



Received: 19-04-2023
Accepted: 29-05-2023

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

The Reintegration of Migrant Workers in Ethiopia

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the assessment was to provide some inputs that could help with the design of an integrated intervention to turn the socioeconomic challenges of women's migration and trafficking situation into a national opportunity.

Method: Data was collected from primary and secondary sources, including government ministries such as MOLSA, MOFA, M.O.E., MOWYC, N.B.E., and non-governmental/international organizations (I.O.M., I.L.O., etc.).

Results: The assessment results indicate that the problem's degree is more comprehensive than many expect. The processes involved in the migration of women for domestic

work need to be looked into in three pivotal phases: pre-migration, migration, and post-migration. It was also identified that the challenges facing citizens migrating overseas for domestic work also emanated from those processes within these significant phases. Both legal and illegal players have critical roles in each of the steps.

Conclusion: There is a clear need for an intervention model that will be able to integrate all efforts coming from various players. There is a clear need for a well-designed national system that will be able to make the legal channels more attractive to provide enough incentives for choosing legal and authorized paths.

Keywords: Migration, Domestic Workers, Human Trafficking, Trafficking in Persons, Reintegration

1. Introduction

The daily news from some Arab countries regarding our citizens, especially women domestic workers, is heartbreaking and unbearable. There is an urgent need for a meaningful and lasting solution. The fact is that regardless of the magnitude of the problem around the migration of women domestic workers seeking employment overseas, the number of travelers through both legal and illegal channels shows a significant increase. For instance, in 2011 alone, 139,200 domestic workers formally left the country; similarly, according to the I.O.M. report, more than 3,170 Ethiopians crossed the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden to Yemen informally daily. It, in turn, has increased the number of agents involved in the process; accordingly, there are around 340 legal agents facilitating the employment of domestic workers overseas. Nevertheless, reports also estimate that more than 1000 illegal brokers are involved in the process, and more than half a million Ethiopians are estimated to live in the Gulf States. Different factors and challenges faced by Ethiopian domestic workers traveling overseas.

1.1 General Objectives

To design a national-level integrated intervention model that turns the socioeconomic challenges of migration (for domestic workers) into national opportunities based on the P-P Approach.

1.1.1 Specific Objectives

- To undertake an end-to-end investigation of the processes (both legal and illegal) involved in the migration of women domestic workers to Arab countries.
- To investigate the challenges women and domestic workers encounter at every stage of their migration.
- To draw valuable lessons from other countries and adopt successful and nationally beneficial experiences.
- To find out ways to prevent human trafficking/illegal migration and reduce the harm it is causing to the well-being of citizens and threats to national image and security.
- To explore overseas domestic work opportunities available for citizens and its potential for developing it as a managed labor export industry.

- To design the type and nature of comprehensive intervention involving all key stakeholders and create an accompanying national structure.
- To suggest policy inputs that could provide bases for the government's decisions to prevent human Trafficking and promote legal skill export as an industry using a P-P approach.

1.2 Research Question

The following questions were addressed during the Study.

- What were the primary sources used for human Trafficking?
- What kind of mechanisms are used to tackle human Trafficking?

1.3 Significance of the Research

This Study may help:

- Government and N.G.O.s that are working in the area to show an alternative way to tackle the problem of human Trafficking using the P-P Approach.
- Public awareness could be raised through the media and support the victim and their families from this social evil by producing sound programs about the magnitude of human Trafficking.
- To provide valuable information for policymakers.
- Other researchers provide a reference to afford a basis for further Study on Human Trafficking and other related issues.

1.4 Limitations of this Study

This Study may have limitations for the following reasons. The first one is that the data collection technique did not address enough samples from the victims and, most importantly, the human traffickers, due to inaccessibility. So much so that the Study depends on secondary data analysis. Regardless of the limitations noted above, this Study's findings would be more applicable to institutions mainly focused on combating human Trafficking.

