Migrating for work from rural communities (2010-13)

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Introduction

Ethiopia's history since the 19th century prompted all sorts of migratory movements, from the nation-building conquest of the South by Menelik to the increasing post-liberation rural-urban and rural-rural migration under Haile Selassie, the Derg's imposed resettlement, the Horn of Africa 'refugee crisis' of the end of the 20th century and the more recent migration to the Middle East (among others see Pankhurst and Feleke 2005, Bevan et al 2006, Terrazas 2007, Fransen and Kuschminder 2009, Pankhurst and Piguet 2009). In this chapter, I focus on more recent experiences of people leaving rural areas for livelihood-related reasons and changes in labour migration patterns in the WIDE communities since 1995.

The WIDE research period (1995-2010/13) is one of considerable changes and transformation in Ethiopia, some of which we document in this volume. Notably, in 2010/13 most people in the country had experienced greater stability for more than a decade, in contrast with the Derg period marked by upheavals and economic decline, and in which mobility was often forced: either driven by the government through resettlement, or severely restricted; or aimed at escaping death due to famine, or for other political reasons. In 2010/13 the WIDE communities were also much more open and connected to the outside world, expanded education had begun to broaden horizons, and new aspirations were emerging (Bevan *et al.* 2014). However, landlessness and youth underemployment had become prominent concerns.

These changes in wider and local contexts were poised to have implications with regard to decisions, experiences, causes and effects of migration. In the course of the same period, internationally the debate about migration became increasingly polarised, both in the literature and as a sensitive political topic, especially regarding migration abroad. In Ethiopia, the Government has stated its ambition of transforming the country's economy and managing urbanisation, but its position vis-à-vis migration to cities has remained cautious[2]. Moreover, faced with rising flows of both legal and illegal migration outside the country, a growing number of terrible hardship stories on irregular journeys, and a returnees' crisis following Saudi Arabia's crackdown on illegal migrants in late 2013, the Government banned travel for employment abroad for more than two years, whilst it was strengthening the legal and regulatory framework against smuggling and trafficking, and around legal employment abroad[3].

In this context, this chapter looks at people's experiences of migrating for work, 'in their own terms'. The focus is on urban, industrial and international migration which, in the course of the past 15 years, became increasingly important options in addition to the seasonal agricultural migration of the 1990s and before.

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[1] The author would like to express her sincere thanks to Asnake Kefale, who also researched recent research on migration, for the very useful feedback he provided while reviewing the draft papers that led to this book chapter.

[2] The draft for consultation of *The Second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTPII) (2015/16-2019/20),* National Planning Commission, September 2015 does not mention migration.

[3] Data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on legal migration to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates show a big jump from about 42,000 in 2010/11, to almost 200,000 in 2011/12 and almost as many in 2012/13. This excludes the many more who moved through irregular channels. Then, after several warnings that it would be doing so, in late 2013 the Saudi government undertook to expel all illegal migrants. More than 160,000 Ethiopian in that situation were repatriated through variably violent coercive means. The Government of Ethiopia issued a temporary ban of employment abroad, initially planned to last for less than a year, in October 2013.

The next section, documenting who migrated, where and for how long, shows that, while leaving rural areas for work was not new in the WIDE communities, overall, but with large variations between communities, this was on the rise, with more diverse destinations, many more women moving, and predominantly young people. I then turn to the question of people's motives for migrating, showing that these were complex, but that overall, aspirations to change one's life played a larger role than in the past in decision-making. The next two sections relate first to people's experiences of moving for work in urban or industrial jobs; and secondly for work and opportunities abroad. These sections indicate that when successful, migration for employment abroad (mainly the Gulf, Sudan, and South Africa in one community) had better returns than moving to towns or for industrial jobs elsewhere in Ethiopia, especially for women. For men, legal options to move abroad for work were very limited. The next section illustrates the effects of migration experiences on livelihoods and human and social development in the communities, suggesting that when migration was successful, especially abroad, it had a range of positive effects primarily for the individual concerned and her/his household but also beyond them. The section also documents how, in most communities where migration was an important economic option, perspectives on the negative versus positive consequences were vastly different between local officials and most people. Drawing on this evidence, the final section presents a number of conclusions and suggestions about the potential for promoting the more positive outcomes from increasing mobility of Ethiopia's rural society.

Migrating for work – Who, where and for how long

Migrating for work was not new in the WIDE communities but new trends had emerged between 1995 and 2010/13 in relation to who left, where and for how long. Agricultural out-migration (people moving to seek work on land elsewhere) coexisted with new or increased urban or industrial migration (people moving to work in urban areas or on industrial premises of various sizes and types) elsewhere in Ethiopia, and large numbers of people leaving to work abroad. These experiences were of very diverse durations: from daily commuting to nearby towns or factories, to a few weeks for a specific job; from a few months or seasonal migration up to absences of several years, especially for those migrating abroad.

There were a range of situations among the WIDE communities. In six of them migration was a relatively minor recourse compared to other livelihood options, other trends or factors of change and other communities. These included the two agro-pastoralist communities, Luqa (Tsemay) and Gelcha (East Shewa) (where cattle grazing transhumance is still practised but on the decline); Dinki (North Shewa) and Yetmen (East Gojam), two Amhara communities studied in 2010, both relatively far from major towns; and Shumsheha (North Wello) and Adele Keke (East Harerge), where tourism-related opportunities in nearby Lalibela for the former, and the booming irrigated *chat* economy may have tipped the balance for a number of young people. At the other end of the spectrum were three communities, with little else in common but hundreds of migrants and where migration had a large impact on the local economy: it was dominated by illegal male migration to Saudi Arabia in Harresaw (East Tigray) and legal female migration to Gulf countries in Oda Dawata (Arsi), while there were fairly large flows in different directions in Somodo (Jimma).

There was no straightforward relationship between the importance of outmigration and the communities' remoteness. As just noted, in Dinki, Yetmen, Luqa and Gelcha, all rather remote, although Yetmen was better market-integrated, migration other than for cattle grazing and seasonal agriculture was small, and this may have been partly explained by the greater difficulties in getting information on other migration opportunities. But in Do'oma (Gofa), Geblen and Harresaw (both in East Tigray), which are also remote, people reportedly migrated in part to escape their community's remoteness.

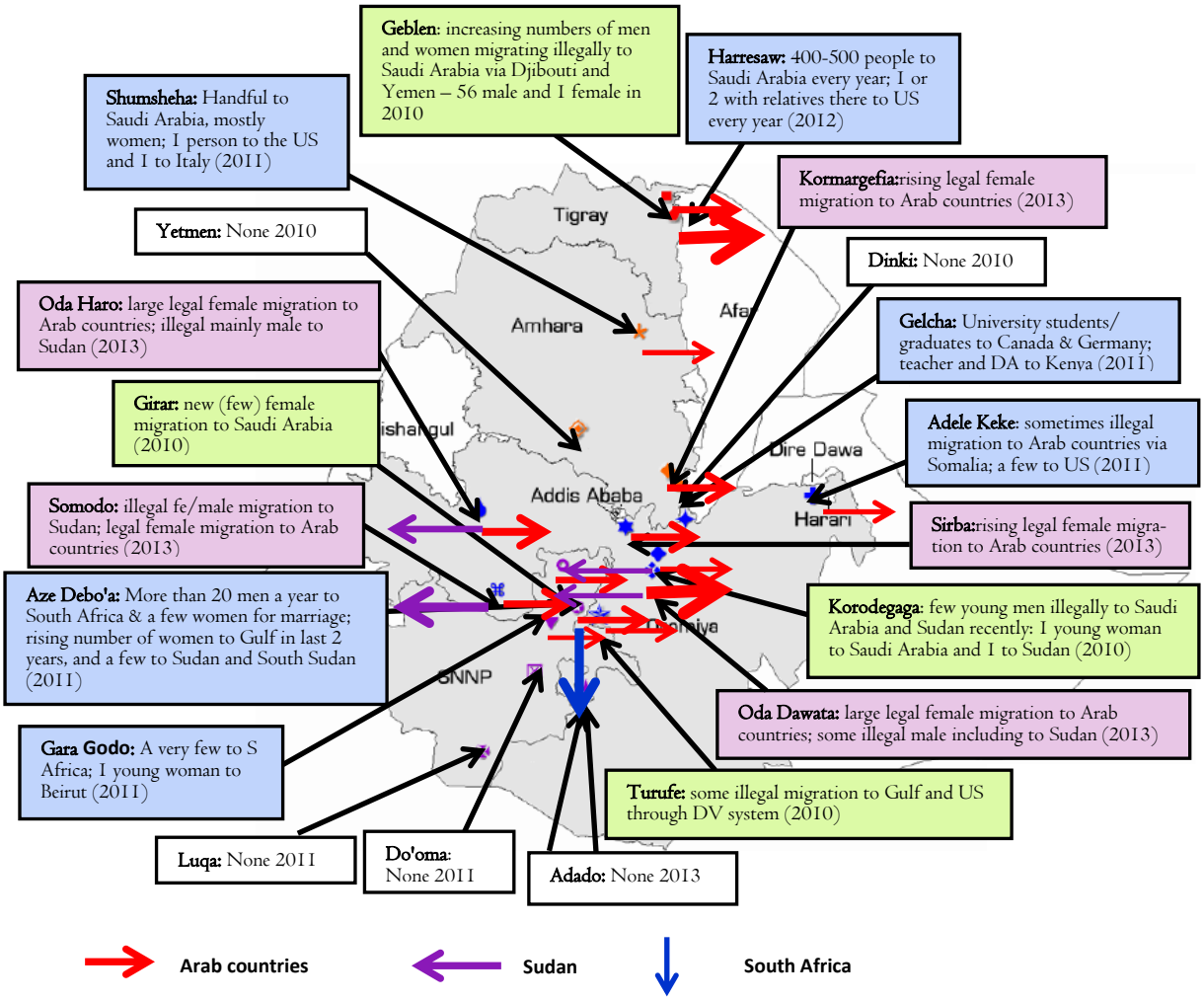
There is growing international evidence that rural transformation involves an increase in "*non-agricultural employment which revolves around rural service centres and small market towns*"[4]. In line with these and our own findings about 'rurbanisation', urban expansion and the thickening of rural-urban links (see chapter on urbanisation), in the WIDE communities moving to work in towns and factories was mentioned in all communities and was said to be important in twelve.

