Ethiopian Female Labor Migration to the Middle East

An Investigation of the System of Irregular Migration

A Thesis

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By

Livia Röthlisberger

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Contents

Abstract

Against the background of Ethiopian female labor migration to the Middle East and the challenges of the legal channel, the present qualitative study explores the system of irregular migration. A special focus is laid on the discernment of actors involved and the responsibilities they assume in the organization of informal labor migration. The objective of this study is to identify ways to improve the overall experience of labor migrants during their recruitment, travel, and employment abroad. Qualitative data gathered through interviews with a broad range of stakeholders in Ethiopia and through participant observations revealed the importance of three major themes that impact the functioning of irregular migration: social networks, trust, and knowledge. Taking into consideration the interrelation of these aspects, the study's outcome is presented as policy recommendations. These recommendations, if enacted, would contribute to the protection of Ethiopian female labor migrants during the entire experience and enhance their opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Key Words: Female Labor Migration, Irregular Migration, Informal Social Systems

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Abbreviations

BOLSA	Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs
COC	Certificate of Competence
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MOLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
MTO	Money Transfer Operators
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEA	Private Employment Agency
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations

Definitions

Broker (low profile, supportive, main)

The definition of a broker in the Ethiopian context is broad. Brokers are service providers in a range of different areas, such as real estate, agriculture, or personnel. The main task of brokers is to understand the needs of customers and provide them with an adequate service satisfying those needs. Throughout this thesis the term is mostly used when referring to people arranging irregular migration procedures for prospective migrants. Low profile, big profile and supportive brokers are terms used by interview partners. Low profile brokers are informal individuals that assume full responsibility over the service they provide to their customers. Supportive brokers support low profile or big profile brokers with specific tasks, such as, collecting payments or spreading information. Finally, big profile or main brokers are established brokers. They have an overview and connections across borders. Main brokers are usually only part-time brokers, with other running businesses, such as trade or construction.

Eder

An Amharic word for a traditional social insurance system in Ethiopia, where the whole community provides for each other in case of emergencies, such as funerals, health issues, and access to loans.

Ekob

An Amharic word for a traditional social system in Ethiopia, where members of a community regularly deposit a certain amount of money in a common pool and where everyone in rotation receives the collection of the sum.

Hawala

Hawala describes an informal money transfer, where the social network is used to execute the transfer. The system is based on trust and the connections within the social network. No legal enforceability measures support the transactions. In the Ethiopian context the term is broadly used but understood differently. Some refer to it as informal money transactions, others generally use it to describe any kind of money transfer.

Kebele

Kebeles are the Amharic word for municipalities. They are the smallest administrative units in the federal state.

Middle East

In this thesis the term Middle East is used to include an extended number of countries that constitute the low skill labor demand for Ethiopian migrant workers. It includes countries from the Mediterranean area, such as Lebanon and Jordan and expands over to the Arab peninsula, to Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. In the Ethiopian context, people refer to this region as *Arab Agar*.

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PART 1

1. Introduction

Within Ethiopian society, living and working in the Middle East is a common phenomenon. For many women, a temporary residency in the *Arab Agar,* the Amharic designation for the region, forms part of their life journey. Particularly, young women are tempted to look for other perspectives than the predetermined ones they are exposed to in Ethiopia. By traveling abroad, they intend to change their lives and accumulate wealth in a short time. Although since 2013, media and international organizations have increasingly reported the precarious situation labor migrants face in host countries[1], the migration flow has sustained. The public outcry in reaction to those reports led the Ethiopian government to amend the legislative framework for the legal migration channel. In order to improve the security situation of labor migrants, the implemented strategy now aims to sign bilateral agreements with partner countries and increase control of private employment agencies. Furthermore, prospective migrants need to undergo skill training and pre departure orientation sessions. In theory, the amendments of the labor migration law seem promising. However, in practice, it is a restrictive approach that bears challenges for employment agencies, migrants and even government stakeholders. Instead of regulating the migration flow, those obstacles lead to a rise in irregular migration.

Although the irregular migration system is currently the only way for labor migrants to cross borders, its functioning is rarely discussed in public. Against the background of local push and pull factors, the thesis investigates the system of irregular migration. Thereby, a particular focus is laid on the actors involved. Based on in-depth analysis of interviews and observations from the field I argue that three interlinked themes, social networks, trust and knowledge, explain the smooth organization but precarious consequences of irregular migration. Government strategies need to consider the interplay of these factors in order to increase the protection and create a positive experience for female labor migrants during the entire labor migration.

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[1] See Human Rights Watch (2010), Walls at every turn, Abuse of Migrant Domestic Workers through Kuwait's Sponsorship System, available at: https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/10/06/walls-every-turn/abuse-migrant-domestic-workers-through-kuwaits-sponsorship-system. Or: Human Rights Watch (2018), Lebanon: Migrant Worker's Abuse Account, Investigate Allegations, Retraction After Return to Workplace, available at: https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/06/lebanon-migrant-workers-abuse-account. Both links last retrieved on 26.09.2019.

2. Thesis Outline

The thesis is divided into five parts. Part 1 starts with background information on the labor migration of female domestic workers from Ethiopia to the Middle East. After pointing out the specific problem, a description of the research question and objective is presented.

In Part 2, the methodology of data collection and analysis is presented. Through a literature review and theoretical perspectives, light is shed on the current state of research in the field of labor migration in Ethiopia in particular and international migration in general.

Part 3 deals with the legal and irregular migration channel. The various ways of migrating are thoroughly described and eventually contrasted with each other. Data is drawn from existing studies, literature but also interviews and observations.

Part 4 elaborates on three aspects of the migration procedure that have been discerned while conducting the analysis. They are social networks, trust, and knowledge. The interpretation of the data reveals a high interrelation among these themes, which is presented in the last section of part 4.

In Part 5, the most important findings are summarized. Recommendations support the improvement of social actions or policies targeting the betterment of the situation of Ethiopian female labor migrants during their entire experience.

3. Background Information

3.1. Situation

The migration of Ethiopian citizens to countries of the Middle East in search of employment started in the early 90s and has since then developed into a broadly observed phenomenon (De Regt, 2007). It is estimated that between 2008 and 2013, almost half a million Ethiopians have legally migrated to the Middle East (ILO, 2017a:6). Though, due to the absence of a central registration system in Ethiopia and the high incidence of irregular migration, the exact number of migrants remains unknown.

Studies conducted by international organizations and the ministerial entities in Ethiopia have revealed an increase of labor migration to countries of the Middle East in the past years, with a greater share of women responding to the employment opportunities abroad (Kefale, Zerihun, 2015). Gender dynamics not only influence the migration, but also the type of work that migrants assume, resulting in female migrants predominantly working in domestic care

(Zewdu, 2018:10). Within the region, Ethiopia is considered as one of the countries with the highest outflow of female migrant domestic workers to the Middle East (ILO, 2015).

A number of push and pull factors contribute to the steady flow of women migrating to the Middle Eastern countries. Reasons such as political repression, recurrent famines, economic distress and a high unemployment rate force young women in Ethiopia to look for employment opportunities abroad. The interest to migrate among Ethiopian women is further intensified through peer pressure, the cultural significance of migration, and the prospect of remittances (ILO, 2017b; Fernandez, 2010).

Migrants are also pulled in because the Gulf countries experienced an increase in their purchasing power due to the oil boom in recent years. This led to several social changes, including the involvement of local women in the labor market. In addition to traditional prestige and status symbol of having a domestic worker, the newly perceived necessity of hiring someone to do the neglected work at home, constitutes one of the reasons for an increased demand for migrant workers (Ketema, 2014:37).

The profile of Ethiopian female labor migrant is extremely varied. As much as the phenomenon concerns women from low income groups, middle class girls are also part of the group of migrants seeking employment opportunities abroad. The women are single, married, divorced, or widows. They might have children or not and live in urban areas or the rural countryside. Some of them are illiterate, others have gone through a secondary education (Fernandez, 2010:253). No clear pattern is identifiable. While these conditions do not influence the fact that women migrate to the Middle East, they certainly do influence the way in which the female migrants experience the journey.

3.2. Problem

Instead of experiencing an enriching situation and accessing a source of income, female migrant domestic workers in particular and female labor migrants in general often face the contrary.

Within the borders of their country, economic, political, and social factors push these women into situations of desperation. In those situations, their vulnerability increases. Partly due to this vulnerability, they are easily convinced by seductive promises of relatives, brokers, or private employment agencies (PEAs) praising the opportunities in the Middle East. The prospect of a source of income and an opportunity for personal growth encourages women to apply for employment abroad. Facilitators of these arrangements are family members, travel

agencies, informal brokers, private employment agencies, or other members of the community. They organize the working visa, the travel to the host country, and the link to an employer. Eventually, by the time of arriving in the destination country the labor migrants have paid a considerable amount of money to the facilitators, but are indebted to their family, the social network, or the facilitators themselves (ILO, 2011).

Once female migrant domestic workers arrive in the country of destination, they are confronted with degrading living and working conditions. Returnees report labor abuse, such as excessive working hours, limited recovery days, below minimum wages, and retention of payment. A possible irregular confiscation of travel documents through the employer restricts the freedom of movement of the migrants further. Racial discrimination, physical abuse, and sexual violence are other conditions endured as well. Local structures, such as the Kafala system that regulates the employer-employee relationship in countries in Gulf region countries or the exclusion of the domestic work from labor law, contribute to an absolute dependency of migrant workers on residential employers. Constant fear of losing employment, being deported, or unable to pay back the debt restrains the women from taking action against their abusers (Ketema, 2014).

Qualitative studies have analyzed the impact of traumatic experiences on the psyche of the female migrant laborers. The studies stress the post-migration consequences of exploitation, disappointed expectations, cultural isolation, and the undermining of a cultural identity experienced by female migrant laborers in the Middle East. In addition to stigmatization from the community, these consequences hinder a smooth reintegration process and contribute to the feeling of social defeat (Anbesse, 2009).

3.3. Specific Problem

An increasing awareness of the problematic situation that Ethiopian female migrant workers face in host countries led the government in Addis Ababa to take measures. A national ban was proclaimed in 2013, prohibiting the migration of workers to the Middle East[2]. During the period of restriction, the government strategy aimed at addressing the negative experiences of migrant workers and improving their protection by strengthening the national legislation.

Just before the enforcement of the ban, Ethiopia ratified the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish

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2 For more details see ILO project on Improved Labor Migration Governance to Protect Migrant Workers and Combat Irregular Migration in Ethiopia: https://www.ilo.org/africa/technical-cooperation/WCMS_553870/lang--en/index.htm, last retrieved on 10.09.2019.

Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children in 2012[3]. As a matter of fact, the government translated the international provisions into national legislation and published Proclamation 909/2015 on the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in 2015[4]. Simultaneously, a national task force was established to support the implementation of the proclamation's provisions. In addition, the Proclamation on the Role and Responsibilities of Private Employment Agencies first published in 1998, was revised for a second time in 2016. It became Proclamation 923/2015 on Ethiopia's Overseas Employment[5]. With the revised edition ready to be implemented, the government lifted the ban in December 2018. However, at the time of writing more than nine months have passed since the lift and not a single migrant has been sent overseas through the government channel. Financial and educational requirements discriminate a wide participation of prospective migrants. Bureaucratic burdens turn down the interest of business owners to engage in employment exchange. And last, difficulties in achieving bilateral agreements between Ethiopia and partner countries hinder the establishment of a diplomatic framework for the regulation of labor migration. In sum, inherent controversies of the proclamation delay its own implementation.

Nevertheless, throughout the duration of the ban and up until now, Ethiopian women continue to migrate to the Middle East. Since licensed PEAs ceased to exist until recently and have not started to fully operate yet, migrant workers were and are forced to reach out to informal brokers, travel agencies, or relatives to organize the irregular migration. Thereby, they are not registered at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) nor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and remain without formal recognition in the host countries. In case of abuse during the arrangement in Ethiopia, the travel, or the employment abroad, they have nowhere to turn to. Contrary to its intention, the ban as well as the revision of the proclamation did not contribute to a decrease of irregular migration, but rather to an increase of the phenomenon and all its consequences. While the strategy was set in place to guarantee protection for female Ethiopian migrant workers, their vulnerability became exacerbated.

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[3] UN General Assembly (2001), United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, A/RES/55/25, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f55b0.html. Last retrieved on 10.09.2019.

[4] Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2015), Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation, Proclamation No. 909/2015, Federal Negarit Gazette, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

[5] Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2016), Ethiopia´s Overseas Employment Proclamation, Proclamation No. 923/2016, Federal Negarit Gazette, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

4. Objective of the Study

Against the background of the problematic situation that Ethiopian female labor migrants face in the Middle East, the objective of this study is to explore the underlying migration systems. Through a socio-centric network approach, the objective is to investigate the roles and responsibilities of actors and shed light on their interplay, which eventually facilitates the process of labor migration. Taking into consideration the contrary impact of the government mechanisms and the steady flow of irregular migration, the research aims at contributing to the formulation of policy recommendations that strengthen the protection of female migrant workers during the preparation, travel to, and eventually residence in the destination country.

The overall objective of the thesis is to guarantee protected migration, space for personal growth and safe access to a source of income for Ethiopian women who decide to pursue employment opportunities in the Middle East or elsewhere.

5. Research Question

The central question of the research is as follows:

Considering the vulnerability of female labor migrants, the restrictive impact of the legal labor migration framework, and the functioning of the irregular migration system, the question remains how the overall experience for Ethiopian women migrating to the Middle East for employment opportunities can be improved in terms of safety and personal and professional growth.

Guiding questions will be:

- Who are the actors that are involved in irregular migration?

- What is the role and interest of those actors?

- How does irregular migration function?

