



**Institute of Social Studies**

Graduate School of Development Studies

**Trafficking at the Cross roads:  
Micro-Meso Institutional Interactions in the Mobility of  
Young Women from Ethiopia to the Middle East**

A Research Paper Presented by:

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(ETHIOPIA)

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Obtaining the Degree of:

Master of Arts in Development Studies  
Specialisation:

**Women, Gender, Development**

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The Hague, The Netherlands  
November 2006

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## **Acknowledgements**

I owe heart felt gratitude to Dr. Thanh-Dam Truong without whose support, guidance and encouragement accomplishing this task would have been difficult. I would also like to thank Dr. Rachel Kurian for her invaluable comments. I am highly indebted to my convenor Dr. Dubravka Zarkov who has been kin to lend as much support and inspiration as possible during my stay at ISS.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to SRTV for co-financing this study. I owe special thanks to Sr. Elma who has given her best for the realization of this mini project. I extend special thanks to the study participants and research assistants who were generous of their time, spirit and hearts.

I extend special thanks to my life time most loved ones: to my husband Wonde whose love, care and prayers made my stay at ISS conceivable, and my son Baba for his love and understanding even if I was not there when he needed me most.

Last but not least, my thanks go to Joseé for her friendliness and understanding, and Kara for being there at those critical moments.

Thank you all!





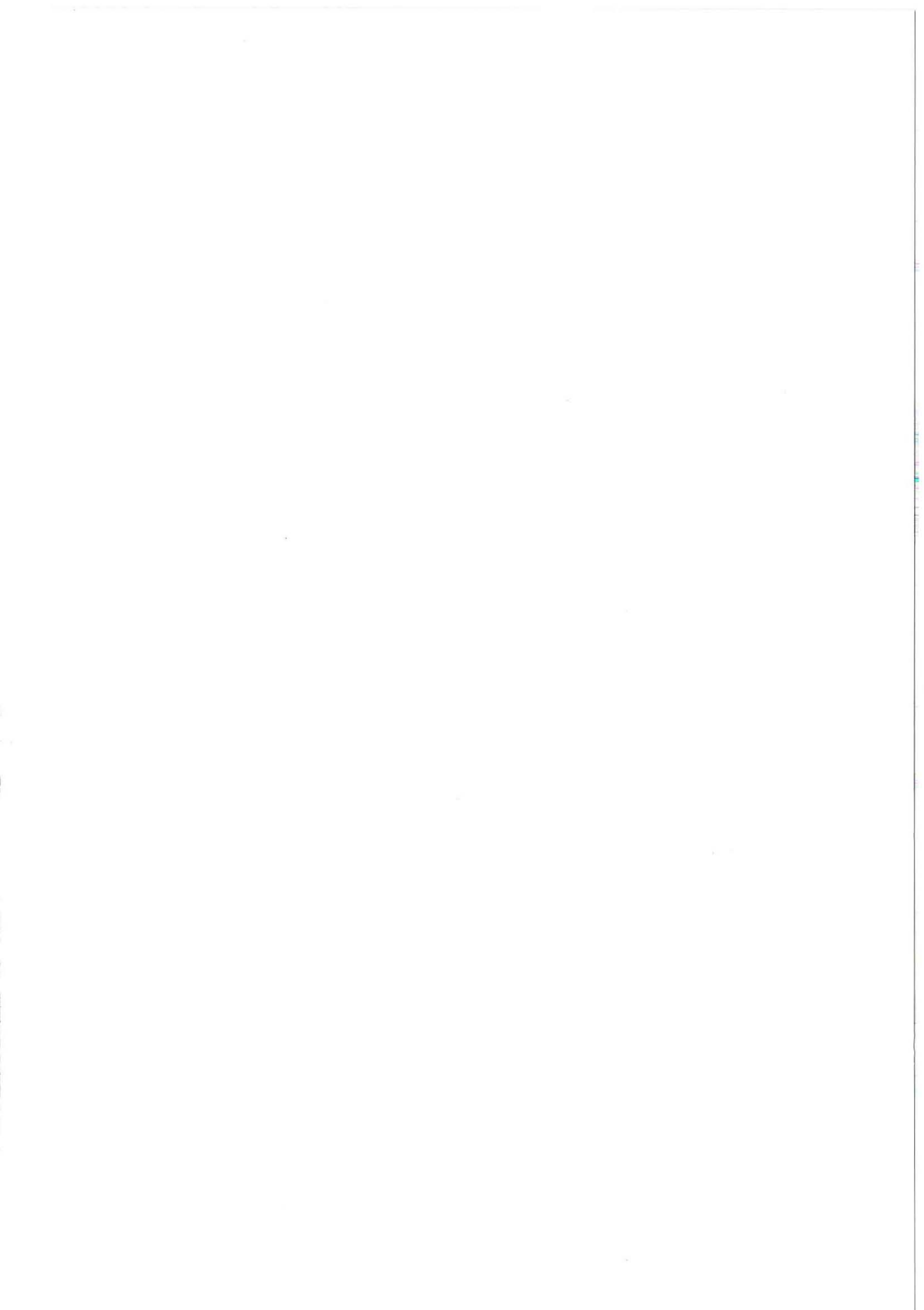
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## **Acronyms**

AKSC	Addis Ketema Subcity
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HH	Household
ILO	International Labour Organization
INAO	Immigration and Nationality Affairs Office
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ME	Middle East
MEGS	Middle East and Gulf States
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MTN	Migration-Trafficking Nexus
PEA	Private Employment Agencies
PEAP	Private Employment Agencies Proclamation
PES	Public Employment Service



## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Research

Trafficking in persons has become a subject of increasing attention among both the academic and policy communities. This is so because it lies at the very intersection of contemporary anxieties concerning the global political economy, 'international migration crisis', gender, generational and ethnic stratification, and the in/ability of states and international agencies to respond to these problems effectively (Apap et al, 2004, Sassen, 2000; Sørensen et al, 2002;). Human trafficking has become an agenda in Ethiopia as well. It soared in convergence with transnational labour migration (Kebede, 2000:12) after the country adopted new macro-economic and immigration policies aligning itself with the new world order (Amdetsion, 2005). In line with the change in macro-economic and political environment, other structural factors such as poverty and gendered institutional arrangements dovetailed with cross-boarder migration resulting a substantial increase in the number of young women being trafficked from Ethiopia to the Middle East.

Despite its research and policy relevance, many aspects of human trafficking remain poorly understood (Truong, 2006b). While much of existing research endeavoured to explain the apparent causes of the phenomenon itself, little has been attempted to unravel the process, particularly the institutional interaction that reproduce and sustain it. The existing body of knowledge largely explains how global circuits of labour involve mainly organized crime groups, governments and migrant women (Apap et al; Sassen, 2000; UN, 2000; UNUWIDER, 2003).

Few studies in the Mekong region in Asia have pointed out how trafficking 'resembles more cottage industry than organized crime, with a range of small-scale operators along the way. And such agents and even traffickers or smugglers are often seen as providing *a service to the community*' (Marshall, 2001:3). Skeldon (2002:18) as well argues the importance of family and friendship networks in entry into the sex industry in this region. In Ethiopia as well, few existing studies on human trafficking pointed out the key role of



families and community members in the informal migration network. They engage in different ways: motivating the young women, generating money for travel, communicating with 'traffickers' even knowing the migration is risky (Kebede, 2001; Pearson, 2003). This goes to the extent of refusing to disclose the identity of 'traffickers' to police or court (Kebede, 2001:26). However, these studies did not explain the micro dynamics and its interaction with the informal networks.

It is at this very junction this research took interest to probe further into *the micro-politics of interests that instigate risky female labour migration, and how this micro-dynamics to sustain and reproduce the informal system of facilitated migration*. By taking the case of Addis Ketema Subcity (AKSC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; this study aims to explore gender-selective household and community mediation in young women trafficking and the institutionalized interaction with the care labour market in the Middle East (ME). The two overarching questions that form the core of my analysis are then:

- 1) What justifies the locale's (households and communities) active engagement in risky and gender-selective trans-national labour migration?
- 2) How do the micro-level institutions (households and local communities) interact with the meso-level institutions (informal networks) to establish dominant migratory regimes?

To answer these main concerns of the study, I raised other specific questions: What factors instigate gender selective migration process within the household (HH)? What opportunity structures are readily available for safe migration in Ethiopia? How is transnational circuit of female labour socially organized in AKSC? How does this female labour circuit intersect with trafficking? What role do community members have in the functioning and reproduction of informal system of facilitated migration? Asking why and how household members and communities help their members to migrate can shed unique light on the formation of trans-national migratory regimes that emerge in the context of contemporary labour markets. More broadly, these dynamics put pressure on the dominant conceptual distinction made between trafficking and migration.

My interest to analyze the micro-dynamics and micro-meso institutional interactions is two-fold. Firstly, I want to contribute to the theoretical debates on the processes of trafficking which is not always necessarily explained by structural determinations as historical structuralists argue (Sassen, 2000); nor on individual self-determination as approaches premised on the 'volition' of the migrant argue (Augustine, 2005; Sharma, 2005). Undeniably these must play a part in any explanation, yet the study of institutional interaction provides proactive understanding of the migrant and the macro system for institutions (HHs, communities and social networks) simultaneously mediate individual agency and macro-structural changes (Grasmuck and Pessar, 1991: 13, 15).

Such analysis further provides a deeper understanding of how certain categories of migration streams can be perpetuated, defying changes in economic and political policies that serve to constrain or halt them (Brettelle, 2000, Skeldon, 2000). Secondly, I bring to light the continuities and change in policy discourses about trafficking on one hand and the social practices of migration on the other. In so doing, I intend to bring alternative understanding of the migration and trafficking phenomena as a continuum; rather than separate social processes. Moreover, I look at the policy relevance of considering communities as major interest groups in interventions directed towards countering the act of trafficking. I want to note at this stage, my focus at the micro (the foreground) is only to *analytically* distinguish from the more complex macro-level analysis which sets the background for most micro-level social relations (Allen, 1996).

## **1.2 Research Process and Methodology**

Research on human trafficking is vexed with a number of methodological, definitional, epistemological, and ethical issues. Having in mind these challenges, I initially intended to answer a slightly different research question that aimed to explore the gendered dynamics of community involvements in young women trafficking and its intersection with their livelihood systems. However, during the field work I realized that the community's engagement can't be singled out and analyzed without looking into the mechanisms by which it interacts with the operation of the care labour market, which obviously indicates the role of meso-level institutions. As a result I twisted the focus of



the analysis into micro-macro interactions, while I retained the former main research as the sub-question to analyze the gendered selectivity within the HH in the migration process.

What captured my attention to investigate the micro-meso interaction was the contradiction I observed in the dominant discourses about trafficking in Ethiopia and the actual practices and perception on the ground. For instance informal intermediaries are usually portrayed in Ethiopia as 'unscrupulous intermediaries', 'traffickers/illegal agents... who own import export businesses, and whose addresses are not known usually known by the migrants' (AGRINET, 2004:17; Kebede, 2001: 6). Although this might sometimes be the case in AKSC-one of the places where a large proportion of women migrate to the ME-informal networks at the trans-local space emerge from, and function in that specific community. They are known by the locale as 'local brokers' who are at the service of the community. So whenever I refer to informal intermediaries of AKSC in this paper, I use the community's terminology-'local brokers'.

