

**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Social Sciences**  
**School of Graduate Studies**

**Causes and Consequences of Human  
Trafficking:**  
**A Case Study in Metema Town**

**By:**

**Hailemichael Nigusu Hagose**

**June 2014**

**Addis Ababa**

**Causes and Consequences of Human Trafficking:  
A Case Study in Metema Town**

**By:**

**Hailemichael Nigusu Hagose**

**A thesis submitted to the school of graduate studies of Addis  
Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts in Social Anthropology**

**Advisor: Meron Zeleke (PhD)**

**Department of Social Anthropology**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

**Addis Ababa University**

**June 2014**

**Addis Ababa**

**Causes and Consequences of Human Trafficking:  
A Case Study in Metema Town**

---

**By:**

**Hailemichael Nigusu Hagose**

**Approved by board of examiners**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Advisor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Internal examiner**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**External examiner**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**signature**

# Declaration

---

I the undersigned hereby declare that the thesis titled *Causes and Consequences of Human Trafficking: A case Study in Metema Town* is my original work and to the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where proper citation and due acknowledgement has been made. I do further affirm that this thesis has not been presented or being submitted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or publication, in English or in any other language.

This is a true copy of the thesis

---

**Hailemichael Nigusu Hagose**

---

**Date**

ID NO. GSR/1296/05

# Certification

---

I the undersigned certify that the thesis *Causes and Consequences of Human Trafficking: A case Study in Metema Town*, which is submitted to the school of graduate studies of Addis Ababa University to award a degree of Master of Arts in **Social Anthropology**, is the original work of **Hailemichael Nigusu Hagose**. (GSR/1296/05)

---

**Dr. Meron Zeleke (PhD)**

---

**Date**

**Department of Social Anthropology,**

**Faculty of Social Sciences,**

**Addis Ababa University**

## Acknowledgements

**T**his thesis research would not have been feasible without the help and assistance of a number of persons; and I would like to use this time and place to present my appreciation and gratitude to them. First and foremost glory and thanks to the heavenly father almighty God for being there all in my life, for my educational success and more importantly for Your **unconditional** love. Next I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to **Dr. Meron Zeleke**, my advisor, for her invaluable guidance, expertise, support and sisterly advices. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to my friend Tekeba, who helped me throughout the data collection phase of the study, and the trafficking victims, Metema town residents and public servants who participated in this study as informants, for willing to give their valuable time to share their life experience with me. I am also grateful to my family, whose moral and emotional support and prayer keep me strong throughout my life and all the study years. My Gratitude also goes to my home institution, Dilla University, for sponsoring my two years study. Last but not least, my appreciation and thanks will goes to my classmates Henok, Lelisa and Lijalem with whom I was sharing this precious time in AAU.

## **Glossary of Local Terms**

Kebelle – the smallest political administrative unit in Ethiopia (urban neighborhood association)

Leqami – a term used to refer to traffickers in places of origins (the literal Amharic meaning of the term refers to someone who collects or gathers things)

Shekava - a term used to call a local human trafficking brokers in Metema town

Wereda - the second smallest unit of political administration in Ethiopia, which consists of different *Kebelles* under it

## **List of Acronyms**

ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
CETU	Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions
CSW	Commercial Sex Work/er
EEF	Ethiopian Employers' Federation
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HT	Human Trafficking
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
NARC	National Aids Resource Center
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PrEA	Private Employment Agencies
SNNPR	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TI	Transparency International
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crimes
WHO	World Health Organization

**List of Figures and Tables**

FIGURE 1 MAP OF THE STUDY AREA .....15

FIGURE 2 DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE TRAFFICKING NETWORK .....63

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF CAUSES OF MIGRATION .....50

TABLE 2 PROFILE OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS BY PLACE OF ORIGIN .....86

TABLE 3 NUMBER OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS BASED ON SEX .....93

## Table of Contents

<b>Content</b>	<b>page</b>
Declaration.....	i
Certification .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iii
Glossary of Local Terms .....	iv
List of Acronyms.....	v
List of Figures and Tables .....	vi
Abstract .....	x
<b>Chapter One .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	7
1.3.1 General Objective.....	7
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	7
1.4 Research Questions .....	7
1.5 Research Method .....	8
1.5.1 Research Design.....	8
1.5.2 Data Collection Techniques .....	9
1.5.3 Data collection Procedure .....	12
1.5.4 Data Compilation and Analysis.....	12
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	13
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	13
1.8 Problems Encountered and Limitations of the Study .....	14
1.9 Description of the Study Area .....	15
1.10 Organization of the Thesis.....	17
<b>Chapter Two.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Review of Relevant Literature .....</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Definition of Key Concepts .....	18
2.1.1 Migration .....	18
2.1.2 Migrant Smuggling.....	19
2.1.3 Human Trafficking .....	21
2.2 Understanding Human Trafficking .....	22
2.2.1 Root Causes of Human Trafficking.....	22

2.2.2	Problems Faced by Human Trafficking Victims .....	25
2.2.3	Impacts of Trafficking in Human Beings .....	27
2.2.4	Actors Involved in Human Trafficking .....	29
2.3	Human Trafficking in Ethiopia: An Overview of Existing Studies .....	30
2.4	Theoretical Framework .....	32
2.4.1	Existing Theoretical Concepts in Human Trafficking .....	33
2.4.2	The Rational Choice Theory of Migration.....	33
<b>Chapter Three .....</b>		<b>35</b>
<b>Major Causes of Human Trafficking in Ethiopia.....</b>		<b>35</b>
3.1	Factors That Lead to Human Trafficking .....	35
3.1.1	Economic Causes of Human Trafficking .....	37
3.1.2	Socio Cultural Factors that Leads to Trafficking .....	45
3.1.3	Other Contributing Factors .....	50
3.2	Migrants Reason for Choosing Illegal Routes of Migration.....	53
3.2.1	Lack of Awareness about the Difficulties of Trafficking .....	53
3.2.2	High Cost of legal Migration .....	54
3.2.3	The Long Process and Conditions of Formal Migration.....	55
<b>Chapter Four.....</b>		<b>57</b>
<b>The Trafficking Process and the Multifaceted Challenges Faced by the Victims .....</b>		<b>57</b>
4.1	The Trafficking Process .....	57
4.1.1	The Recruitment Process .....	58
4.1.2	Transportation Process.....	59
4.1.3	The Trafficking Network .....	61
4.2	Multifaceted Challenges Faced by the Victims at Various Stages of the Trafficking.....	64
4.2.1	Challenges during Pre-departure and the Travel to Metema Town.....	64
4.2.2	Challenges Faced by Victims at Metema Town.....	66
4.2.3	Crossing the Border, Walking Through the Desert .....	72
4.3	Deporting the Victims to Their Place of Origin.....	80
<b>Chapter Five.....</b>		<b>81</b>
<b>Actors Involved in Human Trafficking and the Vulnerability of Victims.....</b>		<b>81</b>
5.1	Actors Involved in Human Trafficking and Their Role .....	81
5.1.1	Traffickers.....	82
5.1.2	Migrants .....	85
5.1.3	Families of the Trafficked Persons .....	87
5.1.4	Local Community of the Transit Town (Metema) .....	89
5.1.5	Public Officials.....	90

5.2	Vulnerability to Human Trafficking .....	92
5.2.1	Who is More Vulnerable to Trafficking? .....	92
5.2.2	Risk Factors for Women’s Vulnerability to Trafficking.....	94
<b>Chapter Six</b>	.....	<b>97</b>
<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	.....	<b>97</b>
6.1	Concluding Remarks .....	97
6.2	Recommendations .....	100
<b>References</b>	.....	<b>102</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	.....	<b>107</b>

## **Abstract**

Currently migration and migration related topics have a prominent place in the discipline of anthropology. Among a range of topics, anthropologists are involved in the study of such areas as migration and identities, religion, family and kinship, remittances, development, and hometown associations. The current study is one of such anthropological endeavors made to understand the ever increasing phenomenon of human trafficking in Ethiopia. Trafficking in persons is an illicit trade in living human beings, where people are recruited in their country of origin and transported to destination countries for the purposes of different exploitations.

The research is conducted in Metema town, one of the prominent transit places in Ethiopia which used to traffic a significant number of Ethiopian migrants to the Sudan. Understanding the root causes of trafficking, depicting the multifaceted challenges being faced by trafficked persons and writing an anthropological account of human trafficking in Ethiopia were the major objectives of the study. To accomplish the above objectives the study collected primary and qualitative data from different informants in Metema town by employing such qualitative data collection techniques as an interview, focus group discussions and observation. A total number of 20 informants were participated in the study as informants.

Human trafficking is one form of migration, and migration is a response made by persons to cope up with different economic, socio-cultural, and political crises. The findings of the study showed that such economic condition as poverty and a desire to improve one's economic condition coupled with lack of employment and low payment for domestic works made many young Ethiopians to look for opportunities in a foreign land and to end up in trafficking. Besides poor economic conditions the study also identifies and discusses other socio-cultural and politico-legal issues as causes of trafficking in Ethiopia. Trafficked persons faced multifaceted problems not only in the destination counties, but also in the transit places and in the journey made to reach the destination country. The study also found out that trafficked persons experience different problems before reaching the destination country, the Sudan. In their way to the destination country trafficked persons are raped, beaten, abused, and ripped of their rights both in the transit town and in the desert route.

## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

In one or another way human trafficking, for it involves the movement of persons, is one part of migration. As Dinan (2007: 58) pragmatically states “trafficking in persons must be understood within the context of the larger phenomenon of persons’ movement across international borders.” It is also suggested by other scholars that trafficking debates must be embedded in notions of migration. Therefore, highlighting some information about human migration in general would be a prerequisite to understand the complicated and controversial concepts of human trafficking. In a strict sense migration is the movement of people, either individually or as a group, through geographic space for different reasons (Kearney 1986: 331).

In the 1950s and 1960s anthropologists began to turn away from community studies. Among other things a heightened awareness of the magnitude and significance of migration was the major cause for anthropologists to make the shift (Kearney 1986: 332). Ever since, anthropologists engaged in the study of migration with reference to development, industrialization, gender role, family structure, and agriculture, transculturalism and ideology. Thus, in anthropology, the investigation of migration is inextricably associated with issues of development and under development. For they have studied migration in association with other social phenomena, the way anthropologists perceive migration is somewhat different from other personalities that investigate migration only. Kearney and Beserra, in their article entitled *Migration and Identity*, try to investigate transnational migration in relation to the role of the migrant’s class and identity in crossing a political border of another country. From this angle they define migration as the “movement of persons across a significant border in the process of which the identity of the migrant is significantly changed politically” (2004: 6).

Human migration is not a recent phenomenon. If we look back to the history of mankind, migration has been part of the lives of human beings for time immemorial. The causes of their migration were quite multifaceted. “Migrations have occurred throughout human history, beginning with the movements of the first human groups from their origins in East Africa to their current location in the world” (National Geographic Society 2005). Since man has been on earth

ethnic groups have travelled to different regions of the world in search of a better basis of existence. These days so many people are living far away from their native homelands. Environmental problems, poor living conditions, violence and armed conflicts, lack of sufficient economic income and the growing gap between poor and rich countries are identified as some of the causes of worldwide migration of people. In developing countries, like Ethiopia, many people consider migration as the only option to escape from poverty and improving their livelihoods.

The various reasons why people leave their homeland have been discussed at length in different researches. Despite the differences in the factors that force people to migrate, people often choose different ways and mechanisms to reach at their destination. Some people choose the formal ways of leaving a country via formally and legally established travel agencies. While other people, for different reasons, resort to illegal routes to leave their country. It is reported in different researches that people who choose these illegal routes often face numerable challenges on their way to the destination places. Transnational human trafficking is one of the major ways by which people cross the boundaries of their country with the help of agents and local brokers.

Numerous root causes have been identified for the existence of human trafficking; and as Cullen-DuPont argues these numerous causes must be examined in terms of the factors that push people from countries of origin and the factors that pull people into destination places. The causes include high prevalence of poverty, lack of employment opportunities, the growing economic imbalances among regions of the world, decline of border controls, gender and ethnic discrimination, corruption, and political instability and conflict (Cullen-DuPont 2009: 23-27).

These push factors are contrasted with the pull factors of demand for workers, the possibilities of higher standards of living, and the perceptions of many in poor communities that better opportunities exist in larger cities or abroad (Shelley 2010: 37). Yet most of these conditions have existed for a very long time. They alone do not explain the phenomenal growth of human trafficking in recent times. Globalization, which is characterized by greater mobility of goods and people and more rapid communications, has also contributed a lot for the rapid growth of human trafficking in recent decades.

For one or another reason mentioned above individuals may think of migrating to other places in search of a good income and life. Having the economic constraints that force them to migrate, individual migrants may choose illegal ways of migration, which cost them less as compared to the formal ones. Illegal migrants face different problems not only at the destination places but also in the long journey that is made to reach the destination places. But it is the challenges that illegal migrants face in the destination places that are repeatedly told by the media, academic and non-academic researchers conducted on the topic and the public in general. Nonetheless, victims of human trafficking face a lot of difficult problems on their way to the destination places as equally as the problems they face abroad in the destination places. They face many complicated problems including sexual abuse and fee overcharging by the local brokers while they are in their own country's boundary, starting from their local residence areas to the transit places. This is one of the issues that this research is going to deal with.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

As some anecdotal evidence suggests, human trafficking is the fastest growing crime in the world and it is the third most money generating illegal activity next to drugs and arms trafficking (Bales and Soodalter 2009: 3). The scale of human trafficking is quite significant. As a result of its hidden nature, it is difficult to obtain data on the exact estimate of the victims of human trafficking around the world and the human traffickers facilitating the migration process. The term human trafficking lacks a common definition among scholars who are working on the field. Because of the reasons mentioned above and largely for it is a complicated and hidden activity, crafting even inexact estimates of the number of people trafficked annually is difficult. Compounding the difficulties in estimation, trafficking is often committed by distinct ethnic groups that are hard for outsiders to penetrate (Shelley 2010: 4; and Savona & Stefanizzi 2007: 2).

Starting from the 1980s there has been a significant growth in the number of Ethiopian citizens, especially women, who are subjected to human trafficking (ILO 2011). Since then many Ethiopian citizens crossed their country's boundary illegally with the help of human traffickers. In Ethiopia there are different places used by human traffickers as a transit to easily deport persons to another country. Predominantly, these places are located around the border areas of the country. *Metema*, a relatively small town that is located in the North- Western part of

Ethiopia around the Ethio- Sudanese border, is one of such places. Since the coming of *Dergue* in to power in the first half of the 1970s, Metema serves as the main gate for people to get away from the country. Each year a large number of people are brought to this small town by local human traffickers from different parts of the country for the purpose of crossing the nearby Ethio – Sudanese border. Crossing this border is not an end by itself; rather it is a means to get into the Middle East/the Arab States, and thereby further to Europe.

In recent times, in Ethiopia, human trafficking is given a due consideration and government has started combating the problem in collaboration with other concerned nongovernmental organizations. In spite of this government effort to tackle the problem, there is lack of anthropological researches/ studies concerning human trafficking in Ethiopia. Human trafficking is a very complicated and covert incident that needs to be studied from different dimensions to understand its course and nature, thereby to set strategies and policies which helps to combat the problem.

So far now, few researches have been done in Ethiopia on the issue of human trafficking. Most of these researches are done by different international and local organizations like that of ILO, IOM, MoLSA, and many others. There are also some studies conducted by individual researchers. Joyte (2005), Beydoun (2006), Mesfin (2011), Asefach (2012), and Elias (2013), are among the few individual researchers who studied human trafficking in Ethiopia. Most of these studies are highly concerned on the investigation of the challenges, prospects, and different kinds of right violations that Ethiopian domestic workers experience in the Arab Middle East, primarily depending on returnee domestic workers as key informants. None of the above researches have given much focus on the challenges that the migrants face before they reach the destination countries (The Arab Middle East). We have heard different tragic stories via different Medias about the problems that Ethiopian domestic workers faced in the Middle East; those miserable stories have been also repeatedly revealed by different studies conducted on migrant returnees. But one major thing that the media and the above researches fail or forget to tell us is about the different multifaceted challenges which those migrants experience while they were in the trafficking process and at the transit places. (The challenges that they face on their illegal journey made to reach the destination countries).

In fact it is obvious that, in recent years, the field of human trafficking has attracted a great deal of attention. There have also been numerous government interventions to control traffickers, to facilitate international cooperation, to prevent these illegal activities, and to assist victims of the problem. However, for a number of reasons, researches in this area are rare. Anthropological studies on migration and related topics are emerging recently. Beside the late introduction of anthropology to the field of migration and other related topics, many researchers including those anthropologists hesitate to study human trafficking as one form of migration for a long period of time. This is mainly because of the risk and the dangerous scenario that surrounds the trafficking business, and the difficulty of accessing informants easily. Because of the scanty nature of research on the field of human trafficking, the knowledge we have about the nature of the problem is weak; and consequently actions and measures that are taken to tackle the problem are sometimes based more on emotions or political bias than on strong and substantiated research work.

Therefore, this research is conducted with the intention of providing a substantial anthropological account about the nature, causes and the multilayered challenges being faced by the victims of human trafficking in Ethiopia, particularly revolving on the trafficking incidents occurring around, Metema town, the Ethio-Sudan border.

As stated above, few studies regarding human trafficking in Ethiopian have been conducted by different researchers. For instance Aderajew Teshome (2013) tries to address the problem of human trafficking from legal point of view. In his research entitled *Ethiopia's Response to Human Trafficking: Towards Effective Criminalization and Protection* Aderajew discusses the issue of human trafficking in relation to the legal framework of the country by assessing the criminal code and employment exchange proclamation of the country. In the course of his investigation he found out that the Ethiopian government has not complied with the international standards in terms of combating trafficking in persons. Finally the research done by Aderajew asserts that the Ethiopian government has an international obligation to combat human trafficking including protection of victims and highlights some ways to amend the law to criminalize trafficking offenses that are not covered under the existing domestic legislation.

Regarding the overseas challenges of trafficked Ethiopian workers, numbers of studies have been conducted by International Labor Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor

and Social Affairs (MoLSA), the Ethiopian Employers' Federation (EEF), and the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU). The research, entitled *Trafficking in Persons Overseas for Labor Purposes: the Case of Ethiopian Domestic Workers*, is conducted by ILO in collaboration with other organizations. This research has indicated that the act of human trafficking is increased recently in Ethiopia. In addition, the research has also identifies different challenges, including sexual abuse, physical abuse and ethnic stereotype, which Ethiopian migrants face in the destination countries (ILO 2011).

Another research focusing on the plights of Ethiopian domestic workers in the Gulf countries is also conducted by a sociologist named Selamawit Bekele. Selamawit (2013), in her paper entitled *The Vulnerability of Ethiopian Women and Girls*, investigates the different challenges that Ethiopian women domestic workers face while they are working in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. She uses legally migrated and returned women workers as key informants to portray the complex problems they have experienced while they were abroad. In addition to the above studies, Emebet Kebede (2002), Yoseph, Mebratu and Belete (2006), and, more recently, a research entitled *Ethiopian Female Domestic Workers in the Middle East: Expectations and Experiences* by Girum Arayaselassie (2013) are also among the studies conducted in Ethiopia on the issue of human trafficking. These researches separately try to address the challenges which Ethiopian trafficked domestic workers face in different destination countries, depending on the experiences of migrant returnees.

Majority of the researches done in Ethiopia regarding human trafficking are focused only on one side of the coin, i.e. the problems which Ethiopian domestic workers face in the destination countries, neglecting the multilayered challenges they experience before reaching the destination countries. However, the issue of human trafficking which is affecting quite a significant number of individuals and the country in general; specifically the different challenges that Ethiopian victims of human trafficking faced while they are in their country is an area which is not much touched by anthropologists and other researchers as well.

Consequently, I found it highly imperative to undertake an anthropological research on the nature, cause and multifaceted challenges of human trafficking in Ethiopia so as to obtain qualitative anthropological facts pertaining to the problem. Through this research a thorough attempt will be made to provide an alternative conceptualization of the cause and challenges of

human trafficking in Ethiopia by utilizing qualitative research methods mainly. Therefore, it is this gap that this research attempts to fill by providing different anthropological accounts on the causes and complicated problems of human trafficking in Ethiopia.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study include the following general and specific objectives

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The overall objective of the study was:

- ❖ To identify and discuss the socio-economic factors of human trafficking; the major precipitating causes that appeal people to resort to illegal ways of trafficking and to portray the multifaceted challenges being faced by the trafficked persons until they reach the destination country.
- ❖ To write an anthropological and ethnographic account on the causes and multifaceted challenges of human trafficking, by focusing the investigation on Metema town, one of the major places used as a transit to traffic persons to the Sudan and the Middle East.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study include:

- To identify the major causes of human trafficking
- To portray the multifaceted challenges and difficulties that the victims of human trafficking faced throughout the whole process of their journey
- To identify the actors involved in human trafficking
- To depict and investigate the role of parents, friends and local agents in human trafficking
- To discover the most vulnerable part of the society to human trafficking

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Depending on the above objectives of the study the following main research questions are formulated, and the aim of this research is to answer these questions.

- 1) What are the socio economic factors behind human trafficking?

- 2) What are the major urging causes that force people to resort into human trafficking?
- 3) Who are the different actors involved in the act of human trafficking in the study area?
- 4) What are the major challenges that faced the trafficked persons in the whole process of their journey?
- 5) Are there any particular groups in the society, which are highly prone to human trafficking?
- 6) What are the agencies of different parts of the society in the human trafficking?

## **1.5 Research Method**

In this part of the thesis an outline of the research methodology, including the research design, data collection techniques and tools, data compilation and analysis methods, which used to carry out this research are given and discussed briefly.

### **1.5.1 Research Design**

This research was designed to investigate the causes and multilayered challenges of human trafficking in Ethiopia, focusing on the incidents of human trafficking taking place in Metema town. Therefore, owing to the objectives, research questions and nature of the issue under investigation, particularly its emphasis on investigating the causes and inside challenges of human trafficking; the research is mainly qualitative.

This research mainly focuses on the exploration and understanding of the perspectives, perceptions, and opinions of those individuals who are involved and affected by human trafficking, and also on the identification of different causes and multifaceted challenges of human trafficking. The research aimed to reflect, explore and disseminate the views, feelings and experiences of research participants. Thus, bearing this in mind, such qualitative research method as ethnography and life histories were employed and made it possible to collect more qualitative and context based data about the perceptions and opinions of individuals and community members, who are affected by and involved in trafficking, towards the causes and challenges of human trafficking. Ethnography, the central methodological strategy which is used in this study, has proven to be a powerful tool for unpacking a series of widely propagated suppositions about the challenges and causes of trafficking in persons.

### **1.5.2 Data Collection Techniques**

Pertaining to the research design proposed above, both primary and, to some extent, secondary sources of data were consulted in this research to obtain the required data for conducting the research. Most of the information pertaining to the secondary data sources was obtained from published and unpublished government documents, different researches, magazines, pamphlets, etc. Primary data about the causes and challenges of human trafficking was collected directly from individuals and community members who are directly affected and involved in human trafficking. Different qualitative data gathering techniques were used to obtain the primary or firsthand information directly from the informants.

In order to collect reliable data and check the validity of the data collected by each data collection techniques, a combination of the following qualitative data collection tools were employed in the research. The data was collected from the informants in Amharic and later translated in to English.

#### **a) Ethnographic Interview**

Of the different data collection tools used in this study, the research heavily relied on ethnographic interviewing to garner in the required data. Both unstructured and structured interview questions were prepared and an interview, formal and informal, was made with different informants. The interview was made with the aim of acquiring data on what the informants think as a cause of human trafficking and how they feel about the different challenges of human trafficking.

The value of an ethnographic interview is optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics like human trafficking are being explored (Mack *et al* 2005: 2). Therefore, in this research an intensive in-depth interview was made with different informants for collecting data on the informants' personal histories, perspectives, experiences, and attitudes towards the causes and challenges of human trafficking.

Key informant interview (**KII**) is one type of interviewing where by the researcher will be able to generate rich and all rounded information about a particular topic. As Bernard says interviewing, particularly unstructured in depth interviewing, can be used for studying sensitive

issues, “like sexuality, racial or ethnic prejudice, or hot political topics” (2006: 213). For it is one of the sensitive issues of our time applying interview as a data collection tool is useful in studying human trafficking. In this research, an intensive and detailed interviewing was made with ten (10) victims of human trafficking and with two local agents and brokers of human trafficking, for they are the main characters of the act of human trafficking. The community members of Metema town were also other participants of the KII. For they have lived in an area where the act of human trafficking is repeatedly done, the local community members have witnessed different things and have a lot to say about the issue of human trafficking. An in depth interview sessions were conducted with three local residents of Metema town who have a detailed knowledge about the trafficking incident in the area. Except for Metema *Wereda* public officers who participated in this study as informants, all other informants were represented in the study with anonymous names.

#### **b) Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

According to Bryman there are several reasons for using focus groups as a data collection tool. Among other things conducting an FGD help the researcher to develop an understanding about why people think the way they do, members of the focus group can bring forward ideas and opinions not foreseen by the researcher, and furthermore the interactions found in group dynamics are closer to the real life process of ‘sense making’ and acquiring understanding (2004: 247-8). Therefore, considering the advantage of conducting an FGD and the time given for completing the research, different focus group discussion sessions were conducted with various categories of informants with the aim of accessing a broad range of views about human trafficking and collecting a large amount of data pertaining to the issue under scrutiny, relatively over a short period of time. The focus group discussions were made with the victims of human trafficking, residents of Metema town, and with some local officials mainly to identify the main causes and challenges of human trafficking, and the parties involved in trafficking.