- How are the actors interrelated?

- What power structures exist among the actors?

- What influence do the actors have on the experience of the female migrant worker throughout the recruitment, travel, and residence in the host country?

PART 2

In order to answer the above mentioned research question and investigate the functioning of irregular migration, methodologies of qualitative research were applied. Part 2 first elaborates on the chosen methodological framework. In the second section, it then presents a review of existing literature and studies in the field of labor migration in Ethiopia in particular and international migration in general.

6. Methodological Approach

6.1. Scope of Research

Despite the fact that the phenomenon of Ethiopian female labor migrants to the Middle East is of transnational and -regional scope, the focus is laid on the country of origin: Ethiopia. The decision was based on feasibility criteria. Due to a previous residency in Ethiopia and an already established network access to information, to experts, and to the actors involved was facilitated during the data collection process.

By limiting the focus of the research on actors based in Addis Ababa, the study became further practical within the time frame and scope of the thesis granted by the university. Qualitative and quantitative studies have revealed the importance of the capital as a hub for the recruitment of candidates and the organization of employment abroad (Zewdu, 2018; ILO, 2011). In addition, MOLSA as well as the headquarters of international organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), are based in Addis Ababa and served during the data gathering between April and May 2019 as important sources of information.

Once in the field, the attention was brought to another area in central Ethiopia prone to migration. Studies of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes found that Dessie, a major city in the Amhara region, is among the areas with the highest incidence of female labor migration to the Middle East[6]. In order to capture a wider range of information, data obtained from Dessie was also included.

6.2. Data Collection

After an in-depth review of existing literature, studies, policies, proclamations, and reports on regional developments, qualitative research was undertaken.

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[6] Interview partners mainly referred to the 2017 annual report of The Freedom Fund on Ethiopia, available online: https://freedomfund.org/programs/hotspot-projects/ethiopia-hotspot/. Last retrieved on 09.09.2019.

Through an existing network in Ethiopia and complementary online research, seven experts were successfully approached for interviews in Addis Ababa. Two were researchers that published articles for a volume of an international journal on Ethiopian migration to the Middle East (Expert 1, 2) and the third the editor of the journal himself (Expert 3). Further experts were the director of an NGO focusing on the rehabilitation and reintegration of female returnees (Expert 4), a representative of the IOM (Expert 5), a lawyer specialized in women's rights (Expert 6), as well as the director of an NGO promoting safer migration and local livelihood opportunities (Expert 7).

Table 1: Experts

Nr.	Indication	Profile	Institution
1	Expert 1	Researcher	University
2	Expert 2	Researcher	University
3	Expert 3	Professor and Editor	University
4	Expert 4	Executive Director	Non-Governmental Organization
5	Expert 5	Project Assistant	International Organization
6	Expert 6	Lawyer	Non-Governmental Organization
7	Expert 7	Executive Director	Non-Governmental Organization

Expert interviews were used to explore the area of research, to get a first orientation of involved actors, and create thematic structures to analyze the field (Flick, 2007: 216). The interviews were semi-structured and conducted in English. Apart from supporting a general understanding of the situation, the interviews also allowed the establishment of contacts to further interview partners. In addition, the data provided information on the existing legal framework and the mechanisms implemented by government and non-government agencies in order to address the challenges of the phenomenon. This information was hardly accessible through literature or online research, hence the method helped to fill the gap. Lastly, through the first round of interviews an initial actor mapping of involved stakeholders could be drawn.

In the second round of data collection, the aim was then to conduct focused interviews with as many of those actors as possible. During the conversations, the objective was to identify their roles, responsibilities, and interests. Sometimes the interviews even revealed the

existence of additional, invisible actors. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were chosen to allow for individual developments throughout the conversation and the capturing of a broad range of perspectives (Flick, 2007:195).

Focused interviews were conducted with seven women migrants that had returned to Ethiopia. Three of them were based in Addis Ababa, four in Dessie. Three of them received reintegration assistance from NGOs (Migrant 1, Migrant 2, Migrant 7) and are currently not considering migrating again. Two others are in the process of being sent through the government channel (Migrant 4, Migrant 5). The two remaining ones are considering migrating again, but with the assistance of informal brokers (Migrant 3, Migrant 6). The interviews were held in Amharic and translated into English by social workers or staff members of the organizations. Through the previous expert interviews, three major steps of the migration process could be identified: 1) the access to information on the migration channels and job opportunities abroad, 2) the recruitment through agencies, brokers, or other entities, and 3) the travel from within Ethiopia across the border. As a fourth focus topic, the way remittances were sent back to Ethiopia was also investigated. This decision was based on the observation of a strong link between labor migration and remittances as well their similarities in terms of functioning as an informal social system. During the focused interviews the aim was to discern the actors involved in each of the segments and gather information on the systems underlying the irregular migration process.

Table 2: Migrants

Nr.	Indication	Location	Status
8	Migrant 1	Addis Ababa	Received reintegration assistance; Currently no intention to migrate
9	Migrant 2	Addis Ababa	Received reintegration assistance; Currently no intention to migrate
10	Migrant 3	Addis Ababa	Intention to migrate irregularly
11	Migrant 4	Dessie	Intention to migrate legally
12	Migrant 5	Dessie	Intention to migrate legally
13	Migrant 6	Dessie	Intention to migrate irregularly
14	Migrant 7	Dessie	Received reintegration assistance; Currently no intention to migrate

Further in-depth interviews were held with representatives from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in Addis Ababa (MOLSA) and a regional office, the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs in Dessie (BOLSA). MOLSA is the federal entity charged with implementing regarding the recently enacted Overseas Employment Proclamation 923/2016, that defines the regular process for migrant workers in general and the one for domestic workers to countries of the Middle East in particular. BOLSA in Dessie functions as a regional office, implementing the responsibility at the mezzo level.

Another interview was held with three prosecutors from the office of the General Attorney. The General Attorney constitutes the head of the anti-human trafficking task force that has been created in order to implement the provisions of Proclamation 909/2015 for the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants (Task Force 1). In addition, data was collected through an interview with the vice dean of a public vocational training institute (TVET1). The TVET offers courses for jobs which the government has identified a high labor demand in the countries of the Middle East. Finally, three private employment agencies, one in Addis Ababa (PEA1), two in Dessie (PEA2, PEA3) and two brokers (Broker1, Broker2) were successfully approached for in-depth interviews as well.

All interviews were semi-structured, in order to avoid any interference by the researcher, but to increase the scope of perspectives (Flick, 2007: 196). During the interviews the aim was to follow the information flow of the interview partners and to discern unanticipated topics or additional, invisible actors.

Table 3: Additional Interview Partners

Nr.	Indication	Location
15	MOLSA1	Addis Ababa
16	BOLSA1	Dessie
17	Task Force 1	Addis Ababa
18	TVET1	Addis Ababa
19	PEA1	Addis Ababa
20	PEA2	Dessie
21	PEA3	Dessie
22	Broker1	Dessie
23	Broker2	Dessie

In order to increase the validity of the gathered data through triangulation, observations contributed to the discernment of additional information (Flick, 2007:284). As those observations were not planned but emerged out of daily conversations with people from the Ethiopian society, they can be characterized as participant, unsystematic observations in natural situations (Flick, 2007:282). Rather than having a structured observation sheet that would limit the spectra of attention, the aim was to be receptive to new information (Flick, 2007:289). By taking into consideration my own position as a researcher within the observations, I captured the observations in a descriptive manner in the form of field notes.

6.3. Coding Methods

Throughout the first and second coding cycles, I constantly wrote analytical memos, as they are a tool to reflect on established codes, on identified major topics, or on emergent sub-categories (Saldaña, 2013:41). Copies of those memos were kept in the research journal and used for complementing the results gained through the coding procedure.

I started the first coding cycle with the method of initial coding, which is used to break down the gathered data and to identify the general path in which the study is directing the research. The idea is to discern segments of the data and relate them to each other, while looking for similarities and differences (Saldaña, 2013:101). I complemented this way of coding with structural and descriptive coding. Both methods can be applied within the initial coding cycle. Structural coding is recommended for interview transcripts and supports the structuring of the data into broader segments in order to conduct further in-depth analysis (Saldaña, 2013: 85). Through the descriptive coding method, the established codes that are generated by summarizing passages are reorganized and listed separately (Saldaña, 2013:89). In a first attempt, I coded each of the transcribed interviews. While doing so, three themes were identified that guided the second cycle of coding. As the main method of the second coding cycle, axial coding revealed to be appropriate. It is used to describe the discerned themes extensively and relate them to each other (Saldaña, 2013: 208). The codes that emerged out of the first coding cycle were used to structure further emergent topics. Through descriptive coding, each of the major topics was exhaustively described. Analytical memos captured emerging ideas, striking interpretations, and new insights all along the process.

Parallel to the coding procedure, the objective of the data analysis was to create a stakeholder investigation through a socio-centric network approach. It consisted of a mapping of all actors involved in the field of labor migration from Ethiopia to the Middle East. Through

expert and focused interviews, the existence of invisible actors and their relationships, roles, and responsibilities within the sector could be identified.

6.4. Limitations of the Study

With a transnational phenomenon as broad as labor migration and a country as vast as Ethiopia in terms of cultures, languages, and traditions, the possibilities of research within the framework of a master thesis remain limited. The focus on specific areas and themes, such as the actors and the organization of irregular migration have certainly increased the validity of the data for those areas. Simultaneously, that same focus has also limited the possibility of general deductions on the labor migration movement from Ethiopia to the countries of the Middle East. The balancing act between choosing the right focus and not omitting important information was a constant challenge. It concerned the geographical area, the variety of actors involved, and the single segments of migration.

Further limitations of the study arose from language barriers. Not only with interview partners that spoke Amharic, but also with people who had mastered English. Having previously experienced the Ethiopian context, I realized once again that language is an extremely contextualized way of communicating and expressing oneself. During the field research I discerned terms, in English and Amharic, that had specific meanings in the Ethiopian context. As those were not pointed out by other people, but came to attention through my own observations, I am convinced of the covered existence of many other terms, with a similar contextualized meaning.

In addition to those language barriers, the study has limitations in terms of a personalized interpretation of the data. Although objectivity was a guiding principle throughout the data collection and analysis, my own life and perception of the world certainly influenced the interpretation of the results. Furthermore, throughout the data collection I observed a certain narrative that dominated the input from interview partners. Although I tried to question the contributions with critical inquiries, the narrative did not change much. Apart from a personalized interpretation, the data itself needs to be considered in its context.

Finally, the research's focus was clearly very broad. While it only touched the surface of a wide range of sub-categories, it coincidently opens avenues for further in-depth research.

7. State of Research

7.1. Studies and Reports on Labor Migration in Ethiopia

Since the increased media coverage of violent incidents in countries of the Middle East at the beginning of the 21st century, the literature regarding female labor migrants from Ethiopia has broadly expanded. Human rights organizations investigated the situation of labor migrants abroad and published reports on the abuses suffered by Ethiopian domestic workers. A few examples:

- Human Rights Watch (2010), Walls at every turn, Abuse of Migrant Domestic Workers through Kuwait's Sponsorship System, available at: https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/10/06/walls-every-turn/abuse-migrant-domestic-workers-through-kuwaits-sponsorship-system, last retrieved on 27.09.2019.

- Human Rights Watch (2018), Lebanon: Migrant Worker's Abuse Account, Investigate Allegations, Retraction After Return to Workplace, available at: https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/06/lebanon-migrant-workers-abuse-account, last retrieved on 27.09.2019.

Those reports of independent organizations are complemented with reports from intergovernmental organizations, such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) or the International Organization for Migration (IOM):

- ILO (2015), Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology-Special Focus on Migrant Domestic Workers. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labor Office.

- ILO (2011), Trafficking in Persons Overseas for Labor Purposes: The Case of Ethiopian Domestic workers. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: International Labor Organization Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan.

- IOM (2015), Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants in the Context of Mixed Migration Flows: State of Play in the IGAD Region, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: International Organization for Migration Special Liaison Office (SLO).

Whereas the independent organizations focused on the collective experiences of female migrants and the role of host countries, the state organizations collected quantitative information on the phenomena of migration, overseas employment, and human trafficking.

In addition, researchers have conducted a number of qualitative studies, highlighting the consequences of the experiences on the psyche and the reintegration process of returnees. Other aspects covered by qualitative studies also concern the analysis of push and pull factors, the feminization of migration and gender roles, and the migration of laborers in the context of human trafficking.

- Reda, A. H. (2018), An Investigation into the Experiences of Female Victims of Trafficking in Ethiopia, African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal, 11:1, 87-102.

- Ketema, N. B. (2014), Female Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers: An Analysis of Migration, Return-Migration and Reintegration Experiences, Thesis presented to the Department of International Studies and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon.

- Zewdu, G. A. (2018), Ethiopian Female Domestic Labor Migration to the Middle East: Patterns, Trends, and Drivers, African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal, 11:1, 6-19.

There are a few existing publications regarding the legal measures of the Ethiopian government and their impact.

- Ashine, K. M. (2017), Migrant Workers Rights under the Ethiopian Legal System, International Journal of African and Asian Studies, Vol 29: 28-33.

- ILO (2017c), The Ethiopian Overseas Employment Proclamation no. 923/2016: A Comprehensive Analysis, ILO Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan.

Finally, while the importance of networks within migration processes is acknowledged, there is a lack of in-depth research and literature on the functioning of the network in the field of irregular migration in Ethiopia. This observation is generally true for the procedure of informal social systems in Ethiopia. Although those social systems are omnipresent in the Ethiopian culture, the few conducted studies date from the 80s and 90s.

- Aredo, D. (1993), The Informal and Semi-Formal Financial Sectors in Ethiopia: A Study of Iqqub, Iddir and Saving and Credit Cooperatives, African Economic Research Consortium.