The research adopted largely qualitative approach and took one sub-city, namely Addis Ketema Subcity (AKSC) as a study site in Addis Ababa Ethiopia. Entry into this community was facilitated by PROPRIDE Ethiopia's<sup>1</sup> community health workers. I contacted Social support group members of that community with whom I have had a previous work relationship. This facilitated access to HHs with migrant workers, key informants, and returnees in the community. Moreover, it created an open research environment.

Research methods combined semi-structured interview with HH members, mainly HH heads, in depth interviews with key informants, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), field observation and review of relevant documents at Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), Immigration and Nationality Affairs Office (INAO), and IOM Ethiopia-Country Liaison office. I focused on the narratives of study participants since as Brettell

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<sup>1</sup> PROPRIDE Ethiopia is a national NGO which is basically engaged in HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities in that community



(2002:441) argues there is a possibility of the existence of 'universal story in particular story and in this sense that individual narratives can put flesh on the bones of theory', which compels me to look for patterns in those narratives. It was not only patterns/universalities that interested me, but also specificities and diversity of experiences.

Primary data collection took place from third week of July until third week of August, 2006. Prior to HH data collection, I set eligibility criteria based on the gender (female) age at migration (less than 24 years ); migration route (informal or semi-formal); and HH headship. Accordingly HH members, mainly HH heads, from 40 eligible HH were interviewed.

FGDs were conducted with migrants' parents that were not involved in interviews. The FGD with migrant mothers and fathers were organized separately so that it would be possible to observe differences in perspective and logic between the genders; and also to minimize the risk of gender performance that could potentially affect the outcome of the research. Another FGD was also conducted with returnees who used both formal and informal means to facilitate their migration. I interviewed key informants as well: local elders, women members of social support group in that community; women's association secretary; local brokers (face to face conversation with one and telephone conversation with the other); head of *Gebenaye* Ethiopia (returnees' association), General manager of anonymous Private Employment Agency, Program Assistant - IOM Ethiopia, overseas employment department experts -Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA); and Public Relations officer -Immigration and Nationality Affairs Office (INAO).

The HH questionnaire was reformulated in light of the important issues that came up during few initial interviews with HHs and key informants from the community, MOLSA, and IOM. FGD guide and interview guides were reformulated in accordance with the themes and issues that came during the HH interviews and consultation of secondary sources.

Empirical data obtained from HH interviews was entered and analyzed by using Microsoft Excel office program; and the qualitative part was analyzed using systematic coding via content analysis. Data obtained from focus groups were first transcribed and then analyzed by combining content analysis and discourse analysis. Not only themes and issues, but areas of agreement and disagreement were looked at since group context was taken into consideration.

### **1.3 Organization of the Paper**

Following this introduction, the next chapter discusses some relevant theoretical and conceptual tools adopted to investigate the research problem. Literature review on the conceptualization of the migration, trafficking phenomena as a nexus is also presented in this chapter. Chapter three provides the possible opportunity structures for safe migration in terms of legislative and institutional context. In so doing, it partially answers the first research question and sets the background for subsequent discussions in the following two chapters. Chapter four presents an analysis of gender selectivity with in HHs along the migration-trafficking nexus (MTN). Chapter five provides the analysis of the micro-meso interaction along the MTN: both the ways of interaction and the mechanisms dominant migratory regimes emerge by such interaction. In chapter six, I conclude pulling together the main issues that comes up in the study.

## **II. CONCEPTUALIZING GENDER AND INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTION IN MIGRATION-TRAFFICKING NEXUS**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual basis for this research. To incorporate insights from gender, migration and trafficking literature, I focus upon: firstly, feminist theories on gender and the process of migration because of the strong conceptual and empirical link between trafficking and the practice of irregular migration. Secondly, feminist local theories of entitlement to unpack gender, power, contestation and negotiation in the migration process with in the domain of micro-politics of interests.



Thirdly from anthropological and sociological theories on social organization of migration that help to analyze the structure and functioning of social networks, and their interaction with the micro along the MTN. I will focus on structuration theory in examining both agency-structure, and institutional (micro-meso) interactions.

Following Grieco and Boyed (1998) in Koffman (2004:644), I analyze the migration process mainly at three major levels: pre-migration, migration, and post-migration. Pre-migration entails the migration-decision making process within the micro-politics of the HH i.e. gender, power, negotiation and contestation among HH members. Migration as an action will be mainly analyzed in light of the complex interaction among informal networks, HHs, communities, the labour market and macro structural factors. Particularly important are social organization of migration and indentured form of migration. Post-migration will be treated mainly as the outcomes of migration to the migrants and their respective HH members in AKSC. Particular attention will be given to the intersection of migration and trafficking.

## **2.2 Migration-Trafficking Nexus**

According to the UN (2000), trafficking in persons is defined:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Central to the idea of 'trafficking' is then, exploitation, trade and illegality (UN, 2000: Skeldon, 2000:10). On the other hand as Skeldon (2000:8,10) argues if certain form of migration as a social process is characterized by "illegality", 'irregularity', 'undocumented' or 'clandestine' nature; then making a clear distinction between trafficking and other forms of migration may be 'more apparent than real'. Of course, there are subtle differences in interpretation that render the discussion a 'terminological minefield' (Ibid). What distinguishes trafficking is its constitution of 'illicit trade' in human beings which has a moral dimension as well. Yet, the trafficking issue cannot be

divorced from the practice of migration for there is strong conceptual and empirical link between trafficking and migration.

Few scholars argued for conceptualization of these two social processes as a continuum/nexus rather than two separate categories (Skeldon, 2000; Truong, 2006a). Taking the case of Asia's mix of legal and illegal means of migration, Skeldon(2000:10) demonstrates how trafficking and labour migration overlap at several points along the 'continuum of facilitation'. For instance the cost of Thai migrants to Singapore varies significantly since some use the legal means yet its cost them higher because of the 'tea money' they pay along the process. On the other hand some approach cheaper and faster services of traffickers to gain access entry to the destination since bureaucratic procedures are so complex and costly (Ibid).

Similarly, as Truong (2006:61) noted in Sahelian region in Sub-Saharan Africa, the role of two institutions clearly shows the intersection of migration and trafficking. These are 1) networks through which migrants gain access to resources and 2) HH structure and its management. Due to absence of information on the proper channels, there is a possibility where people could seek the assistance of traffickers to achieve their desired end. She further points out the selective inclusion and exclusion of labour in the recipient countries can result in the switching of migrants between varieties of occupations that are controlled by illegal networks. This process of switching is another area of intersection for migration and trafficking; where at each node the vulnerability of migrants' increases since their social ties becomes on thinner as they are kept constantly on the move (Ibid).

### **2.3 The Migration Process: Actor, Structure, Institutions and Structuration**

#### ***Migration decision***

Migration decision models differ in the extent that they accord to human agency in relation to that given to social structure. In the Neo-classical model of migration, the agency of the individual migrant is the key explanatory factor, where as in the structuralist model explanation is to be thought at the level of structure and in particular



in the organization and reorganization of capitalist development (Brettell, 2000; Wright, 1995). Dissatisfaction with what was almost exclusively either a micro approach that sidelines the macro-structural context which shapes individual action, or a macro-approach that portrays migrants as passive reactors, not as active agents, led to the development of integrative approaches; among which structuration approach is one (Koffman, 2004; Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Wolfel, 2002; Wright, 1995).

As summarized by Wolfel (2002:1), Giddens's theory of structuration is defined as an 'approach to social theory concerned with the intersection between knowledgeable and capable social agent and the wider social systems and structures in which they are implicated'. He argues that while a number of migration studies have adopted structuration theory, 'none' of them addressed all the six key elements that underpin this approach. These elements include not only agency and structure; but also the duality of structure, institutions, the dialectic of control, and time/space relations. In this project, the agent is conceived to be a 'knowledgeable and capable subject' and all actions are "intentional or purposeful". As the process of decision-making is concerned, people use cost-benefit analysis in order to make decisions using a host of criteria (Goss and Linquist; 1995:331-2; Wolfel, 2002:7-8).

The second element-structure is defined as 'rules and resources, recursively implicated in reproduction of social systems. It is argued that structure exists in the memory traces, the organic basis of human knowledgeability, and as instantiated in action' (Giddens, 1984 in Wolfel, 2002:11). The third element is the duality of structure, which is related to the 'fundamentally recursive character of social life' (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Wolfel, 2002). It expresses the mutual dependence and dialectical relationship between structure and agency in which both interact with each other to influence change in society. In the migration study, the interaction between proximate and structural determinants brings about societal change related to people's mobility.

The fourth element in this model is institutions: routinized practices that are used by agents to bring about social change (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Wolfel, 2002). There are

a host of institutions, State, market, HHs, communities and social networks that affect the mobility of people. The final element in this model is time/space relations on the constitution of society; where a set of unique origin and destination factors influence migration (Wolfel, 2002: 20, 23).

This study pays special attention to the concept of the duality of structure/the dialectic of control in the structuration approach. It refers to the idea that for an individual agents (I add collective agents) to cause change in a society, 'rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but are thereby reconstituted through such interaction' (Wolfel, 2002: 20). In this study rules and resources include legislative and institutional context, labour market principles, rules and norms (including gender norms) in the community.

As an integrative approach, while structuration applied to migration leaves analytical space to account for the agency/decisions of migrants without overlooking the fact that the system in turn conditions their agency; however, I argue that the analytic potential of this approach falls short mainly on four grounds. Firstly, it is by and large gender-blind while gender as a structure, a relation and a process constitutes at each stage in the migration process. Secondly, despite the fact that migration not only entails decision but action and outcomes that involve agency-structure interaction, its use has been largely limited to explain the migration decision making process. Migrants can decide, but they must act upon it. Migration as an action contributes to the structuration on particular patterns of migrations, shape the values and behaviour, as well as the processes of the formation of identity of those involved. Such action in turn leads to some change (brings certain outcomes). The decision or action on the outcomes again involves such agency-structure interaction

Thirdly, its conceptualization of the agent as 'knowledgeable and capable subject who makes a decision based on cost-benefit analyses is narrow. This will be further discusses in light of the findings in this study. In gender and migration, a range of gendered micro-politics of negotiation, cooperation, and contestation takes place in different but



intersecting institutional arenas (Curran & Sagguy, 2001; Lawson, 1998). In some cases, the self-determining autonomous individual may be a useful starting point for analysis, but not always especially in migration. Women may emerge as 'rational' actors in the migration process, but may end up unable to think beyond the 'naturalized' givens of their communities' (Kandiyoti, 1998; Barber, 2000). Within the same vein, in addition to such narrow conceptualization of individual agency; the role of collective agency is omitted in this framework.

These limitations of the structuration approach will be considered in this study so that its analytic potential to bring in the role of the macro and the micro, as well as the processes to the MTN is strengthened. Therefore, structuration in this study is conceived as a complex interaction of related individual actors (migrants, HH members, community members) with social structures which are inclusive of rules and resources (legislative framework related to labour migration and human trafficking in the country; communities own norms and ideologies including gender norms and ideologies; labour market principles; and migrant institutions).

