well as social networking of evictees. A qualitative method has been used in the study. 21 study participants were drawn from evictees, government agencies, NGOs, and *idirs*¹ were involved in the research using Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The findings of the research revealed that the relocation program adversely affected the assets of poor households involved in the study and thereby engendered serious ramifications on the livelihoods of evictees including loss of market and an ensuing sharp fall in income, increasing transportation expenditure, time drain, loss of access to public services, and breakdown of the neighbourhood support system (social capital) with vital resources for poor urban households.

Key Words: Relocation, social capital, assets, livelihoods

¹ *idir* is an age old social institution that exists in many cultures and throughout Ethiopia. It is a type of funeral insurance association.

Abbreviations

AVF	Asset Vulnerability Framework
CBO	Community Based Organization (CBO)
DFID	Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IHDP	Integrated Housing Development Programme
MUDHCo	Ministry of Urban Development, Housing and Construction
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

1. Introduction

The UN Habitat report (2007) states that slums in Addis Ababa are rather a norm than the exception with 80% of the population living in these slums. The Government of Ethiopia has launched an urban renewal program, which has been underway for a decade now, with the aim of reducing “urban unemployment, addressing poor housing quality, housing shortages and reducing slum areas in Ethiopia’s main cities by 50% increasing access to land and basic services, and strengthening urban-rural, and urban-urban linkages” (Ministry of Works and Urban Development, 2007:21-22).²

The Slum Clearance Project Implementation Checklist, of the Arada Sub-City Upgrading Project Office Draft Plan (2010), quoted in Admasu (2014:7) outlines a long list of activities to be performed prior to and during relocation. These activities include holding discussions with local people, the election of residents’ representatives, meetings with representatives, communicating government decisions to residents through their representatives, collecting data on the legality of residents’ ownership of houses, offering households living in *kebele*³ (government owned houses) alternatives to choose either *kebele* rental houses or condominium units, screening residents’ choices, and providing supports to persons with disability, as well as persons with HIV/AIDS. Also included was the provision of ownership title to households who have chosen condominium units, ascertaining that residents have paid for electricity and water before vacating, transporting people who require support to relocate, and making sure that residents have vacated their dwellings. Research results show that the relocation process hardly complied with the plan as envisioned in the government document. In actual practice, the local government was unprepared for the relocation of residents and did not follow the process as planned. As one study pointed out “the Project Office of *Arada* Sub-City did not make any needs assessment about the slum clearance project as planned in *Arat Kilo* (*Basha Wolde Chilot* area)” (Admasu 2014:7). Study results further show that although few discussion forums were organised, they were intended to give only the semblance of legitimacy to the eviction as well as a means to communicate the decisions that have already been made by the government to evictees. Thus, there was no room for any meaningful participation of residents in the relocation process. Despite repeated appeals by residents, the government refused to relocate residents in *Basha Wolde Chilot* after the redevelopment because “the government needed the area for another investment” (ibid.). This article draws upon primary data collected in 2013 (nearly a year and half after the relocation) at *Basha Wolde Chilot* site in Addis Ababa, and secondary sources, and argues that despite its positive intent, the relocation program implemented at *Basha Wolde Chilot* has adversely affected

² Although the policy document incidentally mentions “a low cost housing programme” (Ministry of Works & UD 2007: 19) for the urban poor, it does not state what exactly constitutes “a low cost housing programme”, its distinctive features, and its implementation modalities. In mid-2013 the government came up with a scheme targeting low-income residents mainly civil servants earning a monthly income below ETB 1000 (USD 54)” on condition that they save 10 percent of “the purchase price for two years, realizing 5% interest on their savings” and repay “the remaining 90% of the purchase price... over 25 years at a rate of 9.5%” (MUDHCo, 2014: 44).

³ *Kebele* is an *Amharic* term denoting the lowest and the smallest administrative unit. It is comparable to neighbourhood.

the assets of poor households associated with housing. The paper further argues that relocation has had a negative impact on employment opportunities, access to social service provisions, transport costs, as well as social supports of evicted households resulting in the disruption of their livelihoods.

2. Key concepts

2.1. Displacement and resettlement

Researchers use concepts such as “displacement” and “resettlement” differently. Sherbinin et al (2010), refer to displacement as the influx of people to a new place from the place where they used to live due to *force majeure*. It is an involuntary movement of people simply because except under the circumstances of natural calamity or civil war, dwellers would not have chosen to evacuate their habitation (ibid.). The notion of resettlement, on the other hand, refers to a planned population movement initiated by different actors such as the government or real estate companies to resettle people in a chosen place (ibid.). Resettlement may take place after holding discussions with the affected population and securing their consent or it could be a compulsory one (ibid.). In a resettlement scheme, the affected population may also be remunerated in return for the loss they have sustained due to relocation (ibid.). Other researchers (Cernea 1993; Stanley 2004) seem to conceive displacement and resettlement as different phases of population movement. While Stanley (2004) uses the concept Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement (DIDR) to explain the process of dislocation and relocation of people, Cernea (1993) qualifies involuntary displacement to suggest a faulty type of displacement.