As for working abroad, destinations were primarily the Gulf countries (mentioned in 15 communities though flows were small in some of them), Sudan (mentioned in five communities), and South Africa in Aze Debo'a (Kambata).

The map below shows where people from the various communities were going, to find work abroad. The relative thicknesses of the arrows suggest the relative importance of the migration flows, based on indications in the interviews.

Return migrant, Somodo

Map 1: Destinations and relative importance of migration abroad



[4] See '*RurbanAfrica – African rural-city connections*' research project (http://rurbanafrica.ku.dk/).

Saudi Arabia was topmost among the Gulf countries. The two largest flows to this destination seemed to be from Oda Dawata (Arsi), where people talked of at least one young woman migrating in every household, and Harresaw (East Tigray), where reportedly four to five hundred people migrated to Saudi Arabia every year. Unlike in Oda Dawata, where these were mostly young women going through the regular channel, in Harresaw most people went illegally[5] – they were still mostly men but the trend was rising among young women as well. Sudan was an important destination in some of the western communities but was also mentioned in Korodegaga and Oda Dawata (both in Arsi). Migration to Sudan was mostly through irregular channels, and not very expensive as people travelled through Ethiopia to the border then walked to cross it. As noted above, migration to South Africa was particular to the Kambata community. It was known in other southern communities, but only in Aze Debo'a was it occurring on a large scale.

Important 'mixed migration' flows (international and internal, women and men, and regular and irregular) coexisted in a number of otherwise diverse communities. In Aze Debo'a, alongside the traditional urban migration which now extended to women, international migration was on the rise, both regular for women to the Gulf, and irregular mainly for men, to South Africa. In Somodo most migration was international to both Sudan and the Gulf: most women went regularly to the Gulf and a few through irregular channels to Sudan, whilst most men went illegally. In Kormargefia (North Shewa), Sirba (East Shewa), Oda Haro (West Shewa) and Oda Dawata (Arsi), both men and women migrated elsewhere within Ethiopia; many women also migrated to the Gulf, mostly through regular channels, and a few men through irregular channels. In Geblen and Harresaw, both men and women migrated internally, and to Saudi Arabia, mostly illegally.

As also found in other recent research (for instance Stocchiero 2017[6], de Regt 2016 and Asnake and Zerihun 2016) there had been a marked increase in the number of women moving away for work, so much so that, for instance, in Oda Dawata and Oda Haro in 2013, many more women migrated than men. As discussed later, this was a significant social change, especially in communities where social norms had hitherto strongly constrained women's mobility.

Moreover, unlike in the past, when most migrants were male household heads seeking an income to complement their farm production (e.g. Mberu 2005), many of the recent migrants were young people. In Geblen in 2010, 56 of the 185 members of the Youth Association had left the community. In Gara Godo (Wolayta) 30% of the young generation were said to migrate seasonally or longer to various cities. In Oda Dawata in 2013 migration was presented as very important for the young men and women, and in Oda Haro most migrants were said to be 16-to-30-year-olds. In a number of communities there was a sense that increasingly younger people were migrating. For instance, grade 5-8 students from Harresaw dropped out to migrate to Saudi Arabia; in Adado (Gedeo) boys as young as 10 were said to migrate to the gold mines; in Kormargefia (North Shewa) some respondents mentioned girls as young as 13 migrating to Addis Ababa; in Oda Dawata (Arsi) girls of 16 migrated to Arab countries; in Somodo one young woman noted that girls as young as 14 might travel with older ones to Sudan. These trends are also highlighted in other recent research, some

[5] Before the ban there were two ways of migrating abroad legally. Individuals could try and find jobs directly, and register their migration with MOLSA if they got a visa, an employment contract and a residence permit in the destination country; or they could call on the services of a (licensed) Private Employment Agency, which found them a job and dealt with the necessary paperwork, against a fee which was partly paid by the prospective employee in the destination country. Various studies showed that the second option (through PEAs) accounted for most of the legal international migration flow. Illegal migration relies on variably organised networks of brokers and smugglers/traffickers, from the local level in Ethiopia to the destination country, that pass migrants from one network to the next. 'Legal' migration often entailed various aspects deviating from the ideal-type just presented. Notably, local/intermediary brokers might recruit for the PEAs, and PEAs might also deal with brokers in the destination country, as well as other ways of not fully complying with the various provisions of the Proclamation No.632/2009 (now replaced by the Proclamation No.923/2016).

[6] This research draws on fieldwork done in 2016 by seven Ethiopian universities across the country.

noting that in countries with a significant 'youth buldge' like Ethiopia, such trends are to be expected (RMMS & Save the Children 2017 highlight that almost half of the international migrants in the Horn are under 20).

Migration of different types was important in all communities studied in 2013. This suggests an accelerating trend in labour mobility, in line with that documented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for regular international migration[7]. It is therefore reasonable to assume that in some of the communities, migration could have been growing since they were last studied in 2010 or 2011[8]. For instance, illegal migration to Saudi Arabia in Geblen (2010) may have continued to increase considerably as we found 18 months later in Harresaw, not very far away. Migration of young women to Arab countries in Korodegaga (2010) may also have increased, as also found in 2013 in Oda Dawata in the same Arsi zone. Urban migration from Turufe (2010) may have continued to rise, linked to Shashemene's expansion and the industrialisation in the Rift Valley, as also noted in Sirba in 2013, linked to the expansion of the Addis Ababa-Mojo industrial corridor.

Why people migrated

People left their communities for a range of reasons. Most often decisions were taken based on a mix of push and pull factors, in proportions varying from one individual to another. Among the push factors landlessness was a major one, affecting the younger generation in particular.

Box 1: The role of landlessness in migration decisions

In 2010/13 rising landlessness had transformed the context in which decisions to migrate were taken. First, unlike in 1995, many of the migrants were landless and moved for work to seek a means of livelihood and no longer to get a complementary income. Second, landlessness most affected the younger generation. This was emphasised in more than half of the communities: in Geblen and Harresaw (East Tigray), Shumsheha (North Wello), Kormargefia (North Shewa), Oda Haro (East Shewa), Gara Godo and Aze Debo'a (in the densely populated Wolayta and Kambata zones), Oda Dawata (Arsi), Adado (Gedeo, also very densely populated), and Somodo (Jimma). In Oda Haro, Kormargefia and Somodo there were respondents who knew young men who had migrated once they had been told that their family would not give them land.

The six communities where land was scarcest in 1997 (Bereket 2004)[1] were ones in which there was considerable outmigration in 2010/13: large urban migration in Girar (Gurage) and Gara Godo; rising illegal migration to the Gulf in Geblen and Harresaw; high urban migration combined with rising migration to South Africa in Aze Debo'a; and high and rising semi-seasonal migration to gold mines in Adado.

More broadly, in communities where migration was important, respondents often highlighted a combination of factors, including early dropout from education (due to failure, shocks, inability to afford costs, need to work etc.), lack of access to land, lack of local opportunities, and lack of access to capital to launch one's own enterprise. In Geblen for instance, some youth said there was "*no hope*" and when it came to land "*parents are our enemies*". As also noted in the chapter on education, in a growing number of cases migration was seen as a worthy alternative to the increasingly 'blocked' education-then-job path, and was undertaken as a response to changing aspirations.

On the other hand, there was the attraction of other lifestyles, widely seen as more 'modern'. Daring migrants who had not needed much education to succeed provided new role models for the many young people who dropped out too early to be employable in a formal job. A 13-year old girl from Somodo whose role model was a successful international migrant returnee explained: "*The reason I*

[7] As shown in footnote 5 above.