### *Migration as a Chain of Actions: Institutions and Structuration*

The interaction between structure and agency accepts the fact that migrants shape and are shaped by the context (political, economic, social, cultural) within which they operate whether in the sending society or in the receiving society. Moreover, although not well brought up in structuration approach, the role of mediating institutions is crucial in this process (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). For instance, institutions which this study focuses upon i.e. households and communities mediate the relationship between the individual and the world system and provide a more proactive understanding of the migrant than that provided by the historical-structuralist framework or neo-classical framework (Brettell, 2000). As Grasmuck and Pessar (1991; 15) articulated the case:

It is not individuals but households that mobilize resources and support, receive and allocate remittances and made decisions about members' production, consumption and distribution of activities...

For instance as Castels (1998:183) argues the effect of transnational migration as a consequence of globalizing processes will be more apparent when analyzed at the micro level for local communities can undergo in changes in gender relations, HH structures,... Analysis of the micro-level institutional mediation also offers the opportunity to analyze how macro-scale pressures can in turn instigate risky engagement with the labour market in attempt to articulate resources.

Networks also play key role in mediating macro economic and cultural influences, and affect individual behaviour as well with in the MTN. As Grasmuck and Pessar (1991; 13) argued:

Social networks and households simultaneously mediate macro-structural changes, facilitate the migration response to these changes, and perpetuate migration as a self-sustaining social process.

Networks serve to link individual and household decisions to larger social structures and have a cumulative effect over space and time (Curran and Saguy, 2001:59). As cited in Curran and Saguy (2001), Massey's ground breaking work on networks of obligation moreover challenged the neo-classical assumptions of cost-benefit calculations of a rational individual in the migration decision and shifted focus to relating people to one another through social networks. According to Massey as cited in Curran and Saguy (2001:59), the two essential ways networks shape migration include: firstly, making migration less risky by circulating information among potential migrants; and secondly, feeding subsequent migration since kinship networks allow migrants to send remittances home, making migration a viable household strategy for diversifying economic risk" (Ibid:66). Although the dynamism in social networks-migrant institutions is not addressed in these theoretical developments, it will be considered in this study.



## 2.4 Gender: An Organizing Principle in the Migration Process

Gender perspective has enriched themes and methods of migration research, and has also led to the development of new topics of concern (Wills and Yeoh, 2000). However as Carling (2005) rightly pointed out “the frequent use of the word ‘gender’ is not always justified by analytical approach to gender as a relational term”. According to Scott (1988:42-45), gender as an organizing principle of social life structures social practices related to hierarchical bipolar system of power relation between the sexes (male and female). It is produced within a specific historical and social context and of course works in conjunction with other social relations of power. Therefore gender as analytical category allows examining particular kinds of social relations involving men and women. Gender can mean then:

- A social structure which refers to a web of institutionalized social relationships that, by creating and manipulating the categories of gender organize and signify power at levels above the individual. Such approach recognizes gender is embedded in institutions, and it lays the foundation as well for analyzing the structural factors that condition gender relations in addition to ideological and normative factors (Scott, 1988; Pessar and Mahler, 2003).
- As an identity that defines the status of a person. As an identity gender intersects with other social structures resulting in unique experiences, or distinct social location of individuals.
- As a process: how people bearing gender (male or female) engage with institutions, and their behaviors and decision making. Conceptualizing gender as a *process* refers to a perspective wherein gender identities, relations and ideologies are fluid, not fixed (Pessar and Mahler, 2003).

This conceptualization of gender offers the possibility to analyze gender as an organizing principle in migration as a social process. In this study migration as an experience brings these dimensions to light, for eg. the symbolism of care work as women’s work; gender as a structure expressed in the persistence of gender division of labour; and gender as an identity embedded in institutions (HHs, communities, social networks, labour market State legislations and practices) resulting different outcomes to female migrants.

Especially important in this study is how gender as an 'enduring and extensive pattern of social relations' or social structure (Connell, 2002:9) shapes institutional practices of the State, the labour market, the HH, the community, informal networks and individual decision.

## **2.5 Transnational Migration: A Livelihood Strategy or a Means for Upward Mobility?**

The phenomena of international migration or it's convergence with trafficking is more often explained in terms of the material inequality brought about by globalization processes (Castels, 1998; Sassen, 2000; Yeats, 2004). Indeed, economic restructuring, particularly the failure of Structural Adjustment Programs have created enormous costs for certain sectors of the economy, as a result made the livelihoods of vulnerable segments of the population more precarious. This in turn puts pressure on people's mobility in search of alternative means for making a living (Francis, 2000; Sassen, 2000; Truong, 2006a).

These are valid and important arguments, however what has been under explained in feminist scholarship is the other global-local dynamics in transnational migration and the trafficking process. For instance Raghuram (2005:4) argues Sassen's focus on survival limits the scope of her argument since it fails to recognize:

the personal response to global inequalities are not merely those of differential wages or earning power between receiving and sending countries but are also influenced by the globalization of aspiration by increasing convergence in what we want to consume and what we think we need to survive.

She further argues globalization has not merely squeezed the ability of some people to earn but also (and more importantly) increased people's expectations of what is 'necessary' to live. This implies as some argue, transnational migration is then not a route to survival as it is never the poorest<sup>2</sup> who migrate (Salt, 2001), but to class mobility

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<sup>2</sup> The argument that the poorest can't afford transnational migration should be queried since the findings of this research showed that informal intermediation has been able to increase the access of the poorest to transnational migration



Parrenas (2001). It seems then that it is only through involvement in global spaces that class mobility (whether of the individual or their families) may be negotiated. Stark and Taylor (1990:1, 28) articulate this in terms of relative deprivation. They argued household members undertake trans-national migration not necessarily to increase the household's income or to diversify the livelihoods opportunity of the household, but rather to improve the household's position (in terms of relative deprivation) with respect to a specific reference group.

Massey as cited in Curran and Saguy (2001:62) further elaborates the concept of relative deprivation to "designate strong desire for material goods, accompanied by a sense of entitlement, stemming from the realization that one's peers possess these goods. It is an explicit reference to the movement of ideas and shifting value schemes, in that it is only relevant when people's needs and desires change and can no longer be met by resources in the place of origin". Curran and Saguy (2001:62) add a gender dimension and argue structural changes in places of origin and destination may be driven by different cultural meanings of gender thus affect the impact of relative deprivation upon the migration process. In this study the concept of relative deprivation will be used to analyze not only the material, but the symbolic aspects of deprivation as well; and its gender-differentiated effect along the migration-trafficking process.

I begin my analysis based on these theoretical developments in the subsequent chapters. Yet my engagement with these grounded theories will be retroductive: one that combines deduction (interpreting social processes in light of the theories) and induction (informing theories based on social processes at the ground (Have, 2004:2).

### **III: OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES FOR SAFE MIGRATION IN ETHIOPIA: INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

This chapter first presents a brief overview of the basic features of labour migration from Ethiopia to the ME, and the opportunity structures for safe female migration. Arguably, there a number of factors those constrain or facilitate safe migration in the Ethiopian

context. However this chapter limits the analysis to the legislative and institutional context and operation of the care labour market. In Giddentian terms this implies to the rules and resources available for individuals and collectivities to claim for safe migratory routes. The chapter winds up discussing the institutional and regulatory frameworks in practice, and the forces that incapacitate the functioning of the formal-supposedly 'safe' system. This discussion will be afterwards linked with the discussion in chapter 5.

### **3.1 Introduction**

Labour migration from Ethiopia to the ME is characterized as being female-dominated, and is mainly channelled informally or semi-formally than formally. For instance among the estimated over 200,000 Ethiopian migrant workers in the MEGS (AGRINET, 2004:4-5), in the past five years only 43,800 i.e. about 22% (MOLSA archives, August 2006) left the country using the formal channel. INAO data base shows from September 2005 to June 2006 48, 155 persons (INAO archives, August 2006) have taken passports as *Haji* and *Oumra* pilgrims to Saudi Arabia<sup>3</sup>. Although there is no data (be aggregate or gender-disaggregated) on the proportion of those already migrated, anecdotal evidences suggest about two-third; among which a large proportion of young women have possibly migrated (Interview with INAO official). This has been the trend for years in Ethiopia suggesting possibility of larger numbers of Ethiopian migrant women in the ME region. This is consistent with other studies which showed that informally mediated female labour migration account for more than 72% of the cases (AGRINET, 2004:19 Belayneh, 2003:12). Among, the documented 22% of cases, women constitute 99% of the migrants who used the services of PEAs, and 78.8% of the cases who used the PES to migrate to this region (MOLSA archives, August 2006).

### **3.2 National Legislative and Institutional Context**

Few international provisions on labour, labour rights and against trafficking in human beings lay the foundation for the concerned legislations in the Country. Regarding legislation to labour migration, among the relevant ILO Conventions to the protection of migrant workers; Ethiopia has ratified: (a) The Private Employment Agencies

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<sup>3</sup> Muslim pilgrimages are one among the major informal routes for labour migration to the ME region



Convention (No. 181, 1997) ; (b) The Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); and (c) The Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111). The Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997, was especially influential whose principles laid down for the formulation of 'The Private Employment Agency Proclamation (PEAP) No. 104/1998' in Ethiopia. In addition, The Ethiopian Labour Proclamation No. 42/1993; and the Directive Issued to Determine the Manner of Employment of Ethiopian Nationals Abroad, 1994 are the laws that have relevant provisions related to overseas employment.

The Ethiopian Labour Proclamation No. 42/1993 and the Directive to Determine the Manner of Employment of Ethiopian Nationals Abroad, 1994 establish the mandate for employment services to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), and forward conditions Ethiopians could be employed abroad. Accordingly, a worker is employed outside the country provided their employment doesn't adversely affect the 'manpower' (read human power) requirements of the country; and that the contract of employment concluded is a result of a bilateral or multilateral agreement. However, the contradiction in this framework is that while it discourages skilled labour immigration, it tacitly allows the export of the supposedly 'unskilled' excess female labour<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, the directive does not make specific reference to female migrant workers nor does it guarantee special protection to women who migrate as domestic workers. It is generally silent about domestic work. Even the amended Labour proclamation 377/2004 (Negarit Gazeta 2004) doesn't include domestic work as work.

#### ***Private Employment Agency Proclamation (PEAP) No. 104/1998***

Prior to the formulation of PEAP No. 104/1998, overseas employment service as public employment was provided by MOLSA. Later, the Country's ratification of ILO's Private Employment Agencies convention; coupled with the flourishing of labour trafficking in the country necessitated formulation of PEAP (Kebede, 2001). It is issued by MOLSA with the intent to encourage the participation of individuals and private entities in the employment services in the country (Negarit Gazeta, 1998:715). This clearly reflects as

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<sup>4</sup> Women comprise a large proportion of 'unskilled labour (kebede, 2001: 7 )

well the Country's increasing adoption of Neo-liberal policies of privatization where the State continues relinquishing its social responsibility to the private sector (EEA, 2004). Taking the case of Philippines program of overseas employment, Tyner (2000:61) as well pointed out such state level political decisions are influenced by the historical growth and current position of the state with in the world economy.