A total of three separate focus group discussion sessions were conducted. Participants for the focus group discussion were selected from three different sets of informants. Of the three FGD sessions, one was consist of individuals who are involved and affected by human trafficking as participants. The other two FGD sessions were comprised of the local community members and some government officials, separately, as main participants.

Local brokers and traffickers are among the main actors of human trafficking who are responsible for the trafficking of many individuals. It is like an obligation to incorporate the ideas of those brokers and traffickers as they are the main actors of the human trafficking business. In this case, in this research, I rather prefer to approach them in a different way than conducting an FGD with these actors. Because it was difficult to get six –to- eight individual brokers or traffickers together at a time for conducting a focus group interview, I found it simple and preferable to make an informal interview with them and know their ideas and point of views pertaining to the issue under investigation.

### **c) Observation**

As Mack and her colleagues discussed in their book *Qualitative Research Methods*, that using observation in combination with other qualitative methods such as interview and FGD is an integral part of the iterative research process which helps and enables the researcher to facilitate and develop positive relationship among key informants and stakeholders whose assistance and approval are needed for the study to become reality. Data gathered through observation is also invaluable in determining whom to recruit as an informant for the study and how best to recruit them (Mack *et al* 2005: 16).

In researching some sensitive issues, including human trafficking, it becomes very difficult, dangerous and risky for the researcher/participant observer to observe things while participating in the process of doing those things. Partly the difficulty emanates from the clandestine character of the activity and from the hidden nature of the population under scrutiny. Thus, owing to the difficulty and risk of participating in human trafficking, a simple personal observation was made by the researcher to acquire information about the activities and the behaviors of individuals involved in and affected by human trafficking; and to observe the different challenges that migrants face at the research site/transit town.

The systematic observation, which was made by the researcher, serves two purposes. On the one hand, as a data collection tool, it helped to collect real and observable information about the activities and behaviors (emotions and feelings) of the informants under investigation. On the other hand, it served as a mechanism to check the validity of the information produced in other

data collection tools; putting it in other words it helped to check what informants say about themselves and what they actually do in their day to day activity.

### **1.5.3 Data collection Procedure**

The overriding objective of the study was to investigate the major precipitating causes and challenges of human trafficking, and thereby to write an anthropological account of human trafficking in Ethiopia mainly based on the data gathered from informants. Before starting to collect data from the informants, the above purpose of the study was briefly explained to them and they were asked whether it is good enough for them to participate in the study. Informants who do not wish to participate were not compelled to do so. After having the consent of the informants to participate in the study, the researcher arranged convenient meeting places and other equipment's that are quite necessary for the particular data collection technique to be used in collecting the data from the informants agreed to participate. In the data collection process the researcher predominantly used equipment's like voice recorder and notebook (rarely digital camera) to record different interview and FGD sessions, and to take important notes from those discussions.

As mentioned earlier, observation was also used as one data collection tool in this research. The observation was made in different places where the informants are seen interacting with one another. The observation was made in the natural settings of the informants with and without the knowledge of them being observed. Among others Police stations both in Metema Yohannes and Gendewuha towns were the main observation sites the researcher used to observe trafficking victims.

### **1.5.4 Data Compilation and Analysis**

After collecting the necessary data through the help of the above data collection tools, the next task that needs to be done was the categorizing, combining, synthesizing, and thereby analyzing of the collected data. Before the actual analysis of the data, the collected data was sorted and categorized in accordance to its source and type. For the purpose of clarity and convenience some selected data collected by each data collection technique was transcribed, compiled and further elaborated in to meaningful and patterned information soon after the completion of that particular data collection session. Above all, the whole collected data was analyzed in

thematically organized way by pursuing to the original descriptions of the field notes so as to infer meanings and generalizations.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

In this research the term human trafficking is used as it is defined in Article 3 (a) of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol of the United Nations. Due mainly to the availability of researches on the overseas challenges and difficulties of trafficked individuals, this research will focus on the investigation of causes of human trafficking and the challenges and difficulties faced by victims of human trafficking before reaching the destination country, while they were in the trafficking process. Although trafficked individuals face different problems in the destination countries, this research focuses only on the challenges and problems that trafficked persons face on their way to, and at, the transit place, starting from their local homestead.

Beginning from their place of origin to the transit places, a place where trafficked persons are transferred to foreign traffickers for further miserable journey, there are different multilayered problems and challenges, which are experienced by victims of human trafficking. Therefore, the identification and understanding of these complicated and multifaceted challenges; and outlining the major precipitating causes of human trafficking will be the main concern of this research. To this end, the information gathered, through interviews and FGDs, from victims, residents and public servants of Metema town were used to identify and explain the causes of trafficking and the challenges that trafficked persons faced at transit places and in their way to the destination country, Sudan. The researcher's personal observation in the research site, Metema, was also used to identify and narrate the problems that migrants face at the transit place.

Metema Town is among the major transit areas in Ethiopia where a significant number of persons are trafficked to the Sudan and the Middle East countries. Geographically the scope of this research was delimited to the investigation of causes and challenges of trafficking by taking different informants from this particular district only.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

As there are many other studies done in Ethiopia concerning the quandaries that trafficked persons face in destination countries this research particularly accentuates on the different causes of trafficking and the multifaceted quandaries faced by victims during the trafficking process.

Therefore, the facts which will be engendered at the completion of this study or the findings of the study are expected to have the following contributions.

It presents the accounts of trafficked persons on the causes of their trafficking and the different quandaries they experience throughout the trafficking process so that other researchers and concerned bodies may utilize it as input for further inquiry or action. The study also identifies and explores the multifaceted challenges experienced by migrants who utilize illicit routes like Metema to get into a peregrine land so that other migrants may utilize the formal routes to migrate to the Middle East or other countries. The study additionally sheds a light on the networks of traffickers and the different parties involved in human trafficking so that the concerned body become cognizant of the modes of operation of traffickers and other actors.

### **1.8 Problems Encountered and Limitations of the Study**

Due largely to the clandestine and illicit nature of human trafficking there was some problems faced the study during the fieldwork. The first problem was related to accessing informants. It was difficult and tempting to get individual informants directly involved in human trafficking; this was mainly because of fear of exposing oneself to police. During the fieldwork I had the chance to meet with some traffickers arrested in Metema Yohannes police station, but they were not willing to give information about the issue, due to fear of police and related government organizations. Therefore, time is an important tool to create good rapport with informants and get their intimacy. But the time given to complete this study was relatively short to stay in the research site to break through the hidden operation of trafficking. Shortage of time, therefore, was another challenge that this research encountered.

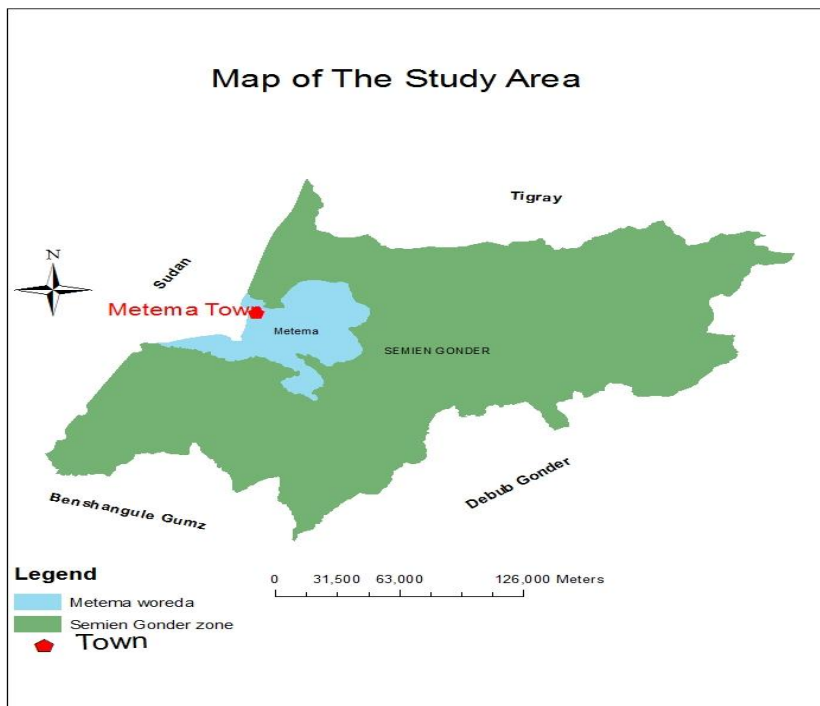
The problem, which is studied in this research, is relatively ‘unseen’ and ‘denied’ by most of the parties involved in it. The key informants, such as traffickers or brokers and victims of trafficking, who are expected to provide the first hand original information for this research are belongs to the group known as ‘hidden populations’. Because its members (traffickers and victims of trafficking) are neither easily identifiable nor easily found, this was another additional challenge for the researcher to access information from such ‘hidden populations’.

Furthermore, the very hot weather condition of the study area also poses a relatively serious problem during the data collection process. The fieldwork of the study is coincided with the

hottest month and I get difficulties of moving through the town to access and contact individuals who provide information for the study.

### 1.9 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Amhara National Regional State, North Gondar Zone of Metema *Wereda*<sup>1</sup>. Below is given a brief description of the study area.



**Figure 1 Map of the Study Area**

Metema is a town noted for its commercial, historic and strategic importance. It is located in Ethiopia's northern border with the Sudan (Ofcansky & Shin 2004: 283). Historically Metema has been the most important point of Ethio-Sudanese contact. Metema, which is found in the north western part of Ethiopia near to the Ethio Sudanese border, is one of the eleventh *Wereda* of the north Gondar zone. Metema is located 898 km away from the capital Addis Ababa and 188 km from Gondar town, the capital of North Gondar zone. Of the surrounding neighbor

<sup>1</sup> *Wereda* is an administrative structure which consists of different *Kebelles*

countries Ethiopia share the longest border with Sudan; and Metema is that place where Ethiopia shares the longest border with Sudan. On the Sudanese side of the border there is a town called Galabat. In between these border towns there is a river called *Amira* which used as a boundary to separate the two countries; there is also a bridge constructed on the river to connect the peoples of the two countries. The bridge which serves as a passage is heavily guarded by border guards; however it is open for both countries' citizens to exchange goods and services in the day time.

Gumuz people, which are now confined to two peasant association *Kebelles* i.e. *Afitit* and *Tumet*, are thought to be the original settlers of the *Wereda*. However, in recent years many thousands of individuals from drought prone areas of the Amhara region are resettled in the area. In spite of the long and sustained contact with the neighboring Muslims of the republic of the Sudan, majority of the residents in Metema *Wereda* are Christians. Nowadays, according to the Metema *Wereda* plan and budget office, 59949 men and 52250 women (a total of 112199 people) are estimated to live in the *Wereda*. The *Wereda* is consists of 23 peasant associations and 2 city *Kebelles* with Gendewuha town being the administrative center of the *Wereda*. Although the administrative seat of the *Wereda* is located out of it, Metema Yohannes is another compelling town of the *Wereda*. According to the *Wereda's* plan and budget office 16134 people are currently living in Metema Yohannes town. Putting it in another way Metema Yohannes constitutes 14% of the total population of the *Wereda*.

Metema town have been served as a center for trade, commerce and foreign contact for a long period of time, long before the coming of Emperor Yohannes IV to power. It also serves as an escaping gate for many Ethiopians who flee the country for different reasons. During the 1970s many individuals around Gondar and from different parts of the country were flee to the Sudan and other countries through Metemma. At the time political unrest in the country was the main reason for the migration of those individuals. For a multifaceted of reasons different from the 1970s nowadays many individuals from different corners of the country migrate to Metema town to illegally cross the border and enter to the Sudan and other countries.

Sorghum is highly produced in the *Wereda* and it is the staple food crop in the area. Metemma is also one of the most notable sesame producing regions of the country. Cotton is also another cash crop which is produced in the *Wereda* by local and commercial farmers. Commercial farmers use tractors to plough, while the locals use animals like oxen and donkey to plough and

transport farm produces. Therefore agriculture accompanied with trade in livestock and farm products is the dominant economic basis of peoples in the area. Geographically the *Wereda* is characterized as lowland. As a result of this the *Wereda* entertains a very high temperature throughout the majority months of the year.

### **1.10 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is consists of five chapters. Chapter one gives an overall context to the study by briefly introducing some concepts of human trafficking and some of the components of the study. The chapter ends by discussing the research methodology and the data collection techniques used in the study. Chapter two reviews some of the attempts and literatures in the academic world at theorizing and understanding human trafficking and explains some of the causes and challenges of the ever increasing phenomenon of human trafficking. Chapter three looks at different ways in which individuals end up in trafficking, and discusses some of the more complex motivations that cause people to become victims of human trafficking, Chapter four threads this together by examining the multifaceted challenges faced by victims of human trafficking. Following on from this, chapter five looks at the different actors involved in human trafficking and end up with the discussion of women's vulnerability to trafficking.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

This chapter of the thesis presents an overview of research and data on human trafficking that are gathered through reviewing different works and studies done by individual scholars on human trafficking. In the course of reviewing the related literatures a thorough consideration is given to show the research gaps which is not addressed by previous works and researches done on the issue of human trafficking. While reviewing the literatures an effort is made to relate the contents of this part of the paper with the objectives and the research questions of this particular study, for it create an opportunity to show the thematic areas which are not covered by the previous studies.

#### **2.1 Definition of Key Concepts**

Human trafficking is such a contested term which is confusingly related to different terms. Such related concepts as migrant smuggling, illegal and irregular migration will be defined and discussed in this section of the thesis. A working definition of trafficking in persons will be also given in this section of the thesis.

##### **2.1.1 Migration**

According to the international organization for migration (IOM) migration can be defined as:

A process of moving, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people, and economic migrants (IOM 2004: 41).

Migration is not a new concept to human civilization. Since life started on earth human beings have crossed national and international borders looking for better life, education and a sustainable and well paid work. In addition to humans other animals like birds also migrate from one place to another in search of food and water. Animals' migration is guided or facilitated by seasonal changes and other natural occurrences. They are lucky for their migration is not guided by travel agents or traffickers. If it were the case they would be trafficked and end up in exploitation like human beings (Singh & Singh 2013: 485).

Though migration is not always necessary for trafficking to occur, there is a close relationship between the two. Human trafficking can be seen as one form of migration in the case of transnational trafficking which involves the movement of persons across international borders. However, there are cases where individuals fall victims of trafficking in their home or locality without the need to migrate to another place. The kind of trafficking which is going to be addressed in this study involves border crossing and movement of persons. Thus in the coming paragraphs an attempt will be made to explore the relation between trafficking and migration.

Morehouse (2009) developed, an open circle of human trafficking, a theory to understand human trafficking. In this theory she identified four core elements that are vital to deepen our understanding of human trafficking. According to her migration is one of the core elements of human trafficking which lies at the center of human trafficking itself. In many destination countries illegal or undocumented migrants are among the main victims of human trafficking. Although many undocumented migrants fall as victims of trafficking, all irregular or undocumented migrants are not victims of human trafficking. Morehouse (2009: 97) states that “not all migrants are victims of human trafficking [...] more specifically, not all irregular or for that matter smuggled migrants become victims of trafficking.” Of the victims of human trafficking, some have been undocumented or smuggled migrants. But migration should not be seen as a prerequisite for human trafficking to take place. There are many citizens who are thrown in to exploitative conditions and become victims of human trafficking in their country of origin.

Analytically it is important to locate the study of human trafficking in the wider concept of transnational migration. In various forms migration involves the movement of persons. Of these forms illegal migration is the one where significant numbers of persons are involved. Human trafficking therefore can be seen as another form or subcategory of illegal migration.

### **2.1.2 Migrant Smuggling**

Based on article 3 (a) of the UN migrants protocol smuggling of migrants is defined as follows:

Smuggling of migrants shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident (UNODC 2008: 3).

Despite some common characteristics trafficking of human beings is totally different from smuggling of migrants. The similarities are quite clear, since both of these activities are forms of illegal immigration, engaging with the transportation of human beings from one place to another for the purpose of getting profit. But generally people do not make a difference between these two concepts. Sometimes, human trafficking is confused with human smuggling that involves facilitation, transportation, attempted transportation or procurement of an illegal entry of a person into another country of which he/she is neither a citizen nor a permanent resident, for the purpose of financial or material benefits (UNODC 2008: 4).

There are three basic differences between trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling. Consent between the smugglers/traffickers and a migrant is the first element that differentiates trafficking from smuggling. Human trafficking involves different forms of exploitation of the victims without the consent of the victims or a consent obtained under coercive, deceptive or abusive actions. Smuggled migrants totally agreed to be smuggled. Migrant smuggling always has a trans-national dimension involving at least two countries. But in case of trafficking it can be within the borders of a particular state. Trans Nationality therefore is another element that differentiates trafficking from smuggling. Exploitation is also another source of difference. Smuggling does not necessarily involve the exploitation of the migrant. Migrant smuggled generally consent to the smuggling and the process is a commercial transaction which ends after the border is crossed. In contrast trafficking involves an ongoing process of exploiting the victim. Traffickers also generate profit from the exploitation of the victims (UNODC 2008: 4-5).

Generally the basic differences between trafficking and smuggling can be summarized as follow. Human trafficking is higher level of exploitation than human smuggling. Trafficking can be inter-state or intra-state where as smuggling is always of crossing of international border. For the most part smuggling abuses the rights of the state by breaking the laws of the state and international agreements since the smuggled person has agreed to the smuggling process, whereas trafficking is a crime against both humanity and state where the trafficked person is victim. Trafficking contains an element of force, coercion, fraud etc. but the person being smuggled is generally cooperating. In trafficking, trafficked person is enslaved, subject to limited movement or isolation, or had documents confiscated but in case of smuggling the smuggled person is free to leave, change jobs etc (Singh & Singh 2013: 489).

### **2.1.3 Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is an imprecise and highly contested term that has no a common definition among scholars. Although insufficient, there is a significant knowledge about human trafficking and the activities of human trafficking all over the world. However, due largely to the illicit and clandestine scenery of the activity of human trafficking, researchers, policy makers, and other concerned bodies working on issues related to human trafficking get difficulties in finding a definition which is common to all. Partly because of this lack of clarity in terms and definitions used by governments, international agencies, NGOs, academics and the media, responses to trafficking are limited. This lack of clarity on the definition of the term also lead individuals, researchers and academicians to use terms like smuggling, irregular migration, and forced labor interchangeably with human trafficking (Lee 2007: 10).

As per the complicated and clandestine nature of human trafficking, it is difficult to find a concise definition of human trafficking, which is agreed up on scholars, policy makers and researchers in general. Although there is no a common consensus among scholars on the definition of human trafficking, many researchers use the definition provided by the United Nations. For reducing the possible controversies on the existing definitions of the term as well as to frame the scope of the research, the same definition given by the United Nations is also used in this particular study. According to article 3 (a) of the United Nation's protocol of trafficking in humans, the term human trafficking is defined as:

Human trafficking shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (UNODC 2008: 2).

Human trafficking is not simply the illegal movement of people from one country to another, as it is outlined in the above definition it is rather a complicated phenomenon consisting of three separate but highly related components i.e. the ‘act’, ‘means’ and ‘purpose’. The act consists of different procedures and steps followed by traffickers including recruiting, transporting, and harboring of persons. The other component is the means, which involves the different ways that human trafficking is done. Human traffickers use different mechanisms as means to convince and get control of their victims, including the use of power and economic vulnerability of victims. Human trafficking can be done for different purposes. Most frequently it is done to generate a large amount of profit by exploiting the labor of trafficked individuals (*ibid*).

## **2.2 Understanding Human Trafficking**

Different commentators on the field of human trafficking (including Newman and Cameron 2007 and Lee 2007) suggest that an understanding of human trafficking requires an analysis of the operation of, and interaction between, a range of factors that combine to make individuals vulnerable to trafficking. In order to understand human trafficking in its broad social, economic and political contexts, it is argued that it is important first to identify and know the interaction between such structural factors or variables of trafficking as economic deprivations, social inequality and demand for inexpensive labor force and adjacent factors of trafficking like loose national and international legal regimes, poor law enforcement, corruption, weak education campaigns etc. putting it in another way, identifying and knowing the interaction between the push and pull factors will help us significantly in understanding the nature of human trafficking (Newman and Cameron 2007: 11).

Identifying the different conditions that cause human trafficking cannot alone help us to deepen our understanding of the topic. Thus, besides identifying the causes, an attempt is made in this section of the thesis to explore the various problems that trafficked persons face, and the actors that involved in trafficking.

### **2.2.1 Root Causes of Human Trafficking**

Identifying and understanding the relationship among those structural and adjacent factors is therefore an important first step to understand why an individual is vulnerable to trafficking through the use of deception and coercion. An understanding of the structural factors of human

trafficking and its relationship to adjacent factors is thus vital for the understanding of the social, economic and political dynamics of human trafficking at both the destination and other places where the problem originated.

The causes of trafficking in persons are various and often differ from one country to the other and even at intra-country level. Trafficking is a clandestine and complex phenomenon which is often driven by such social, economic, cultural and other related political and legal factors. In search of better conditions there is always a desire to migrate among impoverished individuals. This desire is often exploited by traffickers to recruit and gain control on the potential victims. There are some local conditions that make individuals want to migrate in search of better living, such as poverty, oppression, lack of social and economic opportunities, lack of human right and other similar conditions (UNODC 2008: 454).

Many factors contribute to the trafficking of men, women and children. These factors are described as the root causes of human trafficking and can be broadly divided into push and pull factors. The push factors start driving a person away from unpleasant living situations to end up being trafficked, and the pull factors attract a person to find better opportunities. All kinds of trafficking or migration, legal or illegal migration, are bounded by the push and pull factors. According to National Geographic (2005)<sup>2</sup> the push and pull factors can be further divided into four categories: economic, political, cultural and environmental.

Push factors include different problems and hostile conditions that force persons to move away from their localities to another place in search of a better life. Push factors include different variables that operate in the countries of origin. According to the ILO's information guide on *preventing discrimination, exploitation and abuse on women migrant workers* the most common push factors include: "poverty and chronic unemployment; growing materialism and desire for a better life; family situations; lack of educational opportunities; gender discrimination and deep rooted inequalities; economic crisis, natural disaster, war, political conflicts, and ineffective legal and regulatory frameworks" (ILO 2003: 31-34).

According to Gurnam and Harbilas (2013: 492) "poverty and unemployment are the tow interrelated push factors that put persons to enter into situation of exploitation without fully

---

<sup>2</sup> National Geographic Society. 2005. [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

knowing about it as they don't have many alternatives.” Factors such as access to education and employment opportunities are interrelated to the poverty and the general economic situation of the country of origin. Most of the push factors, therefore, are related to the economic factors and poverty.

Apart from push factors, discussed above pull factors are also responsible for the flourishing of the trafficking in human beings. Pull factors are the other causes locating in the countries of destination, which contribute to the trafficking. These factors include the attractive things which increase the will and motivation on the part of the migrant to migrate to the place of destination.

According to the information guide prepared by ILO the main sources of demand and the pull factors in destination countries can be traced to: “Cost competitiveness in labor-intensive, export-oriented production; growth of the informal economy; expansion of lucrative sex and entertainment industry; and a burgeoning marriage market and bride trade” (ILO 2003: 35-38).

As Cullen-DuPont argues economic promises, the demand for consumer sex; and the need for profit maximization, minimizations of expenses, and other motivations of employers in the destination countries are among the major pull factors of human trafficking that draw a large number of persons in to place of destinations (Cullen-DuPont 2009: 25-27). Among the potential destination countries there is a high demand for cheap labor and paid sex work. These demands of labor and sexual service create opportunities for migrants to improve their income and survival. Demands for laborers and prostitutes in countries of destination, therefore, pull individuals from developing countries to migrate towards income opportunities, to get away from economically desperate circumstances.

Economic factors including poverty and lack of employment are not the only factors that push persons to migrate and end up in trafficking. Other than economic conditions there are other factors that make persons want to move to another place and exposed to the control of traffickers. According to UNODC the local conditions that make people want to migrate in search of a better condition include oppression, lack of human rights, lack of social opportunity, dangers from conflict or instability and similar conditions. Political instability, militarism, civil unrest, internal armed conflict and natural disasters may also result in an increase in trafficking

(UNODC 2008: 454). Thus the above mentioned environmental, political and social conditions are also found to be one of the driving factors behind human trafficking.

Beside economic factors people migrate and end up in trafficking for the sake of other political, environmental and cultural reasons. From these above-mentioned factors, it can be seen that the sustainability and better life opportunities which prevail in the country of destinations are the qualities that people are looking for when they decide to migrate or when they end up being trafficked.

### **2.2.2 Problems Faced by Human Trafficking Victims**

Trafficked persons are constantly abused both in the trafficking process and up on their arrival on the place of destinations by the traffickers themselves and their employers respectively. Victims of human trafficking therefore experience a range of problems in all stages of the trafficking.

