

THE REINTEGRATION OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION RETURNEES IN OMO NADA  
DISTRICT, JIMMA ZONE, OROMIA REGION, ETHIOPIA

By

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## DECLARATION

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“The Reintegration of illegal migration returnees in Omo Nada District, Jimma Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia”

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



.....  
**SIGNATURE**

19 April, 2018

.....  
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to the returnees of 'illegal migrants' to Omo Nada district who were willing to provide me information I need to make my study successful. Without the genuine information they provide me, it would have been difficult for me to complete this study.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ETB: Ethiopian Birr

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FDRE MOLSA: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

FGD: Focus Group Discussions

HIV: Human Immune Virus

IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

ILO: International Labour Organization

IMF: International Monetary Fund

IOM: International Organization for Migration

NGO: Non-governmental Organization

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

RMMS: Regional Migration Secretariat

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UN.GIFT: United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking

UNICEF: United Nations Children Fund

UNISA: University of South Africa

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

WHO: World Health Organization

## GLOSSARY OF LOCAL TERMS

**Dalala:** broker

**Iddir:** a burial society, which provides assistance for its members in the case of death and assists with costs for funeral ceremonies

**Iqub:** a traditional co-operative or self-help group established by a community to provide financial assistance to members

**Kebele:** the smallest administrative unit at grass-root level in the Ethiopian political administrative system

**Khat:** a green stimulant leaf chewed by some people in Ethiopia

## ABSTRACT

Despite the imperative of reintegration assistance for returnees of illegal migration, which will enable them to become independent and productive members of the community, the reintegration needs and experiences of returned illegal migrants are neglected in academic studies. The objectives of the study were to explore the socio-contextual factors that gave rise to the illegal migration of the study participants; their illegal migration abuse and exploitation experiences; the reintegration needs they sought after return; and the responses of relevant stakeholders to meet the reintegration needs of the returnees and help them reintegrate into the community. To this end, I conducted a qualitative study in Omo Nada district in 2017. I collected the data by means of in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. I used thematic analysis to analyze the findings. The study revealed that the decision to migrate 'illegally' was the result of numerous drivers: poverty, unemployment, political discrimination, family pressure, and absence of legal means, the influence of brokers and smugglers, and socio-cultural and religious factors. The returned migrants experienced various types of abuse and exploitation, including physical abuse, economic, labour and sexual exploitation both on the migration journey and at the place of destination. The long periods of isolation some experienced also resulted in the disintegration of their families. Participants identified the need for support in the form of health services, counselling, housing, employment, skills training, finances, loans and social support from relevant stakeholders such as family, the community, the government and non-governmental organizations. Despite the many needs identified, the relevant bodies provided very little reintegration support. Due to this, the returnees were not able to reintegrate into their communities. Returning to the pre-migration conditions which drove them to migrate 'illegally' in the first place, with no hope of any reintegration assistance, led some returnees to re-migrate illegally. Reintegration is a key aspect for return migration. Therefore, to be sustainable and for the reintegration process to be successful it must be widely supported. The consequences of illegal migration and reintegration support must be taken seriously and supported by the government in all its aspects. Government agencies such as the Labour and Social Affairs Office must be capacitated to provide the necessary assistance and supports to effect sustainable integration.

**Key terms:** illegal migration, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, returnees, reintegration, economic reintegration, social reintegration, reintegration supports, Omo Nada, Jimma Zone, Oromia, Ethiopia.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The objective of this research was to investigate the illegal migration and reintegration experiences of illegal migration returnees to Omo Nada District in Ethiopia. The two major types of illegal migration are migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

Illegal migrant people who have been smuggled or trafficked may face severe abuse *en route* to their final destinations or in the countries of destination. One of the central aspects of anti-trafficking endeavours is the assistance and protection provided to trafficked persons. First, they need immediate health and welfare needs responses. After that, some will require further assistance to reintegrate into their communities. Reintegration of victims is central to efforts made by governments around the world to prevent, protect, assist and reintegrate the victims into social life. Effective reintegration includes various reintegration services and supports.

#### 1.1 Background to the study

“Illegal migration”<sup>1</sup> (also known as irregular migration) refers to the entrance and residence of individual/s in another country without having or receiving legal authorization from the host state to do so (International Council on Human Rights Policy 2010:1). Illegal migration involves crossing of borders without complying with the requirements for legal entry into the receiving state. It takes place outside the norms and procedures established by states to manage the orderly flow of migrants into, through and out of their territories (International Organization of Migration 2003:6). “From the perspective of destination countries, irregular migration is illegal entry, stay or work in a country, meaning that the migrant does not have the necessary authorization or documents required under migration regulations to enter, reside or work in a given country. From the perspective of the source country, the irregularity is seen, for example, whenever a person

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<sup>1</sup>While illegal migration is globally acknowledged to be a growing problem, estimating the numbers of people who are smuggled or trafficked every year is problematic. The covert and illegal nature of smuggling and trafficking makes both phenomena difficult to provide accurate estimates of their incidences (Native, McClain & Stacy 2010:243). Estimates are inconsistent and are likely to be gross underestimates.

crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfill the administrative requirements for leaving the country (Bisrat, Teklebrhan, Woldeabrah & Muuz 2017:33).

Illegal migration is a subcategory of international migration. Its distinguishing feature is its illegal status which the rules adopted by national governments and international organizations defines (United Nations University 2003:1).

The two major types of illegal migration are migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The smuggling of migrants and human trafficking have become widespread, their causes being deep-rooted in the socio-economic and political structures of societies (Human Smuggling and Trafficking Centre 2006:1). In countries characterized by deep-rooted poverty and an inability of governments to provide employment opportunities for their citizens, many people consider some form of migration as the only available option to improve their livelihoods. Most countries, however, have restrictive immigration policies despite abject poverty and lack of employment opportunities, and despite the demand for cheap labour in other countries. These circumstances drive some to choose illegal migration, which potentially makes them vulnerable to a range of human rights abuses, including labour and sexual exploitation, violence, detention and even killings in transit and host countries (IOM 2011: 8; ILO 2011: vii).

Up to 1,500 persons depart daily as part of legal migration, but there is widespread evidence that illegal migration (both migrant smuggling and human trafficking) is prevalent in Ethiopia and operates clandestinely (ILO 2011: ix). Between mid-2014 and mid-2015, the Federal Police in Ethiopia investigated some 400 cases of human smuggling and imprisoned more than 200 of the smugglers (Sahan Foundation and Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2016:21). The Ethiopian government also assisted in the identification of more than 3,000 trafficking cases and convicted 69 traffickers under the new Ethiopian anti-trafficking law (US Department of State 2016:167-168).

Many people leave their homes and families every year in search of economic opportunities that are not available to them in their home countries. They often make the decision to emigrate based on false information provided by smugglers and brokers regarding the lucrative employment opportunities and better pay abroad or destination countries (Jayagupta 2009:234). The migrant, their families and relatives spend considerable amounts of money on illegal migration (ILO

2011:54). They emigrate either by selling their families' scarce resources or by borrowing money from relatives to pay the smugglers and illegal brokers who promise to undertake the so-called facilitation activities to help them reach the place of destination safely and get decent employment with good pay.

Contrary to the promise of well paid jobs, however, many irregular emigrants are soon absorbed into the illicit world of people smuggling and trafficking which exposes them to conditions of ongoing exploitation and human misery (UNODC 2008:88). There is evidence that smugglers continue to exploit 'illegal migrants' through threats and demands for additional fees. Many illegally smuggled people also become vulnerable to trafficking syndicates due to their lack of legal status, knowledge and experiences of the foreign culture (Jayagupta 2009:234).

Smugglers and traffickers subject the migrants to detention, extortion and severe abuse en route to their final destinations (US Department of State 2015). In some cases, smugglers force migrant to work for years in the illegal labour market to pay off debts incurred because of their transportation. In countries of destination, migrants may become vulnerable to different forms of exploitations in a range of industries like agriculture, construction, domestic work, entertainment, forestry, fishing, mining and textiles (IOM 2015:3). The abuse ranges from the imposition of excessive working hours with unfair pay to verbal and physical abuse to even sexual harassment and sexual attacks. Substandard working conditions and unfair contractual terms are imposed on them by middlemen and employers. Women are particularly vulnerable as the abusers rape and often force them to engage in prostitution (Calandruccio 2005:278).

In addition to being subjected to unsafe conditions on the smuggling journey, smuggled aliens may be held under debt bondage by brokers and smugglers until their debt is paid off by the emigrants, family members or others (Human Smuggling and Trafficking and Center 2006:1).

Ethiopia has been identified as a source, and to some extent a destination and transit country, for illegally smuggled or trafficked men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex exploitation (US Department of State 2016:167). People are smuggled and trafficked through the country via three major routes in east, north and south (IOM 2015:9).

Most of the illegal migrants from Ethiopia to other countries typically face exploitative conditions. The smugglers and traffickers force Ethiopian girls into domestic servitude and prostitution in

countries such as Egypt, Somalia, Yemen, Djibouti, Sudan and South Sudan (particularly in Juba, Bor, and Bentiu). Similarly, they subject Ethiopian boys to forced labour in places such as Djibouti as shop assistants, errand boys, domestic workers, thieves, and street beggars (US Department of State 2012). Migrants are exposed to a range of health concerns including torture, domestic violence, alcoholism, psychological problems, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in transit as well as destination countries (Muco 2013:93; Enaikele & Olutayo 2011: 416; Abdulraheem & Oladipo 2010:35-36; UNODC 2008:9; Bryant-Davis, Tillman, Marks & Smith 2009).

Apart from the abuses and exploitation they face in transit and in places of destination, returnees also face marginalization from family, relatives and the community in their home country due to the stigma and discrimination associated with the negative consequences of illegal migration (particularly human trafficking). Family and/or community rejection is particularly high for returnees who faced sexual exploitation (International Organization for Migration 2010:14). Many of them return after being arrested as illegal immigrants. In addition to the shame and humiliation they experienced from the exploitation, they also face rejection because they usually return home impoverished and without fulfilling their families' hopes of them coming back with resources (UNODC 2008:73). As families and relatives invest much money for the facilitation of their family members' migration, they expect the family members to pay back the money. Returnees thus face social disapproval regardless of the harm they suffered under the exploitative situation especially when they return without the promised wealth (IOM 2006).

Many young Ethiopians transit illegally through Djibouti, Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, or Kenya to the Middle East every year to seek work in the Middle East (US Department of State 2015). A joint study conducted by the Danish Refugee Council and Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (2012) revealed that Ethiopian irregular migrants represented over 75% of all maritime arrivals in Yemen in 2011. Over 75,000 Ethiopians arrived at Yemen's coast in 2011 of which about 56,000 of them entered Yemen to get to Saudi Arabia. The study also reported that over the past six and a half years, the cumulative number of new arrivals from Ethiopia was estimated to be at least 230,000 (Danish Refugee Council and the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat 2012:5).

Saudi Arabia receives the largest number of illegal migrants from the Horn of Africa in general, and from Ethiopia in particular. Over the last three years, between 100,000 and 200,000 Ethiopians

migrated to Saudi Arabia annually through regular labour migration. Estimation indicated that the number of irregular Ethiopian migrants is double the size of the regular migrants (The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat 2014:9). Over 400,000 Ethiopians, including some trafficking victims, reside in Saudi Arabia (US Department of State 2016:167).

In 2013, the Saudi government launched an unprecedented crackdown on irregular migrants for security concerns and opened up employment opportunities for its own citizens. It deported approximately one million migrants from Saudi Arabia to their countries of origin in January 2014. Of these, about 160,000 were Ethiopians (The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat 2014:9-10).

### *1.1.1 The smuggling-trafficking continuum*

Conceptually, there is a broad distinction between people smuggling and human trafficking. In general, the individuals who pay a smuggler in order to gain illegal entry to a country do so voluntarily whereas the victims of human trafficking enter another country through deception or force. In principle, the relationship between smuggler and migrant ends once the individual arrives in the new country. Smuggled migrants may have control over their situation at the point of recruitment but there are conditions under which they may become victims of human trafficking. Although they initially give consent to be smuggled across an international border, they often find themselves in conditions that involve abuse, deprivation of power, exploitation and debt bondage. It is, therefore, difficult to make a clear distinction between trafficked and smuggled persons in practice (Batsyukova 2012:43). The distinctions between the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking are, therefore, very subtle and they often overlap. Even though not all smuggled migrants become victims of trafficking, smuggled migrants are highly vulnerable to trafficking or other forms of exploitation during their journey or once they reach place of destination (IOM 2015:3-4; Sahar Foundation and IGAD Security Sector Program 2016:4).

In Ethiopia, the terms ‘smuggling of migrants’ and ‘trafficking in persons’<sup>2</sup> are used interchangeably. Because of the lack of any clear definitions in the existing legal and policy framework, there is no clear understanding of the differences between the two concepts in the country. This is true across all informant groups, including law enforcement and judicial officials (IOM 2011: 8). Despite the lack of a common and clear understanding, there is ample evidence for

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<sup>2</sup>These terms are discussed more comprehensively in Chapter two.

the prevalence of illegal migration (migrant smuggling and human trafficking) in the country. The smuggling and trafficking of Ethiopians who end up in situations of extreme exploitation are well documented (IOM 2011: 8; ILO 2011:7; US Department of State 2016:167-168). For the purposes of this study, illegal migrants who have experienced severe abuse and exploitation, and victims of human trafficking and are treated as a single category and the term ‘returnees’ as employed in this study includes both categories.

### *1.1.2 The need for successful reintegration*

One of the central aspects of anti-trafficking endeavours is the assistance and protection given to trafficked persons that includes various reintegration supports (Surtees 2010:19). Reintegration of illegal migrants, who faced abuse and exploitation, is central to efforts made by governments around the world to prevent, protect, assist and reintegrate the victims in social life (Muco 2013:1857).

Victims of human trafficking typically require a range of immediate and long-term supportive measures such as immediate health, basic and welfare needs to recover from their exploitative experiences. Once their immediate health and welfare needs are met, some victims also require further assistance either to stay in the destination country, return home and reintegrate, or resettle in another country (Lyneham 2014:1). Returnees also require social acceptance, legal protection, and a secure and safe environment in order to reintegrate into society and lead socially accepted normal lives (IOM 2007: 81-82).

The multifaceted abuses and exploitation experienced by the returnees under illegal migration call for holistic and successful reintegration which requires the provision of need-based assistance, services and follow-up to help them recover and restore from the harms they encountered (UNODC 2008:87). The traumatic, exploitative and abusive condition they experienced coupled with the rejection, stigma and discrimination they often face from family members, relatives and community upon return necessitates the need for reintegration assistance and support. Without effective reintegration schemes, returnees often face re-traumatisation, feel violated, unsafe, invalidated, misunderstood, rejected, become helpless and hopeless. These in turn increase the vulnerability of the victims to re-trafficking (Johnson 2012:370).

Reintegration support is not only necessary for those returnees who are trafficked from the very beginning but also it is important for those who were smuggled and experienced abuse, exploitation and deportation. Smuggling can result in trafficking despite its initial voluntary nature. Smuggled persons may also encounter various forms of abuse and maltreatment. Reintegration support and assistance, therefore, become crucial for the smuggled returnees as well.

Cognizant of the need for returnee reintegration, Article 6 of the United Nations (2000) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children urges the signatory States to take various measures. Article 6(3) of the Protocol states that each State Party shall consider implementation measures aimed at the provision of appropriate housing, counselling and information, medical, psychological and material assistance; legal protection, employment, educational and training opportunities for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims.

Currently, there are many Ethiopian illegal migrants deported from various countries especially Saudi Arabia and returned to the country. The fact that there are many returnees of illegal migration in the country itself justifies the need for reintegration. The reintegration efforts that aim at the recovery, rehabilitation, socio-economic inclusion and creation of a safe environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, and opportunities for personal, social and economic development of the returnees are essential. Generally, the returnees need a range of reintegration support from the community to overcome the illegal migration related abuses and exploitation they experienced. Hence, the illegal migration experiences of the returnees, the subsequent reintegration needs they sought, the ways in which the government and the community responded to reintegrate them, and the extent to which efforts made so far have served the reintegration needs of the returnees require empirical evidence-based studies as there is scant information on the topic.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Although its importance is undeniable, the reintegration of returnees got little attention from research on human trafficking. Lyneham (2014: 1) points to the fact that victims' experiences of return and reintegration are often missing from research on human trafficking, partly because it can be difficult to locate victims once they have returned and because often, the return and reintegration process is complex and not well understood. Research on reintegration is virtually non-existent in the academic world. Those few available evaluation researches by non-

governmental organizations on this issue do not go beyond six month experiences of returnees after return and it is often difficult to determine the reintegration status of returnees after two, three or more years after return.

Academic literature recognizes that reintegration is a long-term process that extends beyond six months. Therefore, one must go beyond examining short-term reintegration status in order to understand the success of reintegration efforts (Maastricht University 2012:5). Despite its unquestionable importance, the return and reintegration process is not always a priority issue in policy or research literature and is ‘often absent from the core anti-trafficking themes of prevention, protection, and prosecution’ (Schloenhardt & Loong 2011: 143).

This situation also holds true in Ethiopia. No studies on illegal migration (migrant smuggling and human trafficking) conducted in Ethiopia have focused on the reintegration of returnees. The available studies have focused mainly on the causes and consequences of illegal migration. For instance, a study conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO 2011) in Ethiopia explores the situation, process, impact, pull and push factors for human trafficking; the expectations and perceptions of victims and families; the causes and consequences; the trafficking routes and processes; the techniques and trends in the operation of traffickers; and the nature of exploitation victims face. Similarly, a study conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM 2010) in Ethiopia also investigated the extent and character of domestic trafficking as well as factors affecting efforts to combat the problem. Yoseph, Meberatu and Belete (2006) analysed the extent and character of human trafficking within and from Ethiopia to identify gaps in policy, legislation and capacity affecting efforts to combat trafficking.

None of the above-mentioned studies has addressed the reintegration needs of returnees and efforts made by the government and the community to reintegrate the returnees; and to what extent the returnees currently reintegrated into the community. There is a dearth of information regarding the reintegration of illegal migration returnees’ reintegration in the country in general and in the Omo Nada district in particular. This study, therefore, intends to address the existing knowledge gap by examining the illegal migration experiences of the returnees; their subsequent reintegration needs; the reintegration responses by government and the community; and the current reintegration status of the returnees with particular emphasis on returnees in Omo Nada District, Jimma Zone, Oromia National Regional State, Ethiopia.

Jimma Zone is one of the areas where illegal migration is widely practiced in Ethiopia (International Labour Organization 2011:21). This zone also received the largest number of the returnees from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries in 2013. Of the districts in the zone, Omo Nada district, where this study was undertaken, received 899 of the returnees (Jimma Zone Labour and Social Affairs Office Report 2014).

### **1.3 Research questions**

The study tries to answer the following five research questions:

1. What are the illegal migration experiences of the returnees?
2. What are the subsequent reintegration needs of the returnees?
3. What reintegration assistance and supports did the families, relatives, government and the community in Omo Nada District provide for the returnees?
4. How do the illegal migrants cope with the reintegration challenges they might face?
5. What are the reintegration experiences of the returnees?

### **1.4 Research objectives**

#### *1.4.1 General objectives*

The general objective of this study is to investigate the reintegration of illegal migration returnees in Omo Nada District, Jimma Zone, Oromia Region, Ethiopia.

#### *1.4.2 Specific objectives*

- To explore the socio-cultural and economic conditions of the returnees before illegal migration;
- To identify the returnees' experiences of illegal migration, particularly, the various abuses and exploitation experienced by the returnees;
- To investigate the subsequent economic and social reintegration needs of the returnees;
- To identify the reintegration assistance and support provided for the returnees by their families, relatives, community, government and the non-government organizations to reintegrate the returnees
- To explore how the returnees themselves manage their situations; and
- To describe the reintegration experiences of the returnees

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study attempted to explore the illegal migration and reintegration experiences of the returnees to Omo Nada District. In doing so, it tried to identify the socio-cultural, economic and political contexts that contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees, the abuses and exploitation experienced by the returnees, the subsequent reintegration support they sought and the responses of relevant bodies to the reintegration of the returnees. Specifically, it provides information on the reintegration needs of the returnees and the actual responses made by families, relatives, government, non-governmental organisations and the community in general to help the returnees reintegrate into the community. Thus, the findings of the study may be useful for the practitioners and concerned bodies to design policy, programs and plan interventions to reintegrate returnees of illegal migration, to combat the illegal migration in the area in general, and to raise awareness of the potential consequences of illegal migration. Other researchers can use the findings of the study as a reference to conduct further studies on this topic.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The scope of a given study can be delimited based on its contents and geographical coverage. In terms of its content, this study deals with the illegal migration experiences of the returnees; their subsequent reintegration needs; how they manage their situations; community responses to the returnees' reintegration needs; and the reintegration experiences of the returnees. In terms of geographic coverage, I conducted the study in Omo Nada district, Jimma zone, Oromia Regional State, South West Ethiopia.

### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

While the findings of the study revealed much valuable information in terms of the research objectives, I used small numbers of purposively selected returnees of illegal migration to the study area. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize for the entire population of returnees. The findings in this study represent only the reintegration experiences and status of the returnees who joined the local community up to the time of fieldwork for data collection.

## **1.8 Outline of the chapters**

*Chapter one* introduces the background of the study by presenting the smuggling-trafficking continuum, the need for successful reintegration, the problem statement, the research questions, objectives, significance, the scope and limitations of the study.

In *Chapter two*, key terms used in the study are described. The global and local dimensions of illegal migration are set out. The ecological systems perspective and the symbolic interactionism perspective are discussed in relation to illegal migration. The similarities and differences between illegal migration and human trafficking are set out. This chapter also examined the factors that contribute to illegal migration and its impacts at micro, meso and macro level. The reintegration of returnees takes place within a dynamic, evolving and complex environment that influences the process. The contextual factors that affect returnee reintegration at micro, meso and macro levels are analysed using the ecological systems perspective. Understanding reintegration also involves exploring the subjective meanings that returnees give to reintegration and their reintegration experiences after return. To this end, the use of the symbolic interactionism perspective in this study is justified. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the concept of reintegration of returned illegal migrants, its dimensions and the prescriptions of national and international instruments for the bodies responsible for the reintegration of returned illegal migrants.

*Chapter three* describes the methodology used in the study. It specifically describes the philosophical assumptions and the relevance of qualitative research methods for the topic under investigation. Thereafter, it gives brief descriptions of the study area, the process followed to conduct the study; the study population; sample size; sampling technique; the methods of data collection and data analysis; and the mechanisms to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the data are set out. The chapter also examines the ethical issues; the limitations of the study; and my reflection on the overall process of carrying out the study. The chapter concludes with brief descriptions of the socio-demographic background information of the study participants.

*Chapter four* explores the socio-cultural and economic conditions or experiences of the returnees before illegal migration. It specifically discusses the findings related to the socio-economic contextual factors that gave rise to the illegal migration of the returnees.

Similarly, *Chapter five* presents the findings related to the different types of abuses and exploitations experienced by the returnees as the consequence of illegal migration.

*Chapter six* highlights the subsequent economic and social reintegration needs of the returnees, how they manage their situations and the reintegration supports provided for returnees by the relevant bodies such as families, relatives, the community, the government and non-government organizations. The extent to which reintegration efforts undertaken by relevant bodies addressed the reintegration needs of the returnees and facilitated their reintegration into the community are also addressed in this chapter. Moreover, the chapter identifies the reintegration [assistance and support] gap for future interventions.

*Chapter seven* is devoted to the analysis and interpretations of the study findings.

*Chapter eight*, guided by the main objectives of the study, presents the discussion, summary of the findings and draws the conclusions as well as the recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **CONCEPTUALIZATION OF KEY TERMS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives brief definitions of key terms used in this study. It also discusses the situation, theoretical perspectives, the similarities and differences between migrant smuggling and trafficking, review related empirical studies on factors contributing to illegal migration, reintegration and its various dimensions as well as national and international instruments on illegal migration.

## 2.2 Conceptualization of key terms

**Illegal migration:** Is the entrance and residence of individual/s in another country without having or receiving legal authorization from the host state to do so (International Council on Human Rights Policy 2010:1). It refers to the illegal movements of people that take place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries.

**Migrant smuggling:** “the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, financial or other material benefits, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which a person is not a national or permanent resident” (United Nation 2000:42).

**Human trafficking:** The *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*<sup>3</sup> defines human trafficking as:

“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual slavery, servitude or the removal of organs” (United Nations 2000:54). In Ethiopia, there is no clear distinction between these two terms and thus, the terms migrant smuggling and human trafficking are used interchangeably and are often confused. Both are widely prevalent in Ethiopia (IOM 2011: 8). Therefore, in the study, I use the definition used in the Ethiopian context.

Few people move by smugglers ‘willingly’. However, the ‘willingness’ mainly depends on deception and false information they get from the smugglers. There are also people who are trafficked from the very beginning by force, fraud, deception and false information for the purpose of exploitation and the use of the term trafficking is also appropriate to use. For this reason, the use of term migrant smuggling or human trafficking alone cannot capture the experiences of the returnees participated in this study. Due to this, both definitions are used.

**Reintegration:** reintegration is defined as the process by which a returned migrant is reintroduced or reintegrated into the ‘economic, social, culture and social structure of the country of origin and

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<sup>3</sup>Also referred to as the Palermo Protocol

becomes self-sufficient and able to earn his/her own livelihood' IOM (2012: 24; International Journal of Refugee Law, cited in the Asian Foundation 2005:20).

**Reintegration supports:** Refers to the material and non-material assistances needed by the returnees to reintegrate into the community after returned to place of origin.

### **2.3 Global and local dimensions of illegal migration**

Getting exact data on illegal migration is difficult due to the 'criminal' and clandestine nature of the movement. Even though it is very difficult to determine precisely the number of illegal migrants in the world due to the criminal and clandestine nature of the activity, available information shows that a number of women, children and men migrate 'illegally' from one country to another every year. Be the limitation as it is, it is important to look at the available figure with caution as at least it indicates the presence of the phenomena.

There were at least 12.3 million adults and children in forced labour, bonded labour, and commercial sexual servitude as reported in 2009 by the International Labour Organization (ILO) cited in (US Department of State 2009:9). The International Labour Organization 2012 estimate indicated that globally 20.9 million people or three out of every 1,000 persons worldwide were trapped into forced labour by coercion, fraud or deception through trafficking. The US Department of State (2012:9) on the other hand reported that 27 million men, women and children became victims of human trafficking. Likewise, UNODC (2012) report indicated that trafficking in persons is a global crime affecting nearly all countries in every region of the world (UNODC2012:12). At least 136 different nationalities were trafficked and detected in 118 different countries between 2007 and 2010 according to the report. These show that human trafficking has become the fastest growing criminal business in the world and is ranked third among the top three most lucrative criminal activities after trafficking of narcotics and armed weapons (Petrunov 2011:166 ).

Regarding its regional distribution, Asia-Pacific regions account for 11.7 million (56%), Africa 3.7 million (18%), followed by the Caribbean with 1.8 million (9%), the developed economies account for 1.5 million (7%), while countries of central, Southeast and Eastern Europe and common wealth countries account for 1.6 (8%) of the illegal migrants (ILO (2012). The European Centre for Policy Studies reported that over a million irregular migrants crossed its borders in 2015 alone (The European Centre for Policy Studies2016: i). There is evidence that a minimum of

2.5 million migrants were smuggled in different countries in the world for economic return of US \$5-7 billion in 2016 (UNODC2018:5).

Like in other countries, it is difficult to know the exact number of people being trafficked annually in Ethiopia due to the dearth of information. However, the country is a source for men, women, and children illegal migrants subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. In 2011 alone, 20,000 to 80,000 Ethiopians applied to work overseas. Of those, 60 to 70 migrated ‘illegally’ by brokers and smugglers and ended up in forced labour. There are many trafficked Ethiopian girls in domestic servitude and prostitution in countries such as Egypt, Somalia, Yemen, Djibouti, Sudan and South Sudan – particularly in Juba, Bor, and Bentiu. In the same manner, there are Ethiopian boys subjected to forced labor in Djibouti as shop assistants, errand boys, domestic workers, thieves, and street beggars (US Department of State, 2012).

Likewise, 1.5 million Irregular migrants left Ethiopia between the year 2008 and 2014. There are 60-70% (between 300,000- 350,000) of the Ethiopian migrants in the Gulf states and the Middle East who are either trafficked or smuggled with the facilitation of illegal brokers according to the US Department of State report cited in ( RMMS2014: 35). About 146, 000 migrants from Oromia, Amhara and Tigray in Ethiopia transit through Djibouti ‘illegally’ every year to attempt to go to Yemen and other Gulf countries in search of better economic opportunities. The migratory journey to the Middle East through Djibouti constitutes a threat to human life and human dignity due to unsafe means of transportation and exposure to extreme climate (IOM 2015:9). The Saudi government deported 163,000 ‘illegal Ethiopians migrants’ from its country in 2013 and the Ethiopian government decreed temporary ban of any form of migration in response to the deportation. However, contrary to the deportation, ban, the expensive and dangerous nature of the journey to the lives of the migrants, the number of irregular migrants reaching Yemen to cross to Saudi increased by the end of 2013 (Fernandez 2017: 243-244).

## **2.4 Theoretical perspective**

In an academic study, theoretical perspectives serve as a lens to look at the topic under investigation. They also imply the appropriate research methods that a researcher should employ to address research question/s he/she wants to address in his/her study. Reintegration is a multifaceted issue, which suggests multiple theoretical perspectives to enable the researcher to

explore its complex dimensions and the contextual factors that influence its success. To this end, I use the ecological system perspective and the symbolic interactionist perspectives to investigate the process and the reintegration status of the returned illegal migrants in the study area. Moreover, this section discusses reintegration, various dimensions of reintegration, national and legal instruments on the issue under investigation.

#### *2. 4.1 The ecological system perspective*

Many factors influence the reintegration of returnees. These include the way in which families, communities and government policies react towards the returnees' reintegration needs. The reintegration process, therefore, involves understanding the micro, meso and macro level contexts within which reintegration takes place as these are crucial for successful reintegration. The ecosystem perspective is one of the perspectives used to analyze the socio-economic, cultural and political environment that contributed the illegal migration of the returnees and responses to reintegrate the returnees in the study area.

The ecological system (ecosystems) approach offers a framework for assessment and intervention in a person's problems to effect positive change. Bronfenbrenner (1989:191) describes that the ecological systems perspective emphasizes 'interrelationship' across levels of practice, which include the interrelationship between individuals and their environment and the impact the environment has on individuals. Environment includes a range of contexts including but not limited to family context, community, organizations, service systems network linkages, political forces, cultural forces and social forces.

According to Pardec (1996:1-3), the ecological systems perspective examines the interdependence between the physical, psychological, economic, social and cultural factors that contribute to human behaviour or situation under investigation at the micro, meso and macro levels. The perspective emphasizes the person-in-the-environment perspective. It assumes that there is interconnection between people's behaviour (situations) and their environment. Personal and environmental factors influence human behaviours and the problems that negatively interfere with their social functioning. Therefore, successful interventions such as reintegration must take into consideration these multiple factors. Muco (2013:115) observes that an ecological approach stresses that effective intervention occurs by working not only directly with clients (returnees) but also with the

environmental factors such as the familial, social, economic, political and cultural factors that affect their situation. This perspective illustrates a problem arises because of a misfit between the person and the environment. To correct the misfit between the client and the environment, we should focus on points of transaction of the client with the environment—an approach that typically results in treating both the micro and macro levels of the client's social environment (ibid).

The ecological perspective thus presents a unique view of the complex interplay between the biological, psychological, social, economic, political, and physical forces in practical interventions. Supporters of this perspective for instance, Muco (2013:115-16) and Pardec (1996:1-3) stress that the practitioner must have a holistic view of human behaviour in order to understand how the environment affects people's social functioning. They conclude that an effective ecological approach to practice should include the following elements:

1. The person is seen as being influenced by multiple and interacting factors.
2. An emphasis has to be placed on growth, development, and the attainment of goals.
3. A health orientation focuses on the whole person, not on individual pathology.

What is particularly useful about the ecological approach is that it helps researchers to analyze problems at various levels, including individual, family, small group, and the larger society. Moreover, this perspective stresses a holistic approach that allows one to shift attention from the individual alone to the interaction between the individual and the environment broad framework approach. It emphasizes the transactional relationship between environmental conditions and the human condition.

I employ the ecological systems perspective in this study to examine the responses to reintegrating returnees of illegal migration (migrant smuggling and human trafficking) in the study area. By employing this approach this study investigates the micro, meso and macro level contextual factors that affect reintegration and the extent to which reintegration responses take into account the linkage among the physical, psychological, economic, political and social conditions of the returnees in order to make the reintegration successful.

Reintegration takes place in a dynamically evolving and complex environment. It is influenced not only by individual's desires and efforts to meet their reintegration needs but also by the

environmental or contextual factors in which the individual returnees are reintegrated. The returnees' meaning, views and motivation for reintegration as well as the institutional, policy and community related factors that create favourable conditions or may act as barriers are some of the major factors that influence the reintegration of the returnee. An ecological approach ideally lends itself to the investigation of the multiple factors that impact on reintegration.

According to the social ecological systems perspective developed by Bronfenbrenner (1989), several factors operating at micro, meso and macro levels influence a person's development. In this study context, development refers to a change in the returnee's status from illegal migrant victim, who is dislocated from his/her original community's socio-economic and cultural fabrics, to a reintegrated citizen fully participating in their community of origin after return. The full participation of the returnee is manifested in the form of participation in the economic, political, cultural and social affairs like other members of the community without restriction based on their illegal migration returnee status.

The micro level components that affect the returnee's reintegration into the community include the intimate and immediate world closest to the individual and with which he/she makes everyday interactions. In the context of this study, these include the returnee's parents, siblings, spouses, friends, offspring and the significant others. How these components accept and interact with the returnee has a paramount importance for the successful reintegration of the returnee. If these different components at the micro level warmly welcome the returnee, mobilize the available resources and provide the various types of supports and assistance the returnee needs for reintegration, the returnee will experience a sense of belonging which lays a foundation for his/her successful reintegration into the community. Conversely, if the relevant role players at this level reject the returnee, he/she faces several reintegration challenges.

The meso level factors that influence reintegration on the other hand include the various formal and informal systems that serve the micro system. Families, groups, peers, local facilities and organizations such as religious institutions (church, temple, mosque...etc), school, club, office, work, union, informal support group and volunteer organizations with which the person make close contact are some of part of the context which affect reintegration (Lakhan & Ekundayo, 2013:104). The reintegration of the returnee tends to be fruitful if there are favourable conditions for this goal

in these social contexts and coordination among them. In addition to the micro and mezzo-level contexts, there are also macro level factors that constrain or promote reintegration.

Institutional factors like existing formal rules, regulations, policies and the informal social contexts such as societal values, norms and perceptions also play a significant role in the success of reintegration. The extent to which the existing formal legal institution gives a safe and secure environment for the returnee to be free from the worries of being vulnerable to illegal migration again, as well as any threats protracted against them by traffickers and brokers, has much contribution for the returnee reintegration. Moreover, such legal instruments lay a foundation for the returnees to get appropriate assistances for reintegration and full participation in all societal affairs important for their lives. Likewise, if there are favourable informal social values, norms and perception, these provide suitable environment for the returnees' reintegration.

In principle, successful reintegration involves the provision of assistances and supports directed to meet the returnees' physical, psychological, economic and social needs resulted from their illegal migration experiences. It is a holistic and an integrated scheme, which requires intervention efforts at micro, mezzo and macro levels. In short, reintegration does not occur in isolation of the context in which it takes place. In addition to the returnee's motivation and efforts, the families, relatives, friends, peers, neighbours, organizations, and the community influence reintegration of the returnee in a number of ways. Therefore, any attempt made to understand reintegration should take the influence of all these contexts into account.

#### *2.4.2 The Symbolic Interactionism perspective*

From the ecological perspective it is understood that reintegration is a purposeful and socially constructed or patterned endeavour aimed at creating a returnee who is socially accepted and fully participates in the social, cultural, political and economic affairs of his/her community without any restrictions arising from his/her previous illegal migration status. However, the extent to which reintegration needs vary from returnee to returnee depending on their experiences of illegal migration and thus, it involves the exploration of the returnees' experiences of the overall reintegration schemes after return. To this end, the study explores the returnees' subjective descriptions of their illegal migration experiences, their subsequent reintegration needs and their reintegration experiences by means of the symbolic interactionism perspective in order to

understand the success or failure of the reintegration responses. Although the historical origin of this perspective dates back to the works of German philosopher and economist, Max Weber (1864-1920) and the American philosopher, Herbert Mead (1863-1931), Herbert Blumer (1969) coined the term symbolic interactionism.

Blumer proposed three underpinning premises. 1. Individuals act toward things based on the meanings that those things have for them. 2. The meanings of these things are derived from or arise out of social interaction that the individual has with other individuals and these meanings are handled in and are modified through an interpretative process used by the individual in dealing with things he/she encounters. Ignoring the meaning of things toward which people act and trying to understand the action leads to falsifying the behaviour under study (Blumer 1969: 2-3).

Charon (2001:229) explains that symbolic interactionism is a useful perspective to understand how people perceive and reflect the situation in which they are. Symbolic interactionism shifts attention from the objective social structure believed to constrain the individual subjective viewpoints to how individuals make sense of their world from their own unique perspective. It argues that individuals are agents, autonomous and integral in creating their world (Carter & Fuller 2015:1).

Blumer's symbolic interactionist methodology helps the researcher to take the standpoint of the actor (the study participant) whose behaviour he/she is being studied and attempts to capture the meanings the research participant used to interpret situations and experiences (Carter & Fuller 2015:3). Therefore, in addition to the ecosystem perspective, I use the symbolic interactionist perspective in order to understand the reintegration of the returned illegal migrants in the study area.

## **2.5. The intersectionality of smuggling and human trafficking**

This section examines more closely the two forms of illegal migration, i.e. migrant smuggling and human trafficking in terms of differences and similarities and the vulnerability of people to abuse and exploitation in both processes.

There are several differences and similarities between migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Migrant smuggling involves financial or other material benefit for the smuggler and smugglers act with the consent of the person(s) being smuggled, who often pay large sums of money. Unlike

migrant smuggling, which is a (criminal) commercial transaction between two willing parties who go their separate ways once they have completed their business objective, human trafficking specifically targets the trafficked person as an object of criminal exploitation. This means the intention of human trafficking from the very beginning is to make a profit from the trafficking business through the exploitation of the victim. For this purpose, fraud, force or coercion characterizes human trafficking (The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Centre 2006:2).

Contrary to human trafficking, smuggling does not require an element of exploitation, coercion, or violation of human rights from its inception (IOM 2011:92). While smuggling involves crossing the international border of a given country, trafficking can take place across countries or within the same country (IOM: 2015:4; Iselin & Adams 2003:4). Migrant smuggling is a crime against a state (IOM 2015:5; Batsyukova 2012:41) whereas human trafficking is a crime against individual (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT 2008:8; Batsyukova 2012:41). Despite the conceptual differences, migrant smuggling and human trafficking do share overlapping characteristics. The similarities between these two terms can be depicted as a set of concentric circles in which the largest circle covers all aspects of international migration, including illegal migration. Migrant smuggling is a special case of illegal migration, while human trafficking can be a subcategory of smuggling. Therefore, migrant smuggling and human trafficking are nested concepts that all share the illegal characteristics of entry to a country (United Nations University 2003:1-4) and take place outside the regulatory forms of the sending, transit and receiving countries (IOM 2011:54). A person's migration journey can include both smuggling and trafficking experienced at the same time or at different times.

Not all smuggled migrants become victims of trafficking or abuse. However, smuggled migrants are highly vulnerable to falling victim to trafficking or other forms of exploitation during their journey or once they arrive in the country of destination. She or he may have contracted an individual or a group to assist in their illegal movement in exchange of a financial payment. Thus, the smuggled migrant might be compelled (e.g. debt bondage, extortion, use of force, forced labour) to continue this relationship and to pay off large transportation costs (International Organization for Migration 2015:5). There are many situations in which the smuggled migrants become trafficked and exploited (International Council on Human Rights Policy 2010:14; Global Alliance against Traffic in Women 2011:32; IOM 2015:4). Many of the people who eventually

become victims of trafficking are those who migrated through smuggling to seek for work but through process at some point found themselves in an exploitative situation outside of their control (Hanley, Oxman-Martinez, and Lacroix & Gal 2006:81). The underlying factors that give rise to both these illegal movements of people are often similar (The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Centre 2006:1; IOM 2015:2).

The legal definition given by the Palermo Protocol clearly demarcates the distinction between migrant smuggling and human trafficking. However, it oversimplifies the voluntary and involuntary nature of the two terms. In reality, it is very difficult to make a clear cut between the two. While there are clear-cut cases of trafficking when a migrant is forced and trafficked against his/her will for the purpose of exploitation, most of the cases are very complex and defy any kind of easy categorization. For instance, many prostitutes leave their country of origin with full consent but often find themselves in an exploitative situation (Andrijasevic 2004:26). Similarly, there are situations where the smugglers deceive or maltreat the smuggled person against the contract or promise to help him/her to reach safely wherever he/she wants. Hence, the smuggled persons may become victims of trafficking during or even after the migration process. This makes it hard to draw a clear line to demarcate the two phenomena (Van Liemt 2006:175).

Despite the problems they face, victims of illegal migration specifically the smuggled migrants are often denied attention from the concerned bodies and deported without receiving the assistance and support they require (Batsyukova 2012:39). They rarely get reintegration assistance and support after return (Global Alliance against Trafficking in Women 2011:33).

## **2.6 Factors contributing to illegal migration**

Illegal migration predominantly takes place from countries where there are economic, social, environmental or political problems to countries where the quality of life is (perceived to be) better. Poverty, unemployment, economic globalisation, corruption, gender-based discrimination, armed conflict and restrictive laws and policies on migration are the often-cited factors contributing to illegal migration (The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center 2006:1-2; IOM 2015:2).

