



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

INSTITUTE OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STUDY

*The Life Experiences of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries; the  
Case Study of Saudi Arabian Returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional  
State*

*A Thesis Prepared for the Partial Fulfillment<sup>of the</sup> Requirements for the Masters of Art  
(M.A) in Regional and Local Development Studies (RLDS)*

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November, 2014  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia


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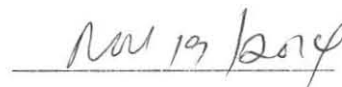
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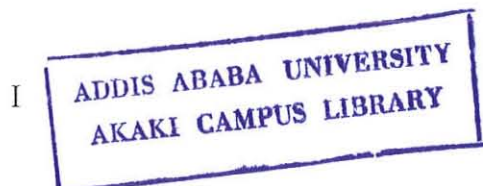




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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other University and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. Besides, I confirm that this document represents the whole part of my study programme, M.A in RLDS, while at the Institute of Regional and Local Development Study, School of Graduate Studies, Addis Ababa University.

Name of the Student: Ibrahim Abdurrahman

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date of submission: November, 2014

Place: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

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## **Abstract**

The phenomenon of return migration has been neglected in many studies in Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular. Conversely, there has been a growing recognition that migration, both internal and international, can offer an important direction out of poverty for many people from developing countries. Particularly, high-skilled return migration has the potential to positively impact on development in our country in many ways including through the harness of the potential of active (youth) portions of the society who actively engaged in emigration. Also, various studies conducted among Asian, European and Mediterranean return migrants have shown that many return migrants face serious problems in obtaining employment after returning home. Evidentially, several months ago, there were over 150,000 Ethiopians who were forced to return to home as a result of the crackdown in the Kingdom targeting illegal foreign laborers/migrants. Besides, the repatriation was accidental and the incident was not projected. Particularly, Ethiopian youth return migrants' later life at home was riddled with possibilities and challenges and they had significant impacts and prospects for the development in the localities and regions to where they return. Hence, their later socio-economic and psychological life-experiences, after the return from the Kingdom, in their host communities required scrutiny. To this end, the aim of this study was to explore the socio-economic and psychological life experiences of Ethiopian youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries, the Case Study of Saudi Returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. Accordingly, key informant interview, focus group discussion and in-depth interview were employed for this study. Several interviews conducted with 53 (fifty three) Ethiopian youth return migrants. Besides, there were a total of nine (9) selected key individuals and three FGDs. The study employed qualitative research approach and an exploratory research design respectively. In addition to this, considering the time dimension, the study was cross-sectional in nature. The selection of the respondents (interviewees) followed snow ball sampling of non-probability sampling technique. To this end, the study analyzed the overall sketch of return migration and its implications for local development in the study area in particular. The study indicated that there were changes in living standards/conditions of return migrants as compared to what they were before migration. Likewise, study participants asserted that the return migrants have been facing challenges, especially with regard to finding job opportunities. The study recommends that government ought to design and implement comprehensive programmes such as post-arrival counseling, reintegration and business start-up support for returnees to ensure a maximum utilization of their skills and resources for the socio-economic development of the country.

**Keywords: Return migrants, Life experiences, Saudi, Youth Ethiopian**

## Abbreviations

AAU: Addis Ababa University  
AYC: African Youth Charter  
BOLSA: Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs  
CBOs: Community Based Organizations  
EEA: Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs  
FBOs: Faith Based Organizations  
FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
FGD: Focus Group Discussion  
GoE: Government of Ethiopia  
GOs: Governmental Organizations  
GS: Gulf States  
GTP: Growth and Transformation Plan  
IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons  
KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
MoE: Ministry of Education  
MoFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
MoI: Ministry of Information  
MoJ: Ministry of Justice  
MoLSA: Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs  
MDGs: Millennium Development Goals  
NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations  
NYP – National Youth Policy  
RMs: Return Migrants  
UN: United Nations  
USAID: United States Aid for International Development

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

International migration has increasingly become more complex and diverse with the increasing trends of mobility and together with the new types, concepts and trends of migration (Vertovec, 1999; Myers, 2005; King, 1986; OECD, 2008a:164; IOM, 2004 et al). According to Human Development Report (UNDP, 2009), there are approximately 740 million internal and 200 million international migrants. Most of the international migrants have migrated from developing country to another or between developed countries, and most movements have occurred within regions. Numerous estimates (HaniaZlotnik, 2003, United Nations, 2002c) present that the total number of international migrants in Africa rose from 9 million in 1960 to 16 million in 2000. Similarly, in comparison to the other major areas of the developing world, Africa has had more than double of the number of international migrants than Latin America and the Caribbean countries. Furthermore, around 1.9 percent of Africa's population engages in international migration (UNDP, 2009). More specifically, migration flows from Sub-Saharan Africa have been occurring in a manner that it has been impacting the migration dynamics and within a milieu of extreme poverty, conflict, and the HIV/AIDs pandemic (Adepoju, 2008).

Moreover, when it comes to return migration, the return migration concept is used when people return to their country of origin (homeland) after a significant duration of staying/living abroad or in another region (King, 1986; IOM, 2004; OECD, 2008a; Migration Policy Institute-MPI, 2012). Besides, migrants decide to return to their country of origin for many reasons including encouraging and positive environment in their country of origin, forced repatriation and/or other obligatory factors (Black and Koser, 1999). Particularly, returnees may experience various changes and challenges in their life after returning to their country of origin and/or in their community. These changes include changes in attitude, economic background, reproductive health outcomes, consumption and calories intake and other conditions, given the exposure in the host community/country (Bonzzoli et al, 201; Hynes et al. 2002; Fiala, 2012). Besides, the return migration and development nexus has become an important paradigm, especially from the policy perspective for reducing poverty and improving development (Dai & Liu, 2009). Principally, the return of migration of the highly skilled people can have a significant impact on knowledge-based development in the localities and regions to which they return. Returnees may have

acquired academic knowledge, science and technical training, and may also have acquired practical business skills (*ibid*). To this end, changes may happen as a result of working in different circumstances and due to multiple factors.

Likewise, the conventional return migration theories, particularly the human capital perspective, focus on the value of human capital gained through the migration experience and upon their return and they suggest that workers serve as agents of change by applying the ideas and skills acquired abroad through establishment of farms, businesses, and enterprises that are beneficial for boosting development (Muschkin, 1993). Conversely, various studies conducted among Asian and Mediterranean return migrants and have shown that many return migrants face serious problems in obtaining employment after returning home (Athukorala, 1990; Mahmood, 1991). To this end, it happened to be important to conduct research on Ethiopian youth return migrants from Gulf countries. Evidentially, there were estimates of over 150,000 Ethiopians who were forced to return to home several months ago as a result of a forced deportation pursued by The Kingdom (RCS, 2014). This happened as part of the then immigration crackdown targeting illegal foreign laborers/migrants in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia whereby more than a million Asian and African migrant workers were expelled from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia expelled these illegal foreign laborers/migrants in order to put more of its citizens (Saudis) into jobs so that its high unemployment rate would be reduced and solved. Accordingly, Ethiopian youth return migrants' later life at home was riddled with possibilities and challenges. Likewise, these return migrants can have a significant impact on and prospects for the development in the localities and regions to which they return. Besides, the fact that the repatriation was accidental and the incident was not projected, their later life experiences after return from the Kingdom in their host communities needed worthy scrutiny. Accordingly, this research assessed the life experiences of Ethiopian youth returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Saudi returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. Hence, from the policy perspective and developmental direction, the issue has implications for reducing poverty and improving local and regional development.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Migration can have significant socio-economic and political benefits for both migrant receiving and sending countries as well as the migrants themselves. Conversely, migration can also have adverse psychological, socio-economic and political effects on the sending countries, especially for the poorest countries and the migrants themselves. Furthermore, migration leads to a drain of high-skilled manpower and aggravates the disparity between developed and developing countries in many ways (Katseli et al., 2006; Sriskandarajah, 2005). However, in 2013, an immigration crackdown targeted illegal foreign laborers/migrants in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia whereby more than a million Asian and African migrant workers were expelled from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, there were over one hundred thousand Ethiopians who were forced to return to home several months ago as a result of this forced deportation pursued by The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (RCS, 2014). Consequently, the later life of these returnees was riddled with possibilities and challenges at home and their return has been reflected in the realm of a significant impact on and prospects for the development in the localities and regions to which they return. Besides, the repatriation was accidental and the incident was not projected and their later life experiences demanded the scrutiny albeit there is not studied conducted on similar topic so far.

More specifically, several studies have been conducted on migration, human trafficking and IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) together with their respective trends, impacts and Prospects. However, compared to the huge empirical literature on emigration, there have been relatively no researches that provide indication on the life experiences of return migrants in their home countries in particular. Being the case, few researches on high-skilled return migrants and their contributions for an economic development had mainly focused on the western and Asian countries including European countries, China, Pakistan, India, Taiwan and few African countries (Hunger 2000, IOM, 2001, Hold-Eisebith 2002a, Black & King 2004, Müller 2007). For instance, a study entitled '*High-Skilled Return Migration and Knowledge-Based Economic Development in Regional Perspective: A Conceptual Considerations and The Example Of Poland*' illustrates the Polish example and argues that the institutional contexts and the regional dimensions are crucial in understanding how high-skilled return migrants do or do not make use and transform of their knowledge, financial and social capitals. The study discusses how high

skilled return migrants could stimulate knowledge-based development when they return to their country of origin.

Additionally, the few studies carried out on return migration of Pakistan and other Asian countries have mainly attributed the high level of unemployment among return migrants to their relatively comfortable financial situation, whereby they could afford to prolong the waiting period for a suitable job (Gilani, 1986; Kazi, 1989 & Addleton, 1992). Also, the high level of overseas earnings and savings accumulation are likely to raise returnees' expectations in terms of salary and working conditions when they look for employment opportunities albeit migrants, upon return, would be unlikely offered wages higher than those being offered to non-migrants. For instance, Pakistan return migrants managed to their earnings during the post-return phase by starting up their own businesses or establish farms [Arif and Irfan (1997)]. Some migrants may intend to invest in existing family enterprises into which they can readily be reintegrated after return (Del Campo and Garmendia, 1974).

Furthermore, Fiala (2012) shows that returnee households, in Northern Uganda, have lower consumption and asset holding as compared to non-displaced group. However, this instance of reality is particular for the poorest households. Besides, the outcomes of the study indicate that health and nutrition are also affected and appear to be different, as in the case of food consumption and calories intake are lower for returnees in Burundi (Verwimp, 2012). Kondylis (2008) finds that in Rwanda returnees are more productive in agriculture than those who stayed during the conflict. Also, Bonzzoli et al. (2011) show that households returning to their communities chose different economic activities than those staying in IDP camps in Uganda. Moreover, , in their survey of a large data set from 52 camps in 7 countries, Hynes et al. (2002) stated that refugees and IDPs had better reproductive health outcomes as compared to other people in their country of origin and/or in the host community. Accordingly, the consequence of return migration is neither negative, but could be filled with challenges.

Moreover, the study conducted on Ethiopian returnees from the Middle East indicated a substantial number of return migrants seeking professional psychiatric help due to mental disorders they did experience abroad (Anbesse et al., 2009; Meskerem, 2011). For instance, qualitative research entitled '*Psycho-social and Economic Experiences of Gulf States Returnee Ethiopian Women Domestic Workers*' was conducted by Meskerem Mulatu in 2011 and the study attempts to investigate the push and pull factors for migration as well as the discrepancies

between the expectation of the domestic workers and the reality that they face in the country of destination. Besides, the research shows the traumatic and life threatening experiences of Ethiopian women domestic workers in the country of destination which results due to different factors including culture shock, maladjustment, frustration, denial of salaries and depression and these are the root causes for the psychosocial problems of these domestic workers.

By and large, the issue of return migration seeks consideration for African countries in general and Ethiopia in particular since these returnees are driver for local and regional economic development. Despite the fact that the number of returnees have increased rapidly due to several reasons, little researches have been conducted so far on the areas of return migration in Africa. Especially, when it comes to Ethiopia, as far as the knowledge of the researcher is considered, there has been no single study conducted on the issue at hand (i.e. the life-experiences of youth Ethiopian returnees from the gulf countries). Particularly, there were over 150,000 Ethiopians who were forced to return to home several months ago as a result of a forced deportation pursued by The Kingdom (RCS, 2014).

Besides, the study was needed due to the fact that there has been an observation of an increasing number of returnee migrants and for the fact that these return migrants face psychological (stress, mental disorder and others), social (problems related to reintegration with their community, retaking on of early values and norms, social exclusion and marginalization), economic (unemployment and others) and other related challenges. Amidst these challenges lies the critical task of reintegrating a large portion of the Ethiopian citizenry who come back home during this incident in particular. Hence, this study investigated, described, determined, examined, clarified or/and evaluated the life experiences of these youth Ethiopian Saudi returnees. Furthermore, the study analyzed how and to what extent repatriates/returnees made use of and transformed various forms of capital and how the local economy benefitted or failed to benefit from them and how the local development progresses. To this end, this research sought to identify the life-experiences of Ethiopian returnees from the gulf countries so that it developed new insights and conceptualizations of how these international repatriates/returnees play a role for local development in Ethiopia context. This research fills the existing gaps in the study and policy issue by examining and discussing the life experience of returnees. Doing so, the researcher prudently considered the time pressure and the financial requirements otherwise would be needed for conducting the study in other areas.

### **1.2.1 Research Questions**

Based up on the above-mentioned statement of the problem, the research tried to answer the following questions

- ✓ What are the life-experiences of Ethiopian youth returnees after their return from Gulf countries, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
- ✓ How did the livelihoods of return migrants changed in terms of opportunities and constraints?
- ✓ What the difficulties did returnees face and how did they overcome these challenges?
- ✓ What are the impacts of the return migration on local development in the study area?
- ✓ How were the returnees re-integrated and what policy measures were pursued so far accordingly?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

#### ***1.3.1 General Objective of the Study***

The general objective of the study was to explore the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Saudi Returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State.

#### ***1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study***

The specific objectives of the study include:

- ✓ To elaborate the life experiences of Ethiopian youth returnees at home after return from Gulf countries, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ To discover the multiple difficulties returnees face after returning back home together with the strategies they have used to overcome difficulties.
- ✓ To scrutinize how the livelihood of return migrants changed in terms of opportunities and constraints.
- ✓ To explore the impacts of the return migration on local development in the study area.
- ✓ To discuss how the returnees were re-integrated and what the policy measures were pursued so far accordingly.

#### **1.4 Significances of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to better understand the life experiences of Ethiopian youth returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Saudi returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. Furthermore, the study discovered the nature, contexts and existing changes in the life experiences of Youth Ethiopian returnees from Saudi Arabia at their homeland. Especially, the study opted for identifying the major types and forces of change in the life of returnee's, the contexts and extents of these changes, the prevailing scenarios, the concomitant impacts and prospects of return migration for local development and other related issues. Hence, the study is significant in discovering realities about returnees' life experiences, the challenges and opportunities of returning to one's homeland and return migrants' contributions in the local development efforts. Besides, this research fills the gaps which exist in studies that analyze the livelihood status and the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular. It will serve as cornerstone for those who are interested to work on similar topic. Likewise, the study will serve as an essential guideline that could indicate intervention direction and information for NGOs, GOs and individuals working on the area of migration, returnees, empowerment, local development and policy intervention. Similarly, the study will contribute to the general understanding of the livelihood status and life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Gulf Countries.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study was delimited to explore the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Gulf Countries (with the sole focus on the Saudi returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State). More specifically, the researcher intentionally delimited the focus on youths who actively engaged themselves in the return migration.

#### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

Basically, the study of 'the life experiences of Ethiopian youth returnees from the Gulf Countries, the case study of returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State was believed to be the first detailed study of its kind in the area under the same theme. To this end, the study was susceptible for various challenges and limitations which affected the undertaking of the research. In view of that, the major constraints that the researcher faced during the undertaking

of this study include (1) inadequacy of reference materials since most studies focus on emigration and there are little (relatively) literatures available regarding Ethiopian return migrants, (2) absence of efficient means enabling one to locate the returnees and the number of return migrants is/was quite unknown, (3) shortage of time and (4) financial problems. Nonetheless, the researcher managed to find/select returnees by way of the snow ball method as indicated in the method section. Moreover, albeit most of the participants were cooperative, some study participants were of unsure and linked the undertaking of the research to the politics and this in turn appeared to be tedious and challenging to convince them. Particularly, it was difficult to find exact data on figures of Ethiopian return migrants. This is partly due to the fact that some of the returnees were not registered as return migrants nor they did contact/inform the ministry/the federal government and did finalize their process through their respective embassies. Needless to mention, the finding of the study can't be used for generalizations.