As a victim of human trafficking men, women and children face multifaceted problems. But the extent and the kind of problems they face differ greatly; and it is also important to recognize that women, men and children are trafficked into many forms of labor and vulnerable to a range of exploitative conditions and risks, which vary by sector. According to Halabi abuses and exploitations in male dominated sectors are well documented and more visible since men usually work in groups in construction and agriculture. Whereas abuses and exploitations against women victims are less known since they are likely to occur at an earlier stage of their migration or in more invisible situations. These abuses can include demand for higher payments from migration agents or traffickers, greater exposure to robbery, frequent violations of physical integrity, like punishment, intimidations, ridicule, and sexual harassment (Halabi n.d.: 44).

Compared to men, women are the most vulnerable groups who suffer a lot from different abusive and exclusive conditions. Halabi's argument about the vulnerability of women is also supported by other studies which assert that Female domestic workers are the group most vulnerable to discrimination and abuse, due to individualized working environments and to the role of intermediaries such as brokers, agents, and recruiters.

Though it is undeniable fact that victims of trafficking face a variety of problems in the trafficking process, but the problems they face in the destination places/ in their work places are well documented and are equally severe to the difficulties they experience in the transit places and in the whole trafficking process. Trafficking victims experience problems like rape, economic exploitation and fee overcharging from the traffickers throughout the trafficking process. But the most annoying and unacceptable problems are found and faced by victims in the destination countries by their employers.

Sabban (2006) studied migrant female domestic workers in the United Arab Emirates. In her study she identified a variety of problems that those trafficked domestic workers face while they are in the UAE as domestic household servants. According to her, apart from the sexual and psychological abuses female domestic workers in the UAE are subject to racial discrimination. She argues that racial discrimination and symbolic forms of prejudice against the migrant worker are also common in UAE. Migrant workers are viewed by their employers as racially inferior and lower status individuals. In addition, most migrant workers reported that they have denied freedom of movement, and their social and physical existence is controlled and all their social interactions with friends and neighbors are seen with a great suspicion. Because of the dominant stereotype towards migrant workers in the UAE, domestic workers experience miss treatment based on their ethnicity and social status.

The social interaction of migrant domestic workers and their movement is highly scrutinized by their employers. As a result isolation becomes a dominant feature of migrant domestic workers in the UAE. However they differ in their level of isolation, trafficked domestic workers are isolated physically, socially, culturally, psychologically and in other aspects of human existence. According to Sabban some trafficked domestics live in extremely abusive environment of isolation, whereas others able to break through some of the physical and psychological difficulties they face by socially interacting with others. In UAE physical and psychological isolation also serve as a mechanism to control migrant domestic workers (Sabban 2006: 18).

To sum up, the vast majority of the literature on human trafficking discussed a lot about the difficulties that trafficked persons experience in the destination places. But as I tried to mention it migrants also face multifaceted problems in the trafficking process, when they cross different transit towns and desert routes. However in the literature there is no an account of the problems

which migrants face in their trafficking trajectories. It is important to study these problems and incorporate them in to the existing literature in order to comprehensively understand human trafficking and the multifaceted challenges experienced by the victims.

### **2.2.3 Impacts of Trafficking in Human Beings**

Trafficking in persons has multifaceted impacts on the health and psychology of individual victims; it has also economic and political implications on the countries of origin and destination. So far there has not been any more rigorous empirical work on the health and other consequences of trafficking in persons. However, the human and social consequences of human trafficking, which range from the physical abuse and torture of victims to the psychological trauma, are compelling and unacceptable. The impact of trafficking on individuals and society is clearly destructive (UNODC 2008: 4).

Human trafficking has a destructive impact on individuals and on political, economic and social systems of the society. On the first place trafficking is a crime against human beings, and its consequences are more directly felt by those individual victims. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2008) it is estimated that 130 countries are affected by human trafficking. From this one can clearly understand that human trafficking is a global phenomenon which knows no international border. However, the pervasive and far-reaching consequences of the problem are more experienced by individual victims, societies and countries.

Though trafficking has political and economic consequences on countries and societies, it is the individual victim that felt the most pervasive impacts of trafficking.

Human trafficking has an impact on the individuals it victimizes in all areas of their life, every stage of the trafficking process can involve physical, sexual and psychological abuse and violence, deprivation and torture, the forced use of substances, manipulation, economic exploitations and abusive working and living conditions (UNODC 2008: 9).

Victims of trafficking experience a variety of health problems in different stages of the trafficking process. They are exposed to different kinds of health and psychological problems even after they have rescued and returned home. Trafficking victims may suffer from an array of

physical and psychological health issues stemming from inhumane living conditions, poor sanitation, inadequate nutrition, poor personal hygiene, brutal physical and emotional attacks at the hands of their traffickers, and dangerous workplace conditions. The most repeatedly reported psychological consequences of trafficking include post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, alienation, disorientation, aggression and difficulty concentrating (UNODC 2008: 9). Studies have also indicated that these psychological traumas worsen during the trafficking process and may persist far beyond the end of any exploitation.

Victims of trafficking are also highly exposed to HIV infection. In 2012 WHO and PAHO produced an information sheet on the health related consequences of trafficking. In this information sheet Zimmerman and Stockl identified some health and related effects of trafficking. The following are some of the consequences.

- “Poor mental health is a dominant and persistent adverse health effect associated with human trafficking. Psychological consequences include depression; post-traumatic stress disorder and other anxiety disorders; thoughts of suicide; and somatic conditions including disabling physical pain or dysfunction” ;
- “Trafficked people who return home may go back to the same difficulties they left but with new health problems and other challenges, such as stigma. For those who try to remain in the location to which they were trafficked, many encounter the insecurities and stresses found in asylum-seeking and refugee populations” (Zimmerman and Stockl 2012: 4).

Stigma as it is mentioned is one of the social effects of trafficking. Regardless of the harm and the problem they suffer, trafficking victims face social disapproval especially if they return home without a promising wealth.

We have seen that the effects of human trafficking are experienced on the individual, community, national, regional and global level. Of all, individual victims are the one that directly felt the extreme heat of the problem. Trafficking affect not only source countries but also transit and host countries. It has also political ramifications for both sending and receiving countries. Shelley (2010: 59) argues that trafficking challenges states’ control over their borders by undermining their ability to determine who will reside on their territory. Yet it should be noted

that the consequences of trafficking for the victims, their families, and communities are very severe and multifaceted.

#### **2.2.4 Actors Involved in Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking involves a high contingent of role players from diversified backgrounds. Shelley (2010: 83) states that:

A diversity of actors participates in human trafficking, ranging from diplomats and employees of multinational organizations who traffic young women for domestic labor to small-scale entrepreneurs, to members of the large criminal organizations of Asia that specialize in human smuggling and trafficking.

The process of human trafficking involves different actors. The person who involves in the activity by trafficking human beings is referred as trafficker. In the beginning of the chain of trafficking especially in the process of recruiting, the trafficker can be a person or a group of local network or elites. Organized crime organizations are often involved in the transnational trafficking of persons across international borders. In addition to local brokers or traffickers police officers, border guards, immigration personnel, and relatives and families of trafficking victims are also among the main actors that involved in the trafficking of children, women, and men (Shelley 2010: 84-85).

A person or a group of persons who are trafficked and exploited for their labor are referred to as victims of human trafficking. Next to women, children are the most vulnerable groups. The trafficking of children is different from the trafficking of men and women. Family involvement in the recruitment and facilitation of the trafficking process is much more common in child trafficking than that of adults. Gozdzia et al (2008) researched child survivors of sexual and labor trafficking and found that parents or grandparents of the children were partially involved in many of the researched trafficking cases.

Variety of actors are involved in human trafficking, including family members, school teachers, police officers, soldiers, retired and active government officials, and returned migrants. According to an information guide prepared by ILO (2003: 27) to prevent discrimination, exploitation and abuses of migrant workers, the actors involved in the trafficking cycle are categorized in to *private actors, public actors and clients*. According to this information guide a

variety of private actors including, including transportation, tourism, media/communications, entertainment and legal are involved in the networks that facilitate and maintain trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation.

Such private actors as taxi and truck driver, hotels and motels, the media and the legal profession, and owners and managers of bars, night clubs and brothels highly participate and provide support services for traffickers in the movement of children, women and men to and between places of exploitation.

According to the above information guide of ILO clients and public actors such as immigration police and other public servants are among the major actors of the trafficking cycle. Public servants participate in trafficking by providing false birth certificates and documents, arranging for illegal border crossing and protecting brothel and bar owners from prosecution. On the other hand trafficking would be dissolved if there is no a high demand for sexual services and cheap labor on the side of the clients. Thus, clients are one actor that indirectly participates in the trafficking by creating the demand for cheap labor and sexual service (ILO 2003: 27).

### **2.3 Human Trafficking in Ethiopia: An Overview of Existing Studies**

Ethiopia is a country of origin for internationally trafficked women, men, and a small number of children. Trafficking also occurs within the country's borders, from rural parts to large cities and towns (Aronowitz 2009: 80). Estimates vary, but local non-governmental organizations believe an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 Ethiopians are trafficked internationally every year. Young women and men are trafficked from all parts of Ethiopia primarily to the Gulf States, Sudan and Djibouti to work as domestic laborers and less typically as commercial sex workers (Yoseph *et al* 2006).

Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia are the most common destination countries for Ethiopian migrants. Traffickers use different routes to get the migrants out of the country. Metema, a border town in North West part of the country, is one of such notable routes used to traffic Ethiopian migrants to Sudan.

The vast region that found below the Saharan desert is referred to as Sub Saharan Africa (SSA). According to Adepoju (2005: 75) this region is uniquely characterized by different incidences of

human migration, including the migration of skilled and unskilled laborers, cross border movements, movement of contract workers, displaced persons and refugees. He also mentioned that human trafficking is another kind of migration which recently becomes an issue of concern in the area. In this region, as Adepoju argues, an insight into the phenomenon of human trafficking is come in the 1990s from the alarm raised by activists, the media and non-governmental organizations operating in Nigeria, Togo and Benin.

Like most developing countries in Sub Saharan Africa, with in the past three decades, a significant number of Ethiopians have been trafficked to the Arab Middle East, Sudan, and many other countries in the continent including South Africa and Djibouti. A large number of trafficking victims are found in different parts of the country, including urban, suburban and rural areas. A number of reasons, including different push and pull factors are mentioned for the trafficking of many individuals.

“Once the birthplace of mankind, Ethiopia today serves as a cradle for traffickers pursuing profit and [Middle East] nationals seeking cheap labor” (Beydoun 2006: 10). In the last three decades many Ethiopian women and men are trafficked to the Gulf States and European countries by legal traveling agencies and human traffickers. Ethiopian women are trafficked to the Arab Middle East mainly to serve as domestic house maids and prostitutes.

Few women [from Ethiopia] migrate to the Middle East through legal channels. Most women migrate through traffickers/illegal agents and data certainly does not take into account the number of women migrant workers who are trafficked out of the country (Kebede; cited in Beydoun 2006: 10).

Thousands of Ethiopian girls were said to be trafficked as domestic servants to Lebanon and other destinations in the Middle East. In Ethiopia different studies found that trafficking of both young female and male children was an issue of concern. Trafficking occurred both internally, from rural parts of the country to cities, and abroad for the purpose of domestic work, agriculture, trading, sexual exploitation, and for petty crimes like begging. Adults, too, are trafficked for various reasons within and outside of the country (Aronowitz 2009: 80).

Although insufficient there is an increasing number of research works regarding Ethiopian victims of human trafficking. Of the existing human trafficking researches in Ethiopia, a large number of them are carried out by such international and local organizations as IOM, ILO,

MoLSA, EEF, and CETU. Despite, different individual researchers from Ethiopia and abroad have also made an effort to understand and conceptualize the phenomenon of human trafficking from different perspectives (see, Aderajew 2010, Beydoun 2006, Elias 2013, Mesfin 2011, and Selamawit 2013).

The vast majority of human trafficking studies in Ethiopia deal with the misery which Ethiopian victims of human trafficking experience in the destination countries. Majority of the studies focus on the life experiences, recruitment process, and expectation of those returned victims of human trafficking. There is lack of research in Ethiopia on the challenges that victims of human trafficking face in the trafficking process, on the trafficking trajectories of victims, and on the operation and networks of traffickers. As a result there is a limited understanding of the trafficking trajectories of human trafficking victims in Ethiopia. There is also a poor understanding of the networks of traffickers and their modes of operation. In general the current state of knowledge about human trafficking in Ethiopia is poor and insufficient.

Overall, overviews of the available studies show that there is lack of any comprehensive research carried out in relation to all aspects of human trafficking in Ethiopia. The majority of information available in this area is focused on the exploitation and life experiences of victims, their expectations before migration, and the prospects and challenges of work migration. These studies may not accurately reflect the trafficking trajectories of victims and the problems they face in the trafficking process; and the networks and modes of operation of traffickers.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

According to Kurtines and Silverman (1999) theory is comprised of an explanatory statement which used to help explain and understand relations among variables, how they operate and the processes involved. As they further argue the importance of theory lies in its ability to assist the researcher to identify and organize the connections among various phenomena that may seem unrelated (cited in Kawulich 2009: 37). In this section of the thesis will be described the theories that provide the theoretical framework for analyzing the human trafficking from the wider perspective connected to the global migration.

#### **2.4.1 Existing Theoretical Concepts in Human Trafficking**

There is a huge lack of theoretical concepts in human trafficking researches in general. As many commentators on the field argue, there are virtually no attempts made to analyze and understand the issue of human trafficking for labor exploitation within the existing international migration theories. It has been said by different commentators on the field that the existing theoretical frameworks describing the concepts of human trafficking are not well developed; and most of them are criticized for referring only to the aims of those anti human trafficking policies or to the causes of human trafficking. And as Morehouse (2009: 75) argues these descriptions are too narrow and would be an insufficient theoretical framework on which to base a comparative country analysis on human trafficking.

#### **2.4.2 The Rational Choice Theory of Migration**

Though migration is not a prerequisite for human trafficking to occur, human trafficking involves the movement of people across national and international boundaries. In this case human trafficking can be seen as one segment of the broader human migration. There are a variety of theoretical approaches that has been developed to explain the factors that cause people to migrate. Theories in this category thrive to answer the question why migrations begin. Among others neoclassical economics or the rational choice theory is probably the earliest and the most known migration theory. According to Douglas and his colleagues there are two models of neoclassical economics, the macro economics and micro economics models (Douglas *et al* 1993: 433). For it focus on the individuals' decision and choice to migrate, the latter model is used in this research.

The rational choice theory or the micro model of neoclassical economics can be used to explain human trafficking from both the economic and social perspectives. This theory explains human behavior and the choice people made. In general, according to Douglas *et al* (1993), the basic argument behind this theory is that people as a rational being want to maximize economic and social gain and minimize risk. The rational choice theory framework can help to explain human trafficking from both perspectives of the trafficking victims and the traffickers.

According to this theory, people decide to migrate because a cost-benefit calculation leads them to expect a positive net return, usually monetary, from movement. Migration is conceptualized

as a form of investment in human capital. People choose to move to a place where they can be most productive, given their skills; but before they can capture the higher wages associated with greater labor productivity they must undertake certain investments, which include the material costs of traveling, the effort involved in learning a new environment and culture, the difficulty experienced in adapting to a new labor market, and the psychological costs of cutting old ties and establishing new ones (Douglas *et al* 1993: 435).

Victims of trafficking originally make the decision to trust the traffickers in hopes that they will accumulate money and have a better way of life in another country. In this case, according to the rational choice theory, trafficking victims were originally rational for they have decided to move with the traffickers to another country where they expect a better way of life. Because traffickers are professionally acquainted with deceiving talents, they are extremely persuasive and can easily persuade individuals to migrate. As far as the golden offers promised by traffickers concerned, the risk of trusting a trafficker seems small compared to the huge rewards in the future. Similar to the decision of the trafficking victims, the decision made by the traffickers is also rational. To win the trust of individual victims and to generate a huge amount of money from the trafficking of them, the traffickers deceive and persuade individuals with false promises.

In this theory rational decision making, free will, and cost benefit analysis are the three major variables that used to build an integrated framework to explain human trafficking. The way in which human traffickers select their victims is based on the cost-benefit analysis of the trafficking and vulnerability of potential victims (Lutya and Lanier 2012: 557).

Human trafficking is a crime against humanity, and it is a direct affront to human dignity. Rational choice theories postulate that criminals like human traffickers are rational beings who make decisions to commit crime (trafficking persons) based on the costs and benefits involved in the process of crime perpetration (Lutya and Lanier 2012: 557).

Potential migrants estimate the costs and benefits of moving to alternative locations and migrate to where the expected discounted net returns are greatest over some time horizon. Based on this theory it can be concluded that, if the quantity of the expected net returns to migration is positive for some potential destination, the individual migrates; if it is negative the individual stays; and if it is zero, the individual is indifferent between moving and staying. In theory, a potential migrant goes to where the expected net returns to migration are greatest than staying at home (Douglas *et al* 1993).

## **Chapter Three**

### **Major Causes of Human Trafficking in Ethiopia**

Trafficking in persons is a process of people being recruited in their community and country of origin and transported to the destination where they are being exploited for purposes of forced labor, prostitution, domestic servitude, and other forms of exploitation. A combination of different economic, social and other factors operate behind human trafficking and are responsible for the trafficking of thousands of individuals from less developed countries to the developed ones.

This chapter of the thesis presents accounts of informants who participated in this study especially in relation to various factors contributing for human trafficking. Identifying the causes is a prerequisite to understand the challenges faced by victims of human trafficking. As it has been presented under chapter two, human trafficking researchers attached different push and pull factors to trafficking in human beings (see Gurnam and Harbilas 2013, Cullen-DuPont 2009, and Shelly 2010). These factors will be discussed in this chapter with giving due emphasis to the experiences of the informants. Following this informant's reason for choosing illegal ways of migration will be also discussed in this chapter. Therefore in this chapter an attempt is made to answer some of the research questions, which are related to causes of trafficking.

#### **3.1 Factors That Lead to Human Trafficking**

Several reasons are forwarded by researchers for the existence and rise of human trafficking in Ethiopia. Migrants who participate in this study also mentioned multiple reasons. The causes mentioned by the informants include unemployment and under employment, the existing poverty, rampant rural impoverishment, economic uncertainties and decline, worsening living standards, low payment for domestic work, dislodgment of family and collective social organizations, discriminatory labor practices, lack of educational opportunities, lack of social and welfare services, loose border controls, lack of good governance, and false or forced marriage. .

Trafficking in human beings is caused by a variety of factors operating both in the sending and receiving countries. According to literatures push factors constitute of different issues which force individuals to seek another way of survival in other countries. Although they differ from one individual to another, these factors create and exert pressure on individual's very decision to

move away from their country in search of a better way of survival and other opportunities. In other words poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunity push individuals to migrate to other places. On the other hand better payments, access to job, and employment opportunities for unskilled laborers in destination countries are among the factors that attract individual migrants to the destination countries; and researchers categorize these factors as pull factors of human trafficking.

As the empirical data collected in the field clearly shows the decline in social services and economic sectors which is caused by the economic transition, unemployment, increasing rate of poverty and failure in education have created a strong force which push vulnerable individuals to opt for migration and end up in trafficking.

The findings of this study shows that majority of the informants are forced to leave their country as a result of poverty and economic vulnerability. Frequently, research in the area of human trafficking makes the trafficker the centerpiece and principal subject of the work, and therefore marginalizes the victim's experience (Beydoun 2006: 5). Brokers or human traffickers are always blamed for the existence of trafficking in persons. Nevertheless, the problem of trafficking begins not with the traffickers themselves, but with the conditions that caused the victims to migrate under circumstances rendering them vulnerable to exploitation. Human trafficking, therefore, is an opportunistic response to two separate but interrelated conditions. On the one hand it is a response to the tension between the economic necessity of moving or staying, on the other it is a response to the politically instigated restriction on migration. Because addressing these conditions will help us to understand the problem and refrain from accusing traffickers as the only cause of trafficking in persons, this section presents an overview of the main social, economic, cultural and other related conditions that cause many Ethiopians to migrate under circumstances that render them vulnerable to exploitation and other risks of human trafficking.

Majority of the informants contacted in this study mentioned poverty, unemployment and other economic factors as a main cause for their migration, but it is also undeniable that social, cultural and political factors played an important role for the trafficking of many individuals especially women and girls. In most parts of Ethiopia, the societies are male dominated and patriarchal. In these communities women are given low statuses and are dispossessed of their

basic rights. These kinds of treatments towards women are among the major risk factors which expose women to trafficking.

The empirical data collected in the field shows that trafficking is a complex phenomenon which is often influenced by economic, social, cultural and other related factors. Many of the factors which are mentioned by the migrants are unique to each individual migrant and to the place from which they come. From the collected data it is easily understandable that human trafficking is a sign of rampant poverty, widespread level of unemployment and lack of opportunities in places of origin. These factors, combined with other related conditions, will force individuals to look for a better way of living by moving far away from their homeland. In general trafficking in human beings can be caused and facilitated by a variety of economic, social, cultural and other related conditions. In the coming sections these conditions will be discussed in detail largely depending on the experiences of the informants.

### **3.1.1 Economic Causes of Human Trafficking**

It is argued that inequitable resource allocation and the absence of viable sources of income are among the main economic factors that push people to become victims of human trafficking (Shield 2003: 15). Nowadays families in Ethiopia, mostly rural ones, have no assets to support their children's education and incomes are inadequate to have a better living. In the countryside agriculture becomes less profitable and land has become increasingly scarce (Fransen and Kuschminder 2009: 11). As a result of this households become increasingly vulnerable economically and women, children, young boys and girls are therefore compelled to contribute their own share towards the family's subsistence. This kind of economic situation by itself paves the way for trafficking; traffickers also use this opportunity to recruit their victims by deceiving those economically desperate persons with attractive economic opportunities in other countries.

Varieties of conditions have been identified by key informants as a cause for human trafficking in an interview conducted with migrant informants as well as in an FGD made with government officials in Metema town. Among other things poverty, unemployment, and other related economic conditions such as the ambition to improve one's own and ones families economic life, a desire to escape poverty and lack of economic opportunities are among the major economic factors mentioned by the informants as a main economic causes of human trafficking. In this

section of the thesis an attempt is made to discuss and shed a light on some of the economic conditions which exert pressure on young Ethiopians to think of migration and end up in trafficking.

The following conditions have been identified in the study as main economic causes of human trafficking in Ethiopia.

#### **A. Poverty and Related Desire to Improve Economic Conditions**

Experts and advocates in the field of human trafficking often emphasize on poverty as a main cause of human trafficking. It is not surprising that poverty is one of the determining factors behind human trafficking. It has unbearable negative impact on the economic and social life of individuals. As elsewhere in the developing world, a large number of men and women in Ethiopia are trapped by poverty. For this reason, many young men and women are politically, economically, and socially marginalized. Therefore due to their calamitous economic circumstances and a growing demand for men and women laborers in developed countries, in this case the Arab Middle East, they are the most vulnerable targets for the troubles of human trafficking.

Often it is claimed that those who migrate are not the powerless and the poorest of poor. However, according to the migrants who participate in this study, it is recognized that the migrants are among the poorest members of the society. Migrants even report that they borrow money from relatives and other peoples in their surroundings to cover the expenses incurred for their migration. Moreover, some migrants engaged in a contract agreement called *debt bondage* with the brokers to pay the trafficking cost after they reached the destination place. Debt bondage is an agreement reached between traffickers and migrants who have no sufficient cash to facilitate the trafficking process. In this agreement the traffickers agree to facilitate the trafficking of an individual migrant/s for noting, if the migrant/s in question agrees to pay back all the expenses on his/her arrival on the destination country.

Thus, as it is discovered in the study the migrants are economically powerless due to poverty. The informants participated in this study maintained that poverty accompanied with other poor economic conditions is an influential factor behind their trafficking. Having recognized how rampant poverty in the country is, migration is the only chance for many people to escape

poverty and change their life. In an interview conducted with the informants I understood that poor people do not necessarily opt for migration as the only means of economic sustainability, if there are provided other ways to escape poverty than migration. For this reason, lack of economic opportunity and access to public services or generally the obstacles hindering one from escaping poverty should be also blamed for the existence of human trafficking rather than poverty itself.

It is evident that many people migrate for work not because they do not have enough money to feed themselves or their family, but in an effort to improve their economic conditions and increase their material wealth. The empirical data collected from informants demonstrate that a desire to improve their economic conditions combined with lack of economic opportunities at home was one of the main reasons of migrants who seek work abroad. It is reported that economic necessities are the primary motivation for most Ethiopian workers to migrate to the Arab Middle East and other countries. Interview with both potential migrants and returnees in Metema town have also indicated that economic hardship were the main reasons they entered into migration.

When I asked Masresha, a migrant informant from Debark, about the causes of his migration he referred me to a two line Amharic verse, taken from an Amharic music sang by a group of musicians including the famous singer Fasil Demoz in memory of Ethiopian victims of trafficking in the Arab Middle East, to make me easily understand his reasons of migration. *Beqa Terign* is the title of the music that Masresha mentioned and the two line verse which he specifically referred when asked about the causes of his migration will read as follows in Amharic:

ለምን ሄድሽ አትባይኝ  
ምክንያቱ በዙ ነው  
አንድም አንዲያልፍልኝ  
አንድም ለእናቱ ነው።

Literally the verse can be translated as follows

*Do not ask me why I left home, for there are various reasons,  
It is because I want to change my life and my mother's too*

I think what Masresha trying to say by citing the above line of verse is that he was forced to migrate because there is a desire to improve his economic conditions and be able to help his families. Thus a desire to improve one's economic life coupled with ambitions of helping families and improving their poor economic conditions, and see them overcoming poverty as well is one of the prominent economic factors behind the trafficking of many destitute young Ethiopians.

