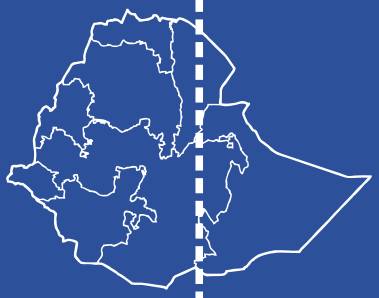


International Labour Organization

Baseline survey

Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in **Ethiopia** Project

Baseline survey

Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project

January 2018

Daniel Lindgren, Thitaree Uaumnuay and Karen Emmons

This publication was produced at the request of the International Labour Organization by Rapid Asia

First published 2018

Baseline Survey: Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project

ISBN 978-92-2-131638-1 (print)
ISBN 978-92-2-131639-8 (web pdf)

Design and layout by the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin – Italy
Printed in Ethiopia

FOREWORD

International migration for employment and related challenges will continue to rise in volume and complexity due to globalization, supply and demand of the labour market as well as other factors. According to UNDESA, in 2017 there were an estimated 258 million migrants globally[1], of which 150.3 million are migrant workers[2]. Together with their families they represent over half (58%) of the people living outside their country of origin. These numbers may be underestimated as a result of irregular migration and the concentration of irregular migrants in informal employment.

Ethiopia has become a hub for outward and inward migration, as one of the major labour sending countries and the largest refugee hosting country in Africa. A number of pull and push factors are at interplay for outward and inward migration in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian economy as well as its population has shown high growth rates. However, the economic growth has not been job rich. Furthermore, the unemployment rate of 27 per cent coupled with poverty, family and peer pressure, and low public awareness on the positive and negative aspects of migration has contributed to of migration within local communities. Moreover, recurrent drought and environmental shocks, and inducements by smugglers and traffickers have pushed people to migrate to the capital province or abroad in search of better opportunities and to support their family. At the same time, advancement of information and communication technology, social networks, better living standards and demand for labour in major destination countries are some of the major pulling factors.

Although the exact number of Ethiopians who have migrated abroad is unknown due to irregular migration and the absence of centralized registration system, according to the estimates by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), more than two million Ethiopian diaspora live abroad. In addition, according to the data from Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) around 460,000 Ethiopians have legally migrated to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States mainly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Dubai between September 2008 and August 2013. However, the numbers are estimated to be higher since there is growing evidence that outward migration has increased significantly in recent years.

1 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). International Migration Report 2017.
2 ILO Global estimates of migrant workers and migrant domestic workers: results and methodology / International Labour Office - Geneva: ILO, 2015.

While existing data paints an unclear picture of the demographic of Ethiopian migrant workers, the administrative records from MoLSA show that the large majority of regular migrants (close to 86 per cent) are women. The high number of female migrants in official statistics on regular migration is mainly due to the greater opportunities they have for regular labour migration (mainly into domestic work) to the GCC States, Lebanon and Sudan, while male migrants might need to resort to irregular channels due to lack of opportunity for regular migration. The RMMS (2014) study on knowledge, attitude and practice of Ethiopian migrants depicts that only 40 per cent migrate with legal documents to GCC States, Lebanon and Sudan, illustrating a relatively high level of irregular migration.

To enhance and strengthen the labour migration governance in Ethiopia, the ILO developed a project entitled *"Improved labour migration governance to protect migrant workers and combat irregular migration in Ethiopia"*. In order to set benchmark to track project successes, fill the knowledge gaps and guide the project implementation a *Baseline survey for Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project* assessment was undertaken.

The Survey was able to provide a comprehensive analysis of the magnitude of regular and irregular labour migration to GCC States and Lebanon; capacity of government institutions to govern labour migration effectively and efficiently; awareness and knowledge of potential migrants and migrants on international and national legal instruments related with migrant workers, and information about major destination countries; current practice of protection of migrant workers by Ethiopian Diplomatic Missions and other service providers, and the coordination of the actors for better protection as well as assessing the satisfaction of these services by migrants and identify and assess challenges, opportunities and recommendation for effective labour migration governance in Ethiopia.

The finding shows that more than 50 per cent of all migrants going to the Middle East go through irregular means and around 83 per cent of the returned and still working migrants could be considered as irregular migrants. It also underscore that men were more prone for irregular migration than women and as a result pay more for recruitment fees. The level of awareness and use of migration services by migrants were found to be low among migrants, with more than 50 per cent not being aware of any such services. The survey findings also indicated that regular migration was cheaper than irregular migration with an average cost of ETB 10,900 and ETB 15,900 respectively.

I hope this Survey findings and practical recommendations will support the Government of Ethiopia in strengthening labour migration governance in the country. In addition, it will contribute to the improvement of coordination among different actors working on labour migration to ensure decent work for Ethiopian migrant domestic workers that target mainly the youth and women. Finally, it will also provide strategic perspectives and knowledge to fill the gap in the protection of migrant workers and ensuring effective and efficient labour migration governance in the country.

I would like to congratulate the Government of Ethiopia for its efforts geared towards eliminating human trafficking and improving labour migration governance in Ethiopia. I would particularly like to thank the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for their collaboration with the ILO in implementing the project and undertaking this assessment. Finally, I would like to thank the United Kingdom's Department for International Development for funding the project *"Improved labour migration governance to protect migrant workers and combat irregular migration in Ethiopia"* under which this Survey was undertaken.

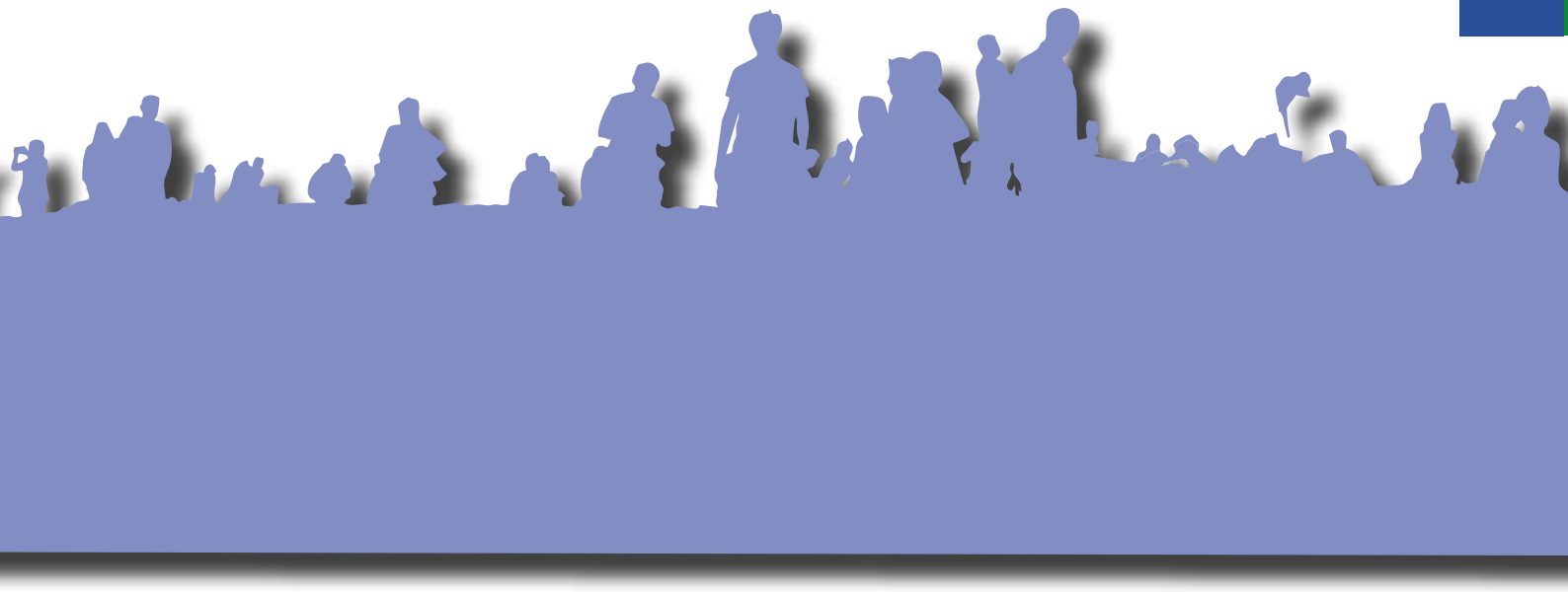
George Okutho
Director
ILO Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan and Special Representative to the African Union (AU) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

CONTENTS

BOXES

TABLES

FIGURES



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Even though Ethiopia has one of the fastest-growing economies on the continent, it remains one of the poorest countries in Africa. Despite its considerable economic growth, unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is high. And many households live with hardship due to income that is below the poverty line and due to the number of people dependent on agriculture, which endures increasing spells of droughts. Given the ecological and demographic pressures on the land and the lack of local employment opportunities, many families pressure their children to migrate, while many young people want to go abroad in search of better employment options and a possible better future.

Some Ethiopians go to neighbouring countries, from where they find employment agents or smugglers who shepherd them to a job in the Middle East. Some go directly to the Middle East as tourists or through trafficking and smuggling networks and then overstay their visa.

Many Ethiopians are influenced by friends, family and recruiters to seek better work opportunities in the Middle East And yet, following an escalation of outward migration in 2011 and 2012 and heightened reports of abuse, exploitation and the trafficking of workers, the Government of Ethiopia imposed a temporary ban on all labour migration to the Middle East as of October 2013 as a way to better protect its citizens.

In 2015, the Government adopted Proclamation No. 909/2015 on smuggling and human trafficking that sets out procedures for the investigation of smuggling and trafficking offences as well as establishing procedures for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking. Then in 2016, many positive institutional and legal framework changes were incorporated into the revised Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923. The many changes include negotiation of bilateral agreements with major destination countries to fill the legal and policy gaps; improving the recruitment and placement services by decentralizing the services as well as building the capacity of government institutions to efficiently govern the regular labour migration process; integrating skills training and pre-departure orientation as part of overseas employment requirements; and assigning labour attachés in diplomatic missions to monitor and more proactively support migrant workers. Despite the many institutional and legal framework changes, the ban remains.

That ban, many government officials and migrants contend, may have been useful to bring about needed reforms, but it has become a liability, increasing the time, expense and dangers associated with going abroad for employment.

PROJECT AND SURVEY BACKGROUND

Recognizing the increase of unemployed and underemployed youth within Ethiopia over the past several years who migrate overseas for better jobs and recognizing the numerous decent work deficits that Ethiopian migrants experience in the Middle East, the ILO initiated a four-year Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project. The project aims at supporting the efforts by the Government and civil society groups to reduce irregular migration by improving labour migration governance and making regular labour migration more accessible and desirable to potential migrants in Ethiopia.

The baseline survey was designed to respond to five objectives:

- Estimate the prevalence of regular and irregular labour migration to Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) States and Lebanon.
- Examine the capacity of government agencies to govern labour migration effectively and efficiently.
- Assess the awareness and knowledge of potential migrants and migrant workers on laws, rights, procedures and information about major destination countries.
- Assess the protection of migrant workers, including the quality of services provided by Ethiopian diplomatic missions, the satisfaction of these services by migrants.
- Identify and assess challenges, opportunities and recommendations for effective labour migration governance in Ethiopia and for Ethiopian missions in major destination countries.

This report presents the findings of the project's baseline survey, conducted in 2017 with 536 respondents: 250 potential migrants, 36 migrants working in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates and 250 Ethiopians who had returned from working in one of six countries: Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and other. The 500 respondents interviewed in Ethiopia (potential and already returned migrants) were surveyed in Addis Ababa or one of the four regions: Amhara; Oromia; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples; and Tigray.

The survey, conducted between September and October 2017, followed a document review. In each woreda, two to four villages with a larger penetration of potential and returned migrants were selected, based on input from local migrant worker resource centre staff and using non-probability sampling with a combination of snowballing and quota sampling. To ensure a good geographic spread of the sample, respondents were sought out in different locations in each village.

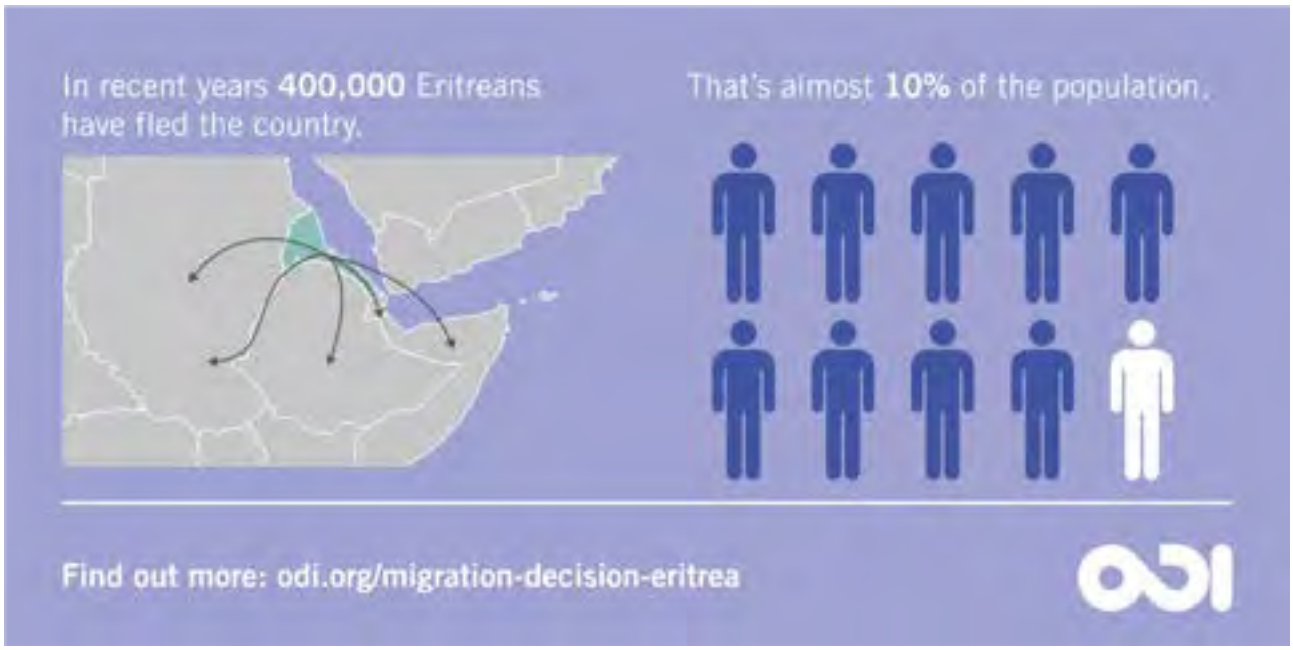
MIGRANT OUTCOME INDEX

To better understand and determine what contributes to positive and negative migrant outcomes, a Migrant Outcome Index was used. Developed by the Rapid Asia in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, the Migrant Outcome Index, consists of eight financial and social indicators considered as critical outcomes for returned migrant workers. The index is useful to analyse economic benefits with social benefits amongst returned migrants as well as understanding what factors contribute to positive migration outcomes. The higher the index, the better the outcome.

Responses from the 250 returned migrants interviewed in Ethiopia resulted in an overall Migrant Outcome Index score of 47 (out of a possible 100), which is relatively low compared with studies done in other developing countries. Ethiopia is on par with Cambodia, which also scored 47. However, migrants who used regular channels were better off on average, with an index score of 51. For a more complete explanation regarding the Migrant Outcome Index, please refer to section 3.6.

CURRENT MIGRATION SITUATION

The more popular destination countries for labour migrants from Ethiopia in the Middle East are Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Lebanon. Some 95 per cent of regular labour migrants going to the Middle East are women hired for domestic work. Only a few female labour migrants work in other sectors. The men typically work in construction, agriculture, hotels, hospitals or as drivers.



The demand from the Middle East for low-skilled workers is a strong pull factor. As Fernandez (2017) noted, based on research she did in 2014, "Since 2011, an agreement between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia resulted in a steep increase in the number of legal migrants to Saudi Arabia. In part, this increased demand from Saudi Arabia was a consequence of the ban on migration to Saudi Arabia imposed by the Philippines and Indonesian governments, following cases of abuse of workers from these countries."

SELECTED FINDINGS

Regular and irregular migrants

Ethiopian workers typically do not have proper documentation (passport, visa and work permit) while working abroad. Overall, 45 per cent of the returned (and still working) respondents had no documentation. Among the respondents who migrated through an irregular channel, it was 59 per cent. Some respondents had a passport (at 28 per cent), and some had obtained a visa and work permit (at 17 per cent). This means that 83 per cent of the returned and still working migrants can be considered as irregular migrants. More than half of all migrants going to the Middle East go through irregular channels, and many use smugglers. Male migrants, although paid higher wages than female migrants, often experience labour abuse and other challenges. Male migrants are significantly more likely to migrate through irregular channels and as a result pay significantly more in recruitment fees.

Fewer than one in five migrants have access to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' pre-departure orientation, and most potential migrants seek out informal alternatives, which likely poorly prepare them for working and living in a particular destination country. Based on the interviews with overseas workers, nearly all of them placed considerable trust in the brokers or agents who had organized the job for them due to stories from other people they knew who had migrated and were better off as a result. This indicates that word-of-mouth communication is strong and that it cannot be assumed or expected that potential migrants will seek information on how to migrate safely.

Access to skills training or pre-departure orientation and other services

Awareness and use of migration services seems rather low, both in Ethiopia and in destination countries, with more than half of the respondents reporting they had never used or were aware of such services. The most common services cited by respondents were pre-departure orientation, skills training, information on destination country and general migration information. Slightly less than a third of the migrant respondents, however, reported receiving some form of pre-departure orientation, which are mandatory. The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) bureau only offers a training programme to returned migrants who need training for reintegration purposes. Government agency representatives believe that potential migrants are aware of and generally have access to their services. Yet, the findings suggest they are not.

The Ethiopian missions in destination countries struggle with a number of challenges in promoting their services. The biggest hurdle is the inability to track all migrants coming into a country, especially because there are no labour attachés in place in Middle Eastern destination countries and the majority of migrants have irregular migration status. Relatively few of the respondents gave the informal skills training they received in their community a "good" rating. The formal training provided by the TVET bureau, NGO or private sector enterprises, however, received a significantly higher rating. Still, the majority of returned migrants who had had some formal training before leaving Ethiopia (85 per cent) indicated that what they had received was not relevant for the job they had in a destination country.

Awareness of migration-related rules and procedures

Regional government agency representatives believe that there is significant lack of awareness among migrants regarding the rules for migrating. The general view is that migrants cannot distinguish between regular and irregular channels, are ignorant regarding the migration ban and hold little regard for migration risks. The representatives also believe that the migration ban amplifies the problem because it removes any legal option to migrate as well as overshadowing the overseas employment proclamation no. 923/2016.

Migration process

According to the survey findings, the regular channels performed better than irregular channels, which often rely on smugglers. A regular channel enables migrants to start working sooner (on average, within a month of leaving Ethiopia, as opposed to more than two months by irregular passage) and to pay less in recruitment fees, at an average of 10,900 Ethiopian birr (ETB), compared with ETB15,900 through an irregular channel.

> Ethiopian workers typically do not have proper documentation (passport, visa and work permit) while working abroad.

Cost of migration

The average overall recruitment fee paid by the returned (and still working) respondents was ETB14,200 (around US$650). Not surprising, respondents using irregular channels paid, on average, a higher fee (at ETB15,900). In comparison with the overall average annual wage, the recruitment fee represents 17 per cent on average, which is equivalent to slightly more than two months' wages. This fee is in stark contrast to what is being specified in the Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation 923/2016.

Employment conditions

Few of the returned (and still working) respondents (18 per cent) could recall having signed an employment contract. Having a contract was more common among the female respondents and for those migrating through a regular channel. In those cases, in which contracts were signed, fewer than half (44 per cent) were written in Amharic, and around one in two workers understood the terms of their contract. But even fewer (23 per cent) were given a copy of the contract – they recalled signing the agreement but the employer retained their copy of the contract.

Work days, work hours and wages

Most of the returned (and still working) respondents (67 per cent) said they worked all seven days of each week, which was more commonly heard from the female respondents. The average day was 14 hours among all respondents. But the women reported an average day of 16 hours, while men had an average day of 12 hours. Respondents in the domestic work sector worked on average 15 hours a day, compared with the 11-hour average reported for the other sectors combined. Relatively few of the returned (and still working) respondents (16 per cent) worked to the international standard of 10 hours per day (including overtime).

Forced labour prevalence

Based on analysis of the ILO forced labour indicators, as much as 72 per cent of the returned (and still working) respondents could be characterized as enduring a forced labour situation while working abroad.