[8] As explained in the introduction chapter, the third round of research, WIDE3, was carried out in three stages. Six communities were studied in 2010, another eight in 2011/12 and the last six in 2013.

want to migrate is that I worry that on completing grade 10 my results may not be good enough to enable me to get a job." In Harresaw and Aze Debo'a, successful returnees with not much education were reportedly doing better than educated people. In Oda Haro female migration to Arab countries was described as a "*prudent economic move*".

The box below highlights the several facets of the complex interaction between migration and education in the WIDE communities in 2010/13. While in some cases migrants had dropped out or failed at school then migrated, migrants also helped finance the education of family members, and it was often (moving for) education that widened their horizons. Most youth dropped out in the first instance, then looked for opportunities and migration was one of them. However, there were reported cases of students dropping out with a view to migrating in communities with large migration flows such as Harresaw, and several communities where it was mentioned as a fear by school staff (for instance in Aze Debo'a). There were also cases of people who had migrated due to being educated and employed as a professional elsewhere in Ethiopia, although this was still comparatively small.

Box 2: Education and migration

In many communities, youth were said to migrate to towns or abroad after failing at one of the exams at school, many more of them reaching this stage than in the past. For instance, young women failing at the grade 10 exam and migrating to Gulf States were a new phenomenon in Girar. Failing at grade 8, 10 or 12 exams was explicitly mentioned as a push factor in half of the communities, namely Geblen, Turufe, Girar, Harresaw, Aze Debo'a, Kormargefia, Sirba, Oda Haro, Adado and Shumsheha (especially for young men in the latter case).

In a number of cases, even without failing youth would drop out of education to migrate – because they did not believe they would be able to reach a high enough level to be employable (e.g. in Sirba and Somodo) or through what people described as a snowballing effect (e.g. grade 5 to 8 students dropping out to migrate, following their elders in Geblen, Harresaw, Somodo and Adado), or because there were "*no jobs after completing education*" (Aze Debo'a, Sirba). In Aze Debo'a, more than a hundred grade 10 leavers, twenty grade 12 leavers and even a few diploma holders were jobless, and there were many 'youth sitting idle' in other places too, like Oda Haro and Somodo.

Some others had to stop as they could not afford higher education costs, like a poor young man from Harresaw who had scored sufficient grades to join government university but his family could not afford it – and he had migrated to Saudi as he "*lost hope*". It would also happen that youth going to towns to study would then stay there after failing or completing, in the hope of finding a job (e.g. Kormargefia, Sirba).

So on one hand, migration was a response to a growing uncertainty or even disillusion with education (see chapter on education). However, a few more positive effects of migration on education were also mentioned. E.g. in some cases urban migrants would attend education part-time while working (Kormargefia, Sirba). In a number of instances, young migrants saved to finance their return to school. And there were cases of remittances being used to finance schooling of siblings (e.g. in Sirba, in Somodo) or of one's children (e.g. Harresaw).

In five communities, professional migration by educated people getting jobs elsewhere in Ethiopia was mentioned. Up to 200 people from Adado were said to work in various government offices[1]. In Girar in 2010 more people were said to be employed by government or in the private sector than in the past. In Sirba there were 35 such educated migrants – who worked as Development Agents, Health Extension Workers, police officers, a nurse, a lawyer, and an agent in the government electricity company, who lived in various towns of the Region and Addis Ababa. Elsewhere this type of migration did not appear to be a major livelihood option.

There was much mobility from both economically thriving and well-connected communities like Oda Dawata (on Adama-Assela road), Somodo (near Jimma) and Sirba (on Bishoftu-Mojo road), as well as struggling and less well connected ones like Harresaw. Thus even when the local economy was steadily growing, the existing local opportunities may have been too few, or they did not match the needs and aspirations of the young people, generally more educated than in the past (e.g. "*no job opportunity that is satisfactory to the youth*" in Harresaw).

Aspirations, combined with the prospect of landlessness and un(der)-employment, made international migration a logical and attractive prospect even for people with resources, and perhaps

even more so. So for instance, in Sirba a rich farmer explained that one of his daughters, grade 10 complete but who did not get any job, migrated and was working in Dubai. They did not need remittances but wanted her to have a chance to improve her life. In some communities even government employees migrated, such as 37 teachers in Harresaw's *wereda*, including Harresaw's previous school director, and several civil servants from Aze Debo'a who were dissatisfied with their job or salary or government policies.

Migration decisions often resulted from joint family decision-making or a combination of the migrant's agency and some pressure from her/his family, peers or the community. As further discussed below, financing migration often required contributions and therefore involvement of the family, especially for migrants abroad. Moreover, as also mentioned in several other studies, the ability to help one's family played an important role in many decisions (RMMS 2014, Jones 2014). For instance, in Aze Debo'a a young woman working at the local coffee plant wanted to migrate to the Gulf "*to change my life and that of my family, because the money I get here is not enough*." In Somodo (near Jimma) a farmer stressed that "*those migrants are able to assist their poor families and change their lives… migration also serves as a job opportunity. If there is no migration, where will the kebele put the large number of jobless youth*?"

Longstanding or more recent traditions of migration also mattered. Examples include: Girar and the longstanding Gurage tradition of urban migration; Adele Keke (East Hararge) where traditionally, women migrate seasonally to Djibouti as domestic workers and men for the *chat* trade, and a few continue their journey to Yemen and Saudi Arabia; Aze Debo'a where migration to South Africa had become a 'tradition' in a few years; and Harresaw (East Tigray) where migration to Saudi Arabia built on older trade links with this country through Afar.

Box 3: Rapidly evolving migration patterns in Aze Debo'a and Harresaw

In *Aze Debo'a*, alongside the traditional Kambata urban migration and fast-rising female migration to Gulf countries, migration to South Africa, mainly male and illegal, was steeply rising. This was part of a more widespread pattern in the Kambata-Tembaro and Hadiya zones. The story as told by Teshome and Teller (2013) is that a first group of people migrated as relatives of the Ethiopian Ambassador Tesfaye Habisso, a Hadiya in post in South Africa in 2000/01, who helped them find jobs etc. These people became very successful; emulation led to ever more young men migrating. In Aze Debo'a some local details were added. People named two young men from the area who had migrated with people 'from Addis Ababa', and started to call others to join as they saw there were good opportunities. These men had become very rich, owning supermarkets in Pretoria.

In *Harresaw*, migration to Saudi Arabia had a long history as a drought-related coping strategy. The community had long-established trade links with the Afar, taking butter, goats, sheep and honey to them; and Afar people, migrating to Saudi Arabia for a long time, were taking these goods there. Then those from Harresaw who had the ability and financial capacity started going to the Arab countries themselves with the goods, and some of them stayed on. One man who in 1985 took 150kgs of honey to Saudi Arabia through Eritrea, travelling by camel and boat, sold the honey, and started labouring work there. These ties prompted a wider interest in Saudi Arabia among the people of Harresaw, though for many years only a few were migrating. However, it became more common for many to take this route in 2009, when the community was struck by a debt crisis following the severe drought in which many lost livestock that they had acquired on credit, and no waivers or suspensions were granted on repayments. The network then continued to expand, as more and more people found that if successful, they could go beyond repaying their loans from their earnings abroad.

In summary, the picture was more nuanced than is painted in a number of recent studies[9]. I found that people in the WIDE communities moved both as a survival/coping strategy and as an

[9] The literature on migration in Ethiopia, both internal and especially international, is vast. I reviewed more than thirty recent publications. A few deserve a special mention for their treatment of the question of people's motives, including: various papers by de Brauw, Mueller and Tassew Woldehanna (2013); Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) (2014); Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat & Save the Children (2016); Jones

investment towards a better future. As noted by van Heelsum (2016), individual strategies reflected a mix of aspirations and capabilities. Those from less wealthy backgrounds (with fewer capabilities) might have to opt for 'second best' choices that left them vulnerable – e.g. irregular migrants abroad, as also noted by Stocchiero (2017); or poor vulnerable urban migrants, as also highlighted in the chapters on urbanisation and inequalities. However, aspirations played a larger role than in the past, especially for those with more capabilities, as also recognised in other studies such as those of Asnake and Zerihun (2016), van Heelsum (2016) and Stocchiero (2017). For instance, in Oda Haro (West Shewa) people talked about the migrants' "*ambitions*". In Harresaw (East Tigray), *tabia* officials explained that almost all youth migrated as an investment strategy.

Some people migrated initially as a last resort 'in extremis', but this shifted into a positive strategy for savings and investment, as explained about a man from Harresaw.