As the empirical data collected in the field demonstrates poverty is not the only factor that makes Ethiopian women and men vulnerable to trafficking. There are also indications in the study that lack of employment alternatives and opportunities in home village, and not simply poverty, are factors that lead people to migrate and become vulnerable to trafficking.

It has been documented that poverty leads to a lack of education leading to unemployment and that leading to both sex and labor trafficking. Human trafficking is inextricably linked to poverty. Wherever neediness and economic hardship prevails, there will be those destitute and desperate poor people enough to enter into the deceptive employment schemes that are the most common intake systems in the world of trafficking. Traffickers benefit from poor people in situations of where they are seeking a better life in a different country but don't have the capabilities to travel and find work as a result of poverty. In this way poverty makes poor individuals more vulnerable to human trafficking. The study conducted in Metema town has discovered that poverty and economic exclusion are the common cause for the trafficking of the migrants that are participated in this study. It is also a common cause for the exploitation of minors more often young women and men in Ethiopia. Therefore poverty is said to be the leading cause of human trafficking in Ethiopia and many other poor countries in Africa and Asia.

The study find out that such economic factor as acute poverty and lack of employment opportunities encourage many young Ethiopians to migrate and find a way to improve their economic condition and support themselves and their families. However impoverished life conditions contribute a lot for trafficking, poverty alone does not make individuals vulnerable to trafficking. Apart from poverty itself the aspiration to improve one's economic conditions and the ambition to escape poverty should be also considered as the main causes of human trafficking.

## **B. Unemployment and Lack of Economic Opportunities**

Closely related to poverty, unemployment and lack of employment alternatives and economic opportunities in many rural and semi urban areas are other major factors considered by many of the informants as a cause for human trafficking. As it is clearly presented in the preceding paragraphs economic necessities, the desires to improve one's economic conditions and escape poverty are the primary motivations of migrants who seek employment abroad. If there were employment and alternative economic opportunities in their home village or country these migrants wouldn't be end up in trafficking.

Poor living standards and unsettled economic conditions are the main reasons for the migration and trafficking of many Ethiopians to the Sudan and the Arab Middle East. Debilitating poverty, which is caused by high rate of unemployment and low payment for domestic works are the major deriving economic factors behind the trafficking of young Ethiopians. Majority of the migrants which participated in the study were come from impoverished rural and peri urban villages where agriculture and related activities are the only available means of employment opportunities. In this semi urban and rural villages or towns agriculture is the dominant livelihood strategy and source of employment for limited number of individuals. Beyond agriculture there is a chronic absence of industries and service sectors to absorb the increasing number of unemployed youths in many rural villages of the country.

Nowadays youth unemployment is increasing Ethiopia, particularly in many small towns and rural parts. The labor market for young men and women is very restricted. Furthermore, women are not as highly valued in terms of their labor as men in such sectors of agriculture and they are, therefore, restricted to domestic works and other service jobs in the informal sector where the payment is insufficient to cover their needs. Consequently, migrating to a different country becomes a wide open option for unemployed youths to get employed and improve their life.

Among the economic factors of trafficking which are identified in the study unemployment was the other main economic factor for the trafficking of many of the migrant informants that participated in the study. Most of them stated that due to various constraints they were unemployed before their migration. Limited access to education, lack of capital to start their own

small business, lack of skills and trainings, and low payment for domestic work were among the main factors for the unemployment of the migrants.

Other studies show that a large number of individuals from Ethiopia migrate to the Arab Middle East to be employed as housemaids, drivers, and construction workers. This is mainly due to the fact that job opportunities within the country are limited. There is no doubt that migrants would not try the dangerous journey across the boundaries of their country if jobs were available to them at home. All the migrant informants in the study mentioned that when they faced lack of job opportunities and financial problem, then they were thought of migrating and considered unemployment as a core factor for them to end up in trafficking. For instance *Masresha* an informant from Debarke states that:

*Since I have completed my grade 10<sup>th</sup> education, I could not be able to find a job to work and support my family and myself. It became hard to find a job. Then I decided to migrate to the Sudan to support my family and to improve my economic conditions.*

In an interview with *Meseret*, another female migrant informant from Zewaye, it is also evident that lack of employment and economic opportunities motivate migrants to search for job opportunities in other countries. She mentioned that:

*My families are poor. While I was in elementary school I used to sell eggs and roasted cereals in the street, in my spare time, to support the family. I drop out my secondary education and tried to get a relatively well paid job, but I failed to get any. Then, finally I decided to migrate to one of the Middle East countries through the Sudan.*

From the above verbatim examples of the informants it is clearly seen that an interplay between poverty, lack of employment and economic opportunities leading migrants to seek for employment opportunities in a different country. The stories of the informants tell us that there is a strong motivation on the part of the migrants to improve their economic conditions and support their family, but we have seen that when they become unable to succeed to improve their life because of lack of job opportunities and other economic opportunities that help them to improve their life and help their family within their country, without the need to go far away

from home. However these economic and employment opportunities are highly lacking in home. That is why we see today that many Ethiopians trafficked to Arab countries and the Sudan in search of employment and better ways of life.

### **C. Low Payment for Domestic and Informal Works**

Among the economic causes of trafficking that the study identified, low payment for local workers that involved in different domestic works and informal sectors is another main economic factor behind the trafficking of many individuals in Ethiopia. As the findings of the study indicates many of the migrants tried to improve their life and escape poverty without leaving the country by doing some domestic works and involving in the informal sector. However the low payment which characterizes the informal labor market sectors and those domestic works in Ethiopia make them to look for other well paid job opportunities in a different country.

Among other things some of the migrants participated in the study was involved and employed in such informal domestic works as daily laborer in construction sites, pity traders, housemaids in local households, janitors in hotels and small firms before their decision to migrate to the Sudan. However, as the informants stated, the amount of income they generate from participating in such kinds of works was not much enough to change their economic conditions. On the contrary, as other studies shows, one can earn a high amount of monthly salary by doing the same kinds of domestic jobs in the Sudan or other countries in the Middle East because their economy is one step ahead of ours. This kind of disparity in payment for similar jobs ignites the desire on the part of the migrants to go to those countries that pays much for domestic works. This desire is exploited by the traffickers and used as a trap to control potential victims.

Most of the migrant informants in the study mentioned that they had a previous work experience on the informal labor market and other domestic works. For instance *Aschalew*, one of the migrant informants participated in the study, which came from Hadya mentioned that:

*Before I decided to go to the Sudan via Metema, I work for three consecutive years in different construction sites as a daily laborer with a minimum wage. The wage I earn was very minimum to satisfy my needs and provide support to my parents who live in the small rural village. After spending such a long time as a*

*daily laborer in those construction sites, I realize that I can't improve my life with this wage and decide to migrate.*

Fekiya, a female migrant informant whom I interviewed in Metema *Wereda* police station mentioned the following about her previous work experience in a local women's beauty salon:

*I used to work in a beauty salon (women) in my locality before I come to Metema, but the payment was not enough not only to help my parents but to lead my own life. Then, I decided to go to the Sudan and save money to open my own small beauty salon back in my local area. But now it is as you have seen, my plan is failed.*

As it is clearly stated in the above word for word expressions of the migrant informants, many of the migrants have worked in different informal and domestic works before their migration. But because of the low payment of domestic works the migrants are forced to quit those jobs and migrate to other countries in search of a better payment.

It is previously stated that the desire to improve economic conditions is one of the primary motives of the migrants who seek work abroad. Here one may ask that why they need to go out to improve their life? Can't they improve their economic conditions within their country? But the answer to these questions, according to the migrant informants, is no; because the payment for domestic work is very low. Many of the migrant informants contacted in this study strongly assert that there are some employment opportunities in the informal labor sector around their home villages or towns, but the wage (the payment) earned from these jobs is not enough to improve one's economic conditions and escape poverty within a relatively short span of time. Thus, low payment for workers participate in the informal labor sector and domestic works, in addition to poverty and the desire to improve economic life; and unemployment and lack of economic opportunities, is the other economic factor identified in this study as a cause of human trafficking in Ethiopia.

Generally, it is evident in the study that the interplay between such economic conditions as poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and low payment for available domestic works leads Ethiopian migrants to opt for migration as a means of improving their economic conditions and changing their life. There is also a strong ambition, among all the migrant informants

participated in the study, to improve one's economic condition and provide economic support to their poor parents. The combined effect of all these economic conditions and desires put an avalanche of pressure on migrants to look for other opportunities in a different country. Having the poverty case that renders them to such kinds of options, it is impossible for those poor migrants to formally travel and find a job in other countries. Using illegal routes and the 'helps' of traffickers is the only viable choice for them to reach the destination countries and get employed.

Human trafficking takes place everywhere in the world, poor countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are always the sources of trafficked persons. Large numbers of individuals are trafficked for different purpose into Europe and the Middle East from those aforementioned poor continents. When we look at the trafficking pattern, it always occurs from less developed countries to more developed ones. The pattern itself is, thus, an indication that trafficking in human beings is a result of poverty and poor economic conditions. People who live in less developed countries are rendered vulnerable to human trafficking by virtue of poverty and other devastating economic conditions. Impoverished life conditions coupled with lack of job opportunities force individuals to migration and create a fertile ground for human traffickers to facilitate and widen their trafficking network.

### **3.1.2 Socio Cultural Factors that Leads to Trafficking**

Impoverished life conditions and economic necessities are the leading responsible factors behind the trafficking of large number of individuals from poor developing nations, including Ethiopia. It is true that many migrants from poor countries flee their countries in order to escape poverty for better job opportunities abroad. It is also true that they often are preyed by human trafficking in one way or the other. However, this does not mean that poverty itself or economic neediness is the only factor causing victims to be trafficked. Rather, cultural values, social norms and practices which are embedded in the cultural constructions of the society, and the culture that embraces and even promotes sexual and labor exploitation are to blame for the ongoing atrocity of human trafficking around the world.

Cultural values, societal norms and practices play an important role and are among the major pushing factors contributing for trafficking in human beings. For example in many societies there

are different social and cultural conditions that suppress and devalue women's work this devaluation and suppression of women and girls in a society makes them more vulnerable to trafficking than men or children. In this paper these social and cultural conditions are presented as the socio-cultural causes of human trafficking.

The finding of the study shows that there are a number of reasons why people move from their home country to other countries of destination. It is often discussed in the literature that every form of migration is a mechanism for migrants to cop up with conflicts, poverty, unemployment and manmade and natural catastrophes. At the international level different conditions have been identified as main causes of human trafficking. Different countries in the world also share some of the conditions in common. But largely due to the broad variation in culture, there are some root causes of human trafficking which are specific to a certain region, country or culture.

Thus in order to understand the problem clearly within its social and cultural context it is important to study the socio-cultural conditions of trafficking. In fact the factors that makes Ethiopian migrants vulnerable to migration and trafficking are quite varied and complex, but there are some major and often interrelated socio-cultural factors that render migrants vulnerable to trafficking. What follows is an attempt to discuss and illuminate these socio-cultural factors of human trafficking.

Migrant informants, concerned government officials and local community members of Metema town, which participated in this study, have identified a number of social and cultural conditions which cause vulnerable individuals to migrate and end up in trafficking. Among other things pressure from family and friends, success stories of previous migrants, failure in education, low level of education, forced marriage and presence of deceptive trafficking brokers are the main social and cultural conditions identified by the study as socio cultural causes of human trafficking.

### ***Pressure from the society***

Pressure from family members and friends is the main social condition contributing to human trafficking in Ethiopia. In societies where migrating to Arab countries become a culture, pushing and motivating children to go to those countries is becoming a common practice for many family

members in Ethiopia. According to the informants of this study this kind of pressure from families is making many individuals vulnerable to trafficking.

*I have never dreamed of going to Arab countries for a minute of my life, but a strong pressure from my family pushes me to migrate to the Sudan. Because one of our neighbors' daughter was in Dubai, my parents especially my mother wants me to go to one of the Arab countries to send them financial remittances and other things such as cloths and jewelries like our neighbors' daughter do.*

The aforementioned verbatim was recorded in an interview with *Rekiya*, a migrant informant in Metema town. As it is clearly seen in the above interview with the informant, parents push their children to migrate to Arab countries with the hope of getting financial remittances and other supports. Poor families, who live in areas where the culture of migration is adopted as one means of survival, want to have one of their Children to go to Arab countries for varieties of economic reasons. In some cases migrants, who can be friends neighbors or relatives, who returned from migration also contribute for the trafficking of other individuals in their locality.

### ***Low level of education and illiteracy***

Low level of education among many rural individuals contributes much to trafficking. As a result of illiteracy and low level of education many rural individuals have less or limited access of employment in formal labor markets. This lack of employment in formal labor markets aggravates the already impoverished life and forces them to look for opportunities in other places. As some migrant informants that participated in the study mentioned their being uneducated let them seek for employment opportunities in informal and low paying sectors, mostly in larger cities and other countries. Low level of education negatively affects individuals in many cases. First it hampers them from getting employed in formal labor market, second it makes them unemployed, and then aggravates the impoverished life they already leading. The impoverished life itself creates the necessary conditions (the desire to migrate and improve one's life) for trafficking.

In relation to low education and vulnerability to trafficking, the study clearly identifies that illiteracy and low education are contributing factors to vulnerability to trafficking. Lack of education and skills makes it hard for uneducated persons to find alternative employment or

other ways to help them and support their families. Having little or no formal education, many can obtain only low paying jobs in the informal sector, mostly as housemaids and waitresses. Many of these low skill jobs also require migration to larger cities or to a different country, where these uneducated individuals may become targets of traffickers and others who wishes to exploit their labor.

In addition to this, failure in education was another factor raised by some of the informants participated in the study as a contributing factor to human trafficking. Some of the migrant informants who mention failure in education as a reason for their trafficking were students in senior secondary schools and higher learning institutions before their trafficking. Particularly university students do not want to go back to their family when they get fired from the institutions because of low academic performance. The following expression is taken from in an interview made with *Sebele*, a migrant returnee and former student in Gondar University. The verbatim clearly shows how failure in education contributes to the trafficking of many desperate students:

*I was fired from Gondar University because of low educational performance. At that time I don't want to get back to home and live with my parents, it is a shame for me. Rather I want to accumulate some money and start my own business and decided to migrate to the Sudan.*

Furthermore the empirical data collected in this study demonstrate how gender based discrimination, patriarchal values and attitudes, and the low social status of women in many societies are among the basic causes for the growth of trafficking in women mainly for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

### ***Forced Marriage***

Unwanted or forced marriage was the other cultural condition identified in the study as a contributing factor to human trafficking. In many rural parts of Ethiopia girls are often married at early age. In some instances young girls are given in marriage to a man that they barely know, often without their consent. Girls are forced to marry an individual whom they know anything about him, just to strengthen the relationship of their parents or to economically subsidize the family. This leads women to suppression and leading unpleasant life situations, which in turn

leads to migration and trafficking. These kinds of cultural conditions coupled with a constant demand for sexual services on the part of men in the Middle East and other regions contributes much to women's vulnerability to trafficking.

Among the migrant informants who participated in the study, there was one female migrant who was forced to migrate and end up in trafficking because of the bad marriage relationship she had with her spouse. Although it is hard to conclude, but is possible to say that forced or unwanted marriage also contribute for the trafficking of many women in Ethiopia by exerting pressure on them to migrate to another place not only to economically improve their life but also to escape from the hams and controls of their spouses.

### ***False Promises of Steady Employment in Arab Countries***

False Promises of Steady Employment in Arab Countries is another issue identified in the study as a factor contributing to trafficking of innocent individuals. Brokers use different methods to encourage destitute individuals to migrate to another place and improve their life. They often promise the victims that they will get them employed in hotels and other service offering industries. Such false promises of steady employment as housemaids, nannies, car drivers, and hotel service positions or attendants, motivate individuals to migrate to those places and are become a very common method of taking victims from their homeland to a place that they know nothing about. Thus, poor individuals who seek work abroad are often misled by false promises of steady employment in developed countries, which is often given by the brokers.

In certain cases, success stories told by formerly trafficked or migrated persons have tended to encourage young women and children to attempt the same. Sometimes, formerly trafficked people go into the trafficking business and tell good stories and pressurize friends, neighbors and relatives to do the same. In other circumstances, they collaborate with their former traffickers and serve as recruiting and supply agents. The success stories told by formerly trafficked individuals tend to be even more convincing as they have been there themselves and talk positively about human trafficking. Of course, what is often discussed in those success stories is not the subject matter of trafficking in itself. Rather it is more business, employment, opportunities and rewards that are discussed in positive and attractive terms.

Factors that lead to trafficking		Number of informants (10 migrants)
<b>Economic factors</b>	– Poverty & desire to improve one’s life	10
	– Unemployment/lack of economic opportunity	9
	– Low payment for domestic work	7
<b>Socio-cultural factors</b>	– False promises of employment	3
	– Forced marriage	1
	– Failure in education and illiteracy	5
	– Pressure from the society	6

**Table 1 Summary of causes of migration for the ten migrants participated in the study as key informants**

### **3.1.3 Other Contributing Factors**

Numerous root causes have been identified for the existence of trafficking in persons. Most of the conditions regarded as the causes of human trafficking have existed for a very long time. The push and pull factors or the economic and socio cultural factors which are presented above in this chapter cannot alone explain the phenomenal growth of trafficking in human beings. In addition to the main causes (push and pull factors) there are other contributing factors for the raise of human trafficking in recent decades. Among other things globalization, the internet and the rise of free market economy are mentioned in human trafficking literatures as main contributing factors.

In addition to the economic and socio cultural factors which are presented above, the study also identified some political and legal conditions as a factor contributing to human trafficking in Ethiopia. Among other things the migration policies and laws of both origin and destination countries, loose border control and protection, and presence of corrupt border securities are the main contributing factors identified in the study. In this section of the thesis an attempt is made to present these contributing factors by giving due emphasis to the testimonials/accounts of the informants participated in the study.

## **1. The Immigration Policies and Laws of Countries**

The immigration policies and laws of both origin and destination countries also play a crucial role for the growth of human trafficking. Now we are living in the era of globalization where economies are increasingly integrated and investment and employment are quickly moving from one part of the globe to another, however workers generally do not have the legal freedom of movement to move to places where employment opportunities exist abundantly. Even though there is an increasing demand for migrant laborers in those wealthier nations with aging populations and declining fertility rates, prohibitive immigration laws have been created, which make the act of formal migration both difficult and dangerous. In the absence of safe and legal options for migration, large numbers of migrants can be left with little choice but to place themselves at the mercy of migrant smugglers and in the worst cases in the hands of traffickers. In such a way the immigration policies of countries contribute to trafficking.

The immigration policies of some sending countries also prohibit the migration of their citizens to certain countries because of some disagreements between the countries. For example Ethiopia has recently banned domestic workers migration to the Middle East countries. Ethiopian citizens are not allowed to formally migrate to any of those countries in the Middle East for the purpose of domestic work. The only exiting option for those Ethiopian citizens who want to go to the Middle East is through smugglers or traffickers. Here it is vital to remember that trafficking is not a response to poverty and other economic necessities only, but also a response to the politically initiated restrictions of migration to certain destinations.

Different countries adopted immigration policies and laws to regulate the cross border movement of the people. Thus, prohibition of free cross border movement of the people by the immigration policies and laws of modern nation states gave the rise to illegal migration of human beings across the borders. Because illegal migration across borders entails a risky and dangerous process, it leads to the emergence of traffickers to facilitate the illegal migration of migrants.

## **2. Loose Border Protection and Control**

Of the surrounding neighbor countries, Ethiopia shares a relatively largest (679 km) border with the Sudan. In between the border of these two countries there found a well guarded and protected bridge which serves as a passage for the residents of the two nearby towns, Metema and Galabat.

A person who has the identity cards of one of these towns (Metema or Galabat) is allowed to move in and out through that well guarded passage. Traffickers in Metema town sometimes bribe the *Kebelle* officials to get them many stamped identification cards to pass their victims through the bridge as residents of Metema town.

The border area, especially the area around Metema town, is environmentally characterized as arid and covered with densely grown bushes which are very conducive for traffickers to transport their victims easily unidentified by the border securities that often patrol around that area. More often traffickers prefer this area to transfer their victims in to the Sudan than that of the formal passage through the bridge.

According to Metema *Wereda* police office head, Deputy Inspector *Girma*, it became very difficult to control the ever increasing trafficking in this area because of the weak control systems at different checkpoints and stations. Because of the lack of tight control and examination systems in the check points different immigrants come to Metema town for more than two times, after they have caught by the police and send to their place of origin.

### **3. Corruption of Government Officials**

Corruption is increasingly cited as a key reason for why trafficking continues and traffickers remain free. According to one report released by OSCE there is a very strong correlation between corruption and trafficking; the trafficking in persons also flourishes in part through the corruption of public officials (OSCE 2006; cited in Holmes 2009: 83). To function, trafficking relies on corrupting police, judges and ministers at all levels. Corruption both facilitates trafficking and feeds the flow of people by destabilizing democracies, weakening a country's rule of law and freezing a nation's development. At the same time, trafficking, which can involve global or regional networks, contributes to a country's corruption. Even though corruption is a responsible factor for the flow of large number of people from their original place, in this paper the study tried to see how corruption or corrupt officials help traffickers facilitate their operations around the border town of Metema.

Corruption among *Kebelle* officials, border securities, and police officers is another factor identified in the study as a third contributing factor of trafficking. According to some residents of Metema town who participated in the study as informants some *Kebelle* officials, police men and

border guards are involved in the trafficking business. Among other things these aforesaid government officials facilitate the trafficking process by forging identification cards for migrants, consciously participating in trafficking operations run by traffickers, leaving wide border areas unprotected for the traffickers to use as passage ways and turning a blind eye during border crossings, and alerting traffickers to forthcoming searches by security forces.

Generally, corruption plays an important role in every single stage of the trafficking process. It is present from the initial planning to the stage where the victim is trafficked and where exploitation begins. However this study focuses on the role of corruption during the actual trafficking or border crossing of victims and it is found out in the study that some public officials in Metema town are involved in the trafficking process by participating in the aforementioned activities.

### **3.2 Migrants Reason for Choosing Illegal Routes of Migration**

Migrant informants that participated in the study mentioned a range of factors as a reason for their choice of illegal routes (in this case Metema) to migrate to another country. The high cost and long and steady process of formal migration and lack of awareness about the difficulties of trafficking are the factors identified by the study as main reasons for migrants to choose Metema town (illegal route) to enter to the Sudan. In forthcoming sections of the paper these factors will be discussed in detail with the accounts of the informants.

#### **3.2.1 Lack of Awareness about the Difficulties of Trafficking**

Among the factors that make individual migrants to choose illegal ways of migration, lack of awareness about the difficulties of trafficking takes the significant share. Migrants choose illegal routes to enter to another country than legal ones merely depending on the wrong and appealing information they have received from the brokers. As studies indicated majority of human trafficking victims in Ethiopia are from country sides or remote rural villages where access to modern technologies that disseminate information about trafficking are rare and limited. On top of this majority of the migrants are illiterate who cannot acquire information by themselves. For these poor individuals, therefore, the only source of information about the migration process is the local brokers that they found in the nearest post. Thus they become misinformed about the

formal ways of migration and forced to choose the illegal routes to get out of the country and enter into the destination countries that they aspire for.

The following case clearly shows how lack of awareness about the difficulties of trafficking make individuals to choose illegal ways of migration.

*Felekech, one of the women informants whom I contacted in Metema town said that she was told by the broker, who sends her to Metema, not to worry about the travel and related issues because Metema is the easiest route to enter to the Sudan. He/ the broker even told her that it will take two days only to reach Khartoum via Metema. But as she noticed latter she found the exact inverse of what the broker told her before leaving her home town, she stayed for six days in a small suffocated room with other migrants in Metema town without sufficient food and water. After that she starts to realize that how it will be difficult to reach Khartoum. Finally she states that she wouldn't try it if she knew about the difficulties before leaving her home town, Arsi.*

### **3.2.2 High Cost of legal Migration**

Compared to illegal routes of migration, the cost of formal migration is somewhat higher. Despite of the risks it encounters many migrants prefer migrating through illegal routes for a variety of reasons mainly related to cost. Migrant informants also mentioned to the study that they prefer Metema, one of the routes used by traffickers to traffic victims to the Sudan, because of their inability to cover the costs of formal migration. Migration for work through formal channels requires an individual migrant to have visa, passport, enough money for transportation (in most cases plane tickets), but most migrant informants report to the study that they were unable to fulfill the above requirements of formal migration because of lack of money.

Regarding the costs of informal migration or trafficking, informants reported that an individual migrant needs to have a minimum of three thousand birr (3000 birr) in cash in order to reach Khartoum via Metema. This amount is less and can be easily afford by the migrants as compared to that of the formal migration cost. Therefore, expensiveness of formal migration is the second factor which makes migrants to prefer for illegal routes and contribute much to trafficking.