- Mauri, A. (1987), The Role of Financial Intermediation in the Mobilization and Allocation of Household Saving in Developing Countries: Interlinks between Organized and Informal Circuits: The Case of Ethiopia, International Experts Meeting on Domestic Savings Mobilization, East-West Centre, Honolulu.

Whilst those publications have been complemented with studies conducted by scholars in recent years (Ketema, 2014; Ayenew, 2016; Zewdu, 2018), a certain gap remains. Hence the outcome of this research will contribute to expand existing knowledge.

7.2. International Migration Theories

The field of migration theories is extremely fragmented. The existing theories differ greatly in terms of level of analysis, emphasis on causes or effects, determinants, and the importance of historical processes (Massey, 1990:3). Rather than complementing each other, separate strands have evolved. Those varying frameworks can explain one aspect or one kind of a migration process, but do not provide a holistic theoretical grounding for the entire range of international migration occurring today (Kurekova, 2011:17).

Massey, an advocate of the importance of social structures within migratory processes, provides an overview of existing theories.

- Massey, D. S., et al. (1990), Social Structure, Household Strategies, and the Cumulative Causation of Migration, Office of Population Research, Population Index, Vol. 56, No. 1: 3-26.

- Massey, D. S., et al. (1993), Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal, Population Council, Population and Development Review, Vol. 19, No. 3: 431-466.

Massey criticizes the Neoclassical Theory, which focuses on rationality. At the macro level, this theory argues that it is mainly the differences in demand and the resulting difference in wages in distinct geographical areas that stimulates the migration process (Massey, 1993: 433). At the micro level, the theory stresses the individual choices based on cost-benefit analysis, considering the employment opportunity and expected returns in the area of destination (Massey, 1993: 436). According to Massey and other authors (Kurekova, 2011), it is necessary to take into consideration local and contextualized variables, such as networks, institutions, and social structures and break down the homogeneity of migrants.

-   Kurekova, L. (2011), Theories of migration: Conceptual Review and Empirical Testing in the Context of the EU East West flows, Paper prepared for Interdisciplinary conference on Migration. Economic Change, Social Challenge, Central European University.

The New Economics of Migration Theory emphasizes the importance of families, households and other communal groupings and their role within the processes. The theory argues that those social groups take a conscious action to diversify risk through international migration. Therefore, analytical focus should be laid on the social structures, e.g. the family as a core decision making unit, rather than on the individual (Massey, 1993:439).

This rational choice theory at the micro level is contrasted with arguments of the Dual Labor Market Theory, which emphasizes the importance of macroeconomic structures. Inflation, occupational hierarchies, capital and labor demand, and other factors are considered determinant for the migratory processes (Massey, 1993).

In the category of macro analysis, Wallerstein's World System Approach serves as a basis for further migration frameworks. Against the background of the capitalist world economy, Massey summarizes the approach as follows: "the penetration of capitalist economic relations into peripheral, non-capitalist societies creates a mobile population that is prone to migrate abroad" (Massey, 1993:444). Migration is therefore based on the structural changes of the world market, such as globalization, the new forms of production and interdependencies of economies around the world (Massey, 1993).

While those theories serve as a framework to research the causes of and decision-making processes within international migration, other theories analyze the perpetuation of the phenomenon. Once pioneer migrants decided to leave their country of origin and settled in the country of destination, additional factors and conditions arise which contribute to a transnational movement independently maintaining itself. This process of self-perpetuation was first described by Myrdal (1957) and further developed by scholars, referring to it as Cumulative Causation. According to Massey, "causation is cumulative in that each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely" (Massey 1993:451). Varying methodological frameworks form part of the theories on the perpetuation of the phenomenon. Some emphasize the institutions, which foster the flow of migrants through the provision of

services. Others the creation of migration systems with reception and sending regions. Or further, the role of social networks that allow for a facilitated movement.

The Network Theory of Migration helps to explain how the creation of a diaspora community contributes to a continuation of migration and highlights the personal relationships between the actors. The theory is criticized by Krissmann (2005), who argues that the focus is too strongly laid on actors stemming from the same community. Krissmann developed a methodology that includes additional "non-hometown" actors, such as middlemen from bigger cities, employers from the receiving country as well as governmental institutions in both regions. With the International Migration Network Theory, he classified all actors according to their role, geographical location, and socio-economic power. Based on methods developed by the Manchester School he identified three principles which transform the network into a methodological tool. These three principles are: anchorage, directedness, and reachability. The analysis of the network in terms of the three principles would then allow the construction of theories explaining migratory behavior (Krissmann, 2005:27-33).

- Krissmann, F. (2005), Sin Coyote Ni Patrón: Why the "Migrant Network" Fails to Explain International Migration, The International Migration Review, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 4-44.

PART 3

8. Migration Channels

8.1. The Legal Channel for Migration

Early on during the literature research I realized limited information was available on the governmentally regulated channel of migration. The most informative document was the proclamation on overseas employment itself, updated for the last time in 2016. Furthermore, an analysis by the International Labor Organization compared the Ethiopian to the relatively successful Filipino approach (ILO, 2017c). Concrete information regarding the ban, such as a directive or a press release, was not available either. The aim of the first round of data collection was therefore to fill the existing knowledge gap about legal migration and to critically analyze the implementation of those theoretical guidelines in the field.

Proclamation 923/2016

According to existing literature and interview partners, the labor migration ban was a reaction of the Ethiopian government to the increase of international reporting on the alarming

situation of Ethiopian women working as housemaids in countries of the Middle East. International human rights organizations reported labor and physical abuse, sexual violence, and harassment to be part of Ethiopian labor migrants' experiences. The international community requested the protection of basic human rights and the ratification of international treaties, such as the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families[7]. The quest for action of the international community was supported by Ethiopian society, whose members demanded the protection of their sisters.

Due to the crackdown on irregular migration to Saudi Arabia in 2013 and 2014, mass deportations took place. This gave Ethiopia the challenge of reintegrating more than 160,000 migrants at once back into the Ethiopian society and economy (IOM, 2014). Parallel to the development and implementation of reintegration services for returnees, the strategy aimed at a review of the existing legislation in order to strengthen the protection of labor migrants in the Middle East. With an increased control of PEAs and pre departure requirements for prospective migrants, the idea was to regulate the legal channel of migration. By signing bilateral contracts with partner countries, Ethiopia further intended to agree on certain labor standards which would improve the safety situation of migrants abroad. MOLSA amended the existing proclamation on employment exchange services from 2009 and enacted in 2016 the current Proclamation on Ethiopia's Overseas Employment. Nevertheless, the ban remained in force until December 2018.

The enacted proclamation now serves as the guiding principle for the regulation of Ethiopian labor migration. While MOLSA represents one of the highest authorities, the regional offices of the states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia are responsible for the implementation of the provisions.

The amended legislation sets two foci: 1) Regulating PEAs and their work 2) Setting clear rights and obligations for migrants. Regarding the control of PEAs, there are several criteria for interested businesses to fulfil to become officially registered. Those criteria are related to capital, infrastructure, and human resources. A close monitoring mechanism through the involvement of MOLSA aims at preventing the agencies from engaging in irregular activities. Regarding the rights and obligations of prospective migrants, the new proclamation sets standardized guidelines and criteria that need to be fulfilled before applying. First, migrants

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[7] UN General Assembly (1990), International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, A/RES/45/158, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3980.html, last retrieved on 12.09.2019.

need to go through a skills training in the field in which they intend to work. After obtainment of the national certification of qualification (COC) and a medical certificate, both documents and the passport need to be submitted to one of the officially registered agencies. Those agencies file the documents of prospective migrants and connect the profiles to employment opportunities. After getting the visa, but before starting the travel, MOLSA controls the validity of all documents and approves the labor migration.

Finally, the entire procedure is influenced by Ethiopia's diplomatic efforts. Only when Ethiopia and a partner country can agree on certain labor standards, such as minimum wage, working hours, and the necessary skills training, a bilateral agreement can be signed. It is this bilateral agreement which finally opens the channel for labor migration. So far, Ethiopia has signed five bilateral agreements with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Qatar[8]. This means that since the lifting of the ban in December 2018, labor migration to those countries is theoretically allowed.

Implementation Challenges

On paper, the proclamation and its intentions sound ideal. However, after implementation the analysis of previous studies and interviews with PEAs, informal brokers, government employees, and migrants reveals a different picture. The following presents this contrary reality for businesses and migrants.

Challenges for Businesses

Together with the enactment of the new proclamation, the government announced business opportunities for interested companies and investors. Despite this promising announcement, the criteria to register a PEA are difficult to meet. To begin with, any company that applies for a license must deposit 100,000 USD as a form of insurance in a blocked account (Proclamation 923/2016, art. 60, paragraph 1). This constitutes not only a difficulty in terms of accumulating the amount of money, but also in terms of accessing foreign currency in Ethiopia. Due to the shortage of hard currency in the country, businesses must apply to exchange Ethiopian Birr into US Dollars. This process can take up to six months (PEA1). Furthermore, businesses can only apply to work with one labor demanding country at a time. Any further license for labor exchange services to other destination countries will involve another deposit of the same amount (PEA1).

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[8] Findings of newspaper articles were confirmed by interview partners: https://www.themigrantproject.org/ethiopia-labour-migration/, last retrieved on 10.09.2019.

Due to the fact that prospective labor migrants can solely register in the region where they have been issued their identity cards there is a high demand for employment agencies outside of Addis Ababa (PEA1). However, for logistical reasons most of the headquarters are located in the capital. For any additional branch office, the company must provide similar office infrastructure and human resources to the headquarters (PEA3). For many companies this is an expensive investment, as the tasks of the branch offices are not requiring a high level of responsibility. Branch offices simply register candidates and forward their files. Because of this costly requirement, an accumulation of subsidiary offices in regions prone to migration is observed, whereby other regions are left without agencies or opportunities to migrate.

Once businesses have made it through the registration procedure and received the license, they are officially allowed to start work. Despite the lift of the ban in December 2018 and the registration of around 400 agencies by April 2019 (Expert 2), MOLSA has not approved the deployment of a single labor migrant by the time of writing this thesis. This delay is mainly due to challenging diplomatic negotiations and the inherent controversies of the legislation. In this situation, with operating headquarters and branch offices all over Ethiopia, PEA owners are left with nothing more than running expenditures.

The above mentioned challenges constitute only a part of the difficulties faced by PEAs or informal brokers interested in registering their business. Further challenges concern the selection of medical centers for the check-up of their clients, the payment relationship with the partner office, and/or tax requirements by the Ethiopian government. To conclude, the business challenges stem from unclear guidelines contained in the proclamation. Although intended to direct companies through the registration and eventually through the labor migration procedure, the proclamation contains controversies that confuse business owners. Together with increased controlling mechanisms, the restrictive policy frightens away potential businesses.

Difficulties for Prospective Migrants

Regarding the migrants, the proclamation bears equal challenges. Although the intention of the government is to guarantee safe migration, the restrictive criteria narrow access to the legal channel for many potential migrants. The main concern for prospective female labor migrants consists of the requirement of having completed grade eight education (Proclamation 923/2016, art. 7, paragraph 1, part a). Apart from omitting information on what exactly the completion of grade eight means, the provision leads to a great number of

potential migrants being refrained from migrating legally. The requirement of having achieved a certain level of education in Ethiopia not only discriminates interested migrants with a lower educational level, but also returnees that have gained the necessary skills during a previous stay abroad (Migrant 7).

With the new proclamation, the government aimed at preparing migrants with necessary skills in order to 1) increase the quality of their work and thereby the labor demand and 2) increase their safety situation by providing an adequate preparation. However, this preparation is restrictive and the professional options that labor migrants have is discriminatory. Proclamation 923/2016 only mentions three occupational activities: domestic care, household work and child care. There is no information on how to get training and employment opportunities for other professions. As interviews with MOLSA and the TVET vice dean revealed, the decision to focus on these three employments is based on a labor market analysis (TVET1). Though, discussions with brokers, migrants, and PEAs unveiled that there is also a demand for other jobs, such as taxi drivers or construction workers.

Another requirement that complicates the implementation of the proclamation is that prospective migrants can only register in regions where they received the identity card based on their birth certificate (PEA2). This can lead to two challenging scenarios: 1) If there is no registered agency in certain areas, regular migration is not an option at all. 2) If there is an agency, but the candidate does not live in the area anymore, regularly registering becomes a difficult undertaking, with long travels and expensive overnights. The issue of travelling and paying overnights is also of concern for prospective migrants that intend to go to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, which is one of the countries with the highest demand for Ethiopian laborers, has identified a number of high standard clinics, where prospective migrants must undergo the mandatory check-up (PEA2). However, all of these clinics are located in Addis Ababa. Representatives in branch offices therefore need to send their clients to the capital. Without relatives or a network in the capital, it becomes a costly trip that women in vulnerable situation cannot easily make.

Finally, the entire migration process depends on diplomatic negotiations. One of the main strategies to increase the protection of labor migrants' basic rights is the achievement of bilateral agreements between Ethiopia and receiving countries. As Ethiopia is one out of many countries providing labor force to the countries of the Middle East, it is a competitive negotiation in which Ethiopia's diplomatic hand remains weak. The coming to terms for

bilateral agreements, which include the agreements on minimum labor standards (wage, working hours, insurance, etc.) is time consuming. Constant discrepancies, such as the fact that Saudi Arabia prefers online procedures, a condition that has no legal value in Ethiopia, or the pre-selection of medical centers, hamper smooth negotiation processes (PEA1). As the receiving countries have no interest in increasing the cost of their imported human resources, Ethiopia needs to strengthen its diplomatic efforts in order to protect its citizens. These difficulties remain one of the main obstacles to formally open the channel for legal migration. By the time of writing this thesis, these implementation challenges have resulted in a realistically open, but practically closed legal migration channel.