2. Literature Review

Free mobility of labor across borders is one of the characteristics of globalization. As a result, many countries in the world have granted the right of free mobility to citizens. The Constitution of The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and other available legal frameworks give citizens the right to move freely, work, and earn. Besides, there are available institutional setups of citizen mobility across national boundaries to be safe and rewarding. Ethiopia is one of the countries experiencing significant mobility of citizens to different destinations, mainly to Middle East countries through legal as well as illegal means, especially seeking employment and better living. In the last decade, Ethiopia's migrant workers in Middle East countries are progressively increasing. Consequently, reports estimate that nearly half a million Ethiopians reside in these countries.

Most of the time, citizens leaving through illegal channels are highly vulnerable to exploitative chains of illegal players and their rules of the game. They also continue to suffer even in the destination country, for those target groups usually lack sufficient skills and information, among other factors. Slavery is believed to no longer exist because of its worldwide abolishment. However, behind a curtain of

propaganda, disbelief, and denial lies a scene of reality that proves the chains of enslavement.

Human Trafficking has different definitions in different conditions. The terminology used to describe human Trafficking also varies child trafficking, sex trafficking, Trafficking in person, labor trafficking, and the like. To get a general view, I want to show some definitions of this social evil in different scholars and organizations.

Human Trafficking is "a process of people being recruited in their community and country of origin and transported to the destination where they are being exploited for purposes of forced labor, prostitution, domestic servitude, and other forms of exploitation"(Megumi, 2009) ^[15]. The U.N. Protocol, 2000 to prevent, suppress and punish Trafficking in persons, especially women and children (hereafter Trafficking Protocol), which supplements the convention against transnational organized crime states:

Trafficking in persons shall mean: "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, using the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs (U.N. Protocol, 2000:1) ^[17].

I.O.M. defines human Trafficking as recruiting and transporting people from one place to another or country to another, using deception or force for exploitation. It is a criminal activity that violates human rights (I.O.M., 2010:1) ^[13].

Accordingly, there is no doubt that the cost of unskilled and uninformed labor migrants is tremendously huge. For instance, the minimum monthly wage for similar migrant workers from the Philippines and Indonesia ranges from \$400 to \$500 per month. It is because they are better trained, well informed, and also relatively enjoy better protections from both their respective consulates and destination governments; on the other hand, the average monthly payment for Ethiopian migrant workers ranges from \$100 to \$180, and most of the time it isn't easy to even to trace their whereabouts.

According to the U.S. Department of Human trafficking statics (2010) ^[13], human Trafficking is an international crime committed by networked people worldwide. It is present-day slavery affecting more than 27 million people worldwide. Human Trafficking is a problem for all human beings around the globe. It is the second known criminal act and highly profitable business next to weapons and drugs on our planet (Harris, 2012:15) ^[14].

Megumi (2009:1) ^[15] defined the term human trafficking as "a process of people being recruited in their community and country of origin and transported to the destination where they are being exploited for purposes of forced labor, prostitution, domestic servitude, and other forms of exploitation"(Megumi,2009) ^[15]. I.O.M. mentioned human Trafficking as a global problem affecting every region. The U.S. Department of State's 2007 trafficking in-person report estimated 600,000 to 800,000 individuals were trafficked across international borders, with millions more trafficked within their own countries each year (I.O.M., 2008:13) ^[12].

According to the World Health Organization, millions of men, women, and children are victims of human Trafficking for sexual exploitation, forced labor, and other forms of exploitation worldwide. The human and economic costs of this take an immense toll on individuals and communities. By conservative estimates, the cost of Trafficking in terms of underpayment of Wages and recruiting fees is over \$20 billion. The costs to human capital are probably impossible to quantify. The problem of trafficking cuts across a range of development issues, from Poverty to social inclusion to justice and the rule of law issues, and thus has relevance for practitioners throughout the developing community (WHO, 2012:1) ^[20].

