

# Coping with illegality

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*Livelihood strategies of illegal refugees in Wageningen and Utrecht*

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## Abstract

This thesis was about a research done on the livelihoods of illegal refugees in Wageningen and Utrecht. The objective of this research was to get an understanding of the livelihood strategies of illegal refugees and the interaction with the local government and aid organisations. The following research question was used: How do illegal refugees and institutions cope with illegality in Wageningen and Utrecht? A theoretical framework was developed based on three concepts, the livelihood framework, social network theory and social interface. In the research three different research methods were used, literature study, interviews and observations. The findings were analysed using the three theoretical concepts and by looking at the differences between Wageningen and Utrecht.

In the literature two important economies were shown for the livelihoods of illegal refugees. The gift economy and the informal economy, this was confirmed by the interview and observations findings. Due to stricter regulations the gift economy has become more important. It has become more difficult to find work on the informal market because employees and employers risk high fines. Especially the support of aid organizations is essential, it was said that without the support of these organizations life would be very difficult for illegal refugees, both in Wageningen and Utrecht. Further illegal refugees have developed alternative activities, to add to their income or to have something to do. Another strategy is to live at low cost. With this they hope to achieve their desired livelihood outcomes. All of them want to survive, and most of them want to participate in the society. They wish to be able to work or study, then they can be part of society. A way to do this is to get a resident permit. Alternatively they can do other activities for example volunteer to get a sense of fulfilment. Persons who are homeless would like to have a place to stay. The livelihoods of illegal refugees is not something fixed, it is a process in which different parties interact with each other. In both cities aid organizations are active to improve their livelihoods and they advocate with the local government as well. In Wageningen the municipality has made the different organizations work together. And in Utrecht the aid organizations have pursued the municipality to help decrease the housing problem of illegal refugees.

Several research methods were used in this research to supplement each other. This has been a good strategy because not all methods delivered as much data as was hoped for. The data gathered by doing observations was limited. That is why more research can be done on the subject. This might also give more insight on the involvement of illegal refugees in the informal market.



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## Introduction

Traditionally the Netherlands has been a country with much migration. Asylum migrants have been a large number of all the migrants. Like other governments in Europe the Dutch government tries to limit the inflow of migrants and therefore the entry of asylum seekers. Because of this the Dutch migration policy and in particular the asylum policy are topics of many debates. Previous this year failed asylum seekers received much attention in the news. They had set up a camp in Amsterdam as a protest against the asylum policy.

Asylum seekers can apply for asylum when they enter the country. When they apply for asylum they state that they are refugees and they want to be recognized as such. When their application is turned down they have been denied the refugee status and the rights accompanying this status. This means they cannot stay in the country and cannot access services. It is expected that they leave the country, on their own or with the support of the government. But a large part of the asylum seekers, who have exhausted all legal procedures, stay in the Netherlands because they cannot or they do not want to leave the country. They have left with destination unknown, which in most cases means they have decided to stay illegally in the Netherlands, or their departure cannot be enforced.

The national government focuses on a closed asylum policy. Asylum seekers are granted asylum or denied and have to return home and no people are caught between procedures. But until this is really realized local governments, with the support of aid organizations, have to deal with illegal refugees who are staying illegally in their area. This brings forth the questions; What kind of livelihood strategies have illegal refugees in Netherlands? How do they care for themselves, arrange shelter and get access to health and education? How do they do this when they are not recognize as legal citizens and are denied the access to these facilities and resources. And what roles do the local governments and aid organizations have in this process? And is this reflected in policy (change)? Questions this research thesis was about.

This paper describes the research done on the livelihoods of illegal refugees in Wageningen and Utrecht. The first section will give some background on the topic. Then the research questions follow. The main research question of the research was "*How do illegal refugees and institutions cope with illegality in Wageningen and Utrecht?*". The research was based on a theoretical framework consisting of three concepts namely the livelihood framework, social network theory and the concept of interface of Norman Long. Then the research design is discussed. The research started with a literature study,

looking at the already existing literature on illegal refugees and illegal residents in the Netherlands. This was followed by interviewing and making observations. Then the findings of research are analyzed and in the last section the research is concluded and discussion is made.

## Background information

Asylum migration is one of the most important forms of migration to the Netherlands (Wijkhuijs, Kromhout et al. 2009). This migration type gets much attention in the media and has a strong interest from society. In 2011 18.310 applications for asylum were made by asylum seekers in the Netherlands. Which is a slight increase compared to previous years. The majority of the asylum seekers come from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. In 2011 there were a total of 19.090 decisions on asylum applications, in 8.380 cases asylum was granted. (IND 2011)

Migration is influenced by, so called push and pull factors. Push factors are factors that influence people's decision to leave their country. Pull factors are factors that make them decide to go to a certain country. Also in asylum migration push and pull factors can be identified. Asylum seekers leave their country for different reasons, like conflict, natural hazards or the economic situation. These are the push factors. Pull factors are conditions in a country which makes it interesting to choose it as a destination. But Asylum seekers do not always have the possibility to choose their destination. Their options are limited by factors such as financial resources, transport, travel documents and the smugglers (Wijkhuijs, Kromhout et al. 2009). Aspects that influence the decision for a destination country are; economic factors, already existing relationships between countries and groups, migration policy and the socio-political climate in a country of destination (Wijkhuijs, Kromhout et al. 2009).

## Asylum process

The Netherlands signed the Geneva Refugee Convention and the European Convention on human rights, based on these treaties the Netherlands has to accommodate people who are in danger in their own country (Rijksoverheid 2012). In the Netherlands the government grants asylum to people who are in danger in their own country if they are persecuted because of race, religion, nationality or political opinions (Rijksoverheid 2012). Even of more importance is the 1951 refugee convention. It relates to the Status of Refugees, the key document in defining who is a refugee, their rights and legal obligations of states (UNHCR, 2012). When somebody is not granted the refugee status, the associated rights and legal obligations of state are the person denied.

The Dutch asylum policy is set out according to the Aliens Act (vreemdelingenwet). This policy is implemented by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, IND). When an asylum seeker arrives in the Netherlands he has to present himself at the central reception location in Ter Apel. After a rest and preparation period of minimal six working days, the asylum procedure starts. The asylum procedure takes eight working days, a prolonged procedure can take up to

six months, during this time the asylum seeker resides in a center for asylum seekers. In case of a dismissal of the request a person has four weeks to appeal against the rejection or to prepare for return. (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland 2012)

### **Denied asylum seekers**

When an application for asylum is (definitely) declined a person has to return to his home country. After the declination the person has four weeks to depart (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland 2012). After the dismissal of the request there are different forms of departure. According to VluchtelingenWerk Nederland (2012) three forms of departure can be identified:

1. Independent departure with supervision
2. Forced departure
3. Independent departure without supervision

### **Voluntary return**

Foreign nationals who do not have the right of residence in the Netherlands have to leave the country, this departure is coordinated by the Repatriation and Departure Service (Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek, DT&V). When an application for asylum has been declined the asylum seeker has to leave the country, the return process is coordinated by DT&V. The responsibility of departure lies with the foreigner himself. When a failed asylum seeker leaves the country independent under supervision of DT&V this is called voluntary return. The DT&V has set up several projects to support people in the return process. Support can be financial assistance or support in kind in the country of origin. These projects are implemented by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and other organisations. (DT&V 2012)

The IOM is an international organisation that helps migrants to return and reintegrate. For foreign nationals who want to leave the Netherlands it provides information on voluntary return and about the situation in the country of destination. Further it takes care of the journey and offers guidance on departure, during transit and upon arrival. IOM can also support in obtaining travel documents. In addition, IOM can give financial support to certain groups (IOM 2012). There are also other organisations in the Netherlands that support failed asylum seekers in to return, for example Mediation Agency for Return (Maatwerk bij Terugkeer). Which aims to provide humane and effective reintegration support for rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants wishing to return to their country of origin (Maatwerk bij Terugkeer 2012).

### **Forced departure**

Another form of departure is forced departure. When the asylum application is declined the failed asylum seeker can be deported by the alien's police (vreemdelingen politie). Failed asylum seekers who have not yet left the Netherlands after 28 days can be transferred to a restrictive location, where is further worked on their departure. When a failed asylum seeker does not want to leave the country he may be placed in a detention centre and can be forced to depart. (Rijksoverheid 2012) However often departure cannot be enforced for example due to the lack of documents and many people return in society.

### **Unknown destination**

It also happens that an alien has left with unknown destination (MOB, met onbekende bestemming), aforementioned as independent departure without supervision. Inspection shows that a person is no longer present at the last known address, but departure has not been registered (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland 2012). In 2011 20.990 aliens left the Netherlands of which 10.170 persons left with unknown destination (Rapportage Vreemdelingenketen according VluchtelingenWerk Nederland 2012).

In their research about unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (UAMAS's) Kromhout and Leijstra (2006, pp. 57) identify four groups among minors who have left with unknown destination:

1. Minors who leave the shelter shortly after they have arrived there. Presumably these are cases of human trafficking from the country of origin.
2. Minors, especially girls, who leave the asylum after quite a while. Who probably have become victims of human trafficking and end up in the prostitution.
3. Minors who decide to not wait for the outcome of the asylum procedure.
4. Minors who will be put out of the shelter because they are almost 18 years and their asylum application has been declined.

The decision of former UAMAS's to stay is based on conditions in or related to the Netherlands; they feel at home, they have not yet realised their goals or they hope for a legal stay (Staring and Aarts 2010).

The circumstances in the home country also influence their decision; some former UAMAS's fear for their live, they have heard negative stories of people who have returned, they do not have a social network in their home country to support them, or conditions they cannot be blamed for example embassies not willing to provide the right documents (Staring and Aarts 2010).

Not much is known about the destination of asylum seekers whose destination has not been registered. They have three options; they stay illegally in the Netherlands, they have returned to their home

country or have left for a third country. Many of the denied asylum seekers remain in European countries (Valenta and Thorshaug 2011).

### **Asylum denied**

From the above can concluded that many asylum seekers do not leave the country when their application is turned down although that is expected of them. Denied asylum seekers who stay illegally in a country are persons who have left with an unknown destination or who cannot be forced to leave the country. According to Leerkes (2007) gradually a large group of failed asylum seekers has emerged in the Netherlands, he estimates that 17.500 to 30.000 of them are illegal. Most people residing illegally in the Netherlands stay in one of the four big cities (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002).