2.2 Debate on resettlement vs. upgrading slums

2.2.1 The upgrading thesis

Dasgupta and Lall (2006) suggest that a slum upgrading scheme is a viable approach that helps slum dwellers improve their lives. Proponents of upgrading invoke several reasons for advocating the slum upgrading approach. The first reason is that slum upgrading is the least expensive venture to addressing the problems of the urban poor (Werlin 1999). Secondly, slum upgrading not only rehabilitates the old and builds new infrastructures, facilities and services (schools, health centers, the supply of safe and healthy drinking water, sewage disposal, waste collection systems, walkways, lighting, access roads) but also creates the opportunity for legalising insecure possession or unclear tenure (Dasgupta and Lall 2006). Moreover, proponents of slum upgrading, question the plausibility of the argument which purports voluntary relocation has less detrimental effects on relocatees. Bartlett (1997), for instance, remarked that voluntary relocation, in addition to creating material and financial predicaments on relocatees, is blamed for causing social ills such as stress, alcohol abuse, divorce, inciting conflict within families. Studies further show that even persons who are relocated voluntarily for the betterment of their living condition suffer from depression (ibid.). Critiques further argue that relocation is socially disruptive as the sites are usually distant and are less convenient particularly for persons working in the informal sectors in terms of

accessing employment opportunities as well as causing them to incur additional transportation expenses. On the other hand, Alemayehu (2008), mentions several advantages of the slum upgrading approach. One of the advantages is that slum upgrading circumvents the disruption of existing economic systems as well as sustains opportunities with which the livelihoods of the urban poor ultimately depend on. Secondly, since slum upgrading often takes place in the inner-city, it barely affects access to job opportunities and social service provisions for the urban poor. Another equally important advantage of the slum upgrading approach is that it preserves existing social networks established to protect and promote individual, family, and group interests. Stanley (2004: 13), on his part suggested,

Unless specifically addressed by targeted policies, forced displacement can cause impoverishment among displacees leading to landlessness, unemployment, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, loss of access to common property resources, increased morbidity and mortality, and community disarticulation...loss of access to public services, disruption of formal education activities, and loss of civil and human rights.

2.2.2 The relocation thesis

Bartlett (1997) argues, relocation at the end of the day brings about improvements in the circumstances of a person's life with respect to shelter and access to basic amenities. Advocates of relocation further contend that relocation on its own is not the source of troubles for evictees as the “ramifications of mobility depend on a range of social and individual factors” (ibid: 122). Moreover, proponents of relocation also suggest that the slum upgrading approach has failed to bring an end to voluntary and involuntary displacements of slum dwellers for the simple reason that upgraded slum areas often attract upper and middle-income families and individuals alike and thereby resulting in gentrification (Alemayehu 2008). Proponents of relocation also blame the slum upgrading approach for its incompatible priorities. According to them many slum upgrading schemes are unable to succeed (the scheme demands active involvement and resource contributions of inhabitants) owing to their indifferences to the priority of inhabitants which in turn erodes the commitments of the latter (ibid.). Proponents of relocation also identified a long list of limitations of upgrading including “lack of integration of projects; lack of follow up with services, and maintenance of facilities; lack of capacity of city government to enforce cost recovery; disappearance of governance structures following the termination of projects; and generally, lack of sustainability” (ibid).

2.2.3 Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

Soussan et al. (undated), suggest that the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) has enjoyed widespread recognition as a vital instrument for grasping the factors impacting the existence of people, more particularly the needy who struggle to sustain their living in emerging nations. SLA is widely accepted in development circles since it not only tries to understand the critical factors that influence the choice of poor households' livelihoods strategies but also strengthens the factors that further widen the range of choices as well as the ability to cope with variable circumstances and alleviate constraints (DFID 1999). One more reason that makes SLA quite distinct from other approaches is that its basic unit of

analysis is the household on which other levels within and beyond the community is integrated in the process (Soussan et al. undated). Farrington (2001) quoted in Morse and McNamara (2013: 20), summarised the major functions of SLA “as a loose checklist of points that need to be considered before an intervention is planned” ; a “formal analytical framework to help understand what ‘is’ and what can be done”, and “an overall developmental objective” where development is conceived as “the improvement of livelihood sustainability, perhaps by making capital less vulnerable or by enhancing the contributions that some capitals can make or even by improving the institutional context”.

2.3 Asset Vulnerability Framework (AVF)

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) in general and the Asset Vulnerability Framework (AVF- the customised version of SLA in the urban context) in particular, is used in this article as a lens for analysing the impact of the relocation on the livelihoods of poor households evicted from *Basha Wolde Chilot* area. The rationale for using AVF is as follows: First, AVF gives prominence to the less known productive asset, housing, which is critical for the urban poor. In the context of AVF, housing (Moser 1998; Farrington et al, 2002; Solon 2003), is a key productive asset for poor urban households that can serve a number of functions besides providing shelter such as renting and earning income, carrying out different economic activities for e.g. sewing, carpentry workshop, using it as a store and stall. The location of the house can provide access to employment opportunities and public amenities such as schools, health facilities and market. Additionally, it can also help reduce transportation costs and save time drain due to location advantage. Secondly, AVF focuses on the tangible and intangible assets that the urban poor possess rather than what they lack (Solon 2003). Third, AVF helps us understand how relocation (forced removal) adversely affects the productive asset (housing), and subsequently pushes poor households further into poverty, significantly reducing the capability of a household for everyday survival, not to mention a sustained response to shocks and stresses (Solon 2003).