In whichever case, the introduction of this act seems to open the legal room for the role of meso-level actors, namely employment agencies to function as brokers between the supply and demand sides in the labour market. The proclamation defines a private employment agency (PEA) 'as any person independent of Government bodies that makes a worker available locally and/or abroad to a third party by concluding a contract of employment with such worker' (Negarit Gazeta, 1998:715). Accordingly, an Ethiopian is allowed to work abroad only through a private employment agency. Direct recruitment by the employer is allowed only if the Minister permits and an employment contract secured by the effort of the migrant worker is approved subject to certain conditions. This is without prejudice to the public employment services that are still provided by MOLSA (Ibid:716). The proclamation provides for employment services to be provided without directly or indirectly receiving payments from the worker. This provision is in line with article 7(1) of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (ILO Convention) that stipulates that such agencies shall not charge directly or indirectly any fees or costs to workers (ILO, 1997). As will be discussed below, these provisions, and some contradictions within them are at the heart of the discussion of this chapter for they ignite tension among the interest groups: States; intermediaries at transnational spaces; HHs and communities; and migrants.

### ***Legislations against human trafficking***

Ethiopia neither signed nor ratified the Palermo Protocol, a protocol provided by the UN to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children; supplementing the convention against trans-national organized crime in 2000 (UNDOC, 2006). Although the protocol attempts to provide an internationally binding definition aiming to set standards for national laws; the interpretation of crime and penalty is



controversial for social and cultural contexts vary (Truong; 2006a:73). This is one reason why Ethiopia refrained from signing or ratifying the protocol for issues of, particularly internal trafficking flounder between exploitation, trade, and illegality on the one hand; and systems of family fosterage on the other (Interview with MOLSA official; Kelly, 2005: 245).

The Country has ratified though the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949 act, and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979 (Kebede, 2001: 14). However, both provisions have a number of limitations to open the legal room to address the trafficking issue in Ethiopia. The first provision is very narrow in numerous terms, to the extent excludes the issue of trafficking for labour exploitation. The later is simultaneously broad and narrow: broad in the sense that it clusters all forms of discrimination as a result water down the trafficking issue; and at the same time narrow to address the multifarious dimensions of the phenomenon.

The trafficking issue in the Ethiopian case is addressed under article 605 of its Penal code (Penal Code of Ethiopia, 1953). In this Code trafficking in persons is defined as 'trafficking in women, infants and young persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation' and traffickers are 'those persons who traffic in women, infants and young persons by seducing them, enticing them or otherwise inducing them to engage in prostitution' (Ibid); while prostitution itself is not punishable by law (Kebede, 2001). This definition is again thin in many aspects, to point one it leaves aside the issue of trafficking for labour exploitation. According to Kebede (2001:19), even currently in the proposed amendment of the penal code, trafficking for labour exploitation is not addressed. As the provision on trafficking does not cover labour trafficking, traffickers are charged under article 565 of the 'enslavement' provision of the penal code. This provision does not cover the issue of deception in voluntary travel, or the issue of forced consent (Ibid). The critical issue is moreover, there are no as such effective implementation and enforcing mechanisms even for the already existing legislations. Kebede (2001:20) argues that for a number of reasons, the trafficking code is the least implemented code in Ethiopia.

Before winding up the discussion, it is important to highlight on the regulatory framework of the recipient countries for migrants fall between borders and systems of protection. The majority of Ethiopian migrants go to domestic services, and few to commercial sex work in private arena where individualized and unregulated work environments prevail. Most Arab States' labour laws do not generally cover female domestic workers for they are not considered as employees (Esim and Smith, 2004: 92). The assumption is these women work in households, which are not considered workplaces; and they work for private persons, who are not considered employers. In general, the employment relationship between a domestic worker and the head of a household is not addressed in national legislation in any Arab country, denying them the status of "real workers" entitled to labour protection. Domestic workers are also excluded from labour protection under any other national law (Ibid). Many Arab States as well have legislation against the act of trafficking in persons (Esim and Smith, 2004: 102), and some of them have ratified the Palermo Protocol. Among the major destination Middle Eastern countries for Ethiopian migrants for example Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Bahrain have ratified the Protocol (UNODC, 2006).

### **3.3 Facilitated Migration in Practice: Tri-dimensional Tension**

There are mainly two formal institutions that are responsible for facilitated international labour migration in Ethiopia: PEAs and MOLSA. PEAs start to function since the year 2000 after the government privatized overseas employment, but began to flourish only in past two years (MOLSA archives, August 2006). Currently 29 private employment agencies are registered-all spatially concentrated in the capital Addis Ababa. Indeed, there are arguably a number of factors (eg. public awareness, spatial concentration of the agencies,...) that hinder the opportunity structures for potential migrants from utilizing the services of these institutions.

Given the fair availability of PEAs and the efforts to raise public awareness on safe migration channels, it is logical to expect the pre-eminence of the formal system of facilitated migration over the informal one. However, in the past 5 years (from July 2001-



June 2006) 29,498 persons, (99% women) have used the services of PEAs, and 14,614 (78.7% women) used PES to facilitate migration (MOLSA archives, August 2006). These figures contrasted against the national estimates show that more than 77% of facilitated migration is informal. This is consistent with other studies which showed that informally mediated female labour migration account for more than 72% of the cases (AGRINET, 2004:19, Belayneh, 2003: 12).

### *Major areas of tension*

As the findings of this research indicate, the tension arises mainly from three dimensions.

1) The government's continuation of public employment service: after handing over the responsibility of facilitation of overseas employment to the private entities; the government has continued providing public employment service for migrants who supposedly secure job and visa by 'their own efforts'. The practice is however, migrants who secured employment visa from local brokers execute the necessary legal requirement in MOLSA to get immigration clearance by pretending it was lawfully secured by their own efforts as the labour law permits. This opened up the room for easy functioning of the informal intermediation, and in turn significantly affected the competitiveness of PEAs as facilitating agents in the care labour market.

We, the association of PEA, were pushing the government to stop the public employment service, since traffickers use it to legitimize their illegal act. Moreover the government is engaged in overseas employment against its own PEAP act 104/1998 that states overseas employment to be facilitated only through private entities. In a way the government itself is facilitating trafficking.

PEA General Manager

The challenge is when we have tourist visas for our clients. Well even in that case we have a way out. But it is much easier when the visa is an employment visa since we facilitate for our clients to fulfil the necessary legal requirement in MOLSA, and then secure immigration clearance.

Local broker

2) Less competitiveness of PEAs: job placement by PEAs takes longer period (usually not less than 8 months) compared to that of local brokers that usually takes less than a month. On top of this, some PEAs unlawfully charge their clients (commonly deduct 3 months salary at the destination) which discourage potential migrants from seeking their services.

Initially I was happy when I was informed that my travel to Beirut for domestic work would be arranged by 'x' PEA free of charge. I only learnt I had to pay when I was expecting my salary at the end of the first month. Sad, they cheated me! Not only me, but many girls whom I know face the same problem.

Returnee

3) Market demand for cheap labour and transfer of risks/costs: The informal is increasingly undermining the formal one by transferring costs from potential employers onto potential migrant workers; and transferring business risks from the intermediaries onto the migrants; hence increasing its competitiveness. Transfer of cost/risk is expressed in a such way that migrants themselves, not their employers, pay their travel, travel related expenses and commissions for the brokers. This is in a way an indentured form of migration where workers agreed to pay to passage to and employment in a foreign country under specifies terms (Goss and Lindquist, 2000: 388-9). Unlike indenture ship in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century capitalist economy primary commodity production where workers pay for secured employment (Ibid), in this case potential migrants pay for job opportunities without even securing one.

Tyner (2000: 67-68) also argues how transferring of cost upon migrants is becoming attractive in the labour market. His findings show how non-reputable agencies in Philippines, who had not the chance to participate in the Client-referral Assistance system in the country's social organization of migration, become competitive for they able to attract foreign employers by transferring the costs to potential migrant workers. In addition, as the findings of this study indicate what makes attractive to hire 'illegalized' migrant workers is the absence of binding legal obligation to respect their rights.

The demand is high for illegal migrant workers in the MEGS since employers do not have to pay much, except the limited amount of commission for illegal agents and traffickers. Besides it is easier to 'enslave' when the status of migrant workers is 'illegal'.

PEA General Manager

### **3.4. Conclusion**

The State's legislative and institutional frameworks don't fully account the needs and plights of migrant women. The schizophrenia of the state is also evident in its migration policies that selective encouragement/dis-encouragement of unskilled/skilled migration; and its contradictory practices-privatization and otherwise- of overseas employment. Moreover market forces in their demand for cheap labour shape the migratory route, in turn resulting in continual informalization of female labour supply. In this context where the use of structure opportunities i.e. rules and resources available for safe migration are constrained; individual women, HHs, and communities actively device their own mechanisms to interact with the care labour market. One key institution that facilitates such interaction is then the informal network. In this way micro and meso institutions also mediate macro-structural influences. It is also evident that these legislative and institutional practices are gendered. Particularly the indentured form of mobility shows the intersecting risks in gender, migration and trafficking.

## **IV. GENDER SELECTIVITY ALONG THE MIGRATION TRAFFICKING NEXUS: A CASE STUDY OF ADDIS KETEMA SUBCITY**

This chapter presents the analysis of the gender selective processes within HHs and the factors that *justify* risky migration of young women members within HHs in AKSC. In this section I intend to demonstrate how HHs and communities mediate migrant women's agency within the domain of micro-politics of interests. I examine how hierarchical relationship within HHs and gender relations; fuelled by material and symbolic gains encourage and rationalize labour trafficking of girls and young women at times of social and economic stress.



#### **4.1. Locating the Research: Addis Ketema Subcity**

According to 1994 national census Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, hosts a population of over 3 million (CSA, 1994). Ethiopian urban socioeconomic survey in Addis Ababa indicated that more than 45 % of households have a monthly income of less than 300 birr (Bigsten & Mekonen, 1999:6). Recent study indicated that low income households account for over 80% of the city's population (Bayrau & Bekele, 2005:496) and it has an amount of slum dwellers between 85% and almost 100 % within the districts (Sub-Cities) (UN-Habitat, 2004).

Addis Ketema Sub-city (hence forth AKSC) is part of the old city centre in Addis Ababa, which is known to be established during the Italian occupation to segregate the indigenous people from the Whites (UNCHS, 2000: 11). It is dominated by a mixture of commercial activities- both large and small, and formal and informal (Lemma et.al, 2005:2). AKSC is predominantly slum area in Addis Ababa, which is characterized by its deteriorating residential areas and most densely populated pockets where the majority of the dwellers live in poverty (Ibid). UNIRIN's report depicts the problem as follows:

The Merkato area (AKSC) is a microcosm of the enormous social and economic problems facing the country: poverty, poor sanitation, a lack of education, and HIV/AIDS. Infection rates for the virus are higher than almost any other area of Addis Ababa, and only one-third of children get the chance of completing their schooling. Local community leaders estimate that just one in 10 families in the Merkato slum areas have access to safe water or sanitation.

UNIRIN<sup>5</sup> -March 1, 2004

However, what didn't come to the attention of both State and non-state actors in this sub city is the occurrence of large-scale female labour migration to the ME which more often than not converges with trafficking. Although there is no region, city, nor Woreda- based data; my previous work experience in that community brought to my attention the migration of quite proportionate girls and women to the ME in search of jobs. The locales describe the phenomenon as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=39760> Accessed on 20/09/2006

There is almost no family in our community that didn't send its female member to Arab countries. If in case not, for sure that family has a plan to send one at least.