Lack of employment opportunities and increasing poverty, gender-based discrimination that pushes women into looking for better opportunities elsewhere, the imbalance between market and labour opportunities among countries, regions and even within the same country create a situation

where people move in hope of better jobs and salaries to improve their lives (Wijers & Lap-Chew 1997:58).

The same holds true in Ethiopia where both push and pull factors influence migration decisions. Poverty, unemployment, low levels of earning, limited access to means of production such as land, social services including vocational and higher education and employment opportunities are the major push factors, which force people to seek better opportunities elsewhere. The availability of employment opportunities and relatively better payment in destination countries are some of the pull factors behind the illegal migration of Ethiopians (International Labour Organization 2011:11, 21, (Martha 2012:2). This section discusses the pull and push factors contributing to illegal migration in detail.

### *2.6.1 Shortage of agricultural land*

In Ethiopia, the agricultural sector accounts for more than 40 percent of the national Gross Domestic Product (World Bank 2012:13), 90 percent of exports and provides basic needs and income to more than 90 percent of the poor (OECD 2010:5). The country's economy relies heavily on agriculture, which accounts for 83.4 percent of employment (ILO 2014:2). Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and 85 percent of all employment opportunity creation in Ethiopia. It is rarely possible to get optimum production required to feed one's family without having adequate agricultural land. However, as the population size increases in rural Ethiopia, the size of agricultural land becomes smaller and smaller over time. Consequently, 40 percent of the farming households are currently operating on less than 0.5 hectares, 64 percent on less than one hectare and 87 percent on less than 2 hectares against the 2.5 to 2.8 hectares of land required for an average family size of six persons in the country. The decrease in land size results in inadequate production, which in turn forces families to purchase food for at least a certain period of time in a year (Food and Agriculture Organization 2011:5).

Individuals wanting access to land have no opportunity to secure land through private purchase because the Ethiopian law prohibits the purchase and sale of land. The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Art 40 (3), which is the supreme law of the land, unequivocally states that land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subjected to sale or to other means of exchange (FDRE Constitution

1995). Legally permitted land rental in the country also has many restrictions such as the number of years land can be rented out. Access to land through allocation from authorities is virtually non-existent whereas land that a person gets from parents through inheritance or as a gift is too small to establish a meaningful livelihood. Particularly, youths in the rural areas of Ethiopia have little or no chance of obtaining agricultural land that can be the base for viable livelihood. As a result, very few people in rural areas plan to pursue agriculture as a means of livelihood. Instead, the majority plan rural-urban migration as an alternative to non-agricultural livelihoods. Lack of access to land and the limited livelihood choices in rural areas are forcing many people to move away from agricultural livelihoods to other areas including abroad to search for a better life (Sosina & Stein 2013:2).

Even though many people migrate from rural to urban settings in expectation of better employment and better financial opportunities, the urban centres in Ethiopia are not in position to meet the expectations of most migrants. Many of the urban centres themselves experience high rate of unemployment and rural to urban migration exacerbates the situation. By confronted with the unwelcoming situation in the urban centres, many rural to urban migrants turn to international migration mainly through illegal migration (Fitsume 2014:207).

The livelihood of the rural Ethiopians depends mainly on agriculture, but recurrent droughts, insignificant land holdings and infertility of existing plots has hindered agricultural production (Bisrat, Teklebrhan, Woldeabrah & Muuz:34). Due to the ever-increasing household size, agricultural land has become fragmented and the average plot of land worked by family has become inadequate. This has led to low productivity. Generally speaking, shortage of land due to rapid population growth, lack of adequate rainfall and decline of productivity of arable land are some of the environmental hazards which escalate impoverishment and fuel the movement of large number of people in Ethiopia internally and abroad through whatever available means, including illegal migration (Kassegne & Gashaw2017:52).

### *2.6.2 Poverty*

Poverty and deprivation of resources are the major contributing factors for illegal migration especially human trafficking (Bales 2005:141). Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development

Report, Ethiopia ranked 174 among the 187 countries (UNDP 2011:26). Even though the government and the Ethiopian community are making efforts to overcome the situation, many people still live in conditions of abject poverty and are unable to fulfil their own daily survival needs. ILO estimated that the proportion of poor people (poverty head count index) in the country to be 27.8 percent in 2011/12 (ILO 2014:3). Abject poverty, a situation in which people lack viable economic activity and income to fulfil basic needs, is the major contributing factor for human trafficking (UNIDOC 2012: 1). Because of the abject poverty, families, friends and neighbours put high pressure on family members, especially the youth, to migrate (mostly illegally) to secure employment opportunities and help the family to overcome poverty (Gudetu 2014:240). Migration in general and illegal migration in particular have become social insurance and a mechanism for coping with the negative consequences of conflict, unemployment, poverty and natural or man-made disasters for many people particularly in developing countries (GTZ 2006: 9).

The economic deprivation of the emigrants in their countries of origin and the relatively better economic development that demands a high unskilled labour force in receiving countries act as the major driving forces for most emigrants to seek employment outside their countries in illegal ways (Reda 2012:32; Fernandez 2010: 257). Even though those ‘migrated illegally’, are not only the poor (Lucas 2005:261), those from the poor backgrounds are more vulnerable.

### *2.6.3 Unemployment*

A person is said to be unemployed if he/she is: a) ‘without work’ or was not in paid employment or self-employment as the international definition specifies. b) ‘currently available for work’, i.e., was available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and (c) ‘seeking work’, i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment (ICLS 1982: Art.10; ILO 2013:6). Unemployment accelerates the level of income inequality and poverty within a given society (Ukpere 2011:60-72). As in many developing countries, the labour force absorbing capacity of the labour market in urban Ethiopia is inefficient and underdeveloped. Labour force supply by far exceeds the labour absorbing capacity of the labour market in urban centres. Consequently, large numbers of men and women seeking employment are unable to find jobs and remain unemployed (World Bank 2007:9).

Despite the recent slight improvements, unemployment is high and remains one of the most serious socio-economic problems and policy challenges facing urban Ethiopia (Martha 2012:27). Overall unemployment in urban areas in Ethiopia declined to 16.5 percent in 2013 from 20.4 percent in 2009. Both female and male unemployment has fallen and the gap between the two groups has narrowed. However, unemployment remains high in Ethiopia, especially among the youths (IMF 2014:5). At least 90 percent of the unemployed in Ethiopia are young people below the age of 30 years (UNICEF 2014:1). Youth employment thus presents severe challenges to Ethiopia (International Growth Centre 2012:1). The unemployment rate is higher among women than among men and women have less employment opportunities. The difficulty to get employment in the formal sector confines women to the informal sectors with meagre income like petty trade, brewing and selling local drinks (Broussard & Tsegaye 2012:1). The prevailing gender norm that deny them easy access to the labour market is the main reason for high unemployment among women compared to men (ILO 2014:2; FDRE MOLSA 2013:20).

Despite the growth in the labour force, employment opportunities in Ethiopia are inadequate to absorb labour market entrants (Fitsume 2014:207). Even though the country has been showing economic improvement, unemployment and underemployment remain serious socio-economic problems in Ethiopia that force many people to migrate illegally (Martha 2012:2). Approximately three million young Ethiopians enter the labour force every year. However, the economic capacity of the country is not growing at equal pace with the number of job seekers. This poses challenges on attempts made to create productive employment opportunity for the ever-increasing number of job seekers both in urban and rural areas. As a result the search for job opportunities results in people looking for job opportunities either within the country or abroad through both regular and irregular ways (Bisrat, Teklebrhan, Woldeabrah & Muuz 2017:33).

#### *2.6.4 Gender based discrimination and inequality*

In developing countries, gender-based violence and discrimination also plays a significant role in exposing specifically women to illegal migration. For instance, it hinders women's access to education. This limits their employment opportunities in formal organizations and forces them to seek employment and income through illegal migration (Human Right Watch Report 2007: 15). Gender based inequality in terms of access to education, employment; resources ownership and control are widely observed in Ethiopia. As women have less opportunity to receive education,

they have fewer opportunities to obtain economically gainful employment and better pay in the formal economic sector compared to men. Thus, they disproportionately share the burden of different social problems including illegal migration and its subsequent abuses and exploitations (Embed 2002:5).

In the past women often migrated for a short period of time to trade or to do seasonal work as dependents of men. However, now many single woman or women with children migrate. The migration of women independent of men implies the “feminization of migration” which is linked to the “feminization of poverty” or an increasing impoverishment of women and children due to severe economic instability in some developing countries particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Gouws 2007:1). Women’s lack of education and ability to obtain employment opportunities and better income within patriarchal society characterized by gender inequality and discrimination impedes their control and use of resources. Consequently, they are vulnerable to a host of socio-economic problems such as gender-based violence and lack of income, which force them to resort in illegal migration (ILO 2011:23). Moreover, pull factors like the high demand for female labour for domestic activities in the Middle East are major driving factors for the illegal migration of women (and its attendant consequences) in Ethiopia (GTZ 2006:5; King 2010:2).

The more women are excluded from education and economically gainful formal employment opportunities; the more they become prone to pursue illegal means like illegal migration to sustain their lives. This illegal means becomes the only way and last resort for them to overcome destitution.

To summarize, the illegal migration of people from Ethiopia to other countries is an outcome of several interlinked factors. The push and pull factors such as unemployment and underemployment, low salaries, scarce land accessibility and fertility, and poverty in general are the main driving forces behind illegal migration of Ethiopians, especially to the Middle East. There are also networks of actors that promote and sustain illegal migration (Kassegne & Gashaw 2017:53). Land degradation, overpopulation, climate change, expectations of high income abroad and the availability of social networks are further contributing factors for illegal migration (Tekalegn, Muktar & Ahmed 2017:48).

Therefore, the reintegration responses to reintegrate the returnees need to take into account the push factors that make people vulnerable to migrant smuggling and human trafficking. In other words, the reintegration scheme, which fails to understand and address the socio-economic contextual factors that gave rise to the illegal migration, remains a futile exercise that rarely succeeds.

## **2.7 The impact of illegal migration**

The positive impact of migration is that the remittance obtained from it slightly increases household income for some recipient. This results in relaxing expenditure restraints for daily consumption, health and education. However, the amount of the remittance is insignificant and it is temporary. For illegal migrants, the negative impacts of illegal migration outweigh its positive impacts. Its negative consequences include suffering and death of migrants, financial burden to the family members, social and legal crises. Economically, for instance, individuals pay tens and hundreds of thousands to cross to Arab countries or Europe with the help of smugglers (Bisrat, Teklebrhan, Woldeabrah & Muuz 2017:35; Kassegne & Gashaw 2017:52).

Illegal migration negatively affects the migrants; their families, communities and society. Understanding the impacts of illegal migration will make a major contribution to the successful reintegration of returnees in terms of the design and implementation of reintegration services and support. It is possible to categorize the impacts of illegal migration (both migrant smuggling and human trafficking) into micro, meso and macro levels.

### *2.7.1 Impacts at micro level*

Micro level impacts are impacts observed at the individual level. Victims of human trafficking are often subject to physical, sexual and psychological abuse and violence, deprivation and torture, forced use of substances, manipulation, economic exploitation and abusive working and living conditions (UNODC 1999:7; United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking 2008:9; Abdulraheem & Oladipo 2010:39). Employers use physical abuse against the illegal migrants to enforce control and obedience. Many returned illegal migrant Ethiopians have been found to have had physical injuries (broken limbs or burn wounds) mental and other health problems (e.g. malnourishment) and the physical and emotional effects of sexual abuse. Those unable to endure the pressure and abuse often commit suicide or die while attempting to escape (ILO 2011:53).

Illegal migrants are also vulnerable to various forms of economic exploitation (ILO 2011:54). Unscrupulous brokers demand large sums of money for facilitating the so-called safe arrival to secure decent employment opportunities in destination countries. If the illegal migrants are unable to pay, the brokers themselves cover the transportation and other costs to enter into an agreement with the potential employer in the place of destination not to pay the migrants until they pay back the money spent by the brokers to facilitate the so-called safe journey for them. As a result, the illegal migrants are forced to work long hours with little/no payment due to debt bondage (Voronova & Radjenovic 2016:4).

### *2.7.2 Impacts at meso level*

The impact at this level refers to the impacts on the migrant's family members and the community. In Ethiopia, illegal migration facilitated by illegal smugglers negatively affects the family directly or indirectly because families usually pay large sums of money for the brokers who facilitate journeys for those family members who emigrate illegally in expectation of reimbursement from remittances. The cost ranges between ETB 8,000 to ETB 11,000 (ILO 2011:56). This implies that the financial burden of illegal migration on poor families in Ethiopia is severe as this amount of money is equivalent to a two months' average salary of a Master's degree holder in the country. Family members left behind also pay huge amounts of money whenever traffickers kidnap the migrating family member en route. Such ransom money is often paid by selling assets and belongings that drain family resources (Kalemework, Zenawi, Tsehaye, Awet & Kelil 2017:45).

It may take a year or longer for a poor family in the country to get the money they spend for illegal migration. In most cases, the situation forces families to sell scarce assets or to borrow from relatives and other community members. When the migrant family member returns home empty handed with physical and/or mental injuries due to exploitation and abuse they have endured, treatment costs also put an additional financial burden on the family and further depletes their resources (ILO 2011:56). Illegal migration may also weaken social ties and affection between parents and children, undermine extended family relationships, and decrease the family's influence and control over their children due to long periods of being apart. It may also interrupt the passage of knowledge and cultural values from parent to child. Consequently, the young generation who stay apart from their community for a length of time due to illegal migration may forget their own

communities' cultural norms and values. This may also impede harmonious interaction with their community when they return to their place of origin (Fitzgibbon 2003:87).

### *2.7.3 Impacts at macro level*

Impact at the macro level refers to the impact of illegal migration on society and the nation as a whole. These impacts include the economic, social and political consequences for nations. Quantifying the exact economic costs of illegal migration on the economy of a nation is difficult. However, it is possible to describe key economic consequences of migrant smuggling and human trafficking at the national level. The prevention and control of illegal migration as well as the reintegration of returnees involves a huge national resource investment. Illegal migration also redirects the financial benefits of migration from the migrants, their families, the community and government or other potential legitimate employers to smugglers, traffickers and their associates (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime 2008:10). The UNODC (2012:1) also states that human trafficking alone generates billions of dollars in profits for the traffickers at the expense of countries affected by the problem.

The youth (those in the most productive age group) are the largest segment of society involved in illegal migration. Some of the more discernible impacts of illegal migration on a nation or a society, therefore, are loss of productive workforce, decrease in national production and productivity, decrease in tax revenue generated from the economically productive labour force, increase in poverty and an increase in the number of older parents without family support (ILO 2011:56).

Generally, illegal migration erodes the human capital of nations. The departure of people, especially those in productive ages, to other countries is an irretrievable loss of human resources to a country because these people contribute less to the development of their own country. The long-term effects of youth migration can also result in fewer people left to care for an increasing number of elderly. It can also create imbalances between the proportions of males to females particularly when illegal migration favours one sex over the other. In addition, illegal migration undermines governments' control over their territory. The operation of traffickers and illegal smugglers thwarts government attempts to exert authority and continues to undermine public safety, particularly the security of vulnerable populations (Fitzgibbon 2003:87).

## **2.8 Reintegration of the returnees of illegal migration**

At the heart of the concept of reintegration is that it is a process of recovery, and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience.<sup>4</sup> It includes the settlement of the returnee in a stable and safe environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical well-being, opportunities for personal, social and economic development and access to social and emotional support (Surtees 2010:24; Velazco 2011:26). It involves reunifying the returnee to his/her family, community of origin and institutions. A central aspect of successful reintegration is the empowerment of the returnees by supporting them develops skills toward independence and self-sufficiency (Surtees 2010:24).

Beyond its concern with reuniting the returnees into the family, community of origin or even integrating them into a new place depending on the needs and interests of the returnees, reintegration entails creating a safe environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, opportunities for personal and economic development, self-esteem, and access to social and emotional support. (Muco 2013:105). Reintegration is successful when the returnees become active members of the economic, cultural, civil and political community (Zimmerman et al., 2011:341). It begins with the restoration of the returnees and culminates by enabling the returnees to maintain sustainable livelihoods, access to basic services and fully reintegrate into the community (UNHCR 2004:4).

Though different individuals and organisations try to define and describe reintegration in slightly different ways, they all agree that reintegration of the returnees involves various schemes that range from meeting their basic needs to their socio-economic and political empowerment. At the heart of these definitions is the re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a returnee into the society of his/her country of origin or habitual residence. Reintegration is a crosscutting concept, which has cultural, economic and social aspects. The cultural aspect of reintegration involves the re-adoption on the part of the returning migrant of the values, ways of living, language, moral principles, ideology and traditions of the society in the country of origin. The economic aspect of reintegration refers to the process by which the returnee inserts himself/herself into the economic system, whereas social reintegration refers to the reinsertion of the migrant into the social structures of his/

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<sup>4</sup>While reintegration is traditionally focused on victims of human trafficking, for the purposes of this study it includes 'illegal migrants' who have been exploited and/or abused in the illegal migration process.

her country of origin. Social reintegration involves the development of personal networks (friends, relatives, neighbours) and the development of civil society structures (associations, self-help groups and other organisations (IOM 2011:82).

The fact that migrant smuggling and human trafficking expose people to a range of abuses and exploitation necessitates the adoption of an integrated view to understand reintegration. Returnees may often need different intervention measures based on the types of abuse, exploitation and traumas they experienced. They may need assistance and services such as mental health counselling, social service support, continued medical care, drug and alcohol counselling, short and long-term housing assistance, job training and employment opportunity to overcome the physical, psychological, economic and social abuses they experienced (Logan, Walker & Hunt 2009:19-21; Muco 2013:105).

Therefore, reintegration schemes must address psychological, economic and physical rehabilitation aspects according to the illegal migration experiences and reintegration needs of returnees. McKay et al (2010:4) points out the importance of the mobilisation of resources from client support systems to meet the need for medical screening and health care, schooling, psychosocial support and/or vocational training.

As illegal migration exposes people to various forms of abuse and exploitation, reintegration schemes must address the following dimensions of reintegration in order to help the returnees reintegrate into their community of origin and lead independent and productive lives.

### *2.8.1 Dimensions of reintegration*

Reintegration is a process of transition concerned with returning the individual to his/her immediate family and usually to the community of origin to help the returnee to receive protection and care which subsequently results in creating a sense of belonging and purpose in all spheres of their lives (Wedge, Krumholz & Jones 2013:3-4; Williamson 2008:12). Reintegration has physical, social, economic and cultural dimension (Derk 1998:27-44). The Asian Foundation (2005:20; Zimmerman et al., 2011:341; Muco 2013:105).

Reintegration involves close examination of returnees' experience before any intervention assistance and the change they experienced in their lives after reintegration assistance in order to determine whether reintegration efforts were successful or not. This requires an investigation of

the returnees' experience of the reintegration assistance and support they received and their subsequent subjective evaluation of their happiness, safety, health and the extent to which they are accepted by and provided with equal opportunities by family, peers, neighbours and the community (Veitch 2013:29). The returnees' subjective experiences of acceptance by those groups with whom they share common social norms and values are central to the understanding of the efficacy of reintegration efforts. Failure to take returnee's subjective experiences of reintegration leads to the incomplete understanding of reintegration based on the mere fulfilment of the reintegration principles, procedures and material assistances provided from the reintegration practitioners' perspectives alone. Wedge, Krunholz and Jones 2013:41) argue that both the fulfilment of the procedural components as well as the social relation attainment experience of the returnees matter equally for making appropriate decisions about the failure or success of the reintegration schemes.

As returnees' experiences and needs vary depending on their illegal migration experience, there is no standardised model for reintegration and the reintegration assistance and support that need to be provided. The returnee reintegration is a holistic process that should address the physical, psychological, economic, political, legal, and social aspects of the returnees depending on their situations. To this end, the returnees have to also get the opportunity to participate in designing the reintegration process specific to their needs and socio-cultural contexts (UN.GIFT 2008:37). In the following few sections, I discuss the major components or dimensions of reintegration that serve as benchmark to guide this study.

#### *2.8.1.1 The physical dimension of reintegration*

Many 'illegal migrants' are subject to physical abuse. Smugglers and traffickers use physical punishment like assaulting, slapping, pinching, flogging, burning with metal and plastic rods to get control over people (Abdulraheem & Oladipo 2010:39; United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking 2008:9). Consequently, victims suffer from physical harm such as pain, bruises, broken limbs and wounds (IOM 2011:27). Women are particularly vulnerable. The physical problems they face include headaches, fatigue and weight loss, stomachache, chest, back, pelvic, dental, eye, ear and vaginal pain due to sexual abuse (World Health Organization 2012:2; Wickham 2009:2; Jayasree 2004:58).

In extreme situations the physical risks faced by women include drug and alcohol addiction, broken bones, concussions, burns, vaginal/anal tearing, traumatic brain injury that result in memory loss, headache, dizziness and numbness. Many of them develop sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS, and gonorrhoea. Other consequences of abuse include pubic lice, sterility, miscarriages, menstruation problems and other diseases such as tuberculosis, pneumonia and forced abortions which exacerbate their physical harm (Zimmerman 2006:273).

Failure to address these physical injuries impedes the psychological, economic and social reintegration of returnees. As the presence of physical injuries often hinders the successful reintegration of returnees, returnees need acute and long-term provision of health care and the material assistance that will help them to recover and heal from physical injuries depending on their illegal migration experiences of these phenomena (World Health Organization 2012:3; World Health Organization 2012:3; UN.GIFT 2008:82). Veitch (2013:51-53) views the physical recovery and meeting the basic needs of returnees as priorities in their successful reintegration into the community.

#### *2.8.1.2 The psychological dimension of reintegration*

The psychological harm which 'illegal migrants' may be exposed to includes disassociated ego states, self mind/body separation, shame, grief, fear, distrust, hatred of self and other people, suicidal thoughts, insomnia, acute anxiety and depression (Zimmerman 2006: 275; Enaikele & Olutayo 2011: 416). The devastating psychological problems that result from illegal migration related abuses and exploitations are often devastating and affect the psychological well-being of the returnees in various ways. Reintegration assistance that helps returnees recover physically should precede everything and followed by psychological and emotional support. Counselling, individual and group therapy, which involves returnees sharing experience with individuals who have experienced similar problems, are central to reducing the psychological trauma the returnees suffer (Jayasree 2004:61; Robinson & Paramo 2007: 243). Counselling support helps returnees build internal characteristics and brings positive behavioural changes that will enable them to benefit from education and skills training to help them obtain jobs and generate income for their independent life. The reintegration practitioners, the families and the community can give counselling support for the returnees in the form of love and respect (Veitch 2013:51-53).

Without emotional and psychological support returnees may continue to suffer from psychological consequences such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and other anxiety disorders; lack of self-confidence, emotional instability, stress, feelings of isolation, hopelessness, thoughts of suicide; somatic conditions, lack of aspiration and vision for future (Chatterjee, Chakraborty, Srivastava & Deb, 2006:173; World Health Organization 2012:3; Jayasree 2004:59). This may prevent them from failing to effectively accept and use the reintegration support intended to reintegrate them into the community.

### *2.8.1.3 The skills training and economic dimension of reintegration*

Lack of education and skills and the consequent failure to secure employment in local markets are the main reasons individuals, particularly women, resort to illegal migration. They may even migrate illegally to get employment that does not require many skills or knowledge. The provision of technical and vocational skills training will contribute significantly to helping returnees secure employment and reintegrate economically into the community. Shakti (2007: :23) identifies important locally relevant and applicable training such as driving, hotel cooking, embroidery, sewing, beauty salon work, petty trade and animal rearing as some of the immediate and important skills that would help returnees to get employment and reintegrate economically. These socio-economically and culturally relevant practical skills trainings are very important in helping the returnees get needs-based and practically applicable knowledge and skills that facilitate their employment opportunities and reintegration into their community (Crawford & Cauffman 2008:906; Frederick 2006:310). Such training also plays a crucial role in helping returnees earn better income, improve their economic situation, raise their self-esteem and cope with social stigma and discrimination associated with their illegal migration experiences (Chaulagai 2009:7).

Even though vocational and skills training is very important for integration purposes, these schemes alone are not sufficient to help returnees start viable economic activities that enable them to earn income. The provision of grant money or facilitation of loans, which serve start the locally available income generating activities is also equally important (Chatterjee, Chakraborty, Srivastava & Deb, 2006:169; Crawford & Kaufman 2008:912). For the returnees to rural areas, access and control over productive resources such as land, agricultural inputs like selected seeds, fertilizers, oxen, saving and credit facilities are the most important economic supports that boost the returnees' potential for successful reintegration (Ballard 2003:1).

The other crucial aspect of reintegration is its economic aspect. When ‘illegally migrated’ people return home either voluntarily or by deportation, in most cases they are confronted with socio-economic and psychological problems as they return to the limited economic opportunities and financial constraints that contributed to their initial departure. Poverty, which contributed to their vulnerability, may hinder their potential for successful reintegration. To reverse the economic related problem that result in the illegal migration of the returnees, the vocational skills training and other support should enable the returnees to be economically independent.

When the returnees return to the economic situation prior to their departure, they become vulnerable to illegal migration and its negative consequences again. Therefore, ensuring economic reintegration options for the returnees has to be the major component of reintegration as lack of viable sources of income and poverty take the lion’s share among the factors that forced these people became vulnerable to illegal migration. The poor economic situation that often contributed to their illegal migration in the first place may further dispose returnees to the possibility of being re-trafficked for example (Williams, Alpert, Cafferty, Konstantopoulos, Wolferstan & Castor 2010:135-140).

#### *2.8.1.4 The social dimension of reintegration*

The term ‘integrate/reintegrate’ is often considered as a passive process in which the returnees simply accept the assistance and support provided to them by the assistance providers, who usually consider themselves the experts and make decisions and undertake reintegration programs themselves in most situations on behalf of the returnees. This assumption is problematic as it overlooks the returnees’ illegal migration specific needs and traumatic experiences. The reintegration schemes generally undertaken by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) usually focus on the provision of material assistance to the returnees and ignore or neglect the social aspects of the process (Slocomb 2006:45). The prevailing assumption is that successful reintegration depends on the provision of assistance alone. Many programs fail to recognise the fact that the returnee is going to be reintegrated into wider social relationships, norms, values and arrangements (Slocomb 2006:45). Most reintegration practitioners and NGOs focus on material assistance and the reintegration procedural practices that make the monitoring and evaluation of the process easier for them as well as establish bench mark for their success neglecting the relational and the social aspects of reintegration (Wedge, Krumholz & Jones 2013:4).

Any form of reintegration effort remains fruitless if it does not consider the social dimension of reintegration. The reintegration of the returnees must result in fixing or reconciling the broken relationship between the returnees and their entire social context due to the illegal migration. This facilitates their social acceptance and makes the reintegration successful (Rodicio 2001:129). McKay et al (2010: 9) point out that social reintegration is required to deal with how the returnees get acceptance and respect from the family and community as contributing members. To this end, the social aspect of reintegration should create conducive environment for social relationships and interactions between the returnees and their families, relatives, neighbourhoods and the community (Derks1998:53).

Reintegration of returnees has important social requirements. Successful reintegration involves the absolute acceptance of returnees by their families, communities and the society without stigma and discrimination (SAHARA & JIT 2004:13). The active involvement of returnees, their families and the community in the reintegration process is essential to ensure successful social reintegration of returnees (Wessells 2006: 160). If the families, the community and the concerned bodies welcome and accept the returnees, they will mobilise resources for the reintegration of the returnees. Social support engenders an atmosphere of safety and security. Hence, returnees get the reintegration support they need, feel safe and secure.

Returned 'illegal migrants' are said to be socially accepted when they are accepted equally and given opportunities by the wider community to exercise their socially expected roles. Even though social acceptance also depends on the returnees' willingness, readiness and adoption of the prevailing social values and norms of the group (Opsal 2011:23), social skills training must be part of reintegration schemes to help the returnees develop acceptable social skills which enable them to interact with the community in accordance with the existing social norms and values. This helps reduce the social isolation of the returnees and promotes their social engagement, self-esteem and sense of belonging (McCamey 2010:61-63).

Otherwise, it leads to the rejection and isolation of the returnees as well as the subsequent detrimental psychological, social and economic effects. This is particularly true in hierarchically ordered traditional communities characterized by gender and social- class based inequality. In such situations, reintegration efforts will be futile exercise if they do not create social

relationships based on equality of human beings irrespective of their backgrounds like gender and returned illegal migrant status (Rodicio 2001:129).

#### *2.8.1.5 The cultural dimension of reintegration*

As with the social aspect, the practitioners and organisations that undertake reintegration schemes rarely incorporate the cultural and religious dimensions of reintegration. However, the reintegration activities and support undertaken to help the returnees participate in their local cultural and religious activities also play a vital role in the reintegration process. Such reintegration activities and support helps returnees to develop useful social relationships and interactions with the surrounding community (Derks 1998:44). It widens the returnees' social networks and access to various types of resources and services in the community, which are essential for successful reintegration. If returnees get opportunities to interact with the different segments of the community, they feel cared for, secure and a sense of belonging. The feeling of being cared for and protected is crucial to the reintegration process as it encourages them to accept and value the reintegration support provided for them by the community (Wedge, Krunholz & Jones 2013:4).

Traditional families and communities, especially those in rural settings, are reluctant to welcome returnees due to stigma and discrimination associated with illegal migration. As returnees are forced to engage in activities and behaviours against the local communities' cultural values, beliefs and norms under the illegal migration, it is common among families and communities to view returnees as a potential danger to their existing culture (Opsal 2011:25-27; Rodicio 2001:131). Ensuring pertinent material assistance required for reintegration alone may not be a guarantee for the successful inclusion into the collective social life. This is particularly true of women who have experienced sexual abuse during illegal migration. The existing cultural context may sometimes require returnees to undergo various ritual practices before accepting them into the community. It is, therefore, important that reintegration schemes design mechanisms to remove the cultural barriers to successful reintegration whenever and wherever needed (Surtees 2000:182).

## **2.9 Addressing stigma and discrimination**

Stigmatisation acts as a barrier to successful reintegration (Chaulagai 2009: 13). Dovidio, Major and Croker (2000:17) describe stigma as an attribute that results in widespread social disapproval and discrediting. Social difference brings spoiled social identity to the person stigmatised. It occurs in social interactions and social contexts that facilitate conditions for its happening (Hebl & Dovidio 2005:157).

The community does not consider a stigmatized person a full member; rather, it excludes him/her from social life. It denies him/her equal opportunity to participate in the community. Stigma and discrimination linked to returnees' sexual experiences under illegal migration, particularly because of trafficking, is one of the major challenges that reintegration schemes need to tackle (Derks 1998: 13; Surtees 2013: 21). Female returnees face stigma resulting from exposure to trafficking-related prostitution, which makes their lives very difficult upon their return to their communities of origin (Derks 1998:51). The stigmatisation of female returnees emanates from the local perception associated with their engagement in commercial sexual exploitation under the human trafficking situation (Surtees 2000:182). Due to the stigma associated with their illegal migration experiences, women returnees face many challenges related to getting married and starting a family. The social isolation and psychological distress that follows stigma often forces returnees to re-migrate illegally or renders them vulnerable to re-trafficking (Hennink & Simkhada 2004:305). The social exclusion resulting from stigma makes them feel unvalued, uncared, pessimistic, anxious and hopelessness. Such conditions are a major barrier to the success of reintegration efforts (Buet, Bushford & Basnyat 2012:46) and often contribute to the decision to re-migrate illegally.

In most cases, the community suspects women involved in illegal migration as infected with HIV/AIDS due to their experience of sexual abuse or exploitation during their lives under illegal migration. This increases the rejection, stigma and discrimination of returnee women by their families and the community (Mahendra et al. 2001:43-44). Reintegration becomes problematic wherever there are such kinds of negative attitudes towards women who have experienced sexual abuse (Cody 2012:13). Hence, it becomes essential for the returnees to regain the honour they had within their families and communities before their involvement in illegal migration and its subsequent abuses and exploitation. To this end, the reintegration process should implement strategies to minimize stigma against the returnees in addition to the provision of physical,

psychological, social and cultural reintegration assistances. It should be noted that reintegration of the returnees requires a holistic approach which including avoiding stigma as much as possible (Derks 1998:41; Surtees 2013: 21).

## **2.10 Returnee empowerment**

Empowerment refers to an individual's or group's capacity to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. If a person or a group is empowered, they possess the capacity to make effective choices; that is, to translate their choice into desired actions and outcomes (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005:5). This capacity includes the resources, knowledge and skills that enable them to make the choices. One of the end goals of reintegration is the empowerment of returnees. The empowerment of returnees assists them to develop skills useful to participate actively in their recovery and reintegration, and to lead independent and self-sufficient lives (Surtees 2010:24; Surtees 2013:38). To this end, it is important to focus on the individual returnees' needs and experiences as well as the various crucial factors decisive for this reintegration goal to be achieved (Derks 1998:13).

Crucial reintegration activities that contribute to returnee empowerment include access to adequate accommodation, physical and mental wellbeing, legal support, safety and security, which contribute to the improvement of the returnee's wellbeing (Surtees 2010:25-27). Other components of reintegration schemes that contribute to the empowerment of the returnee are leadership training, education, employment skills and legal support (Craford & Kaufman 2008). Art therapy is also one of the mechanisms, which is beneficial for emotional and economic empowerment. Mentorship, peer education and the assistance of the survivors of illegal migration to each other also play crucial roles in developing positive identity for themselves and a sense of purpose in their lives (Chatterjee, Chakraborty, Srivastava & Deb 2006:168).

## **2.11 The international and national instruments on reintegration**

### *2.11.1 The international legal instruments*

The United Nations started legal measures for taking actions on the problem of trafficking by adopting a Convention in 1949 for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. Currently, there are several international instruments directly or

indirectly dealing with human trafficking which have been adopted by the United Nations and the International Labour Organization (Yoseph, Mebratu & Belete 2006:58).

The recent international legal instrument relevant to the reintegration of returnees from illegal migration is the UN (2000) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children. Ethiopia ratified this convention in 2012.

Regarding legal measures, criminalisation of human trafficking and the traffickers alone cannot eliminate the problem. Rather, the prevention of human trafficking and the reintegration of the victims must address the link between the broader social, political and economic forces that contribute to the problem. In the global context, there is a close relationship between illegal migration, poverty, international migration, gender inequality, social disenfranchisement and political upheaval to mention a few. However, the obligatory laws contained in the Palermo Protocols begin and end at investigation of trafficking and prosecution of the suspected criminal. Protection of the vulnerable populations and prevention of trafficking are left to the discretion of state and local officials and are rarely addressed (Kreidenweis & Hudson 2013:2-4).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) document recommends that the purpose of reintegration is to provide the returnees with their safe, secured, dignified and sustainable reinsertion into the society and enable them to lead a normal socially acceptable life (IOM 2007: 81-82). According to the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), the returnees need to get legal protection that safeguards and makes them feel free from fear of re-trafficking for the reintegration to be successful (UN.GIFT 2008:35).

### *2.11.2 Ethiopia's domestic legal instruments relevant to illegal migration*

Ethiopia has recently ratified the PALERMO convention. Ethiopia has also ratified many of the international conventions such as the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, the 1966 UN International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1966 UJN International Convention on Civil and Political Rights. Moreover, the country ratified the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181,1997), the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105,1957), the ILO Discrimination Against Employment and Occupation

Convention(NO. 111,1958). Recently, Ethiopia ratified the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forums of Child Labour (Yoseph et al 2006).

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution Article 9(4) states that all international agreements ratified by the country are part of the law of the land. For this reason, it has incorporated relevant provisions on human trafficking. Articles 18, 35 and 36 of the constitution are evidences in this regard. Article 18(2) specifically states, “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. Trafficking human beings for whatever purpose is prohibited.” Article 36(e) strictly prohibits exploitative child labour whereas Article 35(4) strictly forbids laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women. These provisions are basic instruments in combating illegal migration particularly human trafficking in Ethiopia.

## **2.12 Conclusion**

As the decisiveness of the constitutional provisions mentioned above is not underestimated, detailed rules are also important for the implementation of the constitution. Thus, the constitution gives the mandate and authority for the concerned bodies to prepare detailed rules, policies and guidelines that guide efforts made to protect the citizens of the country from the devastating consequences of illegal migration. Therefore, the study also tries to investigate the measures taken by the concerned bodies to translate the constitutional provisions into practice to reintegrate returnees of illegal migration (migrant smuggling and human trafficking) to the country with particular emphasis on returnees to the study area.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND THE STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter consists of a methodological research design, which applies to the study. It discusses the philosophical paradigms that underlie the research methods, the sampling technique and sample size, methods of data collection and data analysis, ethical considerations, validity and reliability of the research instruments.

#### **3.2 Philosophical foundations or paradigms of the research**

Philosophical assumptions offer worldview explanations about the reasons why a researcher uses quantitative, qualitative or methods triangulation in undertaking research. The researcher's philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality influences the selection of research methods, instruments and research practice in social sciences (Creswell 2009:6). I use the interpretivism paradigm to undertake this study. I discuss detail justifications for selecting this paradigm and its philosophical assumptions as follows. The choice of an interpretivist paradigm and its philosophical assumptions are justified as follows.

Interpretivism argues that social life (reality) is relative. Social phenomena or realities have no inherent objective meanings as argued by positivists. Relativism argues that reality is subjective and differs from individual to individual (Guba & Lincoln 1994:110). Rather, people construct reality based on their experiences, feelings and the meanings they attach to the phenomena. Social reality is not static. It is dynamic, complex and ongoing. It is in a continuous state of construction, testing, reinforcing. For these reasons, one cannot apply the methods used in natural sciences directly to understanding social reality. Instead, social science researchers must employ methods that enable them to understand subjective and complex social phenomena (Neuman 2007:41).

The interpretive methodology aims to understand phenomena from an individual's perspective (Creswell 2009:2009:8). For this purpose, it uses methodologies like "*case study* (in-depth study

of events or process over a long period of time), *phenomenology* (the study of direct experience without allowing the interference of existing preconceptions), *hermeneutics* (deriving hidden meanings from language) and *ethnography* (the study of cultural groups over a prolonged period of time).” Interpretive methods intended to produce insight and understandings of behaviour explain actions from the participant’s perspective and do not dominate the participant. Such research methods include “open-ended interviews focus groups, open-ended questionnaires, open-ended observations, think loud protocol and role playing” (Scotland 2012:12).

The philosophical assumption of interpretivism is that reality is not an objective entity out there to be studied by the researcher. Rather it exists in the subjective meanings that people attach to the social world or phenomena. Researchers must, therefore, understand the subjective meanings that people attach to the social world or phenomena they have experienced (McNeill & Chapman 2005).

Consequently, interpretivism favours qualitative research methods, as it believes that qualitative data are suitable to grasp the complex nature of social reality. It prefers inductive reasoning and detailed description and explanation of a specific social setting, process and social relationships. It emphasizes interpretive rather than causal forms of theory that are concerned with the replication of the same approaches at different times and settings. The issue is getting to the inner world and personal perspective of the actors (Neuman 2007:43).

With this in mind, this study employs the interpretive paradigm to understand the individual subjective physical, emotional, economic and social experiences of their contexts that contributed to their illegal migration, the subsequent abuses, exploitation and their reintegration needs that resulted from these experiences.

According to Bulmer (1969), symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective, which emphasizes the subjective meaning of human behaviour, the social process and pragmatism. Interactionists emphasize the subjective dimensions of social life or phenomena instead of the objective macro structural aspects of social systems. Shibutani (1988) argues that humans are pragmatic actors who continuously respond to the actions of other actors and adjust their behaviours based on the subjective interpretation of the meanings attached to the actions. The process of adjustment is supported by an individual’s ability to rehearse imaginatively the

alternative actions before they act. Moreover, the process of adjustment is supported by an individual's ability to think, react to his or her own actions and even themselves as symbolic objects. Hence, for the symbolic interactionists, human beings are active and creative participants who construct their social world rather than being passive conformists to objects of socialization as claimed by functionalists (Shibutani 1988:27).

Society is the outcome of organized and patterned interaction among individuals. Thus, in their study of human behaviour interactionists focus on easily observable face to-face interactions, the meanings of events to the participants and the definition of the situations rather than the macro level structural relationships that involves social institutions. Blumer (1969) contended that this line of thinking shifts the focus of interactionists away from stable, commonly shared norms and values toward more changeable and continuously readjusting social process

A symbolic interaction perspective was used in this exploratory study to investigate the study participants' subjective experiences of the local contextual factors that contributed to their illegal migration; their subjective illegal migration and repatriation experiences; the subsequent reintegration needs they sought; their coping strategies; how the concerned bodies responded to their reintegration needs; and their current reintegration status. For this purpose, interpretive philosophical assumptions guided this study in order to gather the qualitative data required to address the objectives of the study. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to study selected issues in detail (Patton 1990:12). I used qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to collect the data needed to meet the research objectives.

The ecosystem perspective argues that intervention undertakings intended to improve the situation of people in need have to consider the person-in-environment perspective. That means it is important to focus both on the person as well as on the socio-economic, cultural and political contexts within which the person exists in order to understand clearly illegal migration, the people involved in the phenomenon, their reintegration needs and the societal responses to the reintegration of the returnees of illegal migration more comprehensively.

The ecosystem perspective takes into account the phenomena under study, the person affected by the phenomenon and the environment together to properly analyze the underlying multiple factors contributing to the problem and the solution that must be sought to address the problem. The

ecosystem perspective is person-in-environment perspective in its nature and gives equal attention to the person, the problem and the environment. The perspective assumes that these three things influence each other and the imbalance or separate attention to one or two of these constituent parts at the expense of the other will be a piecemeal and reductionist approach, which ignores the intricate nature of these issues (Richmond 1917: 67). Another consequence of the person, the environment and the problem separate approach is that it leads solution-seekers to focus on changing either of the elements in isolation to the other contrary to the fact that the three elements are interwoven and it is difficult to treat them separately (Kemp, Whittaker and Tracy 1997:43).