2.3.1 Vulnerability context

While analysing the vulnerability context, DFID (1999) noted that shocks, trends and seasonality (the poor have limited or no control over them) adversely affect the availability of assets and, by extension, the livelihoods of the poor. Shocks may unfold in the form of manmade or natural catastrophes such as draught, floods, storms, earthquake, and civil war. Shocks destroy the assets of the poor and thereby bringing about unexpected drawbacks to their livelihoods. The poor, in the event of shock, will be compelled to sell their assets such as cattle, land and other possessions and abandon their villages, to cope with the hard times (ibid.). On the other hand, trends are conceived as predictable happenings which may or may not cause harm or damage to the livelihoods of the poor (ibid.). Morse and McNamara (2013:35), suggest that trends pose a longer-term pressure which also “has a particularly important influence on rates of return (economic or otherwise) to chosen livelihood strategies.” The authors further note that in analysing trends the crucial point is not only to understand the situation as it is but also how it unfolds in the future. According to them, “some assets may change little over time (e.g. land and buildings), while

others such as cash and social networks can be volatile and depend upon movement of people into and out of the household” (ibid.). Seasonality on the other hand exhibits itself in variety of forms including, but not limited to, price fluctuations, shift in the availability of employment opportunities, availability of food, etc. (DFID 1999). It is one of the enduring sources of hardships for the poor living in countries of the global South. Morse and McNamara (2013: 21) argue “there is a requirement for a sustainable livelihood to be able to recover from ‘stress and shocks’ but it must also be able to ‘maintain and enhance’ capabilities and assets into the future”. According to them, diversification of livelihood strategies is the response to stress and shocks, as well as an indication for resilience. DFID (1999:23) conceives livelihood strategies as a combination of variety of activities as well as choices that the people make to attain their livelihood goals such as “productive activities, investment strategies, reproductive choices, etc.” Consistent with this understanding the livelihood strategies of poor households need to be based on combinations of some or all (natural, financial, physical, human and social) of these assets. Anderson et al. (2011:7), argue “access to these assets determines the vulnerability of the individual household to shocks, trends and seasonality”.

2.4. Understanding different categories of assets/capitals

Livelihood is organically linked with assets. According to Morse, McNamara, and Acholo (2009:5), assets comprise natural, human, social, physical and financial capitals. Natural capital refers to natural resources including soil, water, air, genetic resources etc., and environmental services such as hydrological cycle, pollution sinks etc., whereas human capital refers to “skills, knowledge, labour (includes good health and physical capability”. While economic/financial capital comprises “capital base (cash, credit/debt, savings, and other economic assets), physical capital which consists of tangible assets referred to as infra-structure, including roads, building, machinery, equipment, and similar others often used as inputs into the process of production of goods and services. Morse and McNamara (2013) argue that it may not be necessary for a household to physically own it for an asset to contribute to the improvement of the livelihood of a household, as access to an asset suffices for a household to improve its livelihoods.

2.4.1 Housing as key asset in the livelihood strategies of the urban poor

Farrington et al, (2002) contend that for poor urban households, housing is the most critical asset used for multiple functions such as lodging, procreation (producing and rearing children), and income generating activities. Perhaps, the single most important reason for selecting housing as a core focus in the analysis of the livelihoods of the urban poor is that it is key asset for the urban poor and more particularly for poor women who predominantly carry out their activities (informal activities) from their home to earn much of their income. More importantly, housing has a positive impact on almost all categories of assets/capitals “including social capital (often based on local residential and community networks), human capital (through the impact of housing on health), financial assets (through the importance of housing location for access to employment), and political capital (through the importance of CBOs in making demands from the state” (ibid: 41). Location advantage is also an inherent attribute of

housing. Housing proximate to market and employment opportunities will not only widen poor households' access/opportunities to income generating activities but also reduce transportation expenses that takes away substantial portion of the income as well as causing time drain of the urban poor (Farrington et al, 2002). No less an important advantage of housing is that "local communities of informal workers often make up specialist districts and attract employers to specific areas" (ibid: 22-23). Another reason that justifies the importance of housing for the urban poor (as an asset) is that it ensures "access to other resources" (ibid.).

2.5. Social capital: the concept and the debate

Social capital is an intangible asset which refers to the interrelated concepts such as "networks and connectedness", "membership of more formalised groups", "relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges" (DFID 1999:9). The livelihood strategies of poor households are greatly influenced by the social ties or networks. Adam and Roncevic (2003) suggested that since the term has been employed in many contexts, it would be better to state where social capital has not been applied rather than listing its fields of application. On the other hand, the wide and varied usage of the term social capital has attracted criticism from different quarters. Morse and McNamara (2013), for instance, criticised the inappropriate usage of social capital that reduced the term to a mere buzzword. The authors argued social capital "has taken on a number of hues and can be argued to hide as much as it reveals" (ibid: 32). According to them, the reason behind the widespread use of social capital is that some authors employ the term in their work not for its conceptual strength but in the hope that the mere treatment of the concept might draw more attention to their research (ibid.). For Morse and McNamara (2013), the main drawback of the concept social capital stems from it being used to cover numerous circumstances.

Wong (2007), acclaimed the importance of social capital using the metaphor, the "new golden goose". According to him social capital is much more important to economic growth particularly with respect to human capital. In his view, social capital "generates increasing returns – and therefore growth – because it is a public good that, once created, can be re-used without cost" (Wong 2007: 19). The author further argued that social capital is a "missing link" in development discourse; it is a critical element that binds society together and has a positive bearing on economic development. Others (Morse and McNamara 2013; Borgatti and Foster 2003) on the other hand, caution against being duped by a simplistic understanding of social capital simply because being a member of social network may not necessarily be always a good thing; there is "dark side" or detrimental effects of social capital "in which social ties imprison actors in maladaptive situations or facilitate undesirable behavior" (Borgatti and Foster 2003: 994).

