The Vulnerability of Ethiopian Rural Women and Girls:

The Case of Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait

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ABSTRACT

The migration of economically and socially marginalized rural Ethiopian women and girls is becoming an accelerating phenomenon. Although the displacement is disguised by voluntary labour migration, their vulnerable position makes them easy targets creating a fertile ground for traffickers. The purpose of this study is identifying the causes of the plights Ethiopian domestic workers are facing in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The study is conducted in light of phenomenological framework aiming to understand the problem through the lived experiences of returnee victims. In-depth interviews with key informants are conducted in order to acquire a broader insight of the root causes and consequences of the problem. Findings of this research indicate that intersections of multiple identities; such as gender, class, race as well as religion, shape the standpoints of Ethiopian women as vulnerable. The themes of the result from interviews and observations are discussed in line with the relevant theoretical explanation provided in the study. In addition, the obstacles that challenge the effort of combating women trafficking is also discussed in accordance with the research question. This contributes to a further understanding of the challenges Ethiopian women face as domestic workers abroad.

*Keywords:* Vulnerability, Women Trafficking, Labour Migration, Domestic Workers, Returnee Victims.
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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to all trafficking victim women and girls who made it through, or not.
ACCRONYMS

CIA  Central Intelligence Agency
EESP  Employment Exchange Services Proclamation
EWLA  Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
GAMCA  Gulf Approved Medical Centers’ Association
GSA  Good Samaritan Association
HRW  Human Rights Watch
ILO  International Labour Organization
IOM  International Organization for Migration
MDINA  Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs
MoFA  Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoLSA  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NBE  National Bank of Ethiopia
NGOs  Non-Governmental Organizations
PEAs  Private Employment Agencies
SIDA  Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SRA  Social Research Association
UEWCA  Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations
UN  United Nations
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNODC  United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
CHAPTER ONE—Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Ethiopian rural women and girls have been challenging their major economic and social life obstacles in many ways, albeit their vulnerability to low social and economic status, denial of their right of access to resources and violence against them are increasing from time to time. Labour migration as domestic worker abroad now a day is considered as an escape from such kind of marginalized life style. According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate, approximately 1500 domestic workers are legally migrating to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait every day. The migration of hundreds of thousands of domestic workers annually is disguised by voluntary labour migration; seeking better job opportunities and livelihood. Poverty, which resulted in lack of access to education and employment opportunities, is the major driving force of this ever increasing labour migration. The availability of cheap labour in the country and the demand of this cheap labour by the Gulf Region\(^1\) make the migrants vulnerable to various kinds of exploitation by creating fertile ground for traffickers, mainly brokers at the source and destination countries that facilitate the illegal recruitment and labour migration according to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) report.

Following the various problems faced by Ethiopian domestic workers migrated through illegal means to the Gulf countries, in 1998 the government of Ethiopia issued a proclamation to establish Private Employment Agencies (PEAs) with the responsibility of protecting the rights, safety and dignity of Ethiopians employed and sent abroad\(^2\). This proclamation later revised as Employment Exchange Services Proclamation (EESP) 632/2009 with additional and improved statements of strengthening the mechanism for monitoring and regulating domestic and overseas employment exchange services. In addition, the proclamation puts further provisions with regard to new requirements based on the changing nature of the labour migration process.

According to the information obtained from MoLSA, in the beginning, very few people came forward to get the license fulfilling the requirements presented in the proclamation (two in 1998). Later, the number increased in accordance with the magnitude of labour migration especially to the Gulf States. In addition, the profiting nature of the business attracts many to

\(^1\) The Gulf states include; Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates. This research focus on two of them; Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

\(^2\) Proclamation No.104/1998 Private Employment Agency Proclamation
require for the license. There are 334 registered and actively engaging PEAs in the woman power supply at this particular time according to the Ministry.

Despite the government’s effort in establishing the PEAs, monitoring and evaluating their activities, and promoting the importance of legal labour migration through media, the sufferings of the Ethiopian domestic workers in the Arab world is becoming pervasive parallel with the increasing number of migrants. According to returnees’ reports, information from various media outlets and research reports, Ethiopian women and girls in the Gulf countries are exposed to various kinds of exploitation including forced labor, sexual assault, physical and psychological abuse, suicide, murder, and other crimes. The following news reports and research results from various sources asserted the magnitude of the problem in the Gulf countries.