UNHCR shows that in recent years, hundreds of thousands of migrants from the Horn of Africa have flooded into Yemen, some searching for local jobs as domestic servants or in construction or agriculture. Still, most hope to travel to neighboring Saudi Arabia for employment. Human rights watch (2014) ^[7] indicate that in 2010, 53,000 migrants and refugees arrived on Yemen's shores; this number doubled to 104,000 in 2011 and rose again to 108,000 in 2012, only to drop to 65,000 in 2013, according to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). During the first half of 2013, 83 percent of the 65,319 migrants and refugees UNHCR tallied in Yemen were Ethiopians. Different assessments indicate that internal Trafficking, particularly in women and children from rural to urban areas, is a prevalent and steadily increasing phenomenon in Ethiopia.

The scope and violence of the trafficking abuses against migrants have increased, along with traffickers' revenue. The traffickers have evolved from local gangsters to organizers of international networks, employing Ethiopian interpreters and intermediaries to phone migrants relative to extract ransom while they torture migrants. (H.R.W., 2014) ^[7] Ethiopia is one of the routes, sources and destinations of human Trafficking in East Africa (Bureau of Labour and social affairs, 2012) ^[2]. Among the well-known routes to flee from Ethiopia to other countries is the Middle East via Somalia and Djibouti by crossing the red sea; South Africa via Kenya and other African countries; Sudan via Metemma to continue their trip to Europe and other countries (BoLSA, 2012; U.N., 2009:17) ^[2]. It refers to the criminal practice of exploitation of human beings whereby humans are treated as commodities for profit, subjected to various forms of exploitation (UN.2009:17) ^[18].

The routes into the country have changed too. Until 2009, most migrants were from Somalia, coming to Yemen from the northeastern part by crossing the Gulf of Aden. Since 2009, most have traveled from Djibouti across the Red Sea to Yemen (UNHCR, 2012).

Most migrants do not have adequate information about the social, economic, and political aspects they may encounter at their destination. They do not know the human rights situation there, the legislation concerning foreigners, or the attitudes of local populations towards migrants. They are unaware of the dangers they may encounter at their destinations or transit areas. As a result, female labor migrants are often at risk and suffer abuse and exploitation (Ephrem, 2008) ^[4].

Knowing the triggering factor for migration and the choice of illegal channels is imperative for designing appropriate mitigation and counter strategies across all phases, including pre-migration, migration, and post-migration phases. In

general, the following are identified as triggering factors commonly noticed so far. The demand for foreign domestic workers in Arab countries is continuously growing. Countries like Sir Lanka, the Philippines, Nepal, and Indonesia were suppliers of trained workers for the Gulf States. Currently, the number of migrant workers from these Asian countries is significantly decreasing while demands for overall domestic workers overseas in the Gulf States are increasing. New countries such as Oman and Jordan are emerging on the list of domestic worker seekers. Thus, the situation can create both artificial and actual demand for domestic workers from Ethiopia. In a nutshell, as long as there is a growing need for migrant workers overseas and the formal channel becomes so restrictive, it leaves more significant incentives for unauthorized agents and brokers to encourage illegal human trafficking or smuggling practices. Thus, it is imperative to work on the formal migration channel to make it more attractive, transparent, and regulated.

3. Human Trafficking in Ethiopia

According to Research conducted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in collaboration with I.L.O., Human Trafficking in Ethiopia can be divided into two broad categories, i.e internal Trafficking and cross-border Trafficking. According to the Research, the movement of people from rural areas to urban for labor and commercial sex work is an example of internal Trafficking. In contrast, the movement of people from their original country to another country is called external Trafficking. External Trafficking has different names; some groups call it illegal migration, while others call it Trafficking in person (I.L.O., MoLSA & 2011) ^[11].

Different humanitarian organizations advocate that in recent years, hundreds of thousands of migrants from the Horn of Africa have flooded into Yemen, some searching for local jobs as domestic servants or in construction or agriculture. Still, most hope to travel to neighboring Saudi Arabia for employment (H.R.W., 2014) ^[7].