### **1.7 Meaning of Terms and Conceptual Framework**

Since the broad concept of migration has its own terminologies, various terms have been used in this research. Besides, since the issue of return migration, whenever it is employed in different contexts including research, require a considerable amount of interpretation, operationalization, comprehension and the finding of the middle ground. Many of the terms associated with return migrants, including their livelihood status and life experiences, are discussed below and are employed throughout the paper accordingly. Generally, while recognizing that some of these terms/concepts might not universally be accepted, the researcher provides the meaning or/and contextual and/or conceptual framework accordingly.

**Gulf States:** refers to countries of Gulf incorporating Bahřain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates.

**Livelihoods** The means by which people survive/subsist (including skills, assets and other resources), as distinct from simply jobs or labor. In the programming context, and especially with youth, a livelihood programme would be aimed at more than enterprise/employability to take in life skills, health etc.

**Migration:** refers to patterns of movements from one place to another. There are several important concepts in migration study. A migration region is a bounded geographical area within which there are considerable migratory movements. (Calhoun, 2002)

**Refugee:** those who went out of Ethiopia for various reasons and lived as refugee and returning home without passport and willingly or otherwise or based on an agreement between the host and the Ethiopian government or those who exited Ethiopia legally or illegally and didn't get asylum in the host country and hence returning home on obligation.

**Returnee:** is the term used by the international community to identify a person who has recently returned to his/her country of origin. In this study, return migrants or returnees refer to persons returning to Ethiopia after having been international migrants in Gulf States, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**Return migration** is the process of coming back of migrants to their country of origin of habitual residence to live after spending some time in another country.

**Youth:** Youth overlaps with, but is distinct from adolescence, as it extends into adulthood. This guide follows the United Nations in defining youth as persons of 15 to 24 years. It is an early time of life, and the period of human life between childhood and maturity (up to 29 years old).

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

#### **Introduction**

Ethiopia is a country located in the Horn of Africa and has a land area of about 1.1 million square kilometers with a population of over 80 million (CSA, 2007). It is the second most populous country in Africa, next to Nigeria, with the majority of the population living in absolute poverty. Also, it has one of the fastest growing economies in the world albeit it is amongst the poorest countries in the world. Furthermore, despite having the 17<sup>th</sup> fastest GDP growth rate in 2011, the GDP per capita was still among the lowest in the world. However, generally speaking, after the macroeconomic challenges of 2008 and 2010, exports, remittances, and foreign investments have recovered and exceeded pre-economic crisis levels.

Besides, Ethiopians have been leaving their beloved homeland and have been migrated to various countries for many reasons including the search for better job opportunities, to obtain better education and to access to the better living facilities and so much more political and economic reasons. More specifically, the magnitudes, causes, rates and effects of these migrations varies accordingly. Historically, for instance, during the Dergue regime, many Ethiopians left their country primarily due to the absence of democracy governance, prevalence of brutal rule and unrelenting political disruptions. Consequently, large number of people fled to different countries. Similarly, those who were already left the country preferred to remain abroad (Getachew and Maigenet, 1991 as cited by Adamnesh Atnafu, 2006). These scenarios persisted to exist because people continued to migrate for different reasons even after the fall of the Dergue regime. The reasons identified as a causes were the need to pursue higher quality education, the dire search of employment opportunities and the way for escaping disparaging conditions in the country that partly provoked by political instability.

Nonetheless, a central area of concern is what migrants experience after return to their country of origin. Many returning migrants invest a great deal of hope and optimism in return, in no small measure because of the notion that they are going home. The word “home”, however, can be misleading, particularly when one has lived abroad for an extended period. Sometimes returnees fail to anticipate how much “home” has changed (or alternately are frustrated at how little it has changed, viz. Boccagni 2011). They might also fail to perceive how much they

themselves have changed and find it difficult to connect with old friends and family. For outward migration, one perhaps expects loneliness and other challenges of adaptation – but “returning home” can be all the more difficult for the way one expects it to be easier than it is, as with the returning Israelis studied by Tannenbaum (2007).

Hence, the overall issue of returnees should be dealt thoroughly for the fact that studying the grounds of returning, the re-integration and re-assimilation process, and the areas of challenges and problems in their livelihood and their means of living, have a very significant policy implication thereby having an impact on the development of the area under study. In this view, the purpose of this study was to examine the life experiences of youth Ethiopian return migrants from Saudi Arabia. The objective of this study was to generate a deeper understanding of the overall experiences returnees’ including psychological and social scenarios. This study examined the impact of post migration experiences on the psychological, sociological and overall well-beings of Ethiopian youth returnees.

## **2.1 Defining Migration and Return Migration**

Migration refers to an alteration of usual place of dwelling where it can be across city, regional state or international boundary lines (Arsdol et al. 2003). Similarly, migration may be defined as a temporary or permanent change in the usual place of residence across space in a given time period (Weeks, 1999). Having this definition in mind, an important aspect of migration worth examining is whether it is voluntary or forced. According to Akokpari, (2000), voluntary migrants are those who change place within or beyond their country of origin at their own discretion rather than for other uncontrollable factor. They mostly, though not always, are people seeking better social, economic or environmental conditions in other regions or countries. Though there exist many other classifications, migrants can generally be divided into five key categories: settlers, contract workers, professionals, unauthorized workers, and asylum seekers and refugees (Stalker, 2005). Migration has time and space dimensions which are often used to classify migrants. For instance, in terms of time, migration can be classified as seasonal or permanent, and spatially and also, it can be classified as an internal or international. Besides, internal migration is further grouped into four components namely, rural-urban, rural-rural, urban-rural and urban-urban (Weeks, 1999).

Moreover, when it comes to returning migrants, the Migration Policy Institute-MPI (2010) and OECD (2008a) discusses the returning migrants as ‘persons returning to their country of citizenship after having been international migrants in another country and intending to stay in their own country for at least a year.’ Accordingly, this definition embraces four dimensions: (1) country of origin (2) place of residence abroad (3) length stay in the host country (4) length of stay in the home country after return (OECD, 2008a:164; IOM, 2004). More importantly, return migration, which is the focus of this research, refers to the act of a person returning to his or her country of citizenship after having been international migrant in another country and who is intending to stay in his/her own country for at least one year (United Nations Statistics Division, 1998; IOM, 2004). Similarly, according to King (1986), the return migration concept is used when people return to their country of origin after a significant period of staying abroad or in another region. Similarly, the return migration is the return of migrants to their country of origin – sometimes as fulfillment of original intentions, sometimes as a consequence of revised intentions. It has much in common with “outward” migration. Generally speaking, return migrants or returnees, in this study, refer to persons returning to Ethiopia after having been international migrants in Gulf States, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

There are four categories of return migrants (Ammassari and Black (IOM), 2001):

1. **Return of failure:** This includes migrants who have failed to overcome problems they encounter in their destination and who could not be able to adapt to the new environment. These kinds of migrants are not significant in number and they usually do not have problem in reintegrating with the society in the home country since they come back quickly as compared to others.
2. **Return of conservatism:** This includes those who have migrated to achieve a specific goal and usually save a significant portion of what they make both as remittance and to pursue their plans back home. This means that they are more attached to their home country and the values of their home country prevail regarding goals and achievements they opted for.
3. **Return of motivation:** These are migrants who adapt perfectly in their new destination and go by its value systems through staying long time. But eventually they return back home with new ideas, values, skills and innovations to apply them in their home country.
4. **Return of retirement:** These are migrants who have finished their working lives who want to go back home to retire. The third type of migrants is those who contribute significantly to

their home country development. In any case to study the different aspects of return migration, it is useful to consider the causes of their return, how they reintegrate with the society and their contribution to the country's development.

Furthermore, in the 1970s, the theories on return migration viewed the returnee as a migrant who returned home because of a failed migration experience that did not accomplish the desired outcome (Cassarino, 2004). For instance, the neoclassical migration model viewed the return decisions of migrants as the outcome of a failed migration experience which did not yield the expected benefits. In other words, in a neoclassical stance, return migration exclusively comprised labor migrants who miscalculated the costs of migration due to imperfect information they obtained before departure and who did not earn the benefits of higher earnings. In this regard, return occurred as a consequence of their failed experiences abroad or because their human capital was not rewarded as expected.

However, the focus shifted by the 1990s, and return migrant was explained in the realm of a successful experience at overseas where the migrant achieved the goals of higher income and the accumulation of savings while remitting part of their income to the household; characterized by an acquisition of higher education, skills, and foreign work experience and the accumulation of social capital in the form of networks, values and attitudes (Cassarino 2004). From the perspective of the new economics model, international migration and return is viewed as a calculated strategy that aims to mitigate credit market imperfections at origin in which migration serves to accumulate sufficient savings to provide the capital or at least the collateral required to obtain a credit for investment at home, in particular in business activities. Once migrants have achieved their target level of savings, they return to their home countries (Stark, 1991; Mesnard, 2004).

## **2.2 Gulf States and Their Socio-Political and Economic Significances for Ethiopia**

Countries of Gulf States incorporate Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates. ([www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country\\_profiles/default.stm](http://www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm) ). According to Metz (1993) the gulf has been an important waterway since ancient times, bringing the people who live on its shores into early contact with other civilizations. The people are mostly Arabs and, with the exception of Oman and Bahrain, are mostly Sunni Muslims. Additionally, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar & UAE generally enjoy a high standard of living

because of oil wealth. The UAE is a regional trading and tourism hub. Particularly, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is among the Gulf State countries. It is the world's dominant oil producer and owner of the largest hydrocarbon reserves. It is one of the main players in the Arab and Muslim worlds and known as the custodian of the two holy mosques. It is the birthplace of Islam.

The majority of migrants from the Horn of Africa intend to leave Yemen and continue their journey to reach to richer countries in the region, the USA, Canada or Europe (de Regt, 2007). Others have a plan to seek low-skilled employment in the Gulf and the Middle East. Women particularly find jobs as domestic workers in Lebanon, KSA and other Gulf countries (ICMPD, 2007: 39; de Regt, 2006: 37). The risk of detention and deportation from the Gulf States is high, and many Somalis attempt the journey several times and faced the risk of detention and deportation (MMTF 2009: 53). Besides, none of the Gulf countries are signatories to the Refugee Convention, and most follow a policy of detention and deportation of irregular migrants. Asylum seekers in KSA have access to UNHCR, and are not targeted for arrest by authorities. They are expected to regularize their status before applying to UNHCR unless they have protection needs (MMTF 2008). Refugees and economic migrants to KSA can only obtain work permits if their stay is in conformity with immigration regulations (MMTF 2008: 15). Some Africans from horn enter KSA legally on “*umra*” visas (for religious pilgrimage purposes) and then overstay to find employment.

More specifically, the relationship between Gulf countries (including Saudi Arabia) and East Africa (Ethiopia) has historical, political, social, cultural and geographical dimensions. For instance, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a major destination country for our migrants and others. For instance, an estimated 9 million migrant workers (regular) fill manual, clerical and service jobs, including 1.4 – 2 million migrant domestic workers. However, there is no comprehensive migration policy in Saudi Arabia. However, an *Iqama* regulation (the *Residency Act*) exists, which acts as a set of laws pertaining to foreign migrants’ status and rights in the country. Once a foreigner enters the country, he or she must obtain *Iqama*, a residency card, and a work permit. Foreign workers are not allowed to enter the country without the sponsorship of an eligible employer or a permitted Saudi household (in the case of domestic workers). This *kafala* or sponsorship system is a quintessential aspect of Saudi labor migration policy. The *kafala* system ties migrant workers’ residency permits to “sponsoring” employers, whose written consent is required for workers to change employers or exit the country. According to many

observers, the *kafala* system is inherently problematic as it ties migrant workers to an employer. Despite some improvements in Saudi labor law and proposals to reform the *kafala* system over the years, many domestic workers still endure forced confinement, food deprivation, and severe psychological, physical, and sexual abuse. Sexual abuses of women and girls (as young as 14 years old) are not isolated incidents but reportedly occur on a large scale.

Besides, Ethiopian women domestic workers migrate to Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates for economic purposes. A report by GTZ (2006) documented that from the Horn of Africa, the number of domestic workers migrating to the Gulf countries is growing. Evidences suggested that many women migrating for employment as domestic workers ended up being trafficked into forced labor and trapped in a complex net of exploitation that is facing legal, social, financial and cultural obstacles.

Particularly, Saudi Arabia, as all other major immigration countries, hosts unrecorded but large numbers of irregular migrants. Recently, Saudi Arabia has been one of the most active countries in the region implementing policies to restrict migration. Examples are the construction of a barrier along the Saudi-Yemeni border, observation posts, patrols in search of illegal migrants, and mass deportations of irregular migrants. Within the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is the major source country for labor migration to Saudi Arabia. Over the last three years, between 100,000 and 200,000 Ethiopian migrants migrated to Saudi Arabia annually through regular labor migration. Irregular Ethiopian labor migration to Saudi Arabia is estimated to be double that size. Many of these irregular migrants travel overland where they primarily transit through Djibouti, or alternatively Somaliland and Punt land. They then embark on boat journeys – across the Gulf of Aden or the Red Sea – to Yemen. Along the way, they experience harsh conditions, including beatings, torture, kidnappings and sexual abuse. However, despite numerous reports of abuse of Ethiopian migrants in Yemen (as well as in Saudi Arabia), Ethiopians have continued to migrate to the Gulf States in large numbers in recent years, indicating a strong ‘culture of migration’ in Ethiopia. From 2009 the number of Horn of Africa migrants arriving in Yemen increased every year, with a record number of arrivals in 2012 (107,532,78% Ethiopians). However, for the first time since 2009 the number of arrivals went down to 65,319 (74% Ethiopians) in 2013. The last months of 2013 showed a particularly sharp decrease. This could be, at least partly, caused by a Saudi crackdown on irregular migration and the repatriation followed then after.

### **2.3 Conceptualization of Youth**

By and large, the concept of 'youth' together with its representation, the rights and responsibilities attached to it, needs serious scrutiny. Furthermore, it is wise to question an a priori meaning of youth as well as recognizing the contextual feature of its existence in the wider societal relation (Christiansen et al, 2006:10). The conception and identification of various approaches regarding the concept of youth gives us a significantly different insight in demystifying issues related to youth, since it could either be a rite of passage or a developmental phase<sup>1</sup> (Jones, 2009). Besides, the categorization of people into different social groups, including youth category, is not a neutral process. In this regard, it appears that age could be regarded as the most basic social category of human existence with the attached roles and responsibilities (Braungart & Braungart, 1986). Particularly, the concept of youth has biological, sociological and psychological meanings associated to it. Hence, it appears to be analytically misleading and conceptually ambiguous to locate such conceptualization (Tyyska, 2005). However, according to African youth charter (2006) youth or young people refer to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. More specifically, both the Ethiopian National Youth Policy and the African Youth Charter define 'youth' as 'young people' between the ages of 15 – 29 and 15 – 35, respectively (NYP, 2004; AYC, 2006). Furthermore, beyond being an age category, youth is also a social construction and a political category which is usually understood in relational terms. Hence, people belonging to the youth category can best be understood in relation to other groups, either their elders or their followers.

The sociological understanding of youth incorporates how youths interact with other members of the society and how youths play their role in the existing societal/social structure. Accordingly, the concept of youth becomes an influential social category, a marginal group or an obsolete social status on the basis of certain social circumstances (Christiansen et al, 2006:10). Hence, understanding youth as a social and relational location in a society is a crucial step to examining their role, priorities, aspiration and expectation of themselves as well as from the society at a whole. For instance, one of the classical sociologists, Emile Durham, stated that only whenever the concept of youth is understood as 'a historically constructed social category', the way that they are treated in the social imagination of a society either in the inclusion and exclusion of the political system, in the economic production system or/and in the societal transformation process can be examined (Durham, 2000). In doing so, the existing power relation

witnessed in the construction of the ideas related to youth, issues of agency, rights and personhood could better positioned for understanding in this regard (ibid). On the other hand it will also help us to see youth both as social being and social becoming; ‘. as a social position which is internally and externally shaped and constructed, as well as part of a larger societal and generational process, a state of becoming’ (Christiansen et al, 2006:11).

Despite the fact that the Ethiopian National Youth Policy and the African Youth Charter define ‘youth’ as ‘young people’ between the ages of 15 – 29 and 15 – 35, respectively (NYP, 2004; AYC, 2006) it is argued in this paper that the definition of youth must consider other factors as mentioned above. Thus, the relational and sociological understandings of ‘youth’ need to deal with it as a ‘political category’. The varied societal perceptions of young people in relation to their socio-economic status, race, gender, ethnicity and other characters cannot be accommodated in a merely age based understanding of youth.

Globally, almost three fourths of 15 to 24 year olds are employed (the majority in unpaid work), while less than one-fifth are actively involved in education or training. Besides, jobless rates, which take into account unemployed youth actively seeking work and youth not seeking work due to discouragement or disability, are at 18 percent for youth. However, when disaggregated by adolescents and young adults, young adults (whether employed or seeking employment) are more represented in the labor force and less represented in education or training. When it comes to the profile of Ethiopian Youths, the majorities of Ethiopian youth are working in some capacity and grouped under some specified category. Albeit the young people are significant section of the Ethiopian population, their needs and aspirations are still mostly remaining unmet. For instance, the unemployment and livelihood problem is particularly acute and growing in developing countries such as ours. Poverty breeds an environment which encourages social deviations like drug-addiction, alcoholism and tendencies towards crime of all sorts.