- An Ethiopian housemaid was found dead hanging from a ceiling fan yesterday in Bahrain³.
- The UN special rapporteur on slavery has urged the Lebanese government to carry out a full investigation into the death of an Ethiopian domestic worker⁴.
- Police are looking for a 23 year old Ethiopian housemaid who ran away from her sponsor’s house after her sponsor’s three sons raped her⁵.
- The women in the study had been threatened by employers and had experienced deprivation of food and sleep, denial and withholding of salaries and sexual harassment⁶.
- A stream of young girls queue at the check-in of the International airport in Addis Ababa, most of them excited about their future thinking their dreams is becoming true. Yet for most their dream becomes a nightmare when they face the reality of a slave like forced labour and mistreatment⁷.

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⁶ Reda, A. 2012, An Investigation into the Experiences of Female Victims of Trafficking in Ethiopia. University of South Africa.

This research aims to identify the causes of the dilemmas Ethiopian women facing with their employers. It also aims to analyze the obstacles of the effort to combat human trafficking and abate the sufferings of Ethiopian domestic workers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

1.2 Definition of terms

**Trafficking**
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol (Art. 3a UN, 2000) provides definition that could be universally applicable.

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

The protocol emphasizes that as long as the recruitment and transport involves the means stated in the definition, the consent of the victim of trafficking as voluntary labour migrant is not considered to be relevant.

The rationale behind applying the definition provided by the UN protocol for the purpose of this study is its comprehensive nature of clarifying the concepts and elements of trafficking that reflect the whole process. Human trafficking not necessarily involves illegal means and routes. Legitimate bodies could also engage in the process through various means. According to the definition given, trafficking not only involves force to abduct a victim which in most cases, considered to be committed by illegal individuals but also applies complex means of deception. Although the work of PEAs in Ethiopia is officially considered as man power supply through legal recruitment means, there are cases where the agencies engage in illicit recruitment and travel processes by receiving payments that is prohibited in the proclamation 632/2009. The domestic workers fall under various kinds of exploitations in the destination countries by their employers. Trafficking victim Ethiopian women and girls experienced all kinds of abuses stated in the above definition.
Domestic work
The concept domestic work defined in the *International labour Organizational (ILO) the Domestic Workers Convention* (2011, No. 189) as;

A work performed in or for a household or households constituting tasks such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing and ironing clothes, taking care of children, or elderly or sick members of a family, gardening, guarding the house, driving for the family, even taking care of household pets.

An individual domestic worker might be expected to perform all these tasks by her employer. As different authors indicate, Fernandez (2010), Beydoun (2006), Ehrenreich (2003) domestic work is considered as a degraded kind of job usually performed by women that are increasingly unprivileged and of low status. However domestic workers are responsible for cleaning the whole mess of their employers’ houses, cooking, taking care of the elderly and children, they in most cases are not entitled for employee rights and privileges.

Forced Labour
Forced labour could be identified in terms of different indicators according to the *ILO Human Trafficking and Forced Labour Exploitation: Guidelines for Legislators and Law Enforcement* (2004).

- Threats or actual physical harm to the worker
- Restriction of movement and confinement to the workplace or to a limited area
- Debt bondage: the worker works to pay off a debt or loan, and is not paid for his or her services. The employer may provide food and accommodation at such inflated prices that the worker cannot escape the debt
- Withholding wages or reducing wages excessively which contradicts previously made agreements
- Retaining passports and identity documents so that the worker cannot leave or prove his/her identity and status
- Threat of denunciation to the authorities, where the worker is in an irregular immigration status

Migrant women domestic workers are deprived from their human rights of equality, freedom of movement, decent conditions of work, protection from abuse and so on. Ethiopian living-in domestic workers are highly dependent on their employers in the provision of accommodation that makes them vulnerable to fall under full control of their movement by employers.
Exploitation
According to a definition given by ILO (2011); *Exploitation of a victim ranges from forced labour to sexual exploitation and prostitution to body organ removal.*

Exploitation, according to the US Department of State report (2012), lies at the core of modern day slavery. Women domestic workers are primary victims of all kinds of exploitations that would inflict physical and psychological harm on them.