Community elder

AKSC has a population of 320, 389 and comprises 9 *kebeles*<sup>6</sup> (Addis Ababa City Government<sup>7</sup>). Among the nine, two *kebeles*<sup>8</sup> (Number 08, 09, and 18) and (06,07)– (locally known as *Mesalamia akababi*) are selected as study areas for this research. From these *kebeles*, 40 eligible house holds were selected for interview.

### ***Household Characteristics***

Although household poverty assessment is beyond the scope of this study, few questions were forwarded to capture the overall socio-economic conditions of HHs. From individual interviews, it was evident that the majority of the HH members are engaged in informal income earning activities, except for about 10% who have a meagre monthly pension income. Since their income earning is on daily basis, it was difficult to trace the exact figure of their monthly earning. However, as per their estimates (excluding remittances), it ranges from 50 birr to 400 birr per month and the average is about 170<sup>9</sup> birr (19 USD per month). This figure falls with the country's 'absolute poverty' category (FDRE, 2002:1). In addition, the majority of the study participants qualitatively categorize themselves as poor<sup>10</sup>. Their livelihoods as well are based on diverse activities including daily labour, petty trading, and small-scale business. Women and girls have key role in the HH's livelihood activities, among which female labour migration to the MEGS is conceived to be the major one. Even among the MHHs, in more than 60% of the cases, women are the *defacto* breadwinners of the HH.

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<sup>6</sup> *Kebele* is the smallest administrative unit with the government's administrative structure of cities

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/Sub\\_cities.htm](http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/Sub_cities.htm) accessed on 09/18/2006

<sup>8</sup> The new system of city administration has merged the three *kebeles* (08,09,18) as one, and the two (06 and 07) as one

<sup>9</sup> 1 USD approximately equals to 8.6 birr

<sup>10</sup> The writer acknowledges the flaws in conventional poverty assessment methods such as income poverty measures and subjective assessment method. However, for the sake of convenience the writer adopted one of the major methods that the government uses (source).

The 40 HHs have had 59 migrant members during the interview period (from 4<sup>th</sup> week of July to 3<sup>rd</sup> week of August 2006). About 60% of the migrants were below 20 years of age at time of migration, and more than 83% are school dropouts. About half were unemployed, while nearly the other half was engaged in informal income earning activities, both productive and reproductive. The national law prohibits overseas employment below 18 years and some Arab states like Qatar have a lower age limit of 20 years for personal care services. However, despite that as it is indicated in another study as well (AGRINET, 2004: 8), great proportions migrate while they are still below 20 years.

A number of factors contribute for the convergence of gender and age selective migratory processes, among which structural factors have key place. Household members' and community's justification for age-selective migration ranges from less prospect of success in education and employment to the demand of household's and migrant's desire for better way of living. Potential migrants motivation usually emanates from former migrants better way of living and better appearances, which is associated with pressures of notions of femininity. Most importantly, as returnees and a local broker pointed out, the demand for younger age categories is high at the destination side. This is because HHs in the ME assume girls<sup>11</sup> are more obedient and non-demanding (read as they don't demand their rights) than young adults. This how different identities (gender, age, class) intersect to bring about unique experiences (Crenshaw, 2000) of younger migrants in the migration process.

The majority of boys and girls in our community are school-drop outs. There is less employment opportunity even for those few who are high-school graduates. So they better go and work.

FGD discussants (Migrants' mothers)

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<sup>11</sup> Despite the fact that the notion of childhood/girlhood is debatable, I have taken the conventional age category of below 18.



## 4.2 Hierarchical Households, Gender Selectivity and Migration Decision: Whose Agency?

### *Households' division of labour and Care labour markets: A continuum of gender relations*

A myriad of factors interplay to bring about gender selective migration in this specific community. Study participants identified high demand for female labour than male labour at the destination side to be the major one. Despite the fact that female migrant members have had active role in the HH's livelihood activities-both 'productive' (eg. Daily labour in construction work) and reproductive ones prior to migration; however, the opportunity structures in the labour market relegate them in personal care services since they migrate carrying on their gender identities. The study participants, both genders alike, regardless the fact women are the major breadwinners of the HH, assume the reproductive arena is women's domain; therefore migration for domestic services.

What do men do in Arab countries? They can't provide domestic service; it is a task of women.

(Migrant fathers and mothers – FGD)

This is how gender relations at HHs in origin and destination interact with gendered structure opportunities in the care labour market to shape gender selective migratory process within HHs in AKSC. This demand for female labour in the care labour market signals also how gender as structure, namely gender-division of labour both at the sending and receiving societies, persists to this end affecting people's mobility that seems gender neutral at the outset (Carling, 2005).

### *Gender identities: Precursors of migration decision in the HH*

Further more, certain assumptions of femininity, womanhood and masculinity underpin the gender selective migration within HHs. Such assumptions include daughters' sense of responsibility; more understanding of the poverty situation of the HH, their mother's burden than male members; their compassion; and 'their capacity' to face and stand problems. Besides while labour migration or 'at least marriage' is considered one means

for women to live a descent life; on the other hand either 'descent work' or education is considered the best way for descent life for men.

*'Wond meketa new lemekuria, kebela keteta min alew. Set gin dabash nat gebenam shefagn'* - meaning

A male (a son) is simply a pride of the family. If he eats and drinks that is all. But a daughter always cares and makes up the family's misfortune.

Migrant's aunt-FGD discussant

Moreover, the other pressing practical reason for gender selective migration is male-female differential in remitting. Almost unanimously the study participants reported that female migrants remit more often and regularly than male migrants. This is based again on the underlying assumptions of femininity and 'proper womanhood' such as sacrifice. A study in Thailand showed although both women and men are equally likely to migrate, women remit wages and gifts to their parents at a significantly higher rate for they are expected to do so (Curran and Saguy, 2001:54). These gender identities and gendered expectations are drawn as resources by members of the HH affecting the propensity to migrate with in domain of micro-politics of interests.

### ***The process of migration decision within the HH: Gender, power, and negotiation***

Even when female members as 'agents' decide to migrate varying power dynamics: dominance, contestation, negotiation, manoeuvre, takes place before migration as an action happens. The very idea of migration is commonly initiated by the migrants themselves, and at times from HH members, particularly female-heads of the HH and other peers in the community or transnational spaces. But it is usually the case male-heads and female-heads of HHs contest against the decision of migration. The contestation arises from varying interests between the genders. For instance unlike mothers, most of the interviewed fathers assert they prefer if their daughters pursue their education or have stable married life than migrate. Mothers on the other hand support migration in their priority for some pressing practical problems with in the HH.



Not only contestations however, lots of negotiations takes place among the HH members. More often, fathers are informed about the migrant's travel plan a day or two before her departure. On the other hand the very idea of migration, travel plans, financial arrangements are discussed with mothers; and indeed the decision is made jointly with them. But later the negotiation with male heads goes on using the rationale of the *overall economic and social gain of the HH*. As returnees pointed out that the propensity for migration is not devoid of self-interest or personal development plan of the migrants. However, migrants negotiate their femininity carrying the emblem: *sacrificing for the welfare of the HH*. Not only migrants, but male heads of the HH themselves negotiate their masculinity for it is the female members who have key role in generating income with in the HH. As articulated by male study participants female members keep them uninformed about the whole travel plans of migrants for it wuld hurt their sense of pride: failure in their 'provider's role'.

I was informed about her travel plans only at the same date of her departure, because her mother and my daughter know that I would be against their decision. Even then, I opposed, but I knew for sure I couldn't do anything. In fact, they kept it secretly for they understand I would feel bad about myself. I let her go to be a domestic servant because I failed to provide her and the rest of the family. What a petty, unlike my daughter those who have rich fathers either get good education, employment or go to the West for better.

(Migrant's father)

This findings signal the need for cautiousness whenever agency is claimed in the migration process for there is a possibility that it is contested over, negotiated, and in fact mediated in the micro-politics of interests within the HH; moreover, crisis tendencies (Connell, 2002) in gender relations that needs further exploration in migration studies.

#### **4.3. Gender and Micro-politics of interests**

##### ***Material and symbolic 'deprivation': Female migration- the 'panacea'?***

The major reason for migration is identified to be HH's poverty in particular and the overall poverty situation in the country in general. Low income of the HH, lack of

employment opportunities, underemployment, and low education level of the migrants are on top among the most frequently forwarded reasons. As argued by a number of scholars (Sassen, 2000; Truong, 2006), in fact structural factors (the material aspect of deprivation) is one motivating force for migration among AKSC community. As mentioned earlier, female labour migration is conceived to be one strategy of diversifying the HH's means of livelihood. The use of remittances is quite telling of this fact as well. Remittances are used for a host of activities that range from survival needs of the HH such as food security, human capital investment of the HH members (school fees), to other consumption needs and medical expenses.

We used to have one proper meal per day or at times two when I manage to sell a lot of boiled potatoes in my lucky days. But more often than not, my daughter (the migrant) herself used to go to school only drinking water, no proper meal at all. Now thank God, we have '*injera*' (Ethiopian bread) in our basket throughout the month.

Migrant's mother

Within the domain of forces behind migration/trafficking; what is not well bought up is the subjective/qualitative/symbolic aspect of deprivation. In this study, though not more, but equally important motivational factor is aspiration of the migrants and non-migrant members of the HH for better 'urban' way of living. This is associated with some status change (in terms of socio-economic change) in HHs in the community who have migrant member. From field observation, HH interviews and FGDs, it was possible to see such 'status change' which is expressed in terms of securing consumer items. Remittances are used to buy conspicuous consumer items like TV sets, coaches; to renovate houses or build extra room with in the room than used as means of income generation. At times the symbolic aspect can even have primacy over the survival need of the HH.

*'Ijochun yelakema betu wistum wichum yinageral'* meaning

Houses with migrant members -both inside and outside speak up for themselves.

Migrant's father

It is almost a year since I quit selling *injera* (traditional home made bread) because of the chronic illness I have had since then. As you see I am building a small room below the ceiling and bought TV set and chairs by the remittance while me and my kids are

struggling to survive with *kolo*<sup>12</sup> (roasted cereals) and plain water. I am doing this for the sake of my daughter's (the migrant one) and the family's pride.

Migrant's mother

On the contrary to one sided debates i.e. 'survival need'/HH's livelihood security to be the prime motivational factor for migration on the one hand, and 'class mobility' or sense of 'relative deprivation' debate on the other; findings of this research showed both can be the cases implying micro-level material and symbolic response to the demands of macro-scale processes that are premised on gender.

### *Transfer of Cost*

Transfer of cost is one of the major reasons that underlies the gender-selective migration in the HH. Such demand for transfer of cost even instigates the migration of more female members of the HH. From among the interviewed households, 37.5% have more than one migrant member. One of the major reasons for sending more than one migrant, in addition to the notion of burden sharing, is more financial gain. To the extreme mothers and male members (usually brothers) can put implicit pressure on younger non-migrant female members of the HH with a sense of pragmatism to establish local brokering which can only be fulfilled from more remittance flows.