Especially, this study focused on youth Ethiopian return migrants because of the following *rationales*. First, globally, young people’s generation is the largest in history since there are over 3 billion people who are under the age of 25 and the majority of them live in developing countries and when it comes to Ethiopia, youth accounts almost half (or one third) of the country’s population. Second, Young people are a valuable asset to their countries and investing in them brings tremendous social, political and economic opportunities. Thirdly, young

population is currently facing challenges including the tragedy of migration and unemployment. Besides, these challenges include violence and crime, exodus, HIV/AIDS and other problems. Fourth, there is growing momentum on youth participation within the development community and it is critical task we engage the young decision makers of tomorrow in the development decisions of today. Also, there has been a greater recognition that young people are the future of development. But there is still a long way to go to realize this potential. Their potential for the development of the country and the impacts that could otherwise their return migration results were the major focuses of the study. Furthermore, Youths should be treated as partners in all community activities. The members of the community and their partners should involve youth in building and designing their present and future, the future of coming generations, to contribute towards a culture of peace. This can be achieved only if youth volunteers are involved in the decision making process at all levels. It is clear that an enabling environment needs to be established that can encourage youth participation in leadership positions and life skill development training needs to be designed in relation to their aspirations, dreams, ambition and in recognition of their potential, in this regard.

#### **2.4 The Dimensions and Trends of Return Migration**

There is a growing recognition that both internal and international migration can offer an important track out of poverty for many people from developing countries (Black et al., 2003). Migration is increasingly seen as part of a virtuous interaction in which development is enhanced, both in the destination country and in the sending country too (Weinstein, 2001). For instance, the role of remittances and repatriated savings in overcoming capital constraints could substantiate the fact (Ilahi, 1999; Mesnard, 2004) and the accumulation of human capital (such as skills and ideas) through exposure to the host country's market economic environment (McCormick & Wahba, 2001; Dustmann & Kirchkamp, 2002). Well over a century ago, Ravenstein (1885) observed that every migration stream generates a counter-stream which suggests that return migration is taken for granted with any migration. This may explain the initial silence over the issue in the literature until the global economic crisis of 1973 (Ammassari & Black, 2001). Return migration is a central part of the ongoing migration process in this development, implying that it is no longer seen as the closure of the migration cycle, but rather as one of many steps within a continued movement (King, 2000).

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For instance, research discusses that Central European returnees tend to maintain professional links, in terms of resource mobilization, with their home country during the migration phase, which facilitates the re-integration process upon return. Further, national results show mixed findings concerning the labor market integration and the labor market outcomes of returnees. Whereas some studies point out that returnees receive significant income premium upon return, others cannot support this finding and even show that the experience of migration may enhance the fragmentation of the career path. Last, research points into the direction that returnees more often switch into self-employment than non-migrants, but this finding is not supported by all research done in the CE region. Boccagni (2011) found a significant level of misunderstanding and mistrust between returnees and stayers in Ecuador, and some disappointed returnees (unhappy with their economic situation as well) ended up migrating outwards again. Return need not be the end of a migration cycle; in some cases it is a stage in “circular migration” (Cassarino 2004).

Needless to say, migration, whether internal or international, is a poorly quantified phenomenon in Africa. Lack of adequate and timely information on population movements is a major obstacle for furthering the understanding of migration dynamics in the continent. The situation with respect to internal migration and urbanization is not much better (United Nations, 1996 and 2002). Besides, both Emigration and Immigration are forms of migration defined by push and pull factors in their countries of origin and destination. Such factors can be economic, political, cultural or environmental in nature (Calhoun, 2002).

There is no comprehensive source on international migration policies in Africa. However, the United Nations Population Division has conducted eight “Population Inquiries among Governments” since 1963 to compile official government views about the different components of population change and information on the policies used to shape them. With regard to international migration, the Population Inquiries carried out since 1976 have included questions on the views of governments regarding the adequacy of their current levels of immigration and emigration and on the goals of policies on immigration or emigration (United Nations, 2002c). It was estimated that in 1960, only 1% cent of all international migrants in Africa were refugees but by that proportion had risen to 10 % and 25% in 1970 and 1980 respectively. The number of refugees as a percentage of the international migrant stock increased further to 33% in 1990 and was likely to have kept on rising until 1995 before declining to 22 % in 2000.

## **2.5 The Reasons for Returning Home and the Potentials of these Return Migrants**

Migrants decide to return for many reasons. They may be motivated to return because of encouraging and positive environment in their country of origin or they may also be forced to return back home for other obligatory factors. The motives for returning back to home could be Personal (health or medical, familial), political (expiration of the contract/visa and repatriation) and economic (unemployment in the country of destination). It could be Forced and by choice.

Return motives are related to social, economic, family, and political reasons. For instance, strong family ties and wish to join friends and family are important factors motivating migrants to return. In addition, unfavorable and unexpected condition in the host country and an aspiration to enjoy better social as well as economic status in the home county after accumulating sufficient funds are also important determinants of return (Ammassari and Black (IOM), 2001). But, often most importantly, the deciding factor will be the situation in the home country. If the economic position improves then migrants will be motivated to return. One of the most striking examples is Ireland which has now become a country of immigrants (Stalker, 2005).

Returning back may involve the construction of a new home as part of a wider community or nation building process (Black and Koser, 1999). In this case, settlement to a new area of home may expose returnees to an imbalance with the local community who have been there before. Estimation of returnees: to estimate the stock of international migrants at comparable points in time for all countries of the world. The life-experiences and changes in the lives of returnees has Financial, attitudinal, technological advancement, social capital implications. Various studies have shown that migration and displacement can have significant social, psychological and economic consequences on the migrants, returnees, their households and their community.

The human capital gains associated with migration accrue from the returnees bringing home new skills required abroad that enhances the average human capital in the sending country (Stark et al., 1998). Returnees may have acquired academic knowledge in the form of general education, science and technical training, and may also have acquired practical business skills from either working in a commercial environment or through having started a business (Dai and Liu, 2009). In Northern Uganda, Fiala (2012) shows that returnee households have lower consumption and asset holding than the non-displaced comparison group, and that this is the case

particularly for the poorest households. Outcomes, related to health and nutrition, are also affected, as in the case of food consumption and calories intake, which according to Verwimp (2012) are lower for returnees in Burundi. But the consequences are not necessarily negative. For instance, Kondylis (2008) finds that in Rwanda returnees are more productive in agriculture than those who stayed during the conflict, an effect that cannot be attributed only to the special assistance to the former. One alternative to explain positive effects is the fact that households who return are different to those who decided to stay in the IDP camp or in the host community.

For instance, Bonzzoli et al. (2011) show that households returning to their communities chose different economic activities than those staying in IDP camps in Uganda. Another alternative is that households returning have a change in attitude given the exposure to the host community or assistance inside the IDP camp. For instance, Hynes et al. (2002) find that, in a large data set from 52 camps in 7 countries, refugees and IDPs had better reproductive health outcomes than the people in their country of origin and in the host community. Another study compares the social and economic conditions of returnee household's vis-à-vis the non-displaced population in 8 villages of the Nuba Mountains and it finds that the communities differ in terms of their status during the war, either controlled by the NCP (Government of Sudan) or the SPLM (the rebel group Sudan People's Liberation Movement). The findings pointed out to important differences between returnee and stayer households in a number of dimensions. While many characteristics of the household are similar between both groups, the returnees are more likely to have an extended family in the village and have clearer property rights over their lands and dwelling. Returned households have fewer assets than those who stayed during the conflict, both in terms of size of the land and livestock ownership. Differences in the composition of agricultural production between the groups, with stayers more involved in the cultivation of cash crops and returnees relying on staples were clearly observed. The data further indicates that returnees tend to have better health outcomes than the rest of the village, given they are less likely to have a member of the household affected by serious diseases. This finding could be related to the targeted support received from NGOs, as well as better sanitation habits and other attitudes possibly learned during displacement. Most of these differences are observed in all the villages, independently if they were formerly controlled by the NCP or the SPLM.

Besides, McMurray (1992, cited in Nyberg-Sørensen 2004) found that 41 percent of return migrants in Nador entered commerce, services or transportation. 12 percent were business

owners or independent operators before migration, against 39 percent after return. From his survey, de Haas (2003) concluded that, between 1975 and 1999, 43 percent of return migrants as against 15 percent of non-migrants invested in agricultural water pumps; 29 percent as against 9 percent bought agricultural land; 88 as against 54 percent invested in real estate; and 39 as against 13 percent invested in non-agricultural enterprises. On average, current and returned international migrant households invested four and six times more, respectively, than non-migrant households (de Haas, 2003).

## **2.6 History of International Migration from Ethiopia and Its Root Causes**

Basically, migration flows from and within Africa are expected to remain substantial in the future (Spaan & Van Moppes, 2006; World Bank, 2009). The largest migration flow worldwide is from developing to developed countries (Martin & Zucher, 2008). These migration flows pose challenges to the countries involved, including both the sending and receiving countries. For the African case, according to Adepoju (2008): "Sub-Saharan Africa is facing daunting challenges in respect of increasing irregular migration, migrants' rights, human trafficking and the emigration of skilled professionals" (p. 57). For developed countries illegal migration, trafficking, managing immigration, circular migration flows, and return migration issues will be high on the political agenda (Martin & Adepoju, 2008 | Zucher, 2008).

Until the early 1990s, Ethiopia was one of the largest producers of migrants in Africa (Bariagaber, 1999). Even though Ethiopia has experienced migratory flows throughout its history, the movement of Ethiopian civilians became substantially greater in the late 1960s and 1970s (Berhanu, Kassahun, Seid & Zekarias, 2004). Especially, after the 1974 revolution, large migration flows started to arise. Most of the migrants from Ethiopia were refugees, escaping political conflict, famine, and persecution (Bariagaber, 1997), often by their own government (De Waal, 1991). The refugees from Ethiopia are depicted as "... *A mass of fleeing individuals primarily interested in safely and quickly reaching neighboring countries.*" (Bariagaber, 1997, p. 27). Motives to flee have changed over time, however. Migrants initially fled for political reasons and to escape conflict. In later years the motives of Ethiopian migrants to flee their country shifted to more economic motives (ibid.).

Needless to say, the current migration patterns in Ethiopia are driven by the same factors that led to historical migration flows. Ethiopian migration flows were mainly generated by

political violence, poverty, famine, and limited job opportunities. Estimates of the number of internal migrants are not available. However, it is evident from existing studies that approximately 50 to 70 percent of the population migrates temporarily or permanently (Mberu, 2006). Likewise, international migration is similarly driven by the desire for better opportunities, but it is currently far less common than internal migration. International migration flows out of Ethiopia are relatively small. The World Bank cites an emigration rate of 0.6 percent of the population in 2005, which amounts to a stock of 445,926 persons (2008). Studies have demonstrated that Ethiopian migrants generally spend 1-3 years in neighboring countries (such as Kenya, Djibouti, or Somalia) before immigrating to the west. Ethiopian refugees residing in refugee camps in neighboring countries may also receive resettlement in other countries further abroad, as in the case of 130 Ethiopian refugees who were resettled in the UK in 2006 (Collyer and de Guerre, 2007). In 2009 a total of 85,250 Ethiopians were listed by the UNHCR as people of concern.

## **2.7 Effects of Return Migration: Theories and Evidences**

Most macro level theories on migration deal with the relationships between mobility on one hand and regional development and population redistribution on the other. Ravenstein's (1889) laws of migration introduced the notion that people move in order to better themselves economically. In this view, migration is considered as the individual's response to regional differentials in economic development. Similarly, neoclassical theory views migration as an outcome of geographic differences in labor demand and supply and of individuals' rational calculation of costs and returns (Sjaastad 1962). At the same time, neoclassical theorists see migration as an equilibrating tool and predict that labor movement from low-wage to high-wage areas will eventually even out regional wage differentials (Borts and Stein 1964). On the contrary, researchers subscribing to structural approaches emphasize the cumulative causation of regional growth and contend that flows of human resources from peripheral, less-developed regions, to core, more-developed regions, will accelerate polarization (Myrdal 1957; Hirschman 1958). Regardless of which view one adopts, it is quite clear that the relationship between migration and regional economic development is a "*chicken or egg*" one (Richardson 1978, 108-9). One scenario, for example, is that economic and employment growth induces labor immigration, which further boosts investment and economic growth. Such a relationship has been

analyzed by methods that identify bidirectional causality, such as simultaneous equations (Greenwood, 1981, 143–68).

The possibilities the case study regions offer for returning migrants and the strength they manage to get out from the additional labor force available will be assessed within the framework of New Endogenous Growth Theory. In contrast to more traditional concepts New Endogenous Growth Theory underlines the importance of internal factors for development. Factors are not externally given but a consequence of actions from within the region. This implies that investments in research, education and information transfer and especially coordinated measures across different political fields can change development possibilities. This has high implications for assessing the contribution of education and skills up-grading but also for the way collaboration and networking of institutions and individuals are taken into account in development strategies.

Migration changes the pattern of labor market supply of a region. For a receiving region this means a plus in quantitative terms, and depending on the qualification of migrants, also in the skills profile available. Depending on the economic situation, this can lead to an increase in economic growth due to better availability of labor, or to downwards pressure on wages in unfavorable conditions for certain sectors of the economy. For the regions, where migrants come from, the effects will likely be opposite, but they can also show adverse characteristics. A shortage of labor will typically slow down economic growth perspectives, especially if emigration leads to a brain drain and to an aging of the work force (both effects are typical). In some situations though, excessive labor supply can be reduced by emigration, i.e. when major structural changes in agriculture lead to high unemployment of people formerly employed in farming industry. The pressure on the labor market can thus be weakened by international mobility. Considering the effects of returning migrants a basic assumption can therefore be that results will be positive: a) if there is demand for labor; and more specifically, demand for the specific skills, returning migrants add to the regional spectrum already available; and b) if they can link into the labor market easily.

Research on return migration also considers its implications for development in the country of origin. In an older perspective rooted in neo-classical economics, return migration was expected to catalyze development insofar as migrants returned with useful skills and experience acquired in a developed (“modern”) country. Many scholars have long been skeptical

of this claim, noting that migrant workers were often employed in unskilled jobs in the destination and sometimes experienced downward occupational mobility via migration; they might even have been skilled workers prior to emigration, such that their departure was a loss for the local economy.

Other research has produced more optimistic results: Conway and Potter (2007) find that migrants (even those at or near retirement age) often return with relevant human capital that contributes to the local economy. Ammassari (2004) reached a similar conclusion about elite migrants who returned to West African countries and used connections developed while abroad to support their entrepreneurial efforts. In some instances, governments in sending countries encourage emigration with the expectation of eventual return; migration can even be part of a Diaspora-building strategy, with governments and other actors encouraging development of transnational ties among emigrants and their descendants, with these links perhaps leading to various types of remittances.

On the other hand, ‘migration pessimists’—inspired by the structuralist paradigm and dependency theory—have argued that migration and concomitant changes, such as growing inequality and individualism, lead to the breakdown of traditional, stable communities and regional economies, leading in turn to the development of passive, non-productive communities, which become increasingly dependent on remittances. The latter are said to be spent mainly on luxury goods and ‘consumer’ investments, and rarely invested in productive enterprises. In a process known as *cumulative causation* (Myrdal, 1957), migration is claimed to undermine the local economy by depriving communities of their valuable labor force. South-North migration is perceived as discouraging the autonomous economic growth of migrant-sending countries (Lipton, 1980; cf. Rahman, 2000; Rubenstein, 1992).

However, both approaches seemed to be too rigid and determinist to deal with the complex realities of migration and development interactions. In the 1980s and 1990s, the new economics of labor migration (NELM) emerged in American research as a response to both functionalist-developmental (the ‘migration optimists’) and structuralist migration and development theory (the ‘migration pessimists’). Stark (1978; 1991), in particular, revitalized academic thinking on migration from the developing world, by placing the behavior of individual migrants within a wider societal context and considering the household—rather than the individual—as the most appropriate decision-making unit (cf. Taylor, 1999).