Most of the forced labour manifested in work and life under duress but also occurred during recruitment and at the time the migrant workers wanted to leave their employer. The most common complaint cited by the returned (and still working) respondents (at 56 per cent) was the inability to refuse demands by the employer (figure 17). Around 42 per cent said they must work whenever the employer asked them to, and 37 per cent said they had to work even when they had not been paid as agreed upon. And 37 per cent said they were forced to work overtime for free. Other abuses included the job was worse than agreed upon, the workplace was filthy and unhealthy, and there was inability to leave when the contract ended. More than half of the returned (and still working) respondents said they were harassed or humiliated, and 46 per cent were under constant surveillance. A large proportion, at 42 per cent, had their freedom of movement restricted. A significant share of the respondents reported other penalty abuses: withheld wages (38 per cent), physical violence (37 per cent), risk of injury (33 per cent), confiscation of their identity documents (27 per cent), threats of violence to their family (26 per cent) and fired without reason (25 per cent). Around 13 per cent of the respondents cited sexual abuse, which actually ranked lowest among all abuses reported.

Access to protection or other needed assistance

Nearly half of all returned migrants who had experienced any of the cited labour abuses when overseas sought assistance, in most cases from friends and family (24 per cent) and the Ethiopian mission (21 per cent). But most of the respondents reported no resolution with their grievance; only 12 per cent of respondents who cited some form of abuse said they had resolved their problem. Although the Ethiopian missions in destination countries provide shelter, medical assistance, protection (negotiate with employers or go to court) and assistance to return to Ethiopia, they generally lack adequate resources to be proactive and conduct outreach activities.

Reasons for returning to Ethiopia

On average, the returned respondents had worked abroad for only two years, which is the average contract period, while the potential migrants on average planned to stay for four years. Thousands of Ethiopians involuntarily returned due to two massive waves of deportations from Saudi Arabia.

Finding work back in Ethiopia

Upon their return to Ethiopia, 42 per cent of respondents remained unemployed and were looking for work. Most of the respondents who had worked in other industries had to shift to a new sector, in most cases to agriculture (the very sector they had left for a better opportunity). Unemployment was similar for the male and female respondents.

Social empowerment and challenges

Most of the returned respondents (59 per cent) experienced some type of social challenge upon their return to Ethiopia, such as gossip, stigma, anxiety, depression, boredom or being disconnected from their family. Financial problems were commonly reported, at 95 per cent of the returned respondents (men and women alike). Many of them had difficulty finding a job; when they found work, it often did not pay enough. Other problems reported were not having saved enough money and having difficulty accessing credit. Because many migrants lose their job unexpectedly and are deported, this makes the return and integration process more difficult. Lack of skills

and services to improve their employability further adds to the problem.

Reintegration services

Nearly four in ten returned respondents had received some type of assistance services since coming back to Ethiopia. Within this group, the most common services were vocational training and family services provided by the government, their community or the TVET bureau.

> ...only 12 per cent of respondents who cited some form of abuse said they had resolved their problem...

RECOMMENDATIONS

Responding to the situation of irregular migration

The report calls for a lifting of the migration ban for countries that have signed a bilateral agreement or memorandum of understanding with Ethiopia. Because regular channels are faster and cheaper than irregular channels, and lead to slightly better migration outcomes, there is an attractive case to promote the use of the regular channels. Registered recruitment agencies should be reinstated and allowed to set up offices in Addis Ababa as well as regional centres. The capacity of the regional labour and social affairs bureaus and the TVET bureau should be increased, in particular staff capacity and number of institutions, so that migration services become available to all potential migrants.

Improving the capacity of government agencies

The TVET bureau needs a mechanism to keep up to date with the skills needed in destination countries; this could be achieved through government-to-government cooperation, in which the destination government works with its private sector to learn what skills are needed. The training in Ethiopia should then focus on those demands and sectors relevant to specific countries in the Middle East.

An action plan is in place (though not yet enforced), but there is urgent need to build up capacity to ensure that it is properly executed. This includes employing more skilled people (training instructors), training materials, venue facilities, number of sites, and transport for training participants. The Government's recently developed domestic workers curriculum for potential migrants going to the Middle East needs to be reviewed and implemented with adequate teaching resources in the regions for proper execution.

Improving migrant workers' awareness of their rights and useful services

More attention is needed to include male migrants in future programming related to safe migration. To do this effectively, regional migration services need to be available, sectors beyond domestic work need to be identified and included in bilateral agreements, and safe migration information needs to be actively promoted to all migrants.

Improving protection services available to migrant workers

The federal database system should be decentralized to record all migrants going abroad to track formal migration and to track migrants' well-being. This will also allow for monitoring the employment situation in destination countries and to have a ready channel for easier contact and follow-up with migrants in need as well as upon return.

More human resources who are appropriately trained to work with migrant issues should be directed to foreign missions for legal, health and general service assistance to migrant workers and to establish an appropriate complaints mechanism as well as shelter services.

Now that the Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016 specifies the posting of labour attachés, the Government must follow through with designated officials who have been appropriately trained to manage the overseas migrant situation.

TERMS

Terms and concepts used in this report

Migrant worker	A person who migrates or who has migrated from one country to another with the intent of being employed otherwise than on their own account. This includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant worker (based on ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), Article 11(1)). A person who is engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which they are not a national (based on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990).
Returned migrant worker	Defined for this study as a person who has returned to Ethiopia within the past four years after working in the Middle East.
Regular migrant worker	A migrant worker or members of their family authorized to enter, to stay and to engage in a remunerated activity in the State of employment pursuant to the law of that State and to international agreements to which that State is a party (based on International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990).
Migrant worker in an irregular situation	People who enter or work in a country other than their legal home without legal authorization, who are thus treated as illegal, clandestine, undocumented or irregular. However, "illegal migrants" is now an unacceptable term due to its connotation of criminality (International Labour Conference, 92nd Session, 2004. Report VI. Towards a Fair Deal for Migrant Workers in the Global Economy, para. 36). Migrants are considered to be in an irregular or non-documented situation if they are unauthorized to enter, to stay and to engage in a remunerated activity in a State of employment pursuant to the law of that State and to international agreement to which that State is a party (International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, article 5).
Irregular channel	Defined for this study as a channel other than through a registered recruitment agent, including unregistered brokers, smugglers, migrating on their own, migrating with the help of relatives or direct recruitment by an employer.
Low skilled	Occupations that typically involve the performance of simple and routine physical or manual tasks. They may require the use of hand-held tools, such as shovels, or of simple electrical equipment, such as vacuum cleaners. They involve tasks like cleaning, digging, lifting and carrying materials by hand, sorting, storing or assembling goods by hand (sometimes in the context of mechanized operations), operating non-motorized vehicles and picking fruit or vegetables (International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2012).

Recruitment agent (agency)

Any licensed person, independent of the public authorities, who provides one or more of the following labour market services:

(a) services for matching offers of and applications for employment, without the private employment agency becoming a party to the employment relationships that may arise therefrom;
(b) services consisting of employing workers to make them available to a third party, who may be a licensed person (referred to as a "user enterprise"), who assigns their tasks and supervises the execution of these tasks; or
(c) other services relating to job seeking, determined by the competent authority after consulting the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, such as the provision of information, that do not set out to match specific offers of and applications for employment (Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181).

Labour broker or broker

Both public employment services and private employment agencies and all other intermediaries or subagents who offer labour recruitment and placement services. Labour recruiters can take many forms, whether for profit or non-profit, or operating within or outside legal and regulatory frameworks (ILO Guideline on Fair Recruitment).

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Labour migration out of Ethiopia

1.1.1 Migration in review

Despite high economic growth in Ethiopia, many Ethiopians are influenced by friends, family and recruiters to seek better work opportunities in the Middle East. Given the ecological and demographic pressures on the land and the lack of local employment opportunities, families pressure their children to migrate. Young unmarried Ethiopian women who migrate as domestic workers are imbued with a very strong sense of responsibility for the economic welfare of their family (Fernandez, 2017, citing Bezu and Holden, 2014 and Jones et al., 2014).

A "culture of migration" has taken root in Ethiopia, whereby "migration is associated with personal, social and material success, and where migrating has become the norm rather than the exception. In this vein, staying at home is associated with failure" (Fernandez, 2017, citing RMMS, 2014, which quotes de Haas, 2006, pp. 5–6).

Migration out of Ethiopia dates to the early twentieth century, when elite Ethiopians began going abroad for education, although few in number. Following the 1974 revolution and the Marxist military regime's (the Derg) takeover of the Government, hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians fled the country. Many bolted due to the political tension, while others (mostly families) saw an opportunity to escape poverty and relocate to neighbouring countries in East Africa. In 1991, after the Derg fell, some of those migrants returned to Ethiopia (Fransen and Kuschminder, 2009).

A second massive wave of outmigration arose in the 1990s, gaining momentum as the century changed (Fernandez, 2017). By 2011, many hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians – mostly girls and women – had migrated overseas to work (and mostly in domestic work), largely to the Middle East. Even though Ethiopia has one of the fastest-growing economies on the continent, it remains one of the poorest countries in Africa. Unemployment, especially youth unemployment, is high (Fernandez, 2017; ILO, 2017). Many households live with hardship, which is cited as the main motivation for more than a million Ethiopians to have migrated to other countries in search of employment. According to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs records, the number of Ethiopian migrants overseas increased from 611,400 in 2000 to 1,072,900 by the end of 2015 (MOLSA, 2017).

According to the World Bank (2014), some 29.6 per cent of the Ethiopian population lived on income below the poverty line as of 2011, down from 38.7 per cent in 2005. However, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2017a), the number of unemployed and underemployed educated youth in Ethiopia increased between 2005 and 2013. Employed youth do not have access to decent work; they have no or limited social protection, they lack freedom of association and they experience poor working conditions, largely in precarious self-employment and unprotected informal jobs. The rural population experiences persistent food insecurity due to natural hazards and seasonal climate changes, such as El Nino and La Nino from drought. The absence of decent work conditions coupled with recurrent drought force a great many Ethiopian youths to migrate overseas for better job opportunities.

Box 1. Ethiopian migrant domestic workers

Ethiopian women have limited access to education, work opportunities and financial resources (ILO,2017d). Faced with poverty and other hardships, a number of women choose to migrate to other countries to support their family. Previous research reports showed that women using regular channels migrated to the Middle East at a higher rate (95 per cent) than men using regular channels, and the vast majority of them were in domestic work (Kerbage-Hariri, 2017).

The nature of domestic work means women have limited opportunities for social interaction outside of the workplace, often becoming isolated and thus encountering greater risk of abuse. Physical and sexual violence is also common. There are limited avenues for these women to seek redress. The domestic migrant workers are mostly uneducated and know very little useful information about the destination country, such as support services that can help them. Hence, they tend to keep problems to themselves until they can't bare it anymore. Some manage to escape from their employer. They are likely to return to Ethiopia empty-handed but with irreversible damage to their health, including psychosocial impacts. After returning home and finding no viable opportunities, some women end up re-migrating.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have explicitly excluded (or in a few cases, only minimally covered) domestic workers under their labour and social security laws. In addition, GCC laws do not allow labour inspectors to enter private homes (Bajracharya, 2012).c Also, in most destination countries, migrant domestic workers are under the mandate of the Ministry of Interior rather than the Ministry of Labour. In Lebanon, in 2015, there was a successful establishment of a domestic workers' union, and some 50 per cent of its members are Ethiopian (ILO, 2014). However, the Government of Lebanon has not yet recognized the union.

ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) seeks improvement of working and living conditions for labour migrants, including migrant domestic workers. Ethiopia and the GCC countries have not yet ratified Convention No. 189 on domestic work nor ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990.

1.1.2 Current migration situation

The more popular destination countries for labour migrants from Ethiopia in the Middle East are Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Some 95 per cent of regular labour migrants going to the Middle East are women hired for domestic work. Only a few female labour migrants work in other sectors such as hospitality. The men typically work in construction, agriculture, hotels, hospitals or as drivers.

The demand from the Middle East for low-skilled workers is a strong pull factor. As Fernandez (2017) noted, based on research she did in 2014, "Since 2011, an agreement between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia resulted in a steep increase in the number of legal migrants to Saudi Arabia. In part, this increased demand from Saudi Arabia was a consequence of the ban on migration to Saudi Arabia imposed by the Philippines and Indonesian governments, following cases of abuse of workers from these countries."

The number of Ethiopian migrants with irregular status in the Middle East is reportedly large, partly because registered recruitment agencies managing the regular migration process could only operate through Addis Ababa prior to the 2016 amendments of the overseas employment proclamation because all migration cases were handled by the federal Government. Thus, Ethiopians in other geographical areas found it easier to migrate through unlicensed agents and brokers (and smugglers) operating closer to their home.

Additionally, opportunities for regular migration have been limited for men. Just how many Ethiopian migrants work abroad each year is difficult to estimate due to irregular migration and because there is no centralized registration system. Data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs indicate that 460,000 Ethiopians migrants migrated regularly to the Gulf

States from September 2008 to August 2013 (MOLSA, 2017), Previous studies showed that the number of irregular migrants living in the Gulf States and working as domestic workers are likely double of the official records (ILO, 2011).The United States 2013 Trafficking in Persons report noted that the nearly 200,000 regular Ethiopian migrants to the Middle East in 2012 represented only 30 per cent of all Ethiopian migrants (US Department of Labor, 2015).

The financial pay-off for many households – and the country – from both regular and irregular overseas labour migration has been positive. In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that remittances from overseas migrant workers significantly contributed (US$3.7 billion in 2015) to the country's gross domestic product, even exceeding the total value of exports (MOFA, 2016).

But the negative impacts have been heavy as well. Both the journey to a destination country and employment situations in those countries come with intense risk and danger – more likely affecting migrants with irregular status, although not necessarily.

Ethiopia is a landlocked country in the horn of Africa. It is bordered by Eritrea to the north, Djibouti, and Somalia to the east, Sudan and South Sudan to the west and Kenya to the south. The more common migration routes are through Yemen to the Middle East and through Sudan (continuing northward to Libya and Egypt) to Europe and through Kenya towards South Africa.

On route to the destination, by air, land or sea, migrant workers may experience various forms of abuse. As Fernandez pointed out, the journey comes with the risk of physical exhaustion, starvation and dehydration (among those who walk long distances through a desert), capsized boats and drowning (for sea travel) or kidnapping for ransom. Migrants have been abandoned by the agent who recruited them. Some migrants have been captured by the military of a transit country and others have been trafficked or held for ransom in camps. Female migrants (more likely those who are smuggled) may be abducted and sold to other criminals or to private "buyers". Degrading treatment and verbal abuse, sexual violence, moderate or extreme physical violence, including torture and organ removal, are reported as common (Fernandez, 2017, citing Yitna, 2006, RMMS, 2014a and RMMS 2014c).

In destination countries, reported cases of abuse range from psychological to sexual violence to physical torture, sometimes leading to death. Reports of such abuse refer to employers as well as recruiters as perpetrators (ILO, 2014). Even being deported has been risky, based on reports that when the Government of Saudi Arabia deported Ethiopians in 2013 and 2014, many were left with no resources in the desert of Yemen (Fernandez, 2017).

Due to their low level of education and lack of access to information, most migrants are not well informed about the working and living conditions in a destination country. Upon arrival, many encounter unexpected issues with their employer. The following labour abuses are common.

- Migrant workers do not speak the employer's language and are often unable to understand the contract terms because they are written in Arabic or English.
- Work skills tend to be extremely limited; some migrants are not even able to operate basic home appliances.
- Many migrant workers have their identity documents taken away by their employer.
- Migrant workers tend to have excessive working hours with not enough time for rest.
- Some workers are paid less than promised, have their salary withheld (to keep them from leaving) or are not paid at all.
- There have been reported cases of food deprivation as well as physical, emotional and psychological abuse.
- In extreme cases, migrants are sexually abused or raped; unwanted pregnancies have occurred.
- Because of the kafala system (see box 2), migrant workers find it difficult to leave their employer or even leave the country.
- Isolation is common among women doing domestic work.
- When abusive conditions occur, many migrant workers do not know where to seek help.

Box 2. *Kafala* system

Kafala is a sponsorship system that regulates residency and employment of workers in Gulf Corporation Council countries and includes anyone who works within a household (drivers, gardeners and maids). The sponsor is responsible for paying any recruitment fees and takes full economic and legal responsibility for their workers. Workers' visa status is tied to their sponsor. The contract period is typically for a minimum of two years, although it is not an agreement between the sponsor and a worker but between workers and their recruitment agency. If a contract is breeched, the sponsor has the right to ask a worker to pay back the recruitment fee, unless the sponsor has committed abuse or some other proven violation.

Through the *kafala* system, the sponsor has complete control over the mobility of migrant workers. The workers cannot resign or change jobs without consent from their sponsor. Workers are also not able to leave the country without first receiving an "exit visa" from their sponsor. Leaving without an exit visa is considered a crime, even if there is evidence of abuse. Leaving the sponsor renders workers with irregular status.

Source: Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility, 2012.

Even though there are Ethiopian mission support services available in some Middle Eastern countries (Lebanon, United Arab Emirates (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia (Riyadh and Jeddah), Kuwait and Oman), many labour migrants are not aware of such services. Because many Ethiopians enter a destination country as an irregular migrant, it is difficult to keep track of them; Ethiopian mission staff are not able to reach out to them sufficiently. Additionally, Ethiopian missions have limited resources to assist when migrants seek protection and other assistance. Some limited services are provided, including mediation, legal services, medical assistance, emergency shelter and return assistance. This is often done in partnership with local NGOs and other civil society organizations. But the missions have limited resources and capacity to manage migration issues and services delivered tend to be on a reactive and best-effort basis.

1.2 The ban on migration

Following an escalation of outward migration in 2011 and 2012 and heightened reports of abuse, exploitation and the trafficking of workers who left for overseas employment (as well as the anticipated deportation of hundreds of thousands of migrants from Saudi Arabia[1]), the Government of Ethiopia banned all labour migration to the Middle East as of October 2013 as a way to better protect its citizens. At the time, it was supposed to be a temporary ban (seven months) while the Government determined and resolved the gaps in its legal and administrative frameworks. Those deliberations became drawn out and the ban became protracted, enduring for more than four years.

In 2015, the Government adopted Proclamation No. 909/2015 on smuggling and human trafficking that sets out procedures for the investigation of smuggling and trafficking offences as well as establishing procedures for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking. Then in 2016, many positive legal and institutional framework changes were incorporated into the revised Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923 (ILO, 2017c), which can be summarized as follows:

- Negotiating bilateral agreements with major destination countries to fill the legal and policy gaps. The Government has signed a bilateral labour agreement with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Jordan. The Government is negotiating an agreement with Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.
- Improving the migration process by decentralizing the services to the regions as well as building the capacity of government institutions to efficiently govern the regular labour migration process by establishing new institutional structure to govern overseas employment.
- Mainstreaming of skills training and pre-departure orientation as part of overseas employment requirements.

1 The deportation began in November 2013.

- Developing a curriculum and occupational manual for housekeeping, household services and caregiving in collaboration with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Bureau.
- Assigning labour attachés in diplomatic missions to monitor and more proactively support migrant workers.
- Making skills training and certificate of competency mandatory for labour migration and identifying 40 public skills training institutions for labour migrants.
- Setting the minimum educational requirement to be completion of eighth grade for overseas employment.
- Revising institutional structures of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to promote foreign employment for the workforce as an option to reap the development benefits, while providing protection for migrant workers.
- Requiring private recruitment agency owners to be Ethiopian citizens who have one million Ethiopian birr in capital. Each agency is required to deposit US$100,000 (or equivalent in ETB) in a blocked bank account.
- Specifying the fee that should be covered by migrants and recruitment agencies.
- Requiring employers who recruit employees to deposit US$50 per worker as a guarantee into a fund administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Despite these legal changes, the ban on low-skilled migrants going to the Middle East and Sudan remains as of 2017. Discussions with government agency and civil society representatives revealed contradicting perspectives on the impact of the ban. Some senior officials claimed domestic workers could still migrate legally, while others asserted that the ban applies to all low-skilled migrants. “The reason we banned the travel was to examine the gaps in our laws and practices in order to prevent the abuses on our citizens in the Middle East,” an official from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs told a reporter for The East African in 2015.[2] At the same time, several officials, civil society representatives and migrants see the ban as creating a situation that force migrants to use irregular channels, which in turn further enables abuse and exploitation.

Migration governance is a complex task because it spans multiple actors and countries – at origin, transit and destination centres. In each country, there are many actors with differing roles in the migration process, including potential migrants, migrant workers, returned migrants, labour recruiters (public and private), brokers, employers, various ministries of the Government, workers’ associations, international organizations and civil society actors. To manage migration effectively, cooperation and coordination between countries and the various actors are necessary. Proclamation No. 923/2016, ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), ILO Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151), the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, the ILO Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment, and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990, are some of the important instruments for improving labour migration governance. They seek collaboration among multiple countries, involving government officials, recruiters, employers and other partners, to improve employment standards for all workers, including migrant workers.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been working with the Government of Ethiopia to strengthen its labour migration governance. Most recently, the ILO and the Government initiated a four-year Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project, funded by DFID. This report presents the findings of the baseline survey conducted as the beginning of that project.