The micro-politics of negotiation and contestation and mediating the agency of migrants is not limited to the decision-making, it rather continues through out the migratory process. Household members (together with social networks) continue to mediate the agency of migrants at transnational spaces. For instance at times of difficulty even when migrants want to return back, HH members insist for their stay unless it is a perceived serious problem such as physical abuse. The reason ranges from indebtedness, to desire for more financial gain to fulfil some consumption needs, pay schooling of usually male members, or replace some livelihood activities of female members of the HH. In this situation they fall under pressure to endure exploitative working conditions.

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<sup>12</sup> Kolo is culturally conceived to be consumed either at times of distress or else under normal circumstances by the very poor



Long live to my daughter, now I am relieved from that demanding task of injera baking.  
(Migrant's mother)

My son, who is a high school graduate, once wanted to go to Jeddah since he couldn't find descent job here. But I insisted that his younger sister go instead. She went to Dubai and now thank God he is studying accounting in college since she is paying.  
(Migrant's mother)

My daughter couldn't pass the 8th grade qualifying national exam. Indeed it is me who ruined her future since I used to demand her support in domestic chores and in my petty trading. But 2 of her brothers succeeded and they are at the university. So she decided to go to support them and the whole family since we – their poor mother and father- are not in a position to do so.  
(Migrant's mother)

*'Hansa lomi leand sew shekmu lehamsa sew getu'*- meaning  
Fifty lemons are burden to a person, but jewels to fifty people.  
(A saying forwarded by a migrant's mother)

#### 4.4. Conclusion

Poverty/ survival need/material deprivation, though important, doesn't necessarily justify risky and gender-selective transnational female labour migration among HHs with migrant members. If not more, equally important is the symbolic aspect of deprivation. The other important dimension that justifies gender selective migration with in HHs is transfer of cost with in the genders and between genders. Through the life cycle of the household, at certain point girls and young women are expected to take the responsibility of their mothers to work for livelihood of the HH or take the burden of financing the for personal development of other members of the HH. All these material and non-material demands with in the HH justify risky migration. More importantly, gender works as an organizing principle in the migration process. Gender as a structure is expressed in the persistence of gender division of labour in Ethiopia and in the ME instigating female labor migration; gender as an identity relegating migrant women in specific types of work in private arena.

## **V: THE MICRO-MESO INTERACTION ALONG THE MIGRATION-TRAFFICKING NEXUS**

In this chapter I present the analysis of how HHs and communities (the micro) interact with informal networks (the meso) in trans-local/transnational spaces. The interaction is particularly expressed in three social processes: organizing migration, institutionalizing informal networks; and transferring cost/risk upon the migrant women. By drawing theories from chapter 2 and the analysis from chapter 3 and 4, I will depict how informal networks evolve into strong migratory regimes by active role of the micro, in addition with other macro-structural processes. For insights on how the logic of the bigger picture (the policy arena and intervention initiatives) is crossed by the logic of the micro; I will bring in social practices and the community's perception on migration-safe or other wise. Finally, I map out the continuities and discontinuities on policy discourses on trafficking contrasting to the social practices of migration on the ground. In so doing, I draw alternative understanding of the migration, trafficking phenomenon as a continuum/nexus.

### **5.1. Social Organization of Migration in AKSC**

As it was mentioned in chapter 3, female labour migration in Ethiopia is by and large facilitated by the informal network. For instance a survey conducted with returnees and potential migrants showed that 60.6% of the respondents used the services of 'illegal agents' and 19% of them didn't know the legal status of the agents (Belayneh, 2003:17). Another study conducted on Ethiopian women migrant workers in four countries of MEGS also indicated that about 90% of the study subjects used the services of informal networks either to facilitate migration or job placement (AGRINET, 2004:18). In this study as well from interviews and FGDs, it was apparent the majority of AKSC migrants use informal networks to facilitate transnational migration. This fact necessitated the analysis of the structure and functioning of the informal system.

### *Structure of local brokers: Recruitment process, travel and job placement*

Previous studies characterize “traffickers” in Ethiopia as entities who “typically own travel agencies, import-export businesses, who have contacts in the Middle East or who travel to the region regularly for various reasons” (Kebede, 2001:6 ). Although this might be the case, however the major facilitators and their networks identified in this study are:

- Local brokers (usually brothers and rarely fathers/mothers) who have migrant sisters/daughters who stayed for longer period of time in the ME.
- Female migrant community members (usually who stayed there for years) who have a network with agents in the MEGS and/or PEAs in Ethiopia
- Less commonly female or male returnees who have a network with migrant members or agents there in the MEGS

According to study participants brokering/facilitating migration to the ME has become a growing business among predominantly few male members of the community in the past seven/eight years in AKSC. During the earlier times however, migration was facilitated by kinship and friendship networks free of charge, even at times covering travel expenses with a sense of fulfilling social obligations in kinship and friendship circles. Over the years, however those kinship and friendship networks were increasingly growing into business institutions. The change is not only in terms of business orientation, but the dramatic increase in facilitation rates from the initial amount of 500 ETB (56 USD) to current average of about 7000ETB (800 USD). A community elder described the phenomenon regrettably as follows:

I feel sad since our community has lost its sense of support and solidarity these days. In those old good days we used to share whatever we have with our neighbours. Former migrants in our neighbourhood used to facilitate migration for our members with their own finances. Now a days things have changed. I can tell you a good case. My neighbour Mrs. ‘A’, who is a returnee herself sent three of her daughters. They used to support other community members free of charge. But later their mother, Mrs. ‘A’ started charging migrants and her business grew within a short period. Anyway she managed to



pull herself out of poverty, and she even moved to another neighbourhood -Asko<sup>13</sup> building a house there.

Unlike anthropological and sociological studies of migration who set forth the cultural aspect of networks, especially the meanings attached to them and as a result are kinship, friendship-based; and the trafficking literature that reduces informal networks largely to simple business institutions; the findings of this study showed that the nature of kinship and friendship based networks can gradually evolve into profit-oriented business institutions.

#### *Recruitment process*

Unlike both centralized and decentralized mode of recruitment of organized crime groups for HT (Truong, 2001:18), in this case the recruitment process is more decentralized. The recruitment highly relies on social networks/social capital. The advertisement within the community or beyond takes place by use of word of mouth. Potential migrants and/or concerned community members approach the local brokers either themselves or through people who are much closer to the business owners. Returnees or migrant workers can be instrumental in recruiting potential migrants using their kinship and/or friendship networks. Other studies too have shown this (Kebede, 2001:6; AGRINET, 2004: 19; Belayneh, 2003). Recruitment of migrants is not limited in that community, but if from other communities it is done through reliable networks.

If the migrant is from our community it is okay since we know each other for years and we trust each other. But when people whom I don't know approach me, first I have to verify whether they are genuine clients or not. I provide services for such people when they approach me through somebody whom I trust since this is a risky business.

Local broker

#### *Mode of Exit and Entry*

Exit from Ethiopia or entry into the destination countries can be 'informal' or 'semi-formal'. Entry visas to the destination/ transit countries vary from religious pilgrimage

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<sup>13</sup> Asko is a name for one part of the city

visas like *Haji* and *Oumra*, to tourist visa and employment visas. According to the interviewed local brokers, they themselves and other brokers use their network with government Officials working at the Airport to facilitate exist for migrants with tourist visas. They bribe the officials since the Ethiopian law especially demands exit visas for people travelling to MEGS. In cases where brokers secure employment visas for potential migrants, they tactically facilitate registration at MOLSA and later immigration clearance for exit.

When the visas are tourist visas, we pay 'business'<sup>14</sup> to officials working at the Airport and they help our clients to exit since the government demands exit visas for those who went to the MEGS.

Local broker

#### *Job Placement*

There are a range of facilitators for job placement there in the MEGS. It includes employment agents in the destination countries who have a network with local brokers or returnees in Ethiopia; migrant workers who have a network with employment agents or with potential employers there at the destination side, and with local brokers in Ethiopia.

#### *The Informal Banking: A backup for the informal intermediation*

The other dimension of informal network that somehow back up the service of the local broker is the informal banking system in the community. Again it is kinship based business. Remittance flow used to be (is still in place) handled by returnees or transnational migrants travelling between Ethiopia and the MEGS. The reason is that firstly, many migrant workers can't use the services of the formal system due to their 'illegal' immigration status; and secondly the service charge by the formal system is quite 'unaffordable' for the majority of migrant workers even when they have a legal status at the destination. However, recently there is an emerging system where few individuals (usually young men) at the destination countries transfer remittances by charging migrant workers a commission which is lower than the formal banking. Distribution of the money at home is then handled by female members of the HH, specifically sisters of the business

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<sup>14</sup> 'Business' payment is a euphemistic reference of bribing officials used among brokers

owners. In both cases of informal networks- migration facilitation and the informal banking system, there is a clear gender division of labour- the main business is dominated by males while women are there as appendages. This implies that informal networks themselves are gendered.

## **5.2. Collective Agency and Institutionalization of Informal Networks: Gendered Structuration**

Other than using the services of local brokers, the community contributes for the institutionalization and legitimizing of such networks in two controversial ways. Firstly, by protecting the local brokers from the rule of law when they make migrant workers to engage in exploitative working relationships, or face different problems at the destination unless it is a 'perceived serious' problem such as death or physical damage.

In cases like early forced return/deportation, community elders manage disputes between migrants or their families, and the local brokers. They put pressure on the local broker to refund back some amount, usually half to the returnee. There is practical reason behind this negotiation as well since the community members are well aware that it is literally fruitless effort to pursue legal claim in the absence of 'solid evidence' where exchange of money takes place under the table. This points to how the protection of rights of trafficked women falls between the cracks of legislative and institutional arrangements of States, communities, and HHs.

Secondly, the community's own way of sanctioning of those local brokers who break *the rule of the game* established in the community or those who are *reluctant for the concerns of migrants/in job-selection*. In both cases i.e., when the local brokers refuse to pay back part of the money to deportees or when several of their clients face problems in the ME, community members defy their services. As focus group discussants asserted the community's sanctioning has such strength that either the brokers abandon this business and engage in other businesses or graduate into registered PEA, which according to some brokers is non-worthy venture. This shows how collective agency of the community



(albeit gendered) interact with the institutionalized structures of informal intermediaries implying structuration as process goes on at each point along the MTN.

Local broker 'F' twice, trice refused to pay back the money of unfortunate returnees in our neighbourhood. He didn't give ear to the pleading of elders and the families of the deportees. He himself ruined his respect. You know bad deeds/name spread quickly and in shorter period of time his service was abandoned. He was not the looser anyways, rather our daughters since he get engaged in other business.

FGD discussants

Why do I change my business status or get registered as PEA, why should I facilitate migration for less gain, why should I kill myself fulfilling heavy tax demands of the government?

Local broker 'M'

### **5.3. Safe Migration: Different Practices and Divergent Perspectives**

In the preamble of PEAP Act 104/1998, the aim of the proclamation is declared: 'to ensure the protection of the rights, safety and dignity of Ethiopians employed abroad' (Negarit Gazeta, 1998:715). And PEA is defined 'as any person independent of Government bodies that makes a worker available locally and/or abroad to a third party by concluding a contract of employment with such worker (Negarit Gazeta, 1998:715). Accordingly, an Ethiopian is allowed to work abroad only through PEA. From the State's perspective therefore, safe migration is the one that take place under the facilitation of the formal intermediary that has a legal entity.