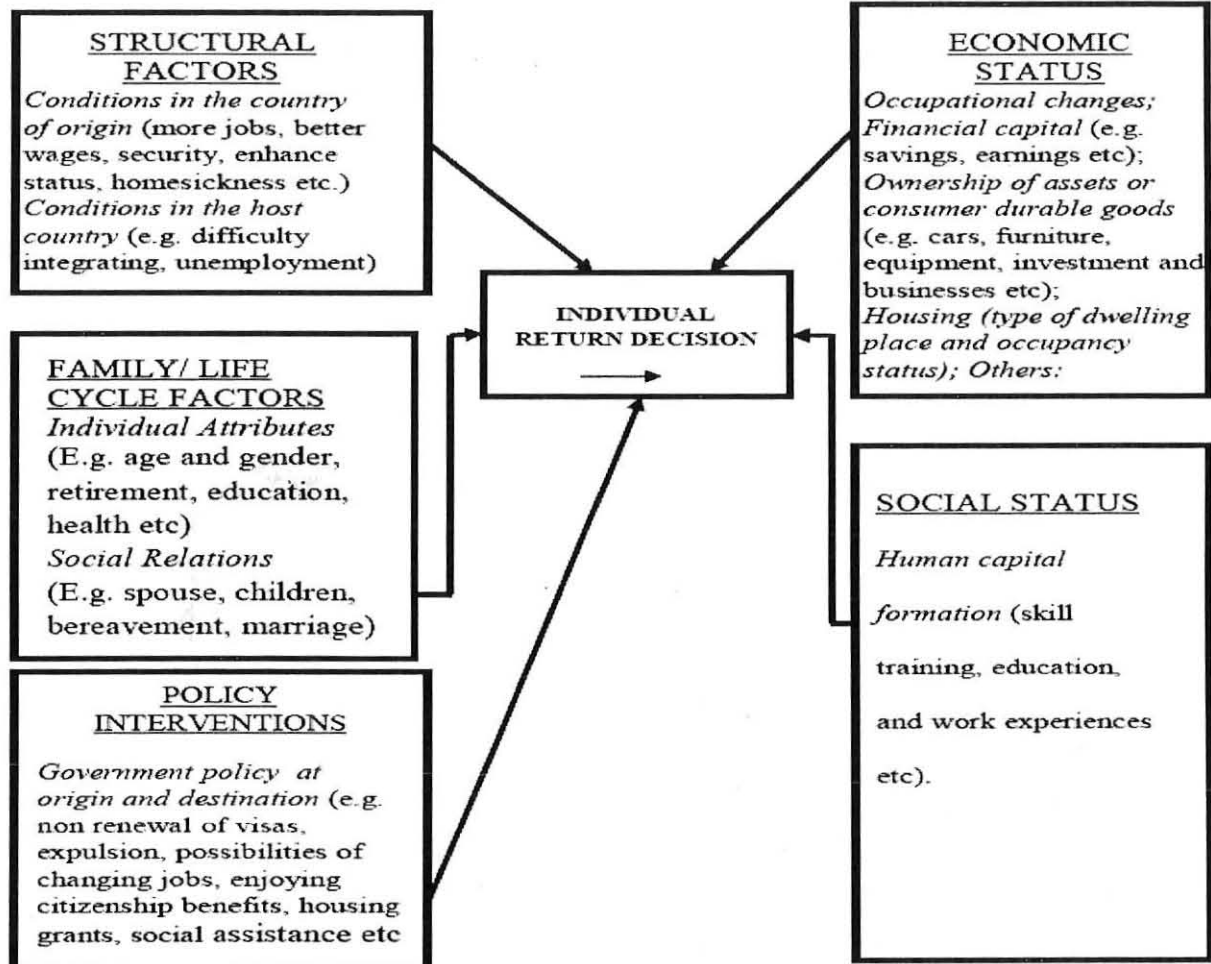
The two key effects of return migration according to the causes and effects model relate to the human capital accumulated abroad through education, training and gain on-the-job skills and the financial capital that is channeled into the home region through remittances and savings. Even though the various propositions advanced in the causes and effects framework were found insightful, variables regarding the socioeconomic status of return migrants were not well articulated. In this regard, some variables which the original framework did not include as part of its analysis were added and these included assets and consumer durable goods, housing, occupational changes and the human capital accumulated abroad. As shown in Figure 1, the section labeled 'socio-economic statuses explained most of the variables which are required for this study and are broadly categorized into economic and social factors. Within the context of this study, assets and consumer durable goods include all the wealth and property acquired by returnees while abroad and after their return. Housing deals with the type of houses the returnees are living in and their occupancy status.

The human capital of the returnees is composed of the formal education, work experience as well as the skills and know-how they have acquired overseas. Occupational changes on the other hand involve issues regarding the returnees' occupational outcomes after their return. That is, whether their occupational status has improved, remained unchanged or worsened after the return (issues of occupational mobility and fluidity). For instance, it is possible for a returnee to move from a production service occupation into trading or agricultural related occupation or to an occupation of similar status as the previous one.

The below mentioned figure shows individual decision making procedures while opting for return. The figure partly indicates their considerations of several factors and making judgments about several issues. In case of forced relocation, this framework may not apply so that the researcher didn't analyze these variables concomitantly.

## CAUSE FACTORS

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework on return migration**  
Source: Adapted from King (2000)

### 2.8. Developmental Facets of Return migration

Migration has the social, political and psychological potentials and the most significant and lasting impacts. Migration can transform the individual migrants and even the societies they leave behind when they move to another country. It has played an important role in the context of regional and local development (Dayton-Johnson et al., 2007; Haas, 2010; IMI, 2006; Katseli et al., 2006; Sriskandarajah, 2005). Additionally, migration has economic, social, political and cultural implications for the sending and host societies and links do exist between migration and development (Ratha 2007).

One of the most debated issues has been that of human capital gains for emigration countries through the return of migrants (Ammassari& Black, 2001; Hunger, 2004). According to the human capital model of socioeconomic attainment, migration is a form of investment

whereby the individual initiates a geographical move with the expectation of drawing net cumulative gains over working life (Wilson, 1985). Brain gain generally denotes expatriates returning from abroad with highly skilled technical or intellectual expertise, which creates a positive outcome because they often bring back skills and/or values (Ardovino & Brown, 2008). Gmelch (1980) has distinguished two perspectives from which this question may be measured or approached. On the one hand, the actual social and economic status of returnees can be examined, looking at employment and housing, participation in associations, their earnings and savings, and ownership of capital assets. On the other hand, the return migrants own perceptions can be measured based on their degree of “satisfaction” or “dissatisfaction” after the migration experience.

Nonetheless, a central area of concern is what migrants experience after return to their country of origin. Many returning migrants invest a great deal of hope and optimism in return, in no small measure because of the notion that they are going home. The word “home”, however, can be misleading, particularly when one has lived abroad for an extended period. Sometimes returnees fail to anticipate how much “home” has changed (or alternately are frustrated at how little it has changed, viz. Boccagni 2011). They might also fail to perceive how much they themselves have changed and find it difficult to connect with old friends and family. For outward migration, one perhaps expects loneliness and other challenges of adaptation – but “returning home” can be all the more difficult for the way one expects it to be easier than it is, as with the returning Israelis studied by Tannenbaum (2007).

A growing body of more recent empirical work strongly suggests that the developmental impacts of migration are often far more positive than is commonly assumed. Several studies have shown that migrant households tend to have a higher propensity to invest than do non-migrant households, but also that consumption and often trivialized ‘non-productive’ investments can have positive income-multiplier effects, through which the benefits or remittances might also indirectly accrue to non-migrant households (Taylor et al., 1996a and 1996b; Massey et al. 1998; see also Özden and Schiff 2005).

The effects of migration on sending countries critically depend on migration patterns, including the balance between temporary versus permanent migration and between high-skill versus low-skill migration, as well as on the capacity of sending countries including the particular sectors and labor markets affected by emigration and the scale of remittances, which

together determine the ability of the sending countries, to adjust to, and profit from, migration (Katseli et al., 2006; Sriskandarajah, 2005). In this regard, the out-migration flows from Ethiopia have both the positive and negative consequences on development processes, so do the returnees.

Nonetheless, it is very important to examine the case of returnees in order to realize their contribution to the country's development. Most of the migrants abroad acquire economic strength while others may achieve educational and professional backgrounds developing new skills and experiences (Yohannes, 2006). Thus, considering their number and potential, the Ethiopian Diaspora can do much more by returning back to their home and engage in different activities that would help the country's development.

In order to realize their developmental potential, however, information is needed on motivating factors for their return, their re-integration and assimilation in Ethiopia after they return, the problems and challenges they face, the achievements they gained after migration and the overall impact of the above on the development of the country. It will also be important to understand the strength and weaknesses of the existing institutional support for returnees. In the absence of such information, it will be difficult to design policies and institutions not only to maximize the returnees' developmental contribution, but also to facilitate their re-settlement and re-integration in their home country. This study attempts to fill this gap by generating information on reasons of return migration and the existing situation regarding their assimilation and contributions.

With regard to policy directions, the five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) was released in October 2010. It lays out plans for continued growth at an ambitious 14 percent rate. Accordingly, agriculture maintains the focus of major economic growth opportunity, with increased stability in both government and macroeconomics undergirding accelerated growth, with a base level of 11 percent growth and both faster and more equitable growth occurring through the addition of industrial expansion. As figures of growth and production have been exaggerated by government reports in the past, however, the high targets for the GTP could potentially lead to a distortion of statistics, which undermines the real need for assistance of many Ethiopians and impedes humanitarian assistance (USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy, Ethiopia, (2012). In addition to poverty reduction and growth policy, the GoE recently released a revised youth policy in 2004. The objectives of the cross-sectoral youth policy include respecting diversity, increasing rights, and supporting democracy in addition to

capacity building. The policy outlines ways to support the health, judicial, education, and economic wellbeing of youth and names the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture as primary coordinator for the implementation of the policy. Nonetheless, much of the responsibility is placed on family, civil society, and the youth themselves Ministry of Youth, Sports & Culture of Ethiopia Youth Policy (2004).

## **2.9 Reintegration as Part of instrument for Changing the Life of Returnees**

The aims of this study include the examining of the reintegration process and the challenges faced by Ethiopian Youth returnees from Saudi Arabia, and the policies measures employed by the Ethiopian government and its development partners to facilitate smooth reintegration of returnees with their respective community. Reintegration is explored within the larger context of Ethiopians' post-repatriation process; as such, the level of analysis is both micro-level (within returnee communities) and macro-level (issues and challenges affecting the entire nation). The restudy provides recommendations to policymakers on broad strategies to facilitate reintegration and help returnee in their respective communities.

As per Ammassari and Black (IOM) (2001):

*'Re-adjustment problems have been considered as indicators of social change brought about by return migrants. Conversely, the more traditional their value orientation upon their return, the less likely they are to bring about innovation and social changes. Still, they are relieved to be backing home in a familiar context. On the other hand they are often quite disappointed and easily irritated with how things are done in the home country. Also the relationship between returnees and no-migrants is generally ambiguous.'*

Studies showed that migrants who have achieved success often do not encounter problems with their families; however those who did not fulfill the expectation of their family might face problems in the response they get from their family. Moreover, the society expects a lot from returnees including providing financial support being considered wealthy (ILO, 2000). All returnees do not have the same experience in re-integrating with the society. Some may face difficulties which might result in disappointment while others may easily re-associate with the homeland community even though they have departed for a long time. Returnees might also be faced with distrust as the society develop an attitude that all migrants are wealthy and try to take

advantage from them. In addition, many returnees complain on how things are done in their homeland which includes Government bureaucracy, inefficiency and problem of time management, etc. Due to this and other reasons, returnees become unsatisfied and unhappy in their home country (Gmelch, 1980). The other problem of returnees' is that they expect too much from their own society and this does not fit with that of the actual situation on the ground (Gmelch,1980, Adamnesh Atnafu, 2006).

2003), business (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2002). In addition to this, considering the time dimension, the study was *cross-sectional* in nature and the researcher collected the data at a specified time (*from late February of 2014 to early April of 2014*) and then analyzed the data in order to come up with a clear understanding of the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (i.e. the case study of returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State).

### 3.3 Data Collection Tools

Regarding the data collection tools, key informant interview, focus group discussion and in-depth interview were data collection tools employed for this study. The requirements for and the methods of data collection were geared towards scrutinizing/exploring the life experiences through identifying gaps in policy and legislation and by analyzing the overall sketch of return migration and its implications for local development in the study area in particular and regional development in general. Each of these tools is discussed as follows:

**In-depth interview:** Several in-depth interviews were carried out with selected study participants. Essentially, a semi-structured in-depth interview guideline was prepared early before going to the field for data collection. The guideline comprised several questions grouped in to various thematic parts. All questions were *open ended*. Moreover, the time duration for in-depth interviews varied with a maximum of seventy (70) minutes to a minimum of thirty three (33) minutes. Furthermore, in order to avoid disruption, misconception and inconveniencies and to maintain confidentiality during in-depth interview sessions, suitably scheduled locations and time schedules were arranged. Additionally, the research objectives were adequately communicated with the study participants. Tape recorder was used to record the response of the interviewees and the researcher took notes while collecting data. Moreover, interviews were conducted with 53 (fifty three) Ethiopian youth return migrants. The researcher decided about these (i.e 53 (fifty three)) total number of study participants after reaching data saturation level. The participants of these interviews were totally return migrants who came back from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the selection of the respondents (interviewees) followed snow ball sampling of non-probability sampling technique.

**Focus Group Discussion (FGD):** Basically, FGD helps to scrutinize thorough ideas and cross-check genuine information where prior research undertaking appears to be missing and it facilitates in-depth analysis of the issue under scrutiny (Kitzinger, 1994b; Vaughn et al., 1996;

Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & et al 2001). For these reasons, the researcher employed FGD. In this regard, group of knowledgeable individuals, who possess sufficient insights, experiences and knowledge of the issue at hand, were chosen for focus group discussions. Accordingly, FGD sessions encouraged participants to generate ideas, stimulate richer responses and allow thoughts and responses to emerge and FGD was used to substantiate and generate more adequate data about the issue under scrutiny. Therefore, there were three FGD sessions and each FGD comprised eight members of homogenous category. The composition of the discussants was homogeneous and was based on discussants' knowledge, lived experiences in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and their relevance for the topic under study. In all of FGD sessions, the researcher acted as the moderator and engaged in note-taking. Tape recording was used. Each session had a time span of almost one and half an hour (75-90 minutes) on average. Additionally, FGD sessions arrangement considered the significance of upholding the privacy and the consent of study participants. Also, suitable situations and comfortable locations were chosen during FGD sessions of this research undertaking.

**Key informant interview:** There were a total of nine (9) selected key individuals who were chosen for this study. These key informants were (1) two experts from the Regional bureau (i.e. BOLSA), (2) one expert from MOLSA, (3) two workers from Shirka Woreda Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs and (4) four community leaders and/or religious leaders. Their arguments, experiences, insights, suggestions and ideas were collected and incorporated in the finding of the study so as to enrich the undertaking/finding of the study.

### **3.4 Study Participants and Sampling Techniques**

As it has been indicated above, the study participants/population were/was Ethiopian youth return migrants who came back from the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and who were living in Shirka Woreda of Arsi Zone, Oromiya Regional State, while data collection was undertaken. Moreover, the study focused on youths/young people who were between the ages of 15 and 29.

**Sampling Techniques:** By and large, sampling techniques are required in many spheres of research (Bridget Somekh & Cathy Lewin, 2005). In the view of that the question about the selecting of the right sample size in research has concerned the researcher. This was due to the fact that the use/selection of samples to obtain relatively precise and adequate information about a population is a fundamental component of the research activity. Accordingly, the study employed non-probability sampling technique because of (1) the nature of the research which

was largely and exclusively exploratory and (2) due to the fact that the qualitative research doesn't largely focus on representativeness or making generalizations and it is claimed that non-probability sampling technique is more useful for assessing the social issue at hand (Margaret A. and Wendy B., 2003; Martyn Denscombe, 2003, Duncan Cramer and Dennis Howitt, 2004; Given, 2008). Specifically, with regard to the sampling procedures, the researcher employed the snow ball sampling techniques amongst non-probability sampling techniques. Basically, snowball sampling is one way of exploring the meanings and relationships of categories of social actors from their point of view and its crucial feature is that each person under study is connected with another through a direct or indirect links and social networks (Neuman, 1997). Snowball sampling is also called network, chain referral or reputational sampling and it is a multistage technique in which the researcher asks each person interviewed from a theoretically based target group to suggest someone else like themselves to take part. Thus, sample grows like a rolling snowball. Generally, the researcher managed to find/select returnees by way of snow ball method through social networks (intimacy, friendship, familiarity and other procedures). Furthermore, the study participants were selected because they met criteria that have been previously identified by the researcher as to address the research questions and objectives.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Basically, for the successful completion of this study, the collected data were analyzed using qualitative approaches. All the data were summarized and categorized according to the main thematic areas and in accordance with the general and specific objectives discussed in chapter one of the paper. Thus, the findings have been divided and presented as per the research subjects (themes) and their respective subtopics. Triangulation and content analysis have been employed in this regard. Hence, the descriptive method of data analysis and presentation has been used and the qualitative data was analysed systematically. However, there was no statistical procedures/tools followed for this study.