> *He went to Saudi three times. His initial objective was to pay a debt with DECSI. But then in the course of his trips he not only paid over 7,000 birr of debt of his own and 9,000 birr of his son's debt, he also saved 25,000 birr at the bank, sent 10,000 birr while he was away, and constructed a good house in Harresaw.*

Urban/industrial experiences

As noted earlier, there was an increasing number of people leaving their community to seek work in towns or in factories, or on large-scale agricultural schemes whose working conditions are quite similar to those of industrial jobs. The types of work mentioned included domestic work, hospitality services, cobble-stone paving, construction work, work at factories of different types and sizes in various places, and work in gold mines, in flower farms, in Metema and Humera sesame farms, and in sugar and other large-scale plantations. In many places, where this had not previously been usual, moving elsewhere in Ethiopia for non-farm work was rapidly becoming an option. In some cases, people took up new types of work on local investments and some of them migrated later on to find similar jobs. In Sirba (East Shewa) for instance, it was explained that, as more people became familiar with wage jobs in nearby factories or on the Chinese road construction, some of them moved to find similar labour opportunities elsewhere.

These experiences ranged in duration from a few weeks or months to several years and even what seemed to be cases of life-long resettlement – as illustrated in the box below.

The costs of moving elsewhere in Ethiopia were usually not huge. In Kormargefia it seemed to be usual for richer parents to give some money for their children to go and look for options elsewhere. Those who could not afford transport costs walked, as for instance, many young women from Do'oma walking to Arba Minch which takes one and a half day. However, the data suggest that urban/industrial migrants often faced a host of difficulties and a precarious life once at their destination. For those who could rely on networks, such as the Gurage from Girar, this was less of an issue, as earlier migrants might recruit them as assistants, or covered their initial costs to help them 'take off'. But for the others it was often a challenge to find accommodation, and a job, especially in urban areas to which many moved without a specific plan. Another challenge was high living costs as migrants no longer shared their household's food or other resources.

Men moving to urban areas seemed to be doing better than women. In line with studies highlighting the vulnerability of rural female migrants in Ethiopia's urban areas (Erulkar et al., 2006; Erulkar and Tekle-Ab Mekbib 2007, de Regt 2016), the women migrating from several of the WIDE communities seemed to mostly end up in poorly paid, unregulated jobs as domestic workers, waitresses in bars, cafés or restaurants or commercial sex workers, and were likely to be facing exploitative conditions. In a number of cases, as for instance in Do'oma and Adado, they were escaping their families and

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et. al (2014); Teller et al (2014); Kuschminder and Siegel (2014); Asnake and Kefale (2016); de Regt (2016); and Stocchiero (2017).

while the WIDE data does not say much about their reasons, de Regt (2016) notes that escaping situations of familial abuses represented an important factor in quite a number of decisions taken by adolescent girls migrating. However, similarly to what we found in WIDE she highlights the importance for many girls of the idea of financially assist their parents.

Box 4: A range of durations of migration

Daily commuting was found in places like Turufe (West Arsi), where people would commute to Shashemene to work as daily labourers.

Urban (mostly male) migrants from Girar would return regularly for holidays, harvest, and family issues, in keeping with the Gurage tradition. In Do'oma (Gofa) and Gara Godo (Wolayta) young people would migrate for jobs in agro-businesses or in towns for 3-4 months, sometimes longer, depending on the job found. Urban migration from Kormargefia (North Shewa) was partly seasonal. Men migrating to the gold mines in Adado (Gedeo) would most often do this as a seasonal or time-bound activity. Those with land would return for the coffee harvest; landless people would return to work in the coffee trade business; and there were also those who wanted to earn enough money to fulfil a specific objective at home such as building a house, marrying, getting land and planting coffee.

Students might migrate for the summer break (e.g. to work on flower farms in Sirba, or in the gold mines in Adado). Others would migrate for a longer period but return home and to school once they had some savings (see education chapter).

In Oda Dawata (Arsi) some of the men migrating to towns might stay there; others returned after a while with enough money to contract land; most women migrating to towns would also return, marry, and open a business locally if they had been successful. The young women from Do'oma migrating to work as housemaids in Arba Minch would stay there for a long time. In Adado, in most cases the few young women migrating to towns would not be seen again.

People could move long term or even permanently and these could be both unsuccessful and successful urban migrants – the latter category including people with a formal job (35 of them in Sirba for instance) or who had made it in town (e.g. some rich Gurage traders from Girar).

Relatedly, urban migration was considered undesirable for women in several communities – including Geblen (East Tigray), Adado (Gedeo), Shumsheha (North Wello), Adele Keke (East Hararge), Do'oma (Gofa) and Oda Haro (West Shewa). As a young woman from Oda Haro explained

> *…most girls who migrate to urban towns looking for a better life are not successful. (When they return), sometimes with a child, they are very disadvantaged as they lost their previous status both at the family and community level. Domestic workers in the country are less respected; they don't send money, and they don't even change the clothes they were wearing when they were living in the community*.

Some of the female migrants had industrial jobs, which might have been seen as preferable. Young women from Sirba, Kormargefia, Oda Haro and Oda Dawata worked in factories, some from Sirba on cobble-stone paving in nearby towns, and some from Somodo and Gara Godo on construction sites. Young women from Turufe, Aze Debo'a and Sirba worked in flower farms, where employment seemed to be largely female. In Sirba it seemed to be seen as a relatively good option, providing both permanent employment and, thanks to the relative proximity of the farms, seasonal jobs for female students wanting to raise an income during the *kiremt* break, including to finance their studies.

But these jobs did not seem to be better paid than domestic or hospitality wage work. For instance, in Oda Haro where some young women worked in factories in Fincha or Addis Ababa, and Oda Dawata where some worked in Assela factories, this was considered to be a lot less advantageous than migration abroad. Women working at the flour factory in Assela mentioned a pay of 400 to 600 *birr* per month; those working on flower farms mentioned earnings of 20 *birr*/day or 700 *birr* per month. From such amounts not much was left once food and accommodation were paid for. Work conditions were also an issue in some cases. For instance, a young woman from Sirba and a young

man from Geblen reported severe headaches after working on a flower farm and in a pharmaceutical factory, respectively – two cases fitting into a seemingly wider pattern of increased health risks associated with industrial work when compared to self-employment, highlighted in a recent study on occupational choice in Ethiopia (Blattman and Dercon 2016).

Generally urban migrants were said to be unable to support their family at home. In Sirba one woman who migrated to Addis Ababa was able to buy a grain mill for her parents, but such cases seemed to be exceptional. More usually, urban migrants might send clothes or bring items when visiting; or send something for holidays or funerals. Those migrating seasonally spent their small gains for clothes for themselves, other personal items, or schooling costs in some cases. In Shumsheha many young men wanted to migrate to sesame farms to get money to buy a mobile phone. A poor farmer from Gara Godo explained that his son, in Hawassa, did not send money as he needed to finance his personal life first. A woman from Kormargefia who worked as a housemaid in Addis Ababa and had sent some small money while she was there, returned with just 800 *birr* after 17 years. Respondents in Kormargefia also contrasted those working elsewhere in Ethiopia with "*many of the women in Arab countries (who) were sending money, within four months of starting work, and building tin-roofed houses for their parents*."

This lesser ability of urban migrants to save/send money home resonates with a number of studies finding that urban migration might be a valuable component of a household's safety net but often it did not transform lives of the migrants themselves or their families at home, and migrants faced a host of difficulties in their daily life in town (see e.g. Bevan et al 2006, Adamnesh Atnafu 2014, Erulkar *et al.* 2006, Erulkar and Tekle-Ab Mekbib 2007, de Regt 2016). Studies highlighting significant benefits from rural-urban migration tend to rely on older data (see e.g. de Brauw *et al.* 2013, World Bank 2014)[10]. In contrast, in a recent study the World Bank (2016) reckons that to help households migrate between sectors and labour to move from agricultural to non-agricultural sectors, which they see as desirable to transform the economy, "*in the short run it may be necessary to expand safety nets (to urban areas)*" as "*transitions take time*"[11].

Experiences of migrating abroad

The increasing flows of migrants to the Gulf, Sudan and South Africa evoked earlier prompted sharply different views on the balance between potential risks and benefits. Local officials, usually presenting migration abroad as overwhelmingly ending in failure, highlighted the risks and harms of such experiences. Migration was said to bring disaster for the migrants, their families, and the community losing its young energetic people and therefore facing much slowed-down development. In Somodo (Jimma) it was described as a "*new Harmful Traditional Practice*". The government's efforts to develop alternative options for the youth were emphasised, such as the establishment of women's saving and poultry-rearing groups in Somodo. However, for people who considered the girls migrating to the Gulf as '*heroes'* (in Kormargefia, North Shewa) or talked about migration as a '*prudent economic move'* (Oda Haro, West Shewa), such local options were no match for the prospects of higher gains through working abroad.

These divergences created tensions in some communities, for instance in Geblen (East Tigray) where *tabia* leaders talked in a derogatory manner about the youth being "*lured by the prospect of making*

[10] E.g. de Brauw *et al.* 2013 found that in 2009 in fifteen of the WIDE communities, households with a migrant had significantly higher objectively measured wellbeing levels (in terms of both consumption and income); although there was no difference in subjective wellbeing between households with and without a migrant. However, the study data is from 2004 to 2009. The World Bank 2014 *Poverty Assessment* which is also quite positive about the benefits of rural-urban migration uses the same data and data from the 2007 Census (chapter 7).