The person-in-environment approach helps me to look at the individual, the problem, families, communities, groups, communities, economy, culture and other relevant social issues in efforts made to understand illegal migration and the approach must be adopted to reintegrate the persons who become victims of the various types of abuses and exploitation resulting from this social phenomenon.

The ecosystem perspective is used to examine the extent to which undertakings by the government, non-government, families and the community took into account the person-in-environment perspective in their responses to reintegrate the returnees of illegal migration.

### **3.3 Research design**

A research design refers to a feasible plan for undertaking research (Dantzker and Hunter 2012:56). A research design attempts to answer six common questions. These are *who* (the sample to be contacted), *what* (the research topic), *where* (the data collection place), *when* (the period for data collection), *why* (the objective of the study or the research question/s to be addressed and *how* or the method/s used to analyze the data collected (Guba & Lincoln 1994:108). I discussed the research design, methods of data collection, sample size and technique, data analysis and interpretation and the ethical issues in the next sections.

#### *3.3.1 Study population, sample size and sampling technique*

According to Dantzker and Hunter (2012: 109-110), a study population refers to a target population from which information required to answer a research question/s or objective/s is collected. The population for this study was the returnees of illegal migration from Saudi Arabia in 2013 to Omo

Nada District. From Ethiopia, migrants are smuggled and trafficked through the country via three major routes in the East to Middle East, North to Europe and South to South Africa(IOM2015:9). Each of these trajectories is quite different in terms of the financial costs, stages and experiences of the migrants. In this study, I focused on the migrant trajectory to the Middle East because of various reasons:

Most Ethiopians migrate to the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia. It is believed that some 146,000 migrants from Oromia, Amhara and Tigray transit through Djibouti every year in an attempt to get to Yemen and other Gulf countries in search of better economic opportunities (IOM 2015:9). The migratory journey to the Middle East constitutes a threat to human life and human dignity due to unsafe means of transportation and exposure to an extreme climate. Migrants may face different types of abuse and exploitation on an illegal migration journey. The deportation of returnees by the Saudi Arabian government in 2013 had negative consequences for their reintegration into the community upon return because they did not return voluntarily and there was little in place to assist their reintegration. Illegal migration to the Middle East despite the dangerous nature, exorbitant costs, and the deportation of many Ethiopians by the Saudi government, for example, and the temporary ban of on all forms of migration to the Middle East by the Ethiopian government. (The number of Ethiopian irregular migrants reaching Yemen in order to cross to Saudi Arabia increased by the end of 2013 (Fernandez 2017: 243-244)). Although most illegal migrants know that the journey to Europe provides better socio-economic returns, the cost of migration is often more than 10 times higher than migration to Arab countries. Thus, the majority of the migrants opt for the latter (Kalemework, Zenawi, Tsehay, Awet & Kelil2017:45).

As far as sample size is concerned, unlike in quantitative studies, it is difficult to determine precisely the exact number of a representative sample size in qualitative research. The issue of optimum sample size in qualitative research is still debatable among qualitative researchers (Atran, Scott, Medin, Douglas & Ross 2005: 771-773; Griffin & Huser 1993: 15-17; Guest, Bunce & Johanson 2006:78). However, some qualitative researchers suggest that the data saturation point is a helpful mechanism to overcome this problem and to decide sample size in qualitative studies. According to Laforest (2009: 2) data saturation refers to a point at which the responses or information from the study participants becomes repetitive and no more new information is obtained.

Romney, Batchelder and Weller (1986: 23-25) suggest that a few samples are enough in qualitative studies conducted on a study population in which its members have common characteristics. Exposures or experiences, the level to reach consensus among individuals in the target group over various issues raised in a given study may vary but the variation decreases and it is possible to observe a finite set of characteristics, views and consensus by interviewing few people. The consensus or similarities in their views over time implies data saturation point to decide sample size in qualitative research. Following this argument, Atran, Scott, Medin, Douglas and Ross (2005: 771-773) reported that in some of the qualitative studies they have conducted, as few as 10 informants were needed to reach a reliable consensus or data saturation point. A market research study conducted by Griffin and Huser (1993: 15-17) which explored customer needs by means of in-depth interviews and focus groups suggested that twenty to thirty in-depth interviews were adequate to uncover ninety to ninety five percent of all customer needs.

Similarly, Guest, Bunce and Johanson (2006:78) in their study on reproductive health in Africa, which involved sixty women, examined the code developed from the sixty women and found that data saturation had occurred at a very early stage. According to their findings, of the thirty-six codes developed for their research, they developed thirty-four of the code from their first six interviews and thirty-five after twelve interviews. They concluded based on their findings that for studies conducted amongst study populations, which have a high level of homogeneity, a sample of six interviews is probably sufficient to help the researcher develop meaningful themes and interpretations.

The population of this study was considered homogenous in terms of them all having migrated from the same socio-economic, cultural and political contexts; having migrated illegally through similar routes; having reached and stayed in similar destinations; and having returned to similar environments. The common contexts, exposure and experiences shared by study participants serve as a base to decide a data saturation point and the subsequent optimum sample size for the study. I applied the concept of data saturation and conducted 20 in-depth interviews with returnees of illegal migration. Laforest (2009:2) suggests that data collection from study participants in a qualitative study should end when data becomes saturated. In other words, when the responses from the study participants become repetitive and no new information on the issue under investigation is forthcoming. Although the data required to address the research objectives of this

study became repetitive and saturated before the twentieth study participant, I terminated the interviews after the twentieth interviewee.

I used the purposive sampling technique to select 20 study participants from returnees deported by the Saudi Arabia and returned to Omo Nada in 2013. Of these, 16 (sixteen) were males and only 4 (four) were women. Men constitute the majority of the returnees to Omo Nada compared to women. This is partly because women rarely endure the difficulties of illegal migration and thus, mainly migrate legally according to information obtained from the Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office. Males are more prone to illegal migration in Ethiopia than females. They also constitute more of the returnees in the country (Henok, Tizazu, Mesfin & Getachew). Stocchiero (2017) notes that there is a significant difference between male and female illegal migration from Ethiopia to the Middle East. Males travel mostly through irregular channels, as they are more risk takers than females while females often use relatively regular ways (Stocchiero2017:7).

The District Labour and Social Affairs Office, which works closely with returnees of illegal migration, identified a number of returnees to Omo Nada District. I purposively selected and interviewed returnees who were voluntarily. In addition to their willingness to participate, other criteria used to select the participants were their age and time of their return. Due to the added vulnerability of child returnees, I selected only participants above the age of 18 to participate in the study. In terms of the time of return, as a large number of migrants officially returned to Ethiopia by Saudi Arabia in 2013, they were included in the study. This helped the researcher get many voluntary participants.

### *3.3.2 Sources of data*

I used both primary and secondary sources to collect the data required for the study. I collected primary data from in-depth interviews with the returnees, the key informants and the FGD participants. Secondary data concerning the magnitude of the returnees to the district was collected from the documents of Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office, which was working in the prevention of illegal migration, the reintegration of the returnees and compiling data related to these issues. I reviewed and used the returnees' non-personal data like the policies, strategies, plans and implementation reports related to reintegration of illegal migrant returnees.

### *3.4.3 Methods of data collection*

Denzin and Lincoln (2003:12) contend that a qualitative approach is more appropriate for studies concerned with exploring the lived experience of people. The qualitative research approach is useful to understand the meaning people give to their social world and social problems (Creswell 2009). This approach best fits the interest of the researcher when the purpose of the study is to obtain deep information about the social phenomena and the subjective meanings individuals attach to the social world, the unique qualities demonstrated by individuals and standardized measurements are absent to measure the variable under investigation (Mertens & McLaughlin 2004). Researchers who conduct qualitative research collect qualitative data in the form of words and phrases as they pay attention to the subjective meanings, opinions and perception of the study participants (Kothari 2004; Vanderstoep & Johnston 2009). Therefore, in this study I used three data collection instruments that are common in qualitative research, namely, in-depth interview, key informant interviews and focus group discussions, as the data required for the study is qualitative.

In-depth interviews are one of the most common qualitative research methods. It is an intense undertaking intense and involves detailed interviews with a small number of study participants to explore their thoughts and experiences related to an issue or issues under study. In-depth interviews are useful when a researcher wants to get detailed information about the study participants' thoughts, experiences or explore new issues in depth (Boyce 2006:3). I used semi-structured interviews in the study as they combined elements of both structured and unstructured interview and allowed the researcher flexibility to probe for emerging issues not included in the interview guide and permitted the participants to explain or describe their experiences and thoughts in the ways they thought appropriate (Punch 1998:178-179).

I interviewed twenty participants. The sample size of the study participants for the in-depth interviews was determined based on the concept of the data saturation point. The interviews lasted between 27 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. I used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews. All of the study participants frankly expressed their views on the topic under investigation with the exception of two women who were willing to be interviewed but unwilling to have their interviews recorded. They explained that the reason they refused the recording of their interviews was because they expressed that they had experienced sexual abuse and they were

suspicious that personal information might be disclosed. They were afraid that unauthorized persons could access this information. Despite the fact that I informed them that the ethical issues include confidentiality; they were not willing to have their voices recorded. I, therefore, wrote down their responses and further enriched those from my memory right after I concluded each of the interviews in order not miss the points they had raised.

The issues covered in the interviews include the illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) experiences of the returnees, their subsequent reintegration needs, their coping mechanisms, how the community responded to their needs and the returnees' subjective meanings concerning their current reintegration.

I also conducted five key informant interviews with one expert in each of the following offices: Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office, Youth's Affairs Office, Women and Children's Affairs Office, Police Office and one non-government organization working on returnee reintegration. I conducted the key informant interviews with experts in the above-mentioned offices because these offices worked closely with the prevention of illegal migration and reintegration of the returnees to the district. The main purpose of the key informant interviews was to elicit information regarding how the existing formal organizations responded to the reintegration of the returnees.

The main issues explored in the key informant interviews included: the assistance or support provided for returnees by each office; the extent to which these offices took into account the returnees' reintegration felt need in providing the support and the legal or policy measures formulated to guide the reintegration.

Finally, I conducted two focus group discussions (FGDs). Focus group discussion promotes group interaction among the target population and encourages participants to make connections to various issues under investigation through discussions that may not be possible during individual interviews. Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley argue, "Focus group discussions are often used at the outset of research in order to explore an unknown area and generate discussions and consensus around a topic of inquiry. It helps the researcher gather information about shared understandings of everyday life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in group situations" (Kielmann, Cataldo & Seeley 2011:36).

I conducted two focus group (1 all -male and 1 all- female) discussions, which each consisted of 12 individuals. I separated the focus group discussants into male and female groups because women in the study area culturally do not feel comfortable to discussing their ideas freely in the presence of men. The participants of the focus group discussions were community leaders, religious leaders, elders, men and women. I selected the FGD participants based on the depth of their knowledge about the reintegration responses made for the returnees and the returnees' current reintegration situation.

#### *3.3.4 Instruments of data collection*

I prepared interviews and FGD guides and used them to conduct the group discussions, in-depth and key informant interviews. According to Fulcher and Scott (1999:89), an interview guide refers to a checklist of topics and questions used to guide the researcher to investigate the issues under investigation.

The interview guide questions were prepared in English and translated into *Afaan Oromoo* (Oromo language) which is the vernacular language of the study area. As I am a native speaker of the language, I translated the interview and FGD guides into *Afaan Oromoo*.

Data was collected on the local contextual factors that forced the returnees to migrate illegally, their illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) experiences, their subsequent reintegration needs, coping mechanisms, how the community responds to the returnee's reintegration needs and the returnees' subjective meanings concerning their current reintegration status. Moreover, I collected the returnees' repatriation-related information such as the voluntary or involuntary nature of their return, their current social inclusion- (social relations, social isolation and social acceptance) and related information.

The following table presents a summary of the research methods, instruments of data collection, sample size, sampling techniques and the sources of primary data used to carry out the study.

Table 1: Data collection methods, instruments, sample size and sampling techniques used

<b>Method</b>	<b>Category of participants</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>	<b>Sampling approach</b>	<b>Data collection instruments</b>
In-depth interviews	Returnees	20	Purposive	Interview guide
Key informant interview	Experts in concerned offices	5	Purposive	Interview guide
Focus group discussions	Local community elders and religious leaders	24	Purposive	FGD guides

#### *3.4.5. The interview setting*

The appropriateness of the setting is important when conducting interviews. The interview setting must be free from distraction and interviewees should feel free to provide the required information without fear or suspicions. With this in mind, I identified the appropriate time and place as per each participant's preference before conducting the interview. I spent adequate time for rapport establishment to reduce their fear, suspicion and make the study participant feel comfortable. I started the interviews once I ensured all these issues. I used a digital voice recorder to record the interview based on the consent of the interviewee. I also carried a small, unobtrusive note pad with me for jotting down particular pieces of information during the interviews in order not to forget important points.

I attempted to capture the physical and emotional expressions of the participants during the interviews to make my interview techniques flexible and more comfortable to the study participants. I conducted all the interviews at the place preferred by the interviewees themselves. Of the twenty interviewees, three of the men preferred the interview to take place at their work places while I interviewed the remaining participants at their homes or temporary living place. I started the interviews of the study participants in the first week of October 2016 but the interviews were interrupted for three months due to the State of Emergency declared by the Ethiopian government in October 2016. The declaration restricted movement and gathering of people for

three months. I continued the rest of the interviews and focus group discussions in January 2017 and finished in February 2017.

### *3.3.6. Data transcription and translation*

I transcribed the data collected through the FGDs, key informant and in-depth interviews and translated from *Afaan Oromoo* (Oromo language) to English. I did the transcriptions and translations after the interviews. There are three types of translation. These are translations at the (word level), translation at the (sentence level and conceptual translation (Riazi 2002). I translated the interviews for this study at the (sentence level ) and the concept.

It is recognized that interpretation of meaning is the core of qualitative research. As translation is also an interpretive act, meaning may get lost in the in the interpretative process. However, as a native *Afaan Oromo* speaker, I have attempted in my translations to stay true to the meanings as much as possible.

Participants may use slang, local idioms and proverbs, which are difficult to understand and capture their meanings. Conceptual translation is, therefore, better in such circumstance as the unit of translation is neither the word nor the sentence but the concept itself (Riazi 2002). I made every effort to make everything transparent in the translation process to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the translation. To this end, I documented the audio-recorded interviews, the transcriptions and translations for audit and further verifications.

### *3.3.7. Methods of data analysis*

The first activity a researcher accomplishes in qualitative data analysis is data coding. Data coding refers to searching for unique concepts and categories in data gathered from the research participants. In other words, data coding is the process of changing responses from study participants into categories and classification (Fulcher & Scott 1999: 80-81). There are three major types of qualitative data coding. These are open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Open coding is the first step qualitative data coding which involves attaching labels to data. Axial coding follows open coding and it involves making connections between the frequently mentioned themes/categories by the study participants identified during open coding. Selective coding involves building on or further expanding the categories/themes obtained through the process of axial coding (Babbie 2013: 398). After completing data transcriptions, I repeatedly read the

transcribed data and used open, axial and selective codings to analyze the data thematically based on the objectives of the study.

I developed the themes based on the research objectives and repeated patterns of meanings in the data. Braun and Clarke (2006: 85) note that such kind of analysis enables the researcher to analyze the socio-economic contexts and structural conditions that underlie individual accounts.

### *3.3.8 Trustworthiness of the data*

As the trustworthiness of qualitative research is often questioned due to the fact that the concepts of validity and reliability in qualitative study are not addressed in the same fashion as in quantitative studies, the mechanism to ensure validity and reliability is very crucial in qualitative research.

Lincoln and Guba (1985: 301-304) describe various techniques to ensure trustworthiness of data in qualitative studies. These are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility refers to how much one can be confident of the truthfulness of the findings. The technique to ensure this is by looking at the length of time the researcher spent in the study area to get a deep understanding of the socio-cultural context and the phenomenon under investigation. These two authors propose that the prolonged time the researcher invests in the study site increases the credibility of the investigator's interpretation of the data. Morrow (2005: 252) argues that one of the mechanisms to achieve credibility is prolonged engagement with the study participants. For this purpose, I spent five months in the field site. This helped me become familiar with my study participants and gain an understanding of their experiences and the contexts in which they lived.

The other technique suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985:314-16) is member checking. Member checking is a process whereby a report of specific descriptions is taken back to the participants to confirm its accuracy (Creswell 2009: 191). To ensure trustworthiness of the data in this regard, I went back to the study site after data collection and transcription to read the transcribed data to the study participants to validate the data.

Transferability on the other hand, refers to the applicability of the findings of the study to other contexts. It refers to the extent to which readers are able to generalize the findings from the study and apply them to their contexts based on the claims made by the researcher regarding the general

application of the findings (Gasson 2004:98). Knowledge obtained from the interpretive paradigm, which uses qualitative research methods, has limited transferability as it is fragmented and not unified into a coherent body. Due to this, generalization is often absent as the research outcome tends to be highly contextualized qualitative data and interpretation of the data involves subjective understanding (Bewerliner 2002:18-19).

However, transferability can be slightly meaningful “if the researcher provides sufficient information about him/her self (the researcher as instrument) and the research context, process, participants and researcher-participant relationships to enable the reader to decide how the findings may transfer” (Morrow 2005: 252). In this regard, I tried to make the maximum effort to be neutral in undertaking the study. I also did not attempt to make or imply generalization in presenting the findings of the study because I used purposive sampling technique and a small sample size. Similarly, I did not use statistical tools for the data analysis useful for making inferences.

Even though it is very difficult to generalize the findings of qualitative research to other settings, the findings from such a study can be useful for other settings. Morris (2006: 154) argues that the detailed descriptions of the contextual factors and experiences of the research participants can help one to compare the findings with the contextual factors in other settings and judge its validity and applicability to other settings.

To ensure dependability, the process through which we obtained the findings should be clear and as repeatable as possible. This is possible by making the research design traceable and keeping an audit trail or the chronology of the research activities and process, influences on data collection and analysis, emerging themes, categories, or models, and analytical memos. Peer researchers, a student’s advisor or colleagues in the field can easily the audit (Morrow 2005:252).

Shenton (2003: 71) advises that in order to address the dependability issue more directly, the researcher should report in detail the process of the study, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same result. Such in-depth coverage also allows the reader to assess the extent to which the researcher followed proper research practices. There should be a section of the research devoted to the research design and its implementation, description of planned and executed activities; the operational detail of data gathering, a minutiae addressing field activities; reflective appraisal of the project and evaluation of the effectiveness of the process

of the inquiry so that readers understand trustworthiness of the data. I tried to document clearly and presented all the procedures I followed to carry out the study to ensure the dependability of the study. I hope that this can pave the way for the replication of the study by somebody else.

The concept of confirmability refers to the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity in quantitative study. There should be a mechanism to ensure that the findings of the study are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. To achieve this goal, triangulation plays an important role in reducing the effect of the investigator's bias and promoting confirmability (Bricki & Green 2007: 13).

The key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her predispositions. Beliefs, underlying decisions made, and methods adopted should be acknowledged within the research report, the reasons for favouring one approach over another has to be explained and the weakness in the technique actually employed have to be admitted. Many of the strategies used to accomplish the objective of dependability also apply in ensuring confirmability. The critical issue regarding this process is the "audit trail", which allows any observer to trace the course of the research step-by-step via decisions made and procedures described (Shenton 2003: 72).

Generally, in order for both the researcher and the user or reader to be confident in the research the findings of the research have to reflect the question the research set out to answer rather than reflecting the bias of the researcher or certain interest group, as much as possible. For this reason, the methods and process adopted to carry out the study have to be reproducible. In other words, if someone else follows the same procedure, he/she should come up with similar information. It also has to be systematic which means there is a mechanism to ensure that the researcher is not just picking the study participants or data that supports his/her pre-existing ideas. Likewise, the researcher has to be credible which means the questions he/she asked and the ways in which he/she asked the participants should be reasonable for generating valid or truthful accounts of the phenomena. Finally, it has to be transparent which means methods should be written up so that the readers can see exactly how the data was collected and analyzed (Bricki & Green 2007:12). I attempted to follow the above-mentioned procedures to ensure the trustworthiness of the research.

### *3.3.9. Research ethics*

I followed all ethical and administrative procedures in undertaking this study. First, I obtained ethical clearance from UNISA. Then I took the ethical clearance from UNISA and additional supportive letters for this purpose from the institution in which I work to Omo Nada Labour and Social Affairs Office to gain permission to get access to the study participants.

After I got permission to get access to the study participants, I introduced myself, read and explained the objectives of my research to the study participants and obtained their informed consent. Participants willingly participated in the study. I maintained confidentiality of information from the study participants. To this end, I did not mention the names of the participants in any part of the study. Instead, I used pseudonyms created and used for case narrations or descriptions.

In addition to the abovementioned ethical issues, Seedat, Pienaar, Williams and Stein (2004: 7) caution that the researcher should avoid trauma-related questions when there is a possibility for negative after-effects and there are no adequate mechanisms in place to handle or to monitor harmful outcomes.

Therefore, I try to avoid questions, which could make the research participants feel distress, fear or shame. I gave the participants the freedom not to answer any questions, which cause discomfort to them. They also had the choice to withdraw from the study at any time. A counselling psychologist accompanied me from Jimma University throughout the interviews in order to assist me to reduce or manage any traumatic experiences, which the study participants might exhibit. During the course of the interviews, however, no research participant exhibited any trauma relating to their illegal migration experience.

### **3.4 My reflection on the overall research process**

Reflecting on the research process entails the researcher reflecting on his/her role as a researcher in a research process, for instance, the extent to which he/she was honest, neutral, objective as well as the field work challenges he/she has experienced while carrying out the study.

Firstly, Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley (2011) note that like quantitative data, a researcher may manipulate qualitative data in order to represent a pre-conceived idea or result, which the researcher wants to support. Researchers, therefore, adhere to a professional code of ethics, which prohibits the manipulation of data in order to fit in with a preconceived interest of the researcher

(Kielmann, Cataldo & Seeley 2011:55). To ensure honesty of the data, I recorded and documented every step followed in carrying out the study.

As far as the neutrality and objectivity of the study was concerned, despite the fact that it is very difficult for a researcher to claim complete detachment and objectivity from the issue under investigation, I refrained as much as possible from a deliberate inclination to collect data that represents my own beliefs and values.

I conducted all the interviews with an open mind. I did not blame or judge any of the interviewees for the illegal means they used, or their exposure to abuse and exploitation. Rather, I was curious to understand the reasons behind their decisions to migrate illegally, their maltreatment *en route* and in the place of destination; the subsequent reintegration assistance they sought; and how the relevant bodies responded to their needs for support. I also prepared myself not to be shocked by the abuse and exploitation some of them experienced.

The fact that I was not a resident of the specific study area and was a male conducting interviews with some female study participants might have affected the study in certain ways due to fear, feelings of shame or suspicion. However, I spent adequate time with these respondents to establish rapport before the interviews. This helped to establish an atmosphere of trust and helped me to manage the interviews easily. The fact that I am a native speaker and acquainted with the culture of the study area helped me to communicate with the study participants easily as I share many characteristics with them although I was not a returnee myself. Although I was not a returnee myself, my dual status as “insider” and “outsider” throughout the data gathering was fluid. Rabe (2006) notes that: Under some circumstances, specific disparities between the interviewer and the interviewee may act as hindrance as the dissimilarities in race, language, class and gender may also have the effect that the researcher is perceived as an outsider who fails to be aware of some cultural norms (Rabe 2006:96).

I, however, felt that most of the issues noted by Rabe (2006) did not apply to me except gender difference between the female participants and myself. The similarities between us helped me to elicit sensitive information as it facilitated free flow of information between them and myself. The study participants, including the women, were free to share their experiences with me as I had built trustful relationships with them. On the other hand, my status as an ‘outsider’ enabled me to ask

the study participants questions that an ‘insider’ might have not asked. In short, all these issues enabled me to collect rich information from the study participants.

As with many researchers, I faced a number of challenges whilst undertaking this study. One of the hardest challenges I encountered was the tiresome journey on foot from one place to another to get the study participants. It took me half an hour to two hours to get to the next study participant after I interviewed the first. Another challenge was the then political situation in Ethiopia in general and that of the study area in particular was among the most noteworthy to mention. Due to widespread corruption, unemployment, poor administration, injustice, lack of equal economic benefits and people losing their land in the name of investments, the public demonstrated against the ruling government from August to October 2016. The unrest unfolded in many parts of the country, particularly in Oromia National Regional State, where I conducted this study and in the Amhara National Regional State. The protests reached a climax October 2016 when the public blocked land transportation routes, destroyed government properties and refused to abide by the government. When the situation got out of control, the government declared a state of emergency on October 9, 2016 to restore its power and order.

The state of emergency lasted for six months and it introduced many restrictions. It authorized the military, inter alia, to enforce security nationwide, impose restrictions on peoples’ freedom of speech, access to information, movement from one place another, and act against any kind of demonstration or meeting. All this happened while I was busy to establish rapport with the study participants and preparing for the data collection. Following the state of emergency, the local government officials in my study area told me to stop movement in the study area and communicating with people for the time being. Their basic argument was that the state of emergency prohibited any type of meeting and it would be dangerous for me to gather people, for instance, for focus group discussions.

They also suspected that I might discuss political issues with the study participants (for both the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions). Although I tried to explain the objectives of my study and the content of my interview guides to them, they were not willing to allow me access to the study participants until the government restored peace and order. From the local officials’ resistance, I recognized that the situation would be dangerous for me to stay in the study area. I then stopped and returned to my home because the situation was dangerous for me and had the

potential to compromise the quality of the data. Furthermore, the command post established to implement the state of emergency and pacify the situation were detaining people for the time being based on suspicion or without having any evidence. I feared that they could take any measures against me if I continued, and I stopped the data collection.

After three months of the declaration of the state of emergency, the government lifted some of the restrictions like free movement and access to information from concerned government bodies and people. I re-started the fieldwork soon after the government lifted the restrictions. Overall, the political unrest and subsequent state of emergency and having to make new arrangements with government bodies and study participants delayed the data collection by four months.

### 3.5. The socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants

Table 2: The Socio-demographic characteristics of in-depth interview participants

Pseudonyms of participants	In-depth interview No.	Sex	Age	Level of education	Religion	Marital status
Abdulbasit	II1	Male	37	6	Islam	Married
Mamadsan	II2	Male	25	8	Islam	Married
Fatuma	II3	Female	27	10	Islam	Single
Sherif	II4	Male	32	4	Islam	Married
Seifu	II5	Male	25	None	Islam	Married
Mishel	II6	Female	27	None	Islam	Married
Abdullatif	II7	Male	28	5	Islam	Married
Abdulshukur	II8	Male	38	None	Islam	Married
Bilal	II9	Male	32	4	Islam	Married
Seman	II10	Male	36	3	Islam	Married
Zubeda	II11	Female	25	8	Islam	Married
Yahaya	II12	Male	24	7	Islam	Married
Sheki	II13	Male	49	3	Islam	Married

Fedila	II14	Female	35	None	Islam	Single
Tayib	II15	Male	35	10	Islam	Married
Fares	II16	Male	45	None	Islam	Married
Mensur	II17	Male	32	4	Islam	Married
Jebal	II18	Male	32	6	Islam	Married
Siraj	II19	Male	21	8	Islam	Married
Tahir	II20	Male	34	None	Islam	Married

Sixteen (16) of the in-depth interview participants were males while four (4) were females. Their ages ranged from twenty one (21) and forty nine (49) years. Six (6) did not have any formal education, two (2) had completed grade 3, three (3) had completed grade 4, one (1) had completed grade 5, two (2) had completed grade 6, one (1) had completed grade seven, three (3) had completed grade eight and two (2) had completed grade ten. All respondents were Muslims. Eighteen (18) were married while two (2) were single.

As the above table shows, all of the returned migrants were Muslims. This is because almost all of the residents in Omo Nada districts were Muslims and they have strong ties with Arab countries, and are, therefore attracted to these countries. Brokers and traffickers exploit this attraction of people to Saudi Arabia to persuade people to undertake these illegal journeys. Similarly, the majority of the returned migrants were males, and this is due to the fact that women often use the legal ways for migration as they cannot withstand the long journey and suffering associate with illegal migration. Apart from this, only women had the legal means to migrate to most Arab countries particularly Saudi Arabia because there is demand for women's services in the area of domestic activities. Thus, more men migrate to the country illegally than women do. This is another reason as information I got from the study participants. Concerning this, ILO (2011:26) also confirmed that women mostly use the formal migration channel, which involves visa and passports whereas men mostly use the illegal route crossing deserts with smugglers. However, the number of women using the services of the smugglers has recently been increasing.

Table 3: Socio-demographic background of the male FGD participants

S/N	Participant No.	Age	Religion	Educational grade completed	Marital status
1	P 1	45	Islam	7	Married
2	P 2	60	Islam	7	Married
3	P 3	55	Islam	5	Married
4	P 4	54	Islam	6	Married
5	P 5	61	Islam	None	Married
6	P 6	42	Islam	6	Married
7	P 7	40	Islam	6	Married
8	P 8	40	Islam	None	Married
9	P 9	57	Islam	4	Married
10	P 10	57	Islam	12	Married
11	P 11	35	Islam	6	Married
12	P 12	65	Islam	8	Married

Table 4: Socio-demographic background of the Female FGD participants

S/N	Participant No.	Age	Religion	Educational grade completed	Marital status
1	P 1	42	Christian	3	Married
2	P 2	25	Christian	4	Married
3	P 3	35	Islam	None	Married
4	P 4	40	Islam	4	Divorced
5	P 5	35	Christian	10	Married
6	P 6	35	Islam	6	Married

7	P 7	28	Islam	4	Married
8	P 8	32	Islam	None	Married
9	P 9	36	Islam	3	Widowed
10	P 10	30	Islam	None	Married
11	P 11	35	Islam	6	Married
12	P 12	50	Islam	None	Widowed

### 3.6 Study area description

I conducted this study in South Western Ethiopia, Oromia regional state, Jimma Zone, Omo Nada District. Omo Nada is one of the 18 districts in Jimma Zone. The district has a total population size of 246,008 of which 123,168 are males and the rest 122,840 are females. Of these, 12,717 live in urban areas and 233,291 in rural areas as documented in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Housing and Population (2008) report.

Omo Nada District is located between 717'-749' North latitude and 3700'-3728' East longitude. It has a total area of 1,658km<sup>2</sup> and is in the SouthernWestern part of Ethiopia, Oromia Regional State, (290 km from the national capital, Addis Ababa). The District is bordered in the South by the Gojeb River which separates it from Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR), in the West by Dedo District (woreda), in the NorthWest by Kersa District (woreda), in the North by Tiro Afata District, in the North East by Sokoru District and in the East by Gibe River. The name of the district, Omo Nada, was derived from the name of two large local rivers called 'Omo and 'Nada. Currently, the district has 39 small sub-administrative units below district level locally known as Kebeles.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for more than 90 percent of population in the district. However, production and productivity of the land has been significantly reduced due to over-cultivation and land fragmentation among the ever-increasing population size of the district (Omo Nada District Agriculture and Rural Development Office, 2013). This is possibly one of the drivers of the wide spread of illegal migration in the district (Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office, 2013). I selected the district purposively for this study due to its proximity to the researcher

and the large number of illegal migrant returnees it received. The following is the map of the district (Omo Nada District Agriculture and Rural Development Office, 2013).

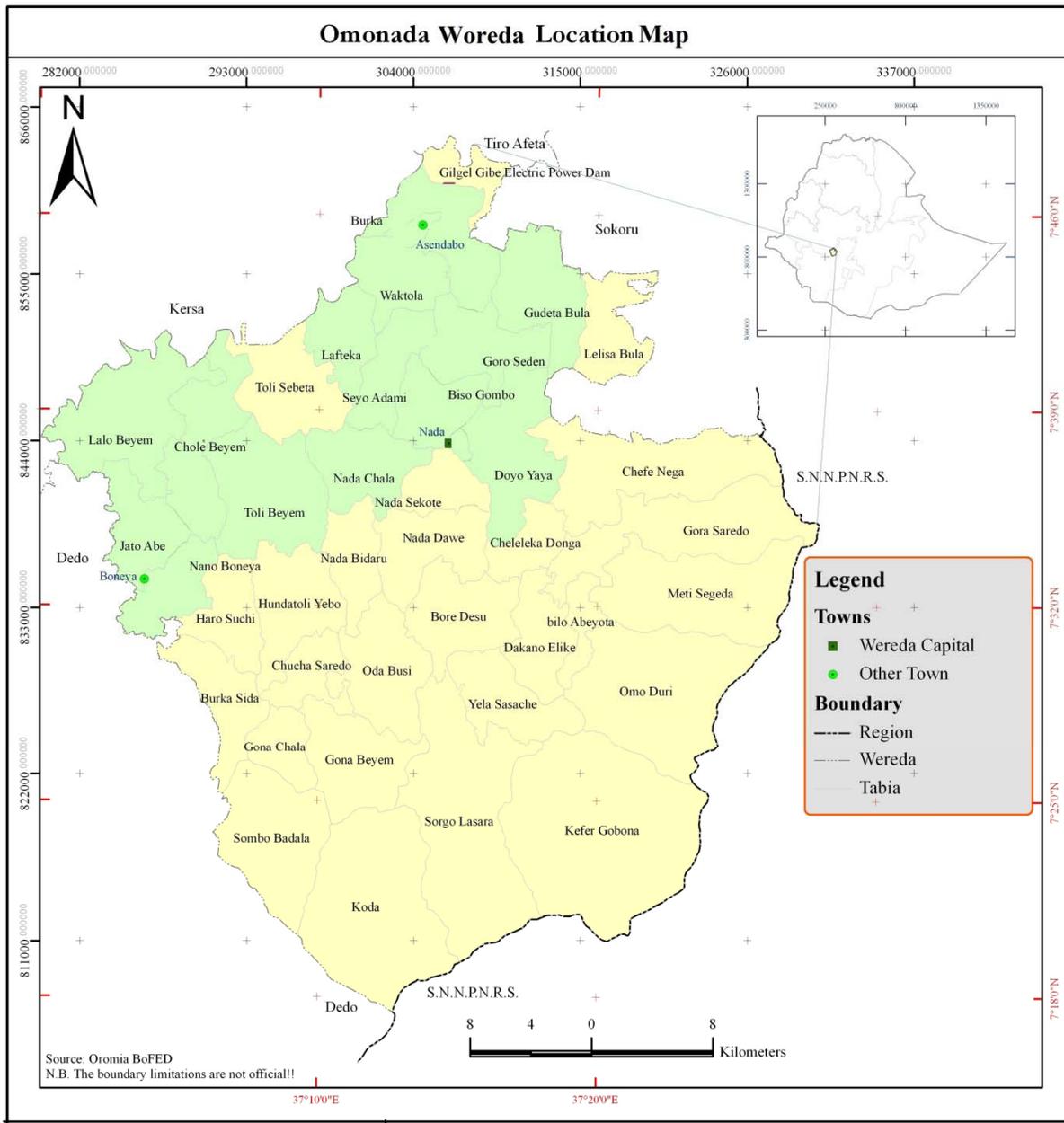


Fig. 1 Map of Omo Nada District

### **3.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I discussed the research methodology, design, methods of data collection, data analysis, challenges encountered and the study area. I also tried to give brief information concerning the rationale for the use of the interpretative paradigm and qualitative research design. I used in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to carry out the study. Similarly, I used thematic analysis to analyze the findings.

The major challenges I encountered during the fieldwork included the length of time and the physically exhausting nature of the study, as well as the political instability in Ethiopia in general and in the specific study area in particular. Nevertheless, I was able to overcome these challenges and manage the overall research process. I discuss the findings of the study in chapter four, five and six in detail.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTED TO THE ILLEGAL MIGRATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with returnees' experiences within their home community prior illegal migration. This information is important because the returnees' reintegration needs mainly originate from the intricate contextual factors that contributed to their illegal migration and the different types of abuses and exploitation they went through on the way and in their place of destination.

Illegal migration is rarely due to free will. Rather, it is deep-rooted in the social structure. In other words, the socio-cultural, economic and political factors beyond their capacities to control forced them to move. Therefore, first, it is important to identify clearly with empirical evidence in order to propose actionable measures to solve this problem in the future. Though the study participants migrated illegally due to external contextual factors, the individual experiences of these factors may also vary from individual to individual. Therefore, in this chapter I explore the contextual factors that gave rise to the illegal migration of the study participants and their individual experiences of those factors.

Combinations of social, economic, cultural, political and environmental factors give rise to illegal migration. The same factors, which contributed to illegal migration, can also influence the returnees' reintegration needs. The ecosystem perspective argues that in order to understand a problem like illegal migration, its consequences such as reintegration needs and the mechanisms to address effectively the needs, it is important to look at 1) the problem, 2) the needs of the person affected by the problem and the 3) contextual factors that gave rise to the problem (needs) simultaneously. In terms of the ecosystem perspective, these three issues are inseparable and considering any one at the expense of the others is a fruitless exercise. The chapter also explores the subjective socio-economic experiences of the returnees within their communities before illegal migration using the symbolic interactionist perspective.

All the responses point to the vital role poverty played in pushing people to resort to illegal migration. Poverty limited their opportunities to acquire basics essential for survival. It limited their access to alternative sources of income, their ability to build a house, and to provide adequate food and clothing for themselves and their children. Illegal migration, therefore, became the only available alternative means for many of them to escape their miserable life situation. Most of them assumed that illegal migration was the only available option for them to escape poverty and live a successful life.

Concerning this, ILO (2011:21) reported that poverty, especially, rural poverty, is the major pushing factor for the illegal migration of many Ethiopians. A number of people in the country have limited access to means of production such as land, social services, vocational and higher education, which limit their employment opportunities. The UNDP (2012a:37) report also revealed that despite the fact that the government had been making efforts and the average economic growth rate of the country was 9-11 percent over the last decades, Ethiopia continues to be one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. The country is vulnerable to recurrent climate change, drought, over flooding and land degradation, which severely affect its economic growth. The Regional Mixed Migration (2012:18) added that contrary to the remarkable improvement in areas like sustained development and rapid progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals in the last two decades, still Ethiopia remains poor with millions of people struggling to survive in fragile environments, which force many people to migrate elsewhere from their original place.

Adamnesh and Margaret (2015:1-2) further noted that Ethiopia is one of the major poverty-stricken countries in the world. The causes of the abject poverty in the country are social, political, economic and environmental. Pushed by poverty, a number of people in the country have resorted to human trafficking and migrant smuggling in hope of attaining better education, employment and get access to better living conditions abroad. According to Bales (2005), even though poverty is not the only cause for illegal migration, there is ample evidence that young and healthy poor people are the main target for migration (Bales 2005:141). By depriving individuals of basic human rights and participation in social lives, poverty plays a crucial role in the illegal migration of many people from their home community to elsewhere (Obokata 2006:126). Some migration scholars argue that the poorest of the poor rarely migrate as migration involves having at least

initial capital to pay the cost of migration. However, when it comes to Ethiopia, women migrants in particular often lack adequate money to pay for processing their passports and medical checkups. Therefore, the brokers often pay the cost associated with their migration in exchange for their first three or more months of wages. Even though it is difficult to conclude that poor people always migrate, the poorest of the poor are those who mainly migrate in the case of Ethiopia (United Nations University 2014:2).

The IOM (2011:82) notes that there are multiple economic, social, political, cultural and environmental factors that drive migration in general and illegal migration in particular. For this reason, the nexus between the study participants' subjective experiences and the contextual factors that gave rise to their illegal migrations are analyzed thematically based on the objective of the study and the issues that emerge from the data.

#### **4.2 Poverty**

Poverty was one of the major contributing factors that forced the study participants to migrate illegally. The study participants experienced abject poverty, a situation in which they lacked a minimum income and resources to fulfil daily survival needs for themselves and their families. They were unable to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter for themselves and their families within their home communities for a long period.

Having no alternative ways to meet their basic survival needs within their communities, they resorted to illegal migration as the only option to satisfy survival needs and improve their situation. Almost all of the study participants mentioned that poverty was the major reason for their illegal migration. They expressed how poverty forced them to leave their families, home community and migrate illegally to Saudi Arabia below. One participant revealed his destitute circumstances as follows:

*I was so poor. My family and I were surviving on the meagre income I was earning from rarely available daily labour. Being poor, I could never provide adequate food and clothing for my family and myself. My children rarely had three meals a day whatever the quality of the food was. On many occasions, they missed either breakfast or lunch. We all used to wear tattered clothes and were living in demolished house for a long time. My children were often ill and could not get*

*timely medical treatment, as I had no money. I was so tempted, and overall life became bitter to me. Due to these, I decided to migrate abroad illegally in order to get employment with better pay and come out of that destitute life condition. For me, migration was a means to say good-bye to poverty (Abdulbasit, male, 37 years).*

Poverty and the persistent wretched living conditions they experienced made many of them hopeless and desperate to leave their community. The following narrations from the other study participants testify to the fact that poverty as the major push factor that drove people to illegal migration. The study participants described the difficulties in acquiring income for survival as:

*My life was just from hand to mouth. I had no regular means of income as I had no job and no assets. I used to engage in daily labour to earn a wage and secure a little food for our daily survival for a long time. The daily wage was too small to cover basic needs for my families. Even earning that small wage itself gradually became very difficult as the daily labour became less available due to the increase in the number of job seekers in the community and the few available jobs. My life and that of my families went on deteriorating. I had two wives and seven children. I was the head of my families, but I had nothing to feed, clothe, buy educational material and send my children to school. It is sad to see the sufferings of one's own family. Poverty is disgraceful. I felt sad for my inability to provide essential things for my children and my wives. Generally, I became hopeless. I then started to think of alternative ways to overcome that destitute life. While I was contemplating what I should do to come out of poverty, I came across people who had similar problems in my community. We discussed our situation and any available alternatives to improve our lives a lot. Finally, we reached the conclusion that we had to migrate illegally as we had no other alternative in our community. At that time, migration was the only way to success for me. (Abdushukur, male, 38 years).*

Tahir's desperate life situation and his hope for a better life in the future were the driving force behind his illegal migration to Saudi Arabia.