2 See www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Ethiopia-seeks-to-protect-migrant-workers-abuse-in-Middle-East/2558-2744338-hqdny0z/index.htm

1.3 Project background

Recognizing the increase of unemployed and underemployed youth within Ethiopia over the past several years who migrate overseas for better jobs and recognizing the numerous decent work deficits that Ethiopian migrants experience in the Middle East, the ILO initiated a four-year Improved Labour Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia Project, with funding from the United Kingdom Department for International Development, in January 2017.

The project aims at supporting the recent uptick in efforts by the Government and civil society groups to reduce irregular migration by improving labour migration governance and making regular labour migration more accessible and desirable to potential migrants in Ethiopia.

Thus, the project began with a baseline survey on the prevalence of regular and irregular migration, the situation of Ethiopian labour migrants in terms of the problems they experience during migration, while working in destination countries and upon their return to Ethiopia. This report presents the findings of that baseline survey. The findings of the survey are expected to pinpoint gaps or areas that the project and the Government should consider resolving as a priority.

> Whichever way they leave, the chances that an agent, other middlemen or employers will take advantage of the "no one looking" situation has increased.

Due to the number of Ethiopians living in poverty and the number of people dependent on agriculture, which experiences intense spells of drought and thus exacerbates the poverty, thousands of migrants continue to leave the country each year in search of employment elsewhere. But they leave irregularly due to the ban, which suspended the licenses of Government-approved agents. Some Ethiopians go to neighbouring countries, from where they find employment agents or smugglers who shepherd them to a job in the Middle East. Some go directly to the Middle East as tourists or through trafficking and smuggling networks and then overstay their visa. Whichever way they leave, the chances that an agent, other middlemen or employers will take advantage of the "no one looking" situation has increased. As the survey findings reflected in this report (and other studies, such as Fernandez, 2017) indicate, not only is outmigration riskier, it is also more expensive due to the illegal and exorbitant recruitment fees required since the ban took effect.

II. RESEARCH APPROACH

2.1 Research objectives

The baseline study was initiated with the following five objectives.

1. Estimate the prevalence of regular and irregular labour migration to Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) States and Lebanon.
2. Examine the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Bureau, the Office for General Attorney, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries and regional bureaus to govern labour migration effectively and efficiently.
3. Assess the awareness and knowledge of potential migrants and migrant workers on international and national legal instruments related with migrant workers, duty bearers and migrants' rights and responsibilities, recruitment and immigration procedures and information about major destination countries.
4. Assess the protection of migrant workers, including the quality of services provided by Ethiopian diplomatic missions, Ethiopian communities and NGOs in GCC States and Lebanon and the coordination of actors as well as assessing the satisfaction of these services by migrants.
5. Identify and assess challenges, opportunities and recommendations for effective labour migration governance in Ethiopia and for Ethiopian missions in major destination countries.

2.2 Research scope

To capture the entire migration cycle, data were collected from potential and returned migrants in Ethiopia and migrants in selected destination countries – mainly Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with informants were carried out in Ethiopia and in the selected destination countries. Within Ethiopia, data collection was carried out in four regions (Amhara; Oromia; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region; and Tigray) and in Addis Ababa. Data were also collected from mission staff in Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Survey topics examined the entire migration process, including the pre-migration situation, in-country working and living conditions and the return and integration experience. The interviews with informants inquired about support services and legislative processes and challenges.

Figure 1. Data collection sequence

2.3 Research design

The baseline study employed a mixed-methods approach, beginning with a desk review before the qualitative and quantitative data collection (figure 1). The qualitative component allowed for more in-depth data gathering to gain more insightful findings from relevant target groups regarding the situation of migrant workers. The quantitative part focused on potential and returned migrants in Ethiopia to gain insights along the entire migration process. The baseline study was supported by two workshops: an initial developmental workshop in which the data collection methods were discussed with the ILO staff and representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to obtain feedback and input, and a validation workshop to obtain input on recommendations.

2.4 Data collection methods

Based on the document review and internal consultations with ILO staff, the following four target groups were determined, for which interview guides and survey questionnaires were developed: (i) potential migrants; (ii) migrants working in the Middle East; (iii) returned migrants; (iv) informants, including ministry representatives, diplomatic missions, regional bureaus and city administrations and ILO staff in Ethiopia and headquarters. A full analysis was conducted for each of the four target groups through triangulation.

2.4.1 Document review

The Project Team hired for the study (Rapid Asia, based in Bangkok, Thailand) conducted a document review to better understand the migration situation

Table 1. Number of informants interviewed, by country

Informants	Location	Number	Method
ILO in Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	1	Phone
ILO Geneva	Switzerland	1	Phone
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Addis Ababa	2	Face to face
Technical and Vocational Education and Training Bureau	Addis Ababa	1	Face to face
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Addis Ababa	1	Face to face
Ethiopia Diplomatic Mission in Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	1	Phone
Ethiopia Diplomatic Mission in Kuwait	Kuwait	1	Phone
Ethiopia Diplomatic Mission in Bahrain	Bahrain	1	Phone
Ethiopia Diplomatic Mission in United Arab Emirates	Dubai	2	Phone & face to face
Ethiopia Diplomatic Mission in Lebanon	Lebanon	2	Phone & face to face
Private Employment Agencies Association	Addis Ababa	1	Phone
Regional government bureaus and city administration	Amhara; Oromia; Tigray; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region; and Addis Ababa	20	Face to face
Total		**34**	

and trends in Ethiopia. An initial document review was conducted in June 2017, followed by additional reviews to explore specific issues (see the References list for all documents reviewed). These document reviews helped the Project Team develop the data collection questionnaires.

2.4.2 Stakeholder interviews

Interviews with senior and regional stakeholders were conducted face to face following the development workshop in Addis Ababa. For the sake of practicality, some of the semi-structured interviews with overseas mission officers were conducted by telephone. All 34 interviews were conducted in English by Rapid Asia senior staff to (table 1).

2.4.3 Survey with migrants

An Addis Ababa-based survey company (the Survey Team) was contracted to conduct the face-to-face survey interviews with potential and returned migrants in Ethiopia.

Following the inception stage, the survey reached out to potential and returned migrants in Ethiopia and migrants in two destination countries (Lebanon and United Arab Emirates). To ensure comparable results, one survey tool was designed for use with all three types of respondents, although topics not relevant to a particular group were excluded (table 2).

The migrant respondents in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates were asked the same questions in relation to pre-migration and migration stages. They were also asked several open-ended questions that were intended to generate insight regarding their experiences. To allow the interviews to be carried out in Amharic, local translators assisted the Rapid Asia moderator (probing interviewer) with interpretation. To avoid potential interference by employers, migrant workers were not interviewed at their workplace. Instead, they were sought in various locations around each capital city (Beirut and Abu Dhabi). A total of 37 interviews were conducted (16 in Lebanon and 21 in the United Arab Emirates).

Table 2. Sampling plan and sample size

Respondent group			
Migration stage	**Potential migrants**	**Migrants**	**Returned migrants**
Pre-migration	Included	Included	Included
Migration		Included	Included
Return & integration			Included
Location	Ethiopia	Lebanon & United Arab Emirates	Ethiopia
Sample size	n=250	n=37	n=250

The quantitative survey with potential and returned migrants in Ethiopia used the following screening criteria to ensure a homogeneous sample between the different survey locations.

- Ethiopian nationals.
- Urban and rural areas.
- Potential migrants: People who planned to migrate to the Middle East within the next 12 months.
- Returned migrants: People who migrated to the Middle East in 2013 or later and returned in the past two years.
- Aged 15–50 years.
- Men and women, using a 50/50 split quota.

The survey was conducted in five locations: Amhara; Oromia; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region; Tigray; and Addis Ababa (which together represent about 88 per cent of the Ethiopian population). The total sample was 500 people, split between potential and returned migrants.

The survey was conducted between September and October 2017. In each woreda, two to four villages with a larger penetration of potential and returned migrants were selected, based on input from local migrant worker resource centre staff and using non-probability sampling with a combination of snowballing and quota sampling. To ensure a good geographic spread of the sample, respondents were sought out in different locations in each village. Table 3 presents the sample size distribution in each location.

Table 3. Sample size by target area

Region	Location	Population (thousand)	%	Total	%
Amhara	Oromia Special Zone: Kemisse District North Wollo Zone: Mersa District	20 401	25	100	20
Oromia	West Arsi Zonel Adaba District Arsi Zone: Juju District and Asela town	33 692	42	200	40
Capital	Addis Ababa	3 273	4	50	10
Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region	Silti Zone: Silti District and Sagure District	18 276	23	100	20
Tirgray	Atsibe Wonberta District Raya Alamata District	5 056	6	50	10
	Total	**80 698**	**100**	**500**	**100**

Note: Population size are estimates for 2017 and based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The survey questionnaire was structured on topics regarding pre-migration, migration process, cost of migration, employment and return and integration.

2.5 Gender sensitivity

Gender concerns were considered throughout the entire process of conducting the baseline survey, making sure a gender lens and gender-sensitive approach were applied (table 4).

Table 4. Gender sensitivity

Stage	Gender sensitivity
Project Team	• Included senior gender expert. • Male and female management representation.
Desk review	• Special attention was given to gender issues and gender context analysis (the extent to which project documents established attainable and clear gender-responsive objectives).
Meetings	• Participation by both men and women. • Inclusion of gender expert. • Agenda covered gender-related issues.
Method	• Equal numbers of men and women participants were required. • For some stakeholder groups, this was not possible but it thus ensured a critical mass of women and men were included.
Questionnaire development	• Ability to have sex-disaggregated data • Include topics that deal with gender issues.
Data collection	• Equal representation and participation were ensured. • All interviewers followed ethical procedures.
Analysis and report	• Results were disaggregated by sex where applicable.

2.6 ILO Forced Labour Indicators

The ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) defines forced or compulsory labour as "all work or service, which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and, for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily" (article 2.1). While forced labour is closely linked to human trafficking, they are not the same. However, human trafficking can be regarded as contained within the concept of forced labour (ILO, 2012).

The ILO framework of indicators for measuring forced labour derive from theoretical and practical experience of the ILO Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour. They are based on the definition of forced labour specified in Convention No. 29. Their classification in this report is based on the definitions and classifications framework as set out in the ILO report *Hard to See, Harder to Count – Survey Guidelines to Estimate* (2012).

Having a common set of variables means comparable estimates can be produced on the prevalence of forced labour. The framework applies to all workers, regardless of their status in employment. The definition of forced labour can be divided into four dimensions:

1. "Unfree recruitment" covers both forced and deceptive recruitment. Forced recruitment is when, during the recruitment process, constraints are applied to force workers to work for an employer against their will. "Deceptive recruitment" is when a person is recruited under false promises about the work. This represents involuntariness insofar as, had the worker been aware of the true working or other conditions, they would not have accepted the job.
2. "Work and life under duress" covers adverse working or living situations imposed on a person by force, penalty or menace of penalty. Work under duress may entail an excessive volume of work or tasks that are beyond what can reasonably be expected within the framework of national labour law. "Life under duress" refers to situations in which degrading living conditions, limitations on freedom or excessive dependency are imposed on a worker by the employer.
3. "Impossibility of leaving" an employer is a form of limitation on freedom and an essential ingredient of forced labour. The difficulty to leave one's employer is characteristic of forced labour when leaving entails a penalty or risk to the worker. "Deliberate retention of wages" is recognized as a form of coercion because the worker must stay because outstanding wages will be lost if they leave.
4. "Penalty or menace of penalty" (the means of coercion) may be applied directly to a worker or to members of their family.

Based on the desk review and initial interviews with ILO Ethiopia staff as well as foreign mission officers in Kuwait and Lebanon, a set of indicators were developed that were deemed relevant to Ethiopian migrants working in the Middle East (table 5). The forced labour indicators are further classified into indicators of "involuntariness" and indicators of "penalty (or menace of penalty)". They are further classified into two levels of strengths: strong and medium, which is applicable for adults but not children. The prevalence of forced labour is measured for each of the three main dimensions using the following formula:

forced labour = (A and C) or (A and D) or (B and C)

Table 5. ILO indicators of forced labour, adapted for this study

Main dimensions		Strength	Indicators
Unfree recruitment	Indicators of involuntariness	A. Strong	Someone else decided you should work in the Middle East Someone else chose the employer without your consent
		B. Medium	Impossible to refuse the employer Job turned out to be much worse than agreed
	Indicators of penalty	C. Strong	Withholding identify documents against your will Physical violence Sexual abuse Threats of violence against you or your family
		D. Medium	Confiscation of mobile telephone Threat of being reported to the authorities and deported
Main dimensions		**Strength**	**Indicators**
Work and life under duress	Indicators of involuntariness	A. Strong	Transferred to another employer without being consulted Forced to work overtime without pay on a regular basis
		B. Medium	Available for work at any time, day and night Filthy and unhealthy workplace Cramped and substandard living quarters with no privacy
	Indicators of penalty	C. Strong	Withholding identify documents against your will Physical violence Sexual abuse Threats of violence against your or your family Locked up Constant surveillance Withholding of wages for several months Harassment, humiliation or strong verbal abuse
		D. Medium	Confiscation of mobile telephone Restriction of movement during free time Doing dangerous work with risk of serious injury Threat of being reported to the authorities and deported
Main dimensions		**Strength**	**Indicators**
Impossibility of leaving employer	Indicators of involuntariness	A. Strong	Work longer than agreed while waiting to get paid Employer refused to release you at the end of the contract Forced to work longer to repay debt or advance on salary
		B. Medium	
	Indicators of penalty	C. Strong	Withholding identify documents against your will Physical violence Sexual abuse Threats of violence against your or your family Constant surveillance Withholding of wages for several months
		D. Medium	Confiscation of mobile telephone Restriction of movement during free time Threat of being reported to the authorities and deported

2.7 Migrant Outcome Index

To better understand and determine what contributes to positive and negative migrant outcomes, a Migrant Outcome Index was used.[3] Traditionally, migrant outcomes have mainly focused on improved economic benefits, such as income and remittances. But social benefits, such as skills development and migrants in control of their livelihood, should also be considered. While economic benefits are often the main drivers of migration, social benefits can determine whether the economic benefits are fully realized and achieved in a sustainable way.

The Migrant Outcome Index consists of eight indicators considered as critical outcomes for returned migrant workers. By including indicators that are, as far as possible, independent of each other, means that together they can explain more of the variation in the overall migrant outcome.

As shown in table 6, the eight indicators are organized into dichotomous variables with specification around what constitutes a positive and a negative migration outcome. Each indicator is given an equal weight, and the eight indicators are balanced equally between financial and social outcomes. The index is based on a scoring range from 0 to 100.

An item analysis of the index was also conducted to gain a better understanding of how the eight indicators contributed to the aggregate results. This structure can help identify causal relationships among outcomes and allow for the index method to be refined in the future.

The benefit of the Migrant Outcome Index is that is provides a shortcut to assessing migration outcomes by generating a number score. This facilitates comparisons between different demographic groups, locations and practices to determine what external factors contribute to positive and negative migration outcomes.

Table 6. Migrant Outcome Index indicators

Social indicators	Positive outcome	Negative outcome
Life skills development	Improved	No change
Currently unemployed	No	Yes
Skill level of work	Improved	No change
Psychological, social or health problems	No	Yes
Financial indicators	**Positive outcome**	**Negative outcome**
Income	Increased	No change
Tangible assets	Increased	No change
Savings	Increased	No change
Debt	No	Yes

2.8 Data analysis

2.8.1 Document review

Relevant documents were reviewed and analysed against the research objectives for the baseline survey and along with findings from the research.

2.8.2 Stakeholder interviews

For each interview conducted, responses provided by informants were summarized into an analysis template to categorize them against the research questions. All interviews were recorded on an MP3 device, which allowed the Project Team to follow up and clarify important points captured. Key findings were determined by determining the most frequent responses, together with suitable case studies and quotes. The key findings were then linked back to each research objective in preparation for triangulation.

3 The Migrant Outcome Index was developed by Rapid Asia in collaboration with the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific for a baseline survey conducted for the ILO TRIANGLE programme and the International Organization for Migration PROMISE programme in 2016.

2.8.3 Survey of migrants

The Survey Team collected data on computer tablets while the Project Team conducted data checks to ensure data quality. The quantitative data collected in the Middle East was also incorporated into the final data file. Attention was paid to the many questions capturing ratio data, such as cost of migration, savings, remittances made and income, to make sure that the data were consistent and to remove outliers. The quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software, and analysis was carried out across sub-groups.

The survey covered several issues associated with costs and income in several currencies. For the sake of comparability, all currencies were converted to Ethiopian birr. Because exchange rates fluctuate over time and the ETB rate has been weakening against many Middle Eastern currencies in recent years, it was important to apply an average exchange rate over a certain period. To do this, the average stay in the destination country was examined and used as the set period over which the average exchange rates were calculated. Because the migration period ranged between 2013 and end 2017, an overall average rate was used (table 7) for each country.

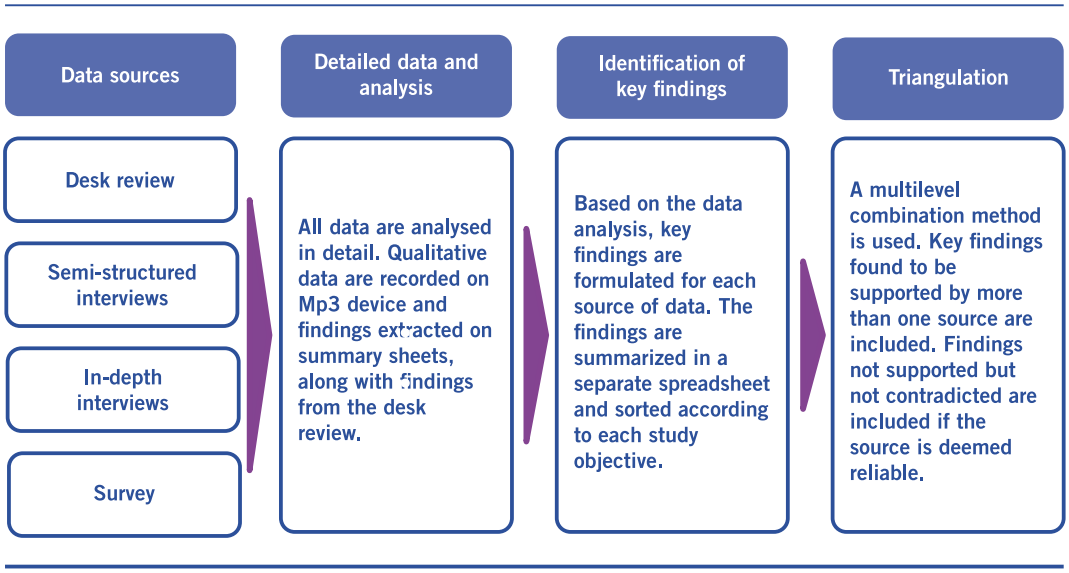
Table 7. Average exchange rates used

Country	Currency	Average exchange rate to Ethiopian birr (ETB)
Saudi Arabia	Riyal (SAR/ETB)	5.8103
United Arab Emirates	Dirham (AED/ETB)	5.9314
Qatar	Riyal (QAR/ETB)	6.0216
Bahrain	Dinar (BHD/ETB)	58.1862
Kuwait	Dinar (KWD/ETB)	73.2320
Oman	Rial (OMR/ETB)	56.7418
Lebanon	Pound (LBP/ETB)	0.0147
Jordan	Dinar (JOD/ETB)	30.8335
United States	Dollars (US$/ETB)	22.000

2.8.4 Data analysis and triangulation

The Project Team used the multilevel combinations approach to ensure proper triangulation of the data (USAID, 2013). First, data from the desk review, informant interviews and the surveys were analysed separately and key findings were agreed within the Project Team. Second, all key findings were linked to the research objectives. Finally, triangulation was accomplished by examining the key findings across the different information sources (figure 2).

Figure 2. Data triangulation process



When reconciling the data and selecting the most important findings, the following logic was applied (table 8).

Table 8. Triangulation logic used throughout the analysis

Triangulation logic	
Findings found to be supported by two or more data sources	▶ Prioritized and included
Findings not supported by other data sources but substantial	▶ Included if mentioned by a critical mass of respondents
Findings not consistent with other data sources or no critical mass	▶ Not included

2.8.5 Validation workshop

The results of the research were presented in a validation workshop held on December 2017 in Addis Ababa. Around 47 participants from government agencies, social partners, private employment agencies, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies attended the workshop to discuss the survey results and validate recommendations. The workshop also generated diverse feedback from participants on how the survey results can be used for future programme initiatives. Insights from the workshop have been incorporated into the recommendations in this report as well as to provide input into the monitoring and target indicators.