In some instances those private employment agencies (PEAs) who operate under the jurisdiction of MOLSA may ask little cost as less than as the one asked by traffickers to send migrants to different Arab countries. But most of the trafficking victims participated in this study do not have any clue about the costs of migrating through formal routes and many of them assume that the cost asked by private employment agencies is highest than that of the traffickers. Even though the traffickers ask higher costs in some cases, as some of the informants mentioned to me, it is not compulsory to pay all the money asked in cash if the migrant agree to pay the remaining up on his/her arrival on the destination country. On the contrary a migrant who chooses to migrate through private employment agencies is asked to pay all the money immediately.

### **3.2.3 The Long Process and Conditions of Formal Migration**

The lengthy process of formal migration is the other reason given by the migrant informants for their choice of illegal routes as a means of reaching destination countries. One needs to pass through several processes and conditions in order to migrate to Arab countries through formally established employment and traveling agencies. It may take several months for one individual migrant to fulfill the conditions and pass through the whole process and get the necessary formal traveling documents and permission. Thus, in order to avoid this long and extended process and reach the destination countries migrants choose informal migration through illegal routes by crossing international borders with foot or other transportation means.

People who are in search of better opportunities are often looking towards developed countries where they can earn more and raise their standard of living. But both the origin and destination countries have some conditions or criteria to give visa to the interested people but normally they do not fulfill those conditions like bank balance required, qualifications required and communication skills. Besides, most migrants lack the ability to deal with the technicalities of the embassy. This provides an opportunity to traffickers to come forward with the slogan to help them to achieve their dreams and normally give illegal turn to their migration process leading to trafficking of human beings. These traffickers adopt illegal routes to take them to their destinations and charge relative amount money in return for their services.

Furthermore, the immigration policies and laws of both origin and destination countries which is mentioned under section 3.2.3 as one of contributing factors to trafficking can also be seen as

another factors that force migrants to opt for illegal routes to migrate to different destination countries. Recently thousands of Ethiopians who happened to live in Saudi Arabia illegally without proper documents have been returned home. Since this incident happened the Ethiopian government has implemented new regulations that ban private employment agencies from sending migrants to the Middle East or other countries. But the regulation on private employment agencies force individuals who want to go to those countries to use illegal routes and create an opportunity for the traffickers to traffic those interested individuals.

Generally, the empirical data collected in this study confirms that lack of awareness about the complicatedness of the trafficking process coupled with expensiveness and extended process of formal migration forced migrants that participated in this study to look for the ‘helps’ of traffickers and to choose for illegal routes (Metema) to reach to the destination country (the Sudan).

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Trafficking Process and the Multifaceted Challenges Faced by the Victims**

Trafficking in human beings is the ‘slavery’ of our time where vulnerable individuals are thrown into different exploitative conditions. It involves three different processes: recruiting, transporting and exploiting (UNODC 2008: 2). From the initial recruiting process to the starting of the exploitation stage in destination places victims of trafficking pass through different transit places and face multifaceted problems. It is true that victims of trafficking face various problems in destination countries while they are in work, looking for job and up on their arrival. But it is also true that victims experience different problems in transit places and the journey made to reach the destination places. Nonetheless these problems are not given much emphasis by researchers like the challenges victims faced after reaching the destination countries (see Selam, 2013, Mesfin 2011, and ILO 2011).

In this study an attempt is made to identify and discuss these multifaceted challenges, and this chapter presents the challenges that victims of human trafficking faced while they were in the transit places and the problems they experience on their journey to reach the destination country. Victims of trafficking also pass through various processes before reaching the destination country, and these processes, except the exploitation process, which is predominantly performed and seen in the destination countries, are among the main topics, which will be covered under this chapter.

Data gathered from victims of trafficking, some brokers, policemen and local communities in Metema town is used to construct the themes and topics covered under this chapter. The data was mainly collected through interviewing victims and other key informants in Metema town. My observation in Metema town, along with focus group discussions with selected public officials, was also another important source of data for writing some of the challenges faced by the victims in Metema town.

#### **4.1 The Trafficking Process**

Trafficking in persons should be understood as a process involving different stages. It begins with the recruitment of a person and continues with the transportation and entry of the individual

into another country. This is followed by the exploitation phase, during which the victim is forced into sexual or labor servitude or other forms of exploitation.

In all the three stages of trafficking, victims face and experience variety of challenges in the hands of different perpetrators. The exploitation and the transportation stages are crucial points in the victimization of innocent migrants. Victims exposed to different problems in the transit places during the transportation process and at the destination countries. At the recruitment stage potential migrants are treated well by the recruiters because at this stage what is needed is their consent. Because this chapter focuses on the challenges faced by victims of trafficking in the process of their trafficking, in this section an attempt is made to shed light on the process of trafficking in a sequential manner starting from the very process of recruitment.

#### **4.1.1 The Recruitment Process**

Recruiting potential victims and getting their consent is the beginning of the trafficking process. Agents or traffickers use different individuals and methods to recruit victims. Some agents use family connections and social relations to procure victims and get their consent to migrate. Some other traffickers also use the helps of *leqamies*<sup>3</sup> or local brokers to get the victims. *Leqamies* are local brokers who recruit and gather different potential migrants from the nearby towns and rural villages. The *leqamies* bring different potential migrants from their surroundings to a trafficker who operates in the nearby town. This is done in a way that the brokers pay the *leqamies* for the service they have provided.

Demelash, a former trafficker, is one of Metema town residents that participated in the study as an informant. Before he resumes to farming s he used to traffic migrants from Metema to Sudan along with other traffickers. He narrated the following about the recruitment process of migrants:

*There are local brokers called leqami in the villages and towns whose work is to persuade and recruit potential migrants. They (the leqami) gather a number of migrants from the town or nearby rural villages and bring them to a trafficker who works in Adama, Jimma or Addis Ababa. Then the trafficker who received*

---

<sup>3</sup>The etymology of the word is related to leqami an Amharic term for someone who gathers or collects things.

*the migrants in one of the aforesaid towns sends them directly to Metema via Gondar.*

Of the different methods of recruiting victims, promising a steady and well paid employment in foreign countries is the main technique often used by the traffickers to persuade the migrants. Some trafficking agents also use other mechanism to get the consent of the victims. Because potential migrants and local agents or *leqamies* are members of the same community the agents know more about the economic hardships and poverty experienced by these potential migrants. The agents exploit this situation and encourage the destitute community members to migrate and change their life and overcome the economic hardship within a short period of time by painting a prosy picture of life in the destination countries.

By using the above recruitment methods the local brokers or *leqamies* gather potential migrants and transfer them to other traffickers. The trafficker/s who received the migrants from the local brokers arranges ways of transportation and sends them directly to the final transit town, Metema.

In summary, traffickers all over the world use various recruitment methods. Among other things targeting of potentially interested persons, informal networks of families and friends, advertisements offering work and study abroad, agencies offering work, marriage, study, or travel abroad, and false pre arranged marriages are the common techniques used by traffickers to recruit potential migrants (Motus 2004: 35).

#### **4.1.2 Transportation Process**

In the trafficking process, transporting the migrants from their local residential area to the transit places is the next step that comes following the recruitment or procurement of migrants. The migrants were not transported to Metema town directly from their place of origin. Rather the local brokers who gather the migrants from different rural villages and towns will bring them to Addis Ababa and transfer them to other traffickers who work there. Unlike the transit town traffickers' local brokers meet in person with the traffickers in Addis Ababa during the transferring of migrants. After the traffickers in Addis Ababa once get the consent of the migrants they transport them to the transit place often located around the border of the intended destination country. In this study, particularly in the present section of the thesis, an attempt is

made to outline and discuss the means of transportation system used and the whole transportation process of trafficking victims from their local residential place to Metema town and then to the Sudan, Khartoum.

Methods of transporting trafficked persons depend upon geographical conditions and may include crossing borders (legally or illegally). Modes of transportation in trafficking can encompass every means available: airplanes, boats, railways, cars or even walking (Transparency International 2011: 3).

Land transportation system is exclusively used to transport victims of trafficking from their local area to Metema town. Metema town is located 898 kilometers far away from Addis Ababa, in the North West direction. There is a long asphalted road from Addis Ababa to Metema. Via a public transportation system, a bus, it takes more than two days to reach at Metema town. Traffickers often use this route to send their victims to Metema town. Out of 10 migrant informants who participated in this study as key informants 5 of them came from Oromiya regional state, 2 from SNNPR, and the remaining 3 were from Amhara regional state. All the migrants, except the migrants from Amhara region, mentioned to the researcher that they pass through different transit towns before they reach Metema, and that they often used public transportation systems. The two migrants from SNNPR (Hadiya and Wolayta) reported that they were first taken to Shashemenie, and then to Adama, Addis Ababa and finally to Metema via Gondar with public transport. Likewise the migrants from Oromiya also mentioned that they were first taken from their local area (*Dedeo and Mana*) to Jimma by the local broker who first made contact with them, and then to Addis Ababa -to- Gondar and finally to Metema.

Starting from their local area migrants pass through different towns before reaching Addis Ababa and continue their trip downward to Metema. As the migrant informants mentioned to me they cover all of the expenses for transportation, food, hotel rooms and other accommodations. The minimal payment they made at this time is goes to the pocket of the local broker, for his service of introducing them with a trafficker who will send them to Metema.

From the interviews made with the migrants it also became clear that the traffickers do not travel with the migrants through all the transit towns. Rather they (traffickers) communicate with the traffickers in the next transit town through phone about the number of migrants coming to their

way and the registration number of the vehicle which they (migrants) are travelling with. Based on the information they received the traffickers in the next transit town receive the migrants and transfer the information to the next one. This process continues until the migrants fall in the hands of Metema town traffickers, that take them to Sudan, the destination country.

After travelling for more than two days migrants will reach at Metema town. As soon as they arrive in the town a local broker in Metema town called *Shekava*,<sup>4</sup> which is hired by the traffickers will collect them directly from the bus station and take them to the place prepared for them to stay until departing for Sudan. For the purpose of avoiding risks of inspected by police, places used to keep migrants are often located in the outskirts of Metema town, usually in the rural villages. There are also some traffickers who use hotel rooms and houses in the town to keep them until arranging ways for further travel to Khartoum, Sudan.

*In this town [Metema] there are individuals called shekava, which we hire to facilitate things on behalf of us. Among other things, these individuals will collect newly arriving migrants from the bus station and escort them to us. Sometimes we also order the shekavas to take the migrants to a safe house which is prepared in advance of their arrival. (Demelash, a former trafficker and resident of Metema Yohannes town)*

Metema is not the final destination place; rather it is the last place among the transit towns serving as a springboard for further travel to Sudan (Khartoum), a final destination country for some migrants and a transit place for some others who intend to continue their travel to other countries beyond Sudan. Thus reaching Metema is the beginning of another weakening journey to Sudan, via the desert. In this section I will not talk much about cross border travel, because there is another separate section in this chapter which will deal about the journey after Metema and the problems faced by migrants.

#### **4.1.3 The Trafficking Network**

Trafficking in persons is a complicated activity done by much networked groups of individuals or crime enterprises. From the migrants' original residential area to the final transit town, Metema, there are traffickers that work in an organized way and well-networked manner. The

---

<sup>4</sup> An Arabic term used to call a local broker in Metema town, they are commission workers hired by traffickers

local broker who operates in the rural villages and town recruit and collect migrants and send them to a trafficker or a broker who works in the nearby city. The traffickers in the city receive the migrants and make communications with other traffickers who work in the next transit town and make arrangements for the migrants travel.

Putting it in the context of the study, the local broker who collects migrants in Jimma and surrounding towns will take the recruits to Addis Ababa and transfer them to a trafficker who works there. In turn the traffickers in Addis Ababa call to Gondar or Metema and communicate with traffickers who work there. Then when the migrants reach in Gondar they will be taken to Metema. A different route is also used for migrants who come from SNNPR state. Migrants from this area are first taken to Adama and then to Addis Ababa and then to Gondar-Metema.

There is a long chain of traffickers in Ethiopia, which stretches from one corner of the country to the other. The empirical data collected in this study demonstrated that there is a chain of traffickers from Jimma to Metema created to facilitate the trafficking of large number of men and women from Oromiya region to Sudan. Likewise there is also another chain that stretches from Adama to Metema. This one is dominantly used to traffic victims from SNNPR region and some other towns in Oromiya region.

At the beginning of the chain there are local brokers who recruit potential migrants in different places of origins (Oromiya and SNNPR), these local brokers transfer the potential migrants they recruit to the traffickers in Addis Ababa. The traffickers located in Addis Ababa in turn transfer the migrants to traffickers in Metema town, which is found somewhere at the near end of the chain. The traffickers in Metema have clients in Addis Ababa who supply them with migrants. Likewise the traffickers in Addis Ababa have different local brokers who recruit potential migrants in different rural villages and towns. Due to these connections between traffickers the chain sustained for a long period of time.

The following verbatim is taken from an interview made with one former broker, Demelash, in Metema town. It clearly shows how the trafficking process is well organized and networked.

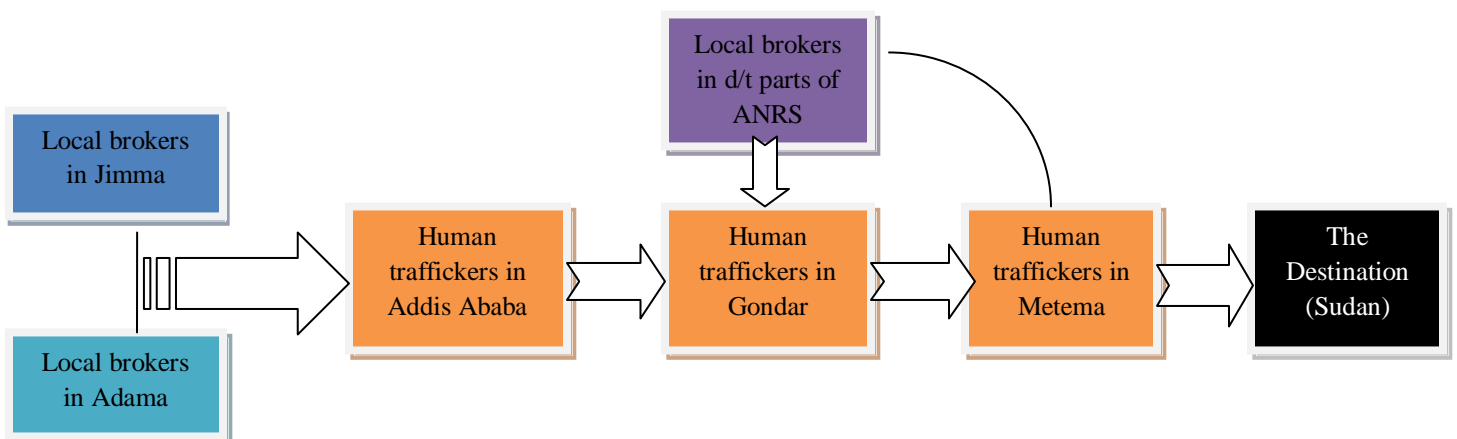
*The work is done through phone calls. We have clients there in Addis Ababa and Adama. When there are migrants who want to go to Sudan, our clients in the aforesaid cities will call to us and tell us about the number of migrants that they*

*send and the type of the car including its plate number and the intended day of their arrival. Up on receiving this information we'll send our men to Gondar or make our men who are already in town to pick the migrants up and bring them into Metema. This is the way used to do our work without the need of having actual physical contact with our clients [traffickers in other towns].*

Abraraw Abeje is a Deputy Inspector and the team leader of crime investigation and controlling team in Metema Yohannes police office. He was one of the public servants who participated in an FGD conducted in Metema town, and he mentioned the following to the researcher concerning the organization and networks of the traffickers in the region:

*The traffickers that operate in this area are very organized and networked. Because their work is well organized and networked, they are more capable of devising different techniques to facilitate their business. We [the police force of the town] always develop new strategies to control the process but in a very surprising way they know our plans in advance and change their modes of operation. This is mainly because of the reason that they do their work in teams and in a networked manner.*

Generally as it is indicated in the above expressions of informants exclusively traffickers in Metema town do not do the trafficking incident which is occurring in Metema town. Rather it is clearly seen that trafficking Ethiopian citizens to Sudan via Metema is an organized activity, which is undertaken, by a well-networked group of traffickers, which are scattered from the places of origins (rural villages and towns) to the final transit town (Metema town).



**Figure 2 Diagrammatic representation of the trafficking network** (starting from places of origins to the final destination country)

## **4.2 Multifaceted Challenges Faced by the Victims at Various Stages of the Trafficking**

As diversified as the causes of trafficking, victims of trafficking face multifaceted challenges in different stages of the trafficking process. In both academic and non academic writings, and in many media outlets including newspapers, magazines and electronic medias we have read and heard about the different problems that Ethiopian trafficking victims face after reaching the destination countries. Although it is true that victims of trafficking experience multifaceted challenges in transit towns and during their travel to the destination countries, the different problems that victims experience in destination places are well researched and documented compared to that of the challenges victims face in transit town and the transportation processes before reaching the destination.

One of the paramount objectives of this study is to outline and portray the challenges faced by the victims during border crossing and their stay in Metema town (the transit place). Therefore, in this section of the thesis an attempt is made to present what the study found out regarding these multifaceted challenges. Data gathered from both returnees and potential migrants, and my personal observation in the study area is used to write this part of the thesis.

### **4.2.1 Challenges during Pre-departure and the Travel to Metema Town**

As it is indicated in the preceding sections of this chapter, recruiting migrants by persuading them through various mechanisms is the initial step of the trafficking process before travelling to Metema migrants will stay in different transit towns including Addis Ababa for a while until the traffickers arrange conditions with their clients in Metema town. In the meantime migrants are told positive things about their travel and the life in the destination country, and this time is simply referred to as pre departure time. As the migrants mentioned the pre departure time was full of promises of good opportunities and other positive things in Sudan. In order to persuade and get their consent, the agents who recruit victims in the rural villages and towns deliberately talk about the availability of life changing opportunities and jobs in the destination countries. During this time migrants are promised that they will have short and safe travel to Sudan. At this time they know nothing about the challenges waiting ahead in the transit town and in their travel to the destination country.

As I heard from some migrant informants, the time before travelling to Metema (the pre departure) was also full of other surprising tricks and fraudulent promises often made by the traffickers and their agents. Among other things there were some migrant informants who mentioned that they were promised that the agent will facilitate a swift travel and will get to the Sudan within a week and get them a well paid job in an industry in Khartoum. Generally the pre departure time is a time where migrants are tricked to completely fall in to the traps of the traffickers or their agents. It is at this time that migrants are made to think and dream positive things about their migration and the job opportunities in a different country.

Agents (*leqamie*) who gather migrants from different towns and rural villages will bring the victims to Addis Ababa, and the traffickers in Addis Ababa will send migrants who are able to pay the amount they asked (which ranges from 3000 to 5000 Ethiopian Birr) to Metema. As I tried to mention in section 4.2.2 migrants are often transported from their local residential area to Metema town through land using public transportation means. Since they travel with other passengers no migrant has mention a serious problem during travel to Metema town.

For those individual victims who came from SNNPR and Oromiya region it takes three days to reach Metema town. Except some exceptional problems of theft, property loss and feeling of strangeness all of the migrants who come from those regions have mentioned that they have not encountered a serious problem in their travel to Metema town. In their travel migrants have passed through different checkpoints but they reported that they did not face any problem in those checkpoints. This may be because of the reason that (according to article 32 and 41 sub article 1 of the FDRE constitution) it is allowed for every legal citizens of the country to move from place to place and work in any place they want, or because of the identification cards that the migrants got from their respective *Kebelle* administration.

Although migrants face variety of problems from the moment they arrived in Metema town to their transportation into Khartoum, migrant informants have mentioned that there was no problem in their travel to Metema town. Thus, migrants face some minor problems in their travel to Metema town like other normal travelers, not as victims of trafficking.

#### **4.2.2 Challenges Faced by Victims at Metema Town**

Victims of trafficking face various problems in the destination countries. Among other things victims are sexually and psychologically harassed by their employers, they are often left to work for long hours within dangerous working conditions (Girum 2013; Elias 2013 and Beydoun 2006). However working places in destination countries or destination places in general are not the only venues where victims of trafficking face multifaceted problems and exposed to inhuman treatments, in transit countries and towns trafficking victims are also prone to and experience similar inhuman treatments before reaching the destination either by the traffickers themselves or other individuals in the transit places.

In Ethiopia there are different towns around the borders that often used as a transit place for human traffickers to traffic their victims to different neighboring countries. Metema town located in the North West part of the country, among others, is a prominent transit place where large numbers of migrants from Ethiopia and other neighboring countries (Eritrea and Somalia) are trafficked into Sudan. Each year, despite the increasing effort of the administration of the *Wereda* to control human trafficking, migrants from different corners of the country flee towards this direction with the aim of crossing the border into Sudan. Even before crossing the border, while they are in Metema, these migrants are lured into different inhuman treatments and right violations by the traffickers and their agents. Some migrants are ripped of their properties and their rights; others are forced to pay much in addition to the initial payment and left to hunger and thirst, again others are raped, beaten to death, insulted and immorally treated by their handlers while they were in their homeland, even before beginning the worst journey through the desert to Sudan.

Until the traffickers in Metema arrange conditions with their Sudanese counterparts, Migrants that use Metema as a transit to Sudan linger in the town at least for a weak or more. It is at this time that the migrants are exposed to the aforementioned problems. Therefore in this section of the thesis an attempt is made to discuss those problems, which migrants face throughout their stay in Metema town, a transit place used to traffic migrants to Sudan.

#### 4.2.2.1 Places Used to Detain Migrants

As mentioned earlier, it is a common thing for migrants to stay in Metema town for a week or more before departing to Sudan. For the purpose of keeping the migrants out of sight from police or other individuals, migrants are often kept in small residential areas situated out of the town. As I understood from the narrations of the migrants and other informants in the town these are small huts and usually found around the rural villages in the outskirts of the town.

It is the duties of the *Shekava* to take migrants from the bus station to places prepared to keep migrants together. So as to avoid inspection of the police and communities of the town *Shekavas* do not bring large number of migrants at a time. The *Shekava* walk in front of them and tell some four or three migrants to follow him slowly. This is the way that the local brokers use to bring migrants to the holding places, which is found around the border.

Some residents of Metema town that participated in the study also mentioned that there are some traffickers who use hotel rooms and some house inside the town to keep their victims until they transfer them to the Sudanese traffickers. Sebele is a migrant who recently returned from Khartoum. She mentioned the following about the places where she spent the days before her departure to Khartoum.

*I came to Metema alone; it was already mid day when I arrived in the town. The man who was waiting for me in the bus station directly took me to a hotel/pension which is located two blocks away from the main road. He put me in a narrow room with a small bed, and I stayed there for two days. On the third day that man came back and took me to another place located some kilometers away from Metema town. Here in the new place, there were other migrants too.*

By the time migrants arrive in Metema town a local agent hired by the traffickers will order to meet them and lead them to the place prepared for them, sometimes forcefully without the will of the migrants. These holding places are not only places to keep out migrants from the reach of police forces or others, but are places where migrants are left to various problems and violations of rights. In these places migrants are raped by the traffickers, forced to sleep in a crowded manner in a small-suffocated room, are not allowed to leave the place for a prolonged period of time. Generally these places are like prison cells where one cannot talk with the other.

Migrants begin to experience different challenges on the first day they arrived in Metema town. Among other things migrants are locked in those small-unaired huts without enough food and water. Sometimes as some migrant informants reported victims are left for days without having something to eat or drink. All in all, as the empirical data collected from the informants demonstrates, these hiding places are the worst places to live not for a week or more but for a day or half. Having witnessed the various problems some migrants wish to return home but the hope of getting in to the Sudan and improving their life kept them there. In addition to the sufferings caused by the traffickers and their agents, migrants who are locked in the small houses are also exposed to various kinds of disease caused by the hot weather condition of the town.

#### **4.2.2.2 Fee Overcharging by Traffickers**

According to Demelash, a former trafficker, and those migrant informants who come from Oromiya and SNNPR, every migrant pay 3000 to 5000 birr on average to the traffickers in Addis Ababa. These traffickers took their share and send the rest to the transit town traffickers and inform the migrants that the money they paid is only used to facilitate their exit out of the country, not to cover other costs like food and transportation cost. Thus, based on the original agreement migrants are not expected to make another payment to transit town traffickers. However, in contrary to the original agreement reached at Addis Ababa some transit town traffickers force migrants to make additional payment.

Among the challenges faced by the victims in Metema town fee-overcharging or forcing migrants to make additional payment in addition to the initial agreement is one. Right after the end of the recruitment process migrants are asked to pay the trafficking fee for the agents in Addis Ababa. The traffickers who receive the payment from the migrants in Addis Ababa will deduct their share and send the rest to the traffickers in Metema through bank or other means. This is the way how originally the payment is done, but after the migrants arrive in Metema town some traffickers force the migrants to make additional payment with the pretext of facilitating their trafficking with in short period of time and getting a good job in Sudan.