Graphic 1: Legal Migration Channel

> **WAY 0:**
>
> Legal Documents → Legal Passport → Registered PEA → Legal Working Visa → **X**
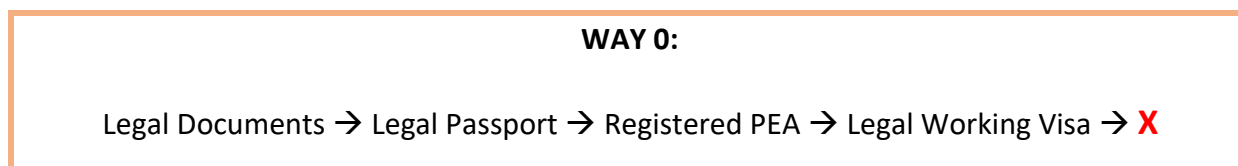
8.2. The Irregular Channel for Migration

If there is no option to migrate legally, the only possible means that remains is the informal path. Although the government claims a decrease in irregular migration due to their strategic actions, clear numbers are not available to statistically support this assumption. On the contrary, according to several interview partners and based on observations of the mass deportations from Saudi Arabia, the number of irregular migrants to countries of the Gulf region must have steadily increased.

Ways of Migrating Informally

Through the data collection it became apparent that there are several ways of migrating irregularly. These ways differ not only regarding the legality of documents, status of agencies or brokers, but also in terms of awareness of the migrants regarding the procedure and the situations they find themselves in.

Graphic 2: Irregular Migration Channel with PEAs

> **WAY 1:**
>
> Legal Documents → Legal Passport → Registered PEA → Legal Visa → by plane → Irregular residence = **No Awareness**
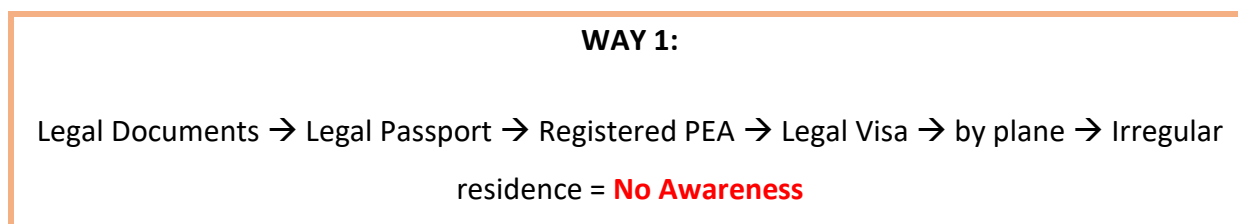
WAY 2:

Irregular Documents → Ir/regular passport → Registered PEA → Legal Visa → by plane →

Irregular Residence = **Awareness**

Ways 0, 1, and 2 are channels of migration where the migrants approach registered PEAs who arrange the travel to and employment opportunities in the Middle East. Whereas Way 0 is a legal procedure, but impossible due to above mentioned conditions, Way 1 and 2 are partly irregular. In the scenario of Way 1, the migrants go through the procedure with regularly obtained passports. In Way 2, they use falsified documents to get a passport or falsify the passport itself. Either way, it has no direct influence on the obtainment of a visa, as the PEAs manage to organize tourism, transit, or religious visa with invalid or valid documents. As those visas expire within a certain time period, the labor migrants become irregular residents in the host countries. Submitting invalid documents to the agency is linked to the awareness of the labor migrant of their irregular migration. By submitting irregular documents to get an irregular passport, the migrant knows about the eventual irregular residency in the destination country. On the contrary, when submitting valid documents and the PEA sees no urgency in explaining the irregularity aspect of the procedure, the migrant ends up staying irregularly in the host country without being aware of it. As will be discussed later, the level of awareness has a significant impact on the overall experience.

Graphic 3: Irregular Migration Channel with Brokers

WAY 3:

Legal Documents → Legal Passport → Non-Registered PEA → Irregular Visa → Plane →

Irregular Residence = **No Awareness**

WAY 4:

Irregular Documents → Ir/regular Passport → Non-Registered PEA → Irregular Visa → Plane

→ Irregular Residence = **Awareness**

WAY 5:

No Documents → Non-Registered PEA → By Foot → Irregular Residence = **Awareness**

Ways 3, 4, and 5 are migration procedures organized through non-registered agencies, main brokers, or low profile brokers[9]. In Ways 3 and 4, prospective migrants either bring their legal or falsified documents for the obtainment of a passport to an agency or a broker or directly to the immigration office. The broker then arranges the visa and travel by plane. With a fake visa, the migrants arrive in the destination country, but remain irregular residents.

Finally, the last option remains to travel without any documents. Brokers arrange the travel via the Danakil Desert in the Northeast of Ethiopia to Djibouti. Details of the travel, such as the final destination, duration, and payments are negotiated individually.

Since the legal channel of migration has been blocked since 2013, all labor migrants heading towards countries of the Middle East eventually end up in irregular situations.

Apart from being considered "illegal residents" in a host country, the level of awareness during the procedure has a direct influence on the labor migrants' experience. Many migrants give agencies proper documents. However, the agencies do not communicate their informal status and irregularity of their activities. Thus, the migrants eventually find themselves deceived with invalid documents in the destination country. In the case of migrants submitting falsified documents to a registered agency or an informal broker, they end up with an irregular residency in the country of destination as well but are at least aware of it. As the data from interviews and previous studies revealed, the unexpectedness and limited knowledge of the situation in which migrants end up finding themselves in leads to an increased level of abuse. This abuse is not only observed in the destination country but also throughout the recruitment and travel abroad.

The Functioning of Irregular Migration

The literature review and the first round of expert interviews allowed the development of an in-depth understanding of the irregular migration system. Three main segments of the system (information, recruitment, and travel) were discerned and served as a guideline for interviews with migrants and returnees. The following part depicts each of these sections in detail.

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[9] Low profile brokers are informal individuals that assume full responsibility over the service they provide to their customers. Supportive brokers support low profile or big profile brokers with specific tasks, such as, collecting payments or spreading information. Finally, big profile or main brokers are established brokers. They have an overview and connections across borders. For more information, see "Definitions".

Information

The phenomenon of migrating to countries of the Middle East for employment opportunities has been extremely widespread in Ethiopian society for the past two decades. Potential migrants get inspired by peers, relatives, and/or acquaintances, like an aunt working in Dubai, a friend's sister sending clothes from Lebanon, or a family from the neighborhood that renovates the house with remittances. Data from the interviews and observations revealed the proximity of these occurrences to any individual in Ethiopian society. Either through a personal experience, the experience of a relative, or another person living in the same community; people can relate to the phenomenon.

After a first inspiration and settling on the idea to migrate, prospective migrants usually reach out to close family members or neighbors[10] that have either migrated themselves or are known to be involved in the organization of migration procedures. Those people are persons of trust for the migrant. They usually remain the focal person throughout the entire procedure until the departure. If they reside in the destination country, they will occupy that role for an even longer period. It is those persons of trust that have a strong link to either low profile brokers or main brokers. Whereas the migrants know about the background of the trusted focal person, they do not have much information on the brokers' personal identity. Some of the interviewed returnees hardly remember the name, face, or mobile number of their brokers. The fragmented knowledge about the brokers only adds to the general confusion of the migrant before the departure. As the available information on the migration procedure is limited and people narrate very different stories, the migrants remain insecure and end up fully trusting their focal persons.

Recruitment

The focal person accompanies the prospective migrant throughout the entire recruitment process. This person gets all necessary information from the brokers, who are either low profile brokers connected to a main broker, or the main brokers themselves. Some of the brokers hide behind supposedly registered agencies, some are manifestly informal. Their formality has no impact on the way of migrating, but it can be used to deceive the migrants and increase their vulnerability. Some agencies or brokers also organize more of the administrative work than others. In some cases, the prospective migrants must do the medical

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[10] The term neighbor, which was used by the interviewees, remains quite flexible in this context as it describes a person stemming from the same community, but not necessarily a person living next door. It could be replaced with the term acquaintance.

check-up, the application for a passport, and gathering other documents on their own. In other cases, the agency takes over the full organization. In any case, the migrants are properly guided, either through the person of trust or the brokers directly. Whenever they face a problem or need more information, these persons provide them with answers. It is presented as a full package service offered by brokers to prospective migrants. Migrants are respected clients that do not have to bother with detailed decision making processes but can simply follow orders to have their expectations fulfilled. The payment for the service is usually made to the focal persons. These persons transfer all or part of it to the brokers. It is then the main brokers who keep the overview and distribute the shares according to the work of the involved actors. All of this remains outside of the perspective of prospective migrants as they are kept in confusion throughout the recruitment procedure.

Travel

In the event of travelling by plane with a tourist, transit, or religious visa, migrants often get their plane ticket and visa the day they leave Ethiopia. In some cases, this is also the first time that the migrants physically meet the main broker. These encounters are short, instructive, and impersonal. The brokers intend to keep their personality hidden and only share the most necessary information with the prospective migrants. The migrants then pass the border control. According to interview partners, it is either that the systems at the airport are not sophisticated enough to detect falsified documents or the fact that airport personnel is involved in the irregular activities and simply let migrants pass. Once the migrants pass the security control, they are off to the country of transit or destination. There they will be expected by further actors of the irregular migration system. These can be police officers, also involved in the informal business of the brokers, local brokers, or family members, that connect them to the employers. Sometimes, the employers themselves await migrants at the airport.

When migrants have no legal documents and brokers did not provide them with any irregular ones, land travel remains the only migration option. Depending on where migrants are based, brokers arrange the travel from Addis Ababa or Dessie, or even closer to the Djiboutian border on the East of Ethiopia. Payment is made before leaving the place of departure. Most of the time, low profile brokers collect the cash, transfer it to the main broker, and accompany the migrants on their journey. Travels by land are usually organized in groups. Until the Danakil Desert, which can be reached from both points of departure, the way can be covered by vehicles. Buses, minibuses, or trucks are used to transfer the group of migrants.

As the route takes more than a day, overnights are arranged in accommodations along the way. Once the brokers and the migrants reach the desert, the group waits for darkness in a hidden space before starting to cross the border. Apart from the indirect involvement of truck or bus drivers, accommodation operators, and police officers, farmers from the desert area take over the role of local guides. Migrants might be forced to add payment for those services or their families are called to pay ransoms. No matter the promises made previously, the brokers bring the migrants either further over the Gulf of Aden to the agreed destination country or leave them alone in Djibouti. While the migrants have been relying on the focal person during the information and recruitment steps, the reliance during the travel shifts towards the broker accompanying them.

8.3. Comparison of Irregular and Regular Migration

Before the restrictive actions of the government in 2013, migrants used to approach employment agencies without knowing about their legal status. The fact that the migration channel could be irregular was not a major issue to consider. Due to the reluctance of the government to control businesses, the agencies' legality was not confirmed nor publicly known. In case migrants had no access to agencies, they reached out to low profile brokers stemming from society, who helped them migrate to countries with high degrees of labor demand. Migrating irregularly is therefore a very commonly observed phenomenon in Ethiopia and widely accepted within society. Only with the ban in 2013 did prospective migrants started becoming more aware of the level of informality of the agencies and the impact it could have on their experience.

In contrast to the legal channel, the irregular activities address in a much more contextualized manner the needs of involved actors, and local challenges. The following part presents this comparison by elaborating on general characteristics, actors and the services they provide as well as the consequences of both path of migration.

General Characteristics

Organizing irregular migration is a lucrative business and a means of making a living for many involved actors. While registering a PEA has been shown to be an administrative struggle and loss for many business owners, irregular migration is a win-win situation. Although the shares are not equal, everyone still profits.

Compared to the legal channel for migration, the irregular system is smooth, easy, and fast. After paying the requested amount of money, prospective migrants can potentially leave

Ethiopia within the next few days. Furthermore, thanks to the network's flexibility, anyone can migrate. Whereas the legal channel formally only accepts women with a certain educational level, the irregular channel for migration is open to everyone.

The system of irregular migration is adapted to the Ethiopian context. It is based on the demands of Ethiopian migrants and the labor demand of the Middle East. Although no formal research has been undertaken, the necessary knowledge exists and flows through the construction of the social network. As an example, the need for taxi drivers in Saudi Arabia is very well known among the actors of the irregular migration system. Many prospective male migrants are interested, but find no guiding information in proclamation 923/2016 on how to officially work as taxi drivers in the country of destination. The irregular migration system on the other hand takes into consideration those demands and responds with a non-discriminatory migration procedure.

Although the legal channel offers free training, free travel, and insurance, people are more comfortable using the irregular migration system, because the system also allows access to loans. The financial services made available through the network have a prominent traditional position within Ethiopian society. *Ekob* and *eder* are the two main traditional social services provided by the social network's cohesion. Researchers describe *ekob* as a rotating saving club, where "each member agrees to pay periodically a small sum into a common pool so that each, in rotation, can receive a large sum" (Aredo, 1993: 9). *Eder* on the other hand is defined as "an association made up by a group of persons united by ties of family and friendship, by living in the same district, by jobs, or by belonging to the same ethnic group, and has an object of providing mutual aid and financial assistance in certain circumstances ... In practice, the [eder] is a sort of insurance program run by a community or a group to meet emergency situations" (Mauri, 1987: 6-7). Despite the fact that these studies were conducted in the 80s and 90s, data from interviews and observations support the arguments brought forward. Until today, these traditional services provided through the network are preferred ways to the formal institutions as they are more contextualized, needs-based, and culturally appropriate (Aredo, 1993: 32). Irregular migration is therefore just another service for which society provides the necessary infrastructure.