[11] The Government, with World Bank support, has undertaken to introduce an urban safety net. In its initial phase starting in 2016, the programme will help 604,000 beneficiaries or about 55 percent of urban dwellers below the poverty line in 11 major cities.

huge money in a short time" or being "*attracted by shiny little ornaments*". In contrast in Harresaw (also in East Tigray), whilst *wereda* officials talked about stepping up awareness raising etc., *tabia* leaders were more pragmatic, reckoning that migration was "*the only option for the youth*" and "*the only solution for the community*" alongside irrigation, especially if the safety nets were going to stop.

In a few predominantly Muslim communities, migration to other Muslim countries connected with discourses of religious mobilisation. In Oda Haro, for instance, migrants were said to bring a "*new Muslim culture*" and "*spread this kind of strict religion*".

Much more commonly, migration was associated with ideas of modernity and linked to success, wealth, "*modern lifestyle*", "*civilised ways*" (dress, houses, cooking), new business ideas etc. As one of the Research Officers said, in Adado (Gedeo) "*old people perceive migration as a sign of poverty, the younger generation sees it as a way to generate an income*".

There were signs of the possible emergence of a 'culture of migration' in some of the communities, with mentions of snowballing influence, emulation effects and peer pressure in many of those with important migratory flows, and the frequent occurrence of repeat migration. In Somodo some respondents noted that migration had become "*competitive*", in that every family wanted to have at least one of their children going abroad, and this resembled a competition. In Harresaw even deacons were migrating in large numbers, prompting fears that some churches might have to close.

In the communities where migration abroad was important, people were well aware of the risks well. They had heard the government awareness-raising messages, knew about unsuccessful cases locally or through the media; or they personally knew unsuccessful migrants or had themselves been unsuccessful. Several interviewees recounted stories of actual harm (e.g. cases of exploitation, physical and mental abuses and death), as exemplified in the box below. Costs, labour shortages, and family absences were other drawbacks.

However, and as also noted in Stocchiero (2017), for many awareness of the risks was not a sufficient deterrent. For instance, a repeat migrant from Sirba noted that a lot of women got harassed by their employers or "*just disappeared"* but it was also "*a good opportunity for many young girls to earn a good amount of money*" and "*better to migrate and work than stay here doing nothing*". Success in moving abroad was often seen as the best pathway to "*change one's life*", as illustrated by a woman development team leader from Kormargefia when she asked *"why collect dung rather than wash one's hands with soap many times a day?"*

Box 5: Real harms occurred

One man from *Harresaw* told his story of a 35-40 days trip, mostly walking in harsh conditions before and after the dangerous sea crossing. Another man's son had died on the way to join his father. In a neighbouring *tabia* 49 young people had died in the same incident on their journey.

In *Somodo*, a young woman personally knew another who was raped while she was travelling to Sudan. She became pregnant and her friends in Sudan helped her to abort. But then she was seriously sick and weak and could not get a job. She came back to Somodo but she was demoralized because she came back without prospects and yet she decided to migrate again.

The 18-year old son of a teacher in *Aze Debo'a* had been abandoned by his brokers on Zanzibar, and detained for a year in Tanzania before being deported. In the course of their six weeks in the community Research Officers attended the funeral of another youngster who was killed in South Africa. And although he had persevered and become very successful, a young returnee told them how he had been robbed and had been very lucky not to get killed when this happened.

In *Sirba*, a young woman (who most likely had migrated through the regular channel) had died, her parents did not know what had happened and had no idea of how they might do anything.

As I discuss later in this chapter, there was also evidence that successful experiences were beneficial at individual, household and community levels. Thus, many were of the opinion that the positives

outweighed the negatives. In the communities visited in November 2013, there was little support for the ban on migration abroad: youth and families argued that it would fuel joblessness, that the government did not have the right to prevent them from '*changing their life',* and that it should '*unban'* migration since it was not able to create adequate numbers of local jobs[12].

At the same time, would-be migrants did not have clear and complete information on the regular migration channels, which allowed brokers to act as intermediaries – e.g. providing information or help to go through the visa procedures in Girar, Sirba, Kormargefia and Oda Haro; and in some cases in these last two communities, helping young women first to find work in Addis Ababa to familiarise themselves with the tasks they would have to perform in modern houses abroad. There were also mentions of brokers smuggling people on irregular journeys, such as in Harresaw to travel to Saudi Arabia, in Somodo for those travelling to Sudan, in Oda Dawata for the young men travelling to Gulf countries, and in Aze Debo'a for those travelling to South Africa.

However, brokers did not seem to have, at least with regard to migrants' decisions to leave, the importance often highlighted in the media, public discourse and a number of recent studies talking about brokers luring young people with false information etc. This relatively low visibility of brokers in the WIDE communities may be due to the fact that local brokers might often have been relatives or other community members (including returnees), whom would-be migrants would not consider as brokers. This resonates with an observation made by Stocchiero (2017), noting that migrants and potential migrants are now playing an increasing role in linking others with smuggling networks which in this way, penetrate deep into society in little visible ways. Another reason might be that brokers are inevitable and therefore, there is no need to mention them as they are 'obvious' actors.

More generally, local discourses did not conjure the notion of trafficking. For instance, in Harresaw where most migration was illegal, people talked about "*sidet*" (exile) and not "*hige wett ziwiw*ir" ('illegal transfer'), most often used by government officials and in the media. While "*sidet*" has an ambiguous connotation, it does not conjure notions of illegality or coercion. In Somodo and Oda Haro people talked in Oromiffa about "*godanssa sera (qabesa)*" (literally, the movement of people from place to place in legal ways) and contrasted it with "*godanssa seeraan alaa*" (movement outside of the legal ways), a term introduced by the government for migration through unlicensed brokers. However, even the latter term referred to people who, while they did not go through the regular legal channel, had *chosen* to migrate.

In addition to huge risks during the journey, irregular international migrants were vulnerable to deportation back to Ethiopia. For regular migrants, some had good employers, as in the case of a young woman from Oda Haro who discovered that she was pregnant on arrival in Saudi Arabia. Her employers kept her, taking care that she would not work too hard, and sending her back to give birth with presents for the baby and her family. However, in other cases, regular migrants were subject to poor treatment and seemed to be just as vulnerable as irregular ones, as illustrated in the box below. People talked about heavy workloads, poor payment, or women being denied payment and/or exposed to brutalities, unfair treatment, and disagreement with employers. Moreover, a number of returnees expressed a sense of powerlessness due both to their lack of preparedness for the jobs and to the lack of effective protection mechanisms in case of problems.

[12] Further fieldwork would be required to see whether these trends towards a 'migration culture' were deflected by events that occurred end 2013 after the final WIDE3 fieldwork - notably, the government ban on international migration and the mass deportation of Ethiopian workers by the Saudi government. The research led by Stocchiero (2017) indicates that migration abroad was continuing to be seen as a worthwhile option in 2016, across the quite diverse areas that the team studied, "notwithstanding the recent deportation measures imposed by the Saudi Arabia government, the successive migration ban enacted by the Ethiopian government and the protracted crisis and conflict in Yemen."

Box 6: Ethiopian regular migrants in the Gulf – poorly prepared and protected

One woman from Somodo recounted how she lost a year and a half of earnings which she had hidden in her room. She was convinced her employer stole it but her accusation got nowhere as she was a foreigner, and she was sent back empty-handed.

A young woman from Oda Haro stressed that Ethiopian migrants were not well informed about the type of skills required and got no help, training or advice from the Public Employment Agencies. She contrasted this with people from the Philippines who "*are very professional and dedicated to their job. They are very experienced and highly paid. They are more secure when they come to the employment contract as they receive training and advice from their national agency*."

A woman from Oda Dawata who had migrated and returned several times, rather successfully and usually with a contact at destination, noted that "*there is a big problem with agents. Sometimes when somebody faced a problem and called to tell the agent, they replied "keep silent and get on with your work" ("arfesh sirashin siri!") Some girls took action themselves because of the hopeless response from the agents. But they might face different problems as they try to change their places"* (a reference to the *kafala* system bonding an employee to her employer[1]).

In Oda Haro the sister of a respondent who first went to Kuwait "*suffered a lot because they refused to pay her salary. She went to the agency in order to get legal action and get paid her salary but she got paid only half her agreement*".

Overall, migration patterns were quite different for young men and young women. For young women, in communities where both were present, migration abroad was seen as, and appeared to be, a better option than urban migration. However, most opportunities for regular migration to Gulf countries were for domestic work jobs. There were few jobs 'for men' among those offered through the employment agencies, so that young men generally migrated illegally, which was risker, to find jobs as drivers, farm daily labour, factory work, etc. – a strongly gendered pattern also noted by Stocchiero (2017). However, there were some rare cases of young men who had successfully progressed to better paid supervision jobs. Most migration to South Africa was irregular; migrants there worked mainly as street vendors of various goods.