According to Demelash, a former trafficker, traffickers in Metema town uses different methods in order to make the migrants pay additional payment. Some traffickers directly ask them to pay additional payment by mentioning such false pretexts as getting them in to Sudan safely and

within short period of time, securing them a decent and well paid job. These and other more false promises are often used by the traffickers to make the migrants make the additional payment. Sometimes some traffickers who are paid to facilitate the trafficking purposely disappear from the town and send another trafficker to negotiate a new deal. Then the new trafficker will tell the migrants that the man who was supposed to facilitate their trafficking has disappeared and let them know that he will send them to Sudan if they can pay him a certain amount of money. This is the other method used by the traffickers in some exceptional occasions to get additional payment from the victims.

Many victims of trafficking are lured into debt bondage and prostitution, to pay the additional payment asked by the traffickers and get into Sudan. In order to make the additional payment many migrants turn into either prostitutes in Metema town or engage into a kind of debt bondage agreement with the traffickers. In the coming few paragraphs an attempt is made to discuss these two problems which victims are forced to engage in so as to able to pay the additional money.

#### **a) Prostitution**

In addition to its prominence as a historical place, a trade center and a transit town for human trafficking, Metema is also a famous town on another issue i.e. prostitution. Despite the size of the town there are hundreds of bars, nightclubs, hotels, and brothels built following the main street of the town, and hundreds of ‘prostitutes’ are found within those establishments.

Due to a high degree of CSW and inter-regional mobility for business, labor and other opportunities, Metema town is identified as high risk of HIV transmission area (NARC 2009; see also Yilma 2007). Many of the ‘prostitutes’ who work in those bars, nightclubs and brothels are young girls and women who came to Metema town from different parts of the country to go to Sudan.

The primary aim of these girls and women was, in most cases, to enter Sudan via Metema, not to work as ‘prostitutes’ in Metema town. But due to profit seeking traffickers migrants are turned into ‘prostitutes’ to be able to pay the additional payment they are asked by the traffickers. When migrants come to Metema most of them do not have extra money to pay the additional payment asked by the traffickers in Metema, because they were told that the money which they paid at the beginning will be enough to cover all the trafficking cost. Thus for many of them working as

prostitutes in one of the night clubs or hotels in Metema is a feasible solution to pay the additional payment and get into Sudan within a short period of time.

## **b) Debt Arrangement**

Migrants who do not want to work as prostitutes prefer another way to pay the additional payment they are asked to make. Arranging a debt is the other way migrants use and agree to pay the additional payment after they moved to Sudan and got work there. In debt bondage the migrants agree to pay half or some percent of their salary for an extended period of time for the traffickers who facilitate their trafficking. After they are sent to Sudan migrants work from dawn to night in the destination countries in tough working conditions. But large amount of their salary is deducted and transferred to traffickers, not their families or other relatives, and this is the worst part of such agreements as debt bondage.

Sara is one of the returnee migrants who shared her own lived experience. Like many other victims of trafficking in Metema town she was also forced to engage in a debt bondage agreement with a trafficker who facilitated her migration to Sudan because she was asked to provide payment in addition to the initial 4000 birr she paid in Addis Ababa.

*While I was in Addis Ababa the man who arranged my migration took 4000 birr and told me that it will cover all my trafficking cost to Sudan (including the payments made to traffickers in Metema). But after I arrived in Metema the man who brought me from the bus station put me in a single room with other migrants for three days without food or something to drink, and he never returned again. Then another man came and told me that he will send me to Khartoum if only I pay him 3000 birr. Because I didn't have that much birr at the time the only choice I had was to agree with the man on paying him back the money after he send me to Khartoum and got a job.*

While I was in one small coffee house in Metema town I met a young gentleman and started to talk with him. In the middle of our conversation I told him the purpose of my presence in the town and asked him to participate in the study as an informant but he refused. However, throughout our short dialogue he indicated me to another point which is directly related to prostitution and fee-overcharging. According to the young gentleman at the coffee house the

traffickers themselves ask some migrants (girls) to sleep with them instead of making the additional payment. This one is different from rape or other forms of forced sexual harassments, because it is based on the 'free will' of the woman who is asked to sleep with the trafficker. If the woman in question agrees to sleep and become the girl friend of one of the traffickers for some times she will not be forced to make additional payment or engage in debt arrangement or prostitution to collect money.

Apart from being forced to make payments beyond the initial agreement, in the transit town migrants are further pushed into other devastating problems of human trafficking in their attempt to overcome the fee-overcharging problem. Of these effects of trafficking debt bondage and prostitution are among the common challenges faced by victims of human trafficking in Metema town. Thus, asking the victims to make additional payments should not be simply interpreted as asking migrants for additional money; rather it is like forcing them to be prostitutes or 'sexual slaves' for the traffickers. The reason that traffickers ask additional payments from the migrants is not because the initial payment is not enough to cover all the cost of the trafficking, but it is because of the traffickers' limitless desire to get more profit out of the trafficking of each individual trafficking victim.

#### **4.2.2.3 Sexual Harassment and Other Related Problems**

Migrants suffer much out of immoral treatments after they arrived in the transit town, Metema, mostly by the traffickers. In an interview made with migrant informants and in a focus group discussion conducted with some public officials, the study identified a significant number of ways by which migrants are immorally treated by the traffickers and some residents of the town as well.

Traffickers in Metema town harass migrants both sexually and psychologically. Many migrants stated that they were badly treated by the traffickers and their agents while they were in the holding places. Among other things, migrants, most of the time girls and women, were insulted and psychologically demoralized by the traffickers. Sometimes when the condition get worth the insult and the verbal harassment will be transformed into real sexual attacks including rape and beating. At the holding places many migrants are kept together in a single room, the traffickers or their agents do not dare to rape or sexually harass women in front of other migrants.

According to migrant informants, traffickers came at night and took the woman they want to another place and do whatever they wish. Migrants are strongly warned to stay in the holding place. Any person who refuses to stay in that place or anyone who complains about the situations of the place will be beaten by the traffickers or left alone without food and water for days.

The other problem mentioned by participants of the FGD is shortage of food and water. Many of the migrant informants mentioned that they suffered a lot of hunger and thirst while they were in the holding place. Sometimes migrants are forced to live in these places without food or water. As a result of this, most migrants were easily infected by malaria, which is endemic in the area. Because their identity will pose some questions and suspicion among the health officers those unlucky victims who suffer from malaria will not be taken to health care institutions; rather they will be given some medicines purchased by the traffickers themselves in shops.

As I heard from Assefa and Kidest, residents of the town who participated in the study as key informants, few numbers of victims of trafficking found dead in the holding places due to malaria infection back in 2013. In addition to lack of food, many migrants are easily infected by malaria because they are new to the place. It is clear that malaria is a killing disease if not medicated immediately.

#### **4.2.3 Crossing the Border, Walking Through the Desert**

So far in the preceding sections of the thesis we have seen different problems experienced by victims of trafficking in the transit town, Metema. But the misery of the victims does not end at the transit town, rather it continues till they reach the destination country and after that too. To enter to the destination country, Sudan, migrants have to walk through the desert for many days. Migrants spend several days and nights of walking before reaching Khartoum, and within these days migrants face challenges, which are worst than the problems they experienced in the transit place, Metema town.

To avoid risks of being caught by border guards, the traffickers in Metema do the border crossing during nighttime. The traffickers in Metema escort the victims to some distances inside the Sudanese border and transfer them to Sudanese traffickers who will handle the rest of the journey to Khartoum, the capital of republic of the Sudan. From this time on the victims start facing various challenges until they reach Khartoum. During the day time migrants will hide in

small shelters made by the traffickers in the desert. Once the journey is started there is no way to look back. A migrant who wants to return will be beaten, threatened and forced by the traffickers to continue forward without complain.

There are two ways of crossing the Ethio-Sudanese border. The first way is crossing the border legally using a bus or other means of transportation. The other and the second way is crossing the border illegally walking through the desert on foot. Migrants should have a tourist visa to cross the border by using the first way. In order to get a tourist visa and cross the border legally as a tourist, As Melaku, head of Ethiopian immigration office in Metema, explained to the researcher an individual migrant should have a valid passport and apply for a tourist visa to the Sudanese embassy in Addis Ababa. Even though crossing the desert on foot in the night exposed the migrants to a variety of debilitating problems, the empirical data collected from the participants of this study shows that many migrants use the second way to cross the border and enter to Sudan.

It takes five to seven days of long and difficult walk in the desert to cross the border and to reach Khartoum on foot. Though the migrants suffer a lot while they were in Metema, most of the migrants reported that they face more serious and dangerous problems during the desert journey especially after the Ethiopian brokers transferred them to the Sudanese ones. Most of the time women migrants are raped by the Sudanese traffickers and any migrant who tried to interfere will be beaten to death by the traffickers. Because there is no water and food in the desert migrants suffer much and there were times where they were forced to drink dirty water and urine. An individual migrant who cannot cope up with the walking pace of the traffickers will be left behind.

Now in this part of the thesis it is time for us to look at the problems, which the victims face during the cross border journey till they reach Khartoum.

#### **4.2.3.1 Rape and Related Problems**

Once they cross the border and transferred to Sudanese traffickers, victims of trafficking begin to experience multifaceted problems. Different informants; especially trafficking victims who returned from Sudan mentioned various problems which are faced by the victims during their trip to Khartoum.

Rape and different kinds of sexual harassments on both girls and boys was a common problem mentioned by the informants. The Sudanese traffickers forced women migrants to have sex with them and some local Sudanese peoples. Refusing to do will lead to serious punishments including beating. Women and girls are not the only victims of trafficking raped by the traffickers, sometimes some gay traffickers rape and sexually harass some men victims. Thus homosexuality is another problem that some men victims experience in the desert journey in relation to rape and sexual harassment.

Among others Sara is one of the victims. She returned from Khartoum one year ago, now she is working in Metema town as commercial sex worker (CSW). I asked her about the desert journey and the sexually related problems which she and her friends faced when they went to Khartoum two years ago, and she mentioned the following:

*Because the Sudanese traffickers speak Arabic language and we cannot understand them, they use facial expressions and hand signs to tell us what to do. One day when we were taking rest in the desert, one of the Sudanese traffickers came to me and shows me a sign to come out of the shelter. Because I saw what they did to the other girl in the previous day, I knew that he was going to ask me to sleep with him or to rape me if I refuse to sleep. Though I knew that he will use his force, I refuse to come out and go with him. Finally he dragged me out and took me to the woods and raped me hard.*

As a result of forced sex and repeated sexual intercourse without protection many women migrants become pregnant, and exposed to different kinds of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and fistula. While I was visiting some victims of trafficking who were staying inside the compound of Metema *Wereda* police station, I came across a girl who was badly injured and raped by traffickers in the desert. She was harshly raped that she cannot control herself. There was one person from the *Wereda's* labor and social affairs office who was trying to take the injured girl to clinic. I approached him and asked about the condition, and he told me that this kind of problem is common. According to him, his name was Habte, many women victims who are rescued by both Ethiopian and Sudanese border guards are raped twice or more by the traffickers in the desert. Those girls who are rapped and injured badly will be left behind; while the traffickers continue their journey with other able migrants.

As I tried to mention earlier in the above paragraphs any migrant who refuses to follow the traffickers order will be threatened and beaten by the traffickers themselves. Sometimes men migrants tried to stop the traffickers from rapping the girls, but these men who tried to stop will be beaten to death. Beating is also another problem that migrants mention as a problem that they faced in the cross border journey.

#### **4.2.3.2 Forced Marriage**

Because the journey is made in the desert without having enough food and water and without proper equipments which are important for travelling through the bushes and unpaved difficult roads, many victims get weak and stay behind in the middle of nowhere in the desert. According to Deputy Inspector Abraraw, Metema *Wereda* police station, some victims are often found dead in the bushes where part of their body is eaten by wild animals. Some victims who survived the attack of the wild animals are rescued by local Sudanese people who live around the desert. Most of the time women are left behind because they cannot walk at the pace of the traffickers. These women victims will be rescued by the local peoples and made to marry one of the local peoples without their will.

*Before reaching Gedarif, [in Eastern Sudan], there are number of towns around the desert. Among others, if you go to Doka, Kunina, Marawit, or Mahana you will find a significant number of Ethiopian women living there with local Sudanese people. These women are forced to marry strangers without their will just because the local peoples saved their life. Forced to live with peoples that you do not know or belongs to them is weigh much more than slavery. (Demelash)*

It was not the dream of these girls and women to live with these peoples, but because they are found weak and vulnerable in the desert they are forced to marry and to live with them without their will. Many victims aimed to reach Sudan and change their life once and ever, but part of them who cannot make it to the destination country end up in a life like this.

#### **4.2.3.3 Forced Labor**

Forced labor often occurs as an outcome of trafficking in persons and according to the ILO Forced Labor Convention No. 29 (1930) it can be defined as: “all work or service that is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered

himself voluntarily” (Andrees 2008: 4). Forced or involuntary labor is one of the devastating results of trafficking and destination places are not the only places where trafficking victims are compelled to render free labor services, but it is discovered in this study that victims are also obliged to provide free labor services while they were transporting to the destination country. Because the main aim of the traffickers is to get more profit out of the victims, they force their victims to do anything, which they think is profitable for them (traffickers). Forced labor is one of such ways where the traffickers make the victims to participate in different works and generate huge amount of money.

Before reaching Khartoum migrants pass through some rural villages and towns, and when they pass through these villages the traffickers force the migrants to work and render different services to the villagers against the victims will. Most of the time victims (mostly men) are forced to work in agricultural fields. According to my informants the kind of agricultural work which victims are forced to participate differs according to the season. Among other things the victims were forced to involve in different agricultural works including clearing farmlands, plowing, weeding, harvesting, and transporting farm products from the field to villages.

Sometimes the traffickers keep the victims in these villages for a long period of time than it normally takes to reach Khartoum. The reason behind this is that the traffickers want to accumulate profit by forcing the victims to work in different agricultural fields of the villagers. The more the victims stay in the villages, traffickers get more profits. As it is mentioned victims do various kinds of works in the fields, but the owners of the fields pay the traffickers not the victims who actually done the work.

I made an interview with those migrants who happen to be victims of such forced labor during the transportation and they told me that the traffickers do not share the payment they received from the field owners with the migrants; rather they threaten the victims to work without any complain by using punishments, penalty, and other violent measures. Thus involuntary or forced labor is another challenge which Ethiopian trafficking victims face while they were transported to Sudan, Khartoum.

#### **4.2.3.4 Hunger and Thirst**

After the victims depart from Metema and if there is no interruption on their way the victims may reach Khartoum within 7 to 10 days of walk through the desert. Except for some kilometers, the victims walk on foot all the way to the destination town. For the purpose of avoiding confrontation from border guards, traffickers transport the victims in the deserts. The victims at least stay for a week walking through the desert without sufficient food and water. As the victims mentioned to me the desert is very hot, beside there is no water to drink. All the key informants mentioned that they all suffered a lot due to lack of water and food while they were walking in the desert to reach the destination town. As a result of high shortage of water in the desert the victims are obliged to drink impure and very infected water to survive. Sometimes some desperately thirst victims drink human urine to keep themselves alive and reach the destination country.

The victims also suffered much due to lack of food too. As the trafficking victims narrated at the beginning of their journey they were told that there will be enough food in their journey, as a result many of the victims do not have enough food for a week or more except some biscuits and breads they put in their back pack. After the journey starts and when the victims are once in the desert the traffickers warn the victims not to eat the food they put in their bag as there will be not food in the desert until reaching Khartoum or other nearby town. Tough the victims do accordingly; the food they packed cannot keep them long. Because many victims finished their food in the middle of the desert before reaching the destination town, they were forced to continue the rest of the journey without having eaten food for days.

Thus hunger and thirst are the other major challenge that the victims face in their journey to the destination town. Due to the lack of food and water many victims got weaker and weaker in the desert, and left behind to perish in the desert. Those trafficking victims who were strong enough to withstand the hunger and the thirst made it to the destination country, while those who cannot endure the hunger left in the desert.

#### **4.2.3.5 Death**

From the day they left Metema town on wards to the time they reach Khartoum, the destination city in Sudan, the victims face multifaceted problems. Individual victims who cop up with the

problems will reach the destination country. On the other hand victims who cannot able to withstand the challenges will perish out in the desert before reaching the final destination place.

According to Deputy Inspector Abraraw, Metema town's police station crime investigation and control team leader, many trafficking victims are found dead in the desert that found between the two countries border. The inspector also mentioned that the causes of the deaths are quite multifaceted.

*The trafficking victims face diversified problems, especially after they are transferred to Sudanese trafficking. We have found and received a lot of dead bodies. For instance last year (2013) we have found nine (9) dead bodies in the desert. It was difficult for us to discover the identity of the deceased victims, because the bodies were kept for days in the desert unnoticed.*

As Deputy Inspector Girma, Metema Wereda police office head, mentioned to the study different crimes are committed on the victims of trafficking. Among other things many victims are found killed in the desert which is commonly used as a path and hiding place for the traffickers and their victims. Most of the crimes are committed in Sudanese soil, after the victims are transferred to Sudanese traffickers. Added to this the aforesaid informant mentioned that:

*When we investigate the bodies of the deceased victims, we found different signs that assures the victim was not dead naturally, but because of something intentionally done on them. Some victims are beaten to death, while others are raped repeatedly. Some other victims also die of malaria and dehydration due to chronic shortage of water and food in the desert.*

Demelash is one of the key informants participated in this study by providing valuable information regarding the trafficking process in Metema. He also reported the following to the study when he was asked about the different death incidents he witnessed.

*Throughout my stay in the trafficking business I have witnessed the death of many trafficking victims. Once up on a time when I transport victims from Metema to Khartoum along with my friends, I have seen more than 13 victims dead due to car accident. I also witnessed the death of 7 migrants because of dehydration.*

Death is another outcome of illegal trafficking. Indeed many lucky trafficking victims make it alive to the destination country and change their life as they wish. But it is undeniable fact that a significant number of victims found dead in the bushes before reaching the destination country and fulfilling their dream of changing their life. Thus death is one of the major challenges that victims of trafficking face in their journey to the destination country.

#### **4.2.3.6 Inability to Communicate with the Sudanese Traffickers**

Most of the time Ethiopian traffickers (the traffickers in Metema town) do not transport migrants all the way to the destination city, Khartoum. Rather they transfer the migrants to the Sudanese traffickers after escorting them some distances inside the Sudanese border and the Sudanese take care of the rest of the journey to Khartoum. Except some Amharic words the Sudanese traffickers entirely speak in Arabic. This creates miscommunication and misunderstanding between the traffickers, who speak Arabic only, and the migrants, who speak Amharic, Oromifa and other Ethiopian languages.

The migrant informants mentioned to the researcher that the Sudanese traffickers shout aloud in a language that we do not know the meaning whenever they want us to do something. The migrants also mentioned that they often use hand signs to ask something or communicate with the traffickers because they do not have a common language to communicate with one another. Likewise the Sudanese traffickers use different signs to order us to walk faster, to stop walking, to hide or to sleep. Throughout all journeys via the desert route migrants face difficulty of communicating with the Sudanese traffickers because of language barrier. Thus, inability to communicate with the Sudanese traffickers - due to language - was another challenge that migrants face in their journey from Metema to Khartoum.

So far in this section of the thesis we have discussed about the multifaceted challenges being faced by the victims. The empirical data collected during the fieldwork shows that victims faced a lot of diversified problems during the cross border journey, which is made to reach Khartoum, Sudan. The study also discovered that Ethiopian victims of trafficking face very devastating problems including rape and death after they have crossed the border and transferred to Sudanese traffickers. But it is not to say that the victims do not face problems while they were inside their country's border.

### **4.3 Deporting the Victims to Their Place of Origin**

According to the reports of Metema *Wereda* police and labor and social affairs office large numbers of trafficking victims come to Metema from different corners of the country. Of these trafficking victims some victims pass the border and enter Sudan, while others captured by the border guards during their attempt to cross the Ethio – Sudanese border. The captured victims will be deported to the place where they come from. Deporting the victim is done in collaboration by Metema *Wereda* police office and the labor and social affairs office of the *Wereda*.

According to Mr. Habte, an expert of Metema *Wereda* labor and social affairs office, the trafficking victims will be treated well and made to stay in the police station for a while before returning to their place of origin. Experts of the labor and social affairs office of the *Wereda* also create awareness for the victims while they are in the police station. According to Mr. Habte the victims are given a day allowance of 107 Ethiopian birr from the day they captured to the time they left Metema town. According to Mr. Habte, Metema *Wereda* labor and social affairs office, Metema *Wereda* administration, in collaboration with the regional government and other NGOs, covers all the cost, including the daily allowance, which used to return the victims to their place of origin. Last year the Metema *Wereda* administration had returned 793 men and 1035 women trafficking victims back to their birth villages.

Victims who came from Oromiya and SNNPR will be returned to Addis Ababa. Whereas, migrants who came from different parts of Amhara regional state will be directly send to their place of origin. Metema *Wereda* administration covers all the transportation cost of transporting the victims to their place of origin.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Actors Involved in Human Trafficking and the Vulnerability of Victims**

From the trafficked person's perspective, as we have seen in chapter three, the reasons for leaving his or her home country are multi determined and complex, often a convergence of push and pull factors. People may migrate due to economic, social or political reasons. Whatever reason causes the trafficking; there are different actors involved behind each and every trafficking incident. Various actors are involved in human trafficking from the start to the finish of the trafficking cycle.

Besides understanding the causes of trafficking and depicting the multifaceted problems faced by the victims, identifying vulnerable groups and the various parties involved in trafficking are also the major aims of this study. Thus, this chapter presents the various actors involved in human trafficking and an understanding of their respective roles.

Human trafficking is a crime against human beings at all; it left no boundaries of race, sex or age. However there are particular groups of individuals among the society who are more vulnerable to human trafficking, for a variety of reasons. Therefore, identifying these vulnerable groups and explaining the degree and reasons of their vulnerability is also another subject, which will be covered under this chapter.

#### **5.1 Actors Involved in Human Trafficking and Their Role**

A diversity of actors participates in human trafficking, ranging from diplomats and employees of multinational organizations who traffic young women for domestic labor to small-scale entrepreneurs, to members of the large criminal organizations (Shelley 2009: 83). The term actor is used in this study to refer to the various individuals and parties that participate in the trafficking process, including trafficked persons themselves, families of trafficked persons, local communities of both transit town and place of origins, and different government officials.

The trafficking process involves different actors. According to the findings of this study, in addition to the traffickers and the trafficked persons, which are the main characters of the trafficking incident, many other individuals are proved to be involved in human trafficking both at the place of origin, transit and destination. The empirical data collected in this study demonstrates that varieties of actors have an active stake in the overall trafficking process of

Ethiopians to the Sudan. Informants reported that various parties including family members, returnees, public officials and local brokers are involved in their trafficking.

Trafficked individuals and a group of traffickers who facilitate the trafficking of those individuals are the foremost actors involved in the process. A range of other actors starting from the family of the migrants to the community members of both the sending and transit places are involved in human trafficking deliberately or unknowingly.

Although a variety of actors are involved in human trafficking, their degree of involvement and their roles and contributions to the migration process are quite different. The trafficker's role and their degree of involvement are quite different from that of the role played by the family members of the victims. For example the roles of the traffickers range from recruiting victims, transporting and facilitating the illegal border crossing. On the other hand the role of the migrants' family and friends is to encourage and push the migrants to migrate by seducing them with successful stories of migration.

Generally, as the findings of the study shows, different actors are involved in the trafficking of young Ethiopian men and women to the Sudan. What follows are a detailed discussion of the various actors participated in the trafficking process and the role-played by each actor.

### **5.1.1 Traffickers**

The person or a group of persons who facilitate the whole trafficking process are referred to as trafficker/s. When we look at the different trafficking incidents all over the world, organized criminal groups are the leading actors that participate in human trafficking as traffickers. As Shelley (2009: 84) argues the organized criminal groups that commit trafficking as a business differs from one another. According to her some traffickers are opportunistic who engage in a variety of illegal activities including human trafficking to generate profit, while others are fulltime traffickers that involve exclusively as human smugglers and traffickers.

Traffickers are those individuals who so ruthlessly recruit and exploit different innocent and defenseless vulnerable individuals. The profession of traffickers is as diverse as the individuals they recruit and exploit. According to Aronowitz (2009: 52-55) they include former prostitutes,

military, security, and law enforcement personnel; athletes as well as typical criminals found in organized crime groups.

The traffickers themselves are as varied as the persons they traffic. Some traffickers are part of larger operations including criminal groups; others are individuals who were victims of trafficking in the past. Still some others are one time offender who might exploit a friend or relatives of his/her own. Men and women of all ages, with various educational, nationality and ethnic backgrounds, are equally involved in human trafficking as traffickers (Motus 2004: 32). Traffickers are responsible for and knowingly participate in the trafficking process.

Because human trafficking is a carefully crafted and networked criminal business, one can find traffickers both at the place of origin, transit towns, and destination countries. The role of traffickers in the place of origin is quite different from that of the traffickers at the transit towns and the traffickers in the destination places. Recruiting potential victims and convincing them to migrate to a foreign country is the role of the traffickers who function in the place of origin, while harboring or transporting the victims into places of destination is the role of transit town traffickers. Receiving and 'selling' the victims or luring the victims into different exploitative conditions is the role of destination town traffickers.

There are different persons in the places of origin who serve as trafficking brokers or agents. These trafficking brokers recruit and procure potential victims in the rural villages and nearby towns by using different recruiting techniques (see chapter four for further discussion of recruiting techniques).