#### ***Facilitated migration and informal networks: The community's practice and rationale***

For the locales, there are sought advantages to facilitate labour migration using local brokers and social networks than the formal system. First it is easily accessible and fast, though not cheap<sup>15</sup> compared to services provided by PEAs which usually takes a long period of waiting time and which also involves risk of non-placement. This can be

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<sup>15</sup> Excluding other expenses, the net payment for the broker ranges from 5,000ETB- 8,000ETB which is a huge sum according to the majority of the participants since they are 'poor'.

attributed to the malfunctioning of the private sector for overseas employment as was discussed in chapter 3.

Secondly, there are varieties of travel and payment arrangements which involve negotiation over the amount and duration of payment as well. This suits for the urban poor who don't have financial asset at their disposal. It can be arranged in such a way: full payment prior to departure after the migrants secure a visa; half prior to departure and half from their salary after departure; or full payment from their salaries over a given period of time. At times local brokers offer discounts for community members who are close. As all study participants affirmed the payment to brokers doesn't involve interest rates unless family members or migrants borrow the money from other lenders in the community. Thirdly, lack of trust on the formal system especially PEAs, since some of them unlawfully charge migrant workers.

### *Divergent perspectives*

In previous studies in Ethiopia, there is a tendency to reduce the reason for the use of the informal channel to lack of awareness of the legal means, and to associate 'informality/illegality' with risk (Belayneh, 2003; Kebede, 2001; AGRINET, 2004). The findings of this study however showed community practices and perceptions do not always prove this. For instance, quite a proportion of the study participants do not conflate 'illegal/irregular' migration with 'risk'. But this doesn't necessarily entail consciousness.

In fact there were conflicting views concerning what generally mean safe/risky migration and the migrant's experience per se. The first category emphasize on the 'illegality' of using informal means of facilitation, particularly local brokers; yet does not associate this with 'risk' when it comes to the personal experiences of the migrants. This mainly emanates from the trust the community has on social networks.

My daughter 'T' who is sixteen and was an 8th grade student left 5 months ago for she understood that my income is meagre to support the whole family after my marriage broke-up some 10 months ago. I had to falsify her age on the Kebele ID so that she could

have her passport as 18 years old and would be eligible for employment. She got registered at 'y' PEA and we waited and repeatedly checked for four months. We couldn't wait for any longer and decided to contact a local broker- a returnee in our locality to facilitate her travel. Thank God, it was nice of her to offer us a discount of 2,500ETB, and she only demanded half of it prior to my daughter's departure.

Migrant's mother

The second category contemplates the risk, but it is well weighed with the intended gain of the HH and the migrant. In which ever case, there is a general awareness of possible risks in the ME; the gut reaction was "*we hear the Arabs throw away Ethiopians from their balconies, and even witnessed the death of 2 young women in our community*". Yet this is by and large associated with the outcome of migration rather than the means employed at various stages of the migration.

We believe that her friend will support her. We are convinced that the problem she faces there is not worse than the problem she faced here/we face here. It is all the same taking risk in the ME or living in poverty here.

Both migrant's mother and father

Even if we knew that it was risky that we can't stop from sending them because the problem we face here is worse than they face there. We prayed and said *Allah tewokeltu*.

Migrant's father

It is better to take whatever risk there rather than starving to death here. We are concerned about our daily problems, and day to day living.

Migrant's mother

It is a matter of chance. There is death everywhere. Anything can happen to her even if she didn't go there. We don't have another alternative.

Migrant's mother

#### **5.4. Labour Migration or Trafficking?**

Unlike attempts on policy discourses to delineate trafficking from other forms of migration, it is in practice difficult to delineate when migration tops and trafficking begins (Kelly, 2005; Skeldon, 2000; Truong, 2006). Policy discourse emphasizes (UN,



2000) to qualify an act as trafficking; it must entail coercion/use of force, deception, exploitation, trade and illegality. However, the findings of this research shows trafficking can happen at any point in the migration process. Moreover, legal/formal means of facilitation doesn't necessarily guarantee safe migration. As discussed earlier the majority of migrants move voluntarily (note that voluntarism doesn't necessarily entail agency) using the informal channel which probably qualify to the category of irregular migration rather than trafficking. However, in the process get trafficked-being exploited, face a number of violations of their human rights.

One key issue for instance, which key informants from concerned line ministries, community members and returnees alike pointed out, is confiscation and seizure of passports immediately on arrival whether the migration is formal or informal, documented or undocumented.

It seems handing over our passports to our employers the moment we meet them is the primary requirement for employment. After having our passports, they literally enslave us. Yes this is the fate of every migrant whether she goes legally or illegally.

Returnees (Focus group discussants)

Yes, we know that employers seize the passports of our clients on arrival. But we have little control on what happens there at the destination, except informing them to contact the embassy or consular office, the sister agency or us at times of need.

General manager-PEA

Migrants can face problems at different levels; be it at the exit, entry, transit stages or stay at the destination. The exploitation begins at home/with in the community when migrants have to pay quite a huge sum for facilitation of migration/job placement. Indebtedness is one key reason that forces migrants to stay in exploitative working situation, even worse instigates re-trafficking at times of forced return. Nonetheless, problems identified as major areas of concern by study participants are those that arise from the destination side. Work overload/overwork is mentioned by parents as inevitable, yet tolerable. Returnees on the other hand mention work over load as one of the major problems that even challenges their health. Other problems include irregular payment, denial of payment, verbal and physical abuse like beating, and denial of food. At most

times, sexual harassment, rape, major physical damage, and death are the ones that trigger attention among community members.

My wife runaway from her first employer since her master tried to rape her. Even more she was denied her 6 months salary. When she tried to run away without her passport for it was with her employer police caught her. She was in prison for 3 months and then gets deported. But she went back again since she has to pay our debt. Now thank God, she is working there comfortably since her current employers are good.

Migrant's husband

On my third day in Beirut, my master attempted to rape me. I kept on weeping silently so that my madam couldn't find out. Oh, if so she would have kicked me away immediately. But luckily enough guests came and he just stopped such insane. After some time I got the courage to warn him whenever he tries. The sad part is however, after two years when their son become 18, he continued harassing me sexually. Well I tolerated that all, but my madam was not willing to increase my salary from 100 USD even when they moved to a bigger house which gave me a lot trouble to clean it. Then I came back to try to Dubai since the payment there is quite okay i.e. 130 US per month.

Returnee

## 5.5. Conclusion

The micro interacts with the meso in trans-local/transnational spaces mainly in three visible ways in AKSC: taking key role in using the services and popularizing the informal system, organizing migration, institutionalizing informal networks; and transferring cost/risk upon the migrant women. And this strong interaction and interdependence of the micro-meso in AKSC has resulted in reproduction and self-sustaining migratory regimes. The continuum of migration and trafficking is also evident in the migratory process. It is expressed in several terms: continuum of facilitation that ranges from informal, semi-formal to formal; dynamism in the nature and role of informal networks; and the overlapping of migration and trafficking along the continuum of mobility.

## VI: CONCLUSION

This study began intending to explore the micro-politics of interests within the HH and the community that instigate risky female labour migration, and how the micro institutions interact with meso-level institutions (informal networks) to reproduce strong and self-sustaining migratory regimes. The approach the study adapted and its limited analysis that base in the bounded community of AKSC does not allow generalizability. Yet its findings prompt further inquiry for research is an ongoing process of discovery<sup>16</sup>. Nor do I-the researcher believe this is a final product, rather the purpose was basically opening the 'Pandora's box', and bringing to light some key theoretical and empirical issue for further engagement in the development field. With this conviction, in the following paragraphs I will attempt to pull together the main issues that came up in the study. These issues centre on the confluence of factors that facilitate risky migration, as well as the dynamics that challenge current theorizing/policy discourse on trafficking. I address the main axes of this paper: gender, power, care labour, migration, agency, structure and institutional interactions including the market. And importantly, I do so in a relational way.

In order to understand the micro-level factors that instigate risky female labour migration from AKSC to ME, the analysis of the opportunity structures or in Giddensian terms rules (legislations) and resources (institutional context) for safe female migration in Ethiopia was important. This revealed that the formal system for facilitated migration is deficient, and it is mainly incapacitated by the market forces in demand for cheap labour of 'illegalized' migrants. In situations where communities are not able to access these opportunity structures, they device their own structures-rules and resources to gain access to the labour market. Not only they device some structures, they as well use existing gender norms and rules (structures).

Access to the labour market is in turn established by active interaction with the informal system of migration facilitation by organizing a system mobility, institutionization of

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<sup>16</sup> I owe this idea to Dr. Truong



informal systems, and transferring recruitment, job placement, and travel cost and business risks upon the migrants. In this was the micro interacts with the meso to form migratory regimes which are stronger and more self-perpetuating than those formally instituted ones. Through this process, gender falls along the cracks of the rules and functioning of formal and informal migratory regimes. Such complex institutional interaction along the MTN is organized on principles of gender. The market demand for 'cheap' young female labour; the persistence gender as structure in the care domain linking HHs in transnational spaces; gendered legislative and institutional arrangements shape certain types of female migration, risky or otherwise.

In addition to deficient macro level systems, micro-politics of interests within the HH explain risky female labour migration. Active engagement of the household members in risky migration endeavours are not necessarily explained by lack of awareness or the material deprivation/survival needs of the HH. Demand to fulfil symbolic aspects of deprivation has also central place in the micro-politics of interests for female labour migration. Assumptions of 'distress entry' into certain labour markets (Sassen, 2000) are challenged by 'internationalizing' tendency of consumption goods as social status markers. Along this line, the discursive interaction of the global-local can be another area of inquiry in migration cum trafficking research.

In this study, the migration-trafficking distinction has been found to be a messy terrain. Few key issues specially illuminate this complexity. Non-voluntarism is not a feature among migrants in AKSC, yet the notion of consent/agency is as well blurred. This doesn't mean the migrants do not exercise agency while engaging in risky migration, but they do so with what is 'culturally conceivable' (Kandiyoti, 1999:139). They continually negotiate their femininity when they decide to migrate, for instance by justifying it as for the overall gain of the HH. Moreover, migration is not as such 'autonomous' women's decision, rather a collective endeavour of HH members and social networks.

This finding does not only challenge the migration trafficking distinction, but also query the conceptualization of the agent as 'knowledgeable and capable subject who makes a decision based on cost-benefit analysis' in Structuration approach (Goss and Linstead, 1995: 332; Wolfel, 2002: 7). In a way this notion of agency falls in the trap of methodological individualism for it does not adequately conceptualize *relationships*. The logic of 'autonomy' and 'rationality' in such conceptualization of agency by implication presumes individuals to be free of social and historical conditions (Meriam, 2005:2; Leira and Sareceno; 2002:61). The point is the analytical potential of structuration theory can be strengthened from insights of feminist conceptualization of individuals as *relational* subjects where their agency can be mediated by series of institutions.