### **3.6 Data Quality Assurance**

It is a matter fact that the quality of the qualitative data should be assured through various mechanisms and the researcher accordingly employed various procedures for data quality assurance. For instance, the process of data collection was carried out after the informed consent

was secured or obtained and the objectives (both general and specific) of the research were communicated to the study participants. Thus, such procedure possibly augmented the quality of data. Moreover, other data quality assurance techniques incorporated various techniques such as paraphrasing of research questions and seeking for and responding to clarification upcoming from study participants and becoming friendly and establishing intimate rapport with the study participants. More specifically, the researcher sincerely considered and respected the priorities, values and norms of the respondents during the data collection sessions. Moreover, the researcher was highly vigilant of not to misinterpret ideas, sentiments, beliefs and responses of the respondents erroneously and hastily. Furthermore, the triangulation (use of different data sources) was amongst the techniques used for maintaining/assuring data quality. *English, Afaan Oromoo* and *Amharic* languages were employed to bring simplicity for data collection and to assure the quality of collected data. In this regard, the researcher engaged in double translation while developing various guidelines for data collection (i.e. the English version of the in-depth interview, key informant and FGD guidelines were translated both to *Afaan Oromoo* and *Amharic* twice by the researcher and other different individuals) so as to make precise translation and to maintain the quality of the data.

### **3.7 Considerations of Ethical Issues**

Regarding the ethical issues, it is important mentioning/discussing here the ethical considerations taken in to account while collecting data. This is due to the fact that in the progress of research, researchers need to respect the participants and the sites for research (Creswell, 2007). Hence, the researcher prepared informed consent and assured respondents that any of the information they were giving won't be disclosed in such a way that it could harm their well-beings. Since the inception, the researcher considered various situations (across different stages of my research) that might put participants at risk. Henceforth, after the approval of the proposal, a support letter was received from the institute which indicated the identity and objectives of the researcher. After giving the necessary information that enables the respondents either to participate or withdraw, informed consent was obtained from them and at least oral agreement reached. Consequently, this reduced the negligence and/or reluctance of the study participants in giving the accurate data that otherwise could happen due to the fear of upcoming consequences/ damages. Also, the research objectives were communicated with the respondents

either verbally or in written form. Also, names of the respondents was neither be asked nor be recorded. Taking in to consideration of the willingness of each participant (the one who was transcribed), tape recording was used both for in-depth interview and FGD sessions. The pseudo names were used in final report and this was carried out in order to conceal the respondent's personal identity so as to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. Besides, in order to avoid disruption and to maintain confidentiality and privacy of study participants, both in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions were conducted in scheduled places and convenient time. In line with this, study participants were given unreserved rights including the right to decline participating if they won't want to respond to some and/or all the questions at any time. Meanwhile, in the presence of study participants' well-versed willingness and endless support, the researcher clarified any/all unclear question(s).

### **3.8 Reasons for the Selection of the Study Area and the Description of the Study Site**

The study entitled '*The life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Saudi Returnees*' was conducted at Shirka Woreda of Arsi of Oromiya Regional State, Ethiopia. The reasons for selecting the study site (Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State) included the following rationales: (1) as per the current returnees' registration report compiled by IOM-Ethiopia and verified by BOLSA, the area was identified to be amongst the most notable and well-known areas characterized by a widespread presence of returnees/repatriates in the area, (2) The study site's geographical proximity and accessibility for conducting research and (3) the researcher prudently considers the time pressure and the financial requirements that would be incurred for conducting the study in other areas. Needless to say, the researcher knows the area very well. Furthermore, in spite of the above-mentioned justifications, the description of the study area could be presented as follows.

Shirka Woreda is one of the administrative Woredas in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia. According to local traditions, the origin of the name of the Woreda is associated to an ancient Ethiopian political province, Sharkha, which vanished as a political unit in the 16th century (Ulrich Braukämper, 2002). Geographically, the Woreda is bordered on the south by the Wabe Shebelle River which separates it from the Bale Zone, another Woreda in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia, on the southwest by Bekoji, on the west by Digelu and Tijo, on the north by Tena, and on the east by Arsi Robe. The altitude of this Woreda ranges from 350 to 1350 meters above sea

level. Perennial rivers include 25 kilometers of the Gumelo and 20 of the Rapese. A survey of the land in this woreda shows that 21.4% is arable or cultivable, 6.3% pasture, 2.7% forest, and the remaining 69.6% is considered swampy, mountainous or/and otherwise unusable. Important cash crops produced in the area includes pepper, black and white cumin and fenugreek. Besides, with regard to the demographic profile of the Woreda, according to the report of the *2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia*, the total population of Shirka Woreda is 163,823. Out of this figure 81,812 and 82,011 are males and females and 12,494 and 151,329 are urban dwellers and rural inhabitants respectively. The majority of the inhabitants said they were Muslim, with 54.19% of the population reporting they observed this belief, while 45.52% of the population practiced Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. With an estimated area of 1,080.78 square kilometers, Sherka has an estimated population density of 145.9 people per square kilometer, which is greater than the Zone average of 132.2. The 1994 national census reported a total population for this woreda of 112,743, of whom 56,527 were men and 56,216 women; 6,642 or 5.89% of its population were urban dwellers at the time. The two largest ethnic groups reported in the Woreda were the Oromo (71.83%), and the Amhara (26.83%); all other ethnic groups made up 1.34% of the population. Afan Oromo is spoken as a first language by 65.98% and 33.91% of the total population speak Amharic (*1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Results for Oromia Region*, Vol. 1, part 1). Likewise, the Woreda consists of three agro-ecological zones and these agro-ecological zones are 35% lowland, 37% mid highland and 28% highland. Besides, Gobessa is the town of Shirka Woreda and it is located at about 265kms East of Addis Ababa. It is the administrative center of Sherka Woreda. Based on figures from the Central Statistical Agency in 2005, Gobesa has an estimated total population of 10,170 of whom 5,010 were males and 5,160 were females. The 1994 national census report shows that the town had a total population of 5,689 of whom 2,717 were males and 2,972 were females. This town has a latitude and longitude of 07°37'N 39°30'E with an elevation of 2353 meters above sea level (CSA, 2005; Socio-economic profile of Arsi Zone, Government of Oromia Region, 2006). Other towns in the Woreda include Gado Guna. For further information, the researcher has already attached the map in the appendix part of this study.



## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Analysis and Finding Presentation**

#### **4. Introduction**

This part of the thesis presents the finding of the study obtained through qualitative data collection methods. Basically, as it has been mentioned in chapter three, key informant interview, focus group discussion and in-depth interview were data collection tools employed for this study. The requirements for and the methods of data collection were geared towards scrutinizing/exploring the life experiences of Ethiopian youth return migrants from the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The participants of these interviews were totally return migrants who came back from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the selection of the respondents (interviewees) followed snow ball sampling of non-probability sampling technique. Hence, the arguments, experiences, insights, suggestions and ideas of these study participants were collected and incorporated/embodied in the finding of the study so as to enrich the undertaking/finding of the study. By considering the objectives of the study, the findings of the study are summarized under five sub-sections. The first subsection presents the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the study participants followed by the socio-economic and psychological life experiences of return migrants in the study area as the later illustrates how the livelihoods of these return migrants were/have been changing in terms of assets, opportunities, constraints and overall outcomes. The focus of the third subsection is about the multiple difficulties returnees facing together with the attempts made to overcome these challenges. The fourth part presents the developmental dimensions of the return migration in the study area and beyond. The nexus between development and return migration is clear mentioned in this regard. Finally, the reintegration processes for returnees and the policy measures pursued so far/to be pursued are thoroughly discussed under this sub-section of the paper. The researcher interpreted data meaningfully in a way what they are/were really meant to be. To this end, the study tried to identify gaps in policy and legislation and analyzed the overall sketch of return migration and its implications for local development in the study area in particular and regional development in general. Generally speaking, based on the general objective of the study which is the Life Experiences of Ethiopian youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries, the Case Study of Saudi Returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State and other specific objectives the

researcher presents the findings and it is in this part, the basic research objectives are answered and discussed concurrently in the subsequent part of the thesis.

More importantly, the researcher, while presenting the direct discourse of the study respondents, has used pseudo names in order to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents. By doing so, study participants' identities were left anonymous and in place of that the researcher used the name Abdo  $n$  (1, 2, 3, 4..... $n$ ) where  $n$  represents the number of study participants. However, this pseudo name (i.e. Abdo  $n$ ) represents only male participants. Hence, the pseudo name Chaltu  $n$  has been used to represent female participants. Similarly, in the regard of the latter,  $n$  represents the number female of study participants. Besides, the researcher, while mentioning these study participants, has indicated some of their demographic profiles.

#### **4.1. Socio-economic and demographic Background of the Study Participants**

This sub-section presents the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the study participants. The socioeconomic and demographic characteristics include study participants age, sex, educational status, ethnicity and religious affiliation. The socio-economic and demographic profiles of the study participants are presented in the following paragraphs;

As long as the age of the study participants is considered, almost all of the study participants, with an exception of key informants, were youths/young people who were between the ages of 15 and 29. This was due to the fact the study was delimited on exploring the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Gulf Countries (with the sole focus on the Saudi returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State). More specifically, the researcher intentionally delimited the focus on youths (who were between 15 and 29) who actively engaged themselves in the return migration. Furthermore, when it comes to the sex of the study participants, one third of them were females and the remaining (the majority) were males.

Additionally, the ethnic distribution of study participants clearly depicts that the majority belongs to Oromo ethnic group. Study participants, with Gurage and Siltie ethnic backgrounds, represent the remaining percentage of the study participants and only four individuals belonged to Amhara ethnic group. In relation to the place of origin of the study participants, the majority (two third) of them were from rural while the remaining had an urban origin. This, ultimately, informs that the majority of the return migrants came from rural areas. With respect to the

religious affiliation of participants, the largest majority of the study participants were Muslims whereas the remaining few percentages were followers of Orthodox Christianity and a single participant was Protestant.

Likewise, as far as the marital status of the study participants is considered, majority of them were single. More specifically, almost three quarter of them were single followed by those who are married and divorced respectively. Only a single individual claimed to be widowed. For instance, the majority of FGD participants were single whereas the remaining were married. None of the FGD participants were divorced or widowed. Besides, when it comes to the marital status of key informants, all of them were married.

Besides, when it comes to employment status of the study participants, majority of the study participants didn't engage in a type of employment which worth much. A significant proportion of them didn't engage in trading or business activities. According to the responses collected, majority of the study participants (return migrants) were job seekers (unemployed) whereas few of them started their own business.

As far as the Educational background of the study participants is concerned, majority of them were 10<sup>th</sup> grade complete followed by those who were enrolled below grade 10. Needless to say, majority of who held certificate/diploma, were nurses. Only two interviewees confirmed that their educational attainment to be degree and above. The same is true for FGD participants whereby majority of them completed grade ten. The following table presents educational background of interviewees.

#### **4.2. The Socio-Economic and Psychological Life-Experiences of Returnees at Home**

Nowadays, in the age of globalization where communication and global integration have appeared to be on the spot, travelling to far off places/countries become easier and cheaper than ever before. People migrate to various countries irrespective of their rationales/motives. Furthermore, provided that their safety and security concerns are well addressed, many migrants, especially the economic ones, prefer better opportunities irrespective of the place where they are offered to. This is true that an emergence of job opportunities at various countries compelled people (including Ethiopian youths) to migrate to other countries (including gulf countries).

Ethiopians have been returning to home from various areas/countries and across different time interval. Let alone this year, hundreds of thousands have returned to home. Evidentially, our

country witnessed that a large number of people tend to return home after having some foreign exposures. The same is true for Ethiopian youth migrants who migrated to gulf countries. Their return could be seen as beneficial for their home country but it is also characterized by challenges. The following paragraphs discuss the socioeconomic and psychological life experiences of returnees at home. By doing so, major experiences of Ethiopian youth return migrants will be major points of discussion in this regard. Besides, the researcher, under the sub-sections, tried to identify and discussed how the livelihoods of returnees were changing in terms of assets, opportunities, constraints and presented an overall outcomes of all these components as follows.

As far as the duration of stay at the KSA is considered, majority of the respondents stressed that they did travel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since the last two to three years. Some of them confirmed that they stayed at KSA longer. More than half of interviewees had stayed at the KSA at least for two years whereas few of them stayed longer, extending up to seven years.

With regard to the reasons for leaving their country, majority of them said that they left their country two or three years ago due to lack of job opportunities. Likewise, economic reasons mainly related to the need for employment. For instance, *Abdo 5* (pseudo name) stressed, “*I was unable to afford the basic needs for my family. My father had passed away five years back so that I sold the property of my family and crossed the border of Somali and finally, reached to the KSA via Yemen after crossing the sea*”. Furthermore, when it comes to the actors that motivated them to migrate to gulf countries, respondents claimed that they lacked job opportunities at home. Similarly, pressure from elder friends is another factor worth mentioning. Also, changes witnessed by ex-friends and relatives and the political and religious reasons were identified. One of the interviewee recounts her story as follows;

*Several changes that I witnessed in the life of my friends and relatives has changed my mind and I heard to the advices of these returnees(friends and relatives) who filled their hearts with vain hopes of living better lives in the KSA. Consequently, I and other adolescent girls in our vicinity were deceived by what we heard and observed from these returnees and easily got stirred up hoping that moving to the KSA would change our lives. Finally, I went and stayed at the KSA for the last three and half years.*”

Generally speaking, the majority of the interviewees and discussants mentioned economic reasons to be the cause for their ex-migration. In this regard, lack of assistance to meet basic needs, difficulties of maintaining an adequate existence and other social and economic basic justifications were identified by the participants. Similarly, the most common initial source of funding for the journey came from their families at home. In most cases, the family funded these ex-migrants by selling of their respective material possessions including house, land and livestock. In this regard, by selling of material possessions, these return migrants, several years back, had secured an initial source of funding for the journey to Gulf States, particularly KSA. However, some of the interviewees asserted that they had worked (both inside the country and on the route to KSA) and saved money for the journey. Also, borrowing money and remittances from family abroad were another source of funding for these return migrants.

When asked about the travel routes, few of these return migrants asserted that they travelled to the KSA by airplane whereas the majority of them had reached to KSA via Yemen by crossing both land and sea routes. For instance, Abdu 2 remarks the travel routes he followed while reaching KSA, as follows, "*I went for hajj (Islamic pilgrimage) and stayed there for so long and finally became an illegal migrant so that the government of KSA deported me back during the recent crackdown*". Conversely, Abdu 6, one of the interviewees, asserted the following, "*I reached to the KSA via crossing of Somalia and Yemen routes correspondingly*".

Besides, with regard to the frequency of travel to the KSA, some of these rerun migrants have confessed that they travelled to the KSA more than two times. These individuals, according to their speech, engaged in illegal migration and reached the KSA many times by crossing land and sea routes via Djibouti/Somalia and Yemen. However, almost all of those who travelled by airplane never came back to the KSA for the second times. The study shows that majority of those who engaged in illegal migration had travelled to KSA, at least twice. In this regard, those who travelled via illegal routes have mentioned some of the dangers they faced along their journey to the KSA. Accordingly, the study participants said that robbery, travel-related problems (such as finding accommodation, harassment and being deliberately delayed), physical attack/ extortion and confiscation of property were some of the dangers (challenges) they faced along their journey to the KSA. According to these respondents (those who engaged in illegal migration), the practice of unlawful killings on others was common, especially on the sea route and inside Yemen. Similarly, the study indicated that the types of challenges that these

respondents had faced at their country of destination (KSA) incorporated physical violence, inadequate provision to meet basic needs, separation from beloved one, harassment by smugglers, beatings and abuse, torture and mistreatment, arbitrary arrest and detention, racial discrimination and deportation threats.

Study participants, both interviewees and discussants, were asked about why and when did they return from abroad (KSA). According to their responses, majority of them returned to their country after the crackdown which took place several months ago by the government of Saudi Arabia against illegal migrants. Few of these study participants have claimed that they did come back to Ethiopia at least since the last one year. Despite of these, those who returned to Ethiopia, during the current repatriation, identified that the sole cause for returning home was their migration status in the KSA (whereby they were labeled to be illegal migrants so that they were forced/expelled from the KSA).

More importantly, it is very important to understand the reasons for return. For instance, Forstlechner's (2010) qualitative study, on self-initiated return migrants to the UK, France, Germany and Austria, showed that respondents returned to their home countries because of a multitude of reasons, including family and financial reasons, employment contract termination in the host country and bureaucratic issues. Equally important, respondents were asked about the factors that motivated them to return to Ethiopia. Majority of them mentioned that the reason for returning home is forced expulsion from the KSA for being illegal migrants. The reasons identified by returnees for returning back to Ethiopia include illegality of their status (conditions), involvement in illegal activities at country of exile, expiration of visa, engagement in fight with nationals of the country family reasons, financial reasons, personal interest, family pressure, employment contract termination in the KSA and bureaucratic issues.