2.9 Quality assurance

The following quality-control requirements were enforced with the Survey Team.

The questionnaire and moderator guides were reviewed in detail by both the Project Team and ILO staff. Several revision rounds were undertaken. Once the tools were agreed, they were sent to Ethiopia for localization, translation and pre-testing. Localization involved scrutiny of the questionnaire and adjusting the language, demographics, technical terms, etc. to ensure it is in line with the country context as well as appropriate from a cultural perspective. Translations were carried out by experienced translators and the translated versions of the questionnaire were also independently checked by national ILO staff in Ethiopia with special attention to technical terms and language, before final sign-off was made.

Prior to data collection, a Survey Team training was conducted at the ILO office in Addis Ababa, supervised by the Project Team and representatives from the ILO. The briefings included the operations manager as well as all supervisors, moderators and interviewers. All interviewers were briefed and instructed on sampling procedures, with question-by-question training on the questionnaire and quality-control procedures. They also conducted role plays and pilot interviews to become familiarized with the questionnaire prior to the fieldwork.

All semi-structured interviews were recorded on an MP3 device for quality control purposes.[4] A standard template was also provided to the Survey Team in which to compile interview summaries.

Even though computer tablets were used, all completed interviews underwent several checks to ensure data quality:

- Validation of 20–30 per cent of all interviews for each interviewer. This was done through direct monitoring of fieldwork, checking GPS maps and through call-backs to respondents to verify that an interview took place.
- The data file was checked for consistency in terms of quotas and regional sampling.
- The Project Team also provided a special checklist to ensure that ratio data regarding income, loans and migration costs were checked for outliers.
- The Survey Team prepared the final data file and submitted to the Project Team.
- The Project Team ran several data tests to ensure that the data were clean, consistent and did not include outliers.

4 This was to enable call-backs to participants to clarify answers if needed. The recording only started after consent was made and personal details were not recorded. Recordings were not available to any third party and were deleted after six months for confidentiality purposes.

2.10 Limitations and risks

There is lack of accurate official data on labour migration. As a result, the returned migrant population profile is largely unknown, and no clear sampling frame is available. Respondents were selected via intercept using quotas, which means there was no scientific basis for calculating sample size and the sample selected was not a pure probability sample. Instead, sample allocation was based on having a large enough sample base to compare results between key segments based on sex, legal status and country of destination, where appropriate.

Obtaining visas for Asian nationals from Rapid Asia to conduct the survey in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia proved to be difficult. Lebanon does not have an embassy in Bangkok, and Saudi Arabia required a work permit from Thailand (where Rapid Asia is based) to issue a visa. The ILO office in Lebanon assisted in obtaining that visa, but it was not possible to obtain a visa for Saudi Arabia. Excluding the migrant workers from Saudi Arabia was not seen as detrimental because most of the returned migrants interviewed in Ethiopia had worked in Saudi Arabia, so they could provide most of the information needed. Still, to compensate for this, the Project Team moderator carried out an additional six interviews with migrant workers in Lebanon as well as three interviews with informants in the United Arab Emirates. An additional three interviews with informants were also done with the mission in Saudi Arabia and MOLSA in Ethiopia.

The hospitality sector together with restaurants and tourism sectors was represented by a smaller proportion of returned migrants. Also, a few returned migrants who had been sex workers were interviewed. But the small numbers precluded analysis by sector; the three sectors were thus combined into a broader sector called “hospitality and food services”. Similarly, the fishing and seafood processing sectors were combined due to representation by a small proportion of returned migrants. The combined sector was called “fisheries”.

Many topics in the survey questionnaire sought additional detail with additional questions for certain respondents. In many cases, only a few respondents met the criteria to answer the more specific questions, resulting in a smaller sample. This meant that further “drill-down” analysis based on sub-groups were in many cases not possible because the resulting sample base was too small to render any statistical validity to the analysis. Instead, higher-level analysis was conducted to determine whether there was any evidence to suggest differences between sub-groups did exist.

Given these limitations, some caution in interpreting the data should be taken. The recommendations made have taken these limitations into account.

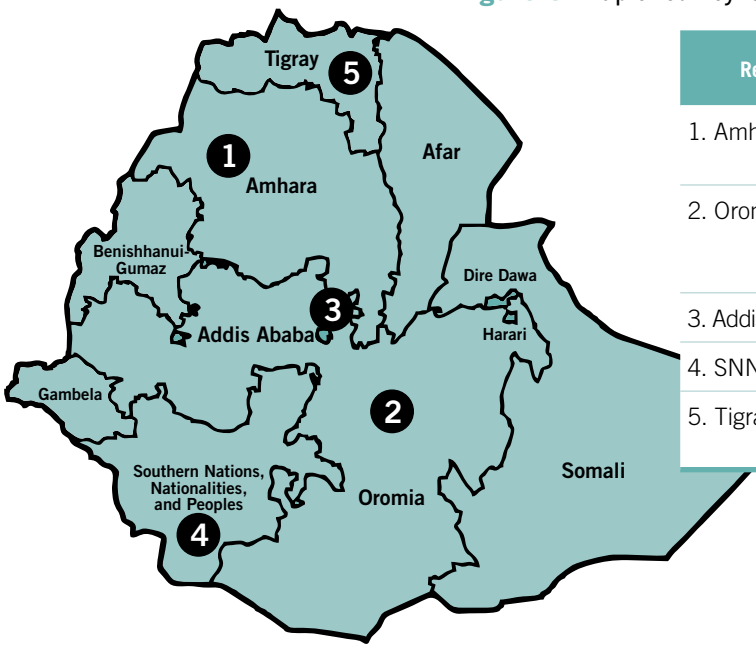
III. FINDINGS

3.1 Survey respondent profile

Of the 536 respondents covered by the survey, 250 were potential migrants, 36 were working in Lebanon or the United Arab Emirates and the remaining 250 had returned from working in one of six countries: Kuwait (2 per cent), Lebanon (7 per cent), Qatar (2 per cent), Saudi Arabia (78 per cent), United Arab Emirates (4 per cent) and other (2 per cent). The reason for the large proportion of returned migrants from Saudi Arabia is not surprising, given that Saudi Arabia is the major destination of Ethiopian migrants. Another possible factor is that the survey took place not long after a second wave of migrants were deported from the kingdom, in 2017.

The 500 respondents interviewed in Ethiopia (potential and already returned migrants) were surveyed in Addis Ababa or one of four regions: Amhara; Oromia; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples; and Tigray. (These five areas are home to about 88 per cent of Ethiopia's population.)

Figure 3. Map of survey locations



Region	District	No. of villages	Male (n)	Female (n)
1. Amhara	Kemisse	4	22	26
	Mersa	4	28	24
2. Oromia	Ababa	14	46	42
	Juju	9	23	21
	Asela Town	12	31	37
3. Addis Ababa	Addis Ababa	10	24	26
4. SNNRP	Siliti Zone	5	50	50
5. Tigray	Atsibe Wonberta	4	12	13
	Alamata	2	14	11

Although most of the migrants going to the Middle East are women, the survey was designed to cover an equal number of women as men. Given the difficulty in finding male migrants for the face-to-face interviews in Lebanon, women outnumbered men by a small margin. Most of the respondents (71 per cent) were seeking or had engaged in domestic work, with small portions in construction (8 per cent), other (8 per cent), agriculture (6 per cent) or hospitality (5 per cent).

Table 9 shows the demographic profile of the potential and returned migrants covered by the survey. Respondents ranged in age from 15 to 49 years, although they were predominantly younger than 30 years: 47 per cent were aged 15–24 years and 33 per cent were aged 25–29 years at the time of the survey. Most of them were single (at 61 per cent). But of the 39 per cent married, 32 per cent had children. Most of the respondents (60 per cent) had only a primary school education or no education at all, while 37 per cent had some secondary school education.

Table 9. Profile of surveyed migrant workers in Ethiopia

Education	Total n=536 (%)	Potential n=250 (%)	Returned n=286 (%)	Male n=252 (%)	Female n=284 (%)	Regular Ch n=255 (%)	Irregular Ch n=281 (%)
No education	8	8	8	8	8	6	10
Primary level 1-4	15	12	18	15	15	11	19
Prmary level 5-8	37	36	39	38	36	36	38
Secondary level 9-10	32	36	27	31	32	37	27
Secondary level 11-12	5	4	5	5	5	7	3
Vocational school or university	3	3	2	3	3	3	4
Family status							
Married	39	20	55	36	41	37	40
Have children	32	18	44	29	36	30	34
Age							
15-24 years	47	66	30	45	48	51	43
25-29 years	33	27	37	29	36	33	32
30 years or older	21	7	33	26	16	17	25
Home region							
Amhara	21	20	22	20	22	15	26
Oromia	39	40	39	40	39	41	38
Addis Ababa	11	10	12	10	12	17	5
Southern Nations, Nationalities & Peoples	19	20	19	20	19	26	14
Tigray	9	10	9	10	9	<1	17
Media usage							
Television	59	63	56	54	64	69	50
Radio	57	61	54	66	49	64	51
Newspaper	8	9	8	14	4	8	8
Internet	23	28	19	28	18	28	19
None	10	10	10	8	12	4	15

Potential migrants were on average a bit younger and less likely to be married and have children. They were also somewhat more educated, with 45 per cent having completed their secondary education or higher, compared with 34 per cent of the returned migrants. This shift is in line with the Proclamation No. 923/2016. The profiles of men and women are similar.

Licenses for recruitment agencies previously registered with the Government were suspended following the migration ban, and the suspension remains. These agencies, however, continue sending workers abroad, as do the unregistered brokers and smugglers. Hence, the 255 respondents who had used (or were about to use) the services of a previously registered agency are

treated as regular-channel migrants for this analysis, while the remaining 281 respondents are treated as irregular-channel migrants. This division appears logical in anticipation that the ban could be lifted in the near future. Thus, respondents using regular channels were on average younger and more educated than respondents who used an irregular channel. They also had slightly higher use of media including television, radio and internet.

For purposes of reaching potential or returned migrant workers with useful information and awareness-raising messaging in the future (to determine the media to use), respondents were asked if they owned a television, telephone or computer. While only 1 per cent owned a computer, 23 per cent had Internet access (perhaps through use of Internet cafes or through their smart telephone, at 21 per cent). Around 59 per cent owned a television, and 57 per cent had a radio. Some 10 per cent did not have any access to any media. This indicates that potential and returned migrants cannot be reached effectively by one medium alone – a combination of mediums is needed.

3.2 Pre-migration preparations

3.2.1 Decision to migrate

Both the potential and returned (and still abroad) migrants indicated that the biggest influence on their decision to migrate was their own opinion, although they also regarded friends and parents as influential. Most migrants expressed a positive attitude to migration as opposed to a negative one. Before migrating (whether waiting to go or having already gone), most of the respondents said they felt certain about their decision (61 per cent), calm (58 per cent) and prepared (54 per cent). Many even felt confident (41 per cent) and excited (43 per cent). The qualitative interviews indicated that many migrants hear positive stories about overseas job opportunities that are confirmed when seeing neighbours and friends coming back "better off". This, in combination with the hope and support from parents, stimulated the positive attitudes.

Based on the interviews with overseas workers, nearly all of them placed considerable trust in the brokers or agents who had organized the job for them due to stories from other people they knew who had migrated and were better off as a result. This indicates that word-of-mouth communication is strong and that it cannot be assumed or expected that potential migrants will seek information on how to migrate safely. Service providers, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, must thus be proactive and reach out to potential migrants with information on safe migration.

3.2.2 Access to skills training or pre-departure orientation and other services

Awareness and use of migration services seems rather low, both in Ethiopia and in destination countries, with more than half of the respondents reporting they had never used or were aware of such services (table 10). The most common services cited by respondents were pre-departure orientation, skills training, information on destination country and general migration information.

The interviews with regional government agency representatives revealed that they typically promote their services using flyers in community gatherings. Those government agency representatives believe that potential migrants are aware of and generally have access to their services. Yet, the findings suggest they are not. This indicates that while service providers may be aware of their responsibilities, they are unable to effectively promote and only attract a minority of potential migrants.

The Ethiopian missions in destination countries struggle with a number of challenges in promoting their services in destination countries. A cost-effective option that has been used is Facebook, but not all migrants have a smart phone or Internet access. Some mission staff have tapped into community gatherings as one way to reach out to Ethiopian migrant workers in a destination country. The biggest hurdle, however, is the inability to track all migrants coming into a country, especially when there is no labour attaché in place. Respondents still working overseas who were aware of such services said they knew about them through word of mouth or through friends.

Table 10. Awareness and usage of migration services

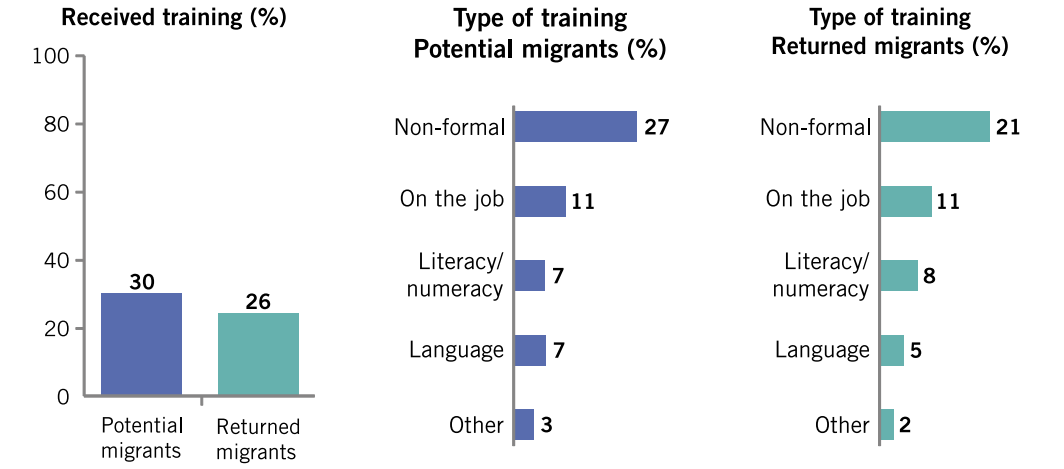
Migration services	Aware of service		Received service	
	Potential migrants n=250 (%)	Returned migrants n=286 (%)	Potential migrants n=250 (%)	Returned migrants n=286 (%)
Skills training	34	30	30	26
Pre-departure orientation	36	33	32	29
Psychological support	6	5	2	4
Complaint mechanism	13	4	8	1
Medical assistance	3	6	1	5
Legal assistance	8	6	4	3
Information on destination country	25	28	20	19
General migration information	24	17	20	15
Shelter services	8	9	3	8
None	54	54	56	60

Some 30 per cent of the potential migrants and 26 per cent of returned (or still abroad) migrants reported they received skills training prior to leaving Ethiopia (figure 4). But this "training" ranged in degree of professionalism. For most of the respondents who said they had some training, it was informal – provided within their community by returned migrants or through some locally organized event. A few respondents received training from the TVET Bureau, NGOs or private sector providers. Some respondents said they had on-the-job training, referring to skills they learned in a previous job in Ethiopia. Representatives with the TVET Bureau and regional agencies confirmed that formal training for potential migrants is rarely provided. One issue is that the TVET Bureau is not well equipped and lacks the capacity because an adequate number of instructors has not yet been recruited. In the research interviews, TVET Bureau representatives said they receive an operating budget of only around 5 per cent from the national education budget, in contrast to the 35 per cent designated for general education.

Many individuals interviewed for this study remarked that the Government focuses primarily on improving general education and that vocational skills training is largely neglected. The representatives also admitted that internal communication between the TVET Bureau and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs remains insufficient. However, the TVET Bureau and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs have been working together to define skills gaps in the country and to develop a joint action plan and training curriculum on domestic work skills, household services and caregiving. That plan remains a paper concept to date due to lack of capacity in both organizations to fully execute the plan and no clear agreement for who will oversee this activity. Staff turnover has been a particular challenge, and there is no specific training programme for potential migrants.

The TVET Bureau does offer a training programme to returned migrants who need training for reintegration purposes. Recent studies by MOLSA have similar findings but go further to say that the frequent change in leadership and collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs prevents full understanding and inconsistent implementation of Proclamation No. 923/206 on overseas employment. Nor are there clear directions to the TVET Bureau regarding training needs for people migrating for work to the Middle East (MOLSA, 2017; Motion Consultancy and Training, 2017). In total, 40 TVET institutions were selected to provide training to potential migrants. To meet current migrants' training needs, however, additional institutions with capacity to train migrants will be needed (MOLSA, 2017).

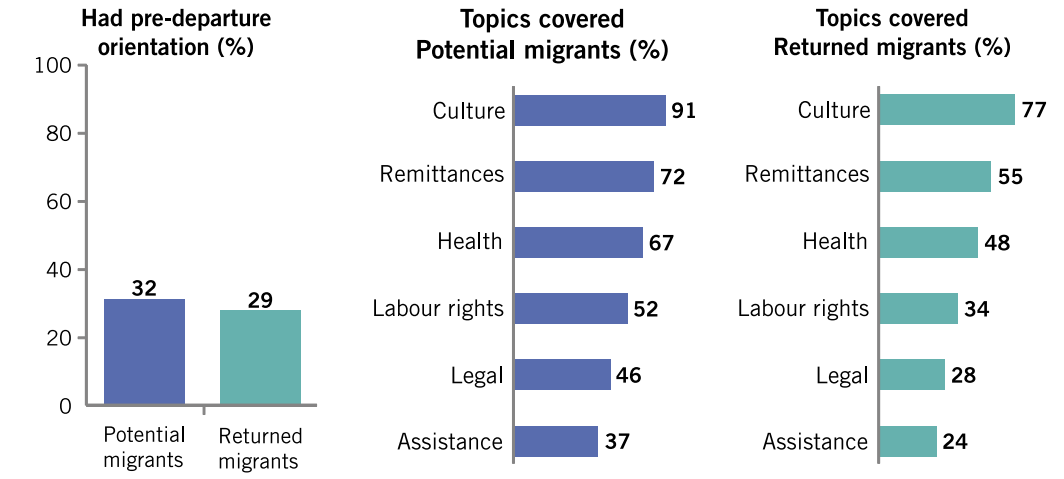
Figure 4. Skills training completed



Base: all respondents, n=536

Slightly less than a third of the migrant respondents received some form of pre-departure orientation (figure 5). The orientations covered several topics, with culture and customs, how to remit money home, health and hygiene and labour rights the more commonly cited. There is some indication that the potential migrants have received a broader orientation that covers more topics than what the returned migrants reported receiving before the ban was imposed. Under Proclamation No. 923/2016, pre-departure orientation is mandatory (ILO, 2017c). And yet, when interviewed, eight of the 20 regional informants for this study said that the proclamation was either not effective or that it had not yet been enforced (no orientation is available in some areas, for instance). Some informants also noted that many potential migrants ignore the orientation programme.

Figure 5. Access to pre-departure orientation



Base: all respondents, n=536

Base: all respondents, n=536

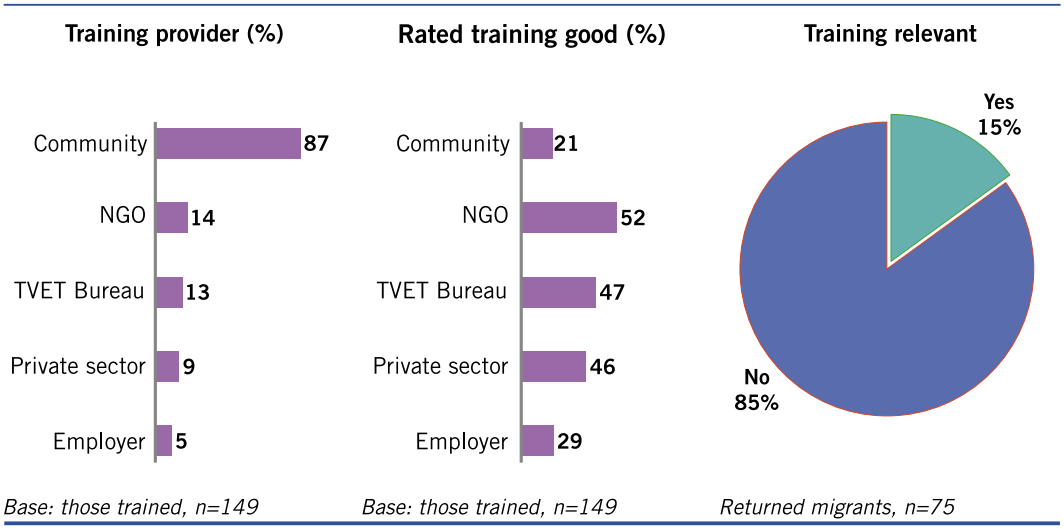
Base: all respondents, n=536

3.2.3 Agency capacity to provide pre-departure orientation and training

Only the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs can provide formal pre-departure orientation. Some 17 per cent of potential migrants and 12 per cent of the returned migrants received orientation from the Ministry. While this shows a slight improvement over the past four years, it also indicates that many migrants are not receiving the mandatory orientation. Staff in the regional bureaus estimated they provide services to between 1,000 and 2,500 potential and returned migrants per year. Some staff members also pointed out that as long as the ban remains, there is little incentive to provide pre-departure orientations to potential migrants. Many respondents said the only orientation they had before leaving Ethiopia was something informal within their community.