### **Refugees staying illegally**

The term denied asylum seekers is not easily defined. For example there are asylum seekers whose application has been turned down for the first time and try again, there are asylum seekers who are expected to return back home to await the decision and there are persons who have been denied asylum but cannot return home due to so called technical reasons for example when people have no passport. Because of this it is difficult to call somebody a denied asylum seekers, because when is somebody definitely denied. That is why it is proposed to use the term illegal refugees here. This refers to persons as mentioned above, refugees who have come to the Netherlands to claim asylum and have not been granted asylum but have not left the country. The following groups of people can be called illegal refugees (VOD 2012) :

- Asylum seekers who have entered the Netherlands through another European country and who need to apply for asylum in that other country.
- Asylum seekers who have done a repeated asylum application.
- Denied asylum seekers who cannot be deported because they do not have the necessary documents or their country does not let them return.
- Persons who have had a negative decision on their asylum application but have made an appeal against it.
- Persons whose resident permit has been withdrawn.
- Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (UAMAS), refugees who came to the Netherlands as a child and are expected to return to their home country when they turn 18.

Since the general pardon (generaal pardon) in 2007 the national government strives for a closed asylum policy. Asylum seekers are granted asylum or denied and have to return home and no people are caught between procedures. Until this is realized local governments, with the support of aid organizations, have to deal with denied asylum seekers who are staying illegally in their area. The national government has only agreed to the general pardon under the condition that local governments would close the shelters (Spijkerboer 2012). Thus it is expected that local government do not give support anymore to failed asylum seekers. But in practice there are still many people who cannot or will not leave the country. People still stay in the Netherlands and try to survive illegally. Persons who need a place to live and try to make a living. This poses a problem to municipalities, the national government does not approve of them giving support to aliens but if they don't illegal persons might not be able to make a living or find shelter and they will live on the streets.

Many municipalities still give support to denied asylum seekers. They do this out of ethical considerations or to prevent irregularities. It is reasoned since the government has not managed to make a closed asylum policy, since there are still people staying illegally, municipalities are not obliged to stop their support. Failed asylum seekers are not only helped by local governments, they are also supported by aid organizations and local initiatives for example from churches. Help is given in the form of a monthly stipend, or support finding a place to live, legal help or advice on health issues.

The issue of refugees staying illegally in the Netherlands seems to be a process in which different parties are involved. There are the national and local governments who do not agree on the way to handle illegal persons. On the local level there are of course the failed asylum seekers themselves, the municipality who establish the local policy, and aid organizations and local initiatives. How do all these actors influence each other and what does this mean for the process of dealing with illegality? How do the livelihoods of rejected asylum seekers look like when they decide to stay in the Netherlands? How do they do this when they are not recognized as legal citizens and are denied the access to these facilities and resources. And what roles do the local governments and aid organizations have in this process? And is this reflected in policy (change)?

## Research questions

The objective of this research was to get an understanding of the livelihood strategies of illegal refugees and the interaction with the local government and aid organisations. Based on this I used the following research question:

How do illegal refugees and institutions cope with illegality in Wageningen and Utrecht?

With the following sub questions:

1. What kind of livelihood strategies do illegal refugees in Wageningen and Utrecht employ?
2. Which actors are involved in the livelihoods strategies of illegal refugees?
3. How are these actors, for example institutions, like the local government and aid organisations involved in the livelihoods of illegal refugees?
4. How do the different actors influence each other?
5. Does this lead to policy change?
6. What are the differences between Wageningen and Utrecht?

## Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework served as a base for the research. The concepts of livelihood strategies, social interface and the importance of networks were leading ideas in the framework.

## Livelihood framework

How do rejected asylum seekers who stay in the Netherlands live and more specific in Wageningen and Utrecht? Or with other words how do their livelihoods look like. To get an insight in the lives of failed asylum seekers living in the Netherlands, the concept of livelihoods is used. Livelihood means a way of making a living. Through the Sustainable Livelihood Approach the concept of sustainable livelihood has gained much importance in development studies. In the early 1990s it got attention, based on the knowledge of famine and food security gained during the 1980s (Eldis 2012).

In their discussion of the concept sustainable livelihoods Chambers and Conway (1991, pp. 6) propose the following definition:

*A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.*

CARE, UNDP, Oxfam and IISD were among the first organisations that started to use the concept. Late 1990s the concept was taken up by UK's Department for International Development (DFID) (Eldis 2012). The following framework for sustainable livelihoods was developed by the DFID.

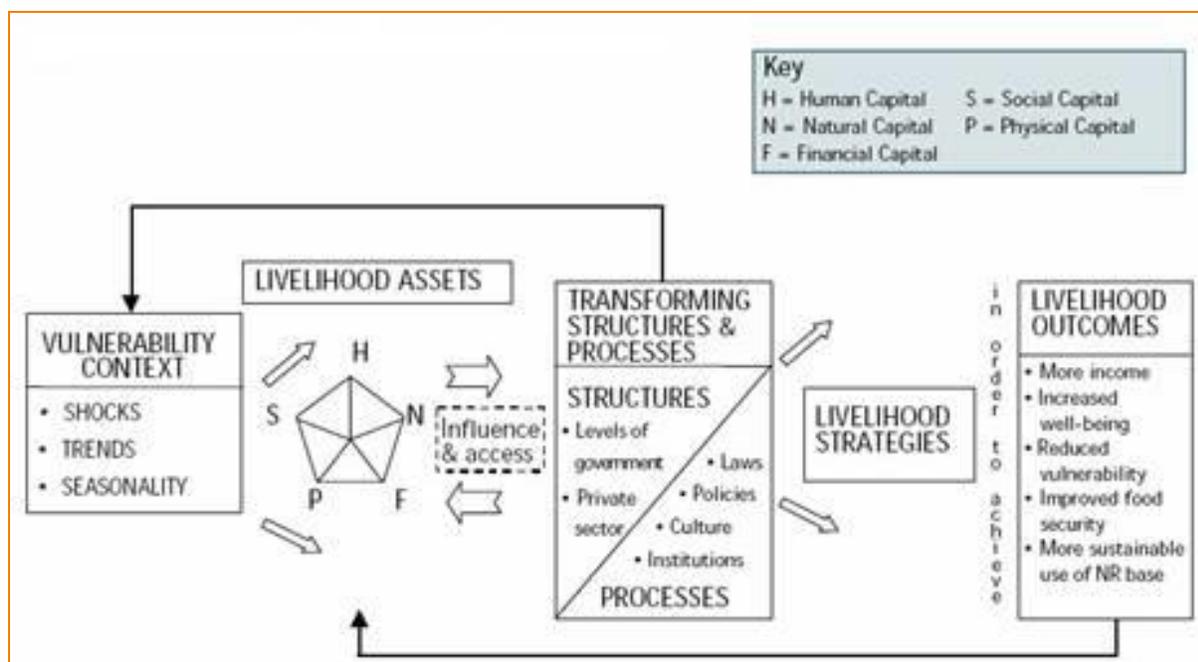


Figure 1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (source: DFID)

It is a tool to get a better understanding of people's livelihoods. The framework shows the main factors that affect people's livelihoods and the relationships between those factors (DFID 1999). According to Eldis (2012) the framework includes the factors:

- the priorities that people define as their desired livelihood outcomes
- their access to assets, and their ability to put these to productive use
- the different strategies they adopt (and how they use their assets) in pursuit of their priorities
- the policies, institutions and processes that shape their access to assets and opportunities
- the context in which they live, and factors affecting vulnerability to shocks and stresses

Important in the livelihoods of failed asylum seekers is their network, they (partly) rely on other people and organisations for their survival. They use coping strategies to deal with the insecurity of their livelihoods. Individuals and households in a marginal socioeconomic positions develop certain strategies to meet their basic needs and not fall too far below the prevailing conditions in their society (Snel and Staring 2001, pp. 7). In their research Snel and Staring (2001) argue that formal social security can only be sufficient for a limited extent. In their paper they write about countries where public social security provisions are less developed but this is also true for the people that cannot access social security in this case denied asylum seekers. That is why there are other institutions and provisions that give a certain security like; people helping each other and exchange goods and services, relatives provide a certain

extent of assistance, and there is the material support provided by local authorities or private charity agencies and informal economic activities and so forth (Snel and Staring 2001, pp. 8). Different coping strategies can be identified. Snel and Staring (2001, pp. 13) describe four kind of strategies; limiting household expenses by consuming less or excluding non-productive members of the household; using internal household resources more intensively by meeting the household's own needs or establishing reciprocity relations within the informal social network; developing market strategies such as formal labour participation (if possible) or informal economic activities; and seeking the support of powerful external actors, such as the state, local authorities or private organizations.

The idea that vulnerable people use coping strategies is also reflected in the study about aliens in the Netherlands of Engbersen, Staring et al. (2002), they use the ideas of Engbersen *et al.* and Engbersen en Staring. They assume that poor citizens to a certain extend have access to both formal and informal sources of support, they distinguish four economies to which they have access;

- the formal economy: wage labour and entrepreneurship
- the informal economy; labour and crime
- the welfare economy: support from facilities of the welfare state
- the gift economy: support from family, friends and aid organisations

These four economies can be used as a framework to identify the means of existence of aliens in the Netherlands (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002). People who are residing illegally in the Netherlands will not be able to access the formal economy. Also their access to the welfare economy is minimal. Since the government has tighten their policies towards illegal migrants it has become impossible to get access to facilities from the welfare state (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002). This leaves the informal economy and the gift economy as sources of income for illegal residents. These are thus sources that can be used in coping strategies of denied asylum seekers residing illegally in the country.

In their research Staring and Aarts (2010) studied youngsters without right of residence in the Netherlands. In their research they discuss how the youngsters get their income and also refer to the four economies mentioned before. According to them the former UAMAS' do not gain income through the formal economy nor do they acquire revenues from the welfare economy (Staring and Aarts 2010). Illegal youngsters mostly acquire their income from the gift economy, primarily from aid organisations and secondly from acquaintances (Staring and Aarts 2010). Thus it can be expected that the gift

economy and the informal economy are the income sources for persons residing illegally in the Netherlands.

The livelihood framework can be used to give an insight in the livelihoods of illegal refugees and the persons and organizations that are involved in it. Answering thus the first two sub questions and partially the third question of the research.

### **Social network theory**

The third sub question of the research is about how actors are involved in the livelihoods of illegal refugees. The idea of the social network theory might also help to answer this question. The above already suggests the importance of networks, people use their networks to get access to resources. For example they can get support from friends or family. Or they can find informal jobs via acquaintances. It is expected that the gift economy and the informal economy are the important income sources for persons residing illegally in the Netherlands, and these are accessible through connections. That is why network analysis can be important in this research. The concept of social network is used widely and network analysis is often used in research. Network analysis can give an insight in the relations between the actors in a network. Network analysis focuses on the ties between social entities and on the patterns and implications of these relationships (Carrington, Scott et al. 2005). According to Carrington, Scott et al. (2005) social network analysis is distinguished from other research approaches because it is based on an assumption of the importance of relationships among interacting units. In this research social network analysis can give an insight in the relationships that failed asylum seekers have with other person and organizations in their network and the patterns and implications that can be seen.