*I tried a lot, but I could not improve my family life working and earning that money from daily labour. That was why I decided to migrate through the route facilitated*

*by brokers. Before my journey, I heard from the brokers that Saudi Arabia was the place where anybody could easily get a job with better pay. So I thought that I would really obtain the type of job I want, earn much money and improve my life and that of my family. I had planned to accomplish many things that I thought would improve my and my family's situation within a short period of time. For instance, I had plans to construct a house in Jimma town, buy a car, open a shoe boutique for myself and support my poor families with the rest of the money. As the information I got from the brokers, migration to Saudi Arabia was the only good way I had to achieve all those plans. But all of those ambitions were left in the air as I came back empty handed (Tahir, male, 34 years).*

Another respondent described the way in which poverty prevented him from fulfilling his dreams and to drove him to migrate illegally:

*Poverty was the main cause for my illegal migration abroad. I had a dream to work, earn better income and live a better life here in my country. To that end, I had a plan to open a small shop and grow it gradually. However, I could not get seed money. My family was too poor to help me start my own business and actualize my dream. I also searched for employment but did not succeed. Getting employment was very difficult for even those who had completed a college education, let alone for people like me who have no adequate formal education and training. Finally, I realized that I could not start my own business, get income and actualize within my country. I found that it was very difficult to realize my dream due to poverty. I exhausted all possible means and illegal migration became the last resort for me. It seemed me that illegal migration was the only available key for me to unlock the life challenges I faced due to poverty (Mamadson, male 25 years).*

Seifu had also described how poverty and the lack of any means of generating income and improving his life in his place of origin forced him to migrate illegally to Saudi Arabia:

*I had no farmland to cultivate crops and no money to trade with or engage in any form of economically gainful activities. My family and I were living a destitute life. We could not get three meals a day let alone other things. While I was thinking about what I should have to do to come out of that difficult condition, I got*

*information from friends and brokers about the availability of a job and better pay in Saudi Arabia. I shared the existence of such opportunities with my parents and consulted them about migrating. As my parents' situation was also hopeless due to poverty, and they knew of successful stories of other people who had been to Saudi Arabia, it did not take them too much time to agree with my idea. They immediately accepted my quest to go to abroad and gave me their consent. A week after I consulted them and got approval, I migrated illegally to Saudi Arabia in order to change my life and that of my families instead of suffering here throughout my life. I believed that migration was the only life changing means I had (Seifu, male 25 years).*

Even if one had agricultural land, productivity of the land had decreased greatly because over cultivation for a long period depleted it. Therefore, it is very difficult to produce enough food. One respondent explained the difficulties in working on his degraded land and paying back a government loan for fertilizer as follows.

*Illegal migration was not a matter of choice for me. Rather, it was the only opportunity I had at that time. I had small plot of farmland. The land was completely degraded and depleted as it had been cultivated for a long period. I could not produce any crops for my families without applying fertilizer. So I used to buy fertilizer at high cost from the government. As I could not pay the entire price for fertilizer at one time, I was getting it in the form of a loan from the government. Because the price of fertilizer was so high I could not pay the government loan by selling the small food crop I was producing from the small plot of land with the application of fertilizer. As a result, I fell into debt and migrated to Saudi Arabia to work and earn income to pay the government loan and improve the situation of my family. Otherwise, I might be I accused and even imprisoned by the government for my failure to pay back the loan (Seman, male, 36 years).*

The size of land owned by farmers was too small and that having farmland was not a guarantee for one to produce adequate food for ones' own needs as one of the study participants described.

*The size of the land owned by many farmers in our community has been subdivided among generations and has become too small. For instance, I had a small plot of*

*land I inherited from my father. As the size of the land was too small, I could not produce an adequate amount of food for my family and we were suffering a lot because we could not produce enough food for our survival needs. Lack of adequate food due to the lack of farmland coupled with lack of other alternative employment opportunities within the community forced me to leave my family and migrate to Saudi Arabia (Abdulbasit, male 37 years).*

A female respondent also explained how deep-rooted poverty limited her ability to fulfill basic survival needs and lead to illegal migration:

*I was a child of a poor family. My father died leaving five children, including me, when I was 9 years old. Our mother faced many challenges bringing my siblings and I up. She travelled long distances carrying firewood to sell on her back to sell and buy our daily needs to survive. When I grew up, my needs also grew. I needed to eat better and be better dressed, but I did not even have a coin to buy hygienic materials like soap and hair oil. I searched for employment, including daily labour, to fulfil my basic needs and support my mother. Nevertheless, I could not get anything. I faced many challenges. Hence, I became hopeless and migrated abroad through brokers to get employment, to bring changes for myself, my mother and my siblings (Mishel, female, 27 years).*

In the same manner, both female and male FGD participants described that poverty is one of the major factors contributing to the illegal migration of a large number of people to Middle Eastern countries particularly Saudi Arabia. The participants also emphasized that the government and all concerned bodies operating in the district should support the community by creating employment opportunities other than agriculture in order to tackle the deep-rooted poverty. The key informant from Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district added that due to a shortage of farm land, land degradation, poverty and unemployment, a number of people in the district have become poorer and poorer over time. The community in the district has little opportunity to improve themselves. Due to these factors, whatever means of migration has become the last resort and coping strategy for many people to survive.

### 4.3 Unemployment

Unemployment is another contributing factor to illegal migration. The study participants had experienced chronic unemployment in their place of origin for a long time before migrated illegally. They tried to get employment, but they could not get the opportunity within their community for various reasons. One of the reasons was that there was little/no job opportunity because the market lacks the capacity to provide the opportunities for all job seekers. Another reason was that families and relatives had no capacity to assist unemployed family members to start their own business, as they themselves were poor. Moreover, the job seekers lacked the knowledge and skills required to get the few employment opportunities available in government organizations or the public sector. Many of the returned migrants explained that they made efforts to get work in their country before they decided to migrate illegally but with no success. One of the study participants articulated the failure to get any work and the subsequent decision to migrate illegally as follows.

*Life was very difficult as my parents were poor. I stopped going to school after I completed grade 7 to work and support my family. I used to start early in the morning and roamed here and there in a nearby small town to search for employment. I searched for more than two years but I could not get anything. As almost everybody in our district was searching for employment, it was very difficult to get even daily labour. Many people were seeking employment; however, very few were fortunate enough to get it as there were few opportunities. Despite all my efforts to get employment, I stayed without any job for a solid two years. However, I was young enough to work and responsible to fulfil my own needs, I became very dependent on my poor parents for everything due to lack of any employment opportunity. As a result, I was disappointed and turned my attention to illegal migration (Yahiya, male, 24).*

*I took the Ethiopian General School Exist Exam and completed grade 10. However, I was not fortunate enough to score an adequate score to continue my preparatory and university education. My family could not help me establish my own business as they were poor. I searched for employment for three years; however, I could not get work because there were few employment opportunities available in the*

*community. Getting employment in our community was as hard as getting into heaven as there were few opportunities available compared to the number of job seekers. It was even very difficult for university graduates themselves let alone for people who had completed grade 10. I stayed jobless for three years because of these reasons. As time went on, things started to get worse. Previously, I sometimes had daily labour and getting something for my daily bread. However, getting daily labour itself became very difficult. I became hopeless and started to chew khat with friends, hiding from my parents. One day while we were chewing khat and talking among my friends about what we should do to get employment, one of our friends brought up the idea of migrating abroad. We discussed the idea and thought that it was good idea. Finally, we decided and migrated illegally through brokers (Tayib, male, 35 years).*

Even if individuals make efforts to establish their own business, the country's tax is too high for many poor people to succeed in their business and overcome poverty as understood from the experiences of some returned migrants who participated in the study. As the government requested them to pay taxes higher than the profit they get from their business, the capital to run the business gradually decreases. Fares describes his problems with having his own business:

*I had no regular job for many years because there was no employment opportunity. After many challenges, I tried to run my own business. I opened a small retail shop. After a year, the government levied high taxes on my business before the business returned even the initial cost I invested let alone any profit. As a result, I was so frustrated and was forced to sell the shop to pay the tax for fear of imprisonment. The business gradually dwindled. Finally, I left empty-handed, became disappointed and chose illegal migration as a means to search employment elsewhere for survival (Fares, male, 45 years).*

Mensur also describes the survival challenges in his community:

*The lack of an employment opportunity was the main reason that forced me to migrate illegally. The livelihood for almost all families in our community was based on subsistence agriculture, which was from hand to mouth. Our family had a small*

*plot of land to cultivate because the land was sub-divided among generations from time to time and became smaller and smaller. My parents had eight children, including me, and we all were working on that small piece of land. As the piece of land was so small, its production was also very small, and it was difficult to feed our family throughout the year. Therefore, my father prepared and sold charcoal while my mother carried firewood to the nearby small town to earn a supplementary income for our daily survival. I had to engage in business other than agriculture and support my parent's meagre income. Even though I tried a lot to search for employment for a long time, I could not succeed. Consequently, I decided to migrate to Saudi Arabia illegally as other youths in our community were doing (Mensur, male 32 years).*

Even though getting employment opportunities was difficult for everybody in the community, the situation was worse for females as for the most part they lacked the minimum education at least to apply for the few available vacancies. It was also more difficult for women to start their own business and improve their situation compared to men in the community. Although the government has been making efforts to ensure equal access to education and employment for women in principle, a lot is still left to the community in general and the family; in particular, to support girls' education. For example, many girls in the community are still not attending school because of lack of support from their families and this hampers their access to obtaining formal employment compared to men. Fedila and Mishel described the situation of women in their community:

*Getting an employment opportunity within our community was very difficult for the educated male let alone for a female who has no formal education at all like me. Many girls never attended school in our community when I was a school aged child and many girls are still not attending school due to lack of permission and support from their families. Many families in our community still think that the only appropriate thing girls need to learn is how to manage household chores. I do not mean that it is wrong to teach girls how to manage domestic activities. But I mean that the fate of girls should not be limited to this. They should also get support from the families like the male children do to get a formal education as lack of formal education is hindering many women from competing for the few available employment opportunities. For*

*instance, I never got a formal education because my parents were not willing to send me to school, like they did my brother, when I was a child. Because I could not compete for the few available formal employment opportunities in the community because of the lack of a formal education, I ended up with migrating illegally (Fedila, female, 35 years).*

Mishel recounts the lack of opportunities for women to obtain employment or to start their own business as:

*A woman has little or no chance of securing employment in our community for various reasons. One of these reasons is that traditionally our communities do not give equal opportunities for females to attend school like the males. The other reason is that as many women are always busy with household activities, they lack time to engage in economically gainful activities to generate income for themselves and their families. It is, therefore, very difficult for them to start their own business. These are the reasons that many women remain unemployed and poor in our community. My mother was very busy with household activities and caring for children while my father was alive. As a result, she could not get and save income at least for difficult times, as she told me. Hence, she automatically surrendered herself to poverty and took firewood to sell at the market to secure income at least for our daily survival after our father died. Had she had the opportunity to work and accumulate income she would have been able to engage in other activities to change our lives and save herself from carrying firewood. This should have in turn enabled her to educate or help me engage in my own business as she told me. If I had been able to get an education or get support from my mother or somebody else I would have either got employment or started my own business and would never have resorted to illegal migration (Mishel, female, 27 years).*

Responses from both FGD participants confirmed that employment opportunities are very limited in the study area, especially for youths with little or no formal education. The few employment opportunities in public sectors are not even adequate to absorb the university graduates, much less individuals with less formal education. There are no investment activities which create employment opportunities particularly for unemployed youths who have completed high school. Most families are poor and have five to ten children. Families have no financial or material

resources to establish income-generating activities for their economically active children to fulfil their needs. Families themselves expect support from their children when they grow up. In the absence of employment or other means of generating income, illegal migration has become the only available alternative for the youths to obtain employment to fulfil their own needs and their families' expectations as understood from the focus group discussions. Therefore, the male FGD participants specifically emphasized that the government should attract investments and big projects to the district in order to create employment opportunities for the unemployed people.

Responses from key informants were similar to those of the returned migrants and the FGD participants regarding unemployment as one of the major driving forces for the illegal migration of many people from the study area to Arab countries (specifically Saudi Arabia). The key informant from Omo Nada District Police Officer stated that youth unemployment went beyond an economic problem and was the cause of frequent political instability in the district. Youth unemployment has also become the cause for the recurrent mass riots against the government. The widespread unemployment-induced public demonstration against the government from August to October 2016 was evidence of the fact that unemployment became the cause of political instability in the district according to the police key informant.

Available literature also witnesses the fact that the high prevalence of unemployment in Ethiopia is one of the major contributing factors for many people to migrate illegally. Muhidin (2016) reported that unemployment is one of the most serious social problems in Ethiopia particularly among the youths due to inadequate institutional attention for youths' employment from the government, lack of business skills, and shortage of finance and lack of work place to create their own employment among the job seekers. (Muhidin2016: 347-349). The labour market in Ethiopia also lacks the capacity to provide employment opportunities for many people contrary to the huge number of job seekers in the country (Fitsume 2014:207).

Though some people try to establish their own business, it is difficult for them to be successful as the government tax is too high to the extent that it forces people to sell their income generation source to pay their bill and end up in illegal migration (The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat 2012:19). Poor employment opportunities coupled with low pay and high taxes versus the expensive cost of living in the country are the major economic drivers influencing many people to migrate illegally from Ethiopia (Martha 2012:27; ILO 2011: 21).

#### **4.4 Influence of brokers/ smugglers/traffickers**

There is no clear distinction between brokers, smugglers and traffickers (commonly known as *dalalas*) in Ethiopia. The widespread existence of *dalalas*, together with poverty and unemployment, created a fertile environment for the prevalence of illegal migration in the study area. The local brokers/smugglers/traffickers are people who move throughout the community, disseminate information and recruit people for illegal migration. Recruiting people for illegal migration is highly lucrative for brokers as they are easily able to exploit the miserable living conditions of people and deceive and recruit them by telling them stories of the successes of some migrants. They play a significant role in migrating people from their place of origin to the Arab countries by creating desires and instilling dreams of good futures in the minds of the destitute if they migrate.

Most of the study participants described how the false promises by the *dalalas* lured them to migrate ‘illegally’. Several study participants described the false promises of the *dalalas* as quoted below.

*The miserable life I was leading for a long time and the information I got from the dalalas made me so eager, and I immediately decided to go to Saudi Arabia. They presented the country as heaven on earth to me. They deceived me by listing many things. They told me that there were plenty of life-changing employment opportunities in Saudi Arabia. In their eloquent speech, they expressed that most of the jobs in Saudi Arabia are simple and undertaken by using less human energy consuming technologies. They did not need a high level of education or skills training, they told me. They also deceived me by saying that many people with low or no education had migrated, got highly paid jobs and become rich within a short period. They added that they had a lot of experience of helping their clients to become successful; I just had to leave everything to them and be confident in their service. According to their false information, many of the clients they already sent abroad achieved their goals very soon and have been thanking them. Therefore, the only thing expected from me was just to pay the service charge they required to facilitate an easy and safe journey for me. Even if I had no money on hand for the service charge, I should not bother because they would cover it for me and I could*

*pay them back after I reached Saudi Arabia and got employment. When I heard all these things, I trusted them and was so excited -as if I had won a lottery - and decided to migrate (Zubeda, female, 25 years).*

Fatuma also tells how illegal brokers came into her community to deceive and recruit people:

*There were a number of illegal brokers campaigning throughout the community and were knocking at each door to attract and recruit potential job seekers. The community did not know who such people were and whether the information they were giving people was true or not. Everybody was spending his/her money without any guarantee for his/her life and with simple trust alone. The brokers deceived people and took large amounts of money from them by cheating and with false promises of a better life waiting for them abroad and were receiving large amounts of money. Individuals, families or relatives were paying 10,000-15,000 Ethiopian Birr or sometimes more, for a single broker who had promised to facilitate safe arrival and an employment opportunity for the emigrant. Most of our communities are trusting people and the illegal brokers, smugglers and traffickers used the trust as an advantage to exploit everybody. I too was deceived and gave them 11,000 Ethiopian Birr for which I benefited nothing at the end (Fatuma, female 27 years).*

Fedila described how a broker forced her into debt bondage as:

*The local broker recruited from Omo Nada district, Asandabo. I migrated to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia through Dire Dawa crossing the border of Djibouti, Yemen and finally reaching Saudi Arabia illegally. I started the journey with my friends. I paid 6000 ETB for the local brokers who cheated me with false promises of an excellent opportunity I would enjoy in Saudi Arabia. The payment for the brokers in Yemen was not included in the initial payment as they told me that the sponsor or my employer in Jeddah would cover it. When I reached Yemen, my potential employer in Jeddah paid a sum of 5000 Riyal to the Yemen smugglers for a service fee and facilitation of my journey to Jeddah. After my arrival, the person employed*

*me with 1800 Riyal per month for my services, but I did not receive anything for three months, as I had to pay to the debt to the employer (Fedila, female, 35 years).*

Brokers, smugglers and traffickers network extended from the local community to various destination points involved in the recruitment, transportation and passing of people from different parts of Ethiopia to other destinations, particularly the Middle East (US Department of State 2015). Once migrants have been recruited locally, they are handed over to the smuggling networks at different transit points in Somalia, Djibouti and Yemen until they reach the place of destination mainly Saudi Arabia (ILO 2011:26). Yahaya describes the extensive smuggling network involved in getting migrants to Saudi Arabia and the costs involved as:

*The local brokers informed me that they would facilitate everything for me to reach Saudi Arabia safely through their networks at different places and get employment. They took my friends and me from Omo Nada, our place of origin, and transferred me to Addis Ababa. Those in Addis Ababa submitted all of us to those smugglers and traffickers in Dire Dawa. Those in Dire Dawa, transferred us to those in Djibouti. Those in Djibouti then transferred us to those in Yemen and we finally reached Saudi Arabia. We paid them a lot of money at all those transit points we passed. I myself paid them 6000 ETB until I reached Djibouti and in the end I left empty hand (Yahaya, male, 24 years).*

In both male and female FGDs, the influence of local brokers (*dalalas*), smugglers and traffickers is also repeatedly mentioned as contributing to the widespread occurrence of illegal migration in the Omo Nada district. These agents have networks extended from the local area to the place of destination. Their major role is motivating potential migrants mainly by deceiving them with false information such the availability of employment opportunities and better pay in Arab countries. Available research evidence also confirms this finding. For instance, Asalefech (2017) noted that the search for job opportunities, limited income and false promises made by brokers are the major factor drawing migrants into illegal migration (Asefach 2017:87). The migration of Ethiopians to Arab countries has intensified due to social networks and expansion of illegal agencies (Girmachew2017:8).

Similarly, the key informant from Omo Nada Police Office emphasized that the *dalalas*/smugglers in local area also engage in recruiting the potential migrants and transfer to those in Addis Ababa in secret ways. Those in Addis Ababa transfer the migrants to those in Diredawa or in Jijiga. Those in Dire Dawa and Jijiga also transfer the migrants to those in Djibouti and Bosassu. From Djibouti and Bosassu, they pass the migrants mainly to Saudi Arabia via Yemen.

#### **4.5 Family pressure**

Families, themselves frustrated by poverty and their dire lives, were also instrumental in motivating family members to migrate through whatever means available in expectation of economic rewards from the remittances the migrant family members send back. Migration of family members to Arab countries by whichever means possible has become a poverty alleviating strategy for many families who have no assets or resources. Yahaya explains how he felt obliged to migrate to help his family in return for their investment in his childhood:

*My family faced many ups and down in bringing up my siblings and I. In spite of their poverty, they did everything they could to raise me well. In our community, family expect children to do something when they grow up in return for their family's investment at childhood. I had a social responsibility to help my family. As I am the senior child in my family, my family expect many things from me. I had to be an example to the rest of my siblings in supporting my family. For that reason, I had to try everything I could to help them, as they had done for me when I was a child. However, I did not have a job to do so as I had no mechanism to get an income and help my family; I migrated to Saudi Arabia illegally as many youths in our community had been doing to help their families (Yahaya, male, 24 years).*

Fatuma explains how her parents themselves made the arrangements with the *dalalas*, paid for the so-called facilitation services and sent her abroad like this.

*Disappointed with poverty, the difficulties in improving our situation, and attracted by the success stories of a few people they had heard from the *dalalas*, my father and mother encouraged me to migrate and help them as many youths in the community were doing. They consulted with me after they communicated and made*

*all the arrangements with the dalalas. They told me after they paid the service charge for the dalalas and made an appointment to fix the date for the journey. They only told me that I had to go to Saudi Arabia after they had almost finished everything. I agreed with their ideas as I had no other choice and they did the arrangement for my future benefits. I preferred migration because I could work and improve my life and that of my family's instead of suffering here with poverty throughout my life (Fatuma, female, 27 years).*

Both FGD participants also confirmed that it has become the norm among families in the community to send their children to Arab countries to get work. Families put pressure on their children to migrate through whatever means available, including illegal migration. Families view having at least one child working in an Arab country as having money in the bank because of the hope that their children abroad will send the money that will improve their situation and their future. Having a child abroad has also become a mark of social respect for some families. The community also gives more respect for those who have a child/children abroad than the family who has sent only one or no child at all yet. A family who has two or more children, particularly in Saudi Arabia is viewed as role models in the community for sending their children to another country where they get better jobs and income. Sending children to abroad through migration has thus become a source of income, social status and prestige amongst many families in the community. It is also a symbol of achievement, which makes the family feel proud and hopeful as understood from the FGD participants. Consequently, every family has been making efforts to send its daughters/sons to Saudi Arabia.

The key informant from the Labour and Social Affairs department of the district added that sending children to Saudi Arabia has currently become more valued than sending them to universities. This is due to fact that many families think that even with a university degree it is difficult to get employment in the country.

This implies that the decision to migrate in general and irregular migration in particular is not only made by the individual migrants alone but also their families initiate it. That means the migration decisions has an intrafamilial implicit contract in its nature. The family supports the migrants before leaving home in expectation of remittances as compensation (Lucas & Stark 1988:478).

#### 4.6 Socio-cultural and religious reasons

It would appear from some of the responses of the study participants that illegal migration has become a cultural norm in the community. People not only migrate for economic reasons alone, but also do it to achieve social-cultural and religious ends. The attraction to Arab countries by people of the Islamic faith to learn religious values and ideologies are other factors that have contributed to the illegal migration of people from the study area as is evident from the following response: The following narrations are evidences concerning this issue.

*I had the desire to go to Saudi Arabia for a religious purpose. Saudi Arabia is a holy place where almost all Muslims in the world wish to go at least once in their lives. The same was true for me. I had a desire to go to Saudi Arabia to be a strong person in my faith. It was my desire to learn the holy Quran in detail and become an intellectual religious teacher and preacher of Islam. Truly speaking, I had a desire to go there for religious purposes rather than for work because I know that I can work and change myself here in my country if I was determined to do so. I tried by rearing goats and realized this. My goats reproduced and tripled in number within a year and I started to get adequate income to feed my family. Soon after my goat rearing business started to be fruitful, however, I encountered a problem. The problem was that my wife became sick and had to drop out of second year college training. While I was at hospital to treat my wife, thieves stole fifteen goats from me. When my wife became better, I decided to migrate because I was angry because my goats were stolen, and I was left with nothing. I became poor and lacked any thing to feed my wife and children. Hence, I changed my plan to work in my country and decided to go to Saudi Arabia to attend religious studies as well as to work and change my life (Bilal, male, 32 years).*

Similar to Bilal, Sheki had migrated to Saudi Arabia where he had hoped to learn more about his religion and become a religious teacher. His long-held desire visit Saudi Arabia for religious education and financial security were the reasons for his illegal migration to Saudi Arabia as he described below.

*I had a long-held plan to go to Saudi Arabia for religious purposes. I wanted to learn the holy Quran in detail and become a knowledgeable Islam religion teacher. Saudi Arabia is the origin of the Islam religion. There are many Islamic religious intellectuals there. I also had ambition to visit the two holy places, Mecca and Medina, in Saudi Arabia for praying and praising Allah at least once in my life as other Muslims do. The country became an ideal place for me for all these reasons. It was possible to go Saudi Arabia legally for religious purpose. However, I decided to migrate on foot illegally as I could not afford the high cost of transportation via the legal means (Sheki, male 49 years old).*

The information obtained from both FGD participants and key informants further strengthens the arguments of the returnees to the study area. According to information from the key informant interview with the Omo Nada Labour and Social Affairs expert, the young generation grew up by hearing about the golden opportunities in Arab countries and the successful stories of relatives and neighbours who had been to Arab countries. Children are brought up listening and internalizing the economic and religious importance of going to Saudi Arabia in particular and the opportunities available in Arab countries in general. They consider migration to Saudi Arabia as a normal part of their lives, which a muslim should at least perform once in life. Many people believe that visiting and praying at Mecca and Medina is one of the religious duties by which the individual gets forgiveness for his sins from the creator, Allah. Because of this, they have been migrating to these places through any available means. Those who cannot travel legally due to lack of money usually migrate illegally according to the key informant.

Similarly, both FGD participants mentioned that those who travelled to Mecca receive great spiritual grace according to the teachings of Islam religion. Travelling to Mecca is one of the pilgrimages of the Islamic religion. It is a symbol of obedience to Allah. It is also a way of getting forgiveness for our sins and attracting blessings that eradicate all our problems including sickness and poverty. Due to these reasons, a Muslim is required to travel to Mecca at least once in their lifetime. However, according to the FGD participants, today many people have been migrating mainly to get employment, better income and overcome poverty other than for religious purposes.

#### 4.7 Political discrimination

Some of the returned migrants also complained that the political system discriminated against them. The existing system marginalized them because of their political beliefs and, therefore, did not get equal employment opportunities and other services. Political cadres also threatened them for the sole reason that they opposed the discriminatory treatment of people based on their political background. Siraj, Jebal, Mensur and Tayib explained how political discrimination contributed to their decision to migrate illegally:

*It was very difficult to get employment in public sectors run by the government. I applied so many times for vacancies advertised by government sectors to recruit guards. But I could not succeed even if I fulfilled all the requirements for the positions compared to other applicants because one had to be a member of the ruling party and present a supporting letter from the party to at least be shortlisted for interviews, let alone be employed. As I was not a member of the party and could not fulfil the political requirements, they threw away my applications and discarded so many times. On the other hand, those who were less qualified but had party support were employed. Political cadres terrified me many times by the cadres because of objecting to that discriminatory treatment. Consequently, I became desperate, left my home and migrated to Saudi Arabia illegally. Migration was the only option for me to escape from poverty, and the threatening and offensive political environment (Siraj, male, 21 years).*

Jebal also explained how political discrimination against those who were not members of any of the ruling party's organizations prevented them from getting any financial assistance from the government:

*Getting employment was very difficult. The only available financial assistance in the community for the jobless was the then small and micro enterprises financed by the government. I applied and tried to get credit from the enterprise many times to run my own small business. However, I could not get the loan as they gave priority for those who were members of the ruling party's youths and women league. The government media were repeatedly propagating that the government was*

*committed to help all unemployed citizens of the country to secure employment opportunities by organizing them into small and micro enterprises. However, in reality, those who were benefiting from the loan money allocated by the government for that purpose were those affiliated to the ruling political party. When I complained against this discriminatory practice, the loan officer collaborated with the political cadres and seriously warned me not to speak a single word about that. As a result, I was disappointed and turned to illegal migration. I did it because I had no other alternative as they considered me as a second-class citizen within my own country (Jebal, male, 32 years).*

Political discrimination was not only practiced in areas of getting access to employment and securing loans, but also political discrimination became the norm in securing other essential resources such as land for the construction of houses and work places for business activities. Those persons who were members of the ruling political party enjoyed relatively better access to resources at the expense of the others. Anybody who opposed such kinds of discriminatory practices and treatment was subjected to threats and imprisonment as understood from the experiences of some returned migrants. Mensur describes how the system denied him acquisition of land like this.

*Apart from lack of employment opportunities, the existing political system was not fair to all citizens. For instance, I applied to get land to construct a house. Those people who were the members of the political party got more than one plot of land. The government officials responsible for distributing land provided it clandestinely for those party members and refused my request by saying that they banned land distribution for an unknown time. I waited for a long time, but I could not get a single piece because I was not a member of their party. They offended me so much by their discrimination and thus, I argued with one of the officials. As a result, he categorized me as a person having a special mission from the anti-government bodies and seriously warned that I would get the consequences that follow. That was what made me hopeless and led to my decision to migrate. For me migration was not only the means to get employment but was also a means to save my life (Mensur, male, 32 years).*

In extreme cases, the political discrimination goes beyond warnings and threats and involves prosecution and imprisonment. Tayib described his experience after opposing discriminatory practices:

*After putting up with unfair treatment for a long time, one day I publicly opposed the discriminatory practices of the politicians at a public conference called by the government cadres to discuss the local development bottlenecks within our area. But the cadres did not accept the point of my argument. They denied everything and argued that the government was serving everybody equally irrespective of their political background. They twisted my question and used to threaten me by saying that such a question (the question I raised on the conference) comes from opposition political parties like the OLF (the Oromo Liberation Front, which was categorized as a terrorist organization by the ruling government) while, in reality, I had had no communication with this party. This resulted in my imprisonment for three days for the sole reason that I raised that question at the conference. They also followed me closely for a long time after the conference. Whenever there were oppositions against government from youths on any matter, I became the first person they suspected and persecuted. I was frustrated with poverty, unemployment and, above all, such type of political injustice. These reasons forced to me leave my lovely family, friends and relatives. Migration was a means to get relief from everything I was suffering (Tayib, male, 35 years).*

Regarding this, the male FGD also described that there were a number of youths who were detained and threatened by government officials without adequate reasons. Whenever the youths challenge the government official by getting involved in protests due to unemployment, the local government responses are mainly blaming the youths as anti-peace agents organized by opposition political parties to hinder development and peace instead of appropriate responses to solve their immediate problems. The imprisonment, threatening and even some times physical punishment by government officials, especially security, is the reason for some youths to migrate abroad.

#### **4.8 Absence of legal means to migrate to Saudi Arabia**

Some of the study participants highlighted the lack of legal means for males to migrate to Saudi Arabia for employment as the policy of the country was closed to unskilled foreign male job seekers. Saudi Arabian policy only allows female foreigners to migrate and obtain employment in the country in areas of household domestic activities. Despite the legal means for them, the women study participants, however, argued that the long time taken to process legal migration, its relatively high cost and inability to get a sponsor in Saudi Arabia are the major reasons for women to migrate illegally. Many participants express these issues as impediments to legal migration.

“Even if there was legal means, it took me a long time to process it and required more expense. That was the reason I preferred the illegal means” (Zubeda, female, 25 years old). “Yes, I know that many women had been migrating legally. But I could not try the legal migration because I was poor and had no money to process all the procedures the legal means require such as the medical check-up, passport, flight fare and others. I decided to migrate illegally because of those reasons” (Fedila, female, 35 years old). “Of course, there was a legal means. But it was costly as one had to pay for everything including flight cost. I could not afford all those costs. That was why I consulted the brokers and chose the illegal ones” (Mishel, female, 27 years old).

*There were no legal means. For instance, there was no legal agency in Ethiopia, which linked male job seekers in Ethiopia with employers in Saudi Arabia. As the policy of Saudi Arabia has no room for male job seekers to emigrate and get employment opportunities there, the employee-employer legal agencies do not process legal migration for males to the country. That was why I decided to migrate illegally. I would have migrated legally, if there had been a legal way (Mensur, male, 32 years).*

*Had it been I got the legal means, I would have been flown through Bole International Airport, which saved myself from the exhaustive journey on foot, the maltreatment and economic exploitation in the hands of smugglers and traffickers at every transit point. But there was no legal means for the male Ethiopian job seekers to migrate to Saudi Arabia for employment. I migrated illegally because of that (Seifu, male 25 years old).*

While inability to afford the cost of legal migration was the main reason for the females to choose illegal migration, the absence of legal means to migrate was the main reason for some males to

migrate illegally. Both FGD participants also stressed that lack of legal means was the reason for many males to migrate illegally from their community to Saudi Arabia.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

To sum up, the various contextual factors discussed above and the subjective experiences of the returnees resulted in their ‘illegal migrations’. Poverty, unemployment, influence of brokers/smugglers/traffickers, family pressure, religious, political discrimination and absence of legal means particularly for males are the major complex and reinforcing factors that gave rise to the illegal migration of the study participants. The returnees’ subjective experiences of these factors and the meaning they gave to migration such as “means to escape poverty, alternative way to success and a key to unlock poverty” also motivated them to migrate.

From the ecosystem perspective point of view, these imply a number of personal and contextual factors ranging from micro to macro level contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees to Saudi Arabia. Lack of skills and knowledge to get employment opportunities within their community and the corresponding disappointment, frustration and hopelessness resulting from joblessness as well as the desire to live a better life in future were the micro level factors that forced the people to migrate illegally.

The motivation and influence of families in expectation of support from their young family members to improve their destitute situations and the inability to provide financial support for these young unemployed family members were the meso level factors responsible for the illegal migration of the returnees. Information about the success stories of people who already migrated to Saudi Arabia and the deception of brokers, smugglers and traffickers also influenced the returnees to make the decision to migrate illegally.

Moreover, poverty, the limited capacity of the existing employment market, political and religious reasons were the macro level factors that contributed to the returnees’ movement from their place of origin to Saudi Arabia.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE RETURNEES' EXPERIENCES OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

There should be evidence to say that reintegration assistance is important for the returnees. To this end, the study explores the illegal migration experiences of the returnees explored in addition to the contextual factors that resulted in their illegal migration. For this reason, this chapter tries to investigate the illegal migration experiences of the returnees that can be a ground for arguing the need for intervention and reintegration. The illegal migration experiences are described in terms of the various abuse and exploitation the study participants experienced in connection with their illegal migration.

The reintegration of the returnees is a complex phenomenon, which involves the understanding of each returnee's illegal migration experiences en route and in the place of destination. In addition to understanding the contextual factors that resulted in the illegal migration of returnees, it also requires an understanding of the subjective experiences with which they returned home. In other words, successful reintegration of the returnees also depends on understanding their experiences of the whole process of illegal migration because this contributes to the understanding of the support they need to reintegrate into their communities of origin effectively.

Lyneham (2014) argues that understanding these experiences has paramount importance and benefits for designing mechanisms to best serve the needs of the returnees to recover and decrease their likelihood of re-migrating illegally (Lyneham2014:1).

As the returnees' subjective experiences of illegal migration vary from individual to individual, their reintegration needs also vary. There is no one-size-fits-all reintegration response. Rather, the reintegration approaches depend on the local contexts and the returnees' needs to match the reality on ground (IOM 2015:16). The failure to understand the subjective problems the majority faced, and their subsequent reintegration needs, leads to inability to tailor reintegration supports to their needs.

Regarding this, Cassarino (2008: 17) contends that reintegration of the returnees depends on understanding three major factors: the situations in the home country to which the returnees are

returned; their migration experiences while they were abroad; and the situations in the host and home country that motivated them to return home. These pre- and post- return conditions assessment are important to estimate the likely outcome of reintegration.

The reintegration efforts which neglect the subjective experiences of the returnees before migration, en route, and in the place of destination results in incomplete reintegration responses which in turn results in wastage of resources. For this reason, this chapter of the study explores and discusses the physical, emotional, economic and social experiences of the returnees en route and in the place of destination.

## **5.2 Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is one of the most insidious problems ‘illegal migrants’ face en route to their places of destination. The long journey and the conditions under which they often travel are physically devastating for many migrants. Most of the returned ‘illegal migrants’ in the study area repeatedly mentioned the fact that they faced various types of severe physical abuse on their journey to Saudi Arabia. The experiences of Abdulbasit, Fatuma, Bilal, Abdushukur and Mamdason discussed below reveal the severity of the physical abuse experienced by the study participants due to the exhausting nature of the journey and maltreatment in the hand of the smugglers and traffickers.

*We (my travelling mates and I) encountered various problems while we were on the way to our destination. The smugglers and traffickers forced us to travel in deserts far away from people because they fear that the security forces in different destination countries would prosecute them if caught. We faced a number of difficulties crossing the Sahara Desert. There were times we stayed for two to three days without getting a piece of bread and a drop of water. My mouth became totally dry due to lack of water and there was a time I was forced to drink human urine. My body was almost paralyzed due to lack of food, water and exhaustion related to the journey. In addition, the smugglers and traffickers were beating, slapping and kicking people whenever somebody became tired. They poured melted plastic on our heads to force us to pay them additional money they requested from us on the journey. Due to all these physical abuses, I became seriously sick. Some people even died due to lack of water, food and the physical abuse by the smugglers and*

*the traffickers. We crossed a long desert observing many dead bodies, their clothes and shoes scattered here and there on the field. As we had nobody to appeal to, we kept silent and endured everything for fear of further abuse. That was how we managed to save our lives (Abdulbasit, male 37 years old).*

Fatuma described the severity of her journey:

*I faced many physical problems. Illegal migration is risky for human beings in general and for women in particular. The journey was so difficult. I travelled long distances together with other migrants, crossing deserts. As we travelled in deserts, it was common to stay for two to three days without eating food and getting a drop of water. I was very exhausted and unable to walk. Consequently, the traffickers seriously beat me with a bamboo stick and dragged me on the ground. My left rib was injured, and I still feel pain as a result. Despite all those problems I kept silent and tolerated the abuse because of what could have happened to me had I not kept silent (Fatuma, female, 27 years old).*

Apart from the physical exhaustion of the journey, the smugglers and the traffickers demanded more money from the migrants. When the migrants could not pay, the smugglers and traffickers used corporal punishment to force the migrants to call to either the families in the home country or somebody else they may know in Saudi Arabia to send them the money they needed. The experience of Bilal narrated below is evidence of this.

*We faced a lot of physical abuse. The smugglers in Jigiga transferred us to the organized smugglers and robbers in Somalia. The organized group of robbers and smugglers in Somali assaulted me severely. They took everything I had including my clothes, money and shoes. After they had taken everything I had and left me empty-handed, they handed me over to other organized group of smugglers and traffickers in Yemen known as “Abdulgawul, an Arabic word which means strong persons who transfer migrants from Yemen to Saudi Arabia. The Abdulgawuls asked us to give them money. As most of us had ran out of our money by the time we got there and could not give them the amount they requested, they stripped us of our clothes and flogged us. They threatened us with a gun and forced us to call our family members or somebody*

*else we may know in Saudi Arabia to send money otherwise they warned us they would kill us. Those migrants who had families in home countries or relatives in Saudi Arabia called them and were saved after they had sent them money. However, as I had no family member in home country or relatives abroad who could send me money, I begged them in the name of Allah not to kill me. They detained me for three months and finally released me after I had endured severe physical injury and labour exploitation (Bilal, male, 34 years old).*

In confirmation of Bilal's experience, the male FGD participants described that *abdulgawuls* force the migrant to call his family member left behind to reach for him while they are flogging him or dropping melted rubber on his head. They also threatened the family left behind saying that they would kill the migrant family member unless the family sent a specified amount of money within a short period. Whenever the families hear such kind of threatening and the crying of the migrant family member for help, they ran here and there to search for ransom money to pay the *abdulgawul* and release the migrant. In most cases, the family left behind pays the ransom money by taking loan from relatives, friends, moneylenders or selling the only precious asset they have to use for difficult times as the FGD participants revealed.

The physical abuse went beyond mere physical punishment and many migrants lost their lives under the extreme conditions of the migration journey. Abdushukur and Mamadsan described the deadly journey where migrants lost their lives as:

*There were illegal armed Somali sailors who transported the 'illegal migrants' from the Djibouti border to Yemen. The sailors and their supporters were so cruel. They loaded people beyond the carrying capacity of the boat. While we were travelling under suffocating conditions, a strong wind came and forced the boat to one side. Consequently, the boat submerged after few minutes and all of us fell into the Indian Ocean as we approached the Yemen border. As I fell into the ocean, I immediately stretched out my hands, caught a plastic water container that was floating in the ocean and which had belonged to someone who had drowned. While I was floating in the ocean with the help of the plastic container, a strong wind came up again and blew me towards the border. That was how I survived. Nobody was rescued. Everyone from the boat died except me. After a while, the United Nations agency operating in Yemen*

*came, searched and obtained the dead bodies of 85 persons from the ocean. I myself observed and counted the dead bodies of those persons. I was extremely shocked with what had happened, and its image still disturbs me. Allah saved me with his help. I have nothing to say except thanking Him for saving my life (Abdushukur, male 38 years old).*

Mamdason described the perilous ocean journey undertaken by migrants as follows.

*I and the many other illegal migrants crossed a long sea in an old boat under risky conditions. The boat was loaded beyond its capacity. Unfortunately, a big wind came up while we were travelling on the sea and rocked the boat from side to side. Many of my travel mates drowned in the sea and I saw them dying. I was so shocked, fixed to the boat and continued to pray to God to save my life. I could not believe what happened. Thanks to Allah! I was lucky to survive. The Creator saved my life (Mamadsan, male, 25 years old).*

Besides migrants drowning at sea due to unseaworthy vessels, the smugglers and traffickers themselves also drowned some migrants who had become mentally disturbed due to physical abuse and anxiety related to the tough journey. Abdulbasit described the brutal treatment as:

*While we were crossing sea by boat, one of the migrants went out of his mind. He became crazy due to the day-to-day suffering and difficulties. He would shout continuously saying ‘Please leave me alone, let me go and buy a cigarette’ and caused a disturbance. He struggled with everybody in the boat to get off. The boat crew assaulted him with a stick to silence him. However, he continued shouting. The boat crew then drowned him in the sea and we continued the journey. His dead body was left in the sea. I observed the same phenomenon while 32 of us were stuffed in one truck while travelling from Yemen to Saudi Arabia. One person accidentally fell from the truck and landed on the ground on his head. When I looked at him, he was already dead. I called Sawat, the driver, and told him “Fenna Fermot”, an Arabic word, which means a person has died. Please stop the car. The driver replied that it was no problem, let him go, you “habesha” (Ethiopians) are as many as the grains of sand and there is no need to worry even if tens or thousands*

*of you die. He continued driving. We left his dead body in the desert and continued our journey. It is a tragedy. I saw all this with my own eyes and the images still disturb me whenever I remember them. In the overall process of the journey, the fact that I spoke a little Arabic helped me at least to describe my situation and beg both the smugglers and traffickers to understand my problem. Had it not been that I could speak a little Arabic, I would have been died of their brutal maltreatment (Abdubasit, male 37 years old).*

Regarding this, both the female and male FGD participants also described the risks associated with illegal migration. The participants emphasized that there are many people from their village whose family could not get any information on since they had left home many years ago. These imply that probably these people died due to the risks associate with illegal migration. Of course, there are also reported cases of deaths to the families in their village according to the FGD participants.