Relatively few of the respondents gave the informal skills training they received in their community a "good" rating (figure 6). The formal training provided by the TVET Bureau, NGOs or private sector enterprises, however, received a significantly higher rating. Still, the majority of returned migrants who had had some formal training before leaving Ethiopia (85 per cent) indicated that what they had received was not relevant for the job they had in a destination country.

Figure 6. Quality of skills training received



A comparison of responses between the potential migrants and workers still abroad or who had returned since 2013 indicated that only services in relation to general migration information or registering a complaint may have improved over the past four years. Overall (and not surprising), there was little indication that pre-migration services have improved significantly since the ban was introduced. The regional government agency officials discussed the limitations they face due to the lack of adequate budget and skilled people.

To examine the capacity of regional and lower-level administrative structures, regional government representatives were asked to rate the effectiveness of the decentralization process, the quality of the migration-related service provided and whether capacity and resources are sufficient. Overall, 11 of the 20 respondents said decentralization has been "less than effective". The main issue raised is that they do not have the capacity to deliver good service and they would like to see more support from the Government. Looking at service quality, 15 of the 20

regional respondents rated their own service quality as "less than good". There was a general feeling that they would like to provide good service but are unable due to the lack of resources and capacity. The evident lack of capacity and resources was overwhelmingly confirmed when asked directly; 19 of the 20 regional respondents said this indeed was the case. Examples of capacity frequently mentioned were lack of skilled people, training materials, venue facilities and transport for participants.

"We need capable and qualified teachers for the trainings we intend to have for potential and returned [migrants], a training place to conduct [the training], teaching aids and budget to have more trainings," one informant in Oromia explained.

Said another informant in Amhara, "More resources are needed to address all the issues: finance, materials, human resources and structural constraints."

> More resources are needed to address all the issues: finance, materials, human resources and structural constraints...

3.3 Migration process and cost

A regular channel to access overseas employment is arranged by registered private sector recruitment agencies. According to the survey findings, the regular channels (i.e. registered agents) performed better than irregular channels, which often rely on smugglers. A regular channel enables migrants to start working sooner (on average, within a month of leaving Ethiopia, as opposed to more than two months by irregular passage) and to pay less in recruitment fees, at an average of ETB10,900, compared with ETB15,900 through an irregular channel. Regular channels, however, do not necessarily shelter migrants from labour abuse, which underscores the need for greater Government oversight. In other countries, the opposite has proven to be the case, and regular channels were found to be more expensive and taking longer time (ILO, 2017b). According to the Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation 923/2016, recruitment fees should be borne by the employer.[5] The survey findings thus indicate there is good opportunity to promote regular channels in Ethiopia.

REMINDING NOTE: Due to ban remaining in place, all migration to the Middle East is regarded as irregular. To provide more insight, this report focuses on what can be regarded as regular or irregular migration channels as well as regular or irregular migration status. Despite the ban and having their licence suspended, recruiting agencies previously registered by the Government continue to send workers abroad. Some officials contend the ban excludes domestic work when bilateral agreements exist, which is consistent with Ethiopia's Overseas Employment Proclamation 923/2016 (ILO, 2017c), while other officials, also with regional government agencies, said that because of the ban there are no authorized recruitment agencies. People who want to migrate regularly, in line with a bilateral agreement or memoranda of understanding (MOU) that has been established between governments, need to contact the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs or a local government agency.

5 The employer shall cover such fees as: visa, transportation costs, work permits, residence permits, insurance, visa authenticating in destination country and employment contact approval fees.

Figure 7. Effectiveness of migration channel

Regular channels	Irregular channels
Average days to migrate: 26 days	Average days to migrate: 64 days
Range of days: 1-270 days	Range of days: 1-360 days
Average cost: ETB10,900	Average cost: ETB15,900
Incidence of forced labour: 71%	Incidence of forced labour: 74%

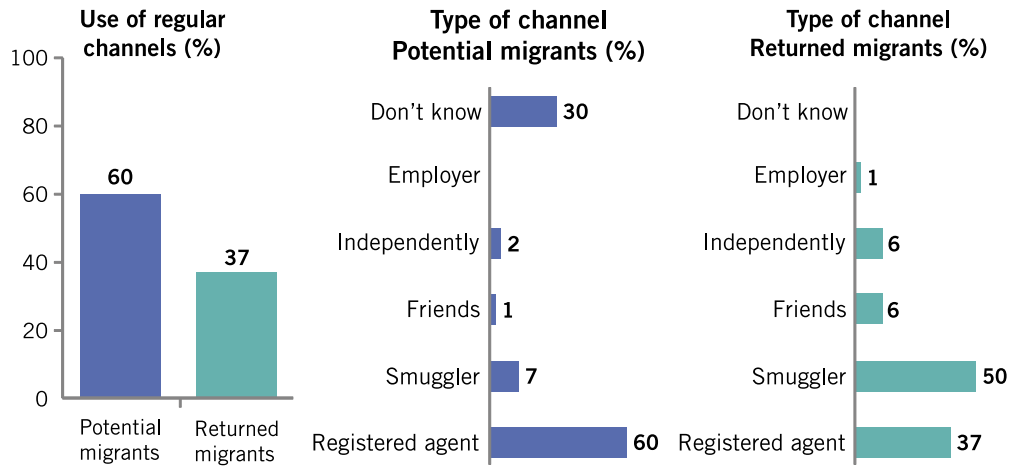
Base: those trained, n=149

3.3.1 Prevalence of regular and irregular migration channels

Irregular migration is difficult to estimate. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs estimates that the irregular labour migrants represent between 60 and 70 per cent of all Ethiopians in the Gulf (Fernandez, 2017). Results from this baseline survey are consistent with the Government estimate, with 63 per cent of the returned (or those still working) respondents reporting they used an irregular channel when they migrated to the Middle East (figure 8). Half of them used a smuggler, and some migrated independently or with help from friends. A large proportion (60 per cent) of the potential migrants said they would migrate using a registered agent. The remaining 30 per cent of potential migrants said they did not yet know what channel they would use. Although the findings do not prove an actual increase in use of regular channels because it is not yet known which channel the potential migrants ultimately will use, they do suggest that they are generally preferred.

Some 44 per cent of the returned respondents travelled directly to the Middle East when they migrated. But many transited through other countries: 49 per cent went via Yemen, 29 per cent via Djibouti and 21 per cent via Somalia. Irregular migrants from Ethiopia who make border crossings follow the pattern

Figure 8. Migration channel



Base: all respondents, n=536

> Banning the legal way has aggravated the illegal [channels] because the one who chooses the legal [channel] has no option other than choosing illegal...

of step-wise migration – travelling in stages overland from Ethiopia to the coast of Djibouti or Somalia then crossing the sea to Yemen (Fernandez, 2017; Kassegne et al., 2017).

Regional government agency representatives believe that there is significant lack of awareness among migrants regarding the rules for migrating. The general view was that migrants cannot distinguish between regular and irregular channels, are ignorant of the migration ban and hold little regard for migration risks. The representatives also believe that the migration ban amplifies the problem because it removes any legal option to migrate.

As one person in Amhara pointed out, "Banning the legal way has aggravated the illegal [channels] because the one who chooses the legal [channel] has no option other than choosing illegal".

3.3.2 Cost of migration[6]

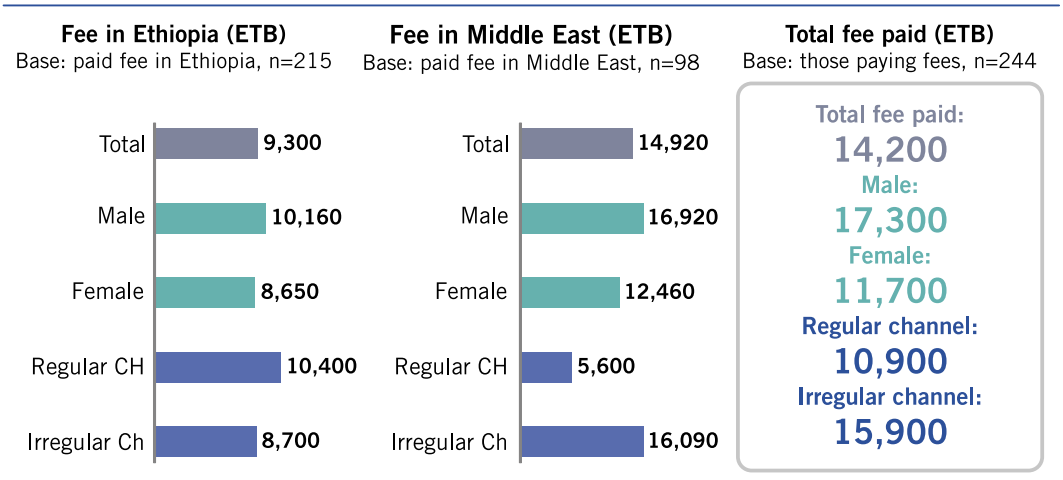
Because the ban prevents migration, using informal recruiters and smugglers has become common and easily accessible, although it is in violation of Proclamation No. 923/2016 and ILO Convention No. 181, which Ethiopia has ratified. Smugglers work on behalf of recruiters and employers in the Middle East. Would-be migrants typically pay them a recruitment fee. In some cases, the employer pays the fee upfront but later deducts it from the migrant worker's salary (typically the equivalent of just over two months' salary). Many Ethiopians, especially in rural areas, have little education and limited knowledge about the destination country in which they seek to work. This includes foreign language comprehension, cultural understanding and suitable work skills and thus are more vulnerable to exploitation when using recruiters not operating under the Government's purview.

The majority of returned (and still working) respondents (85 per cent) paid a recruitment fee, either in Ethiopia (75 per cent of respondents) or in the Middle East (34 per cent of respondents). And 24 per cent of them paid a fee in both countries.

The average overall recruitment fee paid by the returned (and still working) respondents was

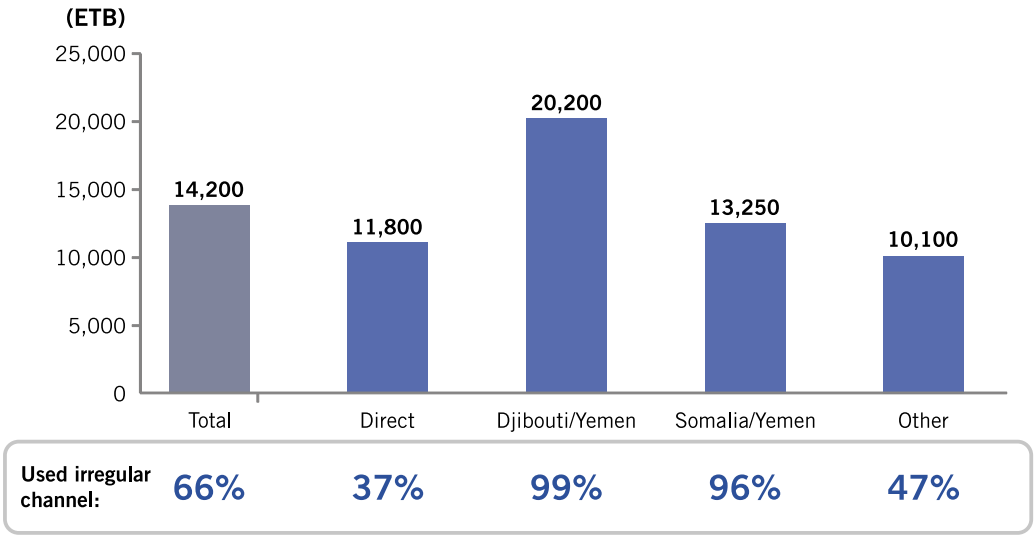
6 Cost of migration included any costs for training, recruitment, passport, visa, travel, examinations, deposits, orientation, bribes and informal payments.

Figure 9. Average recruitment fee paid



Currency: Ethiopian birr (ETB)

Figure 10. Average recruitment fee paid, by corridor



Currency: those paying recruitment fees, n=244

ETB14,200 (around US$650) (figure 9). Recruitment fees were, on average, significantly higher in the Middle East than what was paid in Ethiopia. Male respondents paid on average higher fees (at ETB17,300) than what the female respondents paid (at ETB11,700). Not surprising, respondents using irregular channels paid, on average, a higher fee (at ETB15,900). In comparison with the overall average annual wage, the recruitment fee represents 17 per cent on average, which is equivalent to slightly more than two months' wages. Female migrants and individuals using regular migration channels earn relatively better in terms of wages and can cover their recruitment fee expenditure in less than two months.

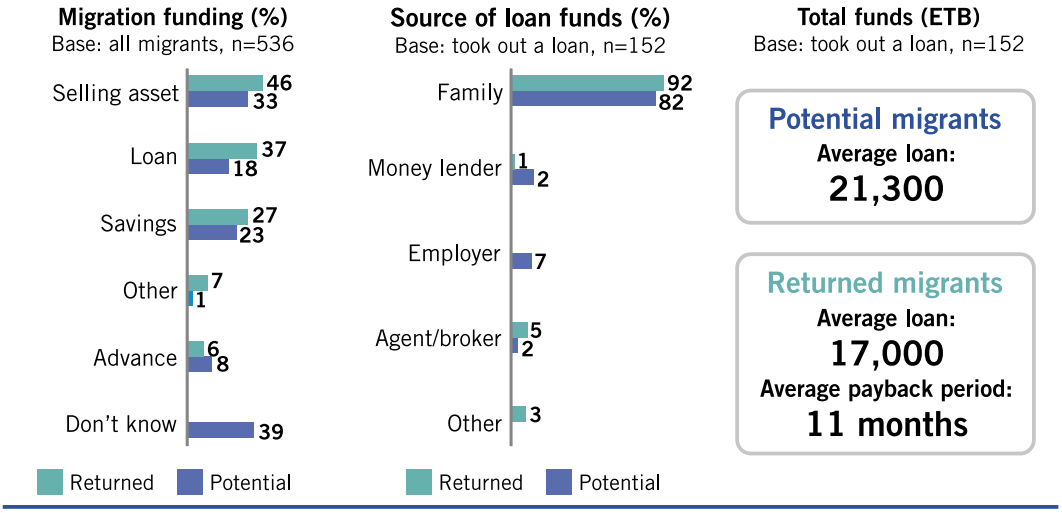
Recruitment fees paid by respondents differed significantly between migration corridors (figure 10). If travelling directly to the Middle East, the average recruitment fee paid dropped dramatically to ETB11,800. The most expensive corridor was through Djibouti and Yemen, where respondents paid an average of ETB20,200 in fees, followed by Somalia and Yemen, where they paid an average of ETB13,250. These corridors are always associated with irregular migration channels.

To fund migration costs, migrants will in many cases sell their assets, take out a loan and/or use their savings (figure 11). Most of the respondents who borrowed said they took money from their immediate family or relatives. The average loan amount for returned respondents was slightly more than ETB17,000 (around US$770). The potential migrants reported borrowing slightly more, at an average of ETB21,300 (nearly US$1,000), which suggests that the cost of migration has increased over the past four years. The ETB has also weakened against most of the currencies in the Middle East over the same period.

3.4 Employment and working conditions

Ethiopian workers typically do not have proper documentation (passport, visa and work permit) while working abroad. Overall, 45 per cent of the returned (and still working) respondents had no documentation. Among the respondents who migrated through an irregular channel, it was 59 per cent. Some respondents had a passport (at 28 per cent), and some had obtained a visa and work permit (at 17 per cent). This means that 83 per cent of the returned and still working migrants can be considered as irregular migrants.

Figure 11. Funding the migration cost



3.4.1 Contract of employment

Few of the returned (and still working) respondents (18 per cent) could recall having signed an employment contract. Having a contract was more common among the female respondents and for those migrating through a regular channel. In the cases in which contracts were signed, fewer than half (44 per cent) were written in Amharic, and around one in two workers understood the terms of their contract. But even fewer (23 per cent) were given a copy of the contract – they recalled signing the agreement but the employer retained their copy of the contract.

3.4.2 Work days, work hours and wages

As table 11 shows, most of the returned (and still working) respondents (67 per cent) said they worked all seven days of each week, which was more commonly heard from the female respondents. The average day was 14 hours among all respondents. But the women reported an average day of 16 hours, while men had an average day of 12 hours. Respondents in the domestic work sector worked on average 15 hours a day, compared with the 11-hour average reported for the other sectors combined. Relatively few of the returned (and still working) respondents (16 per cent) worked to the international standard of 10 hours per day (including overtime).

Table 11. Average work days, work hours and wage

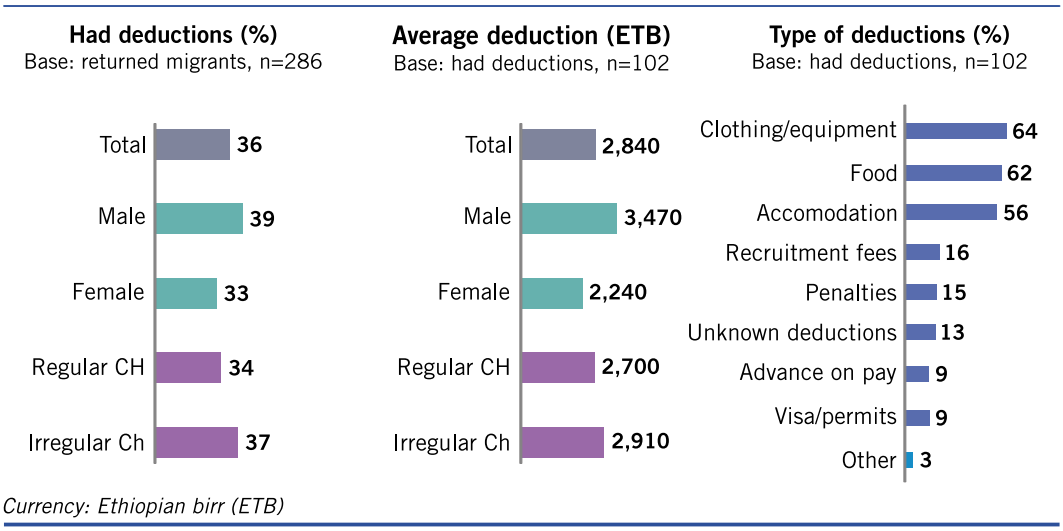
Basic work conditions	Total n=286	Male n=127	Female n=159	Regular Ch n=106	Irregular Ch n=180
Average work days	6.6	6.3	6.8	6.6	6.5
Working maximum 6 days per week	33%	51%	18%	29%	35%
Average work hours	14	12	16	15	14
Working up to maximum 10 hours	16%	28%	8%	9%	21%
Average wage (ETB)	6 790	7 670	6 090	6 060	7 210
Median wage (ETB)	5 810	6 970	5 390	5 230	6 390

The wage data had some outliers that pushed up the average income to ETB6,790 per month. The median wage of ETB5,810 is likely to be more representative and is in line with previous studies that also examined average wages (ILO, 2017b; Kassegne et al., 2017). A recent report by the Italian Agency of Development Cooperation (2017) estimated the average monthly income that returned migrants earned in a destination country to be nearly the same as the baseline survey's findings, at ETB5,890. Some respondents had more than one job and/or changed their job to earn a higher salary. This was more common among respondents in construction and agriculture work; these workers earned as much as ETB870 per day. Some jobs were short term or seasonal. Some respondents did both domestic work and some construction work.

3.4.3 Wage deductions

One in three of the returned (and still working) respondents (36 per cent) had deductions made from their monthly wages (figure 12). The average amount deducted was ETB2,840 per month but was greater on average for the male respondents, at ETB3,470. Most of the deductions were for clothing or equipment, food and accommodation, which can be regarded as unfair deductions.