### **Social interface**

Not only the failed asylum seekers themselves have to deal with their illegal status, it also affects the local government and persons staying legally in an area. Another kind of actors involved are the organisations offering support, like churches or aid organisations, to the denied asylum seekers. This process of different actors dealing with illegality brings in to mind the ideas of Norman Long. Long (2004) stresses the importance of an actor oriented analysis. This implies a focus on the life worlds and interlocking 'projects' of actors, and delving more deeply into the social and cultural discontinuities and ambiguities inherent in the 'battlefields of knowledge' that shape the relations between local actors, development practitioners and researchers (Long 2004, pp. 15). Long emphasizes a research approach in which more attention is given to the different actors involved in a process or project and their dealings with each other. By not only looking at the livelihood strategies of the denied asylum seekers but also to

other actors that are involved this will be done. An important idea is the concept social interface. The point where ideas and practices of different actors get together, defined by Long (2001, pp. 243) as:

*A social interface is a critical point of intersection between life worlds, social fields or levels of social organisation where social discontinuities, based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power, are most likely to be located.*

The situations as described earlier, denied asylum seekers getting help from aid organisations, tolerated by local authorities while the national government strives for a closed asylum policy is such an interface. It is an interface where different life worlds come together, the life world of people trying to survive illegally and the life world of legal citizens. It is an interface where social organisations meet, churches and aid organisations. And an interface with discrepancies in power, the authorities versus denied asylum seekers. And as stressed by Long (2001) it is an on going process of negotiation and adaption. Interventions are not the execution of a detailed plan but an on going, socially-constructed and negotiated process (Long 2004). The notion of social interface offers away of exploring and understanding questions of diversity and conflict inherent in processes of external intervention (Long 2004, pp. 28). It is a concept that does not only make it easier to understand policy process but also the reaction of the groups involved (Long 2004). It can be used to look at the policy process around failed asylum seekers and to explore the reaction of the different actors in this process. Thus this last concept may be used to answer the sub questions '*How do the different actors influence each other?*' and '*Does this lead to policy change?*'.

## Research design

To get an insight in the process around the illegality of denied asylum seekers qualitative research was done. Qualitative research is used in many research traditions to interpret and explain the behaviour and experiences of the people concerned with the least possible disturbance of their surrounding ('t Hart and Boeije 2005). Ethnography means that the researcher is involved in people's lives. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) ethnography usually involves the researcher participating overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artifacts - in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, pp. 3). During the research also an ethnographic approach was used.

## Research methods

Different research methods were used to collect data. Using several methods improves the reliability of the research. A more elaborate literature review was done to get an insight in the possible livelihoods strategies of failed asylum seekers. Then a more ethnographic approach was followed. First (semi-structured) interviews were held with denied asylum seekers and other actors. Further observations were done. Last a discussion group was held, with the persons concerns, to feed back the findings. Together this will be used to answer the research questions.

## Literature study

Books, journal articles, and websites were used in the literature research. Two themes were researched. Namely people staying illegally in the Netherlands and failed asylum seekers staying in the Netherlands. Not much research is yet done on failed asylum seekers staying illegally in the Netherlands, and what is known is mainly about asylum seekers living in the four big cities. Because of that the topic of illegal residents was added to give some more insight. The information of both topics was used to get knowledge on the livelihood strategies of denied asylum seekers and acted as a basis for the next step in the research.

## Interviews

The main source of information for this research is data from the interviews. To get an understanding of the lives of failed asylum seekers interviews were held with people involved with failed asylum seekers and if possible persons from the target group themselves. To get a better understanding of the interface surrounding the illegal status of these persons and the networks they are in also other people were

interviewed. Namely the people who work for organizations or are involved in private initiatives that offer support to (failed) asylum seekers, further there are the policy makers and implementers and civilians. The interviews were semi-structured and based on an interview-guide. The study was done in Wageningen and Utrecht. Due to the old asylum center in Wageningen is an interesting place to start the research. But it was expected that the number people that could be found in Wagening would not be enough for the research. That is why there is chosen to add another city, namely Utrecht. Because of the size and the centrality of Utrecht it was assumed that asylum seekers would be present. Researching two different cities would make it possible to gather more data and the possibility to compare the two places. In practice the research was not limited to these areas, the researcher also came in touch with people from outside the area and data was also collected concerning those people.

Respondents were approached via organizations that support or are involved in the livelihoods of illegal refugees. The snowball effect was also used to find new respondents. Further people were found by going to places where they reside. The objective was to interview different actors. In the field the following persons were interviewed; illegal refugees, workers and volunteers at aid organizations, persons from the church, and employees of the municipality. Appendix A gives an overview of the people that were interviewed, how they were approached and to which city they belong. Most interviews were semi-structured, by using an interview guide. Other interviews were more informal, without an interview guide. Appendix B gives an example of the interviews guide used.

It was assumed that it would be difficult to with failed asylum seekers. Because they could afraid of being arrested or would not find it useful. That is why it was important to guarantee their anonymity, gain their trust and explain the aim of the study.

### **Observations**

As said before ethnography means participation in people's lives. Semi structured interviews is one of the many methods that can be used in an ethnographic approach. Another method is participatory observation. In the research observations were done while visiting places were failed asylum seekers reside, like shelters places. By chance a number of documents were collected concerning illegal refugees, like information letters, which also have been studied. Appendix C gives an outline of the observations that were done.

## Literature findings

The research started with looking into the existing literature. Not much is known about refugees staying illegally in the Netherlands. Some research is done about person's living without the right of residence also some research is done about denied asylum seekers in the four big cities. The study of Livio Sansone about Creole youngsters in Amsterdam might shine some light on livelihood strategies. This chapter gives an overview of the existing literature.

## Living without the right of residence

Persons, who do not have the right of residence in the Netherlands, are staying illegally in the country. A considerable number of persons are living illegally in the Netherlands. There can be different reasons for illegal residence. Some people have entered the country illegally, others arrived legally but lost their right of residence and failed asylum seekers who stayed in the country when they were denied (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Several estimations have been made about the exact number. Van der Heijden et al. have made an estimate of the number of illegals residing in the Netherlands in 2009 (Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011) They came up with a total of approximately 97.145 persons. But it has to be kept in mind that this number is not constant, because people enter and leave the country continuously (Staring according Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011).

As described earlier many rejected asylum seekers leave with an unknown destination. They have either returned home, left for another country or are staying illegally in the Netherlands. Other denied asylum seekers cannot be forced to leave country. Many rejected asylum seekers remain in European countries (Valenta and Thorshaug 2011). According to Leerkes (2007) gradually a large group of failed asylum seekers has developed in the Netherlands, he estimates that 17.500 to 30.000 of them live in the illegality. About 10 to 20 per cent of the total population of illegal residents (De Boom et al. according Leerkes 2007).

Research shows that in Western countries, economic, social and political circumstances are present that create opportunities for illegal residence, and partially creates a demand for it as well (Düvell and Leerkes et al. according Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011). Leerkes et al. (according Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011) argue that the opportunities for illegal residents are influenced by several factors, namely; networks, labour, housing and forming relationships. In the existing research about persons residing illegally in the Netherlands quite some attention is given to the number of people residing in the Netherlands and their background. Further several themes can be distinguished in the literature. Namely means of existence, labour, housing, and health (care) are the main topics (see Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002; Leerkes 2007;

Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Also discussed in the literature are the topics delinquency, prostitution and education.

### **Means of existence**

People who are residing illegally in the Netherlands will not be able to access the formal economy. Also their access to the welfare economy is minimal. Since the government has tightened their policies towards illegal migrants it has become impossible to get access to facilities from the welfare state (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002). Their options are thus restricted to the informal economy and the gift economy. In the gift economy a distinction should be made between support from friends and family and assistance from organisations that support persons without the right of residence (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002).

In their research Staring and Aarts (2010) studied youngsters without right of residence in the Netherlands. They discussed how the youngsters get their income and also refer to the four economies mentioned before. According to them the former UAMAS' do not gain income through the formal economy nor do they acquire revenues from the welfare economy (Staring and Aarts 2010). Illegal youngsters mostly acquire their income from the gift economy, primarily from aid organisations and secondly from acquaintances (Staring and Aarts 2010). Aid organisations support them by means of pocket money and housing (Staring and Aarts 2010). Only for a limited extend they are active at the informal economy for the reason that they still hope to obtain the asylum status, are afraid to be exploited and because of the scarcity of informal labour (Staring and Aarts 2010). By maintaining a sober lifestyle and getting support from social networks illegal youngster try to get by (Staring and Aarts 2010).

### **Labour**

People who stay illegally in the Netherlands cannot work in the formal economy because they are not allowed to work. That is why they have to turn to the informal economy if they want to work. The informal market can be divided in to two categories, black jobs and illegal activities (Sansone 1992, pp. 72). Another way to categorize the informal economy is by dividing between monetary and nonmonetary activities (Sansone 1992, pp. 72). Kromhout, Wubs et al. (2008) estimate that in 2004 between 65.000 and 91.000 persons without the right of residence were working illegally in the Netherlands, and in 2006 5.500 of them were arrested. According to Boom, Leerkes et al. (2011) there is an increasing need for (informal) labour-intensive work in the lower levels of the labour market in the major cities. This provides labour opportunities for illegal residents. Additionally large ethnic-economies have developed in the big cities where informal work by illegal fellow countryman is common (Boom,

Leerkes et al. 2011). People are working in the catering, cleaning, security, care, construction, agriculture, retail industry and temp jobs (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008; Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011). In the study of Staring and Aarts (2010) one third of the former UAMAS's was active in the informal labour market. They were working in the following sectors; cleaning, construction, agriculture, catering and personal services (Staring and Aarts 2010).

Sansone (1992) studied youngster from a lower social class living in Amsterdam, they engaged in alternative activities to replace formal work. They initiate activities to counteract the consequences of their unemployment for their income, their social contacts and their status. The activities they undertake range from making some additional income by for example cleaning or repairing furniture to the more illegal activities like dealing and stealing (Sansone 1992, pp. 72). Sansone (1992, pp. 103) describes that it has become more difficult for the youngster to engage in the less illegal form of alternative activities this is among other reasons due to stricter controls of the informal market.