2.5.1 Social capital and social networking

One more area deserving closer scrutiny is the link between social capital and social networks. Prella, et al. (2009:3) defined social networks as "actors who are tied to one another through socially meaningful

relations”. Richards and Roberts (1998) suggested that social networks could be based on simplex ties or multiplex ties. Simplex ties are less integrated, and more open to outsiders. They stretch out to embrace people that may not belong to neighbours, co-workers, or immediate community (ibid.). The researchers also analysed the essential features of multiplex ties. High degrees of integration and interconnectedness, mutual support within the network, and excluding non-members are some of the attributes of multiplex ties (ibid.). The researchers further explained that multiplex ties involve a multidimensional relationship whereby the individuals or households “relate to others through...work, religion, kinship or common origin, recreation” (ibid.: 2).

3. Relocation/ eviction and loss of critical assets of the urban poor

Agbola and Jinadu (1997) quoted in Solon (2003:6), argue relocation is associated more with the result of evictions, which presupposes some sort of minimal government assistance at the new site. Highlighting the consequences of relocation, Yamamoto (1996) contends that in the urban setting relocation brings about asset loss linked to housing and thereby resulting in disruption of the livelihoods of poor households. The author specified three areas where loss of financial capital is more noticeable among the urban poor in the event of eviction and relocation, i.e., time drain and transport cost, change in job availability particularly for women, and ability to pay monthly mortgage payments for the new housing (ibid.). For instance, location advantage, (which is adversely affected by relocation), saves the urban poor from wasting time and incurring increased transportation expenditure by placing them within close proximity to the labor market as well as provide different job opportunities to persons with no formal training or skills. Social capital is another critical asset associated with housing and that can also be severely affected by eviction as the latter causes “the loss of access to mutual help, child care arrangements, exchange and borrowing opportunities, and other informal support mechanisms” (Yamamoto1996:8). Moreover, relocation not only dislodges the urban poor from the place where utilities such as water, electricity, telephone service, and other essentials are easily accessible, i.e. from the city centers where public funded social services such as health centers and schools are available within a close proximity, to fringe areas where these facilities are virtually absent (ibid.). Solon (2003: 6) observed that in the face of these hardships “the scale and quality of (governments’) assistance in relocations tends to be inadequate and mismatched with the needs of the people” in most developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

4. The research method and process

This section presents the research methods used in the study. Data was collected during the months of August and September 2013 using qualitative research methods. Using a purposive sampling technique, a total of twelve interviews and one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted involving eight participants. I applied purposive sampling techniques for couple of reasons. First, it offered me the discretion to make “deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses”

(Tongco 2007:146). Second, “it is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants” (ibid.). It also gave me the freedom to determine “what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience” (ibid.). I selected all FGD participants from among households relocated in different condominium sites⁴, as well as from among persons who were homeless, and who were willing to provide the information (ibid.). Similarly, I also used purposive sampling to conduct semi-structured interviews with evicted household heads, government officials, *idir* and NGO leaders who provided relevant information on the process and impact of the relocation on the livelihoods strategies of evictees. Three semi structured interviews were conducted with government officials from Arada sub city Administration Land Development and Urban Renewal Office, Arada sub-city, *Woreda*⁵ 9 administration, as well as the Addis Ababa Administration Housing Development Project Office respectively. Interview sessions with NGO leaders, with *idir* leaders, and selective interviews involving a casual laborer relocated in *Samit* site; a carpenter who continued working in *Basha Wolde Chilot* (by commuting from *Yeka-Ayat* site where he is relocated); a civil servant relocated in *Samit* site; a disabled person engaged in mending clothes in *Basha Wolde Chilot* (by commuting from *Gofa* site where he is relocated); and an unemployed youth who got a replacement *kebele* house in *Piazza* area. Additionally, one FGD was conducted consisting of eight women from households affected by the relocation program. The housing situation of the FGD participants following the relocation, and economic activities in which they have been engaged in the past and present was factored into the selection of participants. The findings of the research combined both the personal stories of the interviewees and the experiences of other people affected by the relocation.

5. Summary of findings and analysis

The accounts of the persons evicted in the area studied and their experiences are strikingly similar to the narrative of the respondents in the literature review. Findings of the research revealed that the relocation program negatively affected the critical assets of poor households associated with housing in *Basha Wolde Chilot*, and thereby increased their vulnerability to loss of access to market, income earning opportunities, loss of location advantage for persons working from their house, disruption of social ties, increased transportation expenses, loss of access to public funded service such as health, and education, and homelessness.

⁴ Although it is not exhaustive, the Addis Ababa Housing Construction Project Office Contact Administration and Housing Transfer Sub-Process listed-out some of the condominium sites located in the city fringes or peri-urban areas commonly named as expansion areas. Some of the names of the condominium sites include Jemo I, II and III, Bole summit, Bole Bulbula, Bole gerji, Bole Ayat I,II,II IV V, Furi hana, Yeka Tafo, Kilinto, Yeka abado batch I&II, Koye Feche (batch I,II,II), Goro Sellassie, Bereket Sefer, Sodo Sefer, Fanuel Site, Jemo Gara, Mikililand Condominium site, etc.

⁵ *Woreda* is an *Amharic* term referring to administrative unit equivalent to district. It is the third layer of government structure or administrative structure following after Kilil (region) and zone.