According to the findings of the Study conducted by I.L.O. and MoLSA (2011) ^[11], the more significant proportion, 53.6 percent of the migrant female Ethiopians, are between 19 and 25 years of age, about 30.3 percent are between the age group 25–30, and fewer. Still, a significant percentage (13.5 percent) migrate at a relatively older age. There is adequate evidence that girls are trafficked before they reach the age of 18. Four (11.4 percent) of the victims/returnees contacted for that Study were child victims at the time of their Trafficking. While two of these child victims used formal channels by falsifying their ages, the other two left the country through the desert route. The absence of an effective birth registration system in the country and the possibility of falsifying age contributes to the continued practice of child trafficking. Men migrants are generally older than women migrants and are commonly between the ages of 20 and 35 (ILO & MoLSA, 2011) ^[11].

When properly managed, international labour migration has the potential to serve as an engine of economic growth and development for all parties involved. Migrant workers benefit from skills acquired during their migration experience and countries of origin greatly benefit from remittances and reduce their unemployment rate (ILO, 2010) ^[9].

According to the World Bank, remittance is becoming an important source of foreign currency exceeding earnings from export trade for many developing countries. India (\$70 billion), China (\$60 billion) and the Philippines (\$25 billion) are the three largest recipients of remittances in 2013 (World Bank, 2014) [21]. Despite the benefits, migration involves serious challenges. The problems and challenges are worse for illegal migrants. With the rise in the volume of migration over time, the need to regulate it both by sending and receiving countries as well as the international community has also increased.

The main features of Human Trafficking in Ethiopia processes involved in the migration of women for domestic work need to be looked into at three key phases: pre-migration, migration, and post-migration. It was also identified that the challenges facing citizens migrating overseas for domestic work also emanated from those processes within these significant phases. Both legal and illegal players have critical roles in each of the steps. Any solution to address the challenges must bring all the stakeholders on board. Even though the government and other non-governmental agencies or international organizations have made many attempts, the problems are not yet closer to being resolved. They are rather worsening day by day. The primary reasons for those attempts not to bring solutions are because they have been fragmented and could not get all the key players together. It was also identified that any effort to bring about an integrated solution to the problem needs to be based on a comprehensive investigation that has to be designed to cover local and destination countries. Besides, the Approach that must be followed to halt this national challenge should be based on the "Prevention-Promoting Approach" rather than just focusing on the prevention aspect of the situation. The primary lesson learned is that through the careful and controlled promotion of skill export to those countries, it will be possible to discourage illegal actors gradually. However, promotion and prevention strategies must be implemented and carefully investigated by undertaking a comprehensive study involving all key stakeholders.

Illegal migration channels to Middle East countries can attract more migrants than legal ones. Evidence indicates a clear need for a well-designed national system to make the legal channels more attractive and provide enough incentives for choosing legal and authorized paths. It is observed that the illegal players outnumber the legal players. Besides, the unauthorized agents/brokers have more established chains with unlawful rewarding incentives for all involved along the different phases of the migration process ranging from recruited local community members to overseas agents. The illegal wing of migration has strong incentives and sophisticated networks. The main factors that have influenced Ethiopian migrants are the following:-

3.1 Push Factors

- Poverty and chronic unemployment or under-employment that result in hopelessness.
- Family matters (divorce, death of husband, undesired marriage, gender bias, and unfavorably customary practice especially sending females to Arab countries in some locality).
- Inability to visualize domestic business and employment opportunities (drawing unpleasant picture of domestic options).

- Geopolitical location and proximity of Ethiopia to the Gulf States.
- The misleading, deceitful, and forceful practices of the brokers, collaborators of brokers from the local community that target a vulnerable segment of potential domestic workers segment.