While the irregular migration system is based on the social network, the legal channel gets legislative support. Nevertheless, due to the controversies within the law, the impact remains limited. The same is observable regarding the bilateral agreements that are negotiated with

destination countries or partners of employment agencies abroad. Although the agreements are more institutionalized, it does not necessarily lead to a more organized procedure, as observable in the case of migration.

Nevertheless, irregular migration has drawbacks in terms of transparency. Actors of the system constantly keep their customers in a state of confusion. Migrants have limited information on the number of stakeholders that are involved, the responsibilities they fulfil, on the interplay that forms the basis of the system. Migrants are also stripped off from any power of decision and only follow orders. Compared to that, the legal channel for migration is more transparent and leaves decisions up to the migrant. Despite that higher level of transparency, the narrow spread of knowledge regarding the new proclamation and its inherent controversies remain a significant challenge. Following proclamation 923/2016, the legal channel is confusing for prospective migrants, interested investors, and informal brokers.

Actors

Both systems include a broad range of actors. In the legal channel, the actors are more visible by having a predetermined responsibility through proclamation 923/2016. Government entities, such as sub-cities, regional BOLSA offices, or public training institutes, and PEAs are assigned with specific obligations. Within the irregular system the range of actors involved is more complex. Apart from visible actors, such as migrants and brokers, other stakeholders are indirectly involved too. Although less apparent, they occupy a similarly important role in the system. Among those actors are neighbors connecting migrants to the brokers, farmers from the desert region serving as guides, or aunts sending money from the Middle East.

In regards to actors, the informal sector does not provide any formal agreements between contracting parties. The bonds are based on trust, social networks, and business arrangements. The parties prefer to cooperate to pursue their own interests. By working together, they gain more. Furthermore, hierarchies within the irregular migration system are based on knowledge. In the formal sector, those hierarchies are coupled to responsibilities assigned to the actors. While main brokers control low profile brokers within the irregular system, it is the government agencies that control the private employment agencies in the legal channel. Although a cooperation between all departments and entities involved in the process of legal migration is a precondition for the government strategy, the entities hardly know about the

responsibilities of the others and miss the broader picture. On the contrary, the information flow of social networks does not only cross borders but is also fast and fosters a strong cooperation among the actors.

As the brokers stem from the community, their social reputation is extremely important. With every migrant successfully crossing the border, their reputation increases. This determines the level of trust and confidence the community grants the brokers. The better their reputation, the more trust, the more customers. The government, on the contrary, has not provided its citizens with many social benefits in the past years. As described above, even insurance and saving systems are based on social networks. Although promising announcements have been made in the migration sector (e.g. insurance for labor migrants or reintegration services), the previous lack of institutional support slows society from relying on government services. People rather trust the familiar and traditional safety net provided through the social network.

When migrating irregularly, prospective migrants have to approach a broker. This outreach usually happens through their social network. Once a broker is identified, they provide a holistic service and take responsibility over the entire procedure. Within the legal channel, the division of responsibilities for each entity remains unclear. Interviewed prospective migrants were confused about which steps to follow and what offices to approach during the legal migration. While irregular migration is customer oriented to provide exactly what migrants are looking for, the vision behind the government strategy remains unclear for the wider public. This fact further exacerbates the confusion of prospective migrants.

Consequences

Finally, as described previously, the different ways of migrating impact the overall experience of labor migrants. When using the informal channel, there is no possibility for migrants to report abuse, violence, or violation of basic human rights during the recruitment, travel, or employment abroad. Thus, the risk of abuse is generally higher. Since perpetrators do not face any legal consequences for their actions, undocumented labor migrants are an easy target to exploit. Not only in Ethiopia, but also in the host countries. Salary, working hours, and rest days – it all depends on the good will of the employer. With proclamation 923/2016 the Ethiopian government aims at the registration of all prospective labor migrants in Ethiopia and the destination countries. Thereby local institutions can proceed against offenders in Ethiopia and embassies can provide protection to labor migrants abroad. In addition, the mandatory skills and pre departure training provides migrants with a certain

level of knowledge, which would lead to better working conditions through the improvement of the service provided by the laborer and through an awareness of basic rights. This increase in knowledge moves the migrant into a slightly more powerful and less dependent position.

In conclusion, the irregular way of migration proves to be successful in addressing existing needs of the local population. Nevertheless, the intransparency and confusion of the procedure, coupled with the limited knowledge for prospective migrants leads to an increased risk of abuse.

PART 4

In order to pursue the thesis' objective of identifying ways to improve the safety situation of labor migrants, I aimed at an exploration of the migration procedure and its underlying system. While conducting interviews and parallelly analyzing the data, three major themes of the system could be discerned: social networks, trust, and knowledge. These three topics reappeared over and over in the discussions, observations, and also in the literature. Their identification served as a starting point for the data analysis. Part four of this thesis focuses on an in-depth description of each of the themes and ends with an explanation of the interrelation of all three.

9. Social Networks and Actors

As previously mentioned, the range of actors involved in irregular and regular migration is extremely wide. Stakeholders from the grassroot to the global level are concerned. The actors are geographically present in Ethiopia, in transit, and destination countries. Some settle along the migration route, some are far from it. Some actors are institutionalized, others are informal. Some are in positions of power over others while others are socio-economically dependent. Their characteristics are as different as the tasks they assume. However, eventually, all of them somehow impact the migration flow of Ethiopian labor migrants to countries of the Middle East. Based on the data from interviews, I filtered out the involved stakeholders and categorized them according to the level at which they operate. The following part addresses the profile, role, and responsibility of actors at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Tables with an overview of the findings are attached as annexes to the thesis.

9.1. Actors at the Micro Level

At the micro level, every single individual of the community can be involved in the migration process. The community members not only migrate themselves or influence the migration system, but also organize it. The connection among all of them is executing the migration procedure.

The actors at the community level can take over one responsibility or another. The interviews revealed that it is impossible to predetermine those roles, as they differ in each case. Furthermore, the choice of which responsibility to assume is not always a conscious one. It rather depends on socio-economic and personal factors, such as access to information, education, and community structures. Families in rural Ethiopia encourage their daughters to migrate. Aunts living in Saudi Arabia connect their nieces to low profile brokers. Neighbors spread information on the network of brokers. Brothers keep the knowledge on the dangers along the route hidden. Some husbands deceive their wives and run away with the remittances. Other husbands connect their partners to loans and psychological support in the countries of destination. Brokers accompany migrants to the border. Airline staff bring foreign currency back to Ethiopia. The involvement of a broad range of individuals and their flexibility facilitates the migration process. By assuming different roles and complementing each other, members of the social networks create the flow of migration.

While the actors' roles are unpredictable and diverse, there is one guiding interest; being part of the migration system is either a livelihood strategy or a means of financial betterment for the individual involved. Sending a daughter to the Middle East will eventually improve the living situation of the family back home. Accompanying migrants to the border will leave brokers with a share of the overall payment. Guiding groups of migrants through the desert gives local farmers a financial subsidy beside pursuing their farming activities. Transferring dollars back to Ethiopia allows flight attendants to benefit from higher exchange rates of the black market.

Apart from community actors that, consciously or not, organize the migration procedure, migrants themselves constitute another important group at the micro level. In the field of labor migration to the Middle East, the main group of migrants are women. Many researchers have found that the vulnerable situation in which Ethiopian women find themselves due to societal stereotypes, limited perspectives, and poverty is a factor that pushes them to improve their living situation by migrating abroad (Zewdu, 2018: 9). In fact, it is not their situation in

particular, but rather the situation of their families that female labor migrants want to boost. The data from interviews and observations revealed that prospective female migrants are the only actors in the entire migration that put their personal interests aside. Without any exceptions interviewed female migrants and returnees expressed the idea of migrating to the Middle East in order to financially support their relatives at home. On the other hand, without any exceptions all other stakeholders orient their actions towards achieving their personal interests.

Although many actors from the community assume in one way or another the tasks of a broker, in the Ethiopian context, a broker is defined as a person that is working informally in the service sector. Low profile brokers identify the needs of their customers and respond to them by the use of social networks. The image that Ethiopian society has of a broker is simplistic and uniform. Brokers are middle-aged, a little dubious, but well-connected men with a dynamic personality. They are said to be good communicators and to easily convince people. In the field of labor migration, a broker arranges travel to and employment in the destination country. A woman trading spices and parallelly supporting migrants to cross the border is therefore not considered a broker. The cousin that arranges the visa and plane ticket either. Due to this stereotypical and narrow definition of a broker, there are many invisible actors of which neither society nor the actors themselves are aware of.

Since the officially denominated low profile brokers stem from the community, their social reputation is extremely important. The better their reputation, the more services they can provide. Compared to big profile brokers, low profile brokers are serious full-time brokers.

The social network surrounding migrants not only exists in Ethiopia. It expands along the route and in destination countries to facilitate the travel, arrival, and integration procedures. While travelling informally through the desert, migrants usually move in groups. The network that is thereby established among the members of that group responds to constantly emerging needs. Usually, the networks continue after the arrival of a group of migrants in the destination country. Brokers that have been organizing the travel remain focal persons for immigrants. Relatives that have inspired other family members to migrate link them to job opportunities. Returnees facilitate money transactions to Ethiopia. Once more, the existence of social networks and their use prove to be the solution to imminent societal problems.

9.2. Actors at the Mezzo Level

While the flexible participation of members from the micro level allows the entire and successful organization of irregular migration, at the mezzo level institutions set in place add formality to the process.

This higher level of formality is created through the involvement of big profile brokers. These personalities have connections across borders and are in a position to keep the overview over the entire migration process. They use their networks not only for sending laborers to destination countries, but also to exchange currency, establish import and export trades, and other businesses. Apart from a minor dependency on employers abroad and the labor demand they constitute, main brokers are in a powerful position towards most of the other actors. In particular, when low profile brokers work for them, it is the main broker who decides on the financial share that involved actors get.

PEAs are even more institutionalized actors. Their work is similar to the one of brokers, with the difference that they are established businesses. Within the governmental strategy to enhance the protection of labor migrants, PEAs are portrayed as one of the main culprits responsible for the precarious situation migrants face abroad. Therefore, the enacted proclamation aims at differentiating more rigorously between registered and non-registered companies. Increased control mechanisms by MOLSA are intended to prevent the agencies from conducting irregular activities and exposing migrants to dangers. A number of PEAs were closed down as they did not abide to the rules of the new proclamation. Since the infrastructure and working methods of registered and unregistered agencies remain the same, interview partners explain a tendency of registered businesses to continue working in the informal sector. Considering the level of profit gained through irregular activities and the obstacles of operating legally, the informal alternative is attractive.

The blurriness of PEAs' legal status is particularly confusing for prospective migrants. In many cases, migrants remain uncertain of the formality of the agencies' activity during the entire process. The confusion is further aggravated through the involvement of other entities that claim to be legal but are engaged in informal activities. Those are, for example, hospitals that provide the necessary medical certificates for bribes or, vocational training centers that offer uncertified short-term training in domestic care. Without access to information about the background of those entities or the migration procedure in general, potential migrants are forced to make decisions based on assumptions, rather than facts.

Another important actor at the mezzo level are the banking institutions. According to interview partners and research literature, the formal banking infrastructure in Ethiopia is mediocre and hinders the full exploitation of the potential of remittances (Geda, 2011). While there are private and governmental banks as well as money transfer operators (MTOs) involved in the sector, a large part of the total amount of remittances is transferred through informal channels (Geda, 2011: 118). As confirmed by interview partners and observations, the possibilities that the informal money transfer market offers are more beneficial to a greater share of involved stakeholders. In Ethiopia, the term *hawala* is used to describe the system of informal money transactions. Similar to irregular migration, irregularly sending money is facilitated through the involvement of the social network. It is at the micro level, where *hawala* can be observed. In comparison to the smooth, fast, and uncomplicated procedure of the *hawala* system, the formal MTOs face a hard time entering the market and providing their customers with similar benefits. As there is no sophisticated technology nor a wide-spread banking infrastructure, the official costs for remittances are too high to attract customers and businesses (Geda, 2011: 127). In addition, irregular money transactions are commonly observed and accepted within Ethiopian society as they are similar to the other traditional services provided through social networks. As mentioned above *ekob* and *eder* are respectively saving and insurance mechanisms that engage entire communities cooperatively in order to provide for each other. Sending money by the use of social networks is therefore just another way of exploiting the cohesion of the social network in a mutually beneficial way (Aredo, 1993).

9.3. Actors at the Macro Level

The analysis of the data has revealed that despite high aspiring visions, the institutions at the macro level provide an inadequate implementation of their ideas, resulting in different realities than the ones promised. The following depicts those controversies, comparing official strategies versus actual outcomes.

One of the main actors at the macro level of the field is the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia itself. The state pursues widely varying interests, ranging from decreasing the unemployment rate over the protection of citizens to an interest in using remittances as a way of boosting the economy. In particular since the enactment of the new proclamation, Ethiopia officially pursues the negotiation of bilateral agreement with partner countries to set standards in order to protect labor migrants. Based on international conventions that Ethiopia signed for the protection of basic human rights, the country adapted legislation to incorporate

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those international agreements. Nevertheless, this the restrictive approach complicates the legal channel of migration for both migrants and PEAs. Furthermore, the power dynamics in international relations place Ethiopia in a weak position compared to partner countries who constitute the labor demand for Ethiopian migrant workers and thereby determine the conditions of cooperation. The international negotiations take longer than expected, since the host countries do not want to concede to the requests made by Ethiopia. As a consequence, PEAs and prospective migrants are left without any opportunity to start their business or an employment respectively. Whereas the state responds to the international pressure by focusing on the consequences of labor migration, it lacks the ability to cover basic social services, such as insurances, saving mechanisms or retirement benefits. In particular in the field of migration, where acute mass deportations exacerbate the need for rehabilitation and reintegration mechanisms, the government experiences challenges to set in place the required infrastructure.