5.1. The context

The National Report on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (MUDHCo 2014: 58) states that since 2005 the government through the Integrated Housing Development Program (IHDP), planned to construct 400,000 condominium units. According to the report, between 2006 and 2010 a total of 142,802 housing units were built. Additionally, IHDP envisioned the “creation of 200,000 jobs, promotion for the development of 10,000 micro and small-enterprises, enhancing the capacity of the construction sector, regenerating inner-city slum areas, and promoting home ownership for low-income households in urban areas.” (ibid: 58) The *Basha Wolde Chilot* relocation program is part of the Integrated Housing Development Program. According to the Ministry of Urban Development, in *Basha Wolde Chilot* (Arada Sub-City), which occupies 25 hectares of land, a total of 1295 housing units, 953 public and 342 private houses have been demolished (ibid: 56). Due to the limitation of data availability the total number of inhabitants affected by the relocation program and their profiles (gender, age, education, and employment) is not known. According to the Draft Population Stability Report of Ethiopia (Kuffa, 2014: 8) the average household size (2008-2012), in Addis Ababa was 4.1. Given the fact that 1,295 houses were demolished due to the relocation we can estimate the total number of people evicted from *Basha Wolde Chilot* as approximately 5,309.

5.2 Inadequate preparation

Findings of the research indicate that residents were evicted and their houses were demolished before the completion of construction of condominiums. A civil servant who participated in the study remarked that

The officials notified us the construction of the condominium units would be completed in four or five months’ time. They further informed us up until the completion of the construction of the condominium units the government will give house rent for the said months to evictees to lease houses elsewhere. Afterwards, the *Kebele* administration officials came and ordered us to evacuate our house. We handed over the house and left. We were evicted from our houses before the construction of the condominium units was completed. After we were evicted from the *Basha Wolde Chilot*, I (with my family) stayed in rental house for five months although I have now started living in my condominium unit. There are people who have not yet occupied the condominium units since the construction was not completed.

Respondents also stated that there was no electricity and water supply in sites like *Samit* where close to half of the evictees have been relocated. Even six months after residents were evicted from *Basha Wolde Chilot* necessities such as electricity and water were not available. Respondents complained that poor households were forced to buy a jerry-can of water for 10 *Birr*. Due to the absence of electricity children were unable to work on school assignments or study in the evening. Families could not bake *injera*⁶ for months on end. A scarcity of firewood in close proximity and availability of space required for baking *injera* aggravated the problem. Clearly there was no adequate preparation on the part of the government

⁶ *injera* is a light sourdough flatbread (made of *teff*-flour) having spongy texture. It has now become a national dish in Ethiopia.

with respect to the *Basha Wolde Chilot* relocation program. Admitting the irregularities that occurred during the relocation process, a *Woreda* official remarked that

To avoid some of the problems mentioned earlier (by respondents) and ensure the success of the relocation program, it would have been better to relocate residents after completing the construction of condominium units, as well as putting in places the necessary infrastructures, more specifically public utilities such as electricity, water, telephone. If we address these problems in future, there will be no room for grievances.

5.3 Housing as the basis for other capitals

5.3.1 Loss of location advantages ensuing a sharp fall in income (financial capital)

Farrington et al (2002:41) state that “housing usually represents a vital input for both reproductive and income-generating activities, in particular for women who often carry out much of their informal income earning activities in their homes.” Findings of the study have shown the negative impact of housing on poor households evicted from *Basha Wolde Chilot* and its detrimental effects on the livelihoods of both relocated persons, as well as persons still living in *Basha Wolde Chilot*⁷. For instance, a petty trader who has been living on the street with her three daughters since the relocation recounted the impact of eviction on herself and her family.

In the past the sales was good, but now business is at an all-time low. My daughters sell tea for themselves...The area is now demolished. It is almost barren. In the past I used to sell a lot and I raised my daughters properly. They do not even look like the daughters of a single mother.

Similarly, relocatees also complained that their income has been falling as they were unable to attract customers in the new sites. Another participant shared the story of a street vendor (quoting verbatim) who was evicted from *Basha Wolde Chilot* and relocated in a new site. “When I was in *Arat Kilo (Basha Wolde Chilot)* I used to sell much. Here (in the new site) residents will go out for shopping elsewhere. So, I don’t have many customers. My income is little”. In addition to the drastic decrease in sales, respondents engaged in petty trading who were relocated also expressed that they incur higher transport costs to go and fetch vegetables, fruits and other edible items from wholesalers in *atakilit tera* or *merkato*.

Anderson et al. (2011:7) argue “access to these assets (natural, financial, physical, human and social) determines the vulnerability of the individual household to shocks, trends and seasonality.” Study findings reveal that former residents of *Basha Wolde Chilot*, engaged in occupations such as clothes alterations, mending, carpentry, petty trading, etc., were unable to get both the required space and market to practice their vocations in the new sites. As a result, some of them decided to commute daily from their houses in the new sites to *Basha Wolde Chilot* to carry out their work, while others gave up their occupation altogether. A study participant earning his livelihood by mending clothes remarked, “Before the

⁷ At the time of the research there were households whose houses were not demolished and hence not relocated due to the fact that they cannot afford the down payment required for buying a condominium unit. They instead asked the authorities for replacement houses within the *Arada* sub city.

relocation I earn more money. This time around my income is very limited. The money I get does not go beyond covering my transportation expenses”. Furthermore, study findings revealed that the transportation expenses incurred to commute from home to work was so high that their income could not match their expenses. A casual laborer, who participated in the study, had to say this:

In the past we used to work in *Hana Mariam lebu* site. Our employer is currently undertaking new construction contract in *laffto* area which is far from *Samit* where I am now living (relocated). I am paid 40 Birr a day. Most of my earning goes for transportation. So I quit my job.