3.2 Pull Factors

- Growing demand for domestic workers overseas/destination countries.
- Anticipated and aspired quality life in the land of destination,
- The belief is that a foreign country's far better than the home country and always has good things in store for migrants,

Even though these are some of the significant types of triggering factors, the nature, role, and magnitude of each element are not carefully studied, and there are major gaps that can hinder intervention works that are summarized as follows:

- Insufficient, incomplete, and contradicting data on the number of migrants by country of destination, region, remittance, and even victim cases. It undermines the possibility of tailoring policies,
- No system in place enables policymakers and all concerned to trace the whereabouts of migrant domestic workers. It's currently difficult to trace the status and destination of citizens. It is partly because of unorganized data capturing and maintenance techniques and a lack of compulsory practice to request agents to report the citizens' whereabouts periodically,
- Currently, as it stands, illegal migration mechanisms and Trafficking appear to be more attractive and easy for the migrants and more rewarding for traffickers than the legal channels. Because of this, even those legally registered agencies are found to mix quasi-legal practices. In other words, despite the legislation to regulate agents involved in the process, there are still loopholes in its enforcement,
- no formal, and a particular saving scheme encourages traditional banking and sending remittance home for future investment. Thus, even after long suffering and sacrifices, domestic workers overseas fall into the same poverty trap on their home return except for their temporary improvement in household consumption,
- The ongoing measures are incompatible with the existing dynamism encircling the matter, tend to be fragmented, and mainly emphasize prevention.

As a result, illegal migration channels to Middle East countries can attract more migrants than legal ones. Evidence indicates that there is a clear need for a well-designed national system that will be able to make the legal channels more attractive to provide enough incentives for choosing legal and authorized paths. Moreover, it is observed that the illegal players outnumber the legal players; besides, the unauthorized agents/ brokers have more established chains with unlawful rewarding incentives for all involved along the different phases of the migration process ranging from recruited local community members up to overseas agents. The illegal wing of migration has strong incentives, sophisticated networks, and coordination mechanisms with robust and systematic adaptation capacity to ensure their benefits better. Sadly, the illicit players

benefit at the expense of vulnerable citizens (domestic workers). At the same time, this situation is challenging our national dignity and pride.

4. Human Trafficking and Its Effect

Human Trafficking has devastating impacts on individuals, families, and communities. Ethiopian Constitution (1995) ^[16] describes the family as the basis of society and deserves special attention from the state and society. In stark contrast, the crime of T.I.P. separates children from their parents, and traffickers can keep mothers and fathers in forced labor permanently, never to be heard from their families again. T.I.P. also devastates its victims.

Common abuses experienced by men, women, and children who are trafficked include unlawful activity; threats against their family or other persons close to the victim; physical, sexual, and psychological violence; rape; torture; and debt bondage. Human Trafficking involves people as commodities, and profit seems to be the only consideration. An extreme and excessive level of violence characterizes it. The threat of organ harvesting and death is part of the pattern of torture regularly described in the interviews. The bodies of the dead are not buried but thrown and left to rot, given the hostages (Estifanos, M, Reisen, M. & Rijken, C. 2012) ^[5].

The Study by Estifanos, M, Reisen, M. & Rijken, C., (2014) ^[6] shows another face of human Trafficking: Trafficking in persons for the removal of organs. It needs medical care for the transplantation of organs, and the fact that this has to occur within a short time after the removal of the organ, a sophisticated infrastructure (removal, preservation, transport, and transplantation) is required for this form of Trafficking in persons. However, reports indicate that the forced removal of organs occurs in the Sinai (Estifanos, M, Reisen, M. & Rijken, C. 2014) ^[6]. I.L.O. estimates that at any given time, 12 million men, women, and children worldwide are deceived or coerced into forced and bonded labor, involuntary servitude, and sexual slavery (ANPPCAN, 2008) ^[11].

Any solution to address the challenges must bring all the stakeholders on board. Though many attempts have been made by the government and other non-governmental agencies or international organizations, the problems are not yet resolved. They are rather worsening day by day. Nevertheless, the efforts to address the issue share the following facts: they are fragmented, independently initiated, and static to counterbalance the growing magnitude of the problem effectively.

In sum, the efforts so far are not sufficiently integrated, well-coordinated, and compatible enough with the dynamism of the issue at hand. To control the migration situation systematically, it is essential to carefully understand the nature of the problem by involving all stakeholders at home and abroad.