Not only did the illegal migrants face physical abuse on their journey, but also they suffered abuse from employers in the place of destination. Many female migrants work as domestic workers. Some of the women tell of the abuse they experienced at the hands of their employers:

*My employer was very cruel. She assaulted me every day. I did my best to please her with all the domestic activities I was doing. But she was never satisfied with what I did. Sometimes she would say the rice was not cooked well; other times she would complain that the rice or the vegetables were overcooked. If the food was prepared well, she would complain that either the wall or the bath room was not cleaned well, or the clothes were not washed well. She never lacked a reason to blame and beat me. She insulted me like a dog. Of course, the fact that I had no experience in cooking their food also made me vulnerable to her verbal and physical abuse. As a result, I endured frequent slapping and assaults with a metal rod. As I had nobody to report the assault to, I simply kept silent for fear of the worst thing that might happen to me and passed my whole life there with tensions (Fatmua, female 27 years old).*

*My employer's wife was always quarrelling and belittling me over domestic activities especially about cooking. After I cleaned the walls of the rooms, she checked it by rubbing with a piece of clean white cloth. If she found a little dirt, she would start*

*with a dozen insults and beatings. She was not comfortable with the way I cooked. She often complained that the taste of the food had changed. She frequently grumbled that there was too much salt or oil in the sauce. Of course, I had no previous exposure to their cooking styles and tastes of their favourite food. I made mistakes while cooking, especially in the beginning. I had also no formal training in cooking modern food as I was accustomed to our local traditional method of cooking. So I made mistakes and was frequently insulted and experienced severe physical punishment. One time she even burnt me with heated metal. I suffered a lot. However, I tried to learn from my mistakes and gradually improved over time, and that was how I managed to survive (Mishel, female, 27 years old).*

*When I told my employer that I had to return to my country and asked her to give me my previous two month's salary, she and her husband severely assaulted me and threw me into the street when I became unconscious. Fortunately, one Ethiopian driver working there found me and took me to the Ethiopian Embassy. The next day, the Ethiopian Embassy arranged for me to fly back to Addis Ababa. My left hand was broken, and I was hardly conscious when I reached Bole International Airport. The Ethiopian Red Cross Society workers immediately took me from Bole International Airport to a hospital where I was treated for seven days and sent to my place of origin after I had recovered a bit. I am better now but still I feel pain in my hand because of the injury (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

Physical abuse was not only limited to the female illegal migrant domestic workers. Many male 'illegal migrants', engaged mainly in construction work in Saudi Arabia, reported frequent abuse from their supervisors:

*One of the few places we (the 'illegal migrants') could obtain employment in Saudi Arabia was in areas invisible to government and the security bodies like construction sites. Most of the construction engineers, masons and supervisors working there were Egyptians. The Egyptian construction workers hire us (the Ethiopian male 'illegal migrants') mainly as daily labourers as we lack technical or expertise-based knowledge. We worked from dawn to dusk without rest. If the supervisors found*

*somebody resting for a moment, they slapped or beat the person with sticks like a donkey. My supervisor seriously slapped and kicked me many times while I took a little rest. Therefore, one should always remain alert and active in order not to be punished (Mensur, male, 32 years old).*

*The construction supervisors were very tough. They did not tolerate even a simple mistake. They beat everybody for simple reasons like seeing the person talking to his fellow workers. However, most daily labourers on the construction sites often received severe punishment and physical injuries for making mistakes while mixing cement with sand for the construction. As we had no previous experience in construction, it was common for all of us to make mistakes, especially at the beginning. I made mistakes twice and that resulted in my being beaten severely by my supervisor. I could not do anything except keep silent because he could lay me off from the job, which I only got after many challenges. As the employers knew that we had no legal support to work there, they could take any measures they liked against us at any time (Fares, male 45 years old).*

Another male study participant, who was engaged in keeping cattle, also described the physical abuse of his day-to-day experience:

*As I could not enter big cities due to fear of being caught and arrested by the police, I was employed by a Saudi pastoralist living in a rural area to feed and keep camels and goats. My duty was mainly to continuously provide fodder and water for his livestock. However, as the herds of livestock were large it was very difficult for me to feed all of them as per the employer's schedule. The weather conditions of the country were also very difficult for me to adapt to and undertake my duties properly. As a result, I often experienced unusual tiredness and consequently failed to keep to the feeding schedule for the livestock. My employer assaulted me severely many times as a result. He warned me that he would kill me should I attempt to escape from his home. As I had nowhere to go and nobody to appeal to, I simply cried like a child and begged him to leave me alone whenever he beat me (Jebal, male, 32 years old).*

Physical punishments like assaulting, slapping, pinching, flogging, burning with metal and plastic are well documented tactics used by smugglers and traffickers to get control (Abdulraheem & Oladipo 2010:39; United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking 2008:9). The study participants experienced abuse at every point of their illegal migration journey – from more money extorted from them by smugglers and traffickers to severe physical abuse that included being slapped, beaten and even burned resulting in injuries such as wounds, broken limbs and ribs. Some migrant lost their lives because of the maltreatment by the smugglers and traffickers. Those unable to endure the pressure and abuse often committed suicide. Many also died while attempting to escape (ILO 2011:53).

The mistreatment and physical abuse continued even after they reached Saudi Arabia. Here, the employers were the main perpetrators of the abuse against both male and female migrants. Lack of adequate skills and training resulted in physical abuse of migrants. With nowhere to go, or no one to report the abuse to or appeal for help, migrants had no recourse except to keep silent for fear of worse abuse or losing their lives.

As a consequence, the migrants suffered physical pain such as headaches, fatigue stomach-aches, chest, back, pelvic, dental, eye and ear pain (World Health Organization 2012:2; Wickham 2009:2; Jayasree 2004:58).

### **5.3 Labour exploitation**

Labour exploitation refers to a condition where somebody recruits an individual by force and obliged them to work for long working hours with no/little payment under grave conditions involuntarily. The ILO defines forced labour as “all work or service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered him/her self voluntarily” (ILO 1930). Labour exploitation can take place in both illegally and legally established, well-regulated and monitored businesses (Jagers & Rijken 2014:48).

Illegal migrants are usually forced to engage in various activities. They have no say in any of the type of activities they engage in, the hours they have to work, the length of time they stay in a particular job, or the minimum wage paid to them. The employers themselves determine these issues mainly.

The study participants had similar experiences. The brokers, smugglers and traffickers initially convinced them that they would secure decent jobs with good pay. However, they transferred the migrants to the employers in Saudi Arabia and forced them to engage in whatever type of activities decided by the employer without having any say in the length of time they had to work, the type of activities they had to engage in and the amount of pay they had to receive.

The extreme labour exploitation experienced by the migrants was particularly arduous for females who were often employed as housemaids. They engaged in domestic work such as cleaning, washing, cooking and taking care of children for long hours and often without pay. Fatuma highlighted the deceit of the brokers and the exploitative conditions migrants as:

*I became aware of the fact that the brokers and smugglers had deceived me when I was at home, saying that Saudi Arabia is a country where everybody easily gets any work of his/her interest. I found that everything in Saudi Arabia was the opposite to what the brokers and the smugglers said. I was employed by a family as a house maid through a broker. As getting employment there was very difficult, I had no option except doing whatever activities were available. Otherwise, I would die of hunger. I did all the domestic chores for the family who employed me. I worked from dawn to dusk. I woke up at 5:30 AM in the morning and went to sleep at 11:30 PM most of the time. Although the activities were tiresome and exhausting, I was earning very little money. I was earning 2000 Saudi Riyal a month. That was very little payment for the work I was doing and the time I spent every day on the activities. Had it not been that I was living there and having my meals with them, it would have been very hard for me to even feed myself with the salary alone (Fatuma, female 27 years old).*

Zubeda and Fedila told the following similar tales of deception and exploitation.

*After I reached Saudi Arabia I found that all the brokers', smugglers' and the traffickers' promises of helping me to secure the type of work I would have liked were false because it was very difficult for migrants to get employment there. The only work available, especially for women, was as a domestic worker. I got employment as a domestic worker for one family. I cooked food, fed the family, washed clothes, and cleaned the rooms and walls. I worked long hours every day. I always went to bed at*

*3 AM and woke up at 5:30 AM in the morning. The routine household chores were endless. I had little time to take any rest. Even though I worked day and night, my employer never, ever thanked me. She would criticize a single mistake I made harshly, ignoring the many things I did right. She even assaulted me many times for simple mistakes (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

*I did household activities every day of the week without rest. I worked not only for my employer but also for her relatives. After I had finished all the daily domestic work in my employer's home, she also forced me to work for her family. I often worked for more than 17 hours a day without any rest. It was back breaking work. Often my hands became numb due to washing clothes for a long time without rest. Even though the work was back breaking, and I worked day and night, my salary was very small. I was earning 1800 Saudi Riyal, which was very little for the time and labour spent on the domestic tasks I had to perform. The good thing was that I was not paying house rent and for food; the employers themselves provided (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

Most of the Ethiopian women who migrate to the Middle East in both regular and irregular ways engage in domestic work, which the labour policy of the destination countries does not regulate. This makes them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation (Mefin & Guday 2017:69). Similar to the females, male migrants also face exploitation. Male migrants working in the construction sector experienced the same kind of exploitation. Abdubasit and Mensur stated the exploitation they experienced in the construction sector as:

*I worked from 7:30 AM to 8:30 PM on construction sites. I started out mixing cement and sand. After some time, the supervisors changed my job to cutting and connecting ferrous metal used to erect the building under construction. I was earning 40-50 Saudi Riyal a day, of which I had to pay 10 Saudi Riyal every day for three months to a broker who had secured the job for me. I had no means to negotiate and secure the job myself as I had no Saudi identity card to enable me to make such deals. Therefore, the only way to obtain the job was through brokers by paying them commission. As my monthly earnings were too small to eat enough, most of the time I had only a piece of bread and a cup of tea for both breakfast and lunch. I ate dinner rarely in order to*

*save the money and use it for my survival. In short, the situation subjected me to exploitation throughout my stay in Saudi Arabia (Abdubasit, male, 37 years old).*

*We cut and connected metal on the construction sites together with other 'illegal migrants'. I started the work at 7:00 AM in the morning and went back home at 9:00 PM just to sleep. My job was cleaning the construction site, watering the building under construction, and mixing sand and cement. I was busy throughout the day. I had only a half hour resting time for lunch. However, I was only earning 2000 Riyal monthly after the broker had deducted his own commission. That was too little to even cover the cost of my food and house rent. Because it is very difficult for 'illegal migrants' to get jobs in Saudi, many of them earned very little. Some migrants managed to get better jobs on construction sites by paying brokers commission from their monthly earnings. As our earnings were too small to cover all expenses, we were living in a small room in a group of 3-5 persons. As a group, we bought and ate whatever cheap foods were available in order to save and use the meagre earning throughout the month (Mensur, male, 32 years old).*

Exploitative living and working conditions are the most common types of problems faced by illegal migrants (ILO 2011:50). Illegal migrants become victims of labour exploitation both in transit and in place of destinations in a wide range of industries like agriculture, construction, domestic work, entertainment, forestry, fishing, mining and textiles (IOM 2015:3). The exploitation varies from imposition of excessive working hours with unfair pay to verbal and physical abuse and even to sexual harassment and sexual attacks (Calandruccio 2005:278). Participants told of having to work to earn money for exploitative brokers and smugglers in transit countries on the way to the destination country:

*When I reached Yemen, I had ran out of all the money I had. So I decided to stay in Sana'a, (the capital city of Yemen), for a certain period of time to work and collect some money to continue the remaining journey to Saudi Arabia. Otherwise, I had nothing to pay the smugglers. But I could not get a job in Sana'a. Consequently, I left Sana'a and travelled to a rural area where I got employment on khat farm as a daily labourer through a broker. There, I undertook laborious activities such as digging plots of land to plant a khat seedlings, watering and harvesting khat for the farmer for*

*very little payment. I worked for 12-15 hours per day throughout the week earning only 5000 Yemeni Riyal per month, which was almost equivalent to 500 Ethiopian Birr (ETB), of which I was paying 500 Riyal monthly to the broker who obtained the job for me for six months. It was extremely laborious work with little payment. But I did it as I had no option (Abdushukur, male, 38 years old).*

*Since I did not have money and could not pay commission to the smugglers from Yemen to Saudi Arabia, they made an agreement with one oil-distributing corporation in Yemen and transferred me to the corporation to work. I was serving in one of the corporation's gas stations for long hours only getting food for my daily survival without any payment for three months. The smugglers ordered me to work there for three months and pay them. Otherwise, they would not release me to continue my journey to Saudi Arabia. I had no option other than accepting what they said. I could not resist because I feared that they would punish me. After three months, they took me from Yemen to Saudi Arabia (Siraj, male 21 years old).*

#### **5.4 Economic exploitation**

In addition to the social, political and cultural factors that drive illegal migration, the involvement of brokers and smugglers in the process for economic gain exacerbate the situation. They make large profits from the exploitation of the people they transfer from one place to another with false promises of helping them to get decent employment with better pay. Illegal migrants are subject to exploitation, both en route and in the place of destination, by having to pay extra expenses, having to work long hours without pay, deductions from their salaries, and in extreme cases, having their salaries withheld (IOM 2015:3-4; Sahan Foundation and IGAD Security Sector Program 2016:4; (Johnson 2012:370).

The economic exploitation of the study participants started within the home community when they were required to pay service charges the brokers and smugglers for the so-called facilitation of a safe journey and accommodation on the way to the destination country. Most of the study participants told of how they paid a considerable amount of money to the brokers for promises of a safe transit and paid work in the destination country. The families of the migrants paid for the

brokers and smugglers by selling scarce resources such as land and the only savings they had for resisting bad times or, in most cases, borrowing from relatives and friends. The following excerpts highlight the costs extracted by the brokers and smugglers and the difficulties in obtaining the monies to facilitate the illegal migration journey and a job in the destination country:

*Overall, I paid 10,000 ETB to the brokers and the smugglers until I reached Saudi Arabia. My parents covered part of the payment by selling the only cow they had. I borrowed the rest from my friends. Had it not been for the support of my parents and friends, I would have nothing in my pocket. I deeply regret paying that much money as what I earned from the migration did not cover what I spent for my journey to reach there (Seifu, male 25 years old).*

*I paid 4000 ETB to the brokers before I started the journey. They never told me that I would have to pay more, and I assumed that the 4000 ETB was the overall payment to reach Saudi Arabia. I later saw that this was not the case. The brokers and smugglers within the Ethiopian border divided that initial payment among themselves. When I crossed the Ethiopian border, other smugglers demanded an additional 2000 ETB and 3000ETB in Djibouti and Yemen respectively. I paid 2000 ETB for those in Djibouti and only 1500 ETB for those in Yemen because I ran out of the money and my pocket was left empty. In total, I paid them 7500 ETB. I rented out the small plot of agricultural land I had for five years and used it to pay for them (Abdulbasit, male 37 years old).*

*I was paying money for the brokers and the smugglers at the various destinations points until I reached Saudi Arabia. For instance, I paid them 6000 ETB until I reached Djibouti and became empty hand. My family sold the only ox they had and gave me that money. Since I could not continue the remaining journey without paying the smugglers, I decided to work daily labour in Djibouti for some time. It took me three months to work in Djibouti and collect the money, which I paid the smugglers for the rest of my journey to Saudi Arabia. Roughly, I paid about 9000 ETB to reach Saudi Arabia (Yahaya, male, 24 years old).*

*The broker and smugglers deceived many people with false promises of a better life waiting for them abroad and received huge amounts of money from them. People, families or relatives were paying 10,000-15,000 Ethiopian Birr and even more to a single broker falsely promising that they would facilitate a safe arrival and an employment opportunity for the emigrant. Most of our community trust people, and the illegal brokers used the trust as an opportunity to exploit everybody. I too was deceived and paid them 11,000 ETB until I reached Saudi Arabia. But I could not come up with the same amount of money upon my return as my earning was too small and I had been supporting my family left in the home country while I was there (Fatuma, female, 27 years old).*

In some cases, the employer pays the cost of the migrant's journey. If the migrant is not in a position to repay the employer, the brokers and smugglers themselves pay it for him/her and seek a refund from the employers in destination countries. Such conditions keep many of the illegal migrants in the same place working for a long period of time with little/no payment until they fully pay back the debt (Voronova & Radjenovic 2016:4). Fedila was an example of someone who delved into debt bondage and explained how having to pay this debt to her employer and having money deducted from her salary for no reason left her with nothing:

*I paid 6000 ETB for the local brokers who cheated me with the false promise of an excellent opportunity I would enjoy in Saudi Arabia. The payment to the brokers in Yemen was not included in the initial payment. They told me that my employer in Jeddah covers the cost from Yemen to Saudi Arabia. Of course, the employer paid a sum of 5000 Riyal to the Yemen brokers to facilitate my transportation and for a service fee to arrive there. The person employed me with a monthly salary of 1800 Riyal after my arrival, but I did not receive anything for three months because I had to pay the debt to the employer. I accepted that I had to pay the debt, but the employer sometimes deducted from my salary for no reason. Whenever I asked for clarification, the employer replied to me in an offensive manner saying that whatever they paid me was enough. I lost a lot of money due to debt payment and deduction of my salary for no reasons by the employers (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

Mamadson also described how he paid the brokers commission and the money deducted from his salary without adequate reason as follows.

*Since I had no legal documents and had moved from place to place in that country, I could not search and obtain employment openly. All migrants there were getting employment through brokers by paying them a certain portion of their salary as a commission. Hence, I agreed to pay them commission and the brokers obtained a job for me in one construction site. I was paying 20% of my salary to the brokers for three to five months. Even though they were getting commission from me, the brokers were not genuine. They were colluding with the employers and deducting money from my salary for no reason. There were very few months that I received my full salary throughout my stay in that country. There were even times when they did not pay me at all. Because of that, and the high cost of living, I could not bring the amount of money I spent on the migration when I came back home. Since I had no way of accusing them legally, I could not do anything but keep silent, because they had the right to call the police and have me imprisoned if they wanted as I had no legal permission to live and work there. Overall, the situation there was troublesome for me. It was not as portrayed by the brokers, smugglers, and friends just to convince me (Mamadson, male, 25 years old).*

## **5.5 Sexual Abuse**

Female migrants were particularly susceptible to sexual abuse. Some female study participants told how the smugglers or employers forced and raped them as the following narrations indicated.

*I left my home country for Saudi Arabia to get employment, better pay, improve myself, and support my family. However, I could not succeed in realizing my expectations. Rather, I became victim of sexual abuse. I will never forget the cruel brokers I encountered in Yemen. They asked me to give them money to travel from Yemen to Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, I could not pay them as I had spent all the money that I had on the preceding transit route there. They separated me and took me far away from the other 'illegal migrants'. There were three males. They threatened me with a knife and took turns to rape me. After I reached Saudi Arabia,*

*they diagnosed before they employed me and the result indicated that I had gonorrhoea. The physician prescribed me drugs and I cured after that. Allah saved me from HIV/AIDS at least (Mishel, female, 27 years old).*

Fatuma also told of the sexual assault she endured on her journey:

*The smugglers were such barbarous and brutal people. They had no sympathy for human beings. I had never seen such kinds of people. They are beasts. They raped me many times by force without any protection. Had it not been that I had taken birth control before I started the journey, I would have become pregnant. Because of their brutal deeds against me, I hated my life and myself in general. I did not imagine that I could resist all those challenges and survive as a human being. Thanks to Allah! I am able to exist until now. He (the creator) gave me the endurance (Fatuma, female, 27 years old).*

Zubeda described how the smugglers and the son of her employer coerced and sexually abused her saying that:

*We stayed in a house owned by the smugglers in Jijiga, a town in the Eastern part of Ethiopia, for more than a week before we started the journey. It was common for women to experience sexual abuse there. The smugglers demanded for sexual favours from the women migrants in addition to money. It was impossible to refuse them as serious punishments like slapping, intimidation and assault followed the refusal. I encountered something similar in Yemen. One of the smugglers called and asked me to have sexual relations with him. I tried to refuse. But he repeatedly slapped and intimidated me by pointing a gun at my head. Under those dreadful circumstances, I had sexual intercourse with him to save my life. The same situation followed me after I reached Saudi Arabia and got employment. The son of my employer frequently came in the middle of the night to where I slept and asked to have a sexual relationship with him. I refused him so many times. But he forced and raped me one day when no one was home. He gave me post pills and warned me not to speak a single word about what happened to me. I kept silent and continued my jobs, as I had no person and institution to appeal to for help (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

## 5.5 Restricted communication and isolation from social interaction

The returned migrants described how they were confined to one place throughout their stay in Saudi Arabia and how they were isolated from any social interaction. Some of them were restricted to one place due to fear of arrest by police, as they were illegal residents. Others described that their employers restricted them. Their employers made it impossible for them to communicate with their families and friends at home or even with anyone else there. Zubeda described the prevention and restriction from anybody else as:

*I could not make telephone calls even to my family let alone anyone once I entered my employer's home. She snatched my cell phone and hid it because she thought that if I had any means to communicate with somebody, I might leave her home if I faced problems. For instance, she suspected that I would call and report the problems I encountered in her home to somebody. People might then help me to leave her home. She prevented and restricted me for fear of that (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

Michel had no contact with anyone for two years:

*I had no means to communicate with my family because my employer confiscated my cell phone and prevented me from communicating with my family and relatives at home. The employer also refused to allow me to use their home cell phone. So I had no communication with my family for the two years I stayed there. I had no chance to go out and phone from the outside, as I feared my employers and the police. As I had no identity card, I feared that the police may arrest me. Even if I had a legal identity card and could do so, my employer and his family did not allow me to go out even for a second. They warned me and strictly forbade from leaving the house and communicating with anybody. Even if I saw Ethiopian migrants on the street when I sometimes went out on an errand, I was afraid of even exchanging greetings with them because I feared my employer (Mishel, female, 27 years old).*

The isolation sometimes went beyond the mere restriction of their communications with anyone else. Fedila and Fatuma described how they were not even able to seek medical treatment:

*As I worked for long hours without a rest, I was frequently sick and could not even receive medical treatment because my employer's wife did not allow me to go to a health institution. She suspected that I might use the opportunity and escape from her home. Instead of sending me to a health institution for treatment, she bought me drugs without a prescription (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

*As I was undertaking backbreaking chores without any rest, I was suffering from serious back pain for which I never got medical treatment because my employer did not allow me to do so. I was totally confined to the house by the employer throughout most of my stay there. She restrained me because she thought that I might get information and try and return home if I got in contact with somebody else (Fatuma, female, 27 years old old).*

Staying away for a long time without having any communication with their families resulted in the disintegration of the family for some of the study participants. Abdulbasit, Abdushukur and Fares all describe the effect of not having any contact had on their families:

*As I stayed there for a long time without having communication with her, my wife assumed that I was not alive and appealed to the court for a divorce. The court had notified me to appear for an appointment three times but I could not appear as I was not aware of this. Finally, the court concluded our marriage as divorce in my absence. She was already married to another person when I returned home. I heard all these things when I returned home after three years. I left empty hand. I did not even have a house even to live in. I re-married another woman recently and am now living in a rented house (Abdubasit, male 37 years old).*

*I worked for a private wood working enterprise outside of Jeddah City. I had no way to communicate with my family left at home and send them money. My family suffered a lot. Two of my children left home and migrated to somewhere I do not know. I am still searching for them, but I cannot get any information regarding their whereabouts (Abdushukur, male, 38 years old).*

Fares told of how his family suffered during his absence:

*I had no means to communicate with my family. It was not possible for us to appear in public places while we were in Saudi Arabia. As we had no legal identity cards, it was very difficult for us to move from place to place for fear of arrest by the police. The construction supervisors did not allow us to leave the construction sites for fear of punishment for employing illegal workers. We were leading a confined life in the construction sites. I had no way of sending money to my family at home during the first year of my stay there. They did not even have a piece of bread for daily survival. Because of that, two of my children dropped out of school, left home, migrated to Jimma town and joined the street life (Fares, male, 45years old).*

As far as the migrants' communication with their families is concerned, both the male and female FGD participants also described that a number of migrants never called their families since they left home. There are many migrants from their village whose families do not know whether they are dead or alive due to this reason. The participants further disclosed that this is because their employers often do not allow them to do so. The key informant from Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district also mentioned that the smugglers, traffickers and even the employers often block the communication between the migrant and their family members left behind in order to exploit them and conceal information related to the exploitation.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

Field data reveals that study participants who took the illegal migration route experienced a wide range of abuse and exploitation both en route and in the destination country. The abuse included physical, psychological and sexual abuse.

While the journey en route was itself physically exhausting with migrants experiencing hunger and thirst, they were also subject to physical abuse such as insults, beating, slapping, kicking, and bodily burn from the smugglers. Both men and women were subject to abuse. Injuries inflicted included bodily wounds, broken limbs and ribs. In addition to the physical abuse, the smugglers and traffickers robbed, and exploited migrants economically charging them for extra services at different transit points. In this ways, they held the migrants in debt bondage. Women became subject to sexual abuse by smugglers and by employers.

The abuse continued in the country of destination by employers themselves. Economic exploitation took the form of long working hours with little rest, difficult workloads, reduced pay or wages withheld altogether. Punishment was particularly harsh for those with few or no skills. In addition, the situation deprived the study participants from getting sufficient or healthy food. Women, usually domestic workers, had been subject to sexual abuse by employers and their families. Study participants were restricted in terms of their interaction with their countrymen and communication with their families left behind in the home country.

The various types of abuse and exploitation experienced by the returned migrants implies the returnees require various types of reintegration support depending on the individual experiences of the returned migrants. This also involves responses from family, relatives, neighbours, government and non-governmental organizations. Thus, the next chapter discusses the reintegration support sought by the returned migrants, the way in which relevant bodies responded to their needs, and the extent to which reintegration responses addressed the reintegration needs of the returnees.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE REINTEGRATION NEEDS OF THE RETURNEES AND COMMUNITY RESPONSES

#### 6.1 Introduction

Chapter five identified and discussed the various types of abuses and exploitations the returned migrants experienced during their illegal migration journey and in the place of destination. The returnees returned home empty handed after being exposed to different types of abuses and exploitation. These conditions might compel them to seek certain types of reintegration assistance upon return. Furthermore, as the returnees migrated due to factors attributed to the existing social structure and faced physical, health, psychological, social and economic problems, the existing social structure and institutions must respond to their reintegration needs under normal circumstances. Therefore, this chapter discusses the reintegration needs of the returnees and the responses of concerned bodies, i.e. family, relatives, community, government and NGOs.

Illegal migration exposes people to various types of problems. Successful reintegration of victims of abuse and exploitation requires the provision of needs-based support and follow-up to help them recover from the harm they experienced and reintegrate into the community (UNODC 2008:87).

The different types of problems experienced by the returnees before migration, *en route* and in the place of destination require tailored reintegration support for the individual for successful reintegration into the community. Each returnee, therefore, requires individual need-based reintegration support targeted to meet his/her physical, emotional, economic and social needs to enable them to reintegrate into the community and lead an independent productive life.

IOM (2011:27) notes that due to the risk and unsafe nature of illegal migration, migrants are mainly exposed to various abuses and exploitation. Due to the hazardous nature of illegal migration migrants may experience bodily harm such as bruises and broken limbs, infectious diseases including STDs and HIV/AIDS, low self-esteem, trauma, malnutrition, lack of income to fulfil their clothing and shelter needs, exposure to alcohol, drugs and substance abuse, insecurity and anxiety. A range of reintegration support is required to meet the needs of each individual. The aim of all assistance and protection efforts should focus on the restoration of victims and their holistic reintegration into the community (IOM 2011:27).

Returnees are usually not any in position to fulfil their reintegration needs themselves due to lack of capacity and resources and are reliant on other agents and the community. This chapter is devoted to exploring the reintegration needs of the returned ‘illegal migrants’ to Omo Nada based on their subjective experiences. It also focuses on how concerned bodies (family, relatives, government, non-government organizations and the community in general) responded to the needs of the returnees by providing need-based reintegration supports. The returnees’ current reintegration status and their coping strategies are also investigated.

## **6.2 The reintegration needs of the returnees**

Reintegration is the re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a returned migrant into a group, process or society of his/her country of origin or habitual residence to enable him/her to participate again in the social, cultural, economic and political life in his/her country of origin (IOM 2015:13). It is concerned with the recovery and the empowerment of returnees by creating a stable and safe environment, helping them get access to a reasonable standard of living, improving their mental and physical well-being, and creating opportunities for personal, social and economic development that will help them lead an independent life (Muco 2013:105; Surtees 2010:24).

As returned migrants are dislocated from the social fabric of the society reintegration schemes should reunify the returnee with his/her family, community and enable him/her to start a new life (Derks 1998:37). Reintegration is not only limited to reunifying returnees to their original family and communities but is also concerned with ways of addressing the specific needs of individuals for reintegration through the provision of different types of need-based supports (Kavoukis2004:65). The reintegration needs of the returnees are discussed in this section as follows based on themes developed from the data collected from the study participants.

### *6.2.1 Need for accommodation*

Accommodation and housing appeared to be the primary need for returnees. Access to housing would enable returnees to settle down, recover from their debilitating illegal migration experiences to become stable and think about how to improve their lives. As understood from the study participants, successful reintegration is unthinkable for the returnees without getting a home of their own. Many of the returned migrants sought housing support at least to settle down. Abdulbasit described his problem with getting an affordable home:

*Accommodation is one of the many worries I faced after I returned to the community. I had no house to live in as my ex-wife divorced me, sold our previous house and remarried another person while I was in Saudi Arabia. I had nowhere to settle down, recover the exhausting journey home and think about my future life and that of my children. I stayed with a friend for three days upon my return and immediately started to search for a house where I could least settle down and plan for a future life. I requested that Nada town administration give me a house with an affordable rent from the government houses under its ownership. But the administration could not help with this request for support. Now I am currently forced to rent a small house at a high cost for myself and my family, my new wife and three children from my ex-wife. It is difficult to ensure the daily survival of my family and improve myself as a large proportion of what I am earning from the laundry service goes for the house rent (Abdubasit, male 37 years old).*

Getting a house does not only fulfil the basic need for accommodation. Access to housing has meaning beyond the necessities of life for the returnees. Getting a house is also a means by which the returnees are reinserted into the community of origin, acquire a permanent address and once again become members of the community from which they were dislocated due to illegal migration. It is difficult for returnees to become members of the community to which they returned and be eligible for various services (including reintegration support) without having a permanent address. Mensur described how the lack of permanent residential address hindered his access to information for employment as follows:

*I do not have my own house. I live in a rented home. As the cost of housing is more than I can afford, I have frequently changed my residential address to search for an affordable place. But the frequent change of my residential address has been hurting me in many ways, for instance, by hindering my access to essential information for reintegration. The concerned bodies cannot easily access me whenever they want to provide me job support. For instance, the project staff from Food for Work Project at Omo Nada district once wanted me for a three-month temporary wage employment. But they could not get hold of me as I had already changed my address when they came to my previous village to give me the*

*information. Consequently, I missed the opportunity. This means I may continue to miss other similar opportunities in the future, as I have no permanent residential address. I need housing support not only for accommodation but also to have permanent address that enables me get access to other reintegration information and support (Mensur, male 32 years old).*

Having a permanent address or home is also a pre-requisite for the returnees to get residential identity cards, which is a pre-condition for getting reintegration supports like loans from micro finances, making contractual agreements with other members of the community and moving from one place to another within the country for various purposes. Study participants described the extent to which a lack of a permanent address or home restrained their social interaction as well as hindered their successful reintegration into the community after their return:

*I have faced many challenges since I returned to a situation where I have no permanent residential home. Sometimes I live with my friends. Other times I live with my relatives who are rather far away from here. Whenever daily labour is available, and I get some money, I rent a house in a squatter settlement at a low cost. I have no permanent address because I have no home. I live by moving here and there. The frequent change of my address due to the lack of a home has negatively affected my reintegration efforts into the community. For instance, I could not get a residential identity card from the kebele (the smallest government administrative structure at the grass roots level ) as this requires having a permanent home address as a pre-condition. Inability to get an identity card limited my freedom of movement from place to place and my engagement in different economically gainful activities elsewhere. I cannot move outside this community, as I cannot even rent a bed elsewhere for a single night without an identity card let alone to engage in economically beneficial activities. Moving from one place to another place without an identity card results in serious punishment like imprisonment as the security forces suspect a person without an identity card of being a member of opposition political parties. Getting housing support is an urgent need for me as it is restricting my identity and freedom of movement for economic and social purpose (Siraj, male, 21 years old).*

Yahya and Abdushukur experienced similar problems due to the lack of a permanent home and address:

*I wanted to be a member of micro- and small-scale enterprise to get credit to start my own income generating activities. However, I could not do so because I have no residential identity card. A person must have a permanent residential address or house number registered at the “kebele” to get an identity card, which is a requirement to be a legitimate resident who is eligible for various services and support from government bodies. I could not be registered with the micro- and small-scale enterprise and get credit to start a business due to the lack of a permanent home address, which is a pre-condition to secure an identity card. For this reason, I am badly in need of housing support now. I know that it is difficult for the government to give me a ready-made house. But if I get a legally recognized small plot of land, I can beg for other support from the community and construct at least a small hut (Yahaya, male 24 years old).*

*The dilapidated house in which I left my family and migrated is now on the verge of fallen apart. I lack money to buy iron sheet, nails and wood to repair it. I need financial and in-kind support from anybody to renovate the house. Otherwise, I will be homeless and left on empty space without a home very soon (Abdushukur, male, 38 years old).*

From the experiences of the study participants described above, it is evident that housing support is one of the urgent reintegration supports sought by the returned migrants. The returnees require housing support as a basic need to protect themselves from harm that results from homelessness. Housing is also required for insertion into the community, to get recognition and acceptance as a full member of the community.

Most of returnees the lacked financial and other resources needed to construct their own houses. This would require assistance from external agencies. Thus, in this study I tried to identify the assistance given for the returnees by external agencies to meet the housing needs of the returnees from the key informants and the focus group discussion participants. Accordingly, all the key informants from the district (Youth’s and Sport Office, Women’s and Children’s Affairs Office

and Police Office) said that there was not any formal housing support provided for the returns from either government or non-governmental organizations. The key informant from the Omo Nada Labour and Social Affairs Office who was closely monitoring the reintegration efforts for the returnees also confirmed this finding. The key informant from the Labour and Social Affairs Office added that the government lacks a budget to provide housing support for the returnees.

Both the female and male focus group discussion participants also revealed that there is little/no reintegration assistance provided from the government for the returnees. The FGD participants did not agree with the justification given by the key informant from the Labour and Social Affairs Office concerning lack of resource. Their view was that although the government lacks financial resources to provide housing supports for the returnees, it could provide other resources needed by the returnees to secure a house. For instance, land, which is crucial for constructing houses, is under government administration, but the returnees could not get any plots of land. Apart from land, there are also some government houses under *kebele* (a small government administrative unit) at the grass roots level. Most of these *kebele* houses serve government workers and those community members who have the means to construct their own houses or can rent from private individuals. The government could have helped the returnees by giving them the opportunity to rent these *kebele* houses at an affordable price. It would appear, then, that a lack of commitment from the government rather than the lack of resources is a major factor.

The government could also have designed reintegration programs and mobilized resources from the community to respond to the specific reintegration needs of the returnees in need of support. Interview with key informants revealed that there are no formal policies, guidelines and programs to guide the efforts of any agencies regarding the reintegration of the returnees. There are also no non-governmental organizations currently operating in the district to provide assistance with housing for the returnees.

According to both the focus group discussion participants, most of the returnees returned to their family and relatives. The relatives and families are providing accommodation for such returnees. Nevertheless, there are also returnees who have no families and relatives. These returnees are mainly homeless at this time and they need support from the government and the community.

### 6.2.2 Need for health services

Health support was one of the reintegration supports identified by the returnees. Most of the returnees had experienced severe abuse both on the migration journey and by employers in Saudi Arabia. Many of them were working long hours under stressful conditions in the destination country. These conditions made them susceptible to health problems, which required health service support. Fedila, Zubeda and Seman described the health support they sought when they returned:

*I came back home immediately after I endured a serious physical injury and my left hand was broken. Upon my arrival at Bole International Airport, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society took me directly to the hospital, treated me at hospital for seven days and then sent me to my place of origin. I had recovered little; I was fully healed when I reached home. I got relief from the pain after the treatment. I am better now but still the pain has not left me totally. I am still badly in need of further medical treatment but I cannot get further treatment because I have no money. Somebody took me from where my employer threw me out and sent me home immediately by the Ethiopian Embassy. I did not even have time to bring my money and baggage. I need health support from the community (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

Zubeda also described the health problems she is experiencing and the need for treatment:

*Generally, I do not feel good. I often do not sleep properly since I returned home. I do not have a good appetite. I have a continuous headache, pain in my back and weakness. It started me when I was in Saudi Arabia, but it became severe afterwards. A physician diagnosed me at Omo Nada District Health Centre and prescribed me drugs after I returned home. I took all the drugs as per the prescription of the health professional, but my health did not improve. I then went for a diagnosis for the second time and the health centre referred me to Jimma University Specialized Hospital, which is about 95km away from here. It cost me 1000 to 2000 ETB for transportation, accommodation, diagnosis and treatment to go to Jimma University Specialized Hospital. As I have no relatives there, so I had to cover all my expenses. I want to go to the hospital for medical treatment, but I do not have money. I came back with little money, which I have been using for my*

*daily survival. I would like it if the government or other bodies would arrange free health treatment for me and financial support for treatment (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

Seman also describes the difficulty to get access to medical treatment due to financial constraints as:

*I have been experiencing a continuous cough and pain in my chest ever since I returned home. I feel weak and cannot do hard jobs. I lost my appetite and felt tired. I should visit a health institution and get medical treatment, but I have no money. As I was paying a debt to the brokers who arranged for me to get jobs, and the fact that the cost of living there was very high, and my employer was deducting my salary without reason, I could not accumulate adequate money. I came back home with little money, which I used for my family's basic needs, and have used up it now. As I have no money now, I need support from the government and community for medical treatment (Seman, male, 36 years old).*

The findings from the FGD participants and key informants also corroborate that of the returnees. Both the female and male FGD participants describe that some of the returnees came back with severe injuries and illness. Hence, they need medical treatment but they have no financial capacity to pay for the service as most of them returned to their families empty handed. Most of them also returned to their poor families who cannot support them. Similarly, the key informant from the Labour and Social Affairs of Omo Nada district described that some of the returnees need health treatment to recover from the health problems they have. The key informant added that these returnees with health problems need external support to get the treatment as they have no money but the office has no budget allocated to give such support for them.

The above findings indicate that some of the returned migrants were in pressing need of health services. The provision of health service support is fundamental for the reintegration of the returnees as it prepares them for other reintegration processes. The returnees are able to engage in other reintegration schemes like skills trainings and income-generating activities if they are healthy. Health services, therefore, are a priority in the reintegration support required by the returnees.

Under normal circumstances, all citizens, including returnees, are expected to pay for the health services they seek but the returnees are usually not in any position to access these services due to lack of finances. Their limited financial capacity to seek support from their family and relatives, who, because they lack financial resources themselves are not able to assist. There is also an expectation of assistance from the government, non-governmental organizations and the community in general.

I made attempts to get the views of relevant government and non-governmental organizations through key informant interviews and focus group discussions concerning the health situations of the returnees and the efforts made by these bodies to respond to the health support needs of the returnees.

The information obtained from the key informants and focus group participants confirmed the lack of assistance for health services for the returnees. The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district is the government organ, which has legal mandate to coordinate the reintegration of the returnees into the community at district level. According to the key informant from the Omo Nada Labour and Social Affairs Office, the returnees could not get health support because the government did not allocate a budget for this purpose. The Ethiopian government lacks the finances for development activities and the provision of public services to the community in general. According to this informant, this is the reason for the failure of the government to allocate any resources to address any needs of the returnees.

The focus group participants, however, expressed the view that the inability of the government to provide need-based health support for the returnees is not only due to the lack of finances but rather due to less focus and commitment from the government to respond to the needs of the returnees. The government does, however, provides free health services for the poorest of the poor in the community based on reliable evidence of the poverty of an individual to provide such support. As the returnees were counted among the poorest of the poor, the relevant government body could have facilitated free health services for the returnees based on their lack of finances.

The focus group participants pointed out that the government was organizing various events to mobilize resources from the community for other purposes. For example, the government officials mobilized a large amount of money from the community for the construction of the Ethiopian

Great Renaissance Dam. They did the same to help a few unemployed youths in the district to establish their own sources of income. They expressed the view that the government could have done the same thing to mobilize resources for addressing the reintegration needs of the returnees, in particular the need for health services. It is possible to generate funds to fulfil the health needs of the returnees from community contributions at public meetings, mosques and community-based organizations such as *Iddir* and *Iqub*. However, the government or the relevant bodies did not mobilize resources for the purpose of reintegrating the returnees.

I also attempted to identify the efforts made by the Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district to create partnerships between the existing stakeholders and to solicit resources for this purpose. Once again, I found that the office did not attempt to create networks and partnerships between the government, non-governmental organizations and the community for this purpose as understood from the key informant.

Although the government is expected to take the leading role for providing reintegration support for the returned migrants, the view was that it is also the responsibility of the neighbourhood and the community at large. I made efforts to explore the health service reintegration supports provided for the returnees by the community at the focus group discussions. The focus group discussions revealed knowledge of the existence of returned migrants in the community who have become bed-ridden due to illness and the inability to get proper treatment, but there were no attempts made by the community to assist these returnees to get treatment.