Yntiso (2008:64) in his study found out, ” Many key informants indicated that they quit their jobs because of distance and high transport costs to get to their workplace. The survey indicates that mostly male heads of households lost their jobs”. Similarly, residents who were evicted from *Basha Wolde Chicot* and relocated in distant sites experienced similar problems as observed by Yntiso: (2008). One respondent, for instance, stated the following:

My mother has now become a house wife... She resigned from her job...on account of relocation. She was working in *Nas Food factory* located in *Kara*. Since the factory is very far from here, the transport costs became unbearable. As a result she had to resign from her job. After all they earn 500 and 600-Birr monthly salary.

However, the study findings also reveal a few success stories of individuals who were able to start a small business in the newly relocated sites and were doing well.

5.3.2 Disruption of social networks

Morse and McNamara (2013) remarked that unlike land and buildings, social networks and cash are volatile in nature and can easily be affected by shocks, trends and seasonality. *Idir*, a simplex tie, is a mutual support institution that lends a hand to its members in the event of death, and sickness. Residents of *Basha Wolde Chilot* area were evicted and relocated in different parts of the city as a result of the Integrated Housing Development Program (IHDP). This shock resulted in the disruption of social networks most notably *idirs and* other social ties that the poor heavily rely on in the event of crisis such as death and sickness. One study participant, for instance, explained the effect of relocation on the social capital of former residents of *Basha Wolde Chilo area*.

While we were here (in *Basha Wolde Chilo*) many people attend the funeral procession of a deceased person. If you are sick you may have many visitors. In the new site we are very small in number...Good forbid it, if someone passes away the people attending funeral procession (or) people who visit a sick person will not be as many as it used to happen in the past.

Another respondent said,

There is no social life in the condominium houses. Whether you are happy or in trouble you stay in your room. Never expect someone to do something for you in the event of sickness or come to your assistance in time of need. While we were in *Basha Wolde Chilot*, we visit one another. We support one another. We assume the responsibility of looking after a friend or neighbour who is sick...Now leave alone looking after a sick friend or neighbour, we do not even know each other.

The preceding quotes reveal not only the strong social ties they had in the past but also the irreparable damage done on these ties. On the other hand, study findings show that the relocation has helped some

of the relocatees to draw on their multiplex ties. Drawing on their multiplex ties, some of them received assistance from their relatives to settle the down payment and loan. The experience of one respondent confirms the foregoing assertion.

I chose a three-bed room condominium unit and paid the required 45,000.00 Birr down payment pulling the money from different sources...I have a relative living abroad. She is my niece... If it were not for the financial support of my niece, I could not afford to pay the down payment and the house would have been taken away from me sooner than later.

5.3.3 Loss of access to public funded services

Yntiso (2008:71-72) pointed out “available data reveal that social services and infrastructural facilities are concentrated in the inner city”. In the same way, study findings show *Basha Wolde Chilot* is located in the inner city where publicly funded social services including schools and health centers are easily accessible for poor households. However, following the relocation, children’s education has been for the most part affected. Revealing the adverse effects of the relocation program, in the context of social service provisions, Yntiso (2008:68) remarked, “Most villages are located far away from nurseries, primary/secondary schools, healthcare facilities, and market places. The necessity to travel to the workplace, market, school, and other places requires the allocation of a budget for transportation”. One respondent shared a similar observation by saying that “attending schools is unthinkable” in sites like *Samit*, since there were no public schools. As a result, children had to commute daily from home to *Arat kilo*⁸ (*Basha Wode Chilot*) where they were attending class prior to the relocation. The same respondent further reported the absence of public schools in sites where large number of evictees were relocated. Apart from putting undue pressure on children in terms of commuting long distances on a daily basis, relocated households also have to incur additional transportation expenses. Comparing *Basha Wolde Chilot* vis-à-vis the new site, a FGD participant remarked that “here (in *Basha Wolde Chilot*) schools are within walking distance and students leisurely walk to school. I have three children. Because of lack of schools in close proximity in the area, we moved to the inner city subletting our condominium unit”. Respondents also disclosed that in some sites there were no public funded health centers as well. One FGD participant, for instance, said, “We settled recently in a site called Jomo-2. There is nothing...there is no health centre or even Kebele administration”. While in sites where these services exist, currently there have been very heavy demands on the available resources. A respondent from a NGO reflecting on the level of access to health services in the site where majority of the evictees were relocated stated that

In *Samit* site there is a health center but the number of health extension workers is not commensurate vis-à-vis the density of the population i.e., there were only six health extension workers assigned to serve 120,000 people. The extension workers complained that they were about to give up their job due to the heavy work load.

⁸ *Arat Kilo* is a name that applies to Meizia 27 (May 5) square erected to commemorate Ethiopia’s victory over the Italian invasion and the surrounding district including the seat of key political institutions like the federal parliament, the Prime Minister office, the Grand Palace. *Basha Wolde Chilot* is located at the heart of *Arat Kilo*.

The only option available for the relocatees is to go to private health institutions, which meant that poor households could not access health care services because they could not afford private health care.

5.4 Disruption of NGOs' service provisions

Research findings show that the relocation program in *Basha Wolde Chilot* did not take into account the services provided to the marginalised households by the non-state actors such as NGOs and *idirs*.