There are also different individuals in the transit town that involved in trafficking as agents. For instance in Metema town there are persons who work and deal with migrants on behalf of the traffickers. The role of these persons is to gather migrants from the bus station and lead them to the secret holding places. Whereas facilitating the actual border crossing and negotiating and arranging conditions with the Sudanese traffickers is the responsibility of the transit town traffickers.

In both places of origin and the transit town there are different persons who work for the traffickers in commission. Those individuals who work for the traffickers in the transit town are known as *Shekava* and these persons are most of the time local residents of the town. On the

other hand those individuals who work for the traffickers in the places of origins as recruiters of potential migrants are called *Leqami*. Like the *Shekavas*, *Leqamies* are local residents in the places of origins. Men are often preferred by the traffickers to work as *Shekava* or *Leqami*.

The traffickers in Metema town escort the victims for some distance across the border and transfer them to their Sudanese counterparts. Getting the victims into the destination town and transferring them to their exploiters is left to the traffickers of destination country.

Trafficking in human beings is an organized illicit activity; whereby people are trafficked and held in secrete places often for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitations. Largely as a result of the illicit nature of the topic covered under this study, many individuals fear and hesitate to participate in the study as informants. Following this the researcher encountered difficulties of accessing key informants especially those individuals who involve in human trafficking as traffickers or agents.

Nevertheless, the study found out the following regarding the traffickers and brokers' operations and activities. The traffickers who send Ethiopian migrants to the Sudan work as a group and they have a wide stretched network throughout the country. There are local brokers who recruit migrants in the rural villages. The local brokers who recruit many individual migrants from the rural villages send them to brokers who operate in the nearby city. The process continues until the migrants fall in the hands of traffickers who operate in Metema town. The brokers in Metema in turn walk the trafficked persons half a way to the border and transfer them to the Sudanese traffickers who will take them directly to Khartoum, the destination city in the Sudan where majority of Ethiopian migrants are taken to.

The traffickers who work in Metema are composed of different individuals. Majority of the traffickers are local residents of the *Wereda* and some other surrounding areas. According to residents of the town some of the individuals who work as traffickers and *Shekava* in Metema town are former victims of trafficking that come to the town from different parts of the country or migrants who were previously arrested by the police while trying to cross the border.

According to Deputy Inspector Girma, head of Metema *Wereda* police office, the *Wereda* police have devoted a significant share of their time and manpower for the investigation and controlling of human trafficking in the area. Although it is not the mandate of Metema *Weredas'* court to see

cases of human trafficking, last year the *Wereda* police, in collaboration with residents of the town and some trafficking victims, arrested 62 individuals who were convicted for involvement in trafficking in persons. Of these all accused traffickers 13 of them were found guilty and sentenced to 6 to 7 years imprisonment.

### **5.1.2 Migrants**

The person who is trafficked inside or across national borders is referred to as victim of trafficking in persons. Next to the traffickers, victims of trafficking or persons trafficked with in or out of their country's border are one of the main actors involved in the trafficking process. It has been said that migration is one of the mechanisms by which individuals respond to different economic, social, cultural and political difficulties. Regardless of the cause of migration different individuals choose different ways of migration and entering to a foreign country. Human trafficking is one of the different ways used to enter into a foreign country illegally.

For a variety of reasons, mainly related to poverty and lack of awareness, some migrants seek the aid of traffickers to get into a foreign land. Some victims of trafficking involve in human trafficking knowing that they are going to be exploited in the course of the trafficking and at the destination country as well, where as some others end up in trafficking just simply they are tricked by the traffickers and their agents.

Some trafficked persons have a prior knowledge of the different problems that other migrants face in the destination countries. Despite of the problems they will face in their journey and at the destination places many migrants make a decision to migrate. According to rational choice theory of migration migrants decide to migrate to a certain place by calculating the cost and benefits of moving or staying home. For many of the migrants who participated in this study the benefit of migrating to the Sudan is much weigh than the cost of staying at home. These migrants have nothing in home. Thus if they stay at home they will have nothing, but they will have some prospects of life, with possible sacrifices or costs not in terms of money only, if they migrate to the Sudan. It is this calculation of costs and benefits that make many migrants to migrate to the Sudan even knowing the different problems they will encounter in the process.

There is also the notion of 'destiny' and 'luck' among the migrants. *If it is my destiny to die in the desert while crossing the border I will accept it, but who knows what the future holds for me?*

*I might cross the border safely and get into the Sudan and change my life for once and ever.* This notion of destiny and believe in one's luck keep many of the migrants to push further in their thought of migration and think for positive things and aspire good things in their migration.

Migrants that use Metema town as a transit to enter to the Sudan are much diversified in terms of age, sex and educational backgrounds. Generally when we look at migrants' places of origins migrants from Oromiya region takes the largest number, while migrants from SNNPR and ANRS takes the second and third places in terms of number of migrants. In terms of age majority of the migrants, including the ten migrants participated in this study, are youngsters whose age ranges from 17 to 33. But there are also cases of child trafficking in the area.

Profile of trafficked persons based on place of origin (Sep. 2012 – Aug. 2013)

Place of Origin by region	Sex		Total number of trafficked persons	
	Men	Women	Sub total	Percentage (%)
<b>Amhara</b>	257	121	378	20.67
<b>Oromiya</b>	290	471	761	41.63
<b>SNNPR</b>	239	386	625	34.19
<b>Somalia</b>	7	57	64	3.50
<b>Total</b>	793	1035	1828	100

Table 2 Profile of Trafficked Persons by Place of Origin

Both educated and uneducated migrants are trafficked to the Sudan via Metema. The educational level of migrants spans from little to college educated. Some migrants are illiterate; others are school dropouts or elementary completed and some are high school graduates and university dropouts. Among the ten migrants that participated in this study 5 of them were school dropouts who only completed elementary education, 2 of the migrants were uneducated who have no history of formal education at all. The rest 2 migrants were secondary education students who stopped at grade ten. Only one of the migrants, Seble, was a student in higher learning institution. She was a second year student in University of Gondar at the time of her migration.

Deliberately or not, trafficking victims are involved in illegal border crossings, and they become one part of the trafficking process. But according to such international protocols and procedures which are endorsed by the UN, ILO or IOM trafficked persons are treated as victims of a crime, not as a criminal. To date there is no any international or national legal procedure to punish trafficked persons as criminals that cross international borders illegally without proper travelling documents. But treating trafficked persons only as victims poses a difficulty on the effort made to control human trafficking and other illicit cross border movements.

Regards to the problem of treating trafficked persons as victims, Deputy Inspector Girma, Metema Wereda police office head, mentioned the following during a focus group discussion held with some concerned public servants in Metema town.

*There is no legal procedure to accuse or punish the trafficked persons as criminals. We (police office of the Wereda) arrest many persons who tried to cross the Ethio-Sudanese border illegally. But we simply return them to the places where they come from, because there is no any legal framework to punish them. Due to this gap a person who was once arrested and returned home will come again to cross the border. This in turn makes it difficult for us to control the problem*

Whether they are viewed as victims or criminals, trafficked persons are among the main individual actors that participated in human trafficking from the beginning to the end of the trafficking process. Trafficked persons can be adult men and women, young girls and boys, or children. Regarding the persons trafficked to the Sudan via Metema; the study found out that young girls constitute large number of the victims.

### **5.1.3 Families of the Trafficked Persons**

The trafficked person's family members are also another actor that participates in human trafficking. In one or another way the families of the trafficked persons are one of the main actors that participated in the trafficking of their daughters and sons. Financial remittances are an important source of revenue for many poor families in Ethiopia to appeal to the idea of sending their children overseas. Thus to be the beneficiaries of this financial remittance, family members of the migrants indirectly participate in human trafficking by arranging ways and pushing their

daughters and sons or brothers and sisters to migrate abroad. Parents have played important roles both intentionally and unintentionally in seducing their children into exploitative working conditions.

During in an interview conducted with victims of trafficking, I asked them about their decision to migrate to the Sudan and more than half of the trafficked persons participated in this study as informants mentioned that there were family interventions in their decision. Among other things family members of trafficked persons participate in human trafficking by encouraging the victims to migrate and change their life, by providing money to cover the trafficking cost, and by finding jobs in the destination places.

Here I will use again Rekeyia's case, which is presented in chapter three, to better illustrate the involvement of family members in human trafficking. Rekeyia, a migrant informant originally from Jimma, mentioned the following about the participation of her family in her migration.

*I have never dreamed of going to Arab countries for a minute of my life, but a strong pressure from my family pushes me to migrate to the Sudan. Because one of our neighbors' daughter was in Dubai, my parents especially my mother wants me to go to one of the Arab countries to send them financial remittances and other things such as cloths and jewelries like our neighbors' daughter do.*

As it is clearly depicted in the above expression of the informant, in addition to the financial remittance, families are seduced and encouraged to send their children as a result of changes and improvements they see among their neighbors who previously send one of their daughters or sons to the Arab Middle East or other oversea countries.

Peer influence also plays a significant role. Some trafficked individuals that participated in this study mentioned that there was an influence to migrate from their friends who returned from migration, and from those who were in one of the destination countries. These friends of the trafficked persons tell different positive things about the work opportunities, high and reliable payments in the destination countries. This in turn creates a strong need to migrate. Migrant returnees also put great influence on their friend's decision to migrate.

Generally, families of trafficked persons along with friends of trafficked persons are one among the range of actors participated in the trafficking of many Ethiopians to the Sudan, Khartoum, through Metema.

#### **5.1.4 Local Community of the Transit Town (Metema)**

Before departing to the destination countries, victims of trafficking are taken into a transit town predominantly located near to the border of the intended destination country or the next transit country. Likewise Ethiopian migrants, who wish to go to the Sudan illegally, will be taken to Metema town and made to stay there for days before departing to the Sudan, Khartoum. It is at this time that the local residents of Metema town get the opportunity to participate in the trafficking process. Including my observation at the study area, the empirical data collected in the field shows that the residents of Metema town involved in different aspects of the trafficking process.

Among other things the local community of the town participated in human trafficking in the following ways. Some residents rent their houses for the traffickers to use it as a detention place before transferring the victims to the Sudanese traffickers. Some hotel owners in the town also rent hotel rooms for traffickers to use it as a holding place.

*One afternoon when I was in Metema Wereda police office compound, which is located at Gendewuha, to interview a couple of migrants who were held there, I saw a women who is a local resident of Metema town and accused of cooperating with traffickers. She was then accused for she allows more than ten migrants to hide in her place. Later when she explains to the police the reason why she allowed the migrants to stay in her place, she mentioned that the traffickers promised her that they will give her hundreds of birr if she collaborate them by hiding the migrants for few days.*

Some other residents work for traffickers as brokers or *shekava*, to gather the victims in the town and bring them into the holding places. Instead of exposing to police, providing food and other necessary things and services for victims who are hold in hidden places is the other activity that the local residents are participated in human trafficking.

As we have seen in the previous chapter trafficking victims are forced to engage into prostitution in order to overcome the problem of fee overcharging. Thus forced prostitution was one of the problems that victims experience while they were in Metema town. There are as many as hundred nightclubs, bars, and brothels in Metema town. The owners of those aforementioned establishments involve in human trafficking by hiring and allowing trafficked persons to work as prostitutes in their establishments.

Besides the owners of the nightclubs and the brothels, who employ victims of trafficking as prostitutes, many residents of Metema town and other nearby towns are also involved as sex buyers. Because the town is a famous trade center, place of large agricultural investments, and border town different individuals come to Metema town for various purpose. Some come to the town to buy and sell goods and some other come to work as daily laborer in agricultural fields. Especially during harvesting season many young men come to the town from different rural parts of the Amhara regional state. As some residents of the town mentioned to the study those young men who come to the town to work in agricultural fields are the main clients of trafficked prostitutes.

Even though residents of Metema town are accused of being involved in human trafficking by ignoring and tolerating different trafficking activities, they also participate in the effort made to return the trafficking victims to their place of origin. Among other things residents of the town provide food, shelter, sometimes money for the transportation of the trafficked persons back to their hometown.

Local residents of Metema town and some individuals who come to Metema town to work in plantations as laborers are among the individuals that participate in human trafficking. Some involved in activities directly related to the issue of trafficking, while some other involved indirectly without knowing that they are participating in human trafficking. Whether they involved in the activity knowingly or unknowingly Metema town residents are among the various actors participated in the trafficking of many Ethiopians to the Sudan through Metema.

#### **5.1.5 Public Officials**

Corrupt government officials all over the world are among the main actors participated in human trafficking. Different public servants including police officers, border guards, immigration

officers, and *Kebelle* level administrative workers are all involved in human trafficking. The involvement of government officials in trafficking is more visible in the transit towns than other places of origin or destination. According to United Nations Office on Drug and Crime government officials involved in human trafficking includes the following actors: “police, customs officers, embassies, border control authorities, immigration service, other law enforcement agencies, security forces, armed forces, and local officials” (UNODC 2011: 7).

In the transit town, especially during the time of the actual border crossing, many corrupt border guards and police officers involve in trafficking by helping the traffickers. Among other things these corrupt officials contribute to human trafficking in the following ways. Leaving vast border areas unpatrolled for traffickers to use it as way to pass the border with the trafficked persons, ignoring and tolerating activities of trafficking in persons, and participating and organizing trafficking in persons.

Corruption is one of the reasons for the involvement of government officials in human trafficking. Experts indicate that if it were not for the presence of corrupt officials, trafficking in persons would not have expanded rapidly in recent times. Corrupt public officials allow the trafficking process to remain protected and facilitate the victimization of innocent people. Corrupt officers also assist the victim’s movements within a country and across the border. In general the corrupt behavior of law enforcers and other concerned government officials help traffickers to recruit, transport and exploit trafficked persons.

Issuing false travelling documents for trafficking victims is one of the acts done by corrupt officials. According to some Metema town residents the local officials of the town are involved in human trafficking by issuing identification cards for trafficking victims to pass the Ethio-Sudanese border as local residents of Metema town. For Metema town residents it is allowed to enter Galabat, the nearest Sudanese town and market place, with an identification card issued by the local town administration (*Kebelle*).

While I was in Metema town for the fieldwork of this study, I heard a story that some police officers of the town and border guards have links with local traffickers. Recently the federal government of Ethiopia has replaced some of the local police forces and the border guards that

were protecting the Ethio-Sudanese border. The replacement is made for the reason that the federal government has suspected the involvement of local border guards in human trafficking.

Generally corrupt government officials contribute for the rise of trafficking in persons. Corruption and the involvement of officials may be seen in both steps of the trafficking cycle, but it is more visible during border crossing in the transit towns. Next to local residents of Metema town, families of victims, traffickers and trafficked persons themselves; corrupt government officials are among the various actors that participated in and contributed to the trafficking of Ethiopians to the Sudan.

## **5.2 Vulnerability to Human Trafficking**

As the accounts of the trafficked persons participated in this study shows different people can be vulnerable to trafficking for various reasons. Some persons become more vulnerable because of poverty, unequal distribution of socio economic resources, and unemployment; some persons end up in trafficking due to abusive family conditions and other socio cultural problems.

Related to the above risk factors, there are some individuals or groups who are more vulnerable to trafficking. In this section of the thesis we will look at the gender and age profiles of trafficked persons in order to identify and understand the social group, which is more vulnerable to trafficking.

### **5.2.1 Who is More Vulnerable to Trafficking? Age and Gender Profile of Trafficked Persons**

Who are more susceptible to human trafficking? Women, children, or men? Globally men, women and children are all trafficked for different purposes, but different literatures tell us that women and children are more vulnerable to trafficking than adult men ( see Esim and Smith 2004; Arnowitz 2009: 31-51). So as to answer the above question in the context of this study, it is important first to look at the age and gender profiles of the individuals trafficked to the Sudan through Metema town. To this end I will use a report produced by Metema Wereda police office, which shows the number of trafficked persons caught in Metema town before crossing the border.

Sex	Number of trafficked persons arrested in Metema		Percentage (%)	
	Sep. 2012-Aug. 2013	Sep. 2013-Jan. 2014	2013	2014
Male	793	188	43.39	35.60
Female	1035	340	56.61	64.40
Total	1828	528	100	100

**Table 3 Number of Trafficked Persons Based on Sex**

According to Metema *Wereda* police office report a total of 1828 trafficked persons were caught by the *Wereda* police force and border guards back in 2013 while they were trying to cross the border to the Sudan. Of the total migrants arrested by the police in that year 1035 (56.61%) were female, while the rest 793 (43.39%) were male migrants that come from different parts of the country, principally from Oromiya, SNNPR, and Amhara national regional states. In addition to this, 340 (64.4%) female and 188 (35.6%) male, a total of 528 trafficking victims were caught by the police in Metema town from September 2013 to January 2014. Here I am referring only to the number of those trafficked victims who are arrested by the Metema *Wereda* police and border guards. But it is believed that many trafficked persons (more in number than the one held by the police) have crossed the border and entered the destination country, the Sudan.

As it is indicated in the above report of Metema *Wereda* police office, when we look at the number of trafficked persons arrested in Metema town in 2013 and 2014 females constitutes the largest number of the trafficked persons. The above table shows the number of trafficked persons arrested before crossing the border. But according to residents of Metema town and other informants participated in the study significant number of individuals are trafficked to the Sudan. Therefore, depending on the statistics given above and other findings gained from informants the study found out that more females are trafficked to the Sudan via Metema than that of males and children.

With respect to the age of the persons trafficked through Metema, some residents of Metema town and government officials interviewed in this study mentioned that most of the age of the trafficking victims is found between 18 to 30. For instance if we look at the age profile of the

528 trafficking victims held in Metema in 2014, 491 of them were above the age of eighteen, while the rest (37) of the trafficked persons held in that same year were minors who were below the age of eighteen. The figures mentioned above shows that most of the trafficking victims that use Metema town to enter to the Sudan are young women and men whose age ranges from 18 to 30. But it does not mean that minors are not trafficked to the Sudan through Metema. Though there number is smaller, children of both sexes are trafficked to the Sudan via Metema.

Asefa is one of Metema town residents who were key informant. During a focus group discussion session with residents of the town he mentioned the following with Regard to the trafficking of children to the Sudan.

*Different individuals, including Oromo's, Walayta's, Somalia's and others come to Metema town to go to the Sudan illegally. Back in 2012 when I was passing through the immigration office<sup>5</sup> I saw two little girls as old as 14 or 15 held in the compound of the office with other adult trafficking victims. I could not believe that those children are come to Metema to go to the Sudan.*

Women constitute large number of the persons trafficked into the Sudan via the desert route of Metema. According to my informants Ethiopian young girls and women are trafficked to the Sudan mainly to serve as domestic servants in households and as waiters in different places. With the increased “feminization of migration”, globally women become more vulnerable to human trafficking.

Next to women, Ethiopian gentlemen are also trafficked to the Sudan in large numbers. Unlike women and girls, men are trafficked for a different purpose. Many trafficked Ethiopian men work as daily laborers in agricultural fields, in construction sites, and as chuffers. Although their number is not much like that of women and men, some of the informants reported that children from different parts of Ethiopia were brought to Metema town at different times to be trafficked to the Sudan.

### **5.2.2 Risk Factors for Women’s Vulnerability to Trafficking**

Different factors are attributed to the vulnerability of women to trafficking. Indeed it is mentioned that poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and the desire to improve one’s own

---

<sup>5</sup> There is a branch of Ethiopian immigration office in Metema town

life and that of their families are the main reasons why these trafficked persons left their home country in the first place. Although the above factors are mentioned by both men and women informants that participated in this study as a main reason for them to end up in trafficking, there are some unique factors that additionally make women more vulnerable to trafficking. Mainly related to their gender and different roles trafficked women are more victimized and exploited than adult men. Women are not only exploited, but they are abused in conditions that impose major risks to their mental, physical and reproductive health as well.

It is true that many individuals migrate and end up in trafficking in an attempt to escape poverty and improve their life economically, but the empirical data collected in this study asserts that economic conditions are not the only factors that make people to choose migration. There are other various socio-cultural factors that make women vulnerable to migration and end up in trafficking. According to some women informants who participated in this study, abusive family situations, gender stereotype and expectations of women in the society are among such conditions that force women to leave their home country and end up in exploitation.

When we look at the place of origin of many trafficking victims in Metema town, most of them are come from rural villages and semi urban areas. In these places the society's impression towards women is still as second-class citizens who are incapable of doing things. They are abused, suppressed, insulted, forced to marry without their interest, and forced to drop out from school to support their families. In general women and young girls are forced to live for their families not for themselves and not as they wish. Because of such reasons women are forced to seek ways to get out of the kind of life they live. Moving away and going to other places, which they do not know do women to escape the hard life situation use one of such ways, they experience. Traffickers and brokers use this opportunity to lure innocent women into trafficking and exploitation. Generally factors such as mentioned above make women more vulnerable to human trafficking than that of men.

Of the trafficked women participated in this study there was one woman, Habtam, who mentioned that she ended up in trafficking because of the reason that she was abused and suppressed by both her parents and husband who is married to her without her will.

*When I was 19, I got married to a man that I barely knew. I stayed with him (her husband) for three years. My husband used to drunk very often and insult and*

*beat me all the time without any convincing reasons. When the conditions with my husband get worse and worse I decided to move back to my parents. After I get back to my parents home I have nothing to do except helping my mother in domestic works. But my parents were not happy because of the reason that I left the man they forced me to marry. My families, especially my father harassed me all the time he got the opportunity, and I couldn't withstand that. Finally I decided to migrate to Metema.*

As it is clearly indicated in the above expression of the informant, she was first deprived of her right of marrying to a man of her choice. Second the man who she forcefully married abused her instead of pleasing and comforting her as a husband. When she get tired of her husband's abusive action she left him alone and get back to her family, but they demoralized her instead of welcoming and supporting her emotionally. Eventually all the combined abusive and suppressive conditions of her family and husband lead her to her exploitation through trafficking. Many women in Ethiopia migrate to the place they do not know and end up in trafficking not to improve their life economically or to support their family, but just for the sake of living a normal life, which is out of suppression and strict control.

The empirical data collected from trafficked women and all other informants demonstrated that women are more vulnerable to human trafficking because of various reasons associated with their gender and the gender expectations imposed on them by the society. Because of their gender women are not vulnerable to the act of trafficking only, but they are also victimized, tortured and exploited throughout the trafficking process more than any trafficking victims including adult men and children.

All in all, in addition to poor economic conditions, the vulnerability of women can be attributed to various factors operating both in the society that they live and in the destination places. Women are trafficked to different destination places for the purpose of labor and sexual exploitations. Different studies also revealed that there is a high demand of cheap labor and sexual services among peoples of the destination countries. As long as there is this high demand for sexual and domestic services in those destination places; and the trafficking of women for the above purpose is more profitable than trafficking adult men or children, women became and continue to become the main targets of traffickers and their agents. Thus, the presence of high demand for sexual services among men of the destination countries is another factor that makes women more vulnerable to the act of trafficking in persons.

## Chapter Six

### Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter tries to summarize and provide a conclusion about the major findings which the study discovered about the causes of human trafficking in Ethiopia, the multifaceted problems faced by migrants during the trafficking process, and the various parties involved and the vulnerability of victims to trafficking; and to give some recommendations and implications entirely depending on the major findings discovered in the whole research process.

#### 6.1 Concluding Remarks

This study was conducted for the purpose of exploring and understanding the causes of human trafficking and the multifaceted challenges faced by trafficked persons during the trafficking process, by stressing on the cases of trafficking victims that uses Metema town as transit to enter to the Sudan.

Ethnographic method of research was utilized to conduct the inquiry. Such qualitative data collection techniques as ethnographic interview, focus group discussion and observation were used for gathering data. Ten trafficked persons, five residents of Metema town and five Metema *Wereda* public servants were participated in this study as informants. The fieldwork for the study was conducted for seven consecutive weeks, from January 20 to March 9, in Metema *Wereda*, specifically at Metema Yohannes and Gendewuha<sup>6</sup> towns.

The study was set out to answer the following questions. a) What are the major precipitating factors behind human trafficking? b) What are the challenges that the trafficked persons faced in the trafficking process? c) Who are the different actors involved in the act of trafficking in the study area? d) Are there any social groups in the society, which are highly prone to human trafficking? The empirical findings are chapter specific and were summarized within the respective empirical chapters: major causes human trafficking in Ethiopia, the trafficking process and the multifaceted challenges faced by the victims, and actors involved in trafficking and vulnerability of victims. This section will synthesize the empirical findings to answer the study's research questions.

---

<sup>6</sup> Gendewuha town is the administrative seat of Metema Wereda

What are the major precipitating factors that cause human trafficking in Ethiopia? It was one of the questions that this study intends to answer. The study has identified different economic, social and cultural factors as a main cause of trafficking. Such factors as poverty, the desire to improve one's life, lack of opportunity and low payment for domestic work were mentioned by the informants as main causes of trafficking in Ethiopia. Added to this, migration policy of countries, promises of steady employment, pressure from the society, success stories told by migrants, low level of education, failure in education, forced marriage and abusive family conditions were also among the socio-cultural factors identified in the study as contributing factors to trafficking.

The study has also sought to explore the trafficking process and the multifaceted problems being faced by the trafficking victims in the process. Nearly all informants in the study have suffered during the trafficking process and mentioned different problems they experienced both in the transit town and the desert route, which used to enter to the Sudan. Trafficking victims reported that they were lured into prostitution and debt bondage in the transit town. Rape, insult, beating, disease, hunger, thirst, and death were also the major problems that victims face in the whole trafficking process before reaching the destination country.