Even though most of the community members are poor and it would be difficult for them to provide all the reintegration supports needed by the returnees, support for health needs is not that challenging as there are only a few people needing such support. The male focus group discussion participants also emphasized that there is a possibility to collect money and other resources for the returnees from the community, for instance, on meeting stages called by the local government to discuss local development and security issues. The community itself can contribute sufficient resources for this purpose whenever members gather for praying at mosques. However, despite all these opportunities, there is no attempt made by the government or the community to mobilize resources to meet the health support needs of the returnees. Focus group participants suggested that if each individual household head in the community contributed at least one birr it would have

been possible to provide the necessary health supports for the few returnees suffering from health problems.

There is only one non-governmental organization in the study area. According to information obtained from the key interview with the area development manager of the non-governmental organization, the organization is currently working in the study area on community development activities such as construction of schools, clinics, potable water supply and agriculture. Nevertheless, the organization does not provide any support for the reintegration of the returned ‘illegal migrants’ to the district.

### *6.2.3 Need for employment*

Economic need is the outstanding factor that leads to the illegal migration of many people (ILO 2013:43). The lack of employment was the major driving factor behind the decision of returned migrants to migrate abroad illegally. Although they migrated to Saudi Arabia with the hope of getting employment opportunities and earning better incomes to overcome poverty, they did not succeed. Almost all of them returned to the same conditions they found themselves in before their migration. The creation of employment opportunities, which would allow for economic reintegration, became a priority for most of the returnees after their return. Therefore, the need for economic reintegration has become paramount for most of the returnees due to these reasons.

Economic reintegration refers to the insertion of the returnees into the economic system of his or her country of origin and the ability to earn his or her own living (IOM 2011:5). Economic reintegration involves helping the returnees to engage in socially acceptable economic activities to earn income and to sustain their livelihoods. This is possible through direct employment in the existing government, non-governmental organizations and private sectors or through self-employment.

Tayib told of his expectations of being able to earn and save money and the exploitation he experienced in Saudi Arabia:

*Unemployment was one of the main reasons that forced me to migrate. My expectation before the migration was to get better employment with better pay, which would help me to save enough within a short period of time and return to my*

*country to create my own business. But the situation in Saudi Arabia was not the one I expected. I could not get any job that enabled me to accumulate the money I expected. I was working for long hours with little pay. The payment I was earning did not go beyond my daily expenses. As a result, I returned empty handed. I have no job now. Therefore, I need whatever type of employment support to earn an income for myself and my family's daily survival and housing support. I wish I were employed in a government organization on whatever available jobs I can do (Tayib, male 35 years old).*

The difficulty in obtaining a government position was related by Siraj:

*I migrated to Saudi Arabia because I was forced to do so due to poverty. Migration was the only option I had, but it did not help me to get out of the situation I was in before migration. Now I have come back empty-handed and I need the support of all to get employment. I do not need free financial support because I do not want to be dependent on anybody else. I have to work and fulfil at least my essential needs for survival. I need employment support for this purpose. I often see vacancies advertised by government organizations to recruit guards. I believe I can fulfil all the criteria requested by such vacancies. However, the government should be fair and give equal opportunities for all applicants irrespective of political background. I say this because I became the victim of prejudicial treatment based on my political views before I migrated to Saudi Arabia (Siraj, male, 21 years old).*

Some participants expressed the desire to become self-employed rather than to seek a job but could not get any support. Fares told of the difficulties he experienced when trying to start a business:

*I was in dire poverty due to lack of a regular job before I migrated. Of course, I tried hard to improve my situation before I migrated. For instance, I tried to run my own retail business before I migrated. But I was forced to shut down because I could not afford the high government tax and finally decided to migrate. I came back home without achieving my ambition to escape poverty and I wanted to restart that business again. I need support from all concerned bodies to create my own*

*business and become self-employed. I mainly need financial and workplace support to run the business. I also need tax exemption support from the government until my business gets strong (Fares, male, 45 years old).*

Mishel also expressed the desire to start a business of her own, and the type of support she would need:

*I migrated illegally due to poverty. But I could not get a better job with better pay in Saudi Arabia. So I could not achieve my dream to overcome poverty. Still I believe that I should work hard to come out of poverty. I need employment support from anyone for this purpose. In addition to skills training, a sewing machine and start up loan support, I need the support of all the concerned bodies to start my own business. As it is difficult for me to get employment in organizations, I want to be self-employed (Mishel, female, 27 years old).*

Similarly, Abdulatif expressed a similar desire to start his own business.

*Even though I came back without achieving my goal to accumulate a lot of money, I still believe that I can change my situation if I get some forms of support. I do have a little experience in wood working. If I get a little training to upgrade my skills to produce quality products, financial support in the form of credit and working area, I want to set up my own woodworking enterprise instead of expecting others to give me a job. I need the support of everybody to create my own business and realize my dreams (Abdulatif, male, 28 years old).*

Getting employment plays a crucial role in the successful reintegration of the returnees into the community. Getting the opportunity to become productive members of the community and earn income has many advantages for them, such as, access to the necessities of life for their physical and psychological recovery. Sustainable employment is also the means to help the returnees compensate for the economic exploitation they experienced under illegal migration. Economic reintegration such as employment allows the returnees to interact with different segments of the community, share their concerns, seek solutions and access the resources they need to reintegrate. One of the returnees explained as follows:

*I am badly in need of employment support because if I get an employment opportunity, it means I get everything. For instance, I get the opportunity to interact and meet people. This gives me the chance to exchange information on other available opportunities for work and improve myself. Apart from its financial gain, I hope to forget many of the things I have been regretting as a result of my unsuccessful migration. When I sit idle, I worry about being unemployed and poor. That is why I need help to get a job though I have not got any support yet (Abdushukur, male 38 years old).*

In the absence of access to income-generating activities that allow returnees to meet their and their dependent basic needs, it is difficult for them to reintegrate into the community successfully (IOM 2015:13). It is, therefore, important to investigate the effort made by the relevant government agencies to respond to the employment support needs of the returnees.

According to Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office (2014:25), 899 ‘illegal migrants’ were returned to the district in 2013 alone. The interview with the key informant from the District Labour and Social Affairs Office of the 899 returnees included only a small number (71 males and 37 females) who were organized into groups and given assistance to start their own income generating activities. The key informant from the Youths’ and Sports Office reported that the government had constructed 75 sheds in the district for both the unemployed youths and the returnees. The government constructed the sheds so that the returnees and unemployed youths would use them as working places for business activities. The returnees, however, complained that they had not received any form of reintegration supports. However, it did not allocate any of the constructed sheds for the returnees. In short, the findings from the returnees, the key informants and the focus group discussion participants indicated that the majority of the returnees have not yet received any employment opportunity supports to allow them to reintegrate into the community. Lyneham also noted that economic problems, lack of employment and income, are the most commonly faced obstacles by both male and female returnees (Lyneham 2016:6).

As understood from the key informant interviews conducted by the district Labour and Social Affairs Office, which was given the mandate to coordinate the overall reintegration of the returnees, the returnees did not receive employment assistance from government organizations. Formal employment in government offices requires potential employees to comply with the

criteria set out for positions, e.g. having the minimum educational level and service year experience. As most of the returnees fail to comply with these requirements, they are not able to access these positions. However, the effort made to assist them to secure employment opportunities is minimal.

The findings from both FGD and key informant participants also indicated that as unemployment is one of the major factors that drove the returnees to migrate illegally, economic reintegration is one of the basic reintegration supports they needed upon return especially in a situation where most returnees return empty handed to similar situation before migration. Contrary to this, there are again little efforts made by the government and other relevant bodies in the Omo Nada district to help the returnees get employment opportunities as described by the focus group discussions participants.

#### *6.2.4 Skills training needs*

One of the major factors that contributed to the illegal migration decisions of the study participants was the lack of knowledge and skills, which prevented them from obtaining employment in the existing markets. The returnees frequently expressed the need for vocational skills training. Contextually relevant knowledge and skills would enable them to secure employment or equip them with the skills, which would enable them to establish their own business, which would generate a better income. The provision of contextually relevant vocational skills training is the basis for economic reintegration of the returnees into the community as it widens their opportunity for employment and financial independence. Seifu, Abdulatif and Mishel described the types of skills training they sought after return:

*I wanted to get training in repairing cars and search for employment in a garage somewhere. If I get this training, I am sure I can get a job. But there is no organization which provides such kind of training in the district. Such training is only available in big towns like Jimma, 95 km from here. I wanted to attend the training in Jimma town. But I could not do so because I lacked money. I could not get support from my family and relatives, as they are poor. Neither did I get any support from the community. Now I am sitting idle and life is so difficult. I need someone or an organization to sponsor me (Seifu, male 25 years old).*

In addition to enable the returnee to get better employment, skills training could also increase business entrepreneurship skills and increase the returnees' opportunity to create their own business. Abdulatif stated that:

*I do not want to waste my time searching for employment somewhere else as it is difficult to obtain. Instead, I want to get skills training in woodworking to establish my own business. I have applied to the district technical and vocational training centre for this purpose. I have been waiting for their response for the last seven months, but they have not responded to me yet (Abdulatif, male, 28 years old).*

Despite the need for skills training which would greatly improve the chances of the returnees to improve their financial conditions no skills training has been provided by the government, non-governmental organizations and the community to help the returnees acquire job skills.

The findings from the key informants and the focus group discussions also confirmed that no skills trainings were provided for the returnees to enable them to secure employment or enable them to start their own businesses. Both the key informant interviews revealed that there was one government technical and vocational skills training body in the district. However, there is no attempt made by government bodies like the Labour and Social Affairs Office, the Youths' and the Sport Affairs Office, the Micro and Small Scale enterprises, the Women's and Children's Affairs Office and the existing technical and vocational centre of the district to provide skills training for the returnees. While it is difficult to provide skills training which is not available in the district, the attempt made by the relevant government agents to use even the available opportunities to respond to the skills training needs of the returnees is insignificant.

#### *6.2.5 Need for financial support*

The returnees sought financial support for a number of reasons: for their daily survival needs, to start their own businesses and to repay the money they borrowed to pay for the brokers and smugglers to facilitate their journey to Saudi Arabia.

Bilal described the struggle to survive without any money:

*The Ethiopian government paid my airfare to return home. Upon my arrival at Bole International Airport, the government also gave me 900ETB to use for transportation and accommodation to get back to my local area. I thank the government for the support. Had it not been for the support of the Ethiopian government, I would have been left there and suffered from the punishment that follows failure to leave the country within the given time. After I reached home, I faced many challenges due to the lack of money - even for my daily bread let alone other things. The first two weeks after I returned home, I forgot shame and begged my local community to help me financially for my daily survival. A few individuals contributed a little money, which helped me survive (Bilal, male 32 years old).*

Zubeda sought financial support in the form of loan to establish her own business, but also to repay the loan she took to pay the brokers and smugglers.

*In addition to medical treatment, I have currently no means of getting income for daily survival. I should get income for my necessities of life. I should also repay the loan I took to pay the brokers and smugglers. To do this, I want to engage in income generating activities, which do not require much labour to generate income for survival. I have a plan to participate in small trade like selling of potatoes, tomatoes, onions and garlic. I need at least 5000-7000ETB to start such a business. But there is no organization which provides financial support for illegal migrant returnees in the community. There is only a single micro-finance body, which provides a credit service for the community. It is difficult for the returned migrant to get a loan from the micro-finance because one should at least first deposit twenty percent of the loan into micro-finance first. As I have no money, I could not save and get a loan. I need financial support from the community but cannot get it (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

Even though some returnees came back with a small amount of money, this was not enough to help them start their income generating activity. Fatuma needed a loan to start her own business but encountered many obstacles:

*I came back with some money and I wanted to start a lady's boutique. But the money I had was not enough to allow me to start the business. I tried to get financial support in the form of a loan. But I could not get it from my family, friends or relatives as they do not have the money to support or lend me. There are also no special arrangements for returned migrants from the government to get credit to start their own business. There is one micro finance institution which provides saving and credit services for the community in our district. But it is very difficult for the returned migrants to get credit from the micro finance as it needs collateral like a house map and plan to lend money. Otherwise, one first needs at least to save twenty percent of the total amount of money he/she needs to borrow from the micro finance to get credit. This is also difficult for most returnees, including me, as we have no income to save. This means it is impossible for me to get credit and start a business as I have no house for collateral or income to save the twenty percent at the microfinance first before borrowing (Fatuma, female, 27 years old).*

Due the inability to get decent employment with better pay and economic exploitation in the destination country, the returnees could not come back with adequate money they expected before migration. Like other reintegration supports needs, financial support becomes one of the most types of urgent reintegration sought by the returnees after they return home to engage in income generating activities. Mensur and Jebal also recounted their difficulties in getting start-up capital in the form of loans to start their own businesses:

*I migrated with the expectation of getting employment and better money that would enable me to start my own business after my return home. But I could not succeed as I found that the situation in Saudi Arabia was different from what I expected. I stayed there for three months without getting a job. After three months, I got employment on a construction site after many challenges. But I could not save much money as the pay was too little and did not go beyond covering my cost of living. When the Saudi government decreed the sudden deportation of all 'illegal migrants' in the country, I returned empty handed. My family had nothing to support me after my return as they spent a lot of money on my previous journey. I wanted to start a men's beauty salon for income generating activities. I needed*

*30,000 ETB to start the business. I approached the micro and small-scale enterprise of the district to get a loan. But I could not first save twenty percent of the amount I requested to get the credit as I have no income. Consequently, I could not start a business. I am unemployed. I would be grateful if the government or any concerned body helped me to get financial support to start my own business (Mensur, male, 32 years old).*

*I came back with very little money from Saudi Arabia. I could not save much money when I was there because the payment was little, the cost of life was high, and the employers sometimes did not pay me. I used that little money I brought home for my family's basic needs. I wanted to engage in the poultry business, but I could not due to the lack of seed money. I asked the local micro finance of the district for a 50,000 ETB loan to start the business. But the loan officers of the micro finance told me that they do not give loans to an individual. They will grant a loan for a group of two individuals or more, which has saved twenty percent of the amount of the requested loan first. This means the group must first save 10,000 ETB at the microfinance to get a 50,000 ETB loan. But the problem is that I could not get into a group and save that much money as I had nothing. So I could not start the business. I am now making a living from the little wage I am earning from daily labour. Life is still very difficult for me (Jebal, male, 32 years old).*

The findings from other sources confirm that financial support is one of the major types of reintegration assistance the returnees need. According to the male FGD participants, the returnees need financial support for two main reasons. The first reason is that most of them returned empty handed. Thus, they need temporary financial support even for their daily basic needs particularly in the absence of family or relatives who support them. Second, they need financial support to engage in different activities and generate sustainable income for their future lives. However, there is no financial support provided for the returnees from the government and the community as revealed by the participants.

Likewise, the key informant from Omo Nada Labour and Social Affairs Office described that the returnees' need for financial support is unquestionable and it is normal. However, the problem is that there is no financial support budget allocated from the government or relevant body for this purpose. The informant added that the government provided only transportation compensation for the returnees to travel to their place of origin. Moreover, it is difficult for the returnees to get credit service from the micro finance institution operating in the country as they lack collateral, which the institution requires as criteria to get the service.

From the findings, it is understood that the need for financial support or start-up capital was revealed to be one of the most crucial types of reintegration support sought by the returnees. Vocational and entrepreneurship skills training would build the returnees' capacity to create new businesses for themselves, but the provision of skills training cannot be an end in itself. Seed money is necessary to translate skills and knowledge into practical and sustainable projects. Access to start-up capital in the form of loans facilitates access to the inputs they need to start their own business.

#### *6.2.6 Support for social reintegration*

Social reintegration is another important dimension of successful reintegration into the community. Social reintegration refers to the "Re-incorporation of the returned migrant into the social structures of his/her country of origin" (IOM2004:17). It is a means by which the returnees get acceptance from their families and community. Social acceptance, especially acceptance by the family, plays a vital role in the reintegration of the returnees into the community. The more family, relatives and the community accept them, the more opportunities the returnees will have to interact with different segments of the community accept the returnees. Good social interaction with the community implies the development of social relationships and networks crucial to access other reintegration supports and resources they require for their reintegration needs. Some of the returnees revealed that their families accepted them warmly upon their return:

*My family warmly accepted me. All of them bowed down and thanked God (Allah) for my return home in peace. I am lucky to have such a family (Sherif, male, 32 years old).*

*My family accepted me without reservation. Although I came back empty handed, they did not reject me. I did not really expect such a welcome. I thank my family for allowing me to return home (Seifu, male, 32 years old).*

*My family welcomed me upon my return. They were happy to see me alive (Tahir, male, 34 years old).*

*My family welcomed me warmly. My wife and children have been supporting me since my return. Alhamdulillah! (Thanks to my creator) (Sheki, male, 49 years old).*

The warm welcome and acceptance of the returnees by their families contributed greatly to the recovery and successful reintegration of the returnees. However, this was not everyone's experience. Some of the returnees revealed that they were rejected by their families because they did not come back home with the financial rewards their families expected from their migration. Families borrowed money to finance the illegal migration to Saudi Arabia in expectation of remittances. When the returnees came back empty-handed, the families went into debt. This made some families feel angry and hate the returnees for their failure to succeed financially. Financial support to restore their relationship with their families and ultimately with the community was essential.

Yahiya relates the reaction of his family as follows:

*On the first day I returned home, my family accepted me warmly. They were so pleased and thanked Allah for my returning home safely and getting the opportunity to see them alive. They paid a lot of money for the brokers and smugglers to send me to Saudi Arabia. They borrowed the money from relatives expecting that they would pay back the loan with remittances I would send them. They assumed that I would come back home with money. Unfortunately, I came back empty handed. When they saw that I came back with no money, everybody in the family started to avoid me to the extent that they even refused to greet me. I wish I had died there (Saudi Arabia) instead of returning home empty handed and offending my family. I need the support of others to restore my relationship with my family (Yahaya, male, 24 years old).*

Fatuma also expressed the need for support to repair the broken relationship between her and her family:

*My family paid a lot of much money for the brokers and smugglers in expectation of the remittance I would send back to them after I reached Saudi Arabia. They (my parents) borrowed the money from somebody. But I could not send them enough money to pay back the loan as I was earning too little. I came back home with little money upon my return, too. As a result, I could not help them to pay back the loan and they fell in to debt. A few weeks after my return, everybody in the family started to blame me. I left home, rented a room and am currently living in Nada town. I have had no communication with them for two years and this is really hurting me. I regret making my parents bear the burden of debt and spoiling my relationship with them. I want the support of somebody to be reconciled with my family (Fatuma, Female, and 27 years old).*

The rejection of the returnees by their families engendered sense of blame and guilt, which further compromised reintegration into the community. Fatuma added that:

*Everybody circulated rumours about me. Wherever I go, I hear people gossiping about me saying, "Look at the lady who came back from Saudi. She left her parents in debt and rented a home for herself in town. She is enjoying town life at the expense of her parents. What a selfish woman she is." I am always troubled whenever I hear such rumours. People simply judge me without understanding my condition. I often feel ashamed to interact with people. I am detached from the community (Fatuma, female, 27 years old).*

Not only did some of the returnees experience isolation, they also experienced discrimination from the community. Women, especially, bore the brunt of this discrimination because the community suspected them of having been sexually abused and infected with sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Zubeda described her neighbour's discomfort, and touches on the need for awareness raising in the community:

*I have never told anyone that I encountered rape during the journey. But people suspected me of contracting HIV/AIDs. The fact that I have been facing health problems since I returned has added to their suspicion. I am free from the disease and I do not care about their rumours. But their false rumours have been affecting me a lot because my neighbours do not feel comfortable about having coffee with me. Because I know they suspect me of having HIV/AIDS, I do not feel good about going to their home and let alone to eat and drink with them. Generally, the community has the wrong perception about returned migrant women. I think that the government should at least support the returnees by providing awareness creation for the community to avoid such mistaken perceptions in the community and help the returnees to have a good relationship with the community (Zubeda, female, 25 years old).*

Fatuma also described the stigma against women suspected of sexually abused as:

*Being an illegal migration returnee has many negative social consequences, particularly for a woman. For example, I want to marry and establish a family. But getting married is unthinkable for me here because the community emphasises virginity and sexual purity of a woman for getting married. It is generally accepted in the community that a woman involved in illegal migration has been exposed to sexual exploitation. So she fails to fulfil the already established criteria set out by the community to get married. I am one of those unfortunates to have had such a social relationship and rejected. I call for the support of the concerned body to change the community's attitudes towards returned women migrants (Fatuma, female 27 years old).*

Even if returnees did not experience discrimination from the community, they lacked the resources to engage in community-based organizations. Most of the returnees did not even have the minimum financial resources to become members of community-based organizations such as *Iqub* (a traditional social organization established by the community to support each other during mourning) and *Iddir* (a traditional financial institution established by the community to which members contribute and received a lump sum in turn).

Abdulatif described his problems with getting membership in these traditional community organizations:

*I am not socially reintegrated into the community yet. To say I am reintegrated into the community, I would have to get a job or establish my own business, which would help me generate an income and interact with people in the community. I should be able to participate in the various community-based organizations in the community. I could not be a member of any community-based organizations like Iddir and Iqub to engage in business activities because I lacked the money to contribute to become a member of such community-based organizations. My participation and social interaction with the community is restricted due to this. I need the support and willingness of the Iddir members to become a member (Abdulatif, male, 28 years old).*

Fares also described his difficulty in becoming a member of *Iddir*:

*Iddir is one of the basic community organizations of which everybody should be a member. But I could not be a member of this community based organization because it requires members to contribute at least 1500 ETB membership to become a member which I cannot afford at this time. This means I may not get burial and funeral support if somebody dies in my family. I need social support from everybody to become a member of Iddir and to be part of the community (Fares, male, 45 years old).*

Some of the returned migrants voiced the need for returned migrants to form their own association as part of social reintegration support: Fares and Abdushukur emphasized the importance of forming such an association for reintegration into the community:

*We need to establish an association of returnees because it has many advantages for us. It would help us present our reintegration needs to the government and other concerned bodies in an organized way. Being together will help us to exert influence on concerned bodies. As we are scattered here and there, we are losing the power to exert pressure. In addition, being together helps us to exchange ideas, resources, show direction and share our burden with each other. Because of this,*

*we want to form our own association and need support from the Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office for this purpose. We specifically need expertise support on how to establish bylaws, get registered and become a legal entity (Fares, male, 45 years old).*

Abdushukur also recognized the collective power of a group:

*The more we (the returnees) are organized, the more we can stand together to put pressure on the government. For example, a number of unemployed youths who organized into a group have been getting many benefits like land, financial assistance and jobs from the government. If returnees are organized into an association, I believe we can get the assistance and responses we need for reintegration into the community. Since we are disorganized, nobody is listening to our problems. Therefore, we need support to form an association which voices our problems and interests (Abdushukur, male 38 years old).*

It is evident that social support is extremely important for reintegration into the community. Social relationship with other returned migrants and the community itself are important for the returnees to share their problems, experiences, resources and help each other. However, like other types of reintegration support, the government and other relevant bodies made little effort to respond to the social reintegration needs of the returnees.

Building returnee networks greatly contributes to the social reintegration of the returnees upon their return. Social reintegration like organizing the returnees into self-help groups or associations provides social support structure for them. Creating such a social structure and networks helps them to share experiences, for their economic betterment and prevent them from becoming isolated (IOM 2015:15). The self-help groups of the returnees creates an environment for the psychosocial support of the returnees by allowing them to talk about their experiences with other returned migrants (Admanesh & Margaret 2015:11).

The findings from the key informants and the focus group discussions confirm the inadequacy of attempts made yet to work on the relationships between the community and the returnees. The key informant from the Omo Nada District Labour and Social Affairs Office described office's efforts to create awareness in the community to accept and support the illegal migrant returnees to the

district. The key informant also added that the returnees had the right to form their own associations to support each other and the office would make concerted efforts to organize the returnees into groups to get reintegration supports from the government and other relevant bodies in the future. However, during the interviews I found that efforts made so far to meet these social reintegration needs of the returnees are negligible.

The focus group discussion participants confirmed that some returnees had been facing social relationship-related challenges with their families and the community. The focus group participants noted that the interventions of community-based organizations like *Iddir*, mosques and neighbours was important to respond to the social support needs of the returnees. The focus group discussion participants emphasized the fact that such community-based organizations played a crucial role in meeting the social support needs of the returnees. For instance, the community-based organizations can reconcile returnees with their families and helped them to become members of such community-based organizations to enhance their social relationships. However, little effort had been made by these community-based organizations to fix the relationship among the returnees, their families and the community at large.

#### *6.2.7 Need for counselling support*

Counselling supports also emerged as a need from returnees. Two, in particular, explained that the abuse and exploitation they had experienced on the migration journey left them with feeling of helplessness and rejection. This in turn made them worry about how to continue their future life. In this regard, the IOM (2011: 13) informs that returnees of illegal migration often return home with feelings of shame, loss, failure, disorientation, anxiety, insecurity and stress which hinder the process of reintegration.

Fedila explained the effect of the abuse she faced saying that:

*I do not trust males since I experienced that bad event [rape] in Yemen. It seems to me that every man committed that kind of injury against me. I am afraid to have any social relationships with men since then. That event left an unforgettable image in my mind. I cannot remove it from my mind. I wish I had somebody who could help me to overcome such suspicion and fear of men (Fedila, female, 35 years old).*

Siraj also explained the feelings of rejection he experienced:

*In our community, everybody likes you whenever you succeed financially in whatever field you are engaged in. On the other hand, everybody rejects you if you fail. I did not gain anything from migration to Saudi Arabia. I simply wasted my time, energy and the money I paid for the brokers and smugglers. I am not a valued person in my family, let alone the others due to my failure. That is why I am moving here and there because I have nowhere to live. I feel rejected. I often worry and blame myself for everything that happened to me. I need somebody with whom I can share all my worries and get support on how to forget them (Siraj, male, 21 years old).*

As a counselling psychologist accompanied me, I referred both the study participants in need of counselling to him. These findings evidenced the importance of counselling, together with other reintegration supports to help them to reintegrate into the community.

The key informant from the District Labour and Social Affairs Office also confirmed the need for counselling support for some of the returnees. However, the office lacks professional counsellors from the field of psychology to help the returnees overcome their personal worries and the social workers to work on the relationship- related problems of the returnees.

Returned migrants have the feelings of shame, loss, failure, disorientation, anxiety, insecurity and distress, which hinder their reintegration process. Poor economic prospects and security worries further destabilizes the psychosocial wellbeing of the returnees. Under such circumstances, having a social network provides the returnees with emotional support, information and social capital, which assist them to re-adjust to the difficult situations (IOM 2015:13). Counselling support is important for needy returnees based on their demands for the support. However, such services were not available in the community at all as understood from the key informants from Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district.

### **6.3 Returnees' perceptions of reintegration, their experiences and coping strategies after return**

As the focus of this study is on the reintegration of the returnees, it is important to consider the mode of return, perceptions of reintegration, current reintegration status of the returnees in the

presence/absence of community responses, and their coping strategies. As with the contextual factors that contributed to decisions to migrate illegally, and the abuse and exploitation they experienced because of illegal migration, their modes of return have their own impacts on their reintegration into the community.

Returnees return to their place of origin in two ways; either voluntary or forced. Voluntary return often depends on the voluntary decision of the individual. Voluntary return refers not only to the absence of any physical, psychological or material coercion but also implies that the decision is based on adequate, available, accurate and objective information, while forced return is not undertaken voluntarily by the individual. Forced return, as opposed to voluntary return, implies the existence of coercion in the decision to return (IOM 2005:78).

The mode of return, how the community responds to the reintegration needs of returnees, the socio-economic and political contexts to which they return have their own impacts on the reintegration outcome of the returnees. Almost all of the returnees who participated in this study returned to Ethiopia forcibly following the decree passed by the Saudi government in 2013 to deport all illegal residents in the country to their place of origin. Even though they returned home after having experienced physical, emotional and economic abuse and exploitation there was no reintegration assistance available from anywhere. They returned to similar, or in some cases, worse socio-economic conditions before their illegal migration. As a result, reintegrating into the community has been challenging.

Returnees' perceptions of reintegration, their descriptions of their current integration status and the way in which they have had to cope in the absence of any reintegration assistance raise important questions. Effective reintegration requires multiple interventions (IOM 2015:14; IOM (2012: 24; Surtees 2010:24; Velazco 2011:26; Muco 2013:105).

Responses reveal that the lack of any reintegration assistance severely hampered their reintegration into their communities.

Seman describes his failure to reintegrate into his community due to lack of any assistance:

*For me to say I am reintegrated into the community, I should first be able to get medical treatment for my health problem, must be able to work, obtain regular jobs*

*or means of income, become a member of community-based organizations like Iddir and Iqub. I must be able to interact with the community and be free from the current life stressing events that worry me. Now, I do not feel that I am part of this community because I am detached from it in all my aspects. In short, I can say that I am not part of this community (Seman, male, 36 years old).*

Reintegration into the community was also problematic for Abdulbasit:

*I can say that I became a stranger among the community into which I was born and brought up. I do not have my own house. I have no job and income for myself and my family. I am not a member of any community-based organization. I am in a worse situation than I was prior to migration to Saudi Arabia. Because I spent a lot of money on the journey, my wife divorced me; I came back empty-handed and could not find reintegration support which made my current situation worse compared to the one prior to migration. Physically, I am in the community. But I can say that I am out of the community in my economic and social life. Even if I had got minimum support, I would have been able to start my own business and participate in social life. I did not get reintegration support from anybody except for the free airfare and 900 ETB from the government to use for accommodation on the way back to my place of origin. Many issues have been worrying me. I even have no protection for my personal security as I was warned in a letter written to me from whom I do not know, that I would be killed because I spoke out at a public meeting about what measures have to be taken against brokers and smugglers (Abdulbasit, male 37 years old).*

Difficulties in integration into the community and fears for personal safety were also something that Mensur had to deal with:

*If I at least had a regular means of earning income in activities like others in the community; participate in and contribute to social organizations, events and meetings that affect my life, I can say that I would be reintegrated into the community. I am in the community but I still lack many things to become part of the community. To say that I am reintegrated into the community I should get*

*reintegration assistance and be able to secure at least the basic things that other individuals in the community have to feel that I am mentally, economically and socially part of the community. I should also be free from threats and feel that I am in a safe environment. But I have no guarantee for my personal safety because people I do not know often came at night and threaten me because I reported the fact that there are still many brokers and smugglers operating in the community to the police. I reported what happened to me to the police, but they could not find them. So I cannot say that I am reintegrated into the community because of all these reasons (Mensur, male, 32 years old).*

A key interview with the police confirmed that the police have the responsibility to protect the personal safety of the citizens in the district, including that of the returnees. It has also made efforts to deal with illegal brokers and smugglers in order to mitigate illegal migration in the district, and to ensure the personal security of the returnees. In 2017, the police have brought a total of seven brokers and smugglers involved in the illegal migration of people from the district to Arab countries to court. The court sentences of imprisonment range from 2 to 7 years, and imposed fines of 2000 ETB to 10,000 ETB on the brokers and the smugglers. But the key informant acknowledged that there is still much left to be done by the police to reduce illegal migration in the district and ensure the personal safety of the returnees. As brokers and smugglers operate in subtle and clandestine ways, obtaining tangible evidence is challenging.

I identified a range of reintegration needs in the study. Sustainable reintegration, therefore, must be holistic to address the different dimensions of the returnees' needs. Reintegration is not the mere physical reunifications of the returnees to their community of origin. It also involves addressing the contextual factors that gave rise to illegal migration in the first place, and responding to the physical, emotional, economic and social needs of the returnees. Reintegration furthermore involves political and legal intervention to ensure the safety of the returnees. From this it is understood that the returnees' reintegration needs which have arisen from their illegal migration experiences is in line with the ecological perspective which states that effective intervention including successful reintegration involves interventions that range from the micro, meso and macro level.

The experience of the returnees and the needs identified by them suggest that multiple interventions are necessary. In terms of the ecological perspective effective intervention for successful/sustainable reintegration involve interventions at micro, meso and macro levels. The ecological systems perspective examines the interdependence between the physical, psychological, economic, social and cultural factors that contribute to human behaviour or situation under investigation at the micro, meso and macro levels (Pardec 1996:1-3). It emphasizes that effective intervention like successful reintegration occurs not only directly with clients (returnees) alone but also it involves working with the environmental factors such as the familial, social, economic, political and cultural factors that affect their situation (Muco 2013:115; Bronfenbrenner 1989:54). As the micro, meso and macro dimensions of reintegration influence each other, reintegration should give attention to all of these dimensions. The failure to respond at all these dimensions depending on the presented needs of the returnees or the separate attention to one or two of these constituent parts at the expense of the other will be a piecemeal and reductionist approach, which ignores the intricate nature of these issues, and results in unsuccessful reintegration (Richmond 1917: 67).

The reintegration supports which range from micro to macro level required by the returnees arise from the unique individual experiences of the returnees before migration, en route, in the place of destination and after return. Reintegration supports must be tailored to address the physical, emotional, economic, social and political experiences of individual returnees (IOM 2015:9). According to Carter and Fuller (2015:1), the symbolic interactionist perspective states that each individual has unique exposures and experiences. It follows that each returnee has unique needs and should be treated uniquely (Charon 2009:229). This means that each returnee must be provided with psychosocial supports relevant to their subjective illegal migration-related experiences to be reintegrated into the community. Such supports include physical, psychological, health care, housing, and education and employment services (UNHCR2002:23).

The reintegration efforts must address the contextual factors that initially drove the returnees to migrate illegally, the problems they experienced and their reintegration needs resulting from the various abuses and exploitations due to illegal migration. Successful reintegration should empower the returnees by expanding their assets and capability to participate in, negotiate, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives. It should result in development of the

returnee's ability to stand independently, make his/her own decisions and show control over his/her life (Crawford & Kaufman 2008:35; Surtees 210:28).

The returnees who participated in this study did not get any supports from any anywhere which would facilitate their reintegration into their communities. As a result, the returnees could not reintegrate successfully into the community in the sense that they became productive, independent and active in the social, economic and political affairs, which are very important for their lives. Rather, they were simply physically situated in the community.

In the absence of appropriate reintegration supports, the question of how the returnees have been coping with their situation is relevant. Coping strategies here refer, inter alia, to the mechanisms by which the returnees have been making a living in the absence of the reintegration supports they needed to become active members of the community. The coping strategies of some of the returnees only enabled them to survive from day to day:

*As I am sick and cannot work, I am making a living by begging (Seman, male, 36 years old).*

*I collect and sell firewood to get daily bread for my family and me to survive. I travel on foot 5 to 7 kilometres a day for this purpose. Now it has become difficult for me to collect the firewood as the government and local administrators in the name of natural forest protection prohibit going into the forest (Sherif, male 32 years old).*

*I do daily labour and get small a wage for my daily survival and that of my family. The daily labour itself is not always available and life is very difficult. Whenever daily labour is not available, I beg for leftover food from neighbours and a little money from any benevolent individuals. It is frustrating to continue this way (Seifu, male, 25 years old).*

*I was dependent on my family for my survival needs for some time after my return. However, my parents stopped caring for me after a while as they themselves are poor, deep in debt because of my previous migration and are tired of the long time I have been a burden to them. I have no tangible means to survive. I am very upset*

*now and thinking of migrating again. This is inevitable. I am aware of all the challenges of illegal migration from my previous experience. But I would take my chances again - either to succeed or die. It is better for me to drown in the sea and be food for the fish than to stay in such conditions (Yahaya, male, 24 years old).*

*It has been three years since I returned home empty-handed. I have no job, no money and I am idle. I am just roaming here and there but there is no opportunity and hope to change my life. I live on a little money I get from carrying baggage and other things. Even this work is rarely available and there are many times I go home empty handed. I have no reason to stay in the community and lead such a frustrating life. Now I have decided to re-migrate to another country since I have no other option. I have experienced how challenging illegal migration is, but I need to do it again so I do not starve. Many people have been re-migrating. This is not new to me. I will do it in the near future (Jebal, male, 32 years old).*

Coping with day-to-day challenges forced some of the study participants to involve daily labour, begging, selling firewood and carrying baggage, while others had no means. The dire situation in which they find themselves has given rise to frustration and despair and some expressed their intentions to re-migrate illegally as their only survival option. The IOM (2015: 9) notes that in many countries returnees returned to the same situation before migration and lack reintegration supports. This makes them vulnerable to various challenges, which force them to re-migrate (IOM 2015:9). Williams et al. (2010:137) and Velazco (2011:26) also note that migrants returned to the same socio-economic contexts, which contributed to their previous migration, often forced to re-migrate by the same or the exacerbated situations before their migrations.

The focus group discussion participants also confirmed that many returnees have been re-migrating due to lack of means of survival and reintegration supports. The participants informed me that two returnees had re-migrated one week before I went to the district to conduct the fieldwork. This was confirmed when I could not locate two of the participants I had interviewed previously to check the trustworthiness of the transcribed data.

## 6. 4 Conclusion

This chapter explored the reintegration assistance sought by the returnees, how the concerned bodies responded to the returnees' reintegration needs, their current reintegration status and the coping strategies employed by returnees using the ecological and symbolic interactionist perspectives. The foremost reintegration needs revealed by the study were the need for accommodation/housing, financial assistance, employment, skills training, healthcare, social support, and counselling.

The reintegration of the returnees is complex process, which involves interventions at various levels. In terms of the ecological perspective, reintegration can be seen as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which involves micro, meso and macro-level interventions. Interventions at the micro-level include accommodation/housing; skills training. The findings are in line with the ecological perspective, which states that reintegration is a multi-dimensional approach, which involves micro, meso and macro level interventions. The returnees need for accommodation, skill training, counselling, health and financial supports are some of the needs, which involve intervention at micro (individual level).

Similarly, the need for social support to fix the broken relationship among returnees and their family as well as the need to organize into self-help groups and associations involve meso level intervention. Some of the returnees sought reintegration assistance such as tax reduction to encourage them to establish their own businesses and legal measures to ensure their safety from external threats. Moreover, reintegration is highly individualized and related to the illegal migration abuses and exploitations experiences of the returnees and the contexts where they returned.

Even though the returnees have various reintegration needs, they could not get the reintegration supports they sought because little/no attention was given from the relevant bodies. Consequently, the returnees have been leading despondent lives and some of them intend to re-migrate.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the reintegration of the returned ‘illegal migrants’ to Omo Nada District, Oromia National Regional State, South West Ethiopia. To this end, the study specifically explored the socio-economic experiences of the migrants before migration; their experiences of illegal migration *en route* and in the place of destination. Similarly, it investigated the subsequent reintegration needs they sought from the community; how the relevant stakeholders in the community responded to their reintegration needs; the coping strategies the returnees used to survive after return and the current reintegration status of the returnees. This chapter analyzed the contextual factors that contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees, the abuse and exploitation they experienced *en route*, in place of destination (Saudi Arabia) and the subsequent reintegration needs they sought. Likewise, it examined the concerned bodies (the family, community, government and non-government organizations) responses to reintegrate the returnees, the current reintegration status of the returnees and the coping mechanisms developed by the returnees to overcome the challenging situations after return. The eco-system and symbolic interaction perspectives guided the study.

#### 7.2 Analytical conceptual framework for reintegration of the returnees

I developed the following conceptual framework from the literature reviewed and the findings of the study for analysis and interpretation. It depicts the physical, psychological, economic and social impacts of illegal migration. Similarly, the analytical framework implies that the reintegration of returnees of illegal migration (migrant smuggling and human trafficking) requires interventions which should address the physical, psychological, economic and social needs that arise from the abuse and exploitation they may have experienced due to the illegal migration experience. Reintegration schemes must take into account the individual returnees’ needs in order to help them reintegrate into the community.

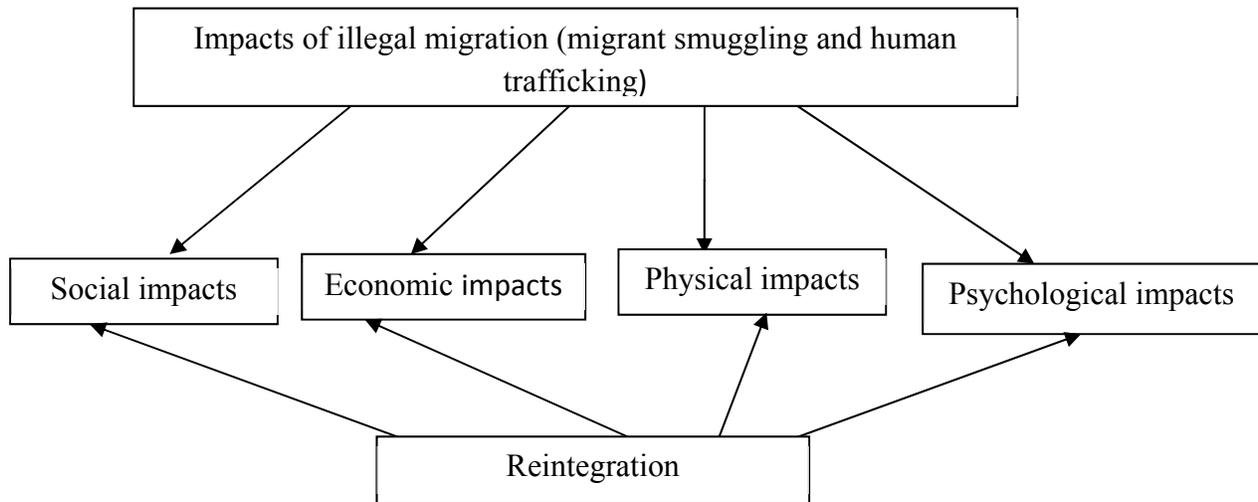


Fig 2: Conceptual framework proposed for reintegration of returned ‘illegal migrants’

Source: Developed from literature review

The returnees faced various physical, socio-economic problems and exploitations due to the illegal nature of their migration. The smugglers, traffickers and employers physically assaulted, kicked and burnt some of them while women specifically became victims of sexual abuse. Consequently, they faced different types of physical injuries. They endured tiresome journey on foot, lack of food, water and sickness. This evidence indicates that the returnees need immediate reintegration assistance for physical restoration. They spent a lot of money for the brokers’ and smugglers service charge. They also experienced economic exploitations such as debt bondage, denial and deduction of salary in the destination country mainly from their employers and brokers. The economic exploitation, high cost of life expenses and low wages they experienced in the destination country limited their ambitions to accumulate adequate income and made them come back home empty handed. These findings also indicate that economic reintegration is a necessary condition for the returnees to become independent economically. The study participants were in separated and confined situations for a long time overseas. Consequently, they lost the social relationship they had with the communities before migration. The families of some of them disintegrated because their spouses divorced them and their children joined the street life. These findings imply the need for social reintegration for the returnees.