In addition, without coming to terms with partner countries, Ethiopian embassies in destination countries face difficulties protecting their citizens. If there are no labor standards nor rigorous documentation of Ethiopian migrants in those countries, the labor attachés that constitute one of the enforcement mechanisms of proclamation 923/2016 remain powerless. Contrary to the strategy of the government, many interviews actually revealed the cooperation of embassy staff with the flow of irregular migration. Migrants report experiences, where they were brought to embassies after arrival at the airport. Embassy staff would then confiscate their passports until they were handed over to an employer. The involvement of official personnel was also mentioned in other areas. Police officers at border controls let migrants pass. Higher officials in government institutions issue licenses for irregular businesses. Sub-cities or *kebeles* produce fake birth certificates. Public vocational training institutes pay for their students to pass the national certificate or airport staff avoid reporting invalid travel documents[11].

Another aspect that characterizes the ministerial entities involved in the field of labor migration is the limited level of cooperation. Although cooperation is portrayed as a necessity in the government strategy, in reality cooperation is narrow. Interview partners mentioned the link between the limited commitment of government entities and their hidden interest in seeing irregular migration sustained.

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[11] On a side note: The claims that official people are involved in irregular activities were made by officials themselves.

International organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration or the International Labor Organization, are further macro level actors. They provide Ethiopia and its partner countries with international standards and support their implementation through contextualized strategies at the macro level.

Keeping the roles and interests of all the stakeholders at the different levels in mind, it is important to acknowledge that migration takes place at the micro level. It is at the micro level where the need to migrate appears and where responses to that need are formulated. No matter how macro level actors frame the sector with top down strategies, the social network is flexible and will adapt to the circumstances. The interconnectedness of all members of the community serves, as in many other ways in Ethiopia, as the solution to societal problems.

10. Trust as the Basis of Social Connections

As a second theme in the field of migration, trust was identified to be of high importance. Trust is a basic characteristic of the social network that allows for the migration system to flow. Trust determines the connections within social networks. It exists between a prospective migrant and a supportive broker, two brokers that work across borders, a money courier and a client, and a police officer and a truck driver. Without trust, the workflow between all those actors would be hampered. Trust is therefore present and of major importance in each stage of the migration process. The following focuses first on how trust is established and then on how trust functions as the basis of the social network.

10.1.   The Establishment of Trust

Analyzing the data brought to light that trust is built by a number of factors. It can be based on familial bonds. A niece that trusts her aunt's success stories in the Middle East. A prospective migrant that follows her cousin's advice on how much to pay the brokers. A wife sending money back to her husband in order to build a common future. Interview partners and data from observations confirmed the fact that kinship increases the level of trust of social connections because kinship means that those partners are known.

Since knowing a person increases trust, greater credit is further granted to members of the same community. The data has revealed a stronger level of trust within homogenous groups. In that sense, groups of women in Ethiopia or immigrant communities in host countries are well connected networks, where members trust each other. Even if a member of the same community has been a dubious broker during the travel, a certain level of trust remains once the group arrived in the destination country. This level of reliance is based on the fact that the

broker is from the same community and known to others as well. In case of deception, the perpetrator is easily identifiable. Living together, sharing the same culture, ideas, and values are all factors that contribute to trusted connections within a given social network.

Another factor that creates the necessary trust within the migration system are business bonds. Migrants, brokers, main brokers, employers, money couriers – all of them are at a certain time customers and at another time service providers. The fact that they enter business relations with each other leads to a level of trust, without which the business deals could not be realized. Due to reciprocal expectations and win-win situations these bonds persist. Not to say that those bonds are found on equality. Power dynamics based on levels of knowledge and access to resources determine the relationships and the benefits each of the contracting party gets out of the deal. In the case of migrants, the benefit can be crossing the border. In the case of local farmers guiding a group of migrants through the desert, it can be a share of the down payment. In case of money couriers, it might be part of the commission from the exchange rate on the black market. By cooperating and complying to the agreed deals, contracting parties gain more than if one of them would decide to break the arrangement.

In addition, if the contracting parties have an interest in the long-term success of such activities, their social reputation plays an important role. Experience is therefore another factor determining the level of trust between members of a social network. With every successful undertaking, an individual from the community gets a higher level of trust from the other members. Brokers build trust with each other the more often they work together. Migrants trust brokers more, when other migrants have experienced their service. Employers request labor migrants from brokers that are known for bringing qualified employees.

Considering the above mentioned factors that increase the level of trust between actors, the importance of the social network becomes obvious.

Graphic 4: Factors Increasing Level of Trust

10.2.   Trust within Social Networks

Analysis of the data further revealed that trust in the community is much higher than trust in formal institutions. In regards to trust in institutions, the fourth factor is determining. Trust in institutions is based on successful experiences. The traditional services that social networks offer, are only partly available from the public service. If not completely absent in the federal strategy, insurance, saving, or investment services are hardly accessible to the wider public. Furthermore, those services are not contextualized to address local needs. Instead of relying on support from the government, Ethiopians have traditionally reached out to societal structures to find solutions to their immediate challenges, as observable in the development of services such as *eder* and *ekob*. In addition to the historically rooted deception, the current strategies in the field of migration do not seem to be more promising for building trust in society. The enactment speech of proclamation 923/2016 encouraged business owners to enter the overseas employment sector. However, contrary to their expectations of an attractive business, they face requirements that are difficult to realize, high capital requests and bureaucratic burdens. As they are still waiting for the legal channel to fully operate, business owners lose their investment because of ongoing operation costs with no results in terms of sending labor migrants abroad. Trust further fades away as government institutions have a flexible stand towards their own legislation[12]. Migrants also refuse to blindly trust the government. So far, the support of public services has always remained mediocre for vulnerable groups of society. The restrictive approach promoted by proclamation 923/2016 discriminates citizens. Many of them are left with less options than before. Due to negative experiences that Ethiopian citizens have made with formal institutions, the reliance on the social network is perceived as a more promising alternative.

Nevertheless, the option of reaching out to the informal sector bears risks. Kinship is no guarantee for keeping a promise or supporting each other. The evaluation of the data confirmed what other studies have already revealed; sometimes it is the closest person that causes the greatest deception (Reda, 2018: 97). Interviewees have talked about experiences where husbands collected the remittances of their wives over years, started their own business and divorced the moment those female laborers came back. Sisters have been sold by their brothers and aunts used their nieces as cheap labor for their own premises. The same goes for community or business bonds. There are always situations in which people confide but get

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[12] Although manifestly written in the proclamation that PEA owners must submit a clearance letter from the partner country's immigration office, an interview partner explained how a simple entry visa was considered sufficient by government employees (PEA1).

deceived. As mentioned earlier, most of the actors put their goals first. In case of a conflict of interests, the one actor in the more powerful socio-economic position (acquired e.g. through more knowledge) will deceive the other actor. As a consequence, most people eventually turn towards the social network not because of a matter of trust, but because of hope. As all other options are out of reach, relying on the social network remains the only possible alternative. It is a powerless decision based on choosing the best out of a number of bad options.

11. Knowledge

The third topic of interest that reappeared throughout the data collection and analysis was knowledge. Either a lack of knowledge or, on the contrary, an awareness of certain aspects proves to have a major influence on the experience of the actors involved. The following part starts with an overview of the areas where lack of knowledge is observable and the consequences it bears. It focuses then on how awareness can be created, or knowledge accessed. Finally, an interpretation of the level of knowledge's impact on the experience of the actors involved in the migration process is presented.

11.1.   Lack of Knowledge

The data analysis revealed that particularly prospective female migrants face a lack of information and knowledge about the migration process. Before migrating, one of the reasons that encourages women to do so is the lack of knowledge about local development perspectives or employment opportunities. Once the decision to migrate has been made, most of the prospective migrants are unaware of the functioning of the migration procedure, like the different ways of migrating or the actors that are involved. They further have restricted information on requested skills or the cultural and political situation in the destination countries. Finally, female labor migrants lack knowledge about the transfer of remittances and the use of savings back in Ethiopia.

In addition to the restricted awareness of female labor migrants, the public's awareness of the above mentioned aspects is also low. There is general confusion about the legal status of certain activities (e.g. transferring remittances[13]) and of the functioning of the migration system. This confusion is further exacerbated through the involvement of a variety of actors

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[13] Interviews revealed that the term *hawala* is used differently throughout Ethiopian society. It literally means "transfer". Whereas some people referred to it as an informal way of sending money through the social network, other people assumed the involvement of accredited banks and MTOs. In one of the most recent studies, Asnake Kefale offers an official definition of the term and why the informal way is much more beneficial to a wider range of actors involved in the Ethiopian context. See Kefale, A., Zerihun, M., (2018), Remittances and Household Socio-Economic Well-Being: The case of Ethiopian Labour Migrants to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East, Forum For Social Studies. For a general overview of the term *hawala*, consult: Vaknin, S. (2005), Hawala, or the Bank that never was, United Press International.

that hide their personalities, roles, and responsibilities. Apart from the brokers and in particular the main brokers, members of society do not have a clear understanding of the migration system or other informal activities. Those actors, that find themselves in powerful positions towards others are reluctant to share their knowledge. Hence, the confusion of migrants and the wider public seems to be part of their working method.

The lack of knowledge is an important, determining factor for the overall experience of labor migrants. Out of many consequences that female labor migrants might face, there is one that deserves special attention: Abuse. With the restricted level of information that prospective migrants have about the various aspects of the migration procedure, the chance to be abused for the benefit of other actors is immense. The abuse can not only happen in the destination countries where labor migrants face physical or psychological damage by their employers. The risk for abuse rather starts right at the beginning of their journey. Drop out school girls get convinced to follow shallow brokers to the Middle East. Daughters put their education aside in order to financially support their family. Prospective migrants reach out to their social network for access to loan and start their employment abroad with a debt. Migrants pay brokers to help them transfer to a destination country, but eventually they are left alone at the border of Ethiopia.

Without having access to information about the situation they find themselves in, prospective migrants cannot make conscious decisions in any of the stages of the migration process. For the benefit of others, they are influenced by others. Eventually it remains an act of choosing between the assumedly best option out of a range of worse ones, where knowledge and trust is replaced by hope.

Lack of knowledge is not only observable among migrants. It is also present among actors at the mezzo level such as PEAs and government officials. Those entities lack awareness on the implications of the legal framework of migration. With the amendment of the oversea employment proclamation published in 2016, the legal migration channel is strictly regulated. Although formally published and theoretically accessible to all citizens, the practical access is restricted. Agencies do not know what requirements to fulfil until they already incur capital expenditure. Vocational training centers teach the curriculum without being aware of the labor demand of the destination countries. Government officials of BOLSA offices face the daily challenges of an increased irregular migration flow but have no overview over federal strategy. MOLSA representatives approve migrants' documents, but do not know when they

can finally start their journey. Eventually, higher officials draft new policies without a previous investigation into local needs or the demands of the labor market. The consequence of this lack of official information leads to an unclear discourse and a general confusion of the public service in the field of migration. For many interviewees, the announced intentions of the government are not clear, as they contrast with the actual performance (see above comparison). Turning towards irregular migration, becomes an attractive option compared to the confusing discourse of the institutionalized entities.

11.2.   Accessing Information

As much the lack of information influences the entire experience and leads to abuse, knowledge can improve the situation for the better. Having analyzed the data, there are three main ways of generating or accessing knowledge for involved stakeholders. The first one is through training or information sessions. As this is an external activity, actors have only limited influence on being part of the awareness creation activity. If a female migrant has passed grade eight successfully, she can theoretically apply for the training. If a regional office of BOLSA is doing awareness raising activities in an area, a migrant's family might be able to join the audience. If an NGO works on promoting local businesses, a well-connected broker might be chosen to join their empowerment program. If not, then the stakeholders will be out of reach of those knowledge transferring activities.

The second option of increasing knowledge is through one's own experience. Although the rate of success of accessing the information is obviously high, the cost of going through these experiences often bears high risks of deception and traumatic psychological impacts.

Finally, the third option for the transfer of knowledge comes from the social network. The interconnectedness of community members among themselves but also across borders allows for a constant flow of information. Not only knowledge in terms of experiences of other people, but also of the functioning of the migration process. Furthermore, the social network also provides access to information on perspectives and opportunities. The knowledge about an NGO's activities to empower women is shared within the network of a community. Information on how to handle saving or plan investment can be transferred through the network of participants at workshops. Listening to a neighbor's experience in Saudi Arabia, will give a prospective migrant an idea of what is ahead of her. In this sense, knowing someone means access to information and with access to information comes power. How power and knowledge are linked, will be explained in the following part.

11.3. Consequences of the Lack of Knowledge

The knowledge pyramid summarizes the findings on power and knowledge.