## Crime

It is often thought that illegality and criminality are connected. Engbersen en Van der Leun (according Leerkes 2007) suggest that aliens commit 'survival crime' due to their marginal position. Current theories state that the involvement in crime of illegal persons depends on the 'opportunity structure' they have access to, the opportunity structure has three dimensions (Engbersen en Van der Leun according Leerkes 2007 pp. 3):

- Formal institutions such as the official labour market
- Informal institutions such as the informal economy
- Criminal networks

Depending on the level of access to the opportunity structures aliens will be involved in different structures. Is it for them difficult to access the formal and informal institutions they will turn to criminal networks. Different type of crimes can be seen among illegal persons. Some seem to be connected to their illegal status but some not at all (Leerkes 2007). Leerkes (2007 pp. 9) identifies four types of crimes among persons staying illegally in the Netherlands;

- Residence crime: crime directly linked to their illegal status.
- Existence crime: crime related to circumstances indirectly linked to their status.
- Addiction related crime: crime related to circumstances indirectly linked to their status.
- Other crime: crime not related to their status.

Leerkes (2008) researched criminality among persons residing illegally in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In Amsterdam illegal residents were overrepresented by a factor 1.5 to 2 in the crime figures (Leerkes 2008). Furthermore around 2000 an increase in the number of illegal residents in Amsterdam suspected of a crime can be identified (Leerkes 2008). Leerkes (2008) suggests two reasons; transnational crime as a result of the increasing internationalisation and increasing marginalisation of illegal persons through stricter policies.

According to Staring and Aarts (2010) former UAMAS's try to avoid crime because they still hope to gain a residence permit and are afraid they will be caught. But rejected asylum seekers are more often suspected of robbery or having false documents than asylum seekers (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Between 2000 and 2010 an increase in the number of rejected asylum seekers detained can be observed (Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011).

### **Prostitution**

Another topic often linked to illegality is prostitution. It is feared that people, in particular women, residing in the Netherlands without the right of residence, against their will end up in prostitution and will be exploited. Often they work in the less visible places like the escort, private house and via the internet (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Little is known about the number of prostitutes illegally living in the Netherlands. Besides the IND, the Foundation against trafficking in women in the Netherlands (Stichting tegen Vrouwenhandel STV) makes registrations and in 2006 63% of the victims did not have the right of residence (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008).

Society and politics sometimes worry that rejected asylum seekers, especially former UAMAS's are recruited for prostitution. Staring and Aarts (2010) cannot confirm this in their research. Staring and Aarts (2010) discovered that UAMAS's are rather victims of trafficking outside the sex industry than forced prostitution. In contrast Van den Borne en Kloosterboer (according to Kromhout and Leijstra 2006) say that some UAMAS's end up in prostitution, due to poor future perspective, lack of knowledge of the society and the absence of a network.

### **Housing**

Most people residing illegally in the Netherlands stay in one of the four big cities (Engbersen, Staring et al. 2002). They mainly live in the so called socio-economically weak areas with a relative large number of immigrants (Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011). Whether people illegally reside in a place depends on a number of factors. The occurrence of legal non-western immigrants in a neighbourhood, work, cheap

accommodation and single people are all aspects that influence the amount of people illegally residing in an area (Leerkes, Engbersen et al. 2006). Most illegal persons live with family or acquaintances, in a guest house, private rented houses, or in shelters (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Sometimes these premises have overdue maintenance or a lack of hygiene (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Mahler (according Boom, Leerkes et al. 2011) points at a parallel in the Netherlands, on the one hand the social housing makes it possible for illegals to live cheap with fellow countrymen or partners, on the other hand, there is a more expensive private housing market, which is also accessible for illegal immigrants.

In the research of Staring and Aarts (2010) about former UAMAS's the issue of housing is discussed. According to them the majority of the former UAMAS's have a place to stay, about 10 per cent does not (Staring and Aarts 2010). Three dominant forms of housing can be distinguished (Staring and Aarts 2010, pp. 112):

- Living in lodgings
- Living in a house or apartment
- Living with no fixed abode

More than half of the respondents in the research of Staring and Aarts (2010) has free housing, with as downside the shame respondents have for living for free. Additionally some cases of abuse were described; in exchange for housing or the threat to report them homeowners or head residents expect that the former UAMAS's do certain work, engage in intimate relationships or sexual services (Staring and Aarts 2010, pp. 12).

## **Health and education**

Health and education are also topics often mentioned in the literature. People residing illegally in the Netherlands have a (limited) right to health care and education, but they do not always know this. Illegal persons are hesitant to make use of health care or they might be refused (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). This due to the lack of knowledge about the right to health care of persons without the right of residence among illegals and social workers (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). And people residing illegally in the Netherlands might be afraid of discovery (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). In principle illegal residents should be able to access vital health care. Former UAMAS's get access to health care via their social network, mainly via aid organisations, further some of them get in touch with health providers themselves and a small group does not access health care (Staring and Aarts 2010).

Access to education is also restricted for illegal persons. But children do have a right to education. Former UAMAS's have difficulties finishing their education, the reasons for this are diverse, but mostly related to their illegal status (Staring and Aarts 2010). Former UAMAS's have the right to continue their education after they have lost their legal status (Cardol according Staring and Aarts 2010). But this is not known by all youngsters and educational institutions (Staring and Aarts 2010).

### **Summary literature findings**

A considerable number of persons are living illegally in the Netherlands. Quite some people of this group are illegal refugees. Accessing the formal market is difficult for illegal persons. That is why they mainly rely on the informal economy and the gift economy. Denied asylum seekers survive through gifts from aid or social organizations or from family and acquaintances. And they make money via the informal economy. They do illegal labour or are working in ethnic sub economies, both mainly in the big cities. They are only active on the black labour market to a certain extent because they are afraid of discovery.

It is often suspected that criminality and illegality are connected. The involvement in criminality of illegal residents seems to depend on the opportunities they have. Staring en Aarts show in their research that former UAMA's try to avoid criminality because they still hope to gain a residence permit and or are afraid they will be caught. Society sometimes worries that rejected asylum seekers, especially former UAMAS's are recruited for prostitution, but this cannot be confirmed.

Whether people illegally reside in a place depends on a number of factors. The occurrence of legal non-western immigrants in a neighbourhood, work, cheap accommodation and single people are all aspects that influence the amount of people illegally residing in an area (Leerkes, Engbersen et al. 2006). Most illegal persons live with family or acquaintances, in a guest house, private rented houses, or in shelters (Kromhout, Wubs et al. 2008). Most denied asylum seekers have free housing with family or friends, sometimes in return for certain activities.

People residing illegally in the Netherlands have a (limited) right to health care and education, but they and the organisations do not always know this

## Interview findings

A small number of people without the right of residence live in Wageningen. Most of them have a connection with Wageningen through their stay in the former AZC. In Utrecht the number of illegal refugees is bigger. In both places a number of people were interviewed; denied asylum seekers and people who are involved with illegal refugees. Appendix A gives a complete overview of all the interviews. In this section an overview is given of the findings. The results are divided in several themes. The following themes are used to get an insight in the lives of illegal refugees; making a living, with the subthemes labour, criminality and prostitution; housing; health and education; pastime; and policy. The topics are discussed for both Wageningen and Utrecht.

### Making a living

People have different strategies to make a living. In Wageningen and surroundings most of the illegal refugees are supported by an organization. Probably the most important organization for them is the VOD (Stichting Vluchteling Onder Dak). *"We give legal and social assistance to denied asylum seekers. We support them by giving allowances and help them to find housing."* (Employee VOD). The VOD receives subsidy from the municipality but therefore has to meet the criteria set by the local government. Their clients need to have a perspective, meaning they are willing to return home or have a chance on a permit, and they need to have a connection with the city. They can only grant financial support to persons who meet those criteria. Another organization that supports illegal refugees is Mai Mi Bath. *"Mai Mi Bath supports refugees by giving psycho-social assistance and legal support and when possible we give people an allowance."* (Employee Mai Mi Bath). This organization has a smaller budget, it does not get support from the government but due to this they do not have to meet the criteria of the municipality. Both organizations support the refugees by giving them legal and social assistance. If their budget allows it they also give an allowance to their clients. *"We have a certain budget, but we can only spend it once."* (Employee VOD). The amount that clients receive from the VOD is €55,- each two weeks. The aid that the illegal refugees get is very important for them, without it would be difficult to survive. *"If the VOD would not be here to assist us, it would be hard for us."* (Illegal refugee).

Another party in Wageningen that supports illegal refugees is the church. Sometimes they appeal to the church for help. *"When people come to us when they are in need, we provide food for them or do groceries for them."* (Pastoral worker). The churches give them spiritual support but also more practical things are arranged. They give them an allowances and help them to find legal aid. Often they get in

touch with the VOD. One of the assumptions in the research was that the Mosque would also support people but this has not been confirmed.

The allowances that people get from organizations are not big. And not everybody is financially supported by an organization. That is why people also undertake other activities to gain some money or to support themselves in other ways. In Wageningen there are several places where you can get things for free. Illegal refugees go to the food bank (voedselbank) and variants of the food bank with free clothing (kledingbank) and free toys (speelgoedbank). Another activity that is mentioned by denied asylum seeker is collecting goods that are thrown out but can still be used, called dumpster diving. Some of them employ activities to gain some resources. For example one person baked cookies and sold them, the money was used to buy oil for the heater. Another person baked pancakes at the neighborhood center.

Further the personal network of denied asylum seekers is also an important resource. This is mostly mentioned by the people working for an organization, it is not mentioned explicitly by the refugees themselves. Often the help is basic, something to eat or drink. Or it is immaterial. Persons living with other people get support from the people they live with. And several people have a support group, a group of Wageningers that are concerned with them and assist them. Illegal refugees can sometimes find work through their network. Some of them have a side job or do some occasional work, this is discussed in a separate section. And they can help each other. *“When they really are in need they lend money from each other.” (Pastoral worker).*

In Utrecht there are many organizations that support illegal refugees. There is STIL an organization that offers juridical and medical help to illegal residents. They refer people to doctors, shelters, lawyers or other caretakers. Then there are several organizations that house people. There is SNDVU (Stichting Noodopvang Dakloze Vreemdelingen Utrecht), an organization that supports homeless illegal residents. This organization has the same criteria as the VOD that clients have to meet to get there assistance. SNDVU houses persons, gives them an allowance and organizes social activities for their clients. But their capacity is limited. The foundation Huize Agnes has several houses where they take care of women and their children without papers. And there is the foundation Seguro which has two projects to houses people without the right of residence. Both foundations house people and support them financially. *“Huize Agnes gives me an allowance. Next to that I go to the food bank. And when I need clothes or something else I get it from Huize Agnes.” (resident Huize Agnes).*

Other organizations in Utrecht where illegal refugees go are organizations that do not specifically target them but assist homeless people or vulnerable people. Ubuntu-huis and Het Catharijnehuis are both organizations that offer daycare for homeless people and in the case of the Ubuntu-huis also for vulnerable people. *“Very often people eat here, and they can do their laundry.” (Volunteer Ubuntu-huis).* Several days a week people can come to the Ubuntu-house for a meal. They can come and do their laundry, there are activities and people can organize their own activities with support of the organization. Het Catharijnehuis provides the necessities of life. They organize a lunch every day, people can take a shower, and stay during the day. *“I go to Het Catharijnehuis for a shower, food or just to sit there for a while.”(visitor Ubuntu-huis).* In Utrecht there are several places where people can go and eat for free or low cost. This is organized by aid organizations, churches or social initiatives. This is well-known by illegal refugees and they share this knowledge with each other. *“Very often they do not have an income and they develop tactics or knowledge on where you can get stuff for free or at low cost. For example Het Catharijnehuis where you can get soup and bread. Every day you can go and eat somewhere for free.” (Volunteer Ubuntu-huis).* In Utrecht you also have places where you can get things for free, like clothes. Illegal refugees also go to these places. But the food bank is not very useful for people who live on the streets.