Exploring the actors involved in human trafficking, and identifying vulnerable groups and the reasons for their vulnerability was the other task that this study wishes to accomplish. Related to the actors involved in the trafficking of Ethiopians to the Sudan, the study identified a range of actors with varied roles. Among others traffickers and agents, the trafficked persons themselves, family's of the trafficked persons, residents of the transit town, and government officials in the transit town were the main entities identified in this study as actors involved in human trafficking. Tough men, women and children are trafficked to the Sudan through Metema, women are found to be more vulnerable to trafficking in this study. Abusive family conditions, gender stereotype and roles, and relentless demand for cheap labor and sexual service in destination countries were among the factors mentioned as reasons for women's vulnerability.

In a nutshell, this study tries to investigate and comprehend the causes of human trafficking in Ethiopia and the various problems experienced by those innocent Ethiopians trafficked to the Sudan via the desert route of Metema. Different factors operating both in the country of origin and the destination countries force people to opt for migration and end up in trafficking. In this

study different economic and socio-cultural factors are identified behind the migration of many Ethiopians to Khartoum, the Sudan. It is evident in the study that impoverished life conditions and the related desire of improving one's life were the major economic factor behind the trafficking of large number of Ethiopians to the Sudan. Nonetheless, poverty and economic necessity alone cannot explain the ever-increasing phenomenon of trafficking in persons in the region. Apart from economic factors there are other conditions to be blamed for the trafficking of many Ethiopians. The migration policies of both sending and receiving countries, loose border control system and presence of corrupt government officials are among some of the other factors that should be blamed.

Different studies have been conducted in Ethiopia in the area of human trafficking. Most of the studies conducted so far were mainly focused on the problems that trafficking victims experience in the destination places while they were at work in a foreign land. These studies explored the expectations, life experiences of trafficked persons, and different problems they faced in the destination country. Yet destination countries are not the only places where trafficking victims experience problems. In this study it is discovered that trafficked persons experience multifaceted problems in the trafficking process, starting from their place of origin till they reach the destination country. Among others the transit town is one of the major places where trafficked persons lured into different problems. In Metema- the transit town- trafficking victims suffer a bunch of problems; they were stripped of their property and right, they were held in a small-suffocated room and exposed to disease, and they were raped and forced to work as prostitutes. Trafficked persons yet experience the most horrible challenges in the desert route after transferred to the Sudanese traffickers.

Up on their arrival on the destination countries, trafficked persons are thrown into different exploitative and dangerous working conditions against their will. Trafficking in persons is a clandestine activity, which is often done by a well-organized and networked group of traffickers. As it is discovered in this study the traffickers have an organized network and links, which is stretched, from the source areas to the transit town and the destination country. Apart from the traffickers there are other various actors involved in the trafficking process. These include trafficked persons themselves, residents of transit places, government officials, and family's of

trafficked persons. Although they contribute to human trafficking, the role and degree of involvement of the actors varies from one actor to the other.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

Primarily depending on the major findings of the study I recommend the following points for concerned governmental and nongovernmental bodies and organizations, and for researchers who wants to research the issue of human trafficking.

As it is discovered in this study human trafficking is caused by varieties of factors that operate both in places of origins and in destination countries, as a result strategies that aimed at preventing trafficking shall address both push and pull factors as a root cause of trafficking. The federal government, regional states and other nongovernmental organizations shall ensure that their interventions address the factors that increase vulnerability to trafficking, including inequality, poverty and all forms of economic and social discrimination.

Government and nongovernmental bodies should develop programs that offer livelihood options, including basic education, skills training and literacy, especially for women and other traditionally disadvantaged groups as they are more vulnerable to trafficking.

The federal government of Ethiopia should develop guidelines and procedures for relevant state authorities and officials such as police, border guards, immigration officials and others bodies that involved in the detection, detention, reception and processing of irregular migrants, to allow the rapid and accurate identification of trafficked persons.

Developing information campaigns for the general public aimed at promoting awareness of the dangers associated with trafficking. Such campaigns should be informed by an understanding of the complexities surrounding trafficking and of the reasons why individuals may make potentially dangerous migration decisions. The awareness creation campaigns shall ensure that potential migrants, especially women, are properly informed about the risks of migration (exploitation, debt bondage, health and security issues) as well as avenues available for legal, non-exploitative migration.

Prohibitive migration policies and laws are found to be among the factors that push people to trafficking. Thus, the federal government of Ethiopia should review and modifying policies that may compel people to resort to irregular and vulnerable labor migration.

While I was in Metema town for the fieldwork of this study I have seen that trafficked persons are held in police stations before departing to their place of origin, but the federal government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with other concerned bodies, should ensure that safe and adequate shelter which meets the needs of trafficked persons is made available. The provision of such shelter should not be made contingent on the willingness of the victims to give evidence in criminal proceedings. Trafficked persons should not be held in police stations and other detention facilities or vagrant houses.

Generally, thanks to the studies done by ILO, IOM and many other individual scholars, there is a blurred but an emerging picture of the routes used by traffickers, causes of migration, and the problems that Ethiopian domestic workers experience in the destination countries. But the knowledge base remains poor and insufficient in the area of the multilayered challenges that Ethiopian migrants face in the whole process of the trafficking, beginning from their localities to the destination countries. It is reported in many studies and in different media outlets that Ethiopian migrants face more severe problems in destination places as compared to migrants of other countries. Likewise, many Ethiopian migrants use the desert routes to migrate to the destination countries. Throughout their journey via the desert routes many Ethiopians face a lot of severe problems, some women are raped by gangs of traffickers, some lost their organs, and some also lost their precious life in the deserts. But apart from some hearsay information and some media reports there is no evidence supported comprehensive study that uncovers the hidden problems which Ethiopian trafficked persons face in the transit towns and in the deserts they cross. Thus, there is an urgent need for data gathering and research in this specific area to fill the gap and address the problem with substantiated research findings

## References

- Adepoju, Aderanti. 2005. Review of Research and Data on Human Trafficking in sub Saharan-Africa. In Laczko, Frank and Gozdzia, Elzbieta (eds.). *Data and Research on Human Trafficking: A Global Survey*. IOM: Geneva.
- Aderajew Teshome. 2013. *Ethiopia's Response to Human Trafficking: Towards Effective Criminalization and Protection*. Accessed from, <http://phys.org/news/2013-03-human-trafficking-modern-day-slavery.html>
- Andrees, Beate. 2008. *Forced labor and human trafficking: a handbook for labor inspectors*. International labor office. Geneva: ILO
- Animaw Anteneh. (ed.). 2011. *Trafficking in Persons Overseas for Labor Purposes: The case of Ethiopian domestic workers*, ILO CO Addis Ababa. A research conducted by Play Therapy Ethiopia.
- Aronowitz, Alexis. 2009. *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: the Global Trade in Human Beings*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Auwal, Mohammed. 2010. *Ending the Exploitation of Migrant Workers in the Gulf*. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, vol. 34 (2)
- Bales, Kevin and Soodalter, Ron. 2009. *The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America*. Berkeley: California University Press.
- Bernard, Russell. 2006. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Lanham: Altamira Press.
- Beydoun, Khaled. 2006. *The Trafficking of Ethiopian Domestic Workers into Lebanon: Navigating through a Novel Passage of the International Maid Trade*. Berkeley Journal of International Law, Vol. 24 (3).
- Bryman, Alan. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cullen-DuPont, Kathryn. 2009. *Human Trafficking*. New York: InfoBase Publishing.

- Dinan, Kinsey. Globalization and national sovereignty: From migration to trafficking. In: Cameron, Sally and Newman, Edward (Eds.). 2007. *Trafficking in Humans: Social, Cultural and Political Dimensions*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press. Pp, 58-79
- Douglas S. et al. 1993. *Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal*. Population and Development Review, Vol. 19, No. 3. pp. 431-466. Accessed: 11/01/2013.
- Esim, Simel and Smith, Monica. 2004. *Gender and Migration in the Arab States: the Case of Domestic Workers*. ILO, Regional Office for the Arab States, Beirut.
- Fransen, Sonja and Katie, Kuschminder. (2009). *Migration in Ethiopia: History, Current Trends and Future Prospects*. Migration and Development Country Profiles Paper Series. Maastricht Graduate School of Governance.
- Goździak, Elżbieta and Bump, Micah. 2008. *Data and Research on Human Trafficking: Bibliography of Research-Based Literature*. Institute for the Study of International Migration (ISIM): Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service Georgetown University
- Halabi, Romina. (n.d). *Contract Enslavement of Female Migrant Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*. Human Rights and Human Welfare.
- Holmes, Leslie. 2009. Human Trafficking and Corruption. In: Friesendorf, Corneluis (Ed.). 2009. *Strategies against Human Trafficking: the Role of the Security Sector*. Vienna: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sport. Pp, 83- 114.
- ILO. 2003. *Preventing Discrimination, Exploitation and Abuse of Women Migrant Workers: An Information Guide*. Gender Promotion Program International Labor Office, Geneva
- IOM. 2004. International Migration Law: Glossary on Migration. IOM: Geneva.
- Kawulich, Barbara. The Role of Theory in Research. In: Garner, Mark *et al* (Eds.). 2009. *Teaching Research Methods in Social Sciences*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited. Pp. 37-47.
- Kearney, Michael. 1986. *From the Invisible Hand to Visible Feet: Anthropological Study of Migration and Development*. Annual review of anthropology, Vol. 15, pp, 331-361. Accessed: 27/11/2013 06:48

Kearney, Michael and Beserra, Bernadete. 2004. *Introduction: Migration and Identity: A Class Based Approach*. Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 31, No. 5, pp, 3-14. Accessed: 27/11/2013 07:07

Lee, Maggy. Introduction. In: Lee, Maggy. (Ed.). 2007. *Human Trafficking*. Oregon: Willan

Lutya, Thozama and Lanier, Mark. (2012). *An Integrated Theoretical Framework to Describe Human Trafficking of Young Women and Girls for Involuntary Prostitution*. Accessed from [www.intechopen.com](http://www.intechopen.com) on 06/01/2014

Mack, Natasha *et al.* 2005. *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. North Carolina: Family Health International.

Morehouse, Khristal. 2009. *Combating Human Trafficking: Policy Gaps and Hidden Political Agendas in USA and Germany*. Germany: VS Vertage.

Motus, Nenette. 2004. The Trafficking Process from the Perspective of the trafficked persons. In Barath, Arpad *et al* (Eds.). *The Mental Health Aspect of Trafficking in Human Beings*. Budapest: Zoro Studio. Pp 35-44.

National Geographic Society. 2005. *Human migration guide*. Accessed from, [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com).

Newman, Edward and Cameron, Sally. Introduction. In: Cameron, Sally and Newman, Edward (Eds.). 2007. *Trafficking in Humans: Social, Cultural and Political Dimensions*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press. Pp, 1-20

Sabban, Rima. 2006. *Migrant Women in the United Arab Emirates: the Case of Female Domestic Workers*. GENPROM Working Paper No. 10, Geneva.

Savona, Ernesto and Stefanizzi, Sonia. 2007. Introduction. In: Savona, Ernesto and Stefanizzi, Sonia (Eds.). *Measuring Human Trafficking: Complexities and Pitfalls*. New York: Springer Science. Pp, 1-4

Selamawit Bekele. 2013. *The vulnerability of Ethiopian Women and Girls: the Case of Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait*.

Shelley, Louise. 2010. *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shield, Stuart. 2003. *Poverty and Trafficking in Human Beings: A Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Trafficking Through Swedish International Development Cooperation*. Edita Vastra Aros Printing.

Singh, Gurnam and Singh, Harbilas. 2013. *Human Trafficking: A conceptual framework*. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences. Vol. 4 (6), pp 485-500.

Thozama Mandisa Luty and Mark Lanier (2012). *An Integrated Theoretical Framework to Describe Human Trafficking of Young Women and Girls for Involuntary Prostitution*, Public Health - Social and Behavioral Health, Prof. Jay Maddock (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-51-0620-3, InTech, Available from: <http://www.intechopen.com/books/public-health-social-and-behavioral-health/an-intergrated-theoreticalframework-to-describe-human-trafficking-of-young-women-and-girls-for-invo>

Transparency International. 2011. *Corruption and Human Trafficking*. TI Working Paper. No. 3 accessed from [www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org) Accessed date 02/25/2014

UNODC. 2008. *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action*. Vienna, UNODC.

UNODC. 2008. *Toolkit to Combat Trafficking in Persons, global programme against trafficking in human beings*. Vienna: United Nations

UNODC. 2011. *The role of Corruption in Trafficking in Persons*. Vienna: United Nations

Yoseph, Endeshaw *et al.* 2006. *Assessment of Trafficking in Women and Children in and from Ethiopia*. IOM, Addis Ababa Office.

Zimmerman, C. Watts, C, et al; "Health Risks and Consequences of Trafficking in Women and Adolescents, Findings from a European Study", London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine: London, 2003.

Zimmerman, Cathy and Stockl, Heidi. 2012. *Understanding and Addressing Violence against Women*. An information sheet produced by WHO. Accessed from <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/en/index.html>. On 01/05/14

# Appendices

---

## Appendix 1. Background Profile of Informants Participated in the Study

Different individuals were participated in this study as informants. The study used local residents of Metema town, Metema *Wereda* government officials, victims of human trafficking and some brokers to collect primary data. The fieldwork was conducted in Metema *Wereda* particularly in Metema Yohannes and Gendewuha towns for seven weeks from January 20 to March 9. A total of 20 individuals were participated in this study as informants and the following three tables will provide the profile of the various informants participated in the study.

**Table 4 profile of migrant informants**

No	Name of the informant	sex	age	Place of origin	Education	Religion
1	Alemnew	M	23	Wolyta/SNNP	Elementary	Christian
2	Aschalew	M	26	Hadya/SNNP	Elementary	Christian
3	Fekyia	F	20	Jimma-Dedeo/Oromiya	10 <sup>th</sup> completed	Muslim
4	Felekech	F	21	Arisi/ Oromiya	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Christian
5	Masresha	M	24	Debark/ Amhara	10 <sup>th</sup> completed	Christian
6	Meseret	F	21	Zwaye/Oromiya	Elementary	Christian
7	Habtam (*)	F	27	Gondar/Amhara	-	Christian
8	Rekeyia	F	20	Jimma-Mana/Oromiya	Elementary	Muslim
9	Sara (*)	F	23	Jimma/Oromiya	-	Muslim
10	Sebele (*)	F	24	Debretabor/Amhara	12 <sup>th</sup> completed	Christian

NB: (\*) indicates migrants who returned from the Sudan

No	Name	Sex	Office Represented	Position in the Office
1	Abraraw (Deputy Inspector)	M	Metema Yohannes Town Police Office	Crime investigation & control team leader
2	Girma (Deputy Inspector)	M	Metema <i>Wereda</i> Police Office	Head of Office
3	Habte	M	Metema <i>Wereda</i> Labor & Social Affairs Office	Senior Expert in the Office
4	Melaku	M	Immigration Office Metema Branch	Office Head
5	Tekeba	M	Metema <i>Wereda</i> Women, Youth & Children Affairs Office	Senior Expert in the Office

**Table 5 Profile of Metema *Wereda* public officers participated in the**

No	Name	Sex	Place of Residence	Religion
1	Assefa	M	Metema Yohannes town	Christian
2	Kidest	F	Metema Yohannes town	Christian
3	Kebede	M	Metema Yohannes town	Christian
4	Demelash	M	Metema Yohannes town	Christian
5	Tigest	F	Gendewuha town	Christian

**Table 6 profile of Metema town residents participated in the study**

## Appendix 2. Guiding Questions

### 1) Interview Guide for Metema *Wereda* public officials

#### Introduction

The general purpose of this research is to produce an ethnographic account of human trafficking in Metema town (Ethiopia), particularly focusing on the causes of migration and the multifaceted challenges faced by migrants mainly utilizing anthropological inquiries. This is an interview guide prepared to collect information from *Wereda* level government officials (Police officers, judicial organs and Labor and Social Affairs office officials) on the prevalence, causes and challenges of **Human Trafficking around the Ethio-Sudanese Border**.

#### Personal information

- ✓ Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Name of the institution \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Official position/status in the institution \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do you understand the act of human trafficking in general?
2. What do you think are the most important elements within the act of human trafficking?
3. What do you think about the causes of Human Trafficking? Socio economic factors operating behind human trafficking.
4. What are the challenges that migrants faced after they arrived in this area (Metema)?
5. What kinds of migrants are repeatedly come to this area? Respective of their gender and age; education and socio economic background.
6. How do you feel about the different challenges faced by migrants in the transit places?
7. Do you think that illegal migrants face very severe problems in the destination areas than the transit places or in the process before they reach the transit places?
8. What are the most frequently reported problems faced by migrants in the transit places?
9. Do you know for how long the migrants stay in the transit area before departing to the destination countries?
10. What are the final destination countries that migrants who pass through this transit place attempted to reach?

11. Can you tell me about the local brokers operating around this area?
12. How do local brokers conduct their work? How they recruit, transport and treat migrants?
13. What do you feel about the influence of family members, friends, returnees, and brokers on individual migrants' decision to migrate illegally?
14. What are the common challenges faced specifically by female migrants in this area?
15. What are the factors that make migrants to choose illegal routes for leaving their country?
16. Is there any way that government officials involve in the process of human trafficking?
17. What should be the role of government officials in combating trafficking in persons in this particular area?
18. How do you evaluate the trend of human trafficking in this area?
19. Do you have anything to add or discuss which is relevant to the topics covered above?
20. Thank you for all the valuable information and your time

## 2) Interview Guide for selected residents of Metema town

### Introduction

The general purpose of this research is to identify and understand the major precipitating causes of human trafficking and the multilayered challenges experienced by migrants; and thereby to write an anthropological account of human trafficking in Ethiopia based on a study conducted in Metema town. This is an Interview guide used to collect information concerning human trafficking from some **selected local communities of the research site.**

1. Can you tell me about yourself? Your name, educational background, what do you work, for how long you lived here etc.
2. What is your opinion towards human trafficking?
3. Since when is Metema serve as a transit place for human trafficking?
4. Is there any particular time that the number of migrants increases or decrease? Why is that?
5. Do you know about the destination countries that migrants passing through this route aiming to reach? Why?
6. What do you think are the main causes of human trafficking?
7. What are the major challenges experienced by migrants in this area?

8. Of the different migrants who came to this area which group is more vulnerable to those problems?
9. How do you feel about the challenges being faced by those migrants in this area?
10. How do you explain the interaction of the local community with migrants?
11. Do you think that some community members are involved in the trafficking of individuals? How they involved?
12. What do you think is the role of other peoples like family members, friends or returnees on the trafficking of individuals?
13. Have you ever seen or heard about any government officers' involvement in the trafficking process?
14. How far is the border area from this place, and how well protected is it?
15. How do migrants cross the border? Is it in the night or in the day?
16. What is the role of the traffickers in crossing the border?
17. Where did the migrants stay in the transit place?
18. Thank you for all that valuable information, is there anything else you would like to add before we end?

### **3) Interview guide for an interview with migrants**

#### **Introduction**

The overall objective of this research is to identify and understand the causes and multifaceted challenges of human trafficking; and thereby to write an anthropological account of human trafficking in Ethiopia depending on the incidences occurring in Metema town. This is an interview guide prepared to garner in information on the prevalence, causes and major challenges of human trafficking from **individual migrants** who tried to migrate to the Sudan and the Middle East via Metema town.

#### **1) Personal Information**

- ✓ Name \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Sex \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Age \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Educational Background \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Place of Origin \_\_\_\_\_

## **2) Causes of Migration**

- 2.1 What makes you to migrate?
- 2.2 How you become interested to migrate to the Middle East?
- 2.3 What are the major reasons responsible for your migration?
- 2.4 Do you influenced by other persons to migrate? By family members, friends returned from migration, or local brokers.
- 2.5 Why do you choose to migrate via Metema?
- 2.6 What country is your choice of destination?
- 2.7 What are the reasons for you to prefer to migrate illegally via Metema?
- 2.8 How you come to know about the illegal means of leaving a country?
- 2.9 What do you work before you decide to migrate and come to this area?
- 2.10 How do you evaluate the income of your family?

## **3) Challenges being faced by migrants in their journey to the transit places and at the transit places**

- 3.1 Where do you come from?
- 3.2 How was the total process of the journey made to reach the transit places?
- 3.3 What kinds of problems do you experience in your journey before arriving to Metema town?
- 3.4 How you come to Metema? Were there any difficulties in your journey?
- 3.5 With whom do you come to this area? What means of transportation is used?
- 3.6 Have you ever seen or heard about different problems faced by other migrants in their travel?
- 3.7 Do you think that females are more vulnerable to different problems in relation to trafficking? Why?
- 3.8 What are the common challenges repeatedly faced by female victims of trafficking?

- 3.9 Who do you think are the possible sources of those challenges?
- 3.10 Do traffickers or local agents harm their clients (migrants)? In what way?
- 3.11 Do the local community members hurt migrants? How?
- 3.12 What are the problems you faced after you arrived in Metema town?
- 3.13 How do you see the hospitality of the local community?

#### **4) Actors involved in human trafficking**

- 4.1 Why you want to leave your country?
- 4.2 How was the travel? Who was involved?
- 4.3 Have you ever pressured by a family member, friend or anybody to migrate?
- 4.4 What was the role of other people in your decision to migrate?
- 4.5 Where you get the money to pay for the local brokers?
- 4.6 How was the payment made?
- 4.7 How you contacted the broker? Where? Through what means of communication?

#### **5. Interview guide for an interview with local brokers and traffickers**

##### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research is to generate an anthropological account of the causes and challenges of human trafficking in Ethiopia mainly depending on the views and perspectives of the main actors involved in the act of trafficking. This is an interview guide for collecting key information on human trafficking from some selected **local brokers or traffickers** which are operating in Metema town.

1. Tell me about yourself? Including your name, age, educational background, etc.
2. What do you know about human trafficking?
3. When did you start to help migrants cross the border illegally? Do you live in this area?
4. How do you become interested to involve in such kind of activity?
5. What were you doing before starting to involve in this activity? How was your economic status?
6. How do you create contacts with migrants, and in what way do you approach them?

7. How are payments conducted? Do you contact migrants in person?
8. What do you think are the major reasons for the migration of many individuals?
9. Do you think that local brokers push migrants to migrate to the Middle East and other Arab countries? Why?
10. What do you know about the role of family members, friends, and returnees on the decision of individual migrants?
11. What do you think are the factors that make migrants to prefer these kinds of informal ways to migrate to the Middle East?
12. What are the common problems faced by migrants while they are in this area (transit place)?
13. Do think that the problems faced by migrants are gender specific? Why is that?
14. How long do migrants stay in the transit place? Where did the migrants stay before continuing their journey to the destination countries?
15. How and where do migrants get the necessary things they need? Like food, water, etc
16. It has been said that most of the brokers treat migrants uncomfortably. How do you feel about this?
17. Do migrants interact with the local community? How do you see the interaction between migrants and the local community in this area?
18. Have you ever seen or heard about a member of the local community hurting migrants?
19. Which parts of the society are more vulnerable to trafficking?
20. How do you manage to cross the border with those migrants? Is there anybody from police force, border keepers, community members involved in the border crossing? What is the role of that person in that act?
21. What time is more preferable for crossing the border with the migrants?
22. Do you have a business relationship with other foreign brokers? Do you think it is that important to establish such a relationship with them? How?
23. Is there any particular time where the number of migrants increase or decrease? Why is that happening?
24. Who else is involved in the process of trafficking other than the brokers and migrants?
25. What are the most common destination countries that you send migrants?

## 6. Guiding questions for focus group discussions

### Introduction

The main aim of this research is to study and understand the major causes and multifaceted problems of human trafficking in Ethiopia primarily depending on the act of trafficking occurring in Metema town. The following questions are discussion points for the Focus Group Interview/ Discussion to be conducted with selected **community members** of Metema town, **some migrants** and **public officials**.

- What is your opinion towards human trafficking?
- Can you discuss a bit about the history of human trafficking in this area (Metema)?
- Can you discuss the major structural (push) and adjacent (pull) factors of human trafficking?
- Can you discuss about the major actors involved in human trafficking? What is their role and responsibility?
- Can you identify and explain the different challenges which migrants face at the transit place? What do you think are the causes of these problems?
- Can you explain the problems that you encounter throughout your travel to the transit place, starting from your locality? <sup>7</sup>
- Can you mention the problems which are repeatedly faced by migrants both in their travel to, and at, the transit places?
- Which group of migrants are more vulnerable to those problems, and why?
- What do you think is the role of family members, friends, returnees and local brokers in individuals' decision to migrate?
- How do you explain the perception and treatment of the local community towards migrants?
- How do you see the traffickers' treatment of the migrants?

---

<sup>7</sup> For migrants only

- How do you explain the interaction between migrants, the local community and local brokers?
- Can you discuss the possible reasons why individuals choose illegal routes of migration over that of the formal ones?
- What do you think are the role of local brokers and traffickers in facilitating the trafficking of individuals?
- Can you discuss how the traffickers and the local brokers treat migrants?
- Do you have anything to add or discuss which is relevant to the topics we have raised so far?
- Thank you for your time and all the valuable information.