Graphic 5: The Knowledge Pyramid
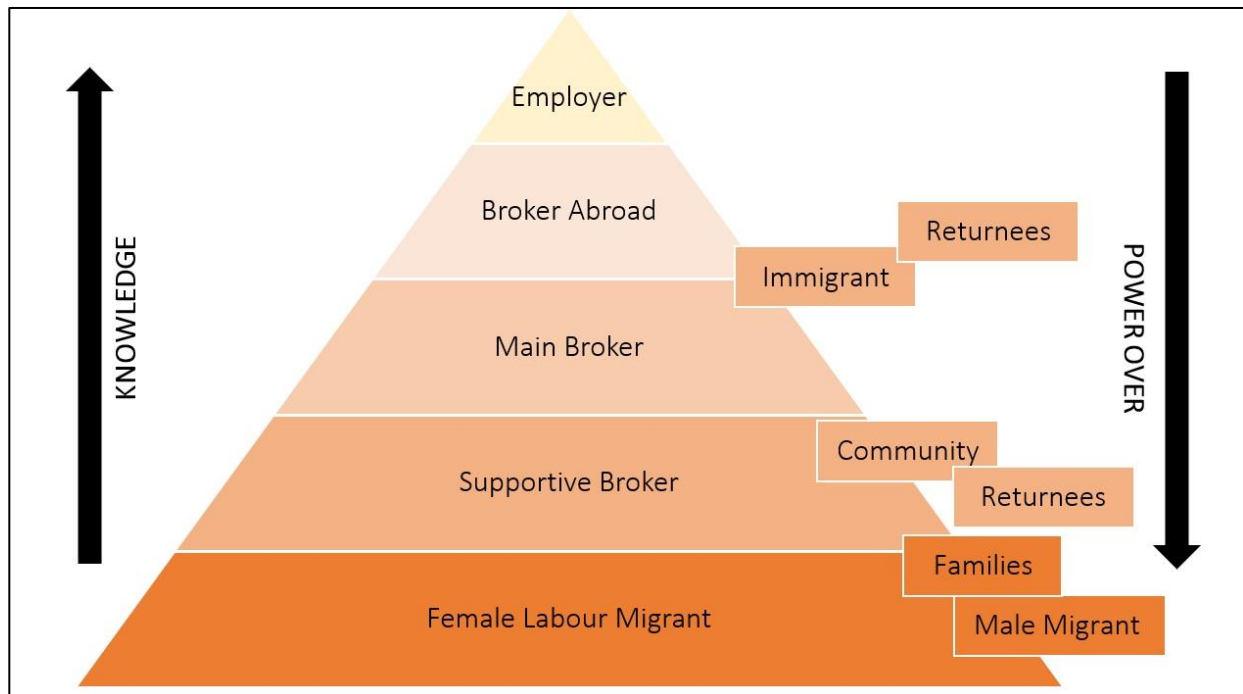
Female labor migrants are found at the very bottom of the pyramid, with sparse information on what to expect from the migration process and the experience ahead of them. In this position, they are completely dependent on and influenced by other stakeholders. As female labor migrants have limited information on how to leave the country and find employment abroad, the first step is usually to access this information through the existing network. Prospective labor migrants turn towards family members, neighbors, or acquaintances with more information. Those people then connect the labor migrants to supportive brokers, who inform them on the pre departure requirements without really going into details. The family members, neighbors, or acquaintances assist the prospective migrants during that time as a focal person. As trusted persons, they consult, advise and discuss relevant challenges with the migrants. If it is for the migrants' interest or not, remains unknown. However, it is very probably that the focal person gets a benefit out of it. Either they get a share of the payment by linking the migrant to the broker or they will get part of the remittances that the labor migrant will send back once they have made their way to the destination country.

The supportive brokers have detailed information about their customers, the migrants. They know about their background and expectations and based on that formulate services for them. Nevertheless, they lack information on the system they are working in. They follow the orders of main brokers, execute the tasks they are given and eventually hand over the migrants to further brokers in the system without having an overview over the entire process. In exchange for a smooth service, which means they stick to their agreements, they will get a predetermined share of the profit.

On the other hand, the main brokers coordinate the travel across borders. Through their knowledge about other countries and the existence of a network of ties across borders, they are in a more powerful position compared to supportive brokers. Nonetheless, as the labor demand comes from abroad, the main broker in Ethiopia is dependent on the brokers in the destination countries. Without them, the brokers in Ethiopia would not be able to link migrants to employment. The brokers in the destination countries have an overview of labor migrants coming from all different countries. Whether they finally end up choosing to work with an Ethiopian broker depends on the quality of the offer and the level of profit they can generate with the deal. Finally, the employers in the destination countries are located at the very top of the pyramid. They constitute the final demand for labor migrants and determine the overall conditions.

The knowledge pyramid and its actors are dynamic. Actors within the pyramid constantly change their positions, as knowledge is transferred, shared, and spread. When female labor migrants return to Ethiopia, they will have increased their knowledge. They now know about the dangers that future migrants might face on the way, of the games that brokers play, and the difficulties that might be expected as a labor migrant in a culturally different host country. Within the pyramid, returnees will climb up levels. The increase in knowledge allows them to be in a more powerful position. Instead of depending upon the goodwill of supportive brokers, they can organize their own travel across the border. Instead of being dependent of family members abroad, returnees can find their own employment through previously established contacts. With the newly accessed knowledge on the situation in a neighboring country, they can start trading across borders. While doing that they can organize migrants' travel and accompany them through the desert or link them to a broker. By residing in a country, previously vulnerable migrants become immigrants with an improved access to information. By knowing the situation in the destination country, they can arrange for sisters, daughters, or nieces to join them. Once arrived, the knowledgeable immigrant can connect

those new migrants to employment on the spot. Without consciously being aware of it, the migrants become supportive brokers themselves.

In any case, an increase of knowledge leads to an increase of power. With an increase in power, the position in the socio-economic structure of the network changes. Thereby, the risk of abuse of involved actors is reduced.

12. Interrelation: Social Networks – Trust – Knowledge

The interconnectedness of the three discerned themes, social networks, trust and knowledge, becomes apparent through the in-depth examination of the previous paragraphs. The three aspects of the migration system mutually reinforce themselves and simultaneously form the basis for each other.

The existence of the social network, which is based on bonds of trust, allows access knowledge. It is with this knowledge that society then solves emerging challenges.

Graphic 6: Interrelation Social Networks, Knowledge, and Trust
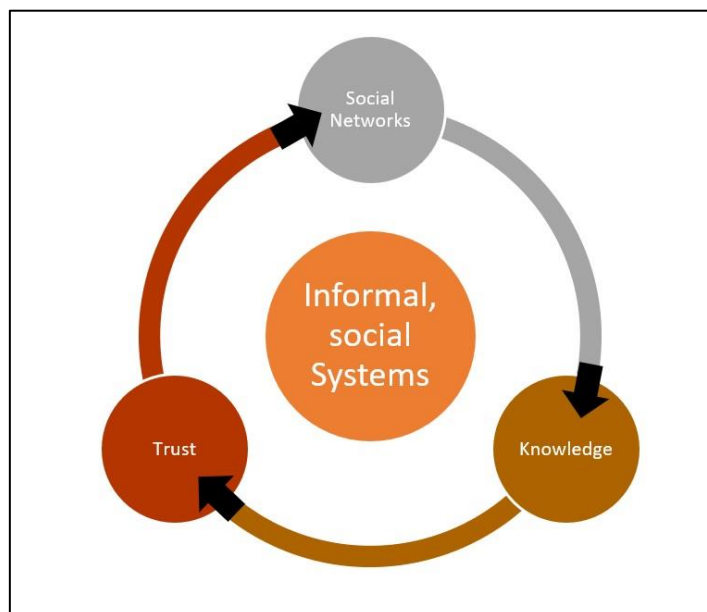
At the same time, bonds based on trust get reinforced through knowledge. The more a community knows about an individual, the more trust is established. The method of solving problems within the social network therefore not only bears solutions but also a sanction system in case members do not play by the rules. With a worsening reputation within a community, individuals are left out by the system.

Knowledge and the social network are strongly interlinked as well. The network, made out of weak and strong ties, bears access to information. While strong ties are influential connections that for example encourage a woman to look for employment abroad, weak ties make it happen. Weak ties are the ones connecting the young woman to a broker, who then transfers her to a labor demanding country and into the hands of another broker. What connects that young woman to a broker is usually a strong tie, or in other words, a person of trust. Knowing someone is access to knowledge and with access to knowledge comes the solution to many problems. Graphic 7 illustrates the solving of problems through social networks, based on knowledge and trust.

Graphic 7: Social Networks to Solve Societal Problems
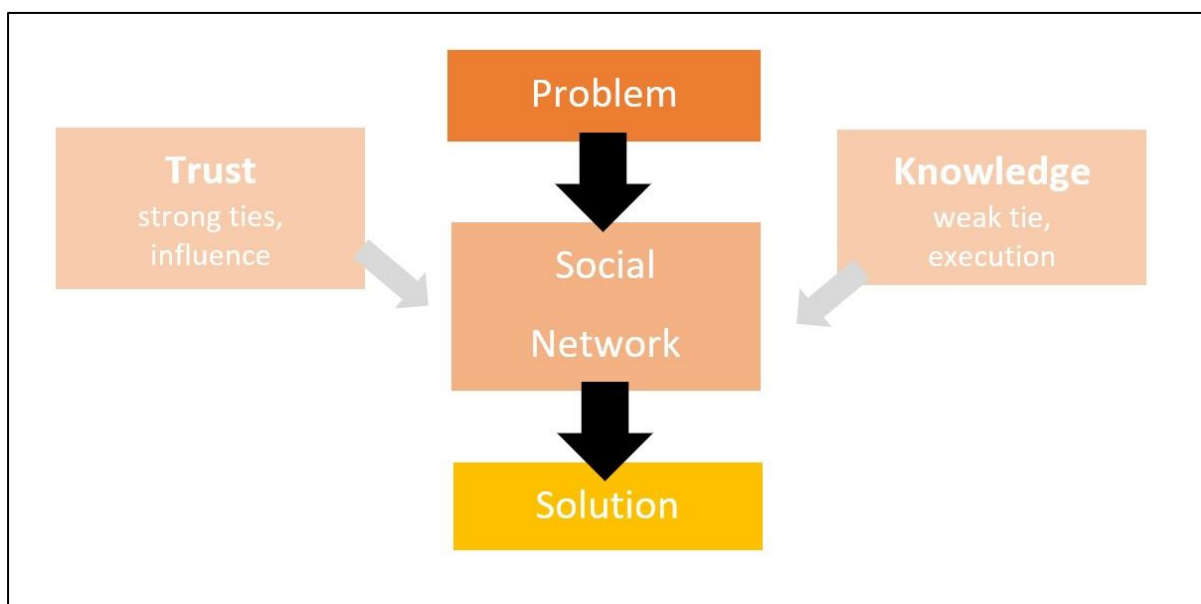
Nevertheless, the downside of the interconnectedness of social networks, trust, and knowledge is that problems are solved on unequal terms. Power dynamics, based on access to knowledge and resources, are determining the outcome. Although the societal structures respond to the needs of young women by allowing them to migrate, the outcome for them remains relatively mediocre compared to what other stakeholders gain.

The trust in the social network, forming the basis for its efficiency, constitutes simultaneously a disadvantage for female labor migrants. Due to their vulnerable position at the bottom of the knowledge pyramid, they are forced to rely on others in order to fulfil their needs. However, due to the intransparent procedure, the high number of actors involved, and the linked potential of conflict of interests, women labor migrants face higher risks of abuse in their vulnerable position.

PART 5

13. Conclusion

Through an investigation of the functioning of regular and irregular labor migration in Ethiopia, the aim of the research was to identify measures that would improve the overall experience of female labor migrants in countries of the Middle East. While the outcome confirmed what other studies have already found, it also shed light on new aspects of the phenomenon. In particular, it thoroughly examined the role and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in irregular migration. The following part summarizes the major findings, before presenting the outcome in form of policy recommendations that would contribute to an enhanced safety situation for female labor migrants and contribute to their empowerment during the entire experience.

13.1.   Summary of Major Findings

Interviews and observations conducted during the field research confirmed what other qualitative studies have already brought to light: the abuse and suffering that female labor migrants might face in labor demanding countries is immense. Nevertheless, the data also underlined the abuse that those individuals might face at earlier stages of the migration procedure. Namely during the recruitment in Ethiopia and the travel across the border to the destination countries. However, the focus of the research was not to examine the negative experiences of those women, but to find out how they end up in these vulnerable situations. Furthermore, the aim was to identify measures that would guarantee an enriching and self-empowering experience for female labor migrants.

First, the research confirmed the inopportune character of the legal channel of migration, promoted through the recently enacted proclamation 923/2016. Several studies highlighted the inherent controversies of the proclamation. Interviews and observations further attested those and emphasized the impact the contradictory legislation has for individual migrants and PEA owners.

Due to those challenges of the legal migration channel, migrating irregularly remains until today the only option for prospective migrants. Interview partners confirmed a rise of the phenomenon, although the official discourse insists on the contrary. Whether irregular migration is on the rise or not, the research has elaborated on the mechanisms that keep the

system alive. It has analyzed irregular migration, as one out of many informal systems that dominate the societal landscape in Ethiopia.

Taking into consideration the functioning of irregular migration, international migration theories can be supported. In particular the New Economics of Migration Theory, which emphasizes the involvement of families, households, and communities in the migration process. Although this theory stresses the importance of those units in terms of decision making processes, the research further confirmed their involvement in the organization of irregular migration. This goes in line with Krissmann's International Migration Theory. He points out the contribution of non-hometown actors, such as middle-men or employers abroad. The field research on irregular migration in Ethiopia has demonstrated the involvement of a variety of stakeholders. Each of them has different responsibilities and interests but taking part in the system provides a benefit for all of them, such as making a living or improving the quality of life.

The conducted research has emphasized the potential of micro level actors in Ethiopia to solve societal challenges. Social networks, based on bonds of trust, facilitate a wide access to knowledge and resources that government institutions have not been able to provide so far. The flexibility, contextuality, and needs-based approach that the services of the social networks provide for their members stand in strong contrast to restrictive government measures. Nevertheless, the historically rooted trust in networks bears disadvantages as well, as the outcome is based on unequal terms. The limited level of knowledge at any stage of the procedure prove to be one of the main reasons for the increased vulnerability of female labor migrants. Though, it is not simply the lack of awareness of the negative conditions they might endure in the destination countries. The limited knowledge concerns much more the intransparency of the informal system within which they find themselves as labor migrants. Within society, there seems to be general confusion regarding the operation of informal systems, such as irregular migration or informal money transfers. The involvement of a variety of actors with different interests and responsibilities exacerbates that ambiguity. Further, keeping the customers in a state of uncertainty seems to be part of the strategy of those coordinating the systems.