In Utrecht people also go to the churches for help. A number of the churches have set up an umbrella organization to help homeless and vulnerable people. This initiative also helps illegal refugees, they refer them to shelter and other organizations, and incidentally they give them financial support. Individual churches also support people; they give them financial assistant and help them with basic needs. *“In the church you could get clothes, not necessarily for me, but for people who needed clothes and could not pay for it themselves.” (Client SNDVU).* Like some churches in Utrecht also some mosques support denied asylum seekers.

The network illegal refugees have is also important, friends and acquaintances. They have met those people in the asylum center, at organizations or otherwise. The help they get is mostly basic, a place to sleep or some food. *“People, who know me and the situation I am in, if they see something nice they will buy it for me.” (Client SNDVU).* Or they help them to find a job.

## **Labour**

*“Do you know what fine an employer can get for doing that??” (Person housing illegal refugees).* As pointed out clearly by one of the persons involved in my research, illegal refugees are not allowed to

work. When they do they risk getting arrested and put after bars and the employer involved can get a big fine. But although people are not allowed to work some have a side job or do some occasional work.

Some of the illegal refugees do small jobs to acquire additional income. These are chores like, gardening and timberwork. These jobs are found via their network or by asking around. *“Through the grapevine or through acquaintances I find these jobs. I have no work at the moment but usually I do gardening.” (Client VOD).* Although some of them like to work but cannot find a job. The general opinion about working is that it has become more difficult for illegal refugees to find jobs because of stricter regulations. In the past people could work on contract base but the introduction of the social security number has made this impossible. More recently the introduction of high fines that employers can get nowadays has made it even more difficult for people to find black jobs. *“No, we are not allowed to work. Though I have tried, but could not find a job.” (Illegal refugee).* In addition these people are more vulnerable when looking for a black job. People can misuse their situation, by paying them less or not at all. *‘Through the grapevine I find jobs, but sometimes people try to abuse you. Once there was a lady who did not want to pay, I stopped working for her.’ (Client VOD).*

In Utrecht some of the illegal refugees also have jobs. Not everybody can work due to physical or mental conditions. They find jobs through acquaintances or by asking around, on the black market, the same way Dutch people do. *“I put up notes in the supermarket looking for cleaning or babysitting jobs. Now I clean the home of a man.”(Illegal refugee).* Generally the work is painting, timberwork, construction work or cleaning. *“The work they do? Is for example cleaning jobs, mainly the poorly paying jobs.” (President OMDUW).* Sometimes the jobs are more informal like the woman who sometimes watches the baby of a friend. It seems that it is easier to find a (temp) job in Utrecht than in Wageningen but that in Wageningen people are eager to help somebody out with a job.

### **Criminality**

Some interviewees in Utrecht suggested that some people might be involved in petty offenses. Several times stealing was mentioned as a way to add to their income, for example stealing bikes. This was not confirmed by the illegal refugees themselves. The contrary was also stated in both Wageningen en Utrecht, illegal refugees stay away from offenses and criminality. This was confirmed by the illegal refugees that were involved in the research, several reasons were mentioned. Illegal refugees are afraid that when they engage in criminal activities they will be arrested and the police will find out their illegal status. Some still hope to be allowed to stay in the Netherlands and think that criminality will harm their changes for a permit. Further religious beliefs were given as a reason not to get involved in crime.

## Prostitution

A number of people that are involved in organizations that help illegal refugees mentioned prostitution. They think that many female illegal refugees end up in the prostitution. Three respondents had dealt with a case in which a woman was involved in prostitution, a pastoral worker and two aid organization workers. To prevent this many of organization help the most vulnerable people first like single women and women with children.

## Housing

Housing is an important part of somebodies livelihood. Illegal refugees find housing in different ways. The VOD in Wageningen helps its clients with finding housing and if possible they help them to pay the rent. But as said the resources of the VOD are limited that is why they help the most vulnerable clients first. Some people find their own place like an illegal refugee in Wageningen; *"I rent a room, which I found by myself."* Others are helped by an organization. People rent a room, or a house or they live with a family. Finding a place to stay is not easy. Several persons have stated how difficult it is for illegal refugees to find a place to stay.

The issue of housing is quite different in Utrecht. First of all there is the phenomenon of homeless people. Quite a number of illegal refugees live on the streets in Utrecht. They cannot find or afford shelter. *"I really like to have a place to stay."* (Illegal refugee). They live on streets; some of them can sleep in the Sleep-inn. The Sleep-inn is a shelter that offers sleep-places at low-cost for homeless people. The number of nights people can stay is restricted, also the number of beds is limited and only people who have a link with Utrecht are welcome. *"Since last year the sleep-inn is only open to people who have a bond with Utrecht. Due to this it is not accessible anymore for denied asylum seekers."* (President OMDUW). Only illegal refugees who are referred to the sleep-inn by an organization like OMDUW or STIL can sleep in the Sleep-inn. *"STIL has given me a 'guarantee', a letter whit which I can go to the Sleep-inn."* (Visitor Ubuntu-huis). As well as in Wageningen in Utrecht there are also persons who find shelter through aid organizations. As mentioned in the above, SNDVU, Huize Agnes and Seguro all house people. Some people find their own accommodation, on the private housing market. Finally there are a number of people who roam, they go from one address to another. They stay with friends, acquaintances or people they have met in the asylum center.

## Health and education

To access medical help is not easy for illegal refugees. In Wageningen most of them go to the organization that assists them, VOD, Mai Mi Bath or they ask somebody from the church for assistance.

*“Once somebody came to me with toothache, the dentist did not want to help him.” (Pastoral worker).*

Three boys that are resident with a Dutch family but do not get assistance from an organization ask the women that has taken them in what to do when they are in medical need. In Utrecht the organizations that help illegal refugees also help them with accessing medical help. “For medical help we refer people to medical institutions”. (Worker SNDVU). They refer them or they even offer medical help. Het Catharijnehuis has several different healthcare providers coming to their building which their visitors can go to.

Most of the denied asylum seekers in Wageningen do not go to school or study. Except children, like other kids they are obliged to go to school. Once they come into contact with an organization, they are sent to school. Some illegal refugees try to start an education but are not accepted. *“I tried to study at the ROC, I was almost admitted but did not succeed.” (Client VOD)*. Sometimes they go to trainings for example Mai Mi Bath offers Dutch lessons for their clients. In Utrecht the adult illegal refugees also do not go to school, trainings like Dutch lessons, and cycling lessons are offered by the aid organizations. Children are also referred to schools by the aid organizations. *“When women and children arrive here they get a medical check-up and children go to the infant-care centre or to school.” (Volunteer Huize Agnes)*. One of the respondents does go to school; this was arranged by the organization UAF. A foundation that helps refugees with schooling and work.

## **Policy**

Policy was not elaborate discussed in the literature but in interviews it was mentioned, the respondents talked about the local policy in Wageningen and Utrecht. Both cities have quite a positive policy towards illegal refugees. Both tolerate illegal refugees and do not follow the national policy. The municipality of Wageningen does not support illegal refugees themselves but gives subsidy to the VOD to help them. They have set criteria's for the help the VOD offers, people need to have a perspective, either willing to return home or still a chance on a resident permit, and they need to have a connection with Wageningen. An autonomous committee checks if the clients of the VOD meet the criteria set by the municipality.

The local government of Utrecht also has a positive approach towards illegal refugees. They also subsidize organizations that assist denied asylum seekers. They want to help vulnerable people, help them of the streets and want to prevent irregularities. Several organization have mentioned that there is an unwritten rule that the people known with their organizations are not arrested by the policy but recently some people have been arrested what is not seen as a good sign towards the policy and the

implementation of the policy. Further in Utrecht the major seems to be important because she had a positive attitude towards illegal refugees, but she has resigned. People wonder what might happen with the local policy with the new major.

## Pastime

To get a better insight in the livelihoods of illegal refugees there was looked into their daytime activities. They are not allowed to work or to study, only children are obliged to go to school. Officially they are also not allowed to do volunteer work. In Wageningen most of the people have a place to stay and there for can spent time on doing the household and taking care of family or kids. Both the VOD and Mai Mi Bath offer Dutch lessons to their clients. Clients of VOD can also go to Solidez, the neighborhood center and the library. They also stimulate their clients to volunteer. *"I volunteer, I cannot sit at home all day, I will get bored. I work at the boarding kennels, twice a week." (Client VOD).* Besides that denied asylum seekers visit each other and talk. Other activities that are mentioned are; activities at the church, meeting with friends, reading, gardening, walking, cycling, watching TV and playing games on the computer. Further they do activities in order to gain extra income. *"Sometimes I collect things that are thrown away. Next to that I don't do much. You survive. You sleep and you eat. I have nothing to do." (Illegal refugee).*

In Utrecht there is a difference between the daytime activities of the persons who have housing and the illegal refugees that are homeless. The ones who have housing spent time on doing the household and taking care of family, while people on the streets spend much time on finding a place to sleep and trying to improve their life. The people who do not have housing can go to daycare to pass their time, to Het Catharijnehuis and the Ubuntu-huis. Visitors of the Ubuntu-huis can work in the garden, have a little nap, they play soccer, follow Dutch lessons, follow workshops and eat. The organizations who house people also organize activities, to keep people active and to integrate them in society. The SNDVU organizes Dutch lessons, cycling lessons, clients can join the gym, they give workshops and they help people to access courses and trainings. *"They have a much spare time, thus distraction is good, that is why we organize social activities. This means that we teach them new skills, like computing or sewing. We teach them something useful this can also be serving coffee in home for elderly people." (Worker SNDVU).* In Huize Agnes the residents are expected to take care of their own room and household. Then they try to find them something to do, they look at their talents and what they can do with it, for example cooking, sewing or volunteering at the food bank. *"Some of the women lie in bed all day while*

*others are active and some of them even try to study.”(employee Huize Agnes). Other activities that are mentioned are; volunteer work, cooking, jogging, reading, watching TV, and surfing on the web.*

## Observations findings

In this section an overview is given of the observations. Observations were done while visiting certain places, doing interviews, and a number of documents were collected during the research. The observations are arranged according to the same themes as the interview findings, the subject policy is left out. Appendix C gives an overview of the observations. In the research quite some papers were collected. These are materials from different organization to inform their target audience, often the audience is homeless people. Quite interesting is the booklet of the municipality Utrecht, with information for people without the right of residence.