Coordination mechanisms with robust and systematic adaptation capacity are necessary to improve their benefits. Sadly, the illegal players benefit at the expense of vulnerable citizens (domestic workers). At the same time, this situation is challenging our national dignity and pride.

What seems missing in the current intervention measures include the currently practiced ongoing actions to address the problem appear to be more inclined towards prevention and missing proper balance to turn socioeconomic challenges into opportunities through promoting well-

regulated migration for gainful employment. Most importantly, the designed interventions miss the option of working on how to engage the returnees in self-employment options through offering programmed entrepreneurial and S.M.E. promotion efforts to help them escape the poverty trap. The lack of support for special saving incentives and schemes advantages for migrant workers and agents who prefer legal migration channels is noticeable.

It was also identified that any attempt to bring about an integrated solution to the problem must be based on a comprehensive investigation that has to be designed to cover local and destination countries. There is a clear need for an intervention model that will be able to integrate all efforts coming from various players.

5. Recommended Approaches

5.1 The P-P Approach

If well-regulated and appropriate intervention measures are put in place concertedly, the existing migration and related challenges have a huge chance of becoming an opportunity. The growing demand for domestic workers overseas, particularly in Middle-East countries, is an opportunity. As the supply of domestic workers from countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and other poor Asian countries is dramatically decreasing, it is leaving a considerable shortage. It indicates the existence of massive demand for overseas domestic workers. Therefore, illegal players will have wider opportunities to grab hold of unless regulated by making the legal channel and approaches more attractive. Suppose the government and other concerned stakeholders relentlessly work concertedly to handle the overall process of domestic workers. In that case, the existing socioeconomic challenges could easily be a rewarding opportunity supposing that the citizens are better informed and well trained.

The balance between prevention and promotion approaches should be maintained, and the implementation process would be regularly and carefully monitored. Without compromising, the primary attention is given to promoting national pride, dignity, and love for the country and relentlessly works to create attractive federal incentives for sustainable employment and inclusive growth.

5.2 Reintegration of Returnees

Thousands of Ethiopians are repatriated yearly mainly from the K.S.A. the efforts made so far by the Government and stakeholders are short of coordination. There is a gap between returnees' expectation and implementation of sought actions to sustainably reintegrate. Based on their account of events, immediately after their return, the matter has become a national agenda that received the attention of the government and donor agencies. However, the returnees argue that focus and attention seems to fade as it goes down the community and over time.

Lack of coordination, lack of clear responsibilities and mandates, lack of commitment and lack of consistent monitoring and evaluation at village level as well as limited involvement of non-governmental organizations are mentioned as the reasons for poor reintegration of the returnees. Shortage of budget, inadequate working place for returnees and failure to control illegal brokers are some of the other challenges encountered.

Supporting returnees to integrate and make a living in their homeland sustainably is at an infant stage. Expectedly, it

requires the well-designed and integrated intervention of stakeholders at all levels. There are opportunities in their respective settlements for them to economically sustain with few supports from concerned bodies. Financial support is the first top priority need of the returnees. Awareness creation training for the returnees as well as the community is mentioned as the critical turning point to bring attitudinal changes and enable the returnees to have sustainable livelihood, and reduce illegal migration.

In general, there are critical gaps/constraints that hinder the efforts to address the needs of the returnees. Shortage of financial resources, inadequate working place (shed in town and farming land in rural), lack of infrastructure (e.g., electricity & water supply), lack of access to credit service, resistance of returnees to take loan due to religion, and poor coordination among government sectors are the main challenges.

Table 1: Acronyms/Abbreviations

I.L.O.	International Labor Organization
I.O.M.	International Office of Migration
K.S.A.	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
M.O.E	Ministry of Education
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
MoYCA	Ministry of Youth, Women and Children
N.B.E	National Bank of Ethiopia
ODI	Official Development Assistance
T.I.P	Trafficking in Persons
U.A.E.	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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