Respondents disclosed that prior to the relocation, NGOs used to provide support to households that could not afford to enroll their children in Kindergarten school. The NGO would pay the school fees; buy stationary materials and uniforms for the children. Study findings reveal that a program run by an NGO has been discontinued due to the relocation. A study respondent from the NGO mentioned

Currently we are replacing the children relocated to different sites with new beneficiaries. So far we have replaced 500 kids (beneficiaries) and 300 more children will soon be replaced. On account of the relocation in *Basha Wolde Chilot* the NGO had changed its operational area. The children were replaced gradually by children in the new operational area. We replace ten to twenty children every month that do not show up regularly as a consequence of their evacuation from *Basha wolde chilot*. There are only 280 children remaining now.

Similarly, findings of the study also show that people living with HIV/AIDS and orphans who lost their parents due to the HIV pandemic have lost access to the services provided by the NGOs ever since their evacuation from *Basha Wolde Chilot*. NGOs have suspended their operations because their beneficiaries have been relocated outside their targeted operational area. Providing service to beneficiaries outside the targeted geographical area is against the operational agreement between NGOs and the city government, as well as the funders. Furthermore the lack of coordination among NGOs, and the information gap about each organizations operation has also contributed to the disruption of services.

Research findings also show that *idirs* used to lending money to members in the event of sickness, providing care and support services jointly with NGOs to people living with HIV/AIDS, paying school fees and other support to orphans who lost their parents due to HIV/AIDS in *Basha Wolde Chilo* area have now been disrupted due to the relocation. The findings of this study further indicate that considerable numbers of *idirs* have been dissolved due to the relocation and a few existing ones have relinquished the reason for their existence, i.e., mobilising their members to attend funeral procession of a deceased member or his/her relatives as well as limited their activities exclusively to giving money when a member or his/her relative passes away.

5.5 Dislocation and homelessness

The Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) provides protection for evicted persons without a legal title to the house he/she possesses. According to the RPF even tenants staying illegally “will be enabled to maintain their livelihood and assisted to secure accommodation” (MUDHCo, 2015: 32), to mitigate the adverse effect of relocation. Additionally, the government policy also explicitly states that “20% to 30% of the housing units will be allocated to female headed households” (Ministry of Works and Urban

Development, 2007: 32). However, study findings show that little attention has been given particularly to evicted female headed households with no legal title. In practice, households with no legal title such as single mothers were denied the right to buy condominiums on credit as well as getting replacement *kebele* houses. As a result, they became homeless with their kids because they were considered as illegal tenants. A study participant and single mother who became homeless stated that

I am not the same now as before my house was demolished and for the past one year I have been sick. I live in a street near a sewage system under a plastic sheet for shade. My daughters are minors. I do not sleep the entire night in order to shield them from sexual assault by intruders. I light a fire and stay awake all night long to watch the surroundings. I have never slept during the night for the past two years...for fear someone will rape them. I sleep during the day time.

5.6 The poor's prospect of owning a house and unaffordable mortgage

UN Habitat (2011:40), states that some of the poor households have bought condominium houses on credit simply because they “managed to get resources from family and friends to meet the down-payment.” This has led the government to claim that some of the poor households have become owners of condominium units. Available research, however, shows that in reality a majority of the “the poorest of the poor are not benefiting from the IHDP due to their inability to afford the initial down payment and monthly service payment” (ibid.). On the face of it becoming owner of a condominium house, apart from offsetting relocatees’ loss of different assets as a result of the eviction, enhances the financial and physical capital (through leasing or selling the condominium unit) of the relocated poor households. In practice, some of them sold their condominium units⁹ and earned more money, while others taking location advantage leased their units and began collecting house rent. According to UN Habitat (2011:40), the real challenge for those who chose to live in their units is that “servicing the monthly mortgage is difficult if not impossible because the majority have no stable employment or income source.” Utility service charges (electricity and water) are an additional financial burden for poor households who are already economically challenged. Equally, poor households who rented out their condominium units to service their mortgage also faced similar problems. For instance, one respondent remarked, “The net income they (evictees who rented out their condominium units) earn from the difference in renting out their condominium units and the house rent they pay is negligible. The money they get is inadequate to sustain themselves”.

6. Discussion

Research studies show that housing in the urban context is vital for poor households as it is associated with different assets that are critical for survival. They can earn income using their house as a workshop, stall and store, subletting rooms, etc. They also draw on their social capital (simplex and multiplex ties) to

⁹ Addis Negari Gazeta of the City Government of Addis Ababa Proclamation No.19/ 2003 Article 14(2) entails that it is prohibited by law to sell a condominium house for five years beginning the day it is acquired.

recover from crisis. Relocation engenders asset loss related to housing and thereby destroys the livelihoods of urban poor households (Yamamoto1996). It is clear from the preceding discussion that the relocation program that took place in *Basha Wolde Chilot* severely affected the financial capital (income) of petty traders, home-based workers, casual laborers and other small wage earners. The program also disrupted their access to market and employment opportunities, not to mention the increase in the transportation expenditure. For instance, petty traders residing in the new sites, as well as at *Basha Wolde Chilot* lost their customers. As a result, their income decreased significantly. Reasons behind the decline in income are several. Petty traders in *Basha Wolde Chilot* used to sell their items near their houses. Their houses served them both as a stall and store for their goods. Secondly, petty traders can fetch fresh vegetables and fruits without incurring transport cost or incurring little cost since the suppliers were located within walking distance. Third, as *Basha Wolde Chilot* was one of the poorer neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa, where most of the residents (owing to financial constraints) largely buy vegetables and food items from petty traders living near them and not from supermarkets. Moreover, residents often do not stock groceries but buy these items in small quantities lasting for a day or two. This in turn spurs not only the forging of a seller-customer relationship between street vendors and residents but also ensures regular income for petty traders. Similarly, the findings of the study show that business for petty traders who still reside in *Basha Wolde Chilot* has been at an all-time low simply because the area has been demolished, and the poor who happened to be their regular customers were relocated to different parts of the city. Study findings also show that petty traders in the relocated area were unable to attract customers either because residents of condominium houses by and large belong to the economically middle or upper classes having sufficient disposable income to buy food items from supermarkets or wholesalers. This has adversely affected the daily transaction and the income of residents involved in petty trading both in the new sites, as well as in *Basha Wolde Chilot* area.