## Making a living

During the information evening of the VOD, it becomes clear that many of the illegal refugees come to the VOD and the Church for assistance. The VOD assists illegal refugees with housing and financial support. They work together with other organizations in Wageningen namely; the food bank, the cloth bank, the toy bank, Vluchtelingenwerk Gelderland, the library, neighborhood center (het inloophuis), Solidez and Meldpunt vrijwilligers. With Christmas several organizations also supported denied asylum seekers. The clients of VOD received a Christmas gift, sponsored by the municipality, the church, the Red Cross, individuals and companies. They also received financial aid from the protestant parish. In Wageningen there is a person who lives in a house with other housemates. He does not pay rent but has to do chores in the household. Several illegal refugees live with individuals in Wageningen and surroundings. Like the three boys who live with a women in the surroundings of Wageningen. Although they do not work, when I visit them one of them is assisting the women in her volunteer work, as a translator. One of the articles is about a woman who escaped prostitution. After her escape she lived with African women she met on the street after that she came to the church for help. A group of people was formed that assisted her, with housing, financial assistance and with medical help. She also got immaterial support; they visited her, took her out and taught her Dutch.

In Utrecht homeless people can go to Het Catharijnehuis. This daycare offers a number of necessities. People can get lunch at low cost, they can take a shower, including a towel, clean underwear and shampoo and they can do their laundry. Further they sometimes distribute clothes. There are also some flyers of RESTO a place where you can get dinner on Sundays for €1,-. The people there tell me that they have knowledge of where you can get stuff for free or cheap, they share this knowledge among each other, and if somebody is broke they will pay each other's meal. Striking is that outside of the building are many bicycles which probably are from the visitors of Het Catharijnehuis. The Ubuntu-huis also

offers some facilities. They have a kitchen and a living room people can use, and they can do their laundry there. Further there is a booklet, published by the municipality of Utrecht with information about daycare and financial assistance and so on. Another organization is OMDUW they have helped people, with food and financial assistance. They also try to connect with other organizations in Utrecht and to advocate for assistance for homeless and illegal people. They have connections with; Altrecht, Release, Doorstroom, STIL, IOM, centrum Maliebaan, Social Services, GGD, stadsgeldbeheer, NOIZ, Centrum Vaartse Rijn, het Catharijnehuis, het Smulhuis, Emmaus, the Salvation Army and the municipality. In Huize Agnes the inhabitants can use the household articles. Also there are toys and second hand clothing.

## **Housing**

During the meeting of the VOD in Wageningen was mainly talked about housing. It seems hard to find housing for everybody. They wonder why not more people can get a place to stay via the residential housing. And the churches decide to take a look at their own building if there are possibilities to house people. There are some examples of people who have wondered, sleeping at different places, before they got assistance of an organization. In Utrecht the housing problem seems to be much more pressing, a number of denied asylum seekers is living on the streets. Most of them are men, which causes the question where are the women? Although many organizations help the most vulnerable people first, for example women with children, does this mean that most women are assisted or does it mean they might be somewhere else?

In Het Catharijnehuis, and the Ubuntu-huis as well, people can take a little nap because you cannot get much sleep on the streets. One person gets offered to stay with a friend but he does not want this, maybe because he is ashamed? Another person is allowed to sleep in the Sleep-inn. Last year the shelters have been restricted for illegal refugees, that is why OMDUW has advocated for more shelter. This has led the local government to subsidies several organizations to set up housing, this has reduced the problem. The problem is not completely solved; people are still living on the street, that is why OMDUW helps people to get a place to sleep.

## **Health and education**

Het Catharijnehuis has several different healthcare providers coming to their building which the visitors can go to.

## Pastime

In Wageningen is a neighborhood centre (Inloophuis) where the denied asylum seekers can go to, they can do activities or volunteer. The man who lives in a student house tells he shares the same interests as his housemates, dancing and music. Further he does house chores, his own and sometimes those of his housemates. When I visit the three boys that live with a woman and her family, one of them is helping the woman with translating another boy is still lying in his bed while it is already midday. The woman who was supported by the Catholic Church for a while was visited by a group of people from the church they undertook activities with her.

In Utrecht homeless people can go to Het Catharijnehuis or the Ubuntu-huis voor pastime. In Het Catharijnehuis people pass their time with playing games, chess or domino, eating, chatting, or they can take a nap. Most visitors stay till closing time. In the Ubuntu-huis people can also eat, chat or have a nap. They can also join the activities, like clay modelling. According to the leaflet they organize different activities like cooking, theater workshop, music, gardening, fishing, Dutch lessons, discussion and reflection.

## **Analysis**

In this chapter the findings from the previous chapter will be analyzed. The information from the three chapters, the findings of the literature, the interviews and the observations will be put to together. The theoretical framework will be used to analyze the findings. The livelihood framework and the concepts interface and network will be applied to answer the research questions.

## **Livelihood framework**

The livelihood framework is made up of several factors that affect people's livelihoods. It consists of the following factors; context, assets, transforming structures and processes, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. These factors will be discussed below.

## **Vulnerability context**

Illegal refugees live in the Netherlands without the right of residence. This means that they do not have the same rights as legal inhabitants and they cannot claim access to social services. In practice this means that they are not allowed to work and have limited rights to education and health services. According to the literature economic, social and political circumstances are present that create opportunities for illegal residents and these opportunities are influenced by factors networks, labour, housing and forming relationships. Further the literature says that illegal residents are not able to access the formal economy and limited access to the welfare economy. There options are thus restricted to the informal economy and the gift economy.

The interviews show that the municipality of Wageningen and the municipality of Utrecht are both quite friendly to illegal refugees. They are more tolerant towards denied asylum seekers than most municipalities. Although they do not support illegal refugees directly they do not want any disturbances and see it as their duty to take care of their inhabitants. They do support organisations that (among others) help illegal refugees. But in both cities illegal refugees are no allowed to work, officially they are not even allowed to do volunteer work and they can only access education and health assistance to a certain limit. There is a chance for illegal refugees that they are arrested, or people can misuse their status when they are looking for a place or a job.

## **Livelihood assets**

The literature shows that illegal refugees have skills necessary for occupations, for example they can clean, or repair furniture. The work they do is catering, security, care taking, cleaning, construction work, agricultural work, catering and personal services, although not everybody is physically or mentally capable to work. Beside these skills, another asset is their personal network. The literature shows that

some people use their personal network to add to their income for example the man who got a job as a paperboy via acquaintances. From the interviews and the observations this became even clearer, people find temporary jobs through their networks. Or they do activities for friends in exchange for something else. Further they also get support from their network, sometimes financial, a place to sleep or some food but mostly it is immaterial support. Further they acquire knowledge through their networks, about temporary jobs, places where you can stay or get food. This is especially important for illegal refugees in Utrecht, via networks they learn about places where you can eat or get things for free or at a low price.

### **Transforming structures & processes**

Several structures and processes can be identified that influence the livelihoods of illegal refugees. A very important process is the tightening of the government policies towards illegal residents. As is mentioned in the literature this has made it impossible for them to access the facilities from the welfare economy. Government policy has made it more difficult to employ alternative activities to add to their income, for example through the informal market. The interviews show that nowadays the national asylum policy has even more severe consequence. Illegal refugees were already excluded from the formal market, but now it also has become more difficult to access the informal market. Not only the illegal refugees have become reluctant, because they can get arrested but also the risks for employers have increased, they can get a high fine for employing illegal residents. Nevertheless it has not become impossible to find work.

Besides that the interviews shows that stricter policies have not only affected the labor chances of illegal refugees. It also has affected other factors. The debate around refugees and illegal refugees has gained more attention. This has led to two effects. First of all in some interviews it was suggested that people have been more reluctant to get involved with illegal refugees or to assist them because they are afraid that this is illegal. But also the contrary has been observed, people have become concerned with illegal refugees. Aid organizations advocate for them and citizens support them, directly or via aid organizations. Several churches in Utrecht have started an initiative to help illegal refugees.

Aid organizations, churches, mosques and civilian initiatives can all be seen as structures that influence the lives of illegal refugees. Aid organizations help illegal refugees with legal assistance, financial support, finding housing and sometimes they refer them for medical help. Other aid organizations that do not specifically target them, they for example help homeless people or people with a low income. They might help them with food or clothing and sometimes a place to stay the night. Churches help people with food or a place to stay, sometimes they give financial aid and often they refer illegal

refugees to other organizations for help. And then there are citizens who are concerned with illegal refugees and who might help an individual with for example making some money. The organizations that target the illegal refugees often try to help them on the long term. For example they give them legal help in the hope they will get asylum, or they organize workshop to teach useful skills.

The policy of the local government also influences the lives of illegal refugees. In both place illegal refugees are tolerated and support through aid organizations who try to enhance the livelihoods of their clients. In Wageningen the government tries to create collaboration between different aid organizations, through this illegal refugees can access different support systems. For example they receive an allowance from the VOD, can get clothes at the kledingbank and can go to the library for Dutch lessons. In Utrecht the policy is positive as well although last year the criteria set by the government that needed to be met by the clients of the aid organizations have become stricter. Nowadays they need to have a connection with Utrecht which has made it more difficult for illegal refugees to access support. Further recently some of the clients of the aid organizations have been arrested while in the past there was a tacit agreement that clients of aid organizations would not be arrested.

The following research question *'Which actors are involved in the livelihood strategies of illegal refugees?'* can now answered:

- Personal network
- People concerned
- Aid organisations targeting illegal asylum seekers
- Other aid organisations such as the food bank
- Churches and mosques
- Local government

### **Livelihood strategies**

In the theoretical framework a distinction was made between four so called economies namely;

- the formal economy: wage labour and entrepreneurship
- the informal economy; labour and crime
- the welfare economy: support from facilities of the welfare state
- the gift economy: support from family, friends and aid organisations

The formal economy and the welfare economy are not accessible for illegal refugees. They can use the informal economy and the gift economy, in which a distinction should be made between support from friends and family and assistance from aid organisations. Among illegal youngsters maintaining a sober lifestyle and getting support from their social networks are strategies to get by.