Above all, the study participants illegally migrated due to social, economic and political factors beyond their capacity to control. Moreover, they returned home by force involuntarily and this can have negative impacts on their readiness to reintegrate into the community. Apart from these, some the returnees are women and this makes the situation more difficult for them to reintegrate into the community because they are more vulnerable to various abuses and exploitation of illegal migration including sexual abuse and the stigma and discrimination associated with it.

Thus, I argue that they deserve reintegration assistance from the the government and the relevant bodies upon return irrespective of the means of their migration-be it trafficked or smuggled. In such circumstances, the need for reintegration supports has become urgent for the returnees. Reintegration is important to help the returnees to become recover from the physical, emotional, economic and social abuses and exploitations they experienced as a result of illegal migration. It is essential to help the returnees to become productive and independent persons responsible for every aspect of their lives.

Reintegration plays a vital role in enabling returnees to re-establish themselves in the society or their country of origin and empowering them to participate in social, cultural and political affairs that affect their lives (IOM 2015:12; Bachtiar & Prasetyo 2017:18; Muco 2013:105; Surtees 2010:24). Returnees may have different short term and long-term reintegration needs such as physical, psychological, educational, professional, social and economic. Their needs are often context specific, highly individualized and related to illegal migration abuses and exploitations. In addition to the reintegration needs which arise from their experiences of illegal migration, returnees may have pre-existing personal, social and economic vulnerabilities which also need to be addressed through the provision of need based reintegration supports in order to make the reintegration effective. For these reasons, Surtees (2017:13) pointed out that reintegration interventions are important to address individual and context specific reintegration needs of the returnees.

### **7.3 The socio-contextual factors contributing to illegal migration of the returnees**

The study revealed that the illegal migration of the study participants were deep-rooted in the social, economic and political structure of the community of origin. Poverty, unemployment, family pressure, political discrimination, the influence of brokers and smugglers, socio-cultural

and religious reasons and the absence of legal means to migrate to Saudi Arabia were the contextual factors underlying the decisions of the returnees to migrate illegally. Moreover, it is also linked to the migrants' lack of adequate knowledge and skills, which enable them to get employment opportunities or create their own business.

Poverty was the major cause of social problems experienced by the study participants who were destitute. They were under abject poverty because they lacked the resources to fulfil basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Most of them were unable to send their children to school or buy educational materials.

The poverty of the study participants was linked to the socio-economic, cultural and political environment in which they existed. Agriculture was the main economic activity for many of them to survive. Agricultural activity requires land to cultivate. Many of the study participants had no land to cultivate. As land had been sub-divided down over generations, plots had become too small to produce adequate crops to feed themselves and their family members throughout the year for those who did possess land. Despite the fact that livelihoods were dependent on agriculture and adequate farmland, the land policy prohibits the purchase of land. As a result, even the few individuals who could afford to buy land to expand their agricultural activities, production capacity and limited earning potential.

The State ownership of land in current Ethiopia is far from perfect because it restricts the different land rights of use, rent, lease, donation and inheritance. Since redistribution of land is highly restricted, access to rural land is almost nonexistent (Daniel 2012:1). The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution (1994) prohibits sale, exchange and mortgage of land. Though land is an important resource for the survival of everyone, such rigid land policy makes land acquisition difficult for those who have the capacity to buy land themselves let alone for the poorest people like the returnees of illegal migration. This acts against the returnees' opportunity to construct homes and get workplaces to set up their own business.

As land has eroded and become infertile due to many years of over cultivation, it resulted in insufficient yields. Although the government provided some loans to help farmers employ modern agricultural inputs like fertilizer to increase production, it was not possible to produce surplus production. Their inability to repay the loans for the fertilizer drove them further into debt. The

fear of imprisonment due to failure to repay the cost of fertilizer added to their sense of hopelessness and frustration.

Unemployment was another factor, which contributed to the illegal migration decisions of the study participants. As some of the study participants had no agricultural land, they had no regular means of income for their survival. They were earning meagre wages from rarely available daily labour. They had little/no-alternative employment opportunities to earn any income because the employment market in the local community did not have the capacity to provide employment opportunities for the large number of job seekers. There were a few vacancies in government organizations, but most of the study participants lacked the minimum level of education, knowledge and skills required by such vacancies. Concerned government organizations did not employ them even if they fulfilled the minimum criteria required due to political discrimination. The existing political system does not provide equal opportunities for all citizens to compete for the available employment opportunities in government organizations. Members of the ruling political party were favoured at the expense of the non-members. The government cadres threatened and even imprisoned the study participants who opposed the biased political treatment.

Although starting one's own business or becoming self-employed were options to escape the poverty trap, there were several impediments. They could not get start up capital as they were poor. Family members also did not have the finance capacity to support them. They could not borrow from the government-supported micro financial institutions because individuals who were members of the ruling political party were favoured. Even the few study participants who were able to establish their own businesses could not sustain them due to the high taxes levied on their business by the government. In the absence of other alternatives, illegal migration has become the only coping strategy for many individuals and their families in the study area. Concerning this, Fransen and Kuschminder (2009:4) also found that remittances from migration provide an integral source of income for many families to sustain themselves and meet their basic needs.

Socio-cultural and religious factors induced the illegal migration of the study participants. Migration to Arab countries has become a way of life for many people in Omo Nada district. It has become an acceptable and alternative way for people in the community to overcome their destitute living conditions. Traditionally, the community expects children to support their families when they become old enough. Thus, it has become common among many families in the

community to send one or more of their members, especially youths, to Arab countries, especially to Saudi Arabia to work there and support them. Having at least one family member in an Arab country is considered as having money in the bank for difficult times. Some people also prefer migration to Saudi Arabia for religious reasons. The fact that Saudi Arabia is perceived as a holy place where a Muslim should visit at least once in his/her lifetime attracts many people to the area.

In addition, legal migration from Ethiopia to Saudi Arabia is possible only for few skilled women who seek employment in areas of domestic activities. There is no legal means to migrate and get employment in Saudi Arabia for the unskilled male Ethiopian job seekers and this contributed to the illegal means. Despite the existence of legal means, even many Ethiopian females themselves mainly migrate illegally due to bureaucratic obstacles and high cost required for passport, airfare and medical examination by the legal means. The influence of illegal brokers and smugglers in decisions to migrate illegally from the study area are pertinent. They were easily able to use the “success” stories of some who had previously migrated, together with the destitute and hopeless situations of people to persuade them to migrate illegally.

Furthermore, there is a kind of intrafamilial implicit contract, which induces migration, as I understood from the study. This means forced by poverty, expectation of remittances, reputation of having a child abroad and the success history of few people who returned from Saudi Arabia, the families in the study area pay the facilitation fee for brokers and smugglers and encourage the family members to migrate abroad. In doing so, a sort of informal contractual agreement is made between the family and its migrant member. In the intrafamilial contractual agreement, the family finances its member’s migration while the migrant family member agrees to reimburse the cost in the form of remittance. Moreover, migration decision making is altruistic in nature. That means, most of the study participants revealed that they decided to migrate not only to improve themselves but also to improve the situation of their beloved families by scarifying themselves.

In sum, intricate socio-economic, political and cultural factors at the micro, meso and macro level influenced the illegal migration decisions of the study participants. In terms of the eco-system perspective, a given problem is an outcome of various factors, which reinforce each other. These factors range from micro to meso and macro level. The study participants’ lack of knowledge and of skills to secure employment from the existing market, the corresponding lack of income with which to survive and the aspiration to live a better life are some of the micro level factors that

forced them to opt for illegal migration. Lack of support from families and micro finances to establish their own business, pressure from families and the influence of brokers and smugglers are the meso level factors that contributed to the illegal migration decisions of the study participants. Similarly, the inability of the existing market to provide employment opportunities for job seekers, discriminatory practices against people based on their political backgrounds, socio-cultural and religious factors and the government's high taxation policy that constrains the poor from establishing their own businesses are the macro level factors that contributed to illegal migration.

Furthermore, the illegal migration of the study participants was linked to their individual experiences of abject poverty, unemployment, political discrimination, the expectation and meanings they attached to migration. The decisions of the study participants to migrate emerged as interaction between them, their environment, the meaning they attached to migration and the future rewards they anticipated from it. They made the decision to migrate based on the destitute life they experienced within their local community and the various meanings they attached to migration. Such meanings include migration is a means "to say good bye to poverty, escape poverty the only way to success and the only available means to unlock poverty and its life challenges". Moreover, the information they got from social interaction from the brokers, the smugglers and their families about the success stories of the people who migrated before and the economic rewards they anticipated from migration motivated them to migrate. These findings confirm the argument of symbolic interaction, which states that individuals' behaviours, decisions and actions including illegal migration are the outcome of the interactions with their surrounding environment.

According to symbolic interactionism, individuals define an objects' meaning according to the use they have for it and react according to the contextually defined meaning of the object, the purpose of the act within this context, and the perceived and anticipated actions of other individuals towards the situation (James 1907:7). Human actions and behaviours are anticipatory and responsive to meaning as opposed to stimuli (Mead 1934:6). Individuals act on things on the basis of the meanings that those things have for them, the meanings of these things are derived from, or arise out of social interaction and these meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the individual in dealing with things he/she encounters. This means, ignoring the

meaning of the things people respond to results in misunderstanding the individual's behaviour (Blumer 1969: 2-3).

#### **7.4 Returnees experiences of illegal migration**

However, illegal migration could not result in the successful life anticipated by the study participants while they were at home. Rather, they became vulnerable to various types of abuse and exploitation. The returned migrants who participated in the study revealed that illegal migration exposed them to physical, emotional, labour, economic, sexual and social problems.

They suffered from physical abuses like lack of water, food and severe exhaustion related to the physically demanding and long journey to reach the place of destination. They were also beaten, assaulted, kicked, burned with hot metal and melted plastic. The smugglers and traffickers were the perpetrators of the physical abuse against the study participants *en route* to the place of destination. The smugglers and traffickers physically abused the migrants mainly to control and coerced them in to giving em more money. This result indicates that the smugglers and traffickers undertake illegal migration to exploit the migrants economically. Some of the study participants experienced physical injures like wound, broken leg and exposure to sickness due to the severity of the journey and the physical maltreatment at the hands of the smugglers and traffickers and some migrants even died. The study participants also faced different types of physical abuse in the place of destination mainly from their employers.

A study conducted by Kassegn and Gashaw (2017) also confirms this finding. According to this study, the smugglers and traffickers torture migrants even to death. They beat the migrants with sticks, electric wire, plastic rope, straps and thrust, burn the migrants' body parts and damage their until they give the phone number of relatives in Saudi Arabia whom they ask for additional money for continuing the journey. The other risks for migrants are suffering from hunger, malnutrition, thirst, poisonous snakebites, boat wrecks and physical deterioration (Kassegn & Gashaw2017:54). Abdulraheem and Oladipo (2010:39), (Wickham 2009:2), Jayasree (2004:58), United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (2008:9) study report also noted that illegal migrants face different types of physical abuses.

The physical abuse continues after they reached the place of destination. Lack of knowledge and skills to undertake domestic activities up to the expectations of the employers were the main

reasons for the physical abuse of female migrants. Similarly, lack of construction and livestock feeding knowledge and skills led the physical abuse of the male migrants by the employers of the place of destination.

The findings also indicated that the study participants encountered labour exploitation. After they arrived at the place of destination, most of the study participants engaged in work different from what the brokers and smugglers had told them to expect prior to migration. They were engaging in laborious activities from dawn to dusk with without rest. This shows they made the migration decision based on false information. The brokers, smugglers and traffickers cheated them by magnifying the benefit obtained from such illegal migration. This again shows that cheating the migrants by giving them false information is trafficking. The following studies conducted by others also confirm these findings.

Illegal migrants mainly become victims of labour exploitation both in transit and in place of destinations in a wide range of industries like agriculture, construction, domestic work, entertainment, forestry, fishing, mining and textiles (IOM 2015:3; Calandruccio 2005:278; ILO 2011:50; Jagers & Rijken 2014:48).

Economic exploitation is another serious problem faced by the study participants. They paid a large amount of money to the brokers, smugglers and traffickers at different transit points. Like physical abuse, the economic exploitation of the migrants continued after they reached the place of destination. They were working for long hours without rest and little payment. The brokers in the destination country in collaboration with the employers were reducing and sometimes even denying them to pay their salary. There are returnees who came back home without receiving a month's worth of salary or more because their employers refused to pay them. They could not get the legal means to claim their own salaries due to their illegal status. In addition, some of them suffered from debt bondage as they were paying debt for a long time to the brokers' and smugglers' so called facilitation services to take them to the destination.

The economic exploitation was not only limited to the study participants but also their families were exposed to unnecessary expenses by selling their scarce and precious resources such as land and oxen in order to pay for the brokers, smugglers and traffickers on behalf of the migrating family members. In some cases, the situation forced families to borrow money for this purpose in

expectation of remittance from the migrating family members. However, some of the families exposed to debt as most of the migrated family members returned home empty handed as understood from the study.

Economic exploitation is one of the severe exploitations faced by illegal migrants. The smugglers and traffickers often initiate for the purpose of economic exploitation from the very beginning. That is the reason the migrants are subjected to economic exploitation in transit and destination countries (IOM 2015:3-4; Sahan Foundation and IGAD Security Sector Program 2016:4; Johnson 2012:370; Voronova & Radjenovic 2016:4; Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center 2006:1; ILO 2011:55; UNODC 2012:1).

In addition to physical abuse and labour exploitation, the illegal migration subjected female migrants to sexual exploitation. The smugglers, traffickers and the employers are the perpetrators of sexual exploitation of the female migrants. This finding is similar to other studies conducted in Ethiopia. For instance, (ILO 2017) revealed that female Ethiopian illegal migrants are at risk of rape, unwanted pregnancy, sexual abuse and sexually transmitted disease (ILO2017:12). Kassegn and Gashaw (2017) added that Ethiopian female illegal migrants face rape regularly (Kassegn & Gasahw2017:54). Forced rape was common both on the way and after they reached the place of destination as the study participants revealed. The brokers, smugglers and traffickers are the perpetrators of sexual abuse against female illegal migrants *en route*. In the same manner, the employers and their young sons are those who exploit female migrants sexually. Similarly, Bachtiar and Prasetyo (2017) found out that illegal migrants engage in labourious and risky conditions that expose them to serious health problems. They have rarely access to protection and support owing to their illegal status (Bachtiar& Prasetyo 2017: 12).

It is common for female illegal migrants to become subject to sexual exploitation. In extreme cases this makes them victims of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS (World Health Organization 2012:2; Enaikele & Olutayo 2011:415; Surtees 2013:20; Zimmerman 2006:273).

Finally, the study participants faced isolation from social interaction during their stay in the destination country. As they were illegal migrants, their freedom of movement and social interaction with other fellow friends was restricted due to fear of imprisonment by the police. They were working in domestic and construction sites, which were out of public sight. The illegal status

of the migrants, the nature of the work they were engaging in, restricted their social interaction with other people. They could not even get the opportunity to communicate with their family members left behind for a long period. This led some of the family members back home to conclude that the migrants were not alive. This in turn led them take measures such as divorce and leaving home, which in turn resulted in family disintegration.

## **7.5 The reintegration supports sought by the returnees and the responses of relevant bodies**

The returnees' exposure to various forms of abuse and exploitation due to illegal migration and their return to similar situations, which gave rise to their illegal migration, forced the returnees to seek different types of reintegration support from the community and the relevant bodies.

### *7.5.1 Housing*

Housing is one of the major requirements for effective reintegration of the returnees into the community. In addition to fulfilling the basic need for shelter, housing is the prerequisite for other reintegration supports. Permanent housing is required to be recognized as a legal member of the community and to get an identity card, which allows them to move from one place to another for various economic and social purposes. Permanent housing is also important for people to receive beneficial information like employment opportunities and to get credit. In some cases, families refused to accept returnees. Others revealed that their houses had become too old and were on the verge of falling apart while one returnee said that his spouse had sold it and divorced him when he returned home. Returnees had no financial capacity to construct a house for themselves as they had returned home empty-handed. As a result, they sought housing support from the community.

### *7.5.2 Health services*

The other reintegration needed sought by the returnees is health service support. Good health and freedom from pain is essential for functioning optimally and engaging in physical activities. Many of the migrants returned to Ethiopia with illnesses and injuries having been subject to extreme abuse en route and in the place of destination and required various health services.

Some of the returnees also need psychological support. They have worries resulting from their illegal migration experiences and fear related to the current life challenging situations. Hence, they need counselling as part of the reintegration support to overcome these emotional problems. In

addition to other reintegration supports, some of the returnees need social support. As they returned empty-handed, their families were unable to pay the money they borrowed from other people. This made some families angry and kept them away from the returned family members. Hence, the returnees need social reintegration support that helps them maintain the broken social relationships between them and their families. The returnees also need social supports to organize into groups for economic activities, share information and experiences with each other. This means social reintegration plays a vital role in strengthening the social capital of the returnees. Moreover, they need social reintegration support to establish their own self-help groups and associations in order to be powerful and influence decision makers to hear their voices.

### *8.5.3 Skills training*

The returnees also sought skills training support for economic reintegration. Lack of knowledge and skills to get employment opportunities was one of the reasons for the returnees to lead a destitute life, which contributed to their illegal migration. Therefore, the returnees needed different types of skills training supports in order to obtain employment from organizations or develop their entrepreneurship skills to create their own business activities. Moreover, some of them sought financial support to fulfil their immediate basic needs while most of them needed this support in the form of credit to use it as start up capital and start their own income generating business activities. Apart from the skills training, financial and employment opportunity support, the returnees also needed tax reduction or exemption support from the government as part of economic reintegration until their business became viable and they get the financial capacity to pay it. The Bachtiar and Prasetyo (2017) study also noted that returnees need empowerment through access to self-employment and waged employment opportunities. To this end, reintegration should consist of at least three components: awareness raising and interest building, skills training and access to finance (Bachtiar & Prasetyo 2017: VII).

### *7.5.4 Social support*

Social support is one of the fundamental reintegration supports the returnees need to develop healthy social interaction and relationship with the community to which they are returned. Central to such support is the need for welcome and acceptance by the family. Regarding this, the findings of the study revealed that most respective families warmly accepted the returnees. However, there

were some returnees whose families rejected them. The families expended huge amount of money for brokers and smugglers to arrange the so-called safe journey for the migrated family members in expectation of remittance. However, most of the migrants returned home empty handed without achieving the goal of their migration and their families' expectations. This made some families angry as it caused them to delve into debt. The situation cut the social ties between the returnee and the family and made the former vulnerable to lack of basic needs supports for survival, social problems such as loneliness, isolation and emotional problem like blaming oneself. For this reason, the returnees are in need of social support to be reconciled to their families.

Some of the returnees also encountered discrimination from the community. Female returnees, in particular faced discrimination from the community because they were suspected to be infected with sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS due to sexual exploitation related to illegal migration. On some occasions, even if the returnees had not experienced social exclusion and discrimination from the community, they lacked the resources needed to engage in community-based organizations like *Iddirs*, *Iqubs* and other social interactions and form relationship important for them to reintegrate into the community.

Others returnees voiced that they needed social support from the Labour and Social Affairs of the District to form their own social associations. Such association helps them to share ideas, experiences, resources and information important for their social and economic reintegration. Apart from these, the study participants revealed that the formation of their own association helps them to get a legal body, which represent them and influence government decision makers to respond to the returnees' reintegration needs. In short, the returnees need social support to reintegrate into the community for these reasons.

Available literature also shows that social support is crucial for building the social network and relationship of the returnees. Creating such social structure and networks helps them to share experiences, for their economic betterment and prevent them from becoming isolated. For this reason, it has many contributions for the reintegration of the returnees (IOM 2015:15; Admanesh & Margaret 2015:11).

#### *7.5.5 Counselling support*

In addition to the abuse and exploitation, that made them feel helpless and rejected, some of the returnees also revealed that they have been worrying about how to continue their future life upon

their return home. They want somebody with whom they can share their personal troubles and get a solution. To this end, they need counselling support. Concerning this, Jayasree (2004:61), Robinson & Paramo (2007: 243) recommend that the provision of counselling support for the returnees plays a vital role in removing their personal worries, helping them build internal characteristics and bring positive behavioural changes that contribute to their reintegration into the community.

In spite of the importance of counselling support, the returnees have not been able to get such support yet. The concerned government body, the Labour and Social Affairs of Omo Nada District, which has the mandate to oversee the overall reintegration schemes in general and the provision of counselling support in particular lacks counselling professionals to offer such support for the returnees. The returnees are left alone to struggle with the devastating situation, which challenges their day-to-day life and their future reintegration into the community.

Without emotional and psychological support returnees may continue to suffer from psychological consequences such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and other anxiety disorders; lack of self-confidence, emotional instability, stress, feelings of isolation, hopelessness, thoughts of suicide; somatic conditions, lack of aspiration and vision for the future (Chatterjee, Chakraborty, Srivastava & Deb, 2006:173; World Health Organization 2012:3; Jayasree 2004:59).

## **7.6 Theoretical relevance of the reintegration needs of the returnees**

As mentioned earlier, the eco-system and symbolic interaction perspectives guided the study. It is important to scrutinize the relevance of the study findings with these theoretical lenses.

The returnees' need for different reintegration supports shows that reintegration is a complex phenomenon which involves addressing the personal, emotional, physical, economic and social needs of the returnees. This implies that the reintegration of the returnees should employ the person-in-environment perspective, which the eco-system perspective proposes. As multitude factors ranging from micro, meso and macro level contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees, their reintegration also involves intervention at different levels.

At the same time, the returnees' need for different reintegration supports is also linked to the returnees' subjective experiences of various abuses and exploitation under illegal migration. The

various abuses and exploitations they experienced forced them to seek different types of reintegration needs or supports. They need reintegration supports that match their subjective experiences. What constitutes relevant reintegration support depends on the returnees' individual feelings and experiences as proposed by the symbolic interactionist perspective. In other word, there is no single reintegration formula, which fits for all returnees. This implies that it is important to take into account individual difference in the provision of reintegration supports. The reintegration efforts, which fail to understand the returnees' feelings, experiences and their preferences of the kind of support that best serves their reintegration, ends up as a futile exercise.

Access to safe, satisfactory and affordable housing, whether provided by an organization, institution or privately arranged, is one of the pre-requisites for successful reintegration of returnees (Surtees 2017:13). However, some of the returnees to the study area were not able to secure any accommodation. Firstly, they lacked the financial means to construct their own houses. There was also no private, government or non-governmental organization programme which provided housing for the returnees. However, the relevant government body attributes its inability to provide reintegration supports in general and housing support in particular for the returnees to lack of resource, absence of commitment is found to be the main reason for the failure of the government to provide this support for the returnees. Various resources like land for house construction and kebele houses are in the hands of the government. Tehe governmnet could have mobilized these resources, labour and even funding from the community to address the returnees need for housing support.

The returnees need health support to recover from the sickness, physical pain and injuries experienced due to illegal migration; however, they could not get this support because of lack of financial capacity to treat themselves, lack of commitment from the government and the community to mobilize resources to meet the specific health support needs of the returnees. The Labour and Social Affairs of the District, which has the mandate to coordinate the reintegration of the returnees, could at least help the few returnees with such needs to benefit from the free health services support allowed by the health policy of the government. Nevertheless, the Office could not recognize even the availability of such opportunity to address the health support needs of the returnees.

Various skills training is another component of reintegration supports sought by the returnees in order to get employment, better income and become financially independent. However, they could not still get the skills training they needed. The returnees' inability to pay for the skills training they needed, the scarcity of skills training providing organizations in the local community and the absence of supports from the concerned body to go somewhere else to receive the training they need are the major obstacles to actualize their desires.

In addition, the returnees need financial and workplace support for economic reintegration. The concerned government organization tried to construct some sheds as workplaces for the returnees. However, the number of sheds constructed for this purpose is too small compare to the number of returned migrants who need support. Apart from this, the government bodies have not distributed any of the sheds constructed for the returnees yet due to negligence. As far as financial support is concerned, the returnees could not get access to credit services given by few micro finances in the district due to lack of collateral or their inability to save twenty percent of the amount of money they want to borrow for business activities before they get credit service. Consequently, some of the returnees are still dependent on their families for everything including their daily survival needs while the others have been facing challenges due to lack of sources of income for survival.

Positive and healthy social relations between the returnee and peers, family, spouse/intimate partner and the community are also important to prevent the returnee from discrimination, stigma and marginalization (Surtees 2017:13). Contrary to the returnees' need for social support to maintain a healthy relationship with their families, there was no attempt made to reconcile those returnees who separated from their families due to their failure to meet the financial expectation of the latter. Similarly, there was no attempt made by the concerned bodies to organize the returnees into self-help organizations and associations because of lack of commitment.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

Poverty, unemployment, lack of knowledge and skills for employment, lack of financial capacity to set up their own business, political discrimination, socio-cultural and religious reasons, limited legal means and the influence of brokers and smugglers are the major factors that contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees from Saudi Arabia. They opted for illegal migration as the

only available alternative and coping strategy to secure better employment opportunities with better pay in the destination country and finally escape the destitute life they were leading.

Contrary to their expectations of secure, well-paid employment, they faced abuse and exploitation en route and in Saudi Arabia. They returned home empty-handed and required various reintegration supports. Housing, health services, skills training, employment opportunities, employment, financial, social and counselling supports were the major reintegration supports they sought from the relevant bodies after their return to Ethiopia.

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Human Trafficking, especially Women and Children Section 2, Article 6 obligates the State Parties to take measures to ensure the physical healing, psychological and social needs of victims of illegal migration. These include cooperation with non-governmental organizations, other relevant organizations and civil society for the provision of adequate housing, advice and information with respect to their legal rights, medical, psychological, material, employment, education and training opportunities.

The Ethiopian government has recognized the importance of reintegration for returnees of illegal migration. Ethiopia ratified the UN Protocol in 2006 (Yoseph, Mebratu&Belete2006:58). The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution Article 9(4) states that all international agreements ratified by the country are considered to be part of the law of the land. The government, therefore, in collaboration with relevant bodies, is obliged to assist returnees of illegal migration to reintegrate into the community. The Ethiopian government called upon illegal migrants to return to Ethiopia following the declaration of the Saudi government to deport the illegal residents in the country. As the returnees revealed, the government also promised the returnees appropriate reintegration supports but these supports were never forthcoming. To date, very little effort has been made by the government, any other relevant agencies, or the community itself to reintegrate the returnees into the community. As a result, most of the returnees have not reintegrated into the community emotionally, economically and socially. They merely exist in the community physically. The lack of assistance has generated feelings of hopelessness and despair. Unmet reintegration expectations and the inability to reintegrate successfully often lead to re-migration as the only remaining coping strategy.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 8.1 Summary of the research findings

In this study, I attempted to shed light on the neglected topic of the reintegration of returned Ethiopian illegal migrants from Saudi Arabia and their reintegration experiences. The study explored the experiences of 20 returned illegal migrants from Saudi Arabia to Omo Nada District, Oromia National regional state, South East Ethiopia in 2013. The study considered the returnees' experiences of illegal migration before, en route, and in the place of destination. It also investigated their reintegration needs and remedies sought from the community; how the concerned bodies in the community responded to the reintegration needs of the returnees; the returnees' current reintegration status; and their coping strategies. To this end the study was guided by five research questions: 1. What were the illegal migration experiences of the returnees? 2. What were the subsequent reintegration needs of the returnees? 3. What reintegration assistance and support was provided for the returnees by families, relatives, government and the community in Omo Nada District? 4. What were the reintegration experiences of the returnees, and 5. How did they cope with the reintegration challenges they faced?

A qualitative research design was used to carry out the study. This allowed for capturing of the returnees' experiences of illegal migration and reintegration in their own words by constructing their subjective accounts. These narratives, in turn, contributed to a deeper understanding of their experiences of the contextual factors that contributed to their illegal migration, their reintegration needs after return, how the community responded to their needs, their current reintegration statuses and the coping strategies they used to manage their situations when they failed to get the reintegration support they sought. The qualitative design allowed for an understanding of the returnees' experiences of illegal migration and reintegration through their subjective accounts. The use of a qualitative design for such a purpose is affirmed by Dantzker and Hunter (2012:56), Guba and Lincoln (1994:108) and Newman (2007:43).

The population of the study consisted of the returned illegal migrants from Saudi Arabia in 2013 to the study area. I used a purposive sampling technique to select the study participants who are above 18 years and willing to participate in the study. In-depth interviews, key informant

interviews and focus group discussions were the qualitative research methods used to collect the data required for the study. Twenty returned migrants were participated in the study. Likewise, five experts working in relevant organizations, and 24 community members participated respectively in key informant and focus group discussions conducted for the purpose of the study. I prepared the interview guides in English and translated them into Afaan Oromo (Oromo Language), the vernacular language of the study area.

After I transcribed the data, I used member checking to ensure the trustworthiness of the data before analysis. I revisited eighteen of the participants for this purpose. I could not find two of the original participants for the member checking, possibly, because they re-migrated, according to the community. I used triangulation to cross check and ensure the trustworthiness of the data. The data was analyzed thematically using narrations based on the objectives of the study and issues emerging from the data. I summarized and presented the findings of the study as follows:

The findings of the study revealed that push factors on micro, meso and macro levels contributed to illegal migration decisions. These findings are consistent with the ecosystem perspective, which states that a combination of multiple social, economic, cultural, political and environmental factors give rise to problems (Pardec 1996:1-3; Muco 2013:115; Bronfenbrenner 1989:54). The decisions of individuals to choose the route of illegal migration were driven by a combination of all the above factors. The subjective experiences of their socio-economic and political conditions fuelled perceptions that the only way to escape poverty was to resort to illegal migration. This finding confirms the contention of the symbolic interactionism perspective that people take certain decisions based on their subjective experiences and interpretations of the situations they encountered as argued by Carter & Fuller (2015:3).

#### *8.1.1 The socio-economic conditions of the returnees before migration*

Understanding the contextual factors that contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees is essential to understand how to reintegrate them into the community. For this reason, the study explored the socio-economic and political experiences of the returnees before migration. Accordingly, I found that poverty, unemployment, the influence of brokers and smugglers, political discrimination, family pressure and religious reasons were the major contributing factors to the illegal migration of the returnees.

### *Lack of resources and assets*

The lack of resources and assets was a major contributing factor in the decision to migrate illegally. The abject poverty in which the study participants were trapped for many years prevented them from fulfilling even basic needs for themselves and their families. A crucial resource or asset for the rural people is agricultural land. Some of the study participants had no land while others had only small plots of land as the size of the land decreased gradually as it was sub-divided from generation to generation. Over cultivation decreased the fertility of the land and its productivity. The inability to produce adequate crops for food and to generate adequate income for survival resulted in participants not being able to meet their own and their families' need for food, clothing and housing.

### *Unemployment*

Unemployment was another factor that forced the migrants to leave their communities of origin and migrate illegally. Obtaining formal employment was problematic for various reasons: there were few vacancies as opposed to the large number of job seekers; job seekers lacked the educational level and skills required by the job market; in government organizations individuals who were members of the ruling political party in the country were given preference at the expense of the non-members.

### *Lack of business support and discrimination*

The lacked the capital needed to start a business; for example, credit services hindered those who wanted to start some business of their own. Although there is some government- supported micro-finance institutions which provide saving and credit services in the district, it discriminated against those individuals who were not members of the ruling party and favoured those members of the ruling political party. Families and relatives did not have the financial capacity to assist the potential migrants to start their own business.

### *Family pressure*

In many cases, families encouraged their members to migrate by whatever means possible and would themselves pay the brokers and the smugglers to facilitate the journey for their family members in expectation of the remittances that the migrated family members would send back.

#### *Socio-cultural considerations*

The socio-cultural reasons that contributed to the illegal migration of people from the study area, particularly to Arab countries like Saudi Arabia by people of the Islamic faith included the opportunity to learn their religious values and ideologies.

#### *Pressure from brokers and smugglers*

The involvement of brokers and smugglers in the process of illegal migration in the study area further contributed to the situation of illegal migration in the study area. Brokers and smugglers, through tales of success and false promises were able to exploit the dire conditions in which people existed to encourage people to migrate illegally.

#### *Absence of legal means*

The high costs of legal migration means to migrate, particularly for males and the length of time to process applications forced many people to migrate illegally.

#### *8.1.2 The returnees' experience of illegal migration*

Understanding the study participants' experiences of illegal migration lays the foundation for understanding their reintegration needs. For this reason, the study explored the returnees' experiences en route and in the place of destination. I found that the participants experienced severe abuse and exploitation, which included physical, sexual, economic, social and work related abuse.

#### *Physical abuse*

The returnees were subject to different forms of physical abuse on the migration journey to their destinations. They travelled long distances without food and water for many days. Many of them were forced to drink human urine in extreme situation to survive. Smugglers and traffickers assaulted, beat and burnt many of them with melted plastic at different transit points. Consequently, many of the 'illegal migrants' lost their lives due to illness and maltreatment. The

physical abuse of the migrants was not limited to the migration journey but continued after they reached the destination. There many were subject to physical abuse such as slapping, beatings and assaults from employers.

#### *Sexual abuse*

The female study participants revealed that they faced frequent rape both on the journey and in the place of destination. While the smugglers were the perpetrators of sexual abuse against the female migrants at different transit points, some study participants also reported that employers and their male children abused them sexually.

#### *Labour and economic exploitation*

Labour and economic exploitation was typical. Employers forced the participants to work excessive hours without rest. On the contrary, they often reduce or withhold salaries completely for the study participants. Regarding economic exploitation, the study participants paid large amounts of money for the brokers and smugglers for facilitation services and a so-called safe journey to arrive at the destination country. This situation forced the migrants and their families to sell their precious property or borrow money for this purpose. In some cases where the migrants lacked money to pay for the journey, the brokers, smugglers and potential employers themselves covered the costs in expectation of repayment after obtaining employment in the destination country. This situation subjected them to debt bondage in which they had to work for several months without payment to repay the debt.

#### *Social isolation*

Participants were usually subject to social isolation by their employers and not permitted any social interactions with others. The employers did not even allow the participants to communicate with their families left behind. This resulted in the disintegration of the migrants' families (divorce, children living on the streets) in some cases assuming that the migrant was no longer alive.

#### *8.1.3 The reintegration needs of the returnees and community response*

Due to the contextual factors that gave rise to their illegal migrations and the different abuses and exploitation they experienced as consequence of illegal migration, the returned migrants sought

different types of reintegration supports from the community after their return to their communities. Most of the returnees came back empty-handed after their migration journey and sought reintegration supports such as accommodation, health, skills training, financial, employment opportunities, counselling and social supports like family reconciliation and social network building to reintegrate into the community.

#### *Housing support*

The study participants required housing support not only meeting safety and for security needs. They also needed it to have a permanent address in the community, get recognition as residents and the right to claim various services, which contributed to their reintegration needs.

#### *Employment and financial support*

Skills training are vital for obtaining employment or establishing their own business. In addition to skills training, resources for establishing a business, tax relief for a period of time and financial support was required to establish their own business and become self-employed.

#### *Health support*

Some returnees sought health service support for the illness and injuries they experienced. Some required counselling support because of the abuse and its consequences.

#### *Reintegration and legal support*

Reintegration support took various forms. The participants expressed the need for social reintegration supports to mend broken relationships between returnees and their families. The returnees needed social support to form their own groups and associations to influence the concerned bodies to respond their needs for reintegration into the community. As they faced threats from brokers and smugglers, some of the returnees also expressed the need for legal support to ensure their safety.

The different reintegration support needs expressed by the returnees indicate that reintegration is a complex phenomenon which involves interventions at the micro, meso and macro level in order to respond to the physical, emotional, economic and social needs resulting from illegal migration. However, despite the urgent need for the supports that would facilitate successful reintegration of

returnees into their communities, no assistance was forthcoming due to the lack of resources and commitment. As a result, the returnees had not yet reintegrated into the community, and some faced challenges that forced them to re-migrate illegally.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

Various contextual factors ranging from the micro, meso, to the macro level contributed to the illegal migration of the returnees. The illegal migration exposed the returnees to physical, emotional, labour, economic, sexual and social abuse and exploitation. The various forms of abuse and exploitation experienced by the returnees and their inability to support themselves forced them to seek various reintegration supports from the community upon their return.

Reintegration is not just the return of people to their places of origin. Rather, it is a complex scheme that involves tackling the contextual factors contributing to illegal migration and the provision of integrated support to address the returnees' physical, emotional, economic and social support needs for reintegration. Reintegration efforts that fail to undertake adequate intervention in the returnees' system at micro, meso and macro level based on their experiences of illegal migration abuse and exploitation have been unsuccessful. Therefore, the returnees could not get the reintegration supports they sought. Consequently, they were excluded from the social and economic activities in the community, left alone without being reintegrated and some of them were forced to re-migrate illegally.

The failure of the returnees to reintegrate into the community is due to the absence of reintegration policies, programs, commitment and responsibility from the government. Furthermore, family, relatives, non-governmental organizations and the community did not provide need-based reintegration support for the returnees. For these reasons, the reintegration of the returnees and illegal migration in the study area will remain challenging until the government and other stakeholders make concerted efforts to mitigate the root causes of illegal migration and provide effective reintegration supports for returnees.

### *8.2.1 Theoretical contribution*

The effective reintegration of returnees is affected not only by the subjective experiences of the returnees but also by the socio-economic and political contexts in which they exist (Kato

2007:21). Interfamilial relations also influence migration decisions. Decisions to migrate are often altruistic in nature because the belief is that individuals migrate not only to fulfil their own individual needs but also to fulfil their family's interests by sacrificing themselves.

The reintegration of the returnees is a complex process that involves interventions at various levels. In terms of the eco-system perspective, reintegration is a complex and holistic approach, which involves intervention in the returnees' system at the micro, meso and macro level (Pardec 1996:1-3; Muco 2013:115; Bronfenbrenner 1989:54). Reintegration efforts must address a combination of social, economic, cultural, political and environmental factors, which give rise to illegal migration. In addition to an eco-system approach, it is important to apply the symbolic interactionist perspective to understand the returnees' subjective experiences in order to design and provide reintegration supports that fit each returnee's unique reintegration needs (Carter & Fuller 2015:3). This implies that reintegration assistance is highly individualized and needs to be linked to the illegal migration experiences of the returnees and the contexts to which they are returned.

### *8.2.2 Practical contribution of the study*

The subject of the reintegration of illegal migration returnees got little attention compared to studies on the causes and consequences of illegal migration. This study addresses this hiatus and makes a contribution regarding the contextual factors that forced the illegal migration of the study participants. It specifically addresses the abuse and exploitation they experienced, the subsequent reintegration need they sought, how the concerned bodies of the community (family, relatives, neighbours, government and non-government organizations) responded to the reintegration needs of the returnees, how the returnees coped with the challenges they encountered after their return and their current reintegration status. The findings of the study will provide information for the government and non-government organizations that want to plan and implement projects and programs for the reintegration of illegal migration returnees.

## 8.3 Recommendations

### 8.3.1 Recommendation for practitioners and relevant bodies

Based on the findings, I recommend the following interventions to the relevant stakeholders at the micro, meso and macro levels in order to effectively reintegrate the returnees into the community based on the findings of the study.

*Micro level:* The needs for the following interventions were identified at the individual returnee level:

- **Health support:** The provision of health support is central to the recovery of returnees who experienced health problems and injuries. Physical recovery is also essential for returnees to enable them to pursue other reintegration schemes such as income generating activities. Returnees lacked the financial resources to access the treatment they needed to recover from their health problems. The Ethiopian health policy allows for the provision of free health services for the poorest segments of the community. Therefore, the Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district in collaboration with the Health Office of the district should use this opportunity and devise a mechanism by which these returnees get free health services.
- **Counselling support:** Some of the returnees experienced psychological and emotional problems because of the abuse and exploitation they were subjected to. The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district should provide counselling supports for the returnees. As it is an office with the mandate to rehabilitate the returnees, the Labour and Social Affairs Office should also facilitate a mechanism by which the returnees are at least provided with kebele houses at an affordable rent, or are provided with land from the land administration of the district so that they can construct their own houses.
- **Vocational and technical training:** Lack of knowledge and skills to secure employment in existing markets or to create their own business opportunities also contributed to the unemployment of the returnees (factors that originally contributed to their illegal migration decisions). Lack of knowledge and skills to obtain employment or to be self-employed is still the major reason for the inability of the returnees to reintegrate economically into the community after return. The Social and Labour Affairs Office of the district in collaboration with the district vocational and technical training should provide skills training for the

returnees. Lack of skills and knowledge to perform domestic and construction activities were one of the reasons that made returnees vulnerable to physical abuse in areas of domestic and construction activities in the destination country. The Labour and Social Affairs Office should provide skills training for the unemployed in various fields in order to reduce their vulnerability to abuse in the cases of those who decide to re-migrate.

- **Employment opportunities:** The Office of Labour and Social Affairs of the district in collaboration with the Employment Opportunity Creation and Food Security Office should give attention to employment creation for the unemployed individuals.
- **Seed money:** The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district in collaboration with micro-finance should provide seed money to help the returnees get employment opportunities or create their own business.