Figure 12. Average wage deductions

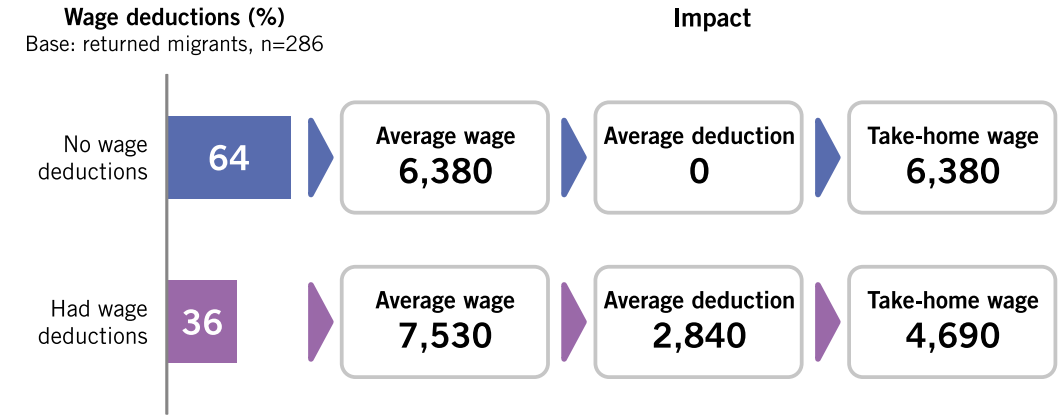


Currency: Ethiopian birr (ETB)

> ...as a result, men are subjected to larger deductions than women. This is compensated to some extent by the greater wages men earn on average than women are paid...

The impact of the wage deductions was considered significant. The 36 per cent who had wage deductions earned on average ETB7,530 per month (figure 13). After deductions, the average wage was ETB4,690 per month, which is considerably below the average wage of those with no deductions, at ETB6,380. Deductions were more common (48 per cent) in sectors other than domestic work (32 per cent) and as a result, men are subjected to larger deductions than women. This is compensated to some extent by the greater wages men earn on average than women are paid.

Figure 13. Impact of wage deduction

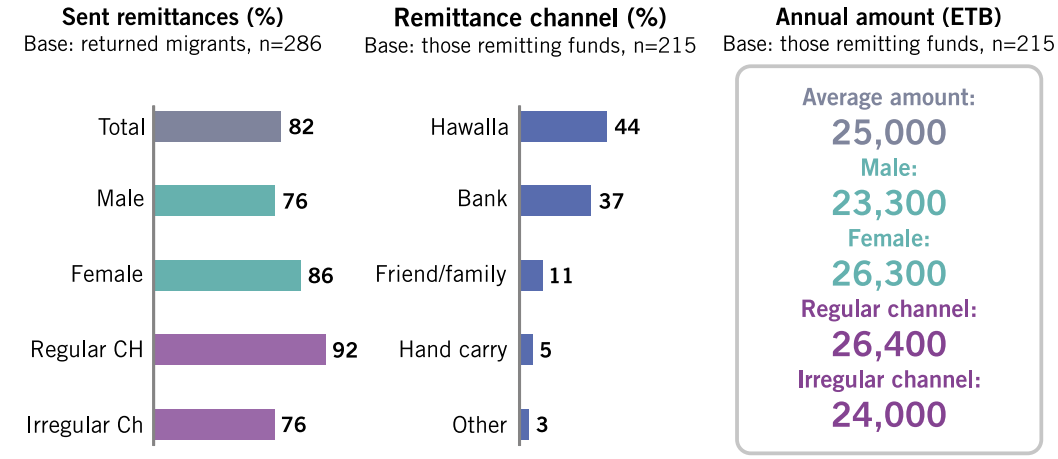


Base: all respondents, n=536

3.4.4 Remittances

The majority of the returned (and still working) respondents (82 per cent) remitted money back home (figure 14). Many of them (44 per cent) used the Hawala system, which is an informal transfer channel, and 37 per cent used a bank. Most of the respondents who remitted sent money two to four times in a year. On average, the remitting respondents sent a total of ETB25,000 annually. A larger proportion of the female respondents (at 86 per cent) remitted money than the male respondents (at 76 per cent), and they also sent home a larger amount on average. A World Bank study on remittances found that the majority of recipients said they received their transfer through remittance companies or banks. Only 14 per cent mentioned using someone to carry it back for them (World Bank, 2010). Similarly, an

Figure 14. Remitted income and channel used



Currency: Ethiopian birr (ETB)

International Organization for Migration study found that 77 per cent of its migrant respondents used banks, while the remaining 23 per cent were either given to someone to carry or passed through agents (IOM, 2014).

3.4.5 Labour rights and social protection benefits

Benefit scheme enrolments are almost non-existent in the Middle East; 83 per cent of the returned (and still working) respondents did not receive any such benefit (table 12). Private health insurance was available, and around one in ten respondents had coverage.

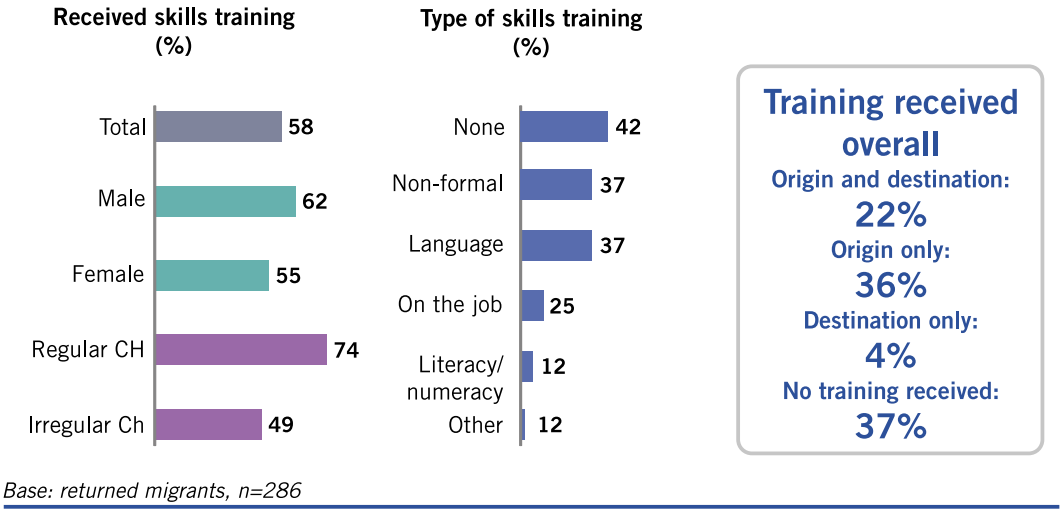
The potential migrants and the returned (and still working) respondents had some expectations that they should have basic labour rights when working in the Middle East: one day off per week, overtime pay, paid sick leave and paid holidays. Only 8 per cent of them did not expect to have any of these benefits. The situation in the Middle East was quite different, with 54 per cent of the still-working respondents not receiving any entitlements. Of all the returned and still working respondents, the women (most of them in domestic work) seemed worse off, with 59 per cent not receiving any entitlement, compared with 47 per cent of the men not receiving anything. Only around one in five of the returned and still working respondents received overtime pay, paid sick leave or paid holidays. It was clear from the interviews with migrants working overseas that they were not aware of their rights, and they were feeling unhappy with the work situation due to long hours and unfair treatment.

Table 12. Labour rights expected and provided

Labour rights	Expected	Actually provided		
	Potential migrants n=250 (%)	Returned migrants n=286 (%)	Returned male n=127 (%)	Returned female n=159 (%)
Paid annual leave	38	2	1	3
Paid holidays	55	23	26	21
Paid sick leave	56	18	15	20
One day off per week	66	16	20	13
Overtime pay	60	19	28	12
Severance pay	37	3	2	4
Ability to make complaints	30	4	2	4
Paid maternity leave	13	1	1	1
None	8	54	47	59

It was common among the returned (and still working) respondents to receive some form of training while working abroad (58 per cent) (figure 15). The respondents who had used a regular channel to migrate were more likely to land a job that provided some form of training (at 74 per cent). Skills development while working overseas was more common for the female respondents (at 82 per cent) and respondents migrating through a regular channel (at 92 per cent). Of the acquired skills cited, however, most cited was a foreign language (at 73 per cent), particularly by the women, followed by social skills (24 per cent) and vocational skills (21 per cent).

Figure 15. Skills training at destination



Base: returned migrants, n=286

Taking the training received in Ethiopia into account along with what was learned abroad, nearly two-thirds of the returned (and still working) respondents had availed of some form of training – but the remaining 37 per cent had none.

3.4.6 Forced labour prevalence

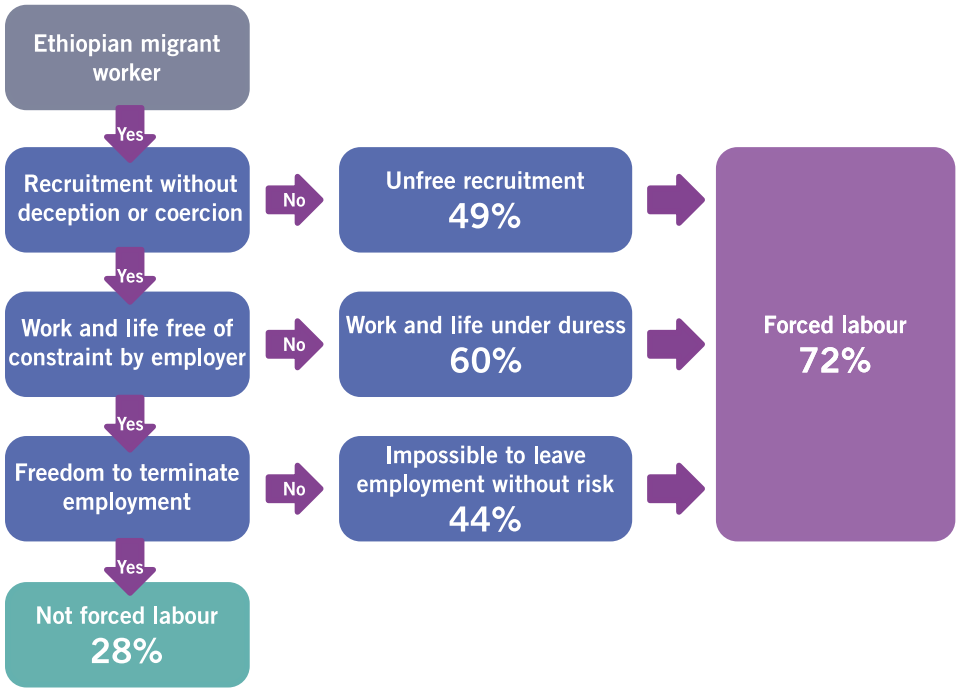
As shown in table 5, the indicators of forced labour are categorized according to seriousness as either strong or medium penalties. For example, forced overtime work and forced to work longer to repay debt are strong indicators of involuntariness. Similarly, withholding identity documents and physical violence are strong indicators of penalty. Accordingly, involuntariness and penalty (or its menace) are represented by different indicators with different levels of strength, depending on the seriousness of the abuse.

As shown in figure 16, an adult worker is considered a victim of forced labour if one of the following situation occurs: (i) unfree recruitment with some form of penalty, (ii) work and live under duress with the menace of penalty or (iii) impossibility to leave the employer due to the menace of penalty. This measurement framework was used to generate indicators of forced labour for returned (and still working) respondents. A combination of these elements generates a combined measure of forced labour.

Based on analysis of the ILO forced labour indicators, as much as 72 per cent of the returned (and still working) respondents could be characterized as enduring a forced labour situation while working abroad.

Most of the forced labour manifested in work and life under duress but also occurred during recruitment and at the time the migrant workers wanted to leave their employer. In their study conducted in 2014 (but published three years later) of returned migrants, Admassi et al. estimated forced labour prevalence to be 58 per cent (ILO, 2017a). While forced labour estimates for “unfree recruitment” and “impossible to leave employer” are similar between that study and this baseline survey, the Admassi et al. study had a significantly lower forced labour estimate for “work and life under duress”, at 19.4 per cent. It is possible that physical and sexual abuse may have been underreported three years ago due to the embarrassment and stigma it carries (Ullah, 2015). Since that time, there have been two waves of deportations from Saudi Arabia, followed by extensive media coverage. It is possible that this has desensitized people to the issues and migrants today are more forthcoming than before. There is no evidence, however, to suggest that the forced labour situation has improved between then and now.

Figure 16. Prevalence of forced labour among returned and still working respondents



Based on the ILO forced labour indicators by involuntariness and penalty (respondents could give multiple answers), the most common complaint cited by the returned (and still working) respondents (at 56 per cent) was the inability to refuse demands by the employer (figure 17). Around 42 per cent said they must work whenever the employer asked them to, and 37 per cent said they had to work even when they had not been paid as agreed upon. And 37 per cent said they were forced to work overtime for free. Other abuses included the job was worse than agreed upon, the workplace was filthy and unhealthy, and there was inability to leave when the contract ended.

More than half of the returned (and still working) respondents said they were harassed or humiliated, and 46 per cent were under constant surveillance. A large proportion, at 42 per cent, had their freedom of movement restricted. A significant share of the respondents reported other penalty abuses: withheld wages (38 per cent), physical violence (37 per cent), risk of injury (33 per cent), confiscation of their identity documents (27 per cent), threats of violence to their family (26 per cent) and fired without reason (25 per cent). Around 13 per cent of the respondents cited sexual abuse, which actually ranked lowest among all abuses reported.

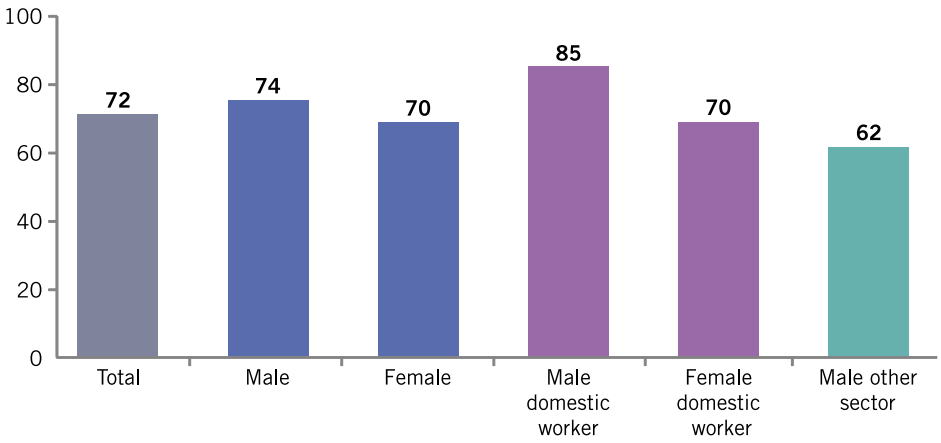
The interviews with overseas migrants confirmed that many people are unable to refuse demands placed on them by their employers, and many are badly mistreated. One woman reported that her employer used to kick her while she was on her hands and knees cleaning the floor, and this occurred regularly. Other respondents shared similar stories, enough to suffice as verification that physical abuse is common. Many respondents felt totally exhausted because they had to work long hours with no rest. One woman said she worked 15 hours a day with no leave for three years and her wages were withheld for the entire period.

> More than half of the returned (and still working) respondents said they were harassed or humiliated...

Figure 17. Incidence of involuntariness and penalty

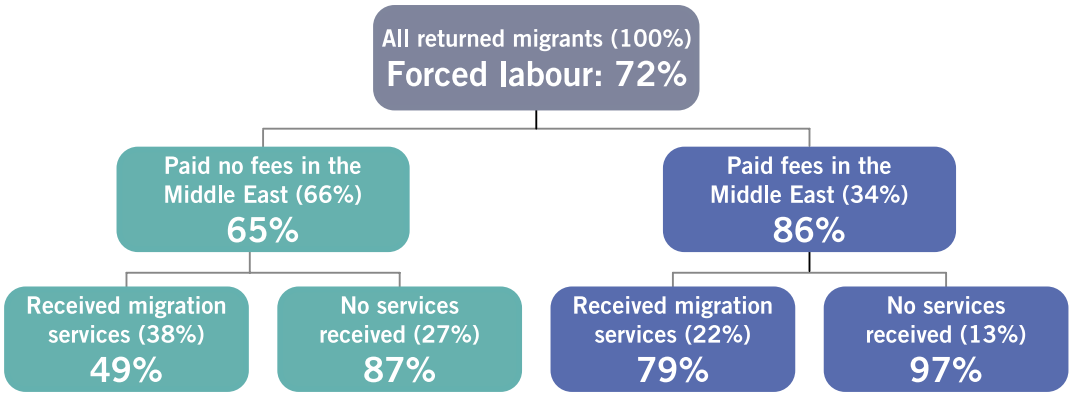
Further analysis was done to determine if there were any gender-based distinctions in terms of vulnerability in relation to forced labour. Reports of forced labour were roughly similar between the male and female respondents, with a slightly larger proportion of the men than the women, at 74 per cent, which is consistent with previous studies (ILO, 2017a). For many other variables, no significant differences were found. The largest difference emerged in the analysis of sex and sector (figure 18). The male respondents working in the domestic sector were more likely to experience abuse (at 85 per cent) than the female respondents (at 70 per cent). In all other sectors, the male respondents on average seemed to have fared better than the female domestic worker respondents, with a labour abuse estimate of 62 per cent. Still,

Figure 18. Forced labour, by sex and sector



Base: returned migrants, n=286

Figure 19. Drivers of forced labour



reports of abuse were common, and it would be difficult to argue at this stage that one group should be prioritized over another.

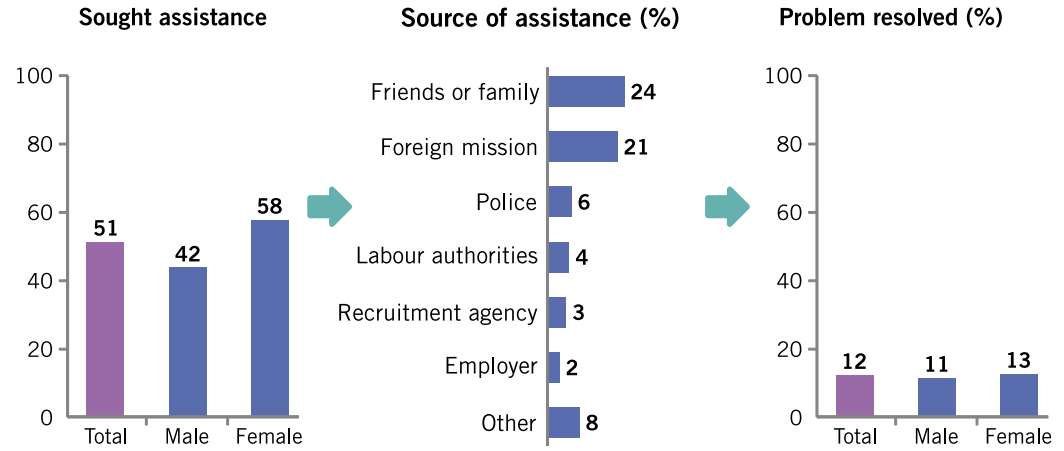
Whether the returned (and still working) respondents had paid recruitment fees in the Middle East and received some type of migration service prior to migrating were two factors found to have the strongest association with the forced labour outcomes (figure 19).[7] In cases in which fees were not paid and the respondent received services, the forced labour prevalence dropped to 49 per cent. In the opposite case, forced labour is almost guaranteed.

3.4.7 Access to protection or other needed assistance

Nearly half of all returned migrants who had experienced any of the cited labour abuses when overseas sought assistance (figure 20). The most commonly mentioned sources of assistance were friends and family (24 per cent) and the Ethiopian mission (21 per cent). It is likely that the Ethiopian mission was involved because of the recent (2017) round of deportations from Saudi Arabia. But most of the respondents reported no resolution with their grievance; only 12 per cent of respondents who cited some form of abuse said they had resolved their problem. This finding is consistent with the interviews carried out with staff from the missions and other informants in Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and in Ethiopia. Although the Ethiopian missions in destination countries provide shelter, medical assistance, protection (negotiate with employers or go to court) and assistance to return to Ethiopia, they generally lack adequate resources to be proactive and conduct outreach activities. One mission raised funds from charities to help victims, but the officer who was interviewed admitted this practice would not be sustainable. Other missions have had some success in building relationships with local NGO partners to whom they can refer migrants. Labour attachés have yet to be posted to any Ethiopian mission in the Middle East, and the staff in those missions do their untrained best to coordinate with local authorities to help migrants in need and resolve their grievances. In Saudi Arabia, mission staff organize community meetings once every three months to raise awareness among the migrants working there.

7 Decision tree analysis was done using the Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detector (CHAID), which is a technique created in 1980 to discover the relationship between variables. A number of dichotomous variables from the study were included to build a decision tree and thus help determine which variables best merge to explain the outcome in the given dependent variable (such as forced labour).

Figure 20. Assistance and remedy in cases of labour abuse



Base: those experiencing labour abuse, n=212

3.5 Return and integration

3.5.1 Reason for returning

On average, the returned respondents had worked abroad for only two years. It was interesting to find that the potential migrants on average planned to stay for four years. The shortened average stay may be explained by the many involuntary returns.