Financing migration abroad was often a key issue. Funding sources included migrants' savings (e.g. young men saving from working on the *chat* trade between Adele Keke and Djibouti or on the port of Djibouti; young women saving from seasonal employment at the local coffee plant in Aze Debo'a; savings from earlier migration in e.g. Somodo). Some parents and relatives supported the migrant enthusiastically as they had high hopes of support in return; in other cases, they were very reluctant, as in the case of the teacher in Aze Debo'a who finally agreed to sponsor his son from his lifelong savings, only to see him return empty-handed. Would-be migrants would also borrow, including under false pretexts, for instance from the government package programme in Harresaw and Geblen (East Tigray). Financing also came from already established migrants, like in Harresaw. In Aze Debo'a a group of youth would pool resources to send one of them abroad, who would then send money for the others to join in turn.

In some cases, would-be migrants and their families used strategies that left the household more vulnerable until remittances would refund them – in cases of success. Families in Somodo would sell crops or cattle or borrow to send at least one child abroad. In Aze Debo'a a family sold their two oxen and all the eucalyptus on their land to finance their son's trip to South Africa, "*like other parents are doing*". When migrants failed, their households ended up impoverished, as in the case of a father of four in Harresaw who had tried unsuccessfully to migrate to Saudi Arabia, and had no other option to repay the loan taken to this effect than renting out his land. In many instances, the poorest people (who might benefit most from successful migration), undertook to migrate first through irregular channels, riskier but perceived to be cheaper, with the hope to earn enough money to migrate later on through the regular channel to better places, possibly for better pay. This was common in Somodo, where young women would migrate illegally to Sudan to get money to migrate legally to Gulf countries at a later date.

The effects of migration in the communities

In this section I review the effects of migration as they were mentioned in the WIDE communities, considering the views of people who were not members of the local administration or the local political elites. Most of the time these effects arose from successful migration abroad, as urban/industrial migrants were rarely earning sufficiently to be able to do more than cover their living costs. I first look at effects on livelihoods, followed by effects on local human development, then examine effects on the communities' social fabric.

Effects on livelihoods

In most communities there was a clear sense that outmigration provided some relief from the ever increasing pressure on land. Indeed, as noted earlier, migration was partly a response to land scarcity and more generally scarcity of local livelihood options. More positively, remittances and savings from migration also permitted livelihood-related investments, in both the farming and non-farming sectors.

In the farming sector, respondents mentioned using migration remittances or savings to invest in land, inputs or livestock. Examples include buying agricultural inputs or hiring or purchasing oxen in Turufe; buying livestock or farm implements in Harresaw (East Tigray); buying cross breeds, engaging in oxen or livestock fattening in Aze Debo'a (Kambata), Oda Haro (West Shewa) and Oda Dawata (Arsi); renting-in more farmland in Kormargefia (North Shewa); farming the family's land previously rented out, or for young men, 'buying' land[13] in Sirba (East Shewa); 'buying' land and planting coffee or *chat* or trees in Somodo (Jimma), or coffee and *enset* in Adado (Gedeo). In Harresaw the first and foremost use, when international migration flows sharply increased, was to pay back loans taken for livestock, as many had suffered severe losses during the 2008/9 drought.

Returnees or migrants' relatives also invested in the non-farm sector, contributing to local economic diversification and the internal urbanisation and thickening of rural-urban links described in the urbanisation chapter. In most communities with sizeable migration flows, some of the migrants' families or returnees invested locally in shops of various sizes, grain mills, trade, cafés or restaurants, beauty salons etc., thus amplifying internal urbanisation. Migration-related investments also strengthened outward links. For instance, in Geblen and Harresaw returnees settled in nearby towns and started businesses there, while keeping strong links with their farming relatives with whom they exchanged goods and services. There was much investment in services. Transport service was one avenue, and returnees had invested in trucks or minibuses in Aze Debo'a and Somodo, and *bajaj* and bikes in Adado. Hospitality was another: returnees from Aze Debo'a and Girar for instance, had invested in hotels in the nearby zonal capitals Durame and Imdibir.

There were a few examples of very successful returnees among those investing in non-farm activities – such as a woman from Somodo, who, after eight years in Dubai, bought a house in Jimma, and a minibus; or another in Sirba who, after years in Bahrain, lived in Addis Ababa and had shares in a car maintenance workshop there. A young man from Aze Debo'a, a Grade 12 completer, who after five years spent at home without a job, had convinced his parents to send him to South Africa, came back (in 2010) with 1.4 million *birr* in addition to sending remittances. He purchased a house and started to construct a big hotel in Durame. He had an Isuzu truck transporting goods and was earning a minimum of 10,000 *birr* per month from it.

However, like many others with some capital in the communities, successful returnees trying to invest locally in the non-farm sector were also facing overriding structural constraints on local

[13] Land in Ethiopia is not a private property and cannot be sold or bought. Farmers have users' rights on land allocated by the government. These rights, defined in a federal umbrella and regional legislations, allow a farmer to lease in/out land under certain conditions. However, many land transactions in rural Ethiopia are informal, and people in the WIDE communities referred to some of them as 'buying land', possibly for some relatively long term agreements.

economies: the small size of the local markets, poor access to outside markets (to buy or sell goods), underdeveloped local infrastructure, and generally a lack of support to the development of the non-farm sector in the WIDE communities. This was a concern expressed by migrants for instance in Adado (Gedeo). In Shumsheha (North Wello), some respondents noted that "*talking about entrepreneurship is not enough*", suggesting there was a need for the Government to address the structural market and transport issues that entrepreneurs, including successful migrant returnees, were facing.

Other positive effects noted in some communities included an increase in daily or contract agricultural work (in households where men were away); improved ability to pay back debts through remittances (instead of selling assets); and new skills and (more rarely) business ideas brought back by migrants. For instance, in Somodo, migrants were said to make a more careful analysis of activities they would undertake, and influenced local people in this way. In Sirba it was seen as useful that young women came back bringing new familiarity with electronic items and with better home management skills.

In the communities studied in 2012 and 2013, key respondents selected for their in-depth knowledge of the local economy, were asked to estimate the importance of migration as a factor contributing to it. They gave fairly high figures in some instances, as shown in the box below. These estimates, while they are not based on scientific measures and should not be taken face value, clearly suggest that migration was widely seen as a major economic contributor in some communities: a view that (whether or not it is correct) is clearly of importance in itself. Even when remittances were spent on consumption, this had multiplier effects in the local economy, as highlighted in Aze Debo'a in relation to successful migrants from South Africa.

Box 7: Estimates of the importance of migration in selected local economies

Together, seasonal agricultural migration and long-term migration to Addis Ababa or abroad were estimated to be the 6th or 7th most important livelihood activity in Shumsheha (North Wello).

Through seasonal (including urban) or longer migration of the youth, outmigration was estimated to represent 25% of the community's livelihood in Gara Godo (Wolayta), up from 15% ten years before.

In Oda Haro (West Shewa), outmigration was thought to represent 5% of community-level income, mostly from international migration.

Outmigration of all types in Oda Dawata (Arsi) was estimated to represent 10% of the local economy. It was an extremely important source of independent income for the youth in particular.

Outmigration was seen as representing 8-15% of the local economy in Somodo (Jimma). Some respondents thought it was a major factor explaining why the community was better-off than two or three years earlier.

Outmigration in Adado (Gedeo), mainly temporary of men to Shakiso gold mines, was estimated to represent 3-6% of the local economy.

There were also negative effects on households when migrants failed or died; or for households severely depleting assets to finance migration. In a number of communities some respondents noted that migration undermined government youth job creation initiatives. For instance, in Harresaw youth took the widely promoted beehive package on credit, then sold the beehives to migrate; in Aze Debo'a it was reportedly very difficult to establish any kind of youth cooperative, because so many youth migrated; in Somodo, only a few women enrolled in the small business schemes mentioned above; and people mentioned a youth stone cooperative that had stopped functioning – although it was not clear whether it became dysfunctional because members migrated or if they left because the cooperative did not meet their expectations. As explained earlier, migration had emerged as an alternative to these local initiatives which, for many youth, did not represent a sufficient incentive in comparison to the prospect of much higher gains through working elsewhere, especially abroad.

Effects on human development

There were clear wellbeing effects in households with successful migrants. Better housing and living standards were the most widespread. Migrants invested in improving their parents' house or building one for themselves, or in buying modern household furniture and equipment. Some would also build houses in nearby towns (e.g. Atsbi or Wukro for Harresaw, Durame for Aze Debo'a, Assela for Oda Dawata, Jimma for Somodo) and live there. There were a few cases of migrants building houses in Addis Ababa, such as a woman from Oda Haro who had spent five years in Lebanon and thought she might need another two years to complete her house.

In line with the finding that improvements in nutrition were more marked in better-off households (as also found in a recent IFPRI study by Ibrahim Worku Hassen et al. 2016[14]), migrants' households were said to have a better diet. In Aze Debo'a, for instance, reflecting the importance of milk in the local culture, families with migrants were said to "*drink milk like water*".