The interviews and observations also showed that the informal economy and welfare economy are not in reach of illegal refugees. Illegal refugees are not allowed to work or access social services. That is why they have to make a living through the informal economy or the gift economy. The gift economy is very important for illegal refugees, especially the support from aid organisations. In Wageningen illegal refugees get financial, legal and social support from aid organisations, churches and mosques. Also in Utrecht aid organisations are important although many illegal refugees are homeless there. Further the network of illegal refugees is important. The help they get from acquaintances is mostly basic, food or a place to sleep or they help them to find a job. Then there is the possibility to make money through the informal market. People can either do black labour or criminal activities. Illegal refugees find jobs through acquaintances or by asking around, the work they do is painting, timberwork, construction work or cleaning. The literature also discussed criminal activities as a way to make a livelihood. This was not confirmed by the interviews or observation, except for some small robbery, although this does not mean that criminality does not happen. Illegal refugees also develop alternative activities to make their livelihoods, for example the woman who sometimes watches the baby of a friend or the woman who baked cookies and sold those to buy oil for the heating. These alternative activities, like volunteer work, are not always intended to make money or to gain resource. They are done to have something on hand and for a sense of fulfillment. Further several illegal refugees showed that they try to live at a low cost, by not spending a lot of money and buying things at a low cost.

Getting assistance of organization is very important for illegal refugees, without their help life would be very difficult. Organizations give financial, legal and social assistance. Sometimes they shelter people or they help them to find housing. Homeless people go to organization for daycare and to access facilities like healthcare. Living at low cost is a strategy that most illegal refugees apply but is especially used by homeless refugees, they go to place where they can eat or get clothes at low cost or for free. Further it seems to be easier to find a job on the informal market in Utrecht than in Wageningen this could be due to the difference in size of the two cities.

This answers the first sub question of the research; *'What kind of livelihood strategies do illegal refugees in Wageningen and Utrecht employ?'*. Summarizing, the following livelihood strategies of illegal refugees were identified during the research:

- Receiving assistance from aid organisations, churches, mosques or other initiatives.
- Getting support from their network.
- Working on the informal economy.
- Doing alternative activities
- Living at low cost

### **Livelihood outcomes**

First of all illegal refugees want to survive. Most of them wish to be granted asylum. That is why many get legal assistance from an aid organization. They want to work or study, so they participate in society, gaining the right to residence would make this possible. Although not all of them still hope for a resident permit, they do want to be part of society.

In Wageningen most of the illegal refugees have a place to stay. But they cannot work or study. That is what they would like to do. Work so they are not dependent on others. They would like to study so they can get a good job. An alternative for this is to do workshop or some of lessons, or to do volunteer work, which does not pay but can give fulfillment.

In Utrecht not everybody has a place to stay. As can be expected the homeless people would like to have a place to stay. Others who do have housing also wish for work or study but maybe more they wish to be independent

### **Social Network theory**

Networks are important for illegal refugees. They get support from friends, acquaintances, and people they have met in the asylum center. This assistance is mostly basic; a place to sleep or some food but more often it is immaterial support. Sometimes they help them to find a temp job or something to do. In Wageningen it was mentioned during interviews that some illegal refugees have build a support group. A group of people in there environment that are concerned with their situation and help them.

In both cities a network can be identified of organizations that help illegal refugees. In Wageningen there are two organizations that specifically target illegal refugees, namely VOD and Mai Mi Bath. Then there is vluchtelingenwerk, in principle they do not help denied asylum although they sometimes work together with the VOD. Then there are other organizations that do not specifically target illegal

refugees, but try to help people in need. These organizations are churches, voedselbank, kledingbank, speelgoedbank, Solidez and het inloophuis. The VOD also cooperates with the library and meldpunt vrijwilligerswerk. There was said that the cooperation between the different organizations could be better, maybe that would solve the issue of housing. As described in the previous section there is also a strong link between the organizations and the local government.

The number of illegal refugees in Utrecht is bigger as well as the network of organizations that support them. First of all there is STIL an organization that helps illegal refugees. There are organizations or projects that house illegal refugees, SNDVU, Seguro and Huize Agnes and if illegal refugees meet the criteria of the regular shelter, Sleep-inn and Noiz, they can go there for a limited number of nights. Then there are the organizations that offer daycare; het Catharijnehuis and Ubuntu-huis. And affiliated organizations; vluchtelingenwerk, IOM, and GGD. Other important bodies are places where people can get stuff or eat for free or a low price, for example Emmaus. Then there are the churches and mosques that support illegal refugees or refer them to other organizations who do. Some of the churches in Utrecht are even organized in one organization, OMDUW, to help and advocate for people in need. And of course some organizations have their own network with people who are concerned. For example Huize Agnes works with volunteers and people can bring second hand products. These organizations also have a connection with the municipality, as discussed above they advocate for more shelter for illegal refugees.

Together with information from the section on the livelihood framework the answer can be given to the following question *'How are these actors involved in the livelihoods of illegal refugees?'*:

- Personal network – friends, family and acquaintances. Giving assistance; a place to sleep, a meal, mental support, a temporary job and sometimes financial support.
- People concerned – Giving assistance directly, financial support, a place to stay, food or a temporary job or indirectly via aid organisations.
- Aid organisations targeting illegal asylum seekers. Offering financial assistance, housing, legal support, social activities and referring for medical help and education.
- Other aid organisations such as the food bank. Assisting illegal refugees for example, social activities, day care, referrals and giving out meals and other items for free or at low costs.
- Churches and mosques – Financial aid, incidentally or long term, referrals and mental support.

- Local government – Execution of the asylum policy, both Wageningen and Utrecht tolerate illegal refugees and subsidize aid organizations that support illegal refugees.

## Social Interface

As the above section on networks already shows there are many connections between the parties involved in the phenomena. This suggests an interesting interface. By looking at the social interface the question *'How do the different actors influence each other?'* can be answered. In the recent past the developments in the interface were very distinct. During and before the General Pardon (generaal pardon) many inhabitants of Wageningen were involved in the interface. There was a civilian initiative that advocated for the stay of denied asylum seekers. This was an interface where the asylum policy could lead to the deportation of illegal refugees, citizens together with aid organizations tried to prevent this. Since the destination of the asylum center in Wageningen has changed the involvement of civilians has decreased, although some are still involved in the lives of illegal refugees. Aid organizations support illegal refugees and advocate for them. It seems that most of the illegal refugees are assisted by the VOD or Mai Mi Bath, others organizations that help people are churches, food bank, kleding bank, toy bank, Solidez, library and the neighborhood center (het inloophuis). These organizations also interact with each other, for example clients of VOD can volunteer in the neighborhood center. Most of them have connections with the municipality and some of them use these connections to advocate for illegal refugees with the local government. The municipality reacted on the interaction between the different organizations by making them work together. The last subsidy round they could only get subsidy if they worked together, for example the VOD, vluchtelingenwerk en de library. Mai Mi Bath decided not to cooperate with other organizations and therefore did not get its subsidy renewed.

In Utrecht there is also an interface with many organizations active. First of all there are organizations that specifically target illegal refugees and there are the organizations with a broader audience. Besides there are the churches and mosques some of the churches are united in the organization OMDUW that helps illegal refugees is part of their objectives. The churches and mosques also give assistance to illegal refugees or they refer them to other organizations.

Recently it has become more difficult for illegal refugees in Utrecht to access support. The government has set an additional criteria for the aid organizations, the people they help need to have a connection with the city, which is not the case for all illegal refugees. In reaction to this the organizations that helped illegal refugees started to advocate for help from the municipality for illegal residents. The municipality has donated money to some organizations in response. A part of this money is used to set

up Seguro, a home that shelters illegal refugee men. Though it can only shelter a limited number of people, it has reduced the problem. Which in the case of Utrecht answers the last sub question '*Does this lead to policy change?*'. The municipality of Wageningen has not changed how they implement the policy they have changed the way they locate subsidy as described above.

Another interface that can be seen in both cities is that illegal refugees are tolerated by the police. They are not arrested because they are staying illegally. Many respondents in both cities have said that there is an unwritten rule that illegal refugees affiliated with an aid organization are not being arrested. Although lately in Utrecht a change has been identified, some illegal refugees are arrested despite this unwritten rule. This has led to a question in the municipal council.

### **Comparing Wageningen and Utrecht**

Before concluding this chapter the last sub question of the research needs to be answered; '*What are the differences between Wageningen and Utrecht?*'. The most obvious difference between Wageningen and Utrecht is that the number of illegal refugees in Utrecht is bigger. It is said that in the past the positive attitude of the municipality created an influx of illegal refugees to Utrecht. Therefore the government has made extra regulations; aid organization can now only support illegal refugees when they have a connection with Utrecht. Another reason for the influx could be that the presence of a big group of illegal might attract others. Also illegal refugees in Utrecht seem to access the illegal market more often, but it is not clear if this is because there is a bigger informal market or because their need is higher. In Utrecht there are many homeless illegal refugees, it is difficult for them to find housing. Especially since they have tightened their policies, which has made it difficult for them to access regular shelter. In Wageningen things seem to be better arranged almost all illegal refugees have housing and are supported by an aid organization. This can be explained by the smaller number of illegal refugees and because this number seems to be stable, due to the change of the destination of the Asylum Centre which has caused the influx of illegal refugees to stop in Wageningen. Thus the number of illegal refugees in Wageningen seems to be stable it might even decrease while in Utrecht the number of illegal refugees varies.

### **Summary analysis**

In the literature two important economies were shown for the livelihoods of illegal refugees. The gift economy and the informal economy, this was confirmed by the interview and observations findings. Due to stricter regulations the gift economy has become more important. It has become more difficult to find work on the informal market because employees and employers risk high fines. Especially the

support of aid organizations is essential, it was said that without the support of these organizations life would be very difficult for illegal refugees, both in Wageningen and Utrecht. Further illegal refugees have developed alternative activities, to add to their income or to have something to do. Another strategy is to live at low cost. The livelihood framework has given a good insight in the livelihood outcomes illegal refugees pursue and what strategies they use. The literature was mostly focused on livelihood strategies the other research methods added information on the other factors of the framework. Using the social network theory has shown the importance of other parties. The personal network and aid organizations are important for illegal refugees. In both cities a network of organizations can be identified that support illegal refugees and some illegal refugees have a personal network which they lean on. The support of the aid organizations is also important because some illegal refugees still hope to gain a resident permit. The concept of interface has given an insight in the ongoing processes. It has shown that the national government policies have made it more difficult for illegal refugees to access the informal market. But in both cities a positive implementation of the policy can be seen, illegal refugees are tolerated and supported by aid organizations and other initiatives. An important difference that could be seen is that the number of illegal refugees in Utrecht is bigger and not everybody finds housing. While in Wageningen their number is stable and almost everybody has housing and is supported by an organization.