In this regard according to some of the study participants, the precondition/reasons they put forward for returning to home (i.e. Ethiopia) was their personal willingness. For instance, Chaltu 6, interviewee, said that she came back to Ethiopia based on the pressure of her own family. She said that:

*"I travelled to the KSA through legal procedures (both by airplane and for the purpose of serving as house maid at the KSA). However, after having stayed at Jeddah, one of the cities in western part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where an international airport is available in nearby areas, and after having served as housemaid or domestic worker, my*

*agent mistreated me so that my relative, who is living there, relocated me without informing my agent. Finally, my visa expired. As a result, I became illegal residents. Then after, when my family heard about the existing crackdown, they called me back to Ethiopia.”*

However, the majority of those who came back during the repatriation time (or while the crackdown of illegal migrants by the KSA government was under way), had returned to their home country by force. Some of the study participants put forward that they were waiting for the conditions before returning home. Accordingly, before returning to Ethiopia, they waited for conditions such as adequate employment opportunities, safety, good governance, infrastructural development and adequacy of basic needs. More specifically, when it comes to the living standards of these return migrants, the study indicated that there were changes in living standards/conditions of return migrants as compared to what they were before migration. The following few paragraphs discuss these changes as follows;

**Settlement pattern changes:** In this regard, a large portion of these return migrants have claimed that they changed their settlement pattern from rural to urban. As it has been indicated under ‘*the socioeconomic and demographic profiles of the return migrants*’ section of this chapter, the majority (two third) of them were from rural while the remaining had an urban origin. In this regard, as compared to their place of origin, only few of these study participants continued their rural life after returning from the KSA. Also, for some, especially for those who used to live in the town, there were no changes with regard settlement patterns. Furthermore, still some of the discussants and interviewees indicated that they changed their settlement from nearby small towns (including Soole, Gaadoo and Guna) to Shirka town which is the capital of the Woreda. Likewise, with respect to issues concerning housing pattern, according to the data collected, it was observed that far less than the quarter of these return migrants owned their own houses after returning from the KSA. As per the responses of the interviewees and discussants, majority of these return migrants stated that they are still living with their family or close relatives. But still, some them mentioned that since their family were living in their respective rural areas, they preferred to live in the town, particularly Shirka town, and in their rented house.

**Educational Attainment:** According to the collected data, an overall average education levels between returnees and host community members is quite different. This is to say that those who didn't engage in the migration and/or those who stayed at home were believed to have good educational background/attainment. For instance, *Abdu 16*, another interviewee, discussed this idea saying, "I dropped my education but majority of my ex-friends had either completed their grade 12 or achieved diploma/certificate or degree." The same is true for some of the interviewees who stated that their educational attainment was not achieved for the reason that they lagged behind their ex-classmates and friend. However, the researcher believes that it is an easy task neither to determine the difference nor to say that the difference is even statistically significant. This is because of the research approach or study design followed (qualitative research design). Correspondingly, the returnees, despite of their lengthy stay at abroad (KSA), proved that their educational attainment was not changed. Almost all of the respondents affirmed that they didn't get a chance to join and pursue further education. Needless to say, few of the returnees confirmed that they managed to read and write Arabic. Still others claimed that they obtained religious education (Islamic teaching including how to recite Quran (Holy book) and how to perform Islamic *salat* (Islamic prayers) and how to make *Umrah* and *Hajji* (pilgrimage to Islamic Holy places). However, it is important to mention the significance of the human capital gains associated with return migration bringing home new skills required at home. In this regard, returnees may have acquired academic knowledge in the form of general education, science and technical training, and may also have acquired practical business skills from either working in a commercial environment or through having started a business (Dai and Liu, 2009). Generally, the analysis has established that none of the respondents had a master's degree and above, after their return. The number of respondents who held diplomas and first degrees before departure never changed at all. Equally important, in terms of skills acquisition, the results have established that most of the respondents had acquired some skills at overseas (KSA) and the dominant skills gained were technical skills such as construction work including masonry, welding and metal work.

Thus, the implication is that those return migrants possessing different skills and knowledge, primarily gained as a result of overseas experiences and exposures, can stimulate or support a knowledge-based and economic development in our country if their skills and knowledge/education are properly harnessed in the local contexts. Even the less skilled returnees

had gained some international (KSA) exposure and work experiences and could be useful for the socio-economic development in the study area in particular and our country in general.

As far as the work experiences of these return migrants is considered, the findings of the study indicated that a substantial portion of returnees had access to jobs in their respective locations of exile (i.e. KSA). These jobs were believed to be different and their salary also varied as per the type, quality and qualifications needed for these jobs. Hence, almost all of these returnees had some sorts of work experience when they came back to Ethiopia, let it be cooking, masonry, driving, carrying materials, managing mini-offices, rearing animals and others. However, some of these work experiences were believed to be non-professional for the fact that they involved little or no qualifications. Furthermore, according to the claims of the interviewed returnees, since the work experience possessed by them (returnees) was not necessarily the type of experience currently demanded in their local's labor market and for the fact that most of these work experiences do not have market value and could be done by every individual, these returnees, they claimed, were unable to obtain job opportunities at home.

***Physical Assets and Material Possessions:*** Some returnees had brought physical assets/possessions upon their return to Ethiopia. These physical assets were different as per the returnees' capacities, opportunities and duration of stay at the KSA. Nonetheless, the overwhelming majority of these return migrants had come back to their country with very little physical and material possessions. However, according to the data collected, the physical assets and/or material possessions of these return migrants include latest mobile phones, computers (laptops) and other electronic materials. Similarly, with regard to the assets acquired, a higher proportion of return migrants had brought some of home consumer and durable goods. But it was discovered that those returnees who stayed longer and who secured job at the KSA had the highest asset-holding status than those who stayed shorter and /or those who didn't get job at the KSA. As some of the interviewed returnees mentioned, they were confiscated their material by Saudi citizens and *shurtas* and some had lost their property in the middle of (during) the repatriation process.

**The Psychological Experiences of These Return Migrants:** The study showed that the return migrants who were unskilled workers and/or who formed the majority of the current return migrants, proved to be more vulnerable to various type violations at abroad. They claimed that they were particularly vulnerable to violations, abuses and other types of challenges when they

worked in the informal sector as domestic workers. As a result, since some of these return migrants were being trafficked and exploited, or were smuggled, these vulnerabilities were acute and real and concomitantly, had brought psychological challenges on their later life. Especially, when it comes to those women return migrants and those who were serving as domestic workers, the consequences of sexual and gender-based violence described to be noticeable. Equally, the study participants mentioned that there are psychological, social and economic challenges that some return migrants have been experiencing as a result of the previous violence and abuses. For instance, few of the respondents identified that they have been experiencing physical and mental disabilities due to their previous sexual and physical violence exposures at abroad.

Also, some of these return migrants, who were sexually and physically abused, pinpointed that they were suffering from psychological trauma and stress at home. Generally speaking, the study found that the emotional and psychological consequences of such abuses/violence include traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, fear, anger, shame, insecurity, self-hate, self-blame, mental illness, suicidal thoughts, and others and currently, such consequences were common among some of these return migrants. For instance, one of the accounts of the interviewee, *Chaltu 2*, was similar to the accounts of many other female return migrants in particular; she said the following

*“My employer did sexually abuse me and beaten me several times. Besides, I was forced to work eighteen hours a day and seven days a week. It was a terrible moment in my life. I was neither allowed to leave the house nor to contact my family. They did not pay me my salary almost for one year. When I returned to Ethiopia, I was so happy because the life I lived there was typical hell. Such bad memory of my life still disrupts my life, happiness and wellbeing. Sometimes, I feel fear, anger, shame, self-hate, self-blame, mental illness and suicidal thoughts for being there and for being exposed to such abuses.”*

As far as the psychological experiences of these return migrants in considered, some of the respondents claimed that the emotional and psychological consequences of experienced abuses/violence (including traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, fear, anger, shame, insecurity, self-hate, self-blame, mental illness, suicidal thoughts) has disrupted their interaction and the roles they had within family and community in general.

In fact, according to some of the respondents (largely women return migrants) some of Ethiopian women have been sexually abused in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Countries. Often this occurred in the private sphere of the houses they were working in as domestic workers and most of the time, such assaults remained undisclosed. But, the consequences of such abuses/assaults still remained with some of these return migrants.

**The sociological experiences of these return migrants:** This is another central area of concern regarding what migrants experience after return to their country of origin. Many returning migrants invest a great deal of hope and optimism in return to their country. Some of them pinpointed that they failed to perceive how much they themselves have changed socially and behaviorally and find it difficult for them to attach with old friends and family. However, some of these return migrants stated the challenging experiences they were facing. These include social inclusion. Conversely, some of them argued that their social status and quality of life have improved. However, the study proved that returnees lack of important social ties and networks in the area. The reasons identified include changes with regard to the values, norms and lifestyles of these return migrants. There happened to be miscarriage of one's own, family and community roles. Also, the study found that there were social stigma and social rejection posed against some of the return migration. A key informant stated that "As strangers to a society, return migrants may experience unfamiliarity (since they have already being re-socialized) with the norms and practice of their host community and so less able than others to cope up. As a result, they faced discrimination, unequal treatment, and so forth. It is found that some returnees faced difficulties while others easily re-associated with the homeland community. For instance, returnees stated that they faced distrust as the society develop an attitude that all migrants are wealthy and try to take advantage from them.

One of the study participants explained the situation as follows;

*"Since our lifestyle has been contaminated by the culture and value of the Arabs. We, return migrants, have already adopted new lifestyles. Our community has already isolated us. The way we talk, walk and do things have been altered. In the middle of the talk, we mix Arabic languages with Afaan Oromo or/and Amharic. The way we get dressed is not familiarized in our community."*

Another discussant added on that saying;

*“At this moment, the major challenge that we are facing emanates due to our lifestyles; some of the women returnees, for instance, followed the Arabs culture and values. Consequently, the way they costume, for instance, is not familiarized in our Woreda. The cosmetics they use and the dress they wear and the material possessions they have (Tablets and smartphones) are not common. Subsequently, members of the community tried to abuse us, insult us and marginalize us”*

Another interview narrates the situation saying;

*“It is common that if the women dressed sexy and appeared attractive she would be insulted and humiliated. Some members of the society insult us saying; the Arab (አረብ) the toy/puppet (አሻንጉሊታ), ጠባራዎ (The one with full of pride), Rihanna (ሪዥና), አስመሳይ/fakkeessituu (The simulator/ imitator), moodeelistii (the modelist) and others.”*

Similarly, the study showed that some of these return migrants lacked ability to cope with changes in socio-economic status. In this regard, one of the key informants discussed that

*“A comprehensive prevention and response plan should focus how to integrate these return migrants with their respective community. These return migrants must know and respect the values and norms of the society and both women and men can become agents of change.”*

Moreover, as it has been discussed under chapter, international economic and social theories of return migration show that, for instance, in the light of structural theories, return migration is part of the whole migration project and often planned from the beginning. Besides, according to network approaches the opportunities in the home country may cause migrants to return. Adding to this, it states that as migrants stay in touch with people from the origin country, they are able to inform themselves about current changes with respect to the home country's economy or political situation and may then decide to return or not. According to network approaches, these links are very valuable resources which facilitate the re-integration process upon return. Studies showed that migrants who have achieved success often do not encounter problems with their families; however those who did not fulfill the expectation of their family might face problems in the response they get from their family. Moreover, the society expects a lot from returnees including providing financial support being considered wealthy (ILO, 2000).

**Economic Conditions of The Return Migrants:** With regard to an Economic conditions of the return migrants, the findings showed that most of the recent returnees are/were younger and they are/were in an economically active age but less often employed and more often unemployed after returning to their home. Their age roughly varied between 15- 29 years old. Besides, the findings suggested that, although returnees possess valuable human capital and financial resources, they show a comparatively high tendency not to enter the local labor market because of many factors including low employment opportunity in the area, low interest for engagement in job due to low wage, returnees' lack of important social ties and networks in the area, lack of startup capital, lack of businesses area (land) and other factors. Only few of these return migrants were self-employed particularly in business activities. Actually, as most of the respondents argued, these were some of the social and economic challenges that they have been facing in the area. Nevertheless, some of the return migrants, after repatriation, have started making a new life in their place of origin. They started to generate their own income and their journey to gain a secure livelihood has been taking place and according the collected data, few of these return migrants soon started finding new means of livelihood. They changed their direction towards improving their life and made this accordance to the existing socio-economic and political situation.

The study showed that few of these returnees started engaging in business generating activities and entered into the formal market. Similarly, some capitalized on the skills they had learned during their stay at the kingdom. For instance, *Chaltu 9*, interviewee, said, *"I have got a container shop made of metal from the Woreda. Despite the fact that most of the return migrants want both startup capital and land for business, only I and other guy got it. I started my own business and possessed a shop made of steel container."* However, according to the responses of returnees and the MOLSA and BOLSA experts (key informant interviewees), majority of the return migrants were not employed and they were at the lower tier because of their low level of education, low level of employment opportunities and other socio-economic circumstances. For instance, *Chaltu (pseudo name)*, 20 years old girl, stated that:

*"Since I returned to home, I have done nothing worthy praising. I stayed all the days and nights at home. I rarely went out for visiting my relatives. I have no job at this moment. I am running out of money. My family (my mother and 3 brothers and 4 sisters) are all in need of my assistances, since my dad has passed away. Besides, I went to the Woreda office several*

*times and asked them to provide me both startup capital and land to create business and they didn't respond me. I planned to rent shop by myself but the price was skyrocketed and I can't afford 10,000-20,000 ETB for annual house rent."*

As far the type of jobs that these return migrants started doing is considered, the study showed that none of these return migrants, after their repatriation and/or return to their homeland, had resumed agricultural work. Most of them claimed that they never started doing the same type of jobs that they had done prior to or during their period of emigration. Abdu 17, together with other discussants, asserted that they used to cultivate their families land before migrating to the KSA. But now, as per their responses, they totally hate the agricultural work so that they didn't resume this agricultural work after they returned from the KSA. In this regard, the reasons that the majority of these return migrants were putting forward were their current settlement changes and their current lifestyle. As it has been mentioned earlier, majority of these return migrants (primarily, those who used to live in rural areas before the migration) were relocated and changed their settlement in their nearby towns rather than rural areas. Also, their lifestyle has been changed as a result of their exposure in the KSA.

Regarding their occupational status, the results have shown that small portion of the respondents ventured into trading or business activities. However, some of the activities in which these returnees are taking part include buying and reselling of various materials. Retailing is also common. It is the practice of bringing materials from Addis Ababa or Adama or other nearby towns and reselling them inside the town or at the nearby small towns and kebeles. Also, buying and storing of food items such as grain, pepper and others also common. Other return migrants said that they are/were accompanying friends and family (relatives) in market activities. For women returnees, the types of activities (potential work) that few of them were engaged in include beauty salons and business/retailing shops. However, the study showed that most of these returnees were unemployed and they stay idle. They waste most of their valued times and energy on irrelevant or less important affairs such as playing tennis or pool, watching movies, gambling and/or wandering inside the town.

As far the households' typical strategy of improving income is involved, many of these return migrants had depended on their early savings. This saving was the money accumulated during their exile. Hence, they were unable to generate new income since the majority of them were unemployed. Furthermore, the relationship between length of stay at abroad (KSA) and the

asset-holding status of returnees showed a significant similarity. According to the collected data, the relationship between length of stay abroad and asset-holding status of return migrants appeared to be direct and similar. For instance, due to the long stay of the return migrants at abroad, their socio-economic conditions had improved. Their asset holding status (material possessions and physical assets) has been enhanced. In this regard, the study pinpointed that the improved socio-economic status of the returnees could serve as incentive for others (non-migrants) whereby they could help their family, improve their life and so forth.

Generally speaking, the respondents asserted that they (returnees) were expected to search longer for a job due to the lack of employment opportunities and as a result some of them, once again, had involved in illegal migration and fled to another country. Similarly, most of the rerun migrants were forced to adapt and find new means of livelihood to survive (if not grow) in a new environment characterized by challenges and opportunities apart from the different socio-economic situations they were familiarized at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Needless to say, the socio-economic conditions and resources they came across were quite not the same with the socio-economic conditions and resources they came across at the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Added on that, another responded recounts her story as follows;

*"I went to the kingdom via crossing Yemen and that was through the sea route from Djibouti. I stayed there for almost three years. Since I was illegal migrant, Saudi police (Al-shurta) captured me deployed me back to my country. During the first weeks of my deployment, I felt sorry and wished to come back to Saudi. This was due to the fact that life appeared to be difficult to me and I was not comfortable with the living conditions here at home. After all, I decided to return to the kingdom at the cost of anything I imagined that I could bear. However, in the middle of this decision of going to abroad, my dad, unfortunately, had passed away. Sooner within a couple of weeks, I changed my mind and decided to stay here in my country and lastly had forgotten about the exodus. Finally, I got startup money/capital and got my small business in the town. Despite of all these, I am still facing challenges and my life is characterized by ups and downs"*

Another interviewee narrates his current life experience as follows:

*"I stayed at the kingdom more than 7 (seven) years. It was a wonderful stay and fruitful occasions. Consequently, I collected enough money and while I was living there, I called my brothers to the kingdom. I got married and by now have three children. I have*

*managed to create job opportunities for them there at the kingdom. It is a matter of fact that some of my relatives and friends are still living there. After a long stay at the kingdom, I decided to return back to my country. It has been eleven years since I came back to my country. However, I have collected enough money but I could get enough support from the Woreda. I have contacted them many times and I decided that I won't give up till they give land for investment/business"*

Another discussant narrates her post migration life experiences saying;

*"The only thing I was aspiring for when I was at the KSA was to return to my country safely. Life in KSA was harsh and rough. I had my own family (wife and children) here before going to the KSA. I met family and I am having a blessed days and stay with them, Praise be to God! However, I could get job at this moment. I stayed all the days and nights at home. Despite all this, I prefer to stay here in my country for the rest of my life."*

#### **4.3. The Multiple Difficulties Returnees Faced At Home after Repatriation/Returning Home and Their Coping Mechanisms**

In this world, in every community, there are people who have been affected by acts of brutality and multiple sorts of violence. Some of these acts violence are often well publicized while others are committed behind closed doors and are often remain completely hidden out of the sight and hear of the public. For example, atrocities committed by armed groups in conflict situations, abuses committed in the confines of one's own home, or sexual and verbal assaults and gender-based violence committed against returnees could be mentioned in this regard. In the regard of the latter, women are among the most vulnerable to such acts of violence. Accordingly, some of women returnees confirmed that they suffer occasionally from sexual and gender-based violence. For instance, *Chaltu 3*, a discussant, stated that women returnees have been exposed to several types of abuses. In line with this idea, another interviewee affirmed saying, *"I came across several types of abuses directed against female return migrants in particular, including sexual and verbal ones."*

Moreover, various literatures showed that sexual violence, gender-based violence and violence against women are terms that are commonly used interchangeably. All these terms refer to violations of fundamental human rights that perpetuate sex-stereotyped roles that refute human dignity, respect and the self-determination of the individual and hamper human development.