The findings further reveal that persons engaged in occupations such as tailoring/mending clothes, carpentry, petty trading were unable to get both space and markets to practice their trades in the new sites. As a result, some of them had to commute daily from their houses in the new sites to *Basha Wolde Chilot* to carry out their work, while others gave up their work altogether. Evictees were thus grappling with dual challenges a reduced income on account of the evicted residents and the increasing transportation cost resulting in the erosion of their financial capital.

Furthermore the study conducted in *Basha Wolde Chilot* also revealed “time-drain” as a major reason for relocatees to quit their jobs. Respondents complained that since their place of work and their residence is far-flung, getting to their workplace on time was nearly impossible. Study findings further disclosed that some of the evictees relocated in distant sites resigned from their work not only because of the additional transportation costs but also because of the escalating tensions between them and their employers, due to repetitive late arrival and/or absence from work.

The study findings also show the empowering aspect of the IHDP. Indeed, the IHDP enabled some of the relocated poor households to become house owners. But again, a careful assessment of the situation reveals the extent of the loss these households have sustained as the result of the relocation; it certainly far outweighs the gains some have attained. The findings reveal that loss of employment, loss of access to public services, loss of locational advantage, homelessness, disruption of social ties are some of the serious setbacks caused by the relocation program on the various assets of poor households.

The study also shows the visible discrepancy between the policy imperatives and the actual practice in the context of the *Basha Wolde Chilot* relocation programme. A classic example for this assertion is the issue of single mothers. Although preferential treatment for women is explicitly stated in the policy document, in practice single mothers possessing houses with no legal title were denied any support whatsoever from the government.

While the policy in place contemplates relocation of residents as a last resort action after exhausting all other viable options, in practice public authorities gave little heed to the repeated appeal of residents to be relocated in *Basha Wolde Chilot* after the area is redeveloped. Instead, they forced them to evacuate the area before the completion of the construction of the condominium units. Admasu (2014:7) argued the main reason behind the reluctance of the government to restore residents in *Basha Wolde Chilot* is that “the government needs the area for another investment.”

From the foregoing discussion one can easily observe the inconsistency between the government’s commitments to enable 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the beneficiaries of the IHDP to be women and the actual implementation of the policy that ignored poor female headed households. While the IHDP accorded to some households the opportunity to buy condominium houses on credit, others most notably low-income female headed households engaged in the informal sector such as petty trading were made to endure livelihoods disruption. As can be inferred from the findings, single mothers not only being denied condominium units, they were also unable to get replacement *Kebele* houses. They were made homeless on the grounds that they were not legitimate tenants. The government, while addressing the housing problem of a number of poor households, has pushed so-called ‘illegal tenants’, particularly single mothers into homelessness.

While commending the government’s aim to enable poor households to own a house, relocatees complain that the cost of the condominium units is not affordable. Other studies confirm this when it says, “the poorest of the poor are not benefiting from the IHDP (Integrated Housing Development Programme) due to inability to afford the initial down payment and monthly service payment” (UN Habitat (2011:40). Likewise, most of the evictees who bought the condominium units on credit and chose to live in them are more likely to default on the mortgage repayment. Defaulting mortgage repayments naturally results in the reclaiming of the condominium units by the bank (the sole lender in this case is the

government-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia). This will lead poor households to slide back into further poverty.

Demolishing inner city slums and relocating marginalised residents to other areas appears to be the chosen approach of the government. However, if the government continues to relocate the urban poor to the outskirts of the city then certainly the livelihoods of huge number of people, most notably the lives of poor households will be at risk. The plight of poor households can only be lessened if the government commits to observe its policy imperatives and consider relocation only as a last resort. As one study proposed, the government should

adopt the concept of urban renewal which aims at redevelopment of physical, social and economic situation of the area... rather than displacement. This is not merely suitable for remodeling the old areas and bringing new structures, but gives chance for existing residents and businesses to modernise the areas (Asfaw et al, 2011: 59).

7. Conclusions

The findings of the research clearly reveal the detrimental effects of the relocation programme in *Basha Wolde Chilot* on the various assets of poor households, causing serious ramifications to their livelihoods. The women involved in petty trading on account of sharp drop in customers suffered a decrease in sales, increased transportation expenditure, and time drain depleting the financial assets of evictees who commute long-distances, are just a few of the consequences of eviction. Loss of access to (human and physical capital) public services (schools, health services), and utilities (water and electricity), are other negative effects of the relocation programme that further marginalised the livelihoods of evictees. As evictees were relocated in the four corners of the city, their traditional neighbourhood support systems (their social capital), vital resources for poor urban households, have been dismantled resulting in an overwhelming sense of loss among this section of the population.

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