## Conclusion, discussion and recommendations

The final chapter of this research consists of three sections. In the first section the research question will be answered. Then the research will be discussed and finally some recommendations will be made.

### Conclusion

The objective of this research was to get an understanding of the livelihood strategies of illegal refugees and the interaction with the local government and aid organisations. Based on this the following research question was used; '*How do illegal refugees and institutions cope with illegality in Wageningen and Utrecht?*'. Illegal refugees cope with their illegality by deploying the following livelihood strategies:

- Receiving assistance from aid organisations, churches, mosques or other initiatives.
- Getting support from their network.
- Working on the informal economy.
- Doing alternative activities
- Living at low cost

With this they hope to achieve their desired livelihood outcomes. All of them want to survive, and most of them want to participate in the society. They wish to be able to work or study, then they can be part of society. A way to do this is to get a resident permit. Alternatively they can do other activities for example volunteer to get a sense of fulfilment. Persons who are homeless would like to have a place to stay.

A number of actors is involved in their livelihoods, namely:

- Personal network – friends, family and acquaintances. Giving assistance; a place to sleep, a meal, mental support, a temporary job and sometimes financial support.
- People concerned – Giving assistance directly, financial support, a place to stay, food or a temporary job or indirectly via aid organisations.
- Aid organisations targeting illegal asylum seekers. Offering financial assistance, housing, legal support, social activities and referring for medical help and education.
- Other aid organisations such as the food bank. Assisting illegal refugees for example, social activities, day care, referrals and giving out meals and other items for free or at low costs.
- Churches and mosques – Financial aid, incidentally or long term, referrals and mental support.

- Local government – Execution of the asylum policy, both Wageningen and Utrecht tolerate illegal refugees and subsidize aid organizations that support illegal refugees.

The livelihoods of illegal refugees is not something fixed, it is process in which different parties interact with each other. In both cities aid organizations are active to improve their livelihoods and they advocate with the local government as well. In Wageningen the municipality has made the different organizations work together. And in Utrecht the aid organizations has pursued the municipality to help decrease the housing problem of illegal refugees.

## Discussion

The theoretical framework consisted of three different concepts which were used to answer the different sub questions of the research. Especially the livelihood framework gave a good insight in the livelihoods of illegal refugees. While the concept of social interface showed the dynamics between the different actors that are part of their livelihoods.

Several research methods were used in this research to supplement each other. This has been a good strategy because not all methods delivered as much data as was hoped for. The literature was insightful but sometimes out of date, which underlines the necessity of this research. The interviews especially have provided a lot of information. Although it was sometimes difficult to find a diverse group of respondents, especially illegal refugees who are not supported by an aid organization are hard to find. But doing observations has proven to be the hardest part of the research. People do not open up easily, bridging the gap between researcher and respondent was difficult and some of the persons were arrested or went into hiding during the research. Another reason that makes observations difficult that is hard to observe people in their daily life when this daily life actually has been paused. Because of this the data in the observation section is limited.

In the beginning of the research it was assumed that the informal market, ethnic sub economies or criminal activities might be important in the livelihoods of illegal refugees. This has not been confirmed in the research although this might not mean this is not the case it might have been missed due to the limited number of observations that have been made.

## Recommendations

As described in the section above some data in the research was limited that is why more research can be done on the subjected. A more elaborate research could enlarge the data and add to the conclusions

of this research. Further more research could be done on the issue the importance of the informal market and criminal activities for illegal refugees.

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## Appendix A List of interviews

Date	Name	Respondent type	Organisation	Place
26-02-2013	Marleen Kramer	Employee aid organization	VOD	Wageningen
01-03-2013	Leo Kleijn	Employee aid organization	Mai Mi Bath	Wageningen
22-05-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Wageningen
22-05-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Wageningen
22-05-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Renkum
22-05-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Wageningen
22-05-2013	Anonymous	Employee aid organisation	VOD	Wageningen
22-05-2013	Marleen Kramer	Employee aid organisation	VOD	Wageningen
22-05-2013	Leo Kleijn	Employee aid organisation	Mai Mi Bath	Wageningen
23-05-2013	Marsha Man	Employee aid organisation	SNDVU	Utrecht
23-05-2013	Henny van den Nagel	Employee aid organisation	Huize Agnes	Utrecht
10-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
10-06-2013	Grada	Employee aid organisation	Ubuntu-huis	Utrecht
10-06-2013	Annelies	Employee aid organisation	Ubuntu-huis	Utrecht
10-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
10-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
13-06-2013	Belinda Bonting	Employee municipality	Gemeente Wageningen	Wageningen
13-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Ede
13-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Ede
13-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Ede
19-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
24-06-2013	Nourdin	Employee aid organisation	Het Catharijne huis	Utrecht
24-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
24-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
24-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
24-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal resident		Utrecht
24-06-2013	Anonymous	Homeless person (Dutch)		Utrecht

24-06-2013	Anonymous	Illegal refugee		Utrecht
26-06-2013	Hans Lammers	Pastoral Worker	Roman Catholic parish	Wageningen
27-06-2013	Diny Ulaen	Church worker	Protestant Church	Utrech
16-07-2013	Jan Kuipers	Church worker	OMDUW	Utrecht

## Appendix B Example interview guide

### Introductie

#### *Interviewer*

- Ina van den Berg
- Studente Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudie aan de Wageningen Universiteit

#### *Interview*

- Doel van het interview: onderzoeken welke processen er rondom illegale uitgeprocedeerde asielzoekers in de gemeente afspeelen.
- Afstudeerscriptie voor Master opleiding aan Universiteit
- Waarom de geïnterviewde is geselecteerd: ....
- U bent geselecteerd via/ik ben aan u contact gegevens gekomen via....

#### *Resultaten Interview*

- De resultaten worden gebruikt om een rapport te schrijven, mijn scriptie, wat een onderdeel is van mijn opleiding aan de Universiteit.
- De resultaten zijn niet bedoeld voor de overheid of de gemeente.

#### *Kosten interview*

- Het interview duurt ongeveer 30 minuten
- Wilt u anoniem blijven? Of kan ik uw naam en de naam van uw organisatie noemen in mijn verslag?
- Er is geen beloning verbonden aan dit interview. Ook kan ik u geen hulp bieden, of kunt u dit door bepaalde antwoorden indirect bereiken.

### **Opbouw van het interview**

Ik zal beginnen met een aantal inleidende vragen. Daarna ga ik verder in op uw levensonderhoud. Dan wil ik graag iets verder ingaan op illegaliteit. Dan heb ik een aantal vragen over hulporganisaties. Ten slotte wil ik graag nog wat weten over de overheid en het lokale beleid. Als u een vraag ongepast vindt of niet wil beantwoorden geef dat dan gerust aan, u bent niet verplicht om antwoord te geven.

### **Interview**

#### *Inleidende vragen*

1. Naam

2. Plaats
3. Hoe bent u in deze gemeente gekomen?
4. Hoe ervaart u het om in deze gemeente te wonen?

#### *Livelihood*

5. Hoe voorziet u in u belangrijkste levensbehoefte? (bv. Steun hulporganisaties, familie, zwart werken etc.) (hoe kom je aan dingen zoals bijv. kleding/telefoon/leuke dingen etc.?)
6. En gezondheidszorg?
7. Educatie?
8. Hoe ziet je gemiddelde dag (indeling) er uit?

#### *Illegaliteit*

9. Hoe beïnvloed uw illegale status uw leven?
10. Hoe gaan u daar mee om?
11. Welke aspecten van uw leven zijn het moeilijkste door de illegaliteit?
12. Met welke actoren/organisaties/mensen heeft u door uw illegaliteit contact? (bv hulporganisaties)
13. Hoe gaan die om met de illegaliteit
14. Ken je andere mensen zonder vergunning? Hoe leven zij? Etc. Hoe kan ik met ze in contact komen?

#### *Actoren Hulporganisaties*

15. Ontvangt u hulp van hulporganisaties? Welke hulp
16. Zijn er ook dingen die ze niet aanbieden?
17. Ontvangt u ook steun van familie of vrienden? Wat dan?
18. Welke invloed hebben mensen in uw buurt op uw leven?
19. Ervaart u weerstand tegen uw aanwezigheid?
20. Invloeden deze verschillende mensen elkaar ook?

#### *Beleid/overheid*

21. Wat is het beleid in deze gemeente?
22. Hoe gaat u hiermee om/wat doet u hiermee? Kunt u het beleid beïnvloeden?

#### **Einde van het interview**

- Eventueel een korte samenvatting geven met de belangrijkste aspecten van het interview

- Heeft u nog opmerkingen of andere aanvullende informatie? Ben ik iets vergeten?
- Kan ik u nog bereiken als er nog onduidelijkheden zijn of als ik nog meer vragen hebben?
- Zou u eventueel mee willen werken aan een vervolg interview of een workshop?
- Kent u nog andere mensen in een vergelijkbare situatie. Is er de mogelijkheid om in contact te komen met hen om ze te kunnen interviewen.
- Ik wil u graag bedanken voor uw tijd en moeite en uw bijdrage aan mijn onderzoek.

## Appendix C List of observations

Date	Situation	Place
26-02-2013	Information meeting about shelter for illegal refugees organized by the VOD.	Wageningen
23-05-2013	Huize Agnes, an organization that houses female illegal residents.	Utrecht
10-06-2013	The Ubuntu-huis an organization that offers daycare for homeless people and people in social isolation.	Utrecht
13-06-2013	Family offering shelter to three illegal refugees	Ede
24-06-2013	Het Catharijnehuis offers daycare and basic facilities for homeless people, including illegal refugees.	Utrecht
	Annual report OMDUW	Utrecht
	Flyer OMDUW	Utrecht
	Information letter OMDUW	Utrecht
	Straatnieuws covering the live of an illegal resident	Utrecht
	Flyer Ubuntuhuis	Utrecht
	Article on illegal refugee in a religious magazine	Wageningen
	Flyer VOD	Wageningen
	Information letter VOD	Wageningen
	Zonder papieren, niet zonder rechten. Brochure on the rights	Utrecht

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of illegal residents

Leaflet from organization that offers food at low cost on Sundays. Utrecht

Card with contact information of the IOM. Utrecht

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