People also talked about better clothing, and the ability to pay for types of health care services otherwise out-of-reach for most rural people. For instance, a young woman from Sirba was helping her father who had been blind for ten years to get the best medical treatment in Addis, something which he "*wouldn't even think of… without the help of his daughter covering all the medical, transport and accommodation costs*." On the potentially negative side regarding health, local officials from Oda Haro highlighted aggravated risks of exposure to HIV/AIDS arising from migration, and some community respondents expressed a similar concern in Adado. In Harresaw Health Extension Workers noted that young women wanting to migrate to Saudi Arabia asked to get a long-term contraceptive implant.

The interaction between migration and education was complex, as outlined earlier in this chapter. On one hand, failing, fearing to fail or not being able to continue at school pushed young people to migrate; at the same time, the attraction of migration led some young people to drop out. On the other hand, the returns of migration in some instances were used to study or help siblings or children to study.

Effects on social development

I mentioned earlier the link between migration and the kind of 'rural urbanisation' we saw in the WIDE communities. The effects of the denser links between rural and urban worlds went beyond the livelihood sphere (also see the chapters on urbanisation and innovation). Notably, in a number of communities, migrants' investments in nearby towns contributed to introducing 'multi-locality'[15], whereby some members of a family remained on the land while others moved and lived in towns. Such examples were mentioned in Harresaw, Aze Debo'a and Kormargefia.

Migration had complex effects on household structures, highlighted especially in Geblen, Harresaw, Kormargefia and Somodo, but no doubt also occuring in other communities where it was sizeable; and as again also highlighted in Stocchiero (2017). Migration of young men or women or both delayed marriage, while at the same time it was also one of the ways young people could establish an independent livelihood, and marry. There were also more households deviating from local norms, as a result of migration. In Geblen, where 44% of households were female-headed, people mentioned that there were more of them since husbands were leaving to migrate. In Harresaw, with 51% female-headed households, there was reportedly an increasing number of married young women living with their parents while their husband was away. In Geblen, Harresaw and

[14] Ibrahim Worku Hassen *et al.* (2016) find that "while the share of food in the total consumption basket is declining, food quantities and calorie intakes have considerably increased between 1996 and 2011" and "this was mostly driven by improvements in household incomes". They also highlight a gradual shift towards high-value foods such as animal products, fruits and vegetables and processed foods, especially for higher income households.

[15] See RurbanAfrica – African Rural-City Connections, *Policy Brief* No. 3, 2016. http://rurbanafrica.ku.dk/

Kormargefia people mentioned cases of children living with their grandparents as their mother had migrated; and in Harresaw, that there were orphans of parents dying on migration journeys. People also talked about cases of divorce linked to migration. In Harresaw people talked about women divorcing husbands who were away for long periods of time; and men divorcing to be able to migrate, or even women with children doing so. A woman from Geblen explained how her husband left her to go and live with another woman whom he had met while he was away.

The effect on intergenerational relationships was mixed. On one hand, decision-making about migration generated tensions in some cases. For instance, a young man from Aze Debo'a said he had been 'nagging' his father to use his savings as a teacher to send him to South Africa; and similar cases were mentioned in Geblen and Harresaw (e.g. household heads unhappy about their son taking a loan to migrate, that they feared they would be asked to repay). On the other hand, as noted earlier, in some cases families were willingly sponsoring youth to migrate. Moreover, migration reduced tension, notably around access to land – as in the cases of the rich families in Kormargefia giving money for their children to go and find work in towns. Similarly, a young man from Oda Haro migrated when his land-poor father made clear he would not give him land; he found work in a hotel in Ambo and told his parents he lived well. So that in some communities, youth migration was seen in a rather positive light by some community members. For instance in Oda Haro it was appreciated that young people were keen to move to seek a job, which was a big change; in Somodo migration was seen as one response to "*new kinds of aspiration of young people*".

There was also a dual effect on local social protection mechanisms. As they moved away, young people left elderly households without labour – as noted for instance in Geblen and Harresaw. But migration was also seen as a first choice option for young people to be able to assist their families. There were strong expectations in that respect in Harresaw, Kormargefia, Oda Haro, Oda Dawata and Somodo – and as noted earlier many young people aspired to migrate to help their families.

Migration also had huge effects for women.

Box 8: Migration and women's empowerment

In Kormargefia, households with daughters were said to be luckiest. Parents' priorities were shifting: finding a good husband for their daughters was less important than being able to send them abroad. The young women migrating abroad were considered as '*heroes'*. Migrant returnees might marry later but they had better marriage prospects. Some people foresaw that women's migration was poised to have a major impact on gender relationships as women became decision-makers in the household's economic issues: "*there will be a different kind of household where women will become the decision-makers in economic activities… the more money a person has means power to decide*" (elderly woman head of household).

In Sirba too people stressed this empowerment effect, economic and broader. In Oda Haro parents' aspirations shifted like in Kormargefia; marrying their daughters came second after they would have migrated abroad for some time, and it was less important to find a landed husband for them.

In Oda Dawata baby girls were now welcome and women returning from migration were sought for marriage as they were economically strong and independent, able to engage in different businesses and building modern houses. However, in predominantly Muslim communities like Oda Dawata and Somodo, these effects coexisted with an increasingly strict interpretation of Islam.

In contrast, in Somodo, young women were 'sent' abroad by families or husbands and in some cases seemed to have had little say in these decisions. Reportedly, they often found little for them when they returned, thus having no other option than migrating again, because families did not save for them, unlike the arrangements they made for their sons when they returned. There were even cases of young men engaging in relationships with several young women with a view to getting remittances from them. Some young women suggested that this pattern was in line with a more general behaviour in the community, whereby "*all families see girls as goods*" who serve their parents until such a time they marry and serve their husband.

Their higher mobility was notable, especially in Geblen and Harresaw (both in East Tigray), Kormargefia (North Shewa), Aze Debo'a (Kambata), Sirba (East Shewa), Oda Dawata (Arsi), Oda Haro

(West Shewa) and Somodo (Jimma), that is, eight very diverse communities across the country, all with sizable outmigration. This greater mobility represented a significant shift, especially in conservative communities such as Aze Debo'a, where in the Kambata tradition women's mobility is quite constrained, or Kormargefia in North Shewa. More broadly, successful migration was a major potential factor of socio-economic empowerment for the women involved and was perceived as such in some of the communities. Meanwhile, it could also be exploitative, and seemed to have been so in Somodo.illustrated in the box below.

As noted earlier, there was also some concern, even among people who were otherwise rather favourably disposed to migration abroad, that increasingly young children were involved. This resonates with a growing concern about the migration of minors (especially unaccompanied minors) amongst policy-makers and authorities (Zelalem Tefera 2013)[16], and appears to be a widespread trend in 'youth bulge' countries as noted above (RMMS & Save the Children 2016). However, it is not clear that people in the WIDE communities would define minors in the same way as the government policy, which considers all those under 18 as children, who should not work, and should not therefore migrate. When they talked about this issue our respondents mentioned relatively young children aged 13, or 14 or 16, or attending the upper primary cycle.

Conclusions and policy considerations

The evidence presented above suggests that the greater mobility found in 2010-13 in Ethiopia's rural communities was primarily a function of their development, whereby people, considering the local context-specific mix of opportunities and constraints, migrated for work to fulfil the higher aspirations resulting from this development. In addition, there was evidence that successful migration *can* be beneficial. It reduced the pressure on scarce local resources and on the labour market. Through remittances, the younger generation contributed to social protection and increased wellbeing for their family at home. Remittances and savings financed investments in local economies and contributed to their diversification. And in several communities, women's increased work-related mobility brought positive changes in gender perceptions and norms and in women's decision-making, wellbeing and empowerment.

Thus increased mobility is a symptom of the development of rural Ethiopia, and if well managed, will be an important tool to help fuel its ongoing transformation. It has the potential to significantly contribute both to the development of the migrants' home communities, and to the government's objective of transformation of the country's economy, requiring labour to move into the non-agricultural sectors. In that light, and although migration poses a range of policy and social challenges, addressing them would allow tapping its potential more fully. As suggested by Stocchiero (2017), the question is how to "enhance migration for local development".

In the paragraphs below I make a few suggestions to this effect, looking at this in three directions: first, given the potential of people's increased mobility in rural Ethiopia, how this could be enhanced to strengthen local rural development; second how the experiences of people migrating from rural communities to seek work could be enhanced when they go for urban or industrial jobs; and, finally, how this might relate to people who seek opportunities or employment abroad. In all cases this would imply a mix of better information and preparation for the available jobs, more efficient and migrant-friendly migration management systems, and strengthening and enforcing the relevant legal frameworks.

Enhancing mobility to strengthen rural development

There could be benefits in defining a migration policy that would recognise both the risks and the benefits of migration, and guide all stakeholders in mitigating the former and enhancing the latter. Systematic research on the evolving and increasingly complex patterns of mobility in Ethiopia could

[16] This was presented at the Child Research and Practice Forum in February 2013.

also strengthen both policy and practices. In addition, a number of more specific measures could be considered with a view to enhancing the ways in which the returns from rural out-migration are being used.