Given that most of the returned (only) respondents had worked in Saudi Arabia, it is not surprising to find that many of them had returned involuntarily via deportation (due to the two waves of deportations out of Saudi Arabia). Reasons for the involuntary return included lost job, end of visa (work contracts are typically granted for three years), exploitation[8] or lack of proper documentation (figure 19).[9] Involuntary returns accounted for 72 per cent, of all the returned respondents and was greater among the men, at 79 per cent and among respondents who had used an irregular channel to go abroad (at 77 per cent). The Ethiopian missions have had a critical role in helping migrants cover the cost of the return (42 per cent), although a significant portion of migrants paid for it (40 per cent).

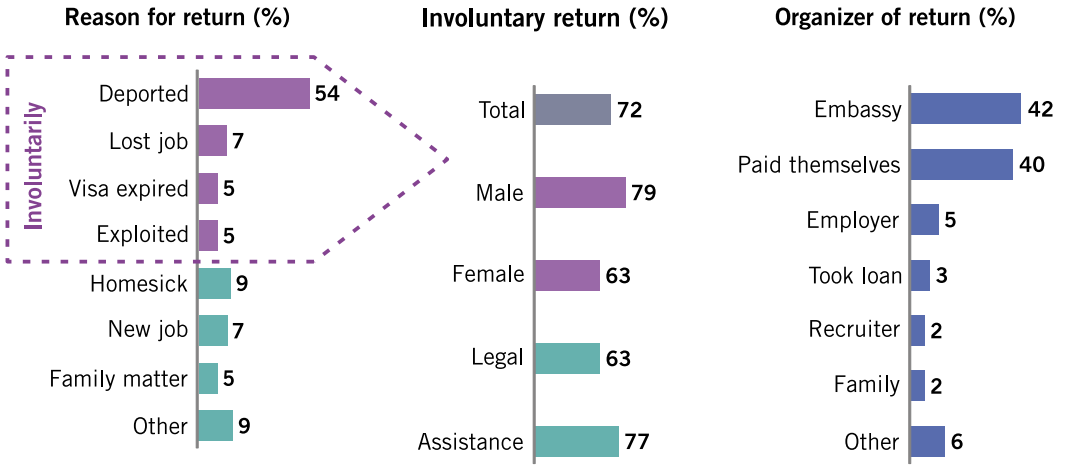
3.5.2 Finding work back in Ethiopia

Most of the respondents who had gone abroad went into the domestic work sector in the Middle East. Upon their return to Ethiopia, 42 per cent remained unemployed and were looking for work. Most of the respondents who had worked in other industries had to shift to a new sector, in most cases to agriculture (the very sector they had left for a better opportunity). Unemployment was similar for the male and female respondents. More male respondents shifted into agriculture upon their return, while only 2 per cent could continue in construction. Some 45 per cent of the female respondents continued with domestic work, but many others worked from home and generated income from home-based activities.

8 In some cases, migrants are able to escape abusive employers and return home.

9 Some respondents likely were affected by a "purge" in November 2013, when the Government of Saudi Arabia deported hundreds of thousands of workers without proper documentation, including 163,000 Ethiopians (Fernandez, 2017). A second round of deportations was made in August 2017.

Figure 21. Reason for returning to Ethiopia

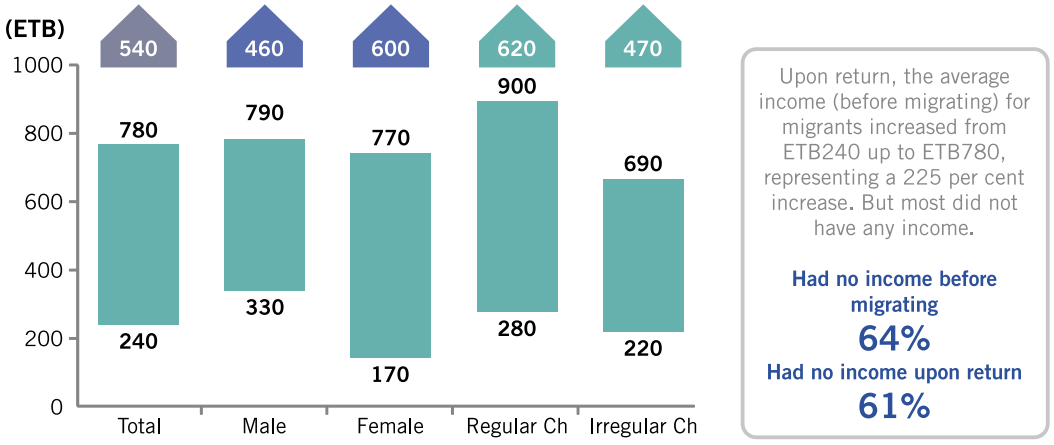


Base: returned migrants, n=250

3.5.3 Change in income after returning to Ethiopia

Most of the returned respondents (64 per cent) did not have any or little income before migrating, with an average income that was quite low, at ETB240 per month. Upon return, many of the respondents did not have any income (61 per cent) as shown in figure 22. These finding are strongly supported by a 2017 study that found that 64.5 per cent of returned migrants had no income before they migrated overseas, while those working had an average income per month that was less than ETB500 (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, 2017). Those who had found work were able to earn more than they earned before leaving, increasing the average income to ETB780 per month. Female respondents, in particular, shifted their income substantially higher, as did the respondents who had migrated through a regular channel.

Figure 22. Change in income upon return



Base: returned migrants, n=286

Table 13. Social and financial problems among returned respondents

Type of social problem	Total n=250 (%)	Male n=125 (%)	Female n=125 (%)	Regular Ch n=102 (%)	Irregular Ch n=148 (%)
Disconnected from community	15	14	17	18	14
Disconnected from family	22	20	24	25	20
Gossip or stigma	39	35	43	43	37
Harassment or abuse	11	16	6	9	13
Anxiety or depression	31	26	35	32	30
Boredom	30	26	33	37	24
Drug or alchohol abuse	9	14	4	2	14
Divorce or separation	2	2	3	1	3
Disability	2	2	2	1	3
None	41	45	38	33	45
Type of financial problem					
Debts to repay	13	17	10	8	17
No money saved	39	38	40	40	38
People asking for money	46	52	39	33	54
Business losing money	16	22	9	18	14
Difficult to find a job	52	53	51	51	53
Jobs do not pay enough	36	39	34	37	36
Difficult to access credit	32	37	28	26	37
None	5	1	9	8	3

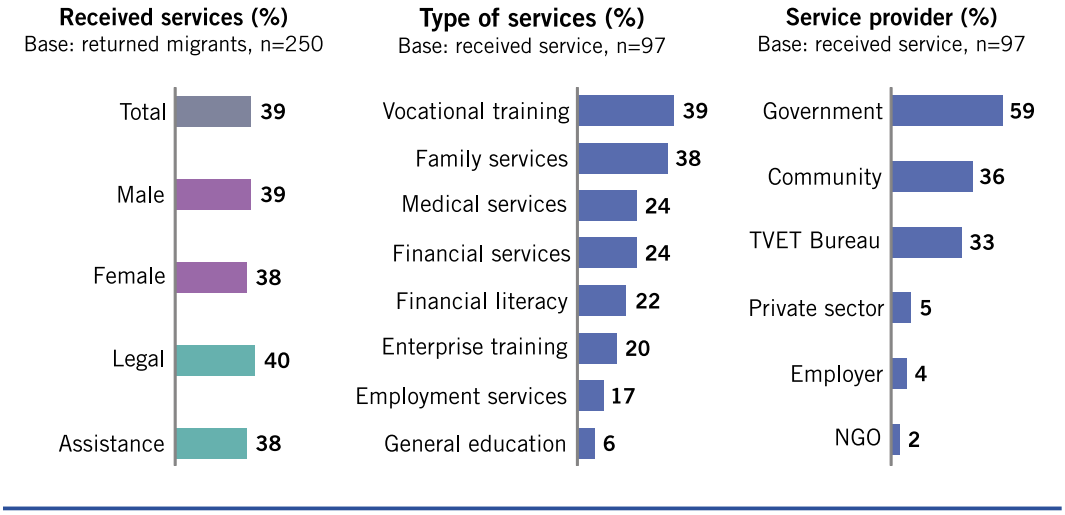
Most of the returned respondents could increase their asset base upon returning to Ethiopia, although in most cases, the assets can be regarded as non-productive, such as a television and mobile telephone. Still, 24 per cent of the returned respondents managed to increase their productive assets, such as acquiring a house, setting up a business or buying farm land or livestock.

3.5.4 Social empowerment and challenges

Most of the returned respondents (59 per cent) experienced some type of social challenge upon their return to Ethiopia (table 13). The most common problems cited were gossip, stigma, anxiety, depression, boredom or being disconnected from their family. There appeared to be little difference in this experience between the male and female respondents.

Financial problems were commonly reported, at 95 per cent of the returned respondents (men and women alike). Many of them had difficulty finding a job; when they found work, it often did not pay enough. Other problems reported were not having saved enough money and having difficulty accessing credit. These findings are consistent with the high unemployment level in Ethiopia. That many migrants lose their job unexpectedly and are deported makes the return and integration process more difficult. Lack

Figure 23. Services received upon returning to Ethiopia



of skills and services to improve their employability further adds to the problem.

3.5.5 Reintegration services and future migration plans

Nearly four in ten returned respondents had received some type of assistance services since coming back to Ethiopia. Within this group, the most common services were vocational training and family services[10] provided either by the Government, their community or the TVET Bureau. Other types of services and service providers were much less commonly cited. Services appear to have been distributed among the male and female respondents equally. The interview with a TVET Bureau representative confirmed that training directed to migrants typically targets returned migrants rather than potential migrants. There is a curriculum and occupational manual for housekeeping, household services and caregiving that was developed in collaboration with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Bureau. But this training has not started mainly because of the migration ban.

Most of the returned respondents (51 per cent) were not sure whether they would migrate again within the next two years but one in three (32 per cent) stated they do intend to migrate. More of the men among them (at 43 per cent) said they would migrate than the women (at 21 per cent). According to Kassegne et al. (2017), many migrant families become dependent on remigration because the financial contribution of remittances are not sustainable. In other words, improvement in livelihoods create a dependency linkage because few migrants can secure viable work opportunities upon their return to Ethiopia.

> Many of them had difficulty finding a job; when they found work, it often did not pay enough.

10 Specific family services were not elaborated but could include such support services as help with integration, mental health and counselling.

3.6 Migrant outcome Index

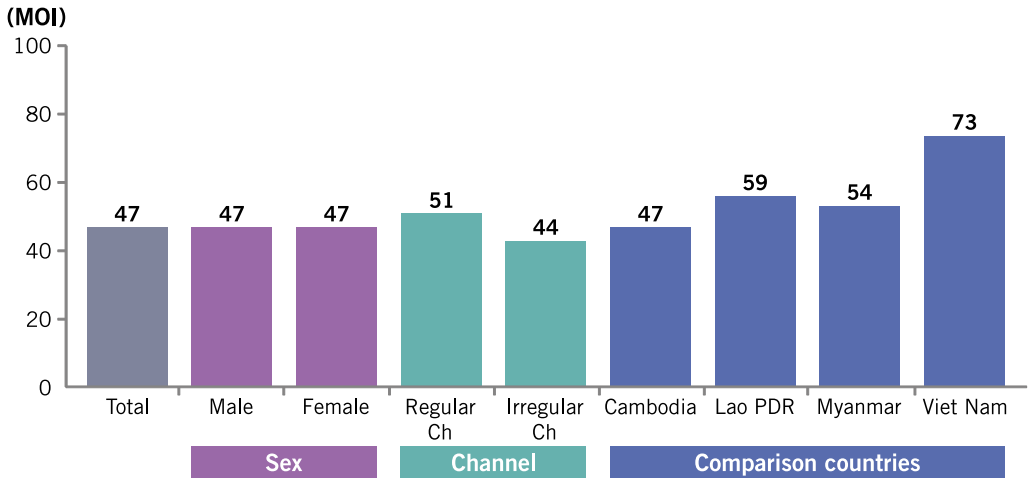
3.6.1 Migrant Outcome Index score

Responses from the 250 returned migrants interviewed in Ethiopia resulted in an overall Migrant Outcome Index score of 47 (out of a possible 100), which is relatively low compared with studies done in other developing countries (figure 24). The Migrant Outcome Index serves as a reference benchmark around which migrant outcomes can be regarded as relatively better or worse. A three-point difference in the index between two variables can be considered as significantly different. Figure 24 shows the resulting Migrant Outcome Index across sex and migration channel used. Index benchmarks from other countries are included. Ethiopia is in line with Cambodia, which had the lowest index score in a previous study for the ILO. No difference was found between male and female migrants. However, migrants who used regular channels were better off on average, with an index score of 51. This may not be surprising, given that many migrants who use irregular channels often travel through Djibouti or Somalia to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which carry higher risks of exploitation and abuse.

The index is based on four financial and four social indicators; in figure 24, positive outcomes are represented by the green bars and negative outcomes are in red. For Ethiopia, the results vary across the eight indicators. But they affirm that the selected indicators are suitable for depicting different migrant outcomes, and the results for the individual indicators provide good insight into what factors are more critical for Ethiopian migrants.

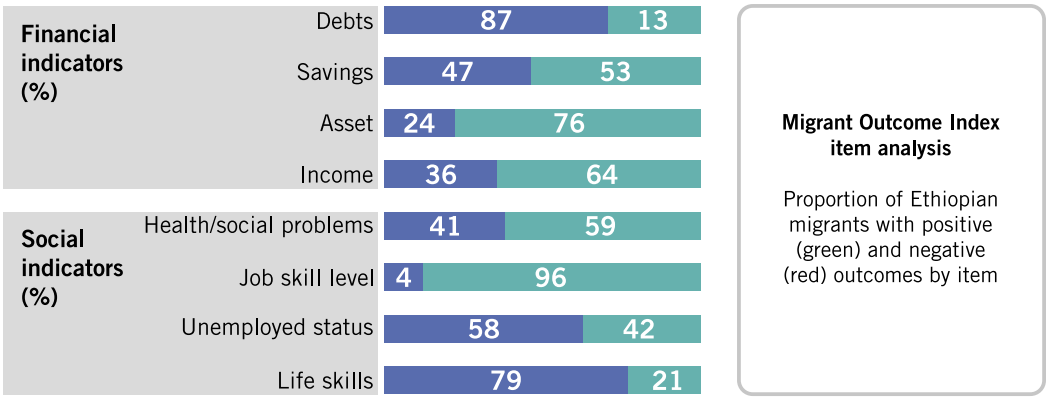
As shown in figure 25, the migrant workers from Ethiopia could return without debt and had developed some life skills but could do better on many of the other indicators. Critical issues are the low development of job skills and the large number of unemployed persons, which may well be related. Many of the respondents also returned with health or social problems, no increase in income (from before migrating) and without building up productive assets.

Figure 24. Comparative Migrant Outcome Index scores



Base: returned migrants, n=250

Figure 25. Migrant Outcome Index score for Ethiopia, by indicator



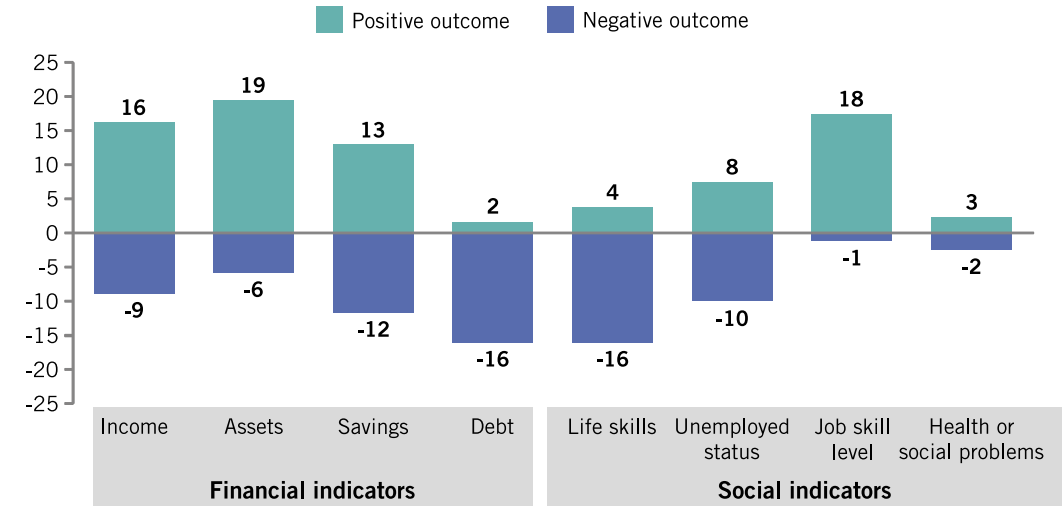
Base: returned migrants, n=250

3.6.2 Migrant Outcome Index impact analysis

The eight individual Migrant Outcome Index indicators represent potential focal areas for future programming. Improving some of the indicators would result in an overall improvement in the index score. Further analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between the eight indicators and how they impacted on the overall index score.

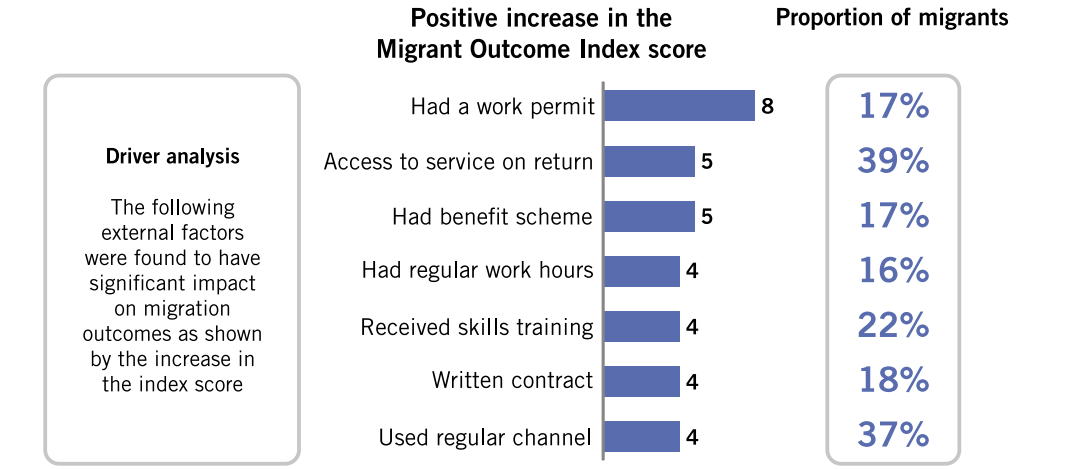
As shown in figure 26, positive and negative outcomes generated by the different indicators vary. Debt and life skills were found to consistently have a strong negative effect on the index score in cases in which they represented a negative outcome. This means that the migrants who had returned to Ethiopia still in debt and without improved life skills on average, were considerably worse off by their migration experience. While this appears to only affect a small proportion of the returned respondents, the potential negative effect is likely to be overwhelming for the affected few.

Figure 26. Item analysis (deviation from the index score), by indicator



Base: returned migrants, n=250

Figure 27. Analysis of drivers affecting migration outcomes



Base: returned migrants, n=250

Improved income, assets and job skills, on the other hand, were found to have a significant positive effect on the overall index score in cases in which they represented a positive outcome. In other words, the migrant workers who could improve on these factors were far better off when compared with those who did not. Job skills development represents a significant gap, with most of the returned respondents indicating they were unable to improve their job skills.

> This means that the migrants who had returned to Ethiopia still in debt and without improved life skills on average, were considerably worse off by their migration experience.

3.6.3 Migrant Outcome Index score driver analysis

The driver analysis looked at the extent to which the external factors helped to drive the Migrant Outcome Index score up or down. Figure 27 shows the seven key drivers that were found. Some of these factors related to pre-migration conditions, such as obtaining a work permit and using regular migration channels. Others related to work conditions in the destination country, including written employment contract, regular work hours and enrolment in a government or private benefit scheme.[11] Finally, being able to access return and integration services once in Ethiopia also contributed positively to the migration outcome. All these factors helped to propel respondents towards better migration experience outcomes. But as also shown in figure 27, compliance on each issue was typically well below 50 per cent.

11 These schemes encompass social security, workers' compensation, government health insurance, private health insurance, education or training.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Magnitude of regular and irregular migration to GCC countries and Lebanon

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs records indicate that irregular labour migrants represent between 60 and 70 per cent of all Ethiopians in the Gulf region (Fernandez, 2017). Results from this baseline study found that 83 per cent can be regarded as irregular because they did not have a passport, visa or work permit while working in the destination countries. Further, 63 per cent of the returned and those still working respondents acknowledge that they used an irregular channel when they migrated to the Middle East. Half of them used a smuggler, and some migrated independently or with help from friends.