To conclude, an increase in knowledge has to be guaranteed so that power dynamics within society improve for the betterment of prospective, female labor migrants.

13.2.   Recommendations

The aim of the research was to focus on ways to improve the situation for female labor migrants during their employment in the Middle East. Thus, the outcome of the research can be used to formulate strategic actions. The following depicts five main policy recommendations, carved out through in-depth data analysis.

Consider the Potential of the Social Network

Looking at the way Ethiopian society solved emerging social challenges in the past, the importance of the social network becomes obvious. It is by cooperating that communities address insurance, investment, and saving issues - services that the state has so far not managed to guarantee to its citizens. Government strategies should therefore consider the potential of social networks. It not only allows an extremely fast flow of information, but with its flexibility and involvement of a broad range of actors, responds to many existing problems. Instead of criminalizing and limiting the impact of the social network, policies should target leveraging it. Solutions to the challenges within migration will have more impact if they benefit each actor involved. Actors hereby are not only labor migrants, but also PEA owners, money couriers, airline staff, and local farmers in the desert region.

In terms of interests, it is necessary to consider the uniqueness of female labor migrants. While all other actors put their interests first, female labor migrants primarily think of improving the situation at home. As much as this bond of support is negatively exploited by other actors of the system, strategic government actions can target the use of its potential.

Broaden Definition of a Broker

As mentioned previously, one observation concerns the definition of brokers. Within Ethiopian society, but also in government strategies, the definition of a broker is extremely narrow. Whereas society stereotypes middle-aged, male brokers with selfish intentions, the strategies of the government target the so-called criminals with a similar profile. In particular, actors that get a financial payment in exchange for their service, are deemed to be the main culprits. The analysis of the available data has clearly revealed the contribution of additional stakeholders to the flow of irregular migration. Among others, corrupt police officers, truck drivers, and money couriers participate, but more importantly is the unconscious involvement of community members in Ethiopia and abroad, local farmers on the way and returnees themselves.

The narrow focus on stereotypical brokers limits the impact of policies or social actions. The spectrum of target groups has to be increased in order to address a broader range of stakeholders, including those that do not get a direct financial payment in exchange for their service, such as family members or returnees. Furthermore, awareness has to be raised among those members of the community that indirectly and unconsciously contribute to the migration flow. With a more adequate understanding of their impact, a change of behavior can be an aim of further actions.

Raise Awareness of Informal Systems

Raising awareness is one of the main strategies of government and NGO actions to target the improvement of the situation of female labor migrants abroad. The spread of information towards prospective migrants mostly concerns the dubious nature of informal brokers, the challenging situation in the destination countries, basic rights that the labor migrants can claim, and the possibility to report abuses. Interviews and observations revealed that the knowledge about the potential danger already exists below the surface for many prospective migrants through narratives from relatives, peers or community members. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the data confirmed that this knowledge has no or only limited influence on the decision making process. Contrary to discouraging prospective migrants from leaving, it persuades them to be ready for anything. The awareness raising strategies should therefore not focus only on the dangers and negative aspects of the irregular migration flow, but also shed light on the system itself. Major parts of the migration procedure remain unclear for migrants and also for other involved stakeholders. Within the irregular system, most of the actors only know about the person behind and in front of them in the flow. Only rarely do they have an overview of the entire procedure and all the stakeholders involved. This lack of knowledge increases the risk of abuse of vulnerable actors at any stage of the procedure.

Enhance Conscious Decisions

In order to tackle the abuse of vulnerable female labor migrants who currently are at the bottom of the knowledge pyramid, their position needs to be improved. Based on past experiences, many vulnerable women rely on services provided through social networks. This reliance is based on the existence of trust, as a main characteristic of the bonds of the network. Lack of knowledge about the migration procedure or employment opportunities in Ethiopia, escalate the dependency of female labor migrants. As a consequence, they increasingly rely on the social network. Although the social structures serve as an answer to immediate challenges, the power dynamics within society cause female labor migrants to take

unconscious decisions and face higher risks of abuse. The blind trust, or desperate hope, has to be limited through an extension of knowledge. With an increase of their level of knowledge, female labor migrants can climb up the knowledge pyramid and make conscious decisions throughout each stage of the migration procedure. This consciousness will eventually improve their experience.

In addition, an easy and broad access to information on the legal channel has to be guaranteed. Individuals at the community level have to know details about the exact procedure, including the cost and duration. Only with full knowledge and information can actors make conscious decisions.

Offer a Full Package Service

When comparing the informal with the formal system of migration, it becomes apparent that the former responds to local needs within the migration sector. One particular characteristic concerns the full package service offered by informal brokers. Once a focal person has been identified, the entire procedure is officially organized through that individual. The exact operations that happen in the background are unknown to the migrant. The migrants find themselves in a client position, where the service providers take over full responsibility. In order not to distract the migrants with supposedly unimportant information, much of the procedure is kept out of sight of the customers. The informal brokers convince the migrants that their only concern is to safely arrive in a labor demanding country. How and when, are questions that they do not have to deal with.

Graphic 8: Service Offered by Informal Structures
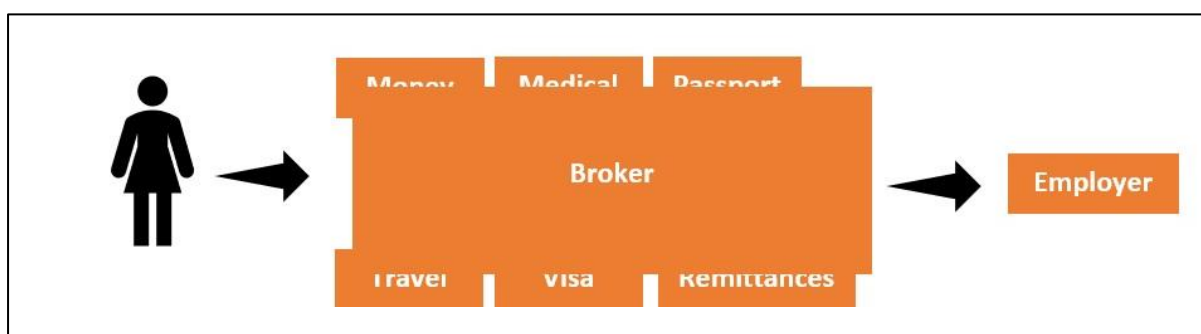
Graphic 9: Service Offered by Formal Institutions
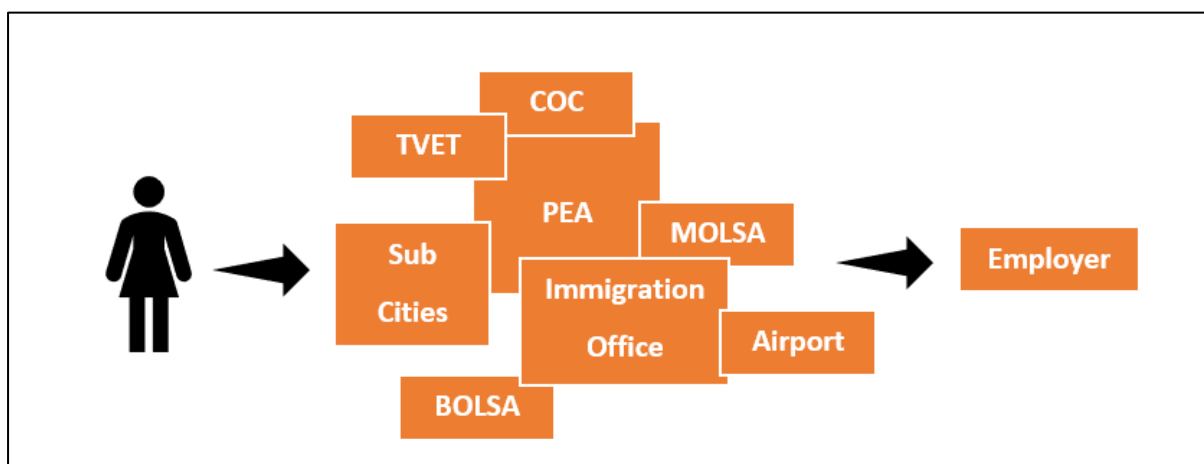
The legal channel of migration, however, includes much more proactivity from the side of prospective migrants. First of all, the information flow from the legal system is hampered. Compared to the irregular migration, where information automatically comes from the community to the individual, in the case of legal migration, interested candidates have to approach government entities or NGOs to access information. Once in the system, there are a number of actors involved that prospective migrants have to approach, such as medical centers for a health check-up, TVETs for a skill training, the immigration office for the passport, a PEA for the connection to an employment opportunity and the visa. The decentralized and bureaucratic procedure constitutes for many prospective migrants a reason to turn towards easier alternatives. In order to provide an adequate service for its citizens, the government should create a centralized system where a smooth cooperation between different stakeholders is facilitated and a full package offered to the clients. As one of the interviewees suggested, this could take the form of a government entity solely charged with the overseas employment service, as is the case in the Philippines (Expert 4). A centralized administration for labor migration would also increase the efficiency of the system. The micromanagement of PEAs by MOLSA as well as the so far hampered coordination between different government offices would be no longer necessary.

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15. Annexes

Annex 1: Tables of Actors

Actors at the Micro Level:

Who	Where	Profile	Role
Community members	Destination country	Family Neighbors Friends Business owners (cross borders) Airline staff Drivers Farmers	Inspiration Influence Information Social connection Gathering migrants Facilitation Access to loans Money transfer Accompany migrants Abuse Brokering Focal persons Transport migrants
	Ethiopia		
	Transit countries		
Women and girls	Ethiopia	Vulnerable Desperate	Victims
Female migrant	Ethiopia	Limited decision-making power Limited knowledge	Intention to migrate
Male migrants	Ethiopia and along the route	Discriminated by legal channel	Protection of others Self-organization
Group of migrants	Ethiopia and along the route	Same interest, same situation	Safety net
Returnees	Ethiopia	Knowledgeable	Inspiration Source of information Social connection Facilitation Accompany migrants
Immigrants	Destination country	Undocumented Unheard Without rights	Work irregular Create community
Low profile broker	Ethiopia	Coordinators Professional Connected Dynamic Focal person From the community	Full time broker Creating links Transferring money

Actors at the Mezzo Level:

Who	Where	Profile	Role
Big profile broker	Ethiopia	Coordinators Business owner Settled Connected Dynamic working methods	Part time broker Creating links Transferring money Deciding on shares
Brokers abroad	Transit and destination countries	Connections to Ethiopia Dynamic Focal person	Transferring migrants Transferring money Connection to employment
Registered PEA	Ethiopia	Registered business	Information Gathering migrants Documentation Facilitation
Unregistered	Ethiopia	Informal business	
Partner offices	Destination countries	Official partnership	Link to labor market
Licensed TVET	Ethiopia	Official training based on labor assessment No fees	Accredited curriculum Preparation for COC
Unlicensed TVET		Individual fees	Any curriculum Fake certificates Facilitation
Medical Centers	Ethiopia	Cooperation with brokers	Medical certificate (false/valid)
Employers	Destination countries	Powerful over broker and migrant Labor demand	Employ Abuse
Banks	Ethiopia	Obsolete infrastructure	Receiving hard currency Money transfers within Ethiopia
MTO (Western Union, etc.)	Ethiopia and partner country	High commission costs	Formal money transfers
NGOs, CSOs	Ethiopia	International standards Needs based and human rights-based approaches Contextualized	Information Support of citizens
	Destination countries		Support of Ethiopian citizens
Religious Institutions	Ethiopia	Interest in increasing community and finances	Influence Inspiration Information Visa processing
Researchers	Ethiopia and else where	Focus influenced by (gov.) funds	Limited research on irregular migration Limited research on traditional social networks
Social media	Anywhere	Connecting people	Information Inspiration

			Support
The public	Ethiopia		Demands saver migration policies from the government Demanding equal opportunities

Actors at the Macro Level:

Who	Strategy	Reality
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	Interest in remittances Interest to decrease population pressure Interest to decrease unemployment rate International Conventions Protection of citizens Bilateral agreements	Difficult business environment Limited power in international negotiations Mediocre social services No reintegration or rehabilitation
Ethiopian Embassies in destination countries	Labor attaché to protect citizens Reporting system	Cooperation with brokers
Ministries	Cooperation among MOLSA, MOFA, MOFE Cooperation with regional entities Facilitation of migration process Protection of migrants Control of PEAs Anti human trafficking mechanisms	Limited interest Involvement of higher officials in irregular activities
Sub-cities and *Kebeles*	Selection of potential migrants Raising awareness on migration process Issue documents	Issuance of falsified documents
Police officers	Border control Prevention of illegal activities	Cooperation with brokers and migrants that cross the border or are engaged in irregular activities
Airport staff	Control visa and passports	Untrained to identify fake documents Cooperation with brokers and migrants
Transit and Destination Countries	Bilateral agreements International Conventions	Cooperation with brokers Power dynamics Ignoring agreements
International Organizations	International standards	Support of government Safer migration

Certificate of Authenticity

I, Livia Röthlisberger, herewith certify that the above presented thesis is true and right to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that I have researched and written this thesis without any outside help. Should I have had assistance this is pointed out at the appropriate place within this thesis.

Signature

Place and Date of Signature

Berlin, 27.09.2019