This definition indicated that sexual violence or gender-based violence or violence against women refers to physical, sexual and psychological harm that reinforces female subjugation and perpetuates male power, supremacy and control. Furthermore, study participants argued that gender-based violence has a devastating impact on the lives of women and girls who are/were the majority of victims/survivors.

Additionally, human rights issues are sometimes violated when it comes to migrants and the same is true for these returnees who confirmed the seldom presence/prevalence of violations of human rights by members of the community. Here the causes and types of such human rights violation have been identified to be varying and multiple in nature. Some of the girls pronounced that there have been facing sexual harassment. They seldom came across unwelcomed, usually repeated and unreciprocated sexual request from boys/men in the community. For instance, *Chaltu 12* stated that “*There is spontaneous sexual attention and demand for sexual access*”. Generally speaking, most of the victims of such assaults were women returnees from rural parts of the Woreda. Some women claimed that there were incidents of attempted forced/coerced intercourse. Other mentioned sexual abuse which involves actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. In this regard, eliminating gender-based violence and gender inequalities help to strengthen entire communities. There is need for practical measures on how to prevent and respond to such sexual and gender-based violence. The practical measures must be developed in collaboration and participation of governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations and community at large.

By and large, there are various psychological, social, economic and cultural challenges that returnees have faced (were facing) upon arriving home from KSA and these challenges and their respective aspects that can prove, though they were unanticipated, the difficult, hardship and obstacles surfaced and the concomitant intervention procedures to be considered in this regard. According to the study, the challenges include, lack of employment opportunity, lack of assistance, boredom, loneliness, loss of ex-friends and relatives.

Furthermore, lack of job opportunities is identified to be the major challenge for the returnees, as it has been mentioned in the previous pages. According to the claims of the interviewed returnees, since the work experience possessed by them (returnees) was not necessarily the type of experience currently demanded in their local’s labor market and for the

fact that most of these work experiences did not have market value and could be done by every individual, these returnees, as they claimed, were unable to obtain job opportunities at home.

More specifically, with regard to these challenges, the study showed that after all the freshness, relatively long stay and stimulation of their time at abroad in the KSA and a return to family, friends, and old experiences, some returnees experienced boredom, lost their previous relationship and accustomed to strange environment. According to their saying “*though our friends are very nice and comforting, they seem very dull in responding to our needs and keeping our interest*”. Also, to some it has become usual to miss the previous excitement and friendship, so that they experienced boredom. Besides, again few returnees have claimed that they noticed their relationships with friends and family have been changed. In this regard, one of the female returnees marked that

*“It is very likely that your relationship with ex-friends and some of the relatives changes. Just as we (returnees) have altered some of our ideas, expectations, behavior, actions, lifestyles and attitudes after returning home from abroad (KSA), the people at home are also possibly to have experienced some attitudinal and behavioral changes whether it is positive or negative.”*

Equally important that few of the returnees asserted that some individuals in their community were not interested in hearing and talking about their life experiences, challenges, and successes in the KSA, as they were in sharing those experiences. For instance, some of these individuals in the community, once they have heard the highlights, they were not interested in hearing about their (returnees) livelihood experience whatsoever. Especially, for those who crossed Red Sea and reached Yemen, no matter how sympathetic the listeners were, it was very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference or travel backgrounds in the gulf countries. To this end, these returnees claimed that communication barriers and misunderstanding happened to be common. For instance, some believed that people misunderstand them by misinterpreting their words or actions in such a way that communication becomes difficult and reactions happened to be elusive and abusive.

Likewise, according to the study, new clothing styles, lifestyle or/and mannerisms of the returnees have been viewed as challenge for the returnees themselves. This was because, according the study participants, the lifestyles and mannerisms that some returnees have shown

appeared to be 'provocative, unique and/or inappropriate' for the members of the community. One of the study participants explained the situation as follows;

*"...Some of the female returnees have altered their practices and values. Consequently, the way they get dressed and the way they act are not familiarized in our Woreda but they are totally copied of the Arabs and the West. The material possessions they have (including Tablets and smartphones) and their acts and appearances are unique for our community. Afterwards, members of the community tried to abuse us, insult us and marginalize us"*

Equally, the study have shown that a continually using references to foreign places and ways of life of Arabs or sprinkling Arabic language expressions or words into an Amharic and Afaan Oromo conversation is often considered boasting. Hence, some of the returnees faced rejection and insult as a result. In this regard, a key informant said the following:

*"Since the lifestyle and values of the returnees had been replaced by (altered to) the culture and value of the Arabs, they have already adopted new lifestyles. The way they talk, walk and do things have been altered. In the middle of the talk, they mix Arabic languages with Afaan Oromo or/and Amharic. Mixing Arabic language expressions or words into an Amharic and Afaan Oromo conversation is/are often considered boasting and rejected practice. For instance, they say, Ma'al esh, shiwaya, bes, fulus, na'am, la, bawadi and others. Also, the way they get dressed and use cosmetics are not familiarized in our community. Consequently, our community tends to isolate them."*

Another interview discusses the challenge he faced saying; *"There is inability to apply new knowledge and skills in our community. We are frustrated by the lack of opportunity to apply our newly gained skills and practices abroad at KSA. Because, the community members reject our potentials"*

Equally important, it is clear that violations against return migrants, while they were living abroad, have been generally under recorded. Particularly in the case of some women returnees, they were forced to an exploitative labor that takes place in the illicit underground economy in the KSA. The same was true men also were confiscated of their property. In this regard, some of the respondents wanted to contact concerned body about their lost property and experienced physical harm at the KSA so that they could ask for compensation. They stated that

*'The return of migrants with its human capital implications is one of the most commonly cited benefits of migration for the sending country, along with remittance and labor market effect. However, financial and social capital can also be mobilized through migrants' return. Migrants may accumulate savings while living and working abroad and bring them back once they return. They may also make professional and personal contacts, which prove useful and productive for their endeavors back home.'* (Ammassari and black (IOM) (2001)

More importantly, as far as the returnees are considered, the economic implication is that some of the respondents are likely to expand their businesses or launch new ones and employ others if they obtain land or other startup resources from the Woreda. This in turn will reduce the level of unemployment in the area. There is also the likelihood that those who were unemployed after their return are likely to compete with non-migrants in Woreda or nearby towns for existing job opportunities. Particularly, economic and employment growth induced by the return migration further boosts investment and economic growth in the local areas in particular. Hence, the cumulative effect of these return migrants on local and regional developments must be utilized and a well-managed return migration trends ought to be demonstrated in this regard.

It is also important to recognize the close links between development, migration, and human rights in terms of prevention. There is a need for development policies that address the migration push factors by strengthening rights in areas of high emigration. Equally, prevention should become a third element in anti-trafficking policies. According to international migration theories, skilled return migrants can become actors of change and can stimulate knowledge-based development in the origin country but this is dependent on institutional and regional factors as well as context conditions. Returnees have to prepare for their return by mobilizing resources (human capital, financial capital and social capital). Therefore they require conditions which are favorable enough to allow resources to be mobilized. Here, especially the membership in various networks is important to link return migrants' capital with local resources. Also existing traditional power relations and local values shape return outcomes and may impact on the behavior of returnees.

It is also found that returnees in an economically active age are less often employed and more often unemployed than stayers. This is an established finding for all respondents. These findings suggest that although returnees possess valuable human capital resources, they show a

comparatively high tendency not to enter the local labor market. Whether this is because returnees lack important social ties and networks in the origin country, or because returnees can just afford to search longer for a job due to savings from higher earnings, or because foreign work experience is a signal of being unsuccessful on local labor markets for employers remains unclear.

Whether and to what extent returning migrants can help boosting regional development is to large extent dependent on the situation of the economy and labor market they re-enter in the study area. Data indicated that the study area is predominantly characterized by a traditional economy and an oversupply on the labor market was characterized with little chances of increased demand for labor market in the near future. Accordingly, little chances of increased demand for labor market in the near future offers only inadequate employment opportunities for returning migrants. Majority of these return migrants claimed that probably their skills, experience and knowledge appeared to be less significant. More specifically, majority of the study participants claimed that their skills and their experience are not giving them a competitive advantage.

Correspondingly, the study showed that the impact of return migration in the domestic economy depends to a large extent on the kind of migrants. This is to say the skill category of these return migrants could help to determine their impacts on the domestic economy. Likewise, return migration of high-skilled professionals, especially from developed countries to developing countries, may be highly beneficial due to the fact that they bring with them the latest knowledge and skill components for home country and may generate more employment at home. Conversely, the return migration of unskilled migrants may not be advantageous.

Nevertheless, majority of the respondents argued that in order to harness the potential benefits of return migration, a comprehensive approach aiming at integration of all categories of return migrants in the socio-economic structure is mandatory and beneficial. According to their responses, a comprehensive approach aiming at integration of all categories of return migrants in the socio-economic structure establishes inspiration and confidence in their own country. In this regard, one of the key informants suggested that, saying,

*“The government must utilize the potential of these return migrants. Hence, the practice of retuning to home by migrants, will no longer be felt a nightmare by potential returnees. Equally, the government must facilitate everything possible to help them. By doing so, the*

*government will gain trust and confidence among the overseas Ethiopian diasporas. On the contrary, as long as they do not perceive it worthwhile to return to the home country, they will be hesitant and their potential will be missed.”*

#### **4.5. Re-integration of Returnees**

Various literatures indicated the three main instruments could be used to assess the success of reintegration: (1) access to employment and economic opportunity; (2) ability to set up permanent resettlement; and (3) access to social services. Accordingly, the aims of this study include the examining of the reintegration process and the challenges faced by Ethiopian Youth returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the policies measures employed by the Ethiopian government and the development partners participated to facilitate smooth reintegration of returnees with their respective community. In this part, reintegration is explored within the context of the study area and in the context of the post-repatriation process.

The study indicated that all returnees do not have the same experience in re-integrating with the society. According to the data collected, reintegration process didn't prioritize targeting of extremely vulnerable individuals. Besides, there was a need to work with communities on developing a long-term vision of tackling illegal migration and concomitant challenges happening as a result of unexpected events, like that of the 2014 forced expulsion of Ethiopians by KSA government and the repatriation procedures/challenges witnessed so far concomitantly. Also, some of the respondents asserted that the government failed to consider the existing social institutions (FBOs and CBOs) and local values because they can help and shape return migrants involvement in this regard. Some said that various social networks are important to link return migrants' and their potentials with local resources, reintegrating them with the rest of the society, including *iqub* and *idir* members.

In addition, many returnees faced difficulties while others easily re-associated with the homeland community. Some complained on how things are done in their homeland. Returnees become unsatisfied and unhappy after their return due to the government bureaucracy, inefficiency and other challenges. In this regard, the study has provided recommendations to policymakers on broad strategies to facilitate reintegration and help returnee in their respective communities.

Most of the key informants discussed that it is a mandatory to consider, while reintegrating the returnees, the initial conditions and individual's psycho-socio and economic

behavior of the returnees including their capital. These are essential components in determining the success of that returnee's reintegration process. Also important to consider are the "prevailing conditions" of the environment to which the returnees come back. According to the study, majority of the respondents did not receive any assistance from the government albeit they sought a lot. When asked about how the government could incentivize and accompany the return progress, the majority of returnees either did discuss this question or reacted with great grief and anger. According to their responses, they didn't get any help from the government. However, majority of the returnees identified the type of assistances they have been seeking from the government. These were/are financial incentives and startup capitals, job opportunities, psychological help (psychiatric advice) and land for investment/business.

#### **4.6. The Policy Measures Taken So Far and its Implications**

With regard to the Policy measures regarding return migration, the Ethiopian government has already established the General Directorate in charge of Ethiopian Expatriate Affairs (EEA) under the prime minister office. There is a policy intervention with regard to the stopping of illegal migration and the re-integration of community with their respective community. The following statements present some of the policy measures identified by study participants; some argued that if there is a decent policy measures sought by concerned bodies and if these policy measures could dictate the necessary procedures, illegal migrations and associated challenges would be minimized and/or solved at all. Similarly, the youth who are highly victimized of illegal migration and the myth of exodus could be either stopped to engage in developmental activities inside their country or welcomed to choose legal migration in search of decent work. With regard to policy measures which must be taken, all policy measures targeting the returnees must be adaptable to different (their respective local) contexts and settings and the intervention measures must provide a framework for developing effective prevention (i.e. prevention of illegal migration) and response strategies targeting the returnees. Most importantly, each and every policy measures in general and the mechanisms by which the returnees must be re-integrated or re-adapted and/or re-assimilated with their respective society must offer an exhaustive/comprehensive set of activities and/or procedures to fit every possible situation and local contexts. Furthermore, an issue of preventing and responding to the complex problems/challenges faced by returnees at home (let it be sexual and gender-based violence) require inter-agency, inter-disciplinary, and multi-sectoral collaboration and the government

must work with community at grassroots and local-level participation of community in general and civil institutions including *Idir and Iqub* in particular must be boosted. Any endeavor focusing on re-integration of returnees with the society as well as the general socio-economic system ought to encourage the involvement, reflection and discussion among governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and local community and other stakeholders. Accordingly, such multi-sectoral involvement (including FBOs and CBOs), reflection and discussion on the matter of returnees could possibly provide guiding principles that underlie all efforts to prevent and respond to challenges faced by returnees in general and the psychological and sociological problems, including sexual and gender-based violence. Similarly, multi-sectoral and collaborative approaches happen to generate fruitful outcomes and through such endeavors enable every stakeholder to formulate framework for later multi-sectoral and collaborative approaches for future community-based challenges and communal collaborative developmental achievements.

Further, they pinpoint that the government together with other stakeholders must pursue/suggest policy directions that are believed to encourage both migrants living abroad in order to come back and those who returned in order to participate in development activities of their country. It is clear that high-skilled return migration has the potential to positively impact on development in our country through the exchange of professional knowledge on methods, techniques and standards pertaining to development. To this end, the government could offer reintegration assistance, access to special social services, give permission to earn interest rates or other measures to encourage migrants to seek representation in institutional structures, or establish systems of information and cultural outreach. The government must remove obstacles. Create framework conditions that help returnees to realize their potential: Initiating change and stimulating economic development is a highly difficult and complex task. How high-skilled return migrants can contribute to succeed in this task still needs to be explored. So far, main findings suggest, that origin countries should: The statistics available, as well as research into particular problems, do not necessarily match the significance of the issue above. Intensive research is thus becoming necessary, which inevitably entails spending a great deal of money. The particular importance of studying migration from the point of view of a sending country needs to be acknowledged.

Additionally, it was also impossible to find data on figures of Ethiopian return migrants. As explained by one of the employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this may be due to the fact that all returnees may not contact the ministry and may precede their process through the embassies. Hence, as there is no other mechanism of tracking them, the statistics of returnees could not be obtained. It could have been more complete if data were also obtained about returnees' life before migration. Sources for the number of returnees are limited, incomplete and non-uniform. Many of the terms associated with return migrants, their livelihood status and life experiences identify the factors that motivate Ethiopians who migrated to the Gulf countries to return back to Ethiopia.

***Policy Recommendations:*** The study has raised important issues and revealed various interesting results. Accordingly, based upon these results, useful policy directions/recommendations could be developed. In line with the main findings of this paper, the following policy recommendations are made by the researcher.