Regional government agency representatives believe that there is significant lack of awareness among migrants regarding the rules for migrating. The general view is that migrants cannot distinguish between regular and irregular channels, are ignorant regarding the migration ban and hold little regard for migration risks. The representatives also believe that the migration ban amplifies the problem because it removes any legal option to migrate.

The migration ban has been in effect since October 2013, although as noted, there is confusion on what it covers. Among the interviewed informants, there were varying perceptions about its impact. Some of the informants continue to argue for it to remain, while others want it lifted.

Argument for the ban to continue

- The ban helps to protect migrants.
- The ban has forced foreign governments to negotiate a bilateral agreement or MOU on migrant employment and protection with the Government of Ethiopia.
- Labour abuse damages the image of Ethiopia.
- The ban gives workers time to think to decide about migrating abroad.

Argument for discontinuing the ban

- There are no legal options for migrating abroad.
- Workers still migrate but now use irregular channels.
- The lack of a regular channel to migrate abroad increases the risks for migrants.
- The lack of a regular channel increases the cost and time needed to migrate abroad.
- Migrant outcomes are worse than before the ban was imposed.
- The Government has no ability to track migrants.

Migrants were asked whether they thought the ban makes migration more dangerous, difficult and expensive, and it takes longer to migrate. The majority of potential and returned migrants agreed this is the case, which means migrants today experience more difficulty when migrating as well as higher costs because of the ban.

Migrant workers' perceptions of the ban and actual practice are consistent

Migrants hold the perception that it is now more dangerous to migrate than before the ban was imposed, and migrating abroad has also become more expensive. Additionally, they think that it has become more difficult to migrate abroad since the ban was imposed and that the migrating journey abroad takes longer because of the ban.

The increase in risk that the lack of a regular channel introduces is a critical issue to consider. Forced labour, a condition arrived at after analysis of many variables, was heavily prevalent in the experiences of the surveyed respondents, at 72 per cent. As this survey and many others in other countries have found, migrants with irregular status typically experience abuse due to their greater vulnerability to exploitation (and because they lack protection). Women are typically considered more vulnerable, but this survey found that men are also highly vulnerable to exploitation. Reports of forced labour were roughly similar between the male and female respondents,

with a slightly larger proportion of the men than the women, at 74 per cent, reporting abuse.

The findings are not all negative, however. Improved income, job skills and assets were frequently cited. Still, job skills development represents a significant gap, with most of the returned respondents indicating they were unable to improve their job skills.

4.2 Capacity of government agencies to govern labour migration effectively and efficiently

Legal and policy framework

Many positive legal and policy framework changes were incorporated into the revised Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923, such as:

- Negotiating bilateral agreements with major destination countries to fill the legal and policy gaps. The Government has signed a bilateral labour agreement with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Jordan. The Government is negotiating an agreement with Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.
- Setting the minimum educational requirement at eighth grade for overseas employment.
- Requiring owners of private recruitment agencies to be Ethiopian citizens who have one million Ethiopian birr in capital. Each agency is required to deposit US$100,000 (or equivalent in ETB) in a blocked bank account.
- Limiting the recruitment fee that can be charged to migrant workers.

Institutional framework

Many positive institutional framework changes also were incorporated into the revised Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923, such as:

- Improving the recruitment and placement services by decentralizing the services as well as building the capacity of government institutions to efficiently govern the regular labour migration process by establishing new institutional structure to govern overseas employment.
- Revising institutional structures of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to promote foreign employment for the workforce as an option to reap the development benefits, while providing protection for migrant workers.
- Requiring employers who recruit employees to deposit US$50 per worker as a guarantee into a fund administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Access to migration services

Decentralization helps to provide better access for migrants by reducing the time and cost required to connect with a licensed agent. But services in regional areas, including pre-departure orientation and training, are still limited due to capacity constraints. On the other hand, training services for returned migrants have better reach than what is available for potential migrants. There is a notion that there is little incentive to promote and offer pre-departure orientation and training services to potential migrants as long as the ban remains in place.

Quality of migration services

Many migrants turn to informal training provided within their community, but the quality is often substandard. Skills training is ineffective because the skills are not relevant to jobs available in destination countries, and the new government curriculum developed for domestic workers has not yet been implemented. The TVET Bureau, NGOs and private sector trainings provide better quality courses, but few migrants have access to them. The TVET Bureau does not appear to have enough budget and other resources to cater to all potential migrants, with only 5 per cent of the education budget going to the TVET Bureau.

4.3 Migrant workers' awareness of their rights, migration procedures and destination countries, and government agencies' awareness of their responsibilities

Comparing results between returned migrants and potential migrants, there was limited evidence to suggest awareness of migration services have increased significantly since 2012. Regional government agency representatives believe migrants are aware of the services through word of mouth. In practice, more than half of all potential and returned migrant respondents in the survey were not aware of any migration services. The ban also presents a stumbling block for effective promotion of services. On one hand, Proclamation No. 923/2016 sets out a workable road map, but the ban overshadows the process and creates the impression, on the surface at least, of lack of commitment.

Pre-departure orientation and training

Orientation on how to migrate safely do not focus on issues that are specific to the Middle East, such as culture, the *kafala* system, basic language skills, laws and regulations and workers' rights (based on either the bilateral agreement or the MOU in place). Nor is there any job skill training relevant to the sector of work in which migrants are destined.

Return

Migrant workers do not know in advance how to best access services upon their return to Ethiopia. Many returned migrants end up working in a sector different from where they worked abroad, thus skills training upon return appears to be significant. The TVET Bureau already fulfils this role to some extent, but it could be more widespread. In addition to greater access of all workers, but especially returned migrants, to skills training relevant to demand in Ethiopia, the available opportunities need to be publicized in channels that will reach the people who can benefit.

4.4 Protection services available to migrant workers

Existing migrant services overseas

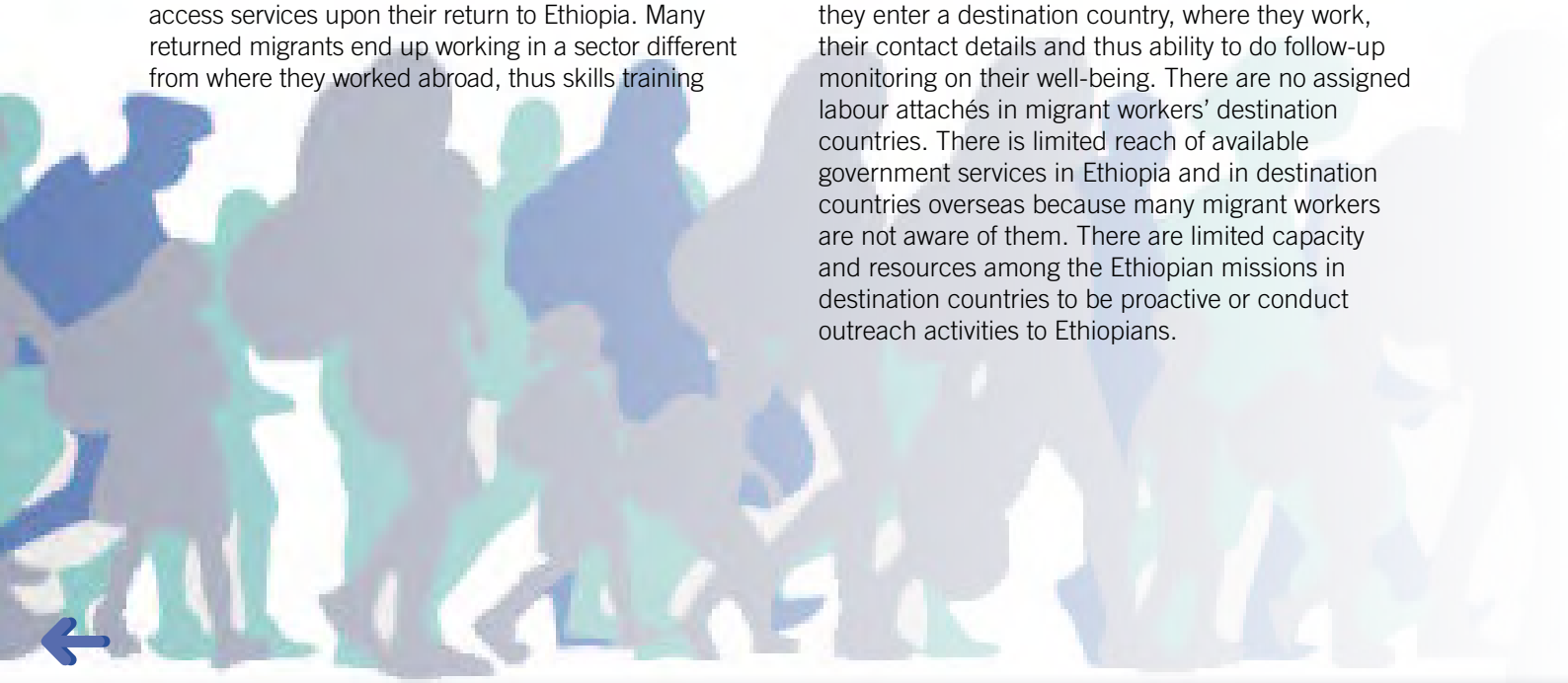
What is available tends to be ad hoc and passive – reacting to a situation once it is reported rather than proactively reaching out to migrants to check on their well-being. Ethiopian mission staff work with limited budget and resources and migrants are not aware of what services are available. The complaints mechanism has been found to have a low success rate.

Destination countries

There is currently no migrant tracking system in place for effective monitoring that has the ability to report and follow up on migrants once they enter for employment. The complaints mechanism is not supported by the help of assigned labour attachés. There is also limited capacity for providing legal support to effectively resolve employment-grievance cases.

Access barriers

There is no system for tracking of migrants once they enter a destination country, where they work, their contact details and thus ability to do follow-up monitoring on their well-being. There are no assigned labour attachés in migrant workers' destination countries. There is limited reach of available government services in Ethiopia and in destination countries overseas because many migrant workers are not aware of them. There are limited capacity and resources among the Ethiopian missions in destination countries to be proactive or conduct outreach activities to Ethiopians.



V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the provisions of the Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016, the Government is well aware and responding to gaps in its governance of the migration process. At this juncture, follow-through is going to be critical. Based on the findings of this survey, the primary next step should be the repeal of the temporary ban on migration for labour to the Middle East, with some limitations, as the following recommendations outline.

5.1 Responding to the situation of irregular migration

- Although the ban worked initially to force destination countries to the negotiation table to forge bilateral agreements or MOUs, it has not stopped migrants from seeking work opportunities in the Middle East. With the ban in place, migration takes longer and is more expensive than what migrants paid prior to the ban, and migration outcomes have been negatively affected. Thus, the ban should be lifted for countries that have a bilateral agreement or MOU with Ethiopia. For countries without a bilateral agreement or MOU, the ban can remain in place until such an agreement is established.
- Although the vast majority of migrants going to the Middle East from Ethiopia are women domestic workers, men also migrate, and many of them find work in other sectors, such a construction and agriculture. Bilateral labour agreements should therefore cover sectors other than domestic work to ensure better access for both men and women to regular migration channels.
- More than half of all migrants going to the Middle East go through irregular channels, and many use smugglers. This was initially caused by having all services centralized in Addis Ababa, and many would-be migrants finding it easier to pass through a neighbouring country or go directly to a destination country rather than go through the official channel out of the capital city. Based on the survey findings, only 17 per cent of respondents had proper documentation, meaning 83 per cent can be regarded as having irregular status. There is considerable more risk when migrating through transit countries, such as Djibouti and Yemen. Migration through regular channels should be promoted and stimulated by reaching out to migrants through the mass media, social media and through social mobilization in local communities. Because regular channels are faster and cheaper than irregular channels, there is an attractive case to promote the use of the regular channels.
- Registered agencies should be reinstated, licenced and allowed to operate.
- The capacity in terms of staff and resources of the regional Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs and the TVET Bureau should be increased so that services become available to all potential migrants.
- Male migrants, although paid higher wages than female migrants, often experience labour abuse and other challenges. Male migrants are significantly more likely to migrate through irregular channels and as a result pay significantly more in recruitment fees. Two of five returned male migrants are also likely to migrate again within the next two years. More attention is therefore needed to include male migrants in future programming related to safe migration. To do this effectively, regional services need to be available and actively promoted to all migrants.
- The vast majority of migrants pay recruitment fees in Ethiopia and/or in the Middle East. In accordance with the overseas employment proclamation, these fees should be monitored, especially because they have a strong association with forced labour.

5.2 Improving the capacity of government agencies

- Not having sufficient skills training limits opportunities for Ethiopian migrants in destination countries and results in abusive work conditions. It is also associated with their inability to find work upon their return to Ethiopia. Now that access to vocational training is specified in the Ethiopia Overseas Proclamation No. 923/2016, there should be courses available across the country that relate specifically to jobs in destination countries. This will require more coordination with the private sector (by conducting employer assessments) in destination countries to target specific skills. The skills training should aim to upgrade the

skill level of migrant workers beyond domestic work, construction, agriculture and hospitality. Ethiopia can use this opportunity to make its migrant workers more appealing to employers in destination countries and more valuable to the Ethiopian economy upon their return. The TVET Bureau needs a mechanism to keep up to date with skill demand in destination countries; this could be achieved through government-to-government cooperation, in which the destination government works with its private sector to learn what skills are needed. The training in Ethiopia should then focus on those demands and sectors relevant to specific countries in the Middle East.

- With appropriate migration governance should come much-needed coordination and coherence between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the TVET Bureau and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An action plan is in place (though not yet enforced), but there is urgent need to build capacity to ensure that it is properly executed. This includes the domestic workers curriculum specifically designed to cater to potential migrants going to the Middle East and to ensure there are enough teaching resources in the regions for proper execution.

5.3 Improving migrant workers' awareness of their rights and useful services

- Fewer than one in five migrants have access to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' pre-departure orientation, and most potential migrants seek out informal alternatives, which likely poorly prepare them for working and living in a particular destination country. There is a need to build awareness among all migrants that covers the entire migration process:
  - How to migrate safely, with focus on regular channels and proper documentation.
  - Language, financial literacy and culture, including the kafala system.
  - Workers' rights, especially work contracts, minimum wage, work hours, and workers' responsibilities.
  - How to seek services in destination countries, such as how to complain and seek legal support in the event of abuse.
  - Remittances using regular channels (banks) and potential drawbacks of the Hawala system.
  - How to access services upon return to Ethiopia.
- To effectively reach migrants with awareness-raising activities, a combination of mass media and social media should be used. Primary media should be television, radio and Facebook. It will also be important to involve regional TVET Bureaus and migrant communities in supplementary outreach efforts.
- Strategic partnerships with civil society organizations and trade unions should be established to ensure that government messages reach the community level.
- It will be important to monitor the quality and appropriateness of all pre-departure and vocational training available to potential migrants and level of participation.

5.4 Improving protection services available to migrant workers

- The federal database system should be decentralized to record all migrants going abroad to track formal migration and to track migrants' well-being. This will also allow for monitoring the employment situation in destination countries and to have a ready channel for easier contact and follow-up with migrants in need.
- The capacity of foreign missions should be strengthened to provide better services to migrants, particularly assistance with complaints regarding labour abuse and protection services.
- More human resources who are appropriately trained to work with migrant issues should be directed to foreign missions for legal, health and general service assistance to migrant workers and to establish an appropriate complaints mechanism as well as shelter services.
- Contract verification measures should be established to ensure that migrants receive a contract in a language they can read and understand and that it is not substituted when the migrant worker arrives in the country of destination.
- Now that the Ethiopia Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016 specifies the posting of labour attachés, the Government must follow through with designated officials who have been appropriately trained to manage the overseas migrant situation.

REFERENCES

- Atnafu, A Benjamin Z, and Linda O. 2014. *Poverty, youth and rural-urban migration in Ethiopia* (Brighton, UK, Migrating Out of Poverty).
- Austrian Red Cross and Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation. 2016. *Ethiopian female domestic workers inside Ethiopia and abroad (household slavery, trafficking)* (Vienna, Austrian Red Cross).
- Ayenew, M. 2002. *Poverty and poverty policy in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, Forum for Social Studies).
- Bajracharya R and Sijapati B. 2012. *The Kafala system and its implications for Nepali domestic workers.* (Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility)
- Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd. 2016. *Measuring well-governed migration: The 2016 migration governance index* (London).
- Fernandez, B. 2017. "Irregular migration from Ethiopia to the Gulf States", in P. Fargues and N.M. Shah: *Skilful survival: Irregular migration to the Gulf* (Cambridge, UK, Gulf Labour Markets and Migration Programme, Gulf Research Center), pp. 243–267.
- Fransen, S.; Kuschminder, K. 2009. Migration in Ethiopia: History, current trends and future prospects, Paper Series: *Migration and Development Country Profiles* (Maastricht, The Netherlands, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance).
- International Labour Office (ILO). 1949. *Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949*, ILO Convention No. 97 (Geneva).
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2006. *ILO's Multilateral framework on labour migration: Non-binding principles and guidelines for a rights-based approach* (Geneva).
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2008. *In search of Decent Work – Migrant workers' rights: A manual for trade unionists.* Geneva, International Labour Office.
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2009. *Strengthening migration governance: Implementation of OSCE commitments related to migration by OSCE participating States* (Geneva).
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2012. *ILO global estimate of forced labour: Results and methodology* (Geneva, Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour).
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2015. *Bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding on migration of low skilled workers: a review.* Geneva, International Labour Office.
- International Labour Office (ILO). 2016. *Decent work for migrant domestic workers: Moving the agenda forward.* Geneva, International Labour Office, Conditions of Work and Equality Department.
- International Labour Organization (ILO). 2011. *Trafficking in persons overseas for labour purposes: The case of Ethiopian domestic workers* (Addis Ababa).

International Labour Office (ILO). 2017a. *Migration and forced labour: An analysis on Ethiopian workers* (Addis Ababa).

International Labour Office (ILO). 2017b. *Stemming irregular migration in Northern and Central Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa).

International Labour Office (ILO). 2017c. *The Ethiopian overseas employment proclamation No. 923/2016: A comprehensive analysis* (Addis Ababa).

International Labour Office (ILO). 2017d. *The implications of work related vulnerabilities of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon* (where).

International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for Ethiopia and Somalia and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA). 2014. *Situations and needs of Ethiopian returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Assessment report* (Addis Ababa, ILO).

International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2014. *Assessment of the Socio-Economic situation and needs of Ethiopian Returnees from KSA* (Addis Ababa). Available at https://ethiopia.iom.int/sites/default/files/KSA%20Assesement%20Report%20_%20SocioEcomnomic%20Needs%20of%20Ethiopian%20returnees.pdf

International Labour Office (ILO). 2015. *Migration governance framework*. Council 106th Session (Geneva).

Kassegne et al., Henok et al., Tecaligne et al., Kelemework et al., Bisrat et al., Massimi and Coresi, 2017. "7 researches of 5 Ethiopian universities on the root causes, 2017", in *Emergency initiative in support of the vulnerable people, refugees, IDPs and migrants addressing the root causes of irregular migration*, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. Available at https://www.aics.gov.it

Kidus M. A., 2016. "Migrant workers' rights under the Ethiopian legal system", *in Global Journal of Human Social Science: H interdisciplinary*, Vol. 16, pp23-27.

Kidus, M.A. 2017. "Migrant workers' rights under the Ethiopian legal system", *in International Journal of African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, pp. 28–32.

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA). 2017. *Capacity building needs and gaps assessment of selected BOLSAs and MOLSA in delivering labor migration services* (Addis Ababa).

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and International Labour Organization (ILO). 2016. *Impact evaluation of awareness-raising interventions to prevent irregular migration* (Addis Ababa, ILO).

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); International Organization for Migration (IOM); International Labour Office (ILO). 2006. *Handbook on establishing effective labour migration policies in countries of origin and destination* (Vienna, ILO).

Regt, M.D. Forthcoming. "Ethiopian women in the Middle East: The case of migrant domestic workers in Yemen". Paper for the African Studies Centre seminar, the Netherland, 2007.

Tiruneh, A.1993. The Ethiopian revolution 1974–1987: *A transformation from an aristocratic to a totalitarian autocracy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

Ullah, A.A. 2015. "Abuse and violence against foreign domestic workers. A case from Hong Kong", in *International Journal of Area Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 221–238.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2005. *United Nations Convention on Migrants' Rights* (Paris, Sector for Social and Human Sciences International Migration and Multicultural Policies Section).

United States Department of Labor. 2015. *Trafficking in persons report* (Washington, DC).

United States Agency International Development (USAID). 2013. *Technical note: Conducting Mixed-Method Evaluations*. United States Agency International Development

World Bank. 2014. *Ethiopia – Poverty Assessment 2014* (Washington, DC). Available at https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21323

UKaid
from the British people

ISBN 978-92-2-131638-1