1.2 Background of the problem

According to a definition given by IOM (2011), *migration is the movement of people from one place to another within a country, or from one country to another for variety of reasons.*

Labour migration is one of the reasons that make people move from one place to another IOM (2003, 2004). People of developing countries such as Ethiopia mainly consider migration as the only means of achieving better living opportunities which in many cases make them vulnerable to different kinds of exploitative conditions in the destination countries. Such conditions include long working hours, unbearable workload, having to work in other households, denial of wage and the like ILO (2011). It is for such reasons labour migration turn to be human trafficking as defined by the UN protocol.

Even though there is no specific time to trace back the emergence of trafficking in human as modern day slavery, it becomes an ever increasing and boundary transcending problem concerning and challenging the world. Women trafficking, though is as old as the world, the global recognition of the problem at least dates back to the Paris conference on trafficking in women held in 1895, (Cole) A. 2006). It is a phenomenon that shows no prejudice towards race, gender, or geography, but has a general preference towards the young and female Beydoun (2006). The US Department of State, in its *Trafficking in Persons Report* (2004, 6), approximates that 600,000 to 800,000 persons are trafficked each year across international borders generating an estimated annual benefit of USD 5-7 billion and among the trafficked, 80% are women and girls for the purpose of prostitution and other kinds of exploitations.

Young African girls are suffering from the varied exploitative situations in different parts of the world including their countries. Perpetrated by close relatives, friends, neighbors, illegal brokers and legally recognized employment agents, trafficking increasingly becomes the fate of girls of poverty stricken and war torn African countries Pearson according to (2003). However trafficking is a worldwide challenge of human right, it is a phenomenon having
higher magnitude in less developed countries. Fitzgibbon (2003) in an article entitled Modern-day slavery? The scope of human trafficking in Africa asserts the experience of slavery in Africa is not abolished but taking a new and modern form, is victimizing the society especially women and children.

Slavery and bondage are still African realities. Hundreds of thousands of Africans still suffer in silence in slave-like situations of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation from which they cannot free themselves.

When we see the case of Ethiopia, unlike other African countries, the country was never colonized and slavery of citizens by outsiders was not part of the country’s history. However, migration within and outside the country was a common trend especially in 1960s and 70s for different reasons including political instability, conflict and famine, stated Fransen & Katie (2009). Later, the movement becomes initiated by economic reasons; in search of better opportunities which becomes the reason for the flooding out of millions of citizens.

Migration of rural Ethiopian women and girls to different towns within the country was a common trend in earlier times. Population growth accompanied by poverty, lack of education and employment opportunities are the major driving forces of rural persons to migrate from their villages to towns in search of better opportunities. Since unemployment is the country’s major problem, the towns were no better places to provide such opportunities. Involving in small scale informal economy or employed as domestic workers if lucky and prostitution or begging in worst cases are the options the migrant women and girls could make a survival from. Due to various internal and external forces, now a day, these internal migrants further outward their bound to abroad which they think is better than internal migration. For instance, a domestic worker in Ethiopia can earn an average salary of 500 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) a month which is less than 50USD compared to an Ethiopian domestic workers’ earning of 180USD in the Gulf States. As a result, they desperately strive to get employed abroad and change their lives as well as their families. This creates a fertile ground for illegal brokers that benefit from mediating job seekers and employers. Although not all labour migration would result in involuntary servitude and series of abuses, the cheap labour migration turns to be trafficking when it involves deception as well as coercion and resulted in exploitative working conditions which these days is becoming a common phenomenon on vulnerable Ethiopian domestic workers. As stated on Anti Slavery International’s report (2006), although many
women migrating to seek for better opportunities ended up in various kinds of exploitations, there are cases that migrant workers have chances of engaging in descent works.