Among other things, the study has revealed that a high proportion of the returnees were in their active ages (young). They are therefore in their most economically active ages during which the experience gained could be put into useful purpose. It is therefore recommended that the country's economic development planners should consider return migrants (especially, the youth return migrants) while developing and implementing developmental and social policies. Since the country is striving to achieve a middle-income status in the upcoming decade(s), such consideration would play a pivotal role in alleviating the misery of poverty so that achieving development at a glance. Furthermore, Ethiopian governmental ought to make special considerations and efforts to attract skilled Ethiopian nationals in the diaspora to return home. This is primarily due to the fact that our nationals (citizens) shouldn't return home not only as a result of forced expulsion or/and repatriation but also it must be up on their inherent willingness and fervent interest to boost the development of their country. For instance, a 2014 incident was evident when Saudi government expelled more than 150,000 Ethiopians by force. The government must work to tackle illegal migrants and awareness creation must be made in this regard.

Correspondingly, it is important to scan the potential of these returnees since they, as it has been revealed in the study, have accumulated substantial amounts of human physical and capital resources which represent a key potentials for the socio-economic development of the

nations. Moreover, the government must provide some incentives including access to credit facilities, job creation, tax reliefs, social assistance and basic skills and trainings. If such incentives could be pursued by the government, it could possibly attract Ethiopians who are living abroad (not only those who are living in the gulf countries but also others) to return home. Consequently, such measures could hasten the transformation of the country's investment climate and brings sustainable development. Again, there must a multi-sectorial approaches and involvement in order to change/improve the livelihood status of return migrants. More specifically, various stakeholders (including CBOs, FBOs, NGOs, groups and individuals) ought to be involved while assisting the returnees/ repatriates and combating illegal migration. Such practices could be actualized through involvement of all stakeholders, including national and international organization working on migration and migration management. Also, various comprehensive and intervention programmes must be sought, developed and implemented. Such comprehensive intervention programs include post-arrival information and counseling and start-up support for returnees. Such activities/endeavors facilitate optimum utilization of returnees' skills and resources. Also, such an efforts and activities benefit both the return migrants and the society as a whole. Meanwhile, more detailed researches could be carried out on the issue under scrutiny so that such research activities would contribute to the improvement of the socio-economic status of returnees in particular and local and regional economic development in general. Hence, any research which will be conducted on the same issue may draw comparative analysis and generalization for the whole nation in general.

More importantly, for the fact that some migrant entered or remained illegally in the KSA and this does not nullify the state's duty under international law to protect the basic rights of her citizenry against discrimination including torture, degrading treatment, or forced labor. In this regard, all of the study participants remarked that Saudi's recent decision to deport more than 150,000 irregular migrant workers to Ethiopia was an evidence for such scenarios (negligence practices) from the side of the government and brought huge complications, consequently. According to the return migrants, the situation (forced repatriation of Ethiopian citizens) proved a witnessed delay from the side of state to protect, under international law, the basic rights of her citizenry against discrimination.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study is to gather information pertinent to the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. Accordingly, the study explored the current situations concerning the return migration (migrants) in Ethiopia, taking the case of Saudi returnees for Shirka Woreda. To this end, based on the findings of the study, the researcher comes to the following conclusions.

#### **5.1 Conclusions**

- ✓ The study dealt with changes in attitude, economic background, social factors and other conditions of return migrants, given the exposure in the host community/country (i.e. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Provided that, the understanding of the life experiences of return migration is still fragmentary due to a lack of comparative international studies, the difficulties in defining and measuring return migration and the scarcity of data sources, especially for our country.
- ✓ With regard to the assets, some of the return migrants had lost their assets, belongings and capitals there in the kingdom during the repatriation scheme made by the government of Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, some returnees brought physical assets upon their return and others were forced to sell their assets during the returning in order to supplement family income and familiarize their later life at home country. By and large, an overwhelming majority of these return migrants came with very little assets since they were either confiscated or left over their materials/ assets including their salary in the kingdom during the repatriation period.
- ✓ The work experience possessed by returnees is not necessarily similar with the type of work experiences currently demanded in our country's labor market and most of the work experience doesn't have market value in their areas of origin. Furthermore, the study came to the conclusion that the return migrants, despite the fact that the substantial portion of them (albeit the type and wage of these jobs varied) had access to jobs in their locations of exile (KSA), possess minimal returnee capital and consequently most of the return migrants are economically underprivileged.

nations. Moreover, the government must provide some incentives including access to credit facilities, job creation, tax reliefs, social assistance and basic skills and trainings. If such incentives could be pursued by the government, it could possibly attract Ethiopians who are living abroad (not only those who are living in the gulf countries but also others) to return home. Consequently, such measures could hasten the transformation of the country's investment climate and brings sustainable development. Again, there must a multi-sectorial approaches and involvement in order to change/improve the livelihood status of return migrants. More specifically, various stakeholders (including CBOs, FBOs, NGOs, groups and individuals) ought to be involved while assisting the returnees/ repatriates and combating illegal migration. Such practices could be actualized through involvement of all stakeholders, including national and international organization working on migration and migration management. Also, various comprehensive and intervention programmes must be sought, developed and implemented. Such comprehensive intervention programs include post-arrival information and counseling and start-up support for returnees. Such activities/endeavors facilitate optimum utilization of returnees' skills and resources. Also, such an efforts and activities benefit both the return migrants and the society as a whole. Meanwhile, more detailed researches could be carried out on the issue under scrutiny so that such research activities would contribute to the improvement of the socio-economic status of returnees in particular and local and regional economic development in general. Hence, any research which will be conducted on the same issue may draw comparative analysis and generalization for the whole nation in general.

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- ✓ With regard to the assets, some of the return migrants had lost their assets, belongings and capitals there in the kingdom during the repatriation scheme made by the government of Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, some returnees brought physical assets upon their return and others were forced to sell their assets during the returning in order to supplement family income and familiarize their later life at home country. By and large, an overwhelming majority of these return migrants came with very little assets since they were either confiscated or left over their materials/ assets including their salary in the kingdom during the repatriation period.
- ✓ The work experience possessed by returnees is not necessarily similar with the type of work experiences currently demanded in our country's labor market and most of the work experience doesn't have market value in their areas of origin. Furthermore, the study came to the conclusion that the return migrants, despite the fact that the substantial portion of them (albeit the type and wage of these jobs varied) had access to jobs in their locations of exile (KSA), possess minimal returnee capital and consequently most of the return migrants are economically underprivileged.

- ✓ Besides, the findings indicated that some returnees have been experiencing emotional and psychological consequences including traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, fear, anger, shame, insecurity, self-hate, self-blame, mental illness, and others. These in return have disrupted their interaction and the roles they had within family and community. Also, they experienced loneliness and other challenges of adaptation so that returning home became the more difficult for them. Likewise, the study showed that after all the freshness, relatively long stay and stimulation of their time at abroad in the KSA and a return to family, friends, and old experiences, some returnees experienced boredom, lost their previous relationship and accustomed to strange environment. Equally, the new clothing styles, lifestyle or/and mannerisms of the returnees have been viewed as challenge for the returnees themselves.
- ✓ The findings show that most of the recent returnees are consistently younger and they are in their economically active ages but less often employed and more often unemployed after returning to their home. Besides, the findings suggest that although returnees possess valuable human capital and financial resources, they show a comparatively high tendency not to enter the local labor market because of many factors including low employment opportunity in the area, low interest for engagement in job due to low wage, returnees lack of important social ties and networks in the area and other factors. Consequently, the respondents asserted that they (returnees) are expected to search longer for a job due to the lack of employment opportunities and some of them, once again, had involved in illegal migration and fled to another country.
- ✓ High-skilled return migration has the potential to positively impact on development of our country in many ways including an exchange of professional knowledge and the harness of the potential of active (youth) portions of the society who actively, but unfortunately, engaged in emigration. Nonetheless, the intention of migrants to return to their home country is largely influenced by institutional (political, social and economic rationales) and contextual factors in the home country as well as in the destination country. The right to come and go between the home and host country is another factor and all of these factors are important topics for policy intervention.
- ✓ The study showed that our country's returnees can become actors of change, especially, whenever they mobilize their resources (including human, financial and social capitals) and the study indicated that the issue of high-skilled return migrants needs to be explored.

- ✓ The study indicated that the reintegration process didn't prioritize targeting of extremely vulnerable individuals. Though the membership in various networks is important to link return migrants' capital with local resources, the existing traditional power relations and local values were not considered so that there has been a dire need to work with communities on developing a long-term vision of tackling illegal migration and concomitant challenges happening as a result of unexpected events.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the key findings from the study, the following main policy implications and intervention recommendations for the Ethiopian return migrations in general and Saudi returnees of Shirka Woreda in particular, can be formulated;

- Our country should encourage the return of skilled nationals by applying different return policies. There is a fervent need to create framework conditions that help returnees to realize their potential and the government must remove obstacles to returning home
- When it comes to reintegration of return migrants, there must be an offering of reintegration assistance for return migrants and there must be an offering of access to special social services (including startup capital and loans), encouraging migrants to seek representation in institutional structures and/establishing systems of information and cultural outreach that could enable them to work collaboratively with their respective community members.
- Besides, with regard to policy measures, it is important to recognize the close links between regional and local development and return migration and there is a need for development policies that address the effects of return migration. This is due to the fact that, irrespective of the contexts and extents of the situation of the economy and labor market, returning migrants can help boosting regional and local development.
- Equally, prevention of illegal migration should become an element in anti-trafficking policies and this must complement the trial of traffickers. This involves the breaking of the vicious circle of illegal migration and poverty. There must a multi-sectorial approaches and involvement in order to change/improve the livelihood status of return migrants. More specifically, various stakeholders (including CBOs, FBOs, NGOs, and individuals) ought to be involved while assisting the returnees/ repatriates and combating illegal migration.
- The available figures and researches do not adequately portray the impact of illegal migration and return migration so that intensive research undertakings, which inevitably entails spending a great deal of money and knowledge, appear to be necessary in this regard.
- Addressing the human rights aspects of migration, including the rights of return migrants is an important task and the return migration (repatriation) should take place in conditions of dignity and in an informed procedures. Besides, the government should increase preparedness to respond to future emergencies and with regard to sudden repatriation of our nationals.

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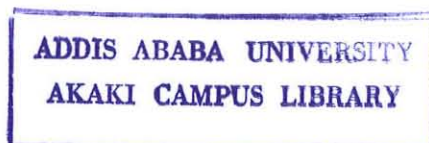
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## APPENDIX

### Informed Consent Form

Dear study participant,

I am Ibrahim Abdurrahman, a prospective Master's program graduate from Addis Ababa University, Institute of Regional and Local Development Study. I am currently conducting study on the topic entitled 'The Livelihood Status of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries; the Case Study of Returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State'. The research is to be conducted for partial fulfillment of the requirements for Masters of Arts in RLDS (Regional and Local Development Studies). The study aims to explore the overall livelihood conditions of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries with specific case focus on the returnees from Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. Accordingly, the objective of the study is to scrutinize the life experiences of returnees at their homeland and their current livelihood scenarios after exodus. To this end, the study will indicate the life experiences and the livelihood status of the study participants and it will advocate alternative ways to address the challenges they are facing at home after exodus and will serve as essential guide that may indicate direction for intervention for NGOS and GOS working on the area of migration, returnees, youth empowerment and local and regional development. Hence, for the successful completion of the study, your cooperation in providing necessary data is crucial. You can fill the questionnaire as much as you can. All data collected from participant (you) will be kept confidential and all respondents (you) have the right to refuse responding to some and/or all the questions at any time. The researcher will clarify any unclear question(s) when necessary. By signing this form, under the above-provided conditions, please, justify whether you agree to participate in the study.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Ibrahim Abdurrahman

Email address: [onlypeaceandloveforhumanity@gmail.com](mailto:onlypeaceandloveforhumanity@gmail.com)

## **Interview Guideline Prepared For Returnees**

### **General Introduction**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information pertinent to the life experiences of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries; the case study of Returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. The data to be gathered via this questionnaire will be used only for academic research purpose. Hence, the research is to be conducted for partial fulfillment of the requirements for Masters of Arts in RLDS (Regional and Local Development Studies). Your response to this questionnaire will be kept confidential. Hence, I humbly request you to take part in this study voluntarily. More importantly, the quality and worthiness of this study highly depends on your genuine responses. Cognizant of this, I would like to confirm that if there is any misconceptions, doubts and/or ambiguity, you can ask any time for clarity.

### **Part I: Profile of the Respondent**

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Religion: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Educational status \_\_\_\_\_
4. Birth place \_\_\_\_\_
5. Marital status
  - A. Single
  - B. Married
  - C. Widowed
  - D. Divorced
  - E. If other, mention \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ethnic background \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part II- Causes of Migration and the Living Conditions at Abroad (Gulf State Countries)**

1. When did you travel to Gulf state countries?
2. What was/were your reason (s) for leaving the country?
3. The most common initial source of funding for the journey came from? (you can encircle more than one)

### **Part II- Causes of Migration and the Living Conditions at Abroad (Gulf State Countries)**

4. When did you travel to Gulf state countries?
5. What was/were your reason (s) for leaving the country?
6. The most common initial source of funding for the journey came from?
7. What was/were your Travel routes?

8. How often you travelled to Gulf State Countries?
9. What was your employment status before you migrated to the Gulf States?
10. What was/were the dangers you faced along the journey?
11. How long have you stayed in that specific country of your destination?
12. What was/were the psychological benefits you obtained from Gulf Countries?
13. What was/were the social benefits you obtained from Gulf Countries?
14. What was/were the economic benefits you obtained from Gulf Countries?
15. What was/were the psychological challenges you encountered at Gulf Countries?
16. What was/were the social challenges you faced from Gulf Countries?

**Part Three: Questions Related To the Motives and Procedures for Returning Home**

17. Why did they return from abroad?
18. When did you return from abroad?
19. What was/were the conditions you were waiting for before returning home?

**Part Four: Crosscutting Issues Related To Migration and Returnees**

20. Are there changes in your living standards after migration? If yes, mention it please
21. What is your current settlement status?
22. What are the problems you have been facing after returning from Gulf States, if any?
23. Types of activities (potential work) that you are currently engaged in?
24. Which of the following benefits have returnees received from the government?
25. What are the types of assistances must be given from governments or from international organizations for the returnees?
26. What the returnees' re-integration process pursued so far by the government or Non-governmental organizations?
27. How the legal assistance, reintegration measures and representation of returnees must be provided?
28. Any comments/ideas you want to share with me, please?

**Thank you in advance for your time and kind cooperation!**

## **Appendix II**

### **Guideline Prepared For Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

#### **General Instruction**

The purpose of this FGD is to gather information pertinent to the Livelihood Status of Ethiopian Youth Returnees from the Gulf Countries; the Case Study of Returnees of Shirka Woreda of Oromiya Regional State. The data to be gathered via this FGD will be used only for academic research purpose. Your response in this FGD will be kept confidential. Hence, I humbly request you to take part in this study voluntarily. More importantly, the quality and worthiness of this study highly depends on your genuine responses. Besides, for the purpose of data analysis and simplify post-data collection process, your responses will be tape recorded. Cognizant of this, I would like to request you to feel free and ask if there is any misconceptions, doubts and/or ambiguity during the discussion session.

#### **Issues to be raised in the Focus Group Discussion**

1. What are the major causes of migration?
2. How are the livelihoods of returnees changing in terms of assets, opportunities, constraints and outcomes?
3. What is the impact of the returnees on livelihood recovery and development strategies of in their homeland?
4. How do returnees access basic services?
5. What is the impact of returnees and reintegration programmes on the livelihoods of hosting communities?
6. How do you see the extent of co-operation and co-ordinations between your local communities and the formal government institutions in the process of helping the returnees?
7. What are the unique challenges they are facing in their respective areas?
8. Who must be involved in the process of helping the returnees?
9. Could you please explain the role of the formal government institutions in the process of helping the returnees? And what must be used to inform government planning and policy related to migrants and returnees?
10. What are the merits and demerits that could be associated with returning to home country?
11. What do you suggest for the effective and sustainable ways of helping the returnees?
12. What are the challenges faced by the formal government institutions in helping the returnees at the grass- root levels?
13. How do you describe the interest, participation and collaboration of communities in the process of helping the returnees?
14. Do you have any additional points or ideas related to the issue under discussion?

**Thank you in advance for your time and kind cooperation!**

### **Appendix III**

#### **Questions prepared for Key Informant Interview (For individuals and NGO representatives who work on returnees)**

1. In which bureau/organization are you currently working? What is your position in the bureau/organization?
2. What kind of assistance/services or provisions your institution is providing for Gulf state returnees?
3. Based on the information that you have got from returnee, if any, what are the major challenges of the returnees at home after returning from Gulf countries?
4. Based on the information that you have got from returnee, if any, what are the major prospects of the returnees at home after returning from Gulf countries?
5. What are the challenges faced by the formal government institutions in helping the returnees at the grass- root levels?
6. How do you describe the interest, participation and collaboration of communities in the process of helping the returnees?
7. Generally, how do you explain their overall experience returnees at their home?
8. Do you have any additional points or ideas related to the issue under discussion?

**Thank you in advance for your time and kind cooperation!**