As we have seen, young people migrated in part from a sense of responsibility towards their family, and in many cases migration strengthened local social protection mechanisms. This could be further enhanced by ensuring that, in line with the Government's objective of expanding banking services in rural areas, migrants have access to cheaper and easier banking and money transfer options: both within the country and from abroad.

We have also seen that migrants and their families prioritised investments in wellbeing and human development. Promoting the use of a portion of migration remittances or savings for contributions to health and other forms of insurance, or as collateral for access to formal credit, could be one way of strengthening these investments. This would also help expand insurance schemes and access to credit, which as suggested in the chapters on inequalities and on economic success, is necessary both to 'leave no one behind', and to support already flourishing local entrepreneurs.

Measures helping to maximise savings and remittances could lead to more migrants being able to save enough to consider productive investments, alongside their investments in wellbeing. These measures could include cheaper and more efficient banking and transfer options, already mentioned, as well as higher interest rates on savings. Moreover, migrants could be helped in selecting worthwhile productive investments in a range of economic sectors, for instance through rural 'one-stop shops' that could advise them on marketable products/services, link them to credit and training, and help them to get land and so on – as part of a broader government strategy to strengthen the development of the non-farm sector in rural Ethiopia that we advocate for in this volume.

Building on the Gurage tradition of migrants funding development projects in their area, mechanisms could be developed to enable migrants and returnees to co-finance investments in infrastructure in and around their community, thereby addressing some of the structural constraints that they face when they want to invest at home. Ideas such as 'local development bonds', akin to a localised version of the diaspora bonds, could be explored as a way of harnessing much needed infrastructure financing, at a local scale and level – as long as trust and confidence can be built in the integrity and effectiveness of any such system.

Finally, considering the potential of migration in relation to women's status in rural Ethiopia, greater attention could be paid to ensuring that like for other economic options, women's migration brings balanced outcomes, for both the women themselves and their families. This could figure prominently in the modernised gender equality message that Loveday suggests is needed (see chapter on women's economic participation), which could reflect migration as one of the new opportunities for women's economic participation, and at the same time address the new issues that arise with it. In particular, facilitating young women's independent access to banking solutions would strengthen their position, as it would enable them to send funds to an account in their own name without having to rely on family members. Other measures incentivising them to save for themselves could be considered, such as access to low-interest loans as a complement to their savings, enabling them to launch their own business on return.

Improving urban/industrial migration experiences

We have seen that migrating to seek urban-based or industrial work is becoming an important option for a growing number of rural people. Indeed, other studies such as Cleland *et al.* (forthcoming) suggest that "*(m)uch of Ethiopia's rural youth will have no option but to migrate to urban areas or seek off-farm livelihoods in rural areas*." Yet too often, this entails a precarious life, exploitative work conditions especially for women, and small returns if any. Support for people

seeking work in urban or industrial areas would both improve outcomes for them and their families, and help reach the Government's industrial and small town development policy objectives.

Facilitating migrants' access to identity cards, as seems to have been more mainstreamed recently in Addis Ababa, would give them access to a range of services. This could be complemented by the provision of information on available jobs, reasonable accommodation, health services and skills training and credit opportunities, for instance through designating a responsible *kebele*/municipal office for this, especially in areas prone to in-migration. Local labour exchanges that would enable information exchange between employers and prospective employees, as also suggested in the chapter on education, could also help migrants seeking employment. A recent World Bank study cited in Cleland et al. (forthcoming), showing that among unemployed youth in Addis Ababa, better educated migrants are more actively seeking jobs than their peers born in Addis, suggests that it could also make good sense to extend the government's support programme to Micro and Small Enterprises (skill and entrepreneurship training, credit etc.) to rural migrants, so that in turn, they might better contribute to the development of the urban area in which they have opted to settle.

Three areas may deserve special consideration in relation to urban/industrial migration and more broadly, wage employment. *First*, greater attention to issues of labour exploitation would have large pay-offs as an increasing proportion of Ethiopian citizens (migrants and others) will make a living out of some form of wage employment. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has a key role to play in this, and could further prioritise the strict enforcement of existing labour laws and regulations, as well as consider issuing regulations on minimum conditions for jobs on industrial or large-scale agricultural plants which would clearly define employers' responsibilities (e.g. safety requirements at work, salary, transport, decent housing) so that they can be followed up.

Second, urban or industrial migration should be made safer for women – many of whom might prefer not to move abroad if they felt that the alternative of working in urban areas or factories etc., was worthwhile. Focusing on work conditions in domestic employment and employment in hospitality services could be one of the ways to combat the current widely prevailing exploitation of female urban migrants. Enforcing gender equality in employment practices (e.g. equal pay for equal tasks) could further enhance their prospects (see more in the chapter on women's economic participation). Additional ways to protect them from harm might also be explored (e.g. urban shelters, as has been undertaken on a small scale in some Ethiopian cities[17]; or establishment of 'safe spaces' where migrant girls can meet peers and female mentors as suggested by de Regt (2016)).

Finally, many men and women might prefer finding work in closer locations. Paying attention to migrants' living and working conditions in smaller towns and local factories would make such options more attractive, while also helping to avoid a concentration of people all moving to larger cities. Other measures could be considered, such as enhancing the capacity of *wereda* and municipality labour offices and developing systems to compile information on local/nearby jobs and disseminate it widely in rural communities, and the establishment of local labour exchanges as noted earlier, with a view to helping would-be migrants find opportunities nearer home.

Improving employment abroad

After two years during which irregular migration was the only route for those who had decided to find work abroad, a new *Prevention and Supervision of Trafficking in Person and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation* and an *Overseas Employment Amended Proclamation* were approved in July and December 2015 respectively. Together, these constitute a new framework for legal migration for employment abroad. From an institutional perspective, the development of clear guidance (based on the framework, and for all actors involved including government structures at all levels)

[17] See e.g. https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2016/jul/27/ethiopia-women-girls-safe-houses-shelter-ethiopia-female-survivors-violence-in-pictures

could help improve the management of voluntary, safe and legal migration for employment abroad. Eighteen months after the approval of the Overseas Employment Amended Proclamation this is an indispensable first step to substitute the transational irregular system (which recent research suggests, continues to flourish – see e.g. Stocchiero 2017) with stronger regular channels.

From the would-be migrants' perspective, ensuring that adequate information is widely and easily available on how to be legally employed abroad would make costly (and not always benign) intermediaries redundant. As a complement to the government's continued efforts to curb irregular migration, media including as social networks, etc., could be used, in addition to physical government offices, to provide information about destination countries, jobs available and other issues (including support schemes and training opportunities, types of contracts, agencies' and employers' responsibilities and employees' rights, etc.). In addition, whilst there are clearly policy and political sensitivities in this area, making legal migration abroad more easily accessible, cheaper and more time-efficient would also help overcome widespread perceptions that dangerous irregular migration is the quicker and cheaper option. This could potentially entail further decentralising migration management, for instance by establishing more branches of the concerned federal department in migration-prone areas, and clarifying regional and wereda administrations' responsibilities in these matters.

Ensuring better preparation of prospective legal migrants before departure would make them more confident and assured in their jobs and help avoid dissatisfaction on their employers' side. Alongside the skills training required for specific jobs, such preparation could include detailed information on the migrant's rights and on the specifics of the support available in her or his destination country. Some financial literacy training might also help migrants to manage and make sustainable use of their earnings. Issues of wage levels may also call for greater attention.

Finally, the new legal and regulatory framework for employment abroad also focuses on better protection and support to migrants once they have reached their destination. Ethiopian Embassies in destination countries will need commensurate resources to fulfil the framework's provision such as for instance, the deployment of in-country labour attachés. Embassies could also support social networking among migrants, and offer shelter to workers facing problems with their employers for the time needed for employment agencies to address the issue.

The evidence above suggests that in the process of reinstating legal employment abroad three groups of migrants may deserve special attention: would-be migrants from poorer backgrounds; young men wanting to work abroad; and the difficult category of 'underage migrants' or 'minors' (aged under 18). Developing formal migration financing options would provide poorer potential migrants with a way of avoiding harmful migration financing strategies. Broadening bilateral agreements so that they include jobs in construction, transport etc., and exploring how labour migration could be legalised in a larger number of countries, could help expand the legal opportunities for young men to work abroad. Finally, the provisions of the amended Proclamation related to minimum age and education need to be implemented in such a way that it does not lead many just under-18 and pre-grade 8 dropouts, with few educational option open to them (see more in the chapter on education), to continue to migrate illegally as they do not meet the Proclamation's requirements. While there may be some merit in the "*pragmatic management*" of the migration of under-18 (Zelalem Teferra 2013), measures such as further developing skill training and pre-grade 10 TVET options and extending support to the establishment of Micro/Small Enterprises into the rural *kebele* centres, suggested in several other chapters in this volume, would go some way to open up alternatives to this particular group.

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