*Meso level:*

- **Mobilisation of existing resources:** The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district, which has a legal mandate to coordinate the reintegration of the returnees, should mobilize existing resources to meet the reintegration needs of the returnees. For instance, there are resources like land and some government houses under “kebele” (the smallest unit of government administration at grass-roots level). These resources are key to meeting the housing needs of the returnees. The Labour and Social Affairs Office, in collaboration with the concerned bodies, should facilitate conditions for the returnees to rent “kebele” houses at affordable prices. In a similar vein, the office should facilitate a mechanism for some of the returnees who want to obtain land from the kebele land administration for house construction.
- **Financial support:** The community should be mobilized to contribute money for those returnees in need of health support. The Labour and Social Affairs Office should organize events to mobilize financial support for this purpose. Community structures such as ‘iddirs’ (traditional community burial societies), churches and mosques are examples of community organizations which may be mobilized for support.
- **Alternative income:** The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district, in collaboration with the Employment Opportunity Creation and Food Security Office of the district should provide alternative sources of income for families in order to reduce families’ influence on their members to migrate illegally.

- **Family support:** The acceptance of the returnees by their families is fundamental for the successful reintegration of the returnees. Some families rejected family members who returned empty handed. This led to the isolation of the returnees. The Social and Labour Affairs Office and other community structures should facilitate conditions to reconcile returnees with their families and help such returnees maintain social relationships with their families.
- **Awareness raising:** The returnees had insufficient information about the destination country, the type of work they were going to engage in or the risk of abuse and exploitation that follows illegal migration. Migration decisions were predominantly based on partial and deceptive information provided by brokers and smugglers. Some of the returnees also re-migrated after return due to the frustrating condition they returned to and the deceptive strategies of the brokers and smugglers. The Labour and Social Affairs Office of the district and other organisations (NGOs, IGOs) should provide awareness of the consequences of illegal migration. Awareness raising in the community is also important to reduce discrimination against returnees. Conditions should be facilitated to enable returnees to become members of community-based organisations.
- **Protection:** Returnees frequently faced anonymous threatening (possibly from the brokers and smugglers). Despite the problem being reported to the police, the police could not take measures to ensure the security of the returnees due to lack of proof. Sophisticated mechanisms are required to collect evidence, arrest and convict the brokers and the smugglers, and to reduce their threats to the returnees' security. The police should make concerted efforts to control illegal brokers and smugglers who deceive people and motivate them to migrate illegally.
- **Provision of business premises:** The kebele administration should provide working spaces where returnees can run their own business. The Labour and Social Affairs Office, in collaboration with the other concerned government agencies such as the Micro and Small Scale Enterprises Organizers, should help returnees to get workplaces from the sheds constructed for unemployed youth in the district.
- **Self-help groups:** Self-help groups and associations should be organized for returnees to encourage and support each other by sharing ideas and influence the concerned bodies to respond to their reintegration needs.

*Macro level:*

The involvement of government in empowering state bodies is indispensable for facilitating reintegration assistance and mechanisms.

- **Access to credit:** While some micro finance institutions provide credit services in the study area, returnees could not access the available credit services provided due to lack of collateral or the inability to save the twenty percent initial saving requested by these financial institutions to provide a loan. Mechanisms should be put in place by the government that would allow returnees to borrow from micro finance institutions without the twenty percent prerequisite saving.
- **Tax reduction:** High government tax is one of the hindering factors prohibiting people from succeeding in their own business. Tax reduction or exemption until returnees are generating an adequate income from their business will foster the establishment of new businesses.
- **Capacity:** The government should expand the capacity of the Labour and Social Affairs Office by employing professional counsellors from the field of counselling psychology and social work as the lack of these professionals hampers the ability of the office to provide give counselling for the returnees in need of such support.
- **Poverty reduction:** Existing poverty reduction programs must be put into practice in order to alleviate poverty that was the major contributing factor driving the widespread illegal migration in the study area.
- **Employment programs:** Employment programs and projects should be designed at a national level based on local situations and fully implemented in order to reduce unemployment that is another contributing factor to illegal migration.
- **Equal opportunities:** Political discrimination must be eliminated and there should be equal opportunities for all qualified people to compete and get employment opportunities as well as access to land and credit services irrespective of their political views.
- **Reintegration policies and programs:** The effective reintegration of returnees requires policies and programs that guide, give clear direction and make the relevant stakeholders responsible should be designed at national level and implemented according to the local situations.

- **Legal migration:** The government should facilitate conditions by which the unemployed job seekers of the country get legal means to migrate and work in Saudi Arabia in order to reduce illegal migration and its subsequent abuse and exploitation.
- **Cooperation:** National and international development partners should cooperate to address all factors giving rise to illegal migration and effective reintegration initiatives.

### 8.3.2 *Recommendations for future research*

This study covered only one district in Ethiopia. Similar studies should be undertaken in other areas to which illegal migrants returned to uncover further information on the reintegration of returnees of illegal migration. A nationwide comprehensive study, which uses a larger number of study participants than this study will generate further information on the experiences of returnees of illegal migration, the reintegration supports provided for them and their reintegration situations. As many returnees re-migrate, research regarding the prevention of re-migration is essential.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS (RETURNEES)**

**TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: The Reintegration of Returned 'illegal migrants' to Omo Nada District, Oromia Region, Jimma Zone, Ethiopia**

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms \_\_\_\_\_ Date...../...../2016

#### **NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

I am Fojo Gudina Abshula, a registered doctoral student at the University of South Africa, and I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis requirement in Sociology. The purpose of this research

project is to understand the reintegration needs of the returnees of illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) to Omo Nada district, how the returnees manage their situations, how government and the community in the district responded to reintegrate the returnees and the extent to which the returnees are reintegrated into the community. The study makes use of interviews to gather this information from the returnees who have been selected for interviews for this study.

**RESEARCH PROCESS (thorough and clear description of all data gathering processes that will take place)**

1. The study requires your participation in individual interview to give information concerning your illegal migration related experiences, the reintegration needs you sought upon your return, how government and community respond to reintegrate returnees and to what extent the responses helped you to socially and economically reintegrate.
2. The interview will be undertaken by myself, the doctoral researcher.
3. The interview offers you the opportunity to express your opinion on your illegal migration related experiences, the reintegration needs you sought upon your return, how government and community respond to reintegrate returnees and to what extent the responses helped you to socially and economically reintegrate into the community.
4. You have full right either to participate or not to participate in the study. You can discontinue participation in the study at any point in case you feel discomfort. No harm will be caused to you because of your refusal to participate.

**NOTIFICATION THAT INTERVIEW WILL BE TAPE RECORDED (this option should be included if any photographs, tape recording, video recording etc. will be made during the data gathering session)**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the interview will be tape recorded to ensure that valuable information elicited during the interview is captured and the context of the information can be reviewed in detail. Following the interview, the recorded material will be transcribed. You may peruse the transcription of the recording of the interview in which you participated at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The opinions of the interviewees are viewed as strictly confidential, and only members of the research team will have access to the information. No data published in dissertations and journals will contain any information through which interviewee member may be identified. Your anonymity is therefore ensured.

**WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE**

I understand that I may withdraw from the interview at any time. I therefore participate voluntarily until such time as I request otherwise.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE STUDY (brief as in the research proposal)**

You may not get direct benefit for your participation in this study. However, the findings of the study may be used by concerned bodies to design programs and take corrective measures that may benefit the returnees in your locality in future if needed.

**INFORMATION (contact information of your supervisor)**

If you have any questions concerning the study, you may contact my supervisor, Prof Carol Allais, at the Department of Sociology, Pretoria, Unisa, Tel: 27(0)825737493 or e-mail: carol.allais@gmail.com

**CONSENT**

I, the undersigned, ..... (full name) have read the above information relating to the project and have also heard the verbal version, and declare that I understand it. I have been afforded the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the study with the study leader, and hereby declare that I agree voluntarily to participate in the project.

I indemnify the university and any employee or student of the university against any liability that I may incur during the course of the study.

I further undertake to make no claim against the university in respect of damages to my person or reputation that may be incurred as a result of the study, unless resulting from negligence on the part of the university, its employees or students.

I have received a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of participant: .....

Signed at ..... on .....

**APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM FOR FGD PARTICIPANTS**

**TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: The Reintegration of Returned ‘illegal migrants’ to Omo Nada District, Oromia Region, Jimma Zone, Ethiopia**

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms \_\_\_\_\_ Date...../...../2016

**NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

I am Fojo Gudina Abshula, a registered doctoral student at the University of South Africa, and I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis requirement in Sociology. The purpose of this research project is to understand the reintegration needs of the returnees of illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) to Omo Nada district, how the returnees manage their situations, how government and the community in the district responded to reintegrate the

returnees and the extent to which the returnees are reintegrated into the community. The study makes use of group discussions with discussants selected to participate in the discussions to gather the information required for the study.

**RESEARCH PROCESS (thorough and clear description of all data gathering processes that will take place)**

2. The study requires your participation in the focus group discussions to give information concerning the situation of human trafficking and smuggling returnees in this community, how families, relatives, friends and neighbourhood reacted to the returnees; the reintegration assistances and supports provided for the returnees by the families, relatives, friends, neighbourhood, government and non-government; the returnees' means of livelihood, social inclusion (social acceptance, relationship, stigma, and discrimination related issues), and the overall current reintegration situation of the returnees without mentioning the name(s) of any individuals including the returnees, their families and relatives.
- 5 The focus group discussion will be undertaken by myself, the doctoral researcher.
- 6 The focus group discussions offer you the opportunity to express your opinion on the above mentioned issues.
- 7 You have full right either to participate or not to participate in the focus group discussion. You can even discontinue the participation in the study at any point in case you feel any discomfort you may think will have negative impact upon you. No harm will be caused to you because of your refusal to participate.

**NOTIFICATION THAT DISCUSSION WILL BE TAPE RECORDED (this option should be included if any photographs, tape recording, video recording etc. will be made during the data gathering session)**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the discussion will be tape recorded to ensure that valuable information elicited during the discussion is captured and the context of the information can be reviewed in detail. Following the discussion, the recorded material will be transcribed. You may peruse the transcription of the recording of the discussions in which you participated at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The opinions of the interviews are viewed as strictly confidential, and only members of the research team will have access to the information. No data published in dissertations and journals will contain any information through which the focus group participant member may be identified. Your anonymity is therefore ensured.

**WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE**

I understand that I may withdraw from the focus group discussion at any time. I therefore participate voluntarily until such time as I request otherwise.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE STUDY (brief as in the research proposal)**

You may not get direct benefit for your participation in this study. However, the findings of the study may be used by concerned bodies to design programs and take corrective measures that may benefit the returnees in your community in future if needed.

**INFORMATION (contact information of your supervisor)**

If you have any questions concerning the study, you may contact my supervisor, Prof Carol Allais, at the Department of Sociology, Pretoria, Unisa, Tel: 27(0)825737493 or e-mail: carol.allais@gmail.com

**CONSENT**

I, the undersigned, ..... (full name) have read the above information relating to the project and have also heard the verbal version, and declare that I understand it. I have been afforded the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the study with the study leader, and hereby declare that I agree voluntarily to participate in the project.

I indemnify the university and any employee or student of the university against any liability that I may incur during the course of the study.

I further undertake to make no claim against the university in respect of damages to my person or reputation that may be incurred as a result of the study, unless resulting from negligence on the part of the university, its employees or students.

I have received a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of participant: .....

Signed at ..... on .....

**APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM FOR KEY INFORMANTS**

**TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: The Reintegration of Returned ‘illegal migrants’ to Omo Nada District, Oromia Region, Jimma Zone, Ethiopia**

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms \_\_\_\_\_ Date...../...../2016

**NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

I am Fojo Gudina Abshula, a registered doctoral student at the University of South Africa, and I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis requirement in Sociology. The purpose of this research project is to understand the reintegration needs of the returnees of illegal migration (human

trafficking and smuggling) to Omo Nada district, how the returnees manage their situations, how government and the community in the district responded to reintegrate the returnees and the extent to which the returnees are reintegrated into the community. The study makes use of key-informant interviews to gather this information from the key-informants who have been selected for interviews.

**RESEARCH PROCESS (thorough and clear description of all data gathering processes that will take place)**

3. The study requires your participation in key-informant interview to give information concerning the situation of human trafficking and smuggling returnees in this community, how families, relatives, friends and neighbourhood reacted to the returnees; the reintegration assistances and supports provided for the returnees by the families, relatives, friends, neighbourhood, government and non-government; the returnees' means of livelihood, social inclusion (social acceptance, relationship, stigma, and discrimination related issues), and the overall current reintegration situation of the returnees without mentioning the name(s) of any individuals including the returnees, their families and relatives.
- 8 The interview will be undertaken by I, the researcher.
- 9 The interview offers you the opportunity to express your opinion on the above mentioned issues.
- 10 You have full right either to participate or not to participate in the interview. You can discontinue participation in the study at any point in case you feel discomfort. No harm will be caused to you because of your refusal to participate.

**NOTIFICATION THAT INTERVIEW WILL BE TAPE RECORDED (this option should be included if any photographs, tape recording, video recording etc. will be made during the data gathering session)**

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the interview will be tape recorded to ensure that valuable information elicited during the interview is captured and the context of the information can be reviewed in detail. Following the interview, the recorded material will be transcribed. You may peruse the transcription of the recording of the interview in which you participated at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The opinions of the interviewees are viewed as strictly confidential, and only members of the research team will have access to the information. No data published in dissertations and journals will contain any information through which interviewee member may be identified. Your anonymity is therefore ensured.

**WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE**

I understand that I may withdraw from the interview at any time. I therefore participate voluntarily until such time as I request otherwise.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE STUDY (brief as in the research proposal)**

You may not get direct benefit for your participation in this study. However, the findings of the study may be used by concerned bodies to design programs and take corrective measures that may benefit the returnees in your locality in future if needed.

**INFORMATION (contact information of your supervisor)**

If you have any questions concerning the study, you may contact my supervisor, Prof Carol Allais, at the Department of Sociology, Pretoria, Unisa, Tel: 27(0)825737493 or e-mail: carol.allais@gmail.com

**CONSENT**

I, the undersigned, ..... (full name) have read the above information relating to the project and have also heard the verbal version, and declare that I understand it. I have been afforded the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the study with the study leader, and hereby declare that I agree voluntarily to participate in the project.

I indemnify the university and any employee or student of the university against any liability that I may incur during the course of the study.

I further undertake to make no claim against the university in respect of damages to my person or reputation that may be incurred as a result of the study, unless resulting from negligence on the part of the university, its employees or students.

I have received a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of participant: .....

Signed at ..... on .....

**WITNESSES**

1 .....

2 .....

**APPENDIX 4: TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION**

*APPENDIX 4.1: INDEPTH INTERVIEWS GUIDE*

Interview guide to collect data from returnees of human traffic and smuggling in Omo Nada district of Jimma zone

Dear participant, my name is Gudina Abashula. I am a PhD student at University of South Africa. I am conducting this study for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for PhD degree in Sociology at University of South Africa. The objectives of the study are to explore the illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) experiences of the returnees, their subsequent reintegration needs, how they manage their situations, how the community responded to the returnees' reintegration needs and the reintegration experiences of the returnees. The interview may take 1:30 hours approximately. There may not be direct and immediate benefits that you get from the study. However, the findings of the study may serve the concerned bodies to plan further reintegration and illegal migration protection interventions in future. All information you provide

will have a paramount importance for the success of the study. Any information you provide will be kept in secret. For this purpose, your name will not be mentioned in any part of the study. You have full right to participate or not to participate in providing information for the study. Even once you have started to participate in the study and may feel discomfort at any point in the process, you have full right to discontinue the process. There is no harm caused to you because of your refusal. Hence, please do not hesitate to give information or ask questions something that is not clear for you.

1. Tell me about yourself.

**Probing:** Would you tell me a pseudonym you like to be called with instead of your real name? How old are you? What is your religious background? What is your educational background? What is your occupation or means of livelihood now? What is your marital status? Do you have family members? If so, are you living with them?

2. How did you migrate to abroad?

**Probing:** Would you tell me the local contextual situations that forced you to migrate illegally? What was your age at the time of illegal migration? Who initiate you to migrate illegally? If there is somebody who initiated to migrate illegally, how did she/he convince you to do that? Did she/he inform where you arrive? Did she/he inform you the type of work you would be doing? Did you consult about your illegal migration with your families, relatives and friends? If so, what did they tell you? What did you expect to achieve in the place of destination?

3. Would you tell me your experience on the process of illegal migration?

Probing: Is there problem you faced on travel to the place of destination? If so, what problems did you face? How could you cope up with the problems?

4. Would you tell me about your experience in your place of destination?

**Probing:** Where did you arrive? For how long you worked there? What type of work were you engaging in? How did you find the work you were doing there? For how long were you working daily? How much were you earning monthly? Did you get adequate to eat? Was there payment related problem you faced? If so, would you tell me the problem you faced? How do you describe your relationship with your employee? What about your work environment? Was work environment conducive? Is there work related problem you faced? If so, would you tell me the problem you faced? How did you manage the problems you

faced? Was there any family member or relative you left in your home country? If so, how were you communicating with them? Generally, how did you get the situation there? Did it meet your expectation while you were at home? If “No”, why?

5. Would you tell me about your repatriation experience?

**Probing:** Did you return to your home country voluntarily? If you returned involuntarily, who helped you to return your home country? Was there any asset or property you got there? Did you able to take the asset or property you got there to your home country when you returned? Were there problems you faced upon your return? If so, would you tell me the problem you faced? How could you manage the problems?

6. Would you tell me your reintegration experience?

**Probing:** How did you get your family members you left in home country before your illegal migration upon your return? How did your family, relatives or neighbourhood accept you when you returned? Would you tell me any difficult experiences you face your family members upon your return? Did you seek reintegration assistances and supports up on your return? If so, what types of supports or assistances did you get? Who provided you the reintegration assistance or support you sought? What legal measures were taken to ensure your safety? Was the reintegration assistance or support you got helped you to be reintegrated into the community? If “Yes”, what are your justifications to say so? What sorts of supports best help you to be reintegrated? Do you think that you are now living similar life with the rest of citizens in the community? How is your life now? Is it better than the one you were living under the trafficking or smuggling situation? Are your families, relatives, friends and neighbors supportive to you? If “No”, why? What is your means of livelihood now? How much do earn? Do you have dependent family member/s? If so, how adequate is what you earn to support you and your dependent family members? Are you satisfied with your current means of livelihood? If “No”, why? If you are currently unemployed, how are coping with the situation? How are human trafficking and illegal migration returnees are viewed in your community? Are there any challenges you are currently facing? If so, what types of challenges are you facing? Is there any discrimination, isolation or stigma you faced because you are returnees of illegal migration? If so, from whom and why are you facing the challenges? How could you cope up with these challenges? Generally, how would you describe your current reintegration experiences?

7. Is there anything you add other than what we have discussed so far?

Thank you!

#### *APPENDIX 4.2: FGD GUIDE*

##### **Focus group discussions guide prepared to collect data from community members on response to reintegrate returnees of human trafficking and smuggling**

Dear participant, my name is Gudina Abashula. I am a PhD student at University of South Africa. I am conducting this study for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for PhD degree in Sociology at University of South Africa. The objectives of the study are to explore the illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) experiences of the returnees, their subsequent reintegration needs, how they manage their situations, how the community responded to the returnees' reintegration needs and the reintegration experiences of the returnees. You are selected for this focus group discussion because it is believed that you can contribute valuable information for the study. To this end, I am going to conduct focus group discussions with you for about 1 hour. There may not be direct and immediate benefits that you get from the study. However, the findings of the study may serve the concerned bodies to plan further reintegration and illegal migration protection interventions in future. All information you provide will have a paramount importance for the success of the study. Any information you provide will be kept in secret. For

this purpose, your name will not be mentioned in any part of the study. You have full right to participate or not to participate in providing information for the study. Even once you have started to participate in the study and may feel discomfort at any point in the process, you have full right to discontinue the process. There is no harm caused to you because of your refusal. Hence, please do not hesitate to give information or ask questions something that is not clear for you.

**Discussion points:** The discussion points are concerned with your knowledge about:

- Human trafficking and smuggling returnees in this community
- How families, relatives, friends and neighbourhood reacted to the returnees
- Reintegration assistances and supports provided for the returnees by the families, relatives, friends, neighbourhood, government and non-government
- The returnees' means of livelihood, social inclusion (social acceptance, relationship, stigma, and discrimination)
- The overall current reintegration situation of the returnees

#### **APPENDIX 4.3: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Dear informant, my name is Gudina Abashula. I am a PhD student at University of South Africa. The study will be conducted to for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for PhD degree in Sociology at University of South Africa. The objectives of the study are to explore the illegal migration (human trafficking and smuggling) experiences of the returnees, their subsequent reintegration needs, how they manage their situations, how the community responded to the returnees' reintegration needs and the reintegration experiences of the returnees. You are selected for this interview because it is believed that you can contribute valuable information for the study. Moreover, it is to identify gaps that need further interventions. To this end, I am going to interview with you for about 1 hour. All information you provide will have a paramount importance for the success of the study. Any information you provide will be kept in secret. For this purpose, your name will not be mentioned in the study report. Hence, please do not hesitate to give information. You have full right to participate or not to participate in providing information for the study.

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sex \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name of the organization \_\_\_\_\_
4. Your position in the organization \_\_\_\_\_
5. What are the supports/assistances provided by your organization to reintegrate returnees of human trafficking and smuggling in Omo Nada district?

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6. For how many returnees your organization provided reintegration supports??

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7. How do you describe the extent to which the reintegration supports provided by your organization is based on the returnees felt need?

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8. What legal/institutional measures strategies or plans taken by your organization to reintegrate returnees of human trafficking and smuggling?

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9. To what extent the legal measures taken and the supports provided by your organization enabled the returnees to reintegrate into the community?

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10. How do you describe the current reintegration status of the illegal migration returnees to OMo Nada district?

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## **APPENDIX 5: THE AFAAN OROMOO VERSIONS OF TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION**

### *APPENDIX 5.1: The Afaan Oromoo Version of In-depth interviews guide*

Kabajamtoota hirmaattota qorannoo kanaa akkam jirtu, nagaadhaa? Ani maqaaan koo Guddinaa Abashuulaa jedhama. Yeroo ammaa kana Yuunivarsitii Afrikaa Kibbaa(UNISA) jedhamee beekamuun barataa digrii sadaffaa ykn Pi Echi Di(PhD) ti. Yeroo ammmaa kana ittiin xumura barnoota koo digrii sadaffaa muummee saayinsii qorannoo hawaasummaa(Soosiyooloojii) jedhamuuf kan naaf ta'uuf qorannoo geggeessaan jira. Mata dureen qorannoo kootii kunis “Haala hawaasatti deebi’anii makoo deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa akka aanaa Omoo Naaddaa, godina Jimmaa, Bulchiinsa Mootummaa Naaannoo Oromiyaa, Kibbaa Lixa Itiyooophiyaa”ti kan jedhu. Kaayyooleen qorannoo kanaas haalota godaanotota seeraan alaa muudatan, sababa kana irraan kan ka’e deebi’anii dhaabbachuuf deggersa isaan barbaadan, tooftaa rakkoo isaan quunname ittiin keessa darban, deebii qaamooleen hawaasaa dhimmi ilaallatu namoota kanaaf laatan fi muudannoo namooti deebi’anii galan kun deebifamanii hawaassa keessatti makamuu irratti qaban adda baasuuf. Isin qorannoo kanaaf namoota raga sirrii ta’e naaf laatu jedhee addaa baase keessaa nama tokko. Kanaaf dhimma kana ilaalchisee isin waliin gaaffii fi deebii gochuun barbaada. Gaaffii fi deebii ani isin waliin taasisu kun tilmaamaan sa’a tokkoo fi walakkaa fudhata. Ragaa

isin naaf laattan fiixaan ba'iinsa qorannoo koo kanaaf shoora ol'aanaa qaba. Ragaa isin naaf laattan iccitiidhaan eegama waan ta'eef waanti isin yaaddeessu tokko illee hinjiraatu. Iccitii keessan eeguuf maqaa keessan qorannoo kana keessatti yeessattu hincaqasu. Haata'u malee qorannoo kaanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta'e dhiisuuf mirga guutuu qabdu. Korannoo kanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta'e dhiisuuf miidhaan isin irra ga'u hinjiru. Akkasumas raga ani baarbaadu naaf kennuuf qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuu keessaniif waan dhimma keessan adddaan kuttanii nawaliin maree gootaniif qarshii soddoma ani isiniif kennuun ala bu'aan adddaa isin kallattiidhaan argattan hinjiru. Haata'u malee firiin qorannoo kanaa qaamolee hawaasaa dhimma ilaallatu deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa kana deebisanii dhaabuuf gara fuula duraatti waan fayyadamuu danda'aniif tarii al-kallattiin isinis ta'e deebitoota kan biroo fayyaduu danda'a.

Kana waan ta'eef wantoota hanga ammaatti ani qorannoo kanaan walqabsiisee kaase irratti shakkii ykn gaaffii kam illee qabdu yoo ta'e deebii(ibsaa) isiniif kennuuf qophii waanan ta'eef maloo gaafachuu irraa duubatti hinjedhinaa. Wantoota ani hanga ammaa isiniif bsuu yaale hubattanii? Qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuuf fedha qabduu? Naaf eeyyamtaniittu yoo ta'e gaaffilee armaan gadiitti tarreeffaman kan isin gaafachuun maree keenya itti fufna.

1. Mee waa'ee keessan naaf ibsituu?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** Maqaa kee kan hawaasa kan keessatti beekamtuun ala kan ta'e maqaa dhoksa ittiin waamamuu barbaaddan natti himaa. Amantaan keessan maali? Sadarkaan barnoota keessanoo? Yeroo ammaa kana maddi jireenya keessanii maali? Haalli gaa'ela keessanii'oo? Maatii qabduu? Maatii qabdu yoo ta'e maatii keessan waliin jiraattuu?

2. Mee haala akkamiin gara biyya alaa godaantan?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** sababootni akka isin seeraan ala godaantan isin dirqisiisan maal, maalfaadha? Yeroo isin godaantan umuriin keessan waggaa meeqa? Akka isin seeraan ala godaantaniif eenyutu isin kakkaase? Yoo namatu isin kakaase ta'e namni sun akkamiin akka deemtan isin amansiise? Namni isin akka godaantan isin kakaase sun biyya kam akka deemtan immoo isinitti himeeraa? Namni isin akka godaantaniif isin kakaase sun biyya deemtan sanatti hojii akkamii akka isin hojjetan immoo isinitti himeeraa? Waa'ee godaansa keessanii sana maatii, hiriyooota fo firoota keessan waliin mari'attaniittuu? Yoo

mari'attaniittu ta'e, mattii, hiriyoottaa fi firoottan keesssan isin mariisiftan waa'ee godaans keessanii sana ilaalchisee maal isiniin jedhan?

3. Yeroo godaansaa wantoota imala irratti isi quunnaman naaf ibsituu?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** osoo gara biyya itti godaantan imalaa jirtanii rakkoon isin quunname naaf ibsituu? Rakkoon isin quunname jira yoo ta'e rakkoo akkam,akkamiitu isin quunnamee? Rakkoo isin quunname sana tooftaa akkamiin keessa dabartan?

4. Biyya itti godaantan keessatti wantoota isin muudate naaf ibsituu?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** Biyya eessaa deematan/geessan? Waggaa meeqaaf achi turtan? Dalagaa ykn hojii akkamii hojjechaa turtan? Dalagaa ykn hojii hojjetaa turtan sana haala akkamiin argattan? Guyyaatti sa'a meeqaaf hojjechaa turtan? Hojii hojjetaa turtan sanaaf ji'atti hagamtu isiniif kaffalamaa ture? Wanna nyaattan ga'aa argataa turtanii? Wanta hojjetaniif kaffaltii argachhun walqabatee rakkoon isin quunname yoo jiraate naaf ibsaa. Maal, maalfaadha? Hariiroo ykn walitti dhufeenya isinii fi hojjechiisaa keessan waliin ture akkamiin ibsitu? Haala naannoo hojii hojjetaa turtanii akkamiin ibsitu? Haala ykn naannoo hojii mijataa ture? Hojii hojjetaa turtan waliin walqabatee rakkon isin quunname jraa? Hojii hojjetaa turtan waliin rakkon isin quunname jira yoo ta'e haala akkamiin rakkoo sana keessa darbuu dandeessan? Maatii ykn fira keessan keessaa namni isin manatti dhiiftanii godaantan turaniiruu? Yoo maatii keessan manatti dhiiftanii godaantan ta'e haala akkamiin walquunnamaa turtan? Walumaa galatti haala biyya deemtan Sanaa akkamitti ibsitu? Haalli biyya Sanaa hanga isin eegadan ture? Kaayyoo deemtaniif galmaan geessaniittuu? Kaayyoo deemtaniif galmaan hingenye yoo ta'e sababni isaa maal?

5. Hala itti as deebitan naaf ibsituu?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** Gara biyya keessanii fedha keessaniin deebitanii? Gara biyya keessanii fedhii keessan ala deebitan yoo ta'e akka deebitaniif eenyutu isin gargaare? Qabeenya isin biyya turtanitti horattan jiraa? Biyya deemtaniitti qabeenya horattaniittu yoo ta'e wayita as deebitan qabeenya achitti horattan fudhattanii dhuftanii? Wayita gara biyyaatti deebitan rakkon isin muudate jiraa? Rakkoon isin muudate jira yoo ta'e tooftaa akkamin rakkoo sana injifattan?

6. Muudannoo keessan hawaasa keessatti deebi'anii dhaabbachuu naaf ibsituu?

**Gaaffiilee dabalataa:** Yeroo deebitan maatii fi firoota keessan biyyatti dhiiftanii deemtan akkuma dhiiftanii deemtaniitti argattanii? Yeroo gara biyya keessanii deebitanii dhuftan

simannaan maatii, hiriyoootaa, firaa fi hawaasa naannoo keessanii akkam ture? Erga mana keessanitti deebitanii rakkon maatii, hiriyoootaa, firaa fi hawaasa naannoo keessan irraa isin muudate jiraa? Erga as deebitanii hawaasa keessatti dhaabbachuuf deggersa barbaaddanii turtanii? Akka deebitanii hawaasa keessatti jireenya dhaabbataa itti fuftaniif deggersi isiniif godhame jiraa? Deggersi isiniif godhame jira yoo ta'e deggersa akkamiitu isiniif godhame? Deggersa sana eenyutu isiniif godhe? Gama seerraatiin nageenya keessan mirkaneessuuf tarkaanfiin fudhatame jiraa? Tarkaanfiin gama seeraan nageenya keessan mirakaneessu fudhatame jira kan jettan yoo ta'e wanti akka ragaatti natti himtan jiraa? Yeroo ammaa kana jiraattota naannoo keessan waliin jireenya ykn haala walfakkaataa jiraachaa jirtuu? Gaaffii kanaaf deebiin keessan miti yoo ta'e maaliif? Walumaa galatti jireenyi keessan yeroo ammaa kana haala akkamii irratti argama? Jireenya keessan kan ammaa isa yeroo biyya godaansaa turen waliin yoo wal bira qabdan isa kamtu wayya jettu? Maaliif? Maatiin keessan, firootni keessanii fi hawaasn akkaisin jireenya fooyya'aa jiraatan wanti isin deggeran naaf ibsituu? Amma maaliin jiraataa jirtu? Guyyaatti galii isin argattan meeqa? Maatii ykn nama deggertan qabduu? Yeroo amma kana hojii hinqabdan yoo ta'e maaliin maatii keessanis ta'e ofii keessan jirachiftu? Jireenya keessa ammaa kanatti gammaddaniittuu? Namootni gara biyya alaa irraa deebi'an hawaasa keessan keessati akkamiin ilaalamu? Rakkon amma isin muudachaa jiru maal, maalfaadha? Deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa ta'uu keessaniif loogii fi qoollifannaan hawaasa keessaa isin muudate jiraa? Deebiin keessan "jira" kan jedhu yoo ta'e eenyuu fi maaliif loogii fo qoollifannaan isin irra ga'e? Rakkoo akkanaa kana tooftaa isin keessa darbuu dandeessan maal, maalfaadha? Walumaa galatti haala hawaasatti deebi'anii dhaabbachuu keessan akkamitti madaaltu ykn ilaaltu?

7. Wantoota hanga ammaatti kaafne irraa want hafe yoo jiraate naaf ibsaa.

Galatoomaa!

## *APPENDIX 5.2: AFAAN OROMOO VERSION OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE*

Kabajamtoota hirmaattota qorannoo kanaa akkam jirtu, nagaadhaa? Ani maqaaan koo Guddinaa Abashuulaa jedhama. Yeroo ammaa kana Yuunivarsitii Afrikaa Kibbaa(UNISA) jedhamee beekamuun barataa digrii sadaffaa ykn Pi Echi Di(PhD) ti. Yeroo ammmaa kana ittiin xumura barnoota koo digrii sadaffaa muummee saayinsii qorannoo hawaasummaa(Soosiyooloojii) jedhamuuf kan naaf ta'uuf qorannoo geggeessaan jira. Mata dureen qorannoo kootii kunis “ Haala hawaasatti deebi’anii makoo deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa akka aanaa Omoo Naaddaa, godina Jimmaa, Bulchiinsa Mootummaa Naaannoo Oromiyaa, Kibbaa Lixa Itiyooophiyaa”ti kan jedhu. Kaayyooleen qorannoo kanaas haalota godaanotota seeraan alaa muudatan, sababa kana irraan kan ka’e deebi’anii dhaabbachuuf deggersa isaan barbaadan, tooftaa rakkoo isaan quunname ittiin keessa darban, deebii qaamooleen hawaasaa dhimmi ilaallatu namoota kanaaf laatan fi muudannoo namooti deebi’anii galan kun deebifamanii hawaassa keessatti makamuu irratti qaban adda baasuuf. Isin qorannoo kanaaf namoota raga sirrii ta’e naaf laatu jedhee addaa baase keessaa nama tokko. Kanaaf dhimma kana ilaalchisee isin waliin gaaffii fi deebii gochuun barbaada. Gaaffii fi deebii ani isin waliin taasisu kun tilmaamaan sa’a tokkoo fi walakkaa fudhata. Ragaa isin naaf laattan fiixaan ba’iinsa qorannoo koo kanaaf shoora ol’aanaa qaba. Ragaa isin naaf laattan iccitiidhaan eegama waan ta’eef waanti isin yaaddeessu tokko illee hinjiraatu. Iccitii keessan eeguuf maqaa keessan qorannoo kana keessatti yeessattu hincaqasu. Haata’u malee qorannoo kaanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta’e dhiisuuf mirga guutuu

qabdu.Korannoo kanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta'e dhiisuuf miidhaan isin irra ga'u hinjiru.Akkasumas raga ani baarbaadu naaf kennuuf qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuu keessaniif waan dhimma keessan adddaan kuttanii nawaliin maree gootaniif qarshii soddoma ani isiniif kennuun ala bu'aan adddaa isin kallattiidhaan argattan hinjiru. Haata'u malee firiin qorannoo kanaa qaamolee hawaasaa dhimma ilaallatu deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa kana deebisanii dhaabuuf gara fuula duraatti waan fayyadamuu danda'aniif tarii al-kallattiin isinis ta'e deebitoota kan biroo fayyaduu danda'a.

Kana waan ta'eef wantoota hanga ammaatti ani qorannoo kanaan walqabsiisee kaase irratti shakkii ykn gaaffii kam illee qabdu yoo ta'e deebii(ibsaa) isiniif kennuuf qophii waanan ta'eef maloo gaafachuu irraa duubatti hinjedhinaa. Wantoota ani hanga ammaa isiniif bsuu yaale hubattanii? Qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuuf fedha qabduu? Naaf eeyyamtaniittu yoo ta'e gaaffilee armaan gadiitti tarreeffaman kan isin gaafachuun maree keenya itti fufna.

Qabxilee mareef qophaa'an

- Hubannoo godaansa seeraan alaa irratti qaban
- Wantoota namoonti seeraan ala gara biyya alaatti godaanan taasisan
- Haala itti maatii, firri fi hawaasni deebitoota simatan
- Deggersa maatii, firrii, mootummaa, miti-mootummaa fi hawaasni deebitootaa deebisanii dhaabuuf godhan
- Rakkoolee deebitoota quunnaman (kan akka qoqqobbii fi loogii)
- Haala walii gala deebisanii dhaabuu deebitoota godaantotaa

### *APPENDIX 5.3: AFAAN OROMOO VERSION OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE*

Kabajamtoota hirmaattota qorannoo kanaa akkam jirtu, nagaadhaa? Ani maqaaan koo Guddinaa Abashuulaa jedhama. Yeroo ammaa kana Yuunivarsitii Afrikaa Kibbaa(UNISA) jedhamee beekamuun barataa digrii sadaffaa ykn Pi Echi Di(PhD) ti. Yeroo ammmaa kana ittiin xumura barnoota koo digrii sadaffaa muummee saayinsii qorannoo hawaasummaa(Soosiyooloojii) jedhamuuf kan naaf ta'uuf qorannoo geggeessaan jira. Mata dureen qorannoo kootii kunis “ Haala hawaasatti deebi'anii makoo deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa akka aanaa Omoo Naaddaa, godina Jimmaa, Bulchiinsa Mootummaa Naaannoo Oromiyaa, Kibbaa Lixa Itiyooophiyaa”ti kan jedhu. Kaayyooleen qorannoo kanaas haalota godaanotota seeraan alaa muudatan, sababa kana irraan kan ka'e deebi'anii dhaabbachuuf deggersa isaan barbaadan, tooftaa rakkoo isaan quunname ittiin keessa darban, deebii qaamooleen hawaasaa dhimmi ilaallatu namoota kanaaf laatan fi muudannoo namooti deebi'anii galan kun deebifamanii hawaassa keessatti makamuu irratti qaban adda baasuuf. Isin qorannoo kanaaf namoota raga sirrii ta'e naaf laatu jedhee addaa baase keessaa nama tokko. Kanaaf dhimma kana ilaalchisee isin waliin gaaffii fi deebii gochuun barbaada. Gaaffii fi deebii ani isin waliin taasisu kun tilmaamaan sa'a tokkoo fi walakkaa fudhata. Ragaa isin naaf laattan fiixaan ba'iinsa qorannoo koo kanaaf shoora ol'aanaa qaba. Ragaa isin naaf laattan iccitiidhaan eegama waan ta'eef waanti isin yaaddeessu tokko illee hinjiraatu.Iccitii keessan eeguuf maqaa keessan qorannoo kana keessatti yeessattu hincaqasu.Haata'u malee qorannoo kaanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta'e dhiisuuf mirga guutuu

qabdu.Korannoo kanaaf raga ani barbaadu naaf kennuu keessatti hirmaachuufis ta'e dhiisuuf miidhaan isin irra ga'u hinjiru.Akkasumas raga ani baarbaadu naaf kennuuf qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuu keessaniif waan dhimma keessan adddaan kuttanii nawaliin maree gootaniif qarshii soddoma ani isiniif kennuun ala bu'aan adddaa isin kallattiidhaan argattan hinjiru. Haata'u malee firiin qorannoo kanaa qaamolee hawaasaa dhimma ilaallatu deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa kana deebisanii dhaabuuf gara fuula duraatti waan fayyadamuu danda'aniif tarii al-kallattiin isinis ta'e deebitoota kan biroo fayyaduu danda'a.

Kana waan ta'eef wantoota hanga ammaatti ani qorannoo kanaan walqabsiisee kaase irratti shakkii ykn gaaffii kam illee qabdu yoo ta'e deebii(ibsa) isiniif kennuuf qophii waanan ta'eef maloo gaafachuu irraa duubatti hinjedhinaa.Wantoota ani hanga ammaa isiniif bsuu yaale hubattanii?Qorannoo kana keessatti hirmaachuuf fedha qabduu? Naaf eeyyamtaniittu yoo ta'e gaaffilee armaan gadiitti tarreeffaman kan isin gaafachuun maree keenya itti fufna.

1. Umurii\_\_\_\_\_
2. Saala\_\_\_\_\_
3. Maqaa dhaabbata keessaanii\_\_\_\_\_
4. Itti gaafatammaa dhaabbata keessan keessati qabdan\_\_\_\_\_
5. Dhaabbatni keessan deebitoota godaantota seeraan alaa gara aanaa keessanitti deebi'an dhaabuuf deggersa maal, maalfaa godhe?

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6. Dhaabbatni keessan deggersa deebisanii dhaabuu kana deebitoota nama meeqaaf kenne?

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7. Deggersa dhaabbatni keessan kenne sun fedhii deebitootaan hagam walmadaala?

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8. Tarkaanfiin gama seeraa, karoora hojii fi istraatejiin deebitoota godaansa seeraan alaa deebisanii dhaabuuf godhaman maal, maalfaadha?

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9. Deggersa dhaabbanni keessan kenne hagam deebitootni akka hawaasa keessatti deebi'anii dhaabbattan gargaare?

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10. Haala hawaasa keessatti deebi'anii dhaabbachuu deebitoota godaansa seeraan allaa aanaa keessanitti deebi'an akkamitti ibsitu?

**COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

18 August 2016

2016-CHS-010  
Mr GA Fogo  
Student Number: 53342526

Dear Mr GA Fogo

**APPENDIX 6: A LETTER FROM UNISA'S ETHICAL COMMITTEE**

**Decision: Ethics Approval**

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**Name:** Mr GA Fogo  
Department of Sociology  
53342526@mylife.unisa.ac.za  
+251 911 947181

**Proposal:** The Reintegration of Illegal Migration Returnees in Omo Nada District, Oromia Region, Jimma Zone, Ethiopia

**Qualification: Masters in Social Work**

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Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee. Final approval is granted for the duration of the research period.

3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Note:

The reference number [top right corner of this communiqué] should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee.

Kind regards,



Professor AH Mavhandu-Mudzusi

Chair: CHS Ethics Review Committee

Department of Health Studies

Tel: 012 429 2055

Cell: 082 406 2494

Email: mmudza@unisa.ac.za



Professor RMH Moeketsi

Executive Dean: College of Human Sciences

**For full approval:** The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the CREC on 29 July 2016. The revised application was approved on 18 August 2016. The proposed research may commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the CHS Ethics Review Committee. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.

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