Although insufficiently problematized in the trafficking literature, the other major finding in this study that challenges the migration-trafficking distinction is indentured form of migration. Indenture ship –where the cost of recruitment, travel, job placement and of course business risks is transferred from interest groups (employers, informal intermediaries, and HH members) on to migrants is one junction where migration intersects with trafficking. Indebtedness in indentured form of migration is for example one key feature which forces migrants from AKSC to stay in exploitative working relationships. Transfer of cost is also another key reason in which risky migration is justified and power is articulated as well between and with in genders in micro-politics of interests.

In addition to a continuum of facilitation ranging from legal to semi-legal and illegal, what has been found important where migration and trafficking overlap is in kinship and friendship networks evolving over time to profit-oriented migration facilitating institutions. Sense of reciprocity is not totally absent in such networks/businesses as was discussed earlier in the previous chapters; yet they are exploitative in their relationships with migrants and/ or their families. Such dynamism in migrant social networks/institutions can be another area of inquiry where migration research (with its' focus on reciprocity of kinship and friendship based networks) and literature on

trafficking (with its' focus on profit-orientation of mediating institutions) can talk to each other.

In a nut shell, the analysis of the micro politics of interests, and the micro-meso institutional interactions in female labour migration in this study brings to light the complexity of the trafficking phenomenon that lies at the 'cross-roads' of different axes of power and intersecting realities. Moreover, it has to lend perspectives to the policy field that largely focuses on 'punitive measures' with all its 'good' intentions to counter trafficking.



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## **Appendix 1 Household Questionnaire**

### **Household Questionnaire for the Study Entitled: "The Trafficking of Young Women from Ethiopia to the Middle East: The Gendered Dynamics of Community Involvements"**

#### **Preamble**

Hello, my name is Abinet G.Gebremariam. I am an MA participant in the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, the Netherlands. I am interested to learn about the reason for the migration of young women to the Middle-East. This information will be used for my research paper which I hope will also be useful for Community-based Organizations in Ethiopia and Non-Governmental Organizations engaged in preventing risky migration.

I request your kind cooperation in participating in the interview since the information you provide is very important for this research. I want to assure you that this is anonymous questionnaire, and also the answers you provide will be treated with great confidentiality. I wish to emphasize that the participation is voluntary, and I will be most grateful if you could grant me some time for the interview at your convenience. The interview is estimated to take about an hour. Do you agree to participate in the interview? If yes, when?

**Thank you!**

Respondent's ID. \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_/08/2006

Time: (Starting) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Ending) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section I. Brief Household Socio-economic and Demographic Profile**

1. Number of the household members \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex composition of the household members
  1. Male \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age composition of the household members
  1. < 12 years
  2. 12-18 years
  3. > 18 years
4. Type of HH
  1. MHH
  2. FHH
  3. CHH

5. Religion

- |               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Muslim     | 4. Catholic         |
| 2. Orthodox   | 5. Others (Specify) |
| 3. Protestant |                     |

6. Livelihood

1. Number of working members-sex disaggregated (probe for the major bread winner and associated assumptions) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Types of income earning activities \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Regularity of income \_\_\_\_\_
4. Monthly income (in any) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Use and control of income-check for gender differentiation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Did the household income diminished over the past 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
6. If yes to Q.5, why? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many members migrated to MEGS? \_\_\_\_\_
7. The migrant's own marital/family status \_\_\_\_\_  
M1 \_\_\_\_\_  
M2 \_\_\_\_\_
8. The migrant's educational status \_\_\_\_\_  
M1 \_\_\_\_\_  
M2 \_\_\_\_\_
9. The migrant's previous employment status \_\_\_\_\_  
M1 \_\_\_\_\_  
M2 \_\_\_\_\_
10. Age at migration \_\_\_\_\_  
M1 \_\_\_\_\_  
M2 \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2. Migration History**

1. Which female member of the household migrated to the Middle-east?
  - a. Daughter,
  - b. Female head of the household,
  - c. Relative
  - d. Other
2. When did she migrate?
  - a. <1 yr
  - b. 1-5 years
  - c. >5 years
3. Is this migration for the first time? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If no, for how many times? \_\_\_\_\_



### Section 3. Migration Decision

1. Why did the migrant leave the country?
  - a. The migrant's lack of job/low income status
  - b. The migrants desire for better income
  - c. Household's low income status
  - d. The household's desire for better income
  - e. Experience of abuse (physical, psychological,...) with in the household
  - f. Others \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who initiated the idea of migration?
  - a. The migrant herself
  - b. All adult members of the household
  - c. All female adult members of the household
  - d. Friends and relatives in the community
  - e. Friends and/or relatives in the MEGS
  - f. Others \_\_\_\_\_
3. If the migrant, do you think it was her own initiative? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. If other adult members of the household initiated it, why? (Probe for gender identities, values, emerging alternative assumptions) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why was this specific female member of the household selected to migrate, why not male member? (Probe for gender power relations, gender and care work)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Was there any resistance from the migrant or other members of the household about her migration? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. If yes, how was it dealt? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. If other members of the household don't approve her migration, what was the reason? (Probe for gender power relation, religion related issues, fear of losing stable source of livelihood,...and/or the intersection of these factors)

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#### Section 4. Migration/Travel Arrangements

1. What kind of travel arrangements have been made for international migration? (Probe for 'legality' and 'illegality'- example use of private employment agents, travel agents, any other)

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2. Who facilitated the travel?

- a. Recruiters (Local brokers)
- b. Outside brokers
- c. Household members
- d. Friends/relatives (at home or in the MEGS)
- e. Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. If she arranged her exit through a broker, how much money did she pay? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How was the money for travel generated?

- a. Migrant's or household members own saving
- b. Borrowed
- c. Arranged by the recruiters/travel agents to be paid over time
- d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. If the money was borrowed or arranged by recruiters, what kind of mechanism have been used (are being used) to return back the money? (Probe if there is any debt bondage)

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6. Do you think the payment made for travel or its interest rate to be reasonable?

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## Section 5. Social and Economic Remittance

1. Do you think the migrant's social and economic status improved? (Probe for success stories, changes in gender relationst)

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2. Does the migrant send remittances?

1. Yes regularly
2. Yes occasionally
3. Not at all

3. If she sends, does the household's socio-economic status improved (Probe for increased income, better asset ownership,...) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Are there other migrant community members (male or female) whom you know that that send remittances? (Probe for gender differences in remitting) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is there any observable change in the social or economic status of their respective households? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Do you think these social and economic changes were inspiring to other young women in your household or your community? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Section 6. Perception of Risky Migration

1. Have you and/or the migrant heard about any form of risky migration? (Probe for risky travel, transit, or stay at the ME) \_\_\_\_\_

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2. If yes, from which source? (Media, NGOs, CBOs,...) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your opinion about safe and risky migration? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think the migrant's migration was risky? \_\_\_\_\_

5. If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

6. If you think it was risky, what was your reaction? (Probe for measures taken to minimize risk) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Does the migrant ever told you any form of abuses or work related problems that she faced during recruitment, travel to or stay in the MEGS? \_\_\_\_\_

8. If yes, what was your reaction? (Probe for the household members denial of/neglecting/consideration of the problem,...and related actions)

## **Section 7. Experience of Return/Re-trafficking (If any-refer to part section 2 Q.3)**

1. What was the reason for return? (Probe for success stories, problems on the demand side, mismatch between aspiration and gain, household reaction...)

2. What was your reaction when the migrant returned home? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the reaction of your neighbors concerning her return? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Is there any change in the income or attitude of the household members in relation with the migrant's return? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you think any change in your household induced aspiration or fear among your neighbors? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Why did the migrant go to the MEGS again? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How was her travel arranged again? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Is she sending remittances? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you want other adult female/male members of the household or relatives to go to the MEGS? \_\_\_\_\_
10. If yes, do you have plans to help them going anyway? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What is your general opinion regarding the increasing trend of migration to the MEGS? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. If you are in favor of migration, what do you think should be done to minimize risky migration? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you once again for your cooperation!**





## Appendix 2 Focus Group Discussion Guide

### Focus Group Discussion Guide

#### Preamble

Hello, my name is Abinet G.Gebremariam. I am an MA participant in the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, the Netherlands. I am interested to learn about the reason for the migration of young women to the Middle-East in your community and how their migration is facilitated. This information will be used for my research paper which I hope will also be useful for Community-based Organizations in Ethiopia and Non-Governmental Organizations engaged in preventing risky migration.

I request your kind cooperation in participating in this discussion since the information you provide is very important for this research. I want to assure you that your participation will not cause harm for the answers you provide will be treated with great confidentiality. I wish to emphasize the participation is voluntary, yet I will be most grateful if you could grant me some time for the discussion. I need to tape record our discussion so that I have the chance to re-listen to the points you made. Would you allow me?

#### Thank you!

Group No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_/08/2006

Time: (Starting) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Ending) \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. General

1. When international migration become common in your community?
2. Which countries/regions are common destinations for male and female migrants in your community? If there is any difference why?
  - a. Probe for supply and demand side gendered assumptions, arrangements; continuity of gender relations
3. Why do female members in most cases migrate?
  - a. Probe for gendered assumptions in the HH and in the community
  - b. Probe for structural and symbolic factors

4. Which age groups, ethnic and religious groups commonly migrate?
5. Which household head/member (male or female) play a great role in decision-making process for migration, finding ways for travel, generating money for travel,...?
6. From which member come resistance for the female's migration if there is any?
  - a. Probe for gender power relation
  - b. The role of religion/consumerist culture
  - c. Fear of losing stable source of livelihood and/or the intersection of these factors

## **II. The Practice of Migration and Travel Arrangements**

1. What kind of travel arrangements are usually used for international migration?
  - a. Probe for 'formal', semi-formal or 'informal' means of facilitation
2. Which types of travel arrangements are preferred for international migration?
  - a. Check for discrepancy in actual use and preference
3. Why do your community members prefer the services of local brokers than PEAs or public employment service?
  - a. Probe for the advantages and disadvantages
  - b. Types of travel and payment arrangements

## **III. Social and Economic Remittance**

1. Are the migrant community members (male or female) whom you know send remittances?
  - Probe for gender differences in remitting
2. How do their respective families use the money? (
  - Probe for gender differences in managing remittance, livelihood systems,...)
3. Do you think their respective household's socio-economic status improved?
  - Probe for increased income, better asset ownership,...?
4. Do you think these social and economic changes were inspiring to other young women in your household or your community?

#### **IV. Perception of Risky Migration**

1. Have you heard about any form of risky migration before?
  - Probe for risky travel, different forms of abuses in the ME? Which source?
2. What is your opinion about safe and risky migration?
3. Do CBOs or NGOs work to counter risky migration in your community?
4. If you are in favour of migration, what do you think should be done to minimize risky migration?

#### **V. Experience of Return/Re-trafficking, Sanctioning mechanisms**

1. What are the common reasons for return?
  - Probe for success stories, problems on the demand side,
2. What is the family's, neighbours, community members reaction when migrants return home, especially before the end of contract?
  - Probe for cultural factors, pressure or expectation of the community...
3. Why do you think returnees migrate to the ME again?
4. What do you do as a community when one of the parties, either migrants or local brokers fails to fulfil their obligation? Failure in job placement for either side, when the migrants face problem,...

**Thank you for your cooperation!**