According to U.S. department of state trafficking in persons report (2012), young Ethiopian women were trafficked to the Middle East, particularly Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain for involuntary domestic labor. There is no clear statistical data that indicates the number of women and girls trafficked since the means applied are variety and illicit. As of the 1998 establishment of legal employment agencies, the labour migration gets a formal and legal procedure in order to combat the problems resulted from illegal migration. Apart from the illegal migration, the recruitment made by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) shows a massive increase of migrant workers. A report obtained from the Ministry shows the number is increasing pervasively; 255,945 women and girls are migrated to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait only as domestic workers between the years 2008 & 2011. According to the report, the migration of 104,131 girls is facilitated by the ministry for the past eight months. An approximate number of 1500 trainees who follow the legal recruitment and travel process are given orientation by the ministry every day.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

In rural Ethiopia, poverty is rampant and girls are more vulnerable to various social and economic problems than the rest of the society. They rarely have access to education and employment. They have no right to making decisions on their lives even at the family level. They are not encouraged to have a say on their own agenda. Rather they are subjected to fulfill the interest of parents. The parents opted to use them as a means for income, and there by bridge poverty gaps. This marginal societal status would likely entrap them in various risks. Human trafficking is one of the main risks that make rural Ethiopian girls more vulnerable. The displacement is disguised by better employment opportunities and the recruitment of potential victims is initiated by different parties including relatives and friends, local brokers, and private employment agents.

Different researches have been conducted by individual scholars and organizations on the issue of trafficking Ethiopian women and girls to the Middle East Tekle & Belayneh (2000) Mesfin (2003), Beydoun (2006), Endeshaw (2006), Reda (2012). Most of these researches emphasize illegal means and routes of migration facilitated by illegal brokers. With the establishment of PEAs since 1998, using legal employment agencies for recruitment and
travel process is encouraged and promoted by government as a safer way of labour migration. Information obtained from MoLSa and MoFA indicate that despite the efforts made by the government and non-governmental organizations, the plight of Ethiopian domestic workers in the Middle East countries is increasing in accordance with the increasing number of labour migrants at alarming rate.

The Ethiopian Employment Exchange Services Proclamation; no. 632/2009 gives PEAs responsibility and accountability of protecting the rights, safety and dignity of citizens recruited and sent abroad in pursuance to their qualification and ability. With this regard, MoLSA is the office in charge of issuing the license and regulating the work of these PEAs. MoLSA exerts efforts in cooperation with other concerned bodies like, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), to improve the situations of domestic workers through legal recruitment, following up, controlling and evaluating the activities of the PEAs. However, the labour migration involves a complex means and process that still victimize the rural Ethiopian women and girls in various aspects.

There are lots of gaps identified in the practicality of the provisions of the proclamation. The nature of the domestic sphere which leaves the domestic workers in the locked apartments makes them unidentified facing various kinds of physical, psychological and sexual abuses by their employers and such cases remain unreported. However the PEAs in Ethiopia have representatives in the destination countries, it is not feasible to perform a recurrent follow-up to every domestic worker’s situation in the employers’ houses. In addition, there are cases that employers pass their domestic workers to other parties within or outside the country the domestic workers were first employed. This makes it difficult tracing the situation of girls which can’t be solved by the PEAs alone. Following are the problem statements that this study is focusing on.

- There are particular cases that the PEAs involving illegal means of recruitment through brokers that exposed the women and girls and their families for financial exploitation and further plight of the domestic workers.

- The migration of uneducated, unskilled and unaware rural women and girls is increasing. In addition, the PEAs play significant roles in picturing an illusion of success stories that leaves the migrants uninformed and unprepared for the different
reality and the risks they would likely be facing on the ground. This resulted in employer-employee dispute that leads to violence against the domestic workers.

- According to ILO (2011), there are evidences that show cases that Ethiopian girls as young as 13 years old are trafficked. The ILO report asserts that the trafficking of girls before the age of 18 is becoming a common trend. Lack of a system of birth registration in the country, especially rural areas plays a significant role in falsifying ages of people. It is common now a days that girls of ages 13 to 17 can get documents which describe them as 24 and more years old.

- Returnee victims of various kinds of violence in most cases are left alone without material, psychological and social support.

The above mentioned and other related problems that make rural women and girls vulnerable are the main initiators of this research study.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General objective:

Assessing the conditions that make Ethiopian rural women and girls vulnerable at home and in the Gulf Countries as domestic workers is the main objective of this study.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives
- Identifying the factors that make rural women and girls vulnerable to trafficking in the name of voluntary labour migration.

- Exploring the causes and consequences of disputes arise between employers and employees in the destination countries.

- Analyzing the efforts exerted by government and other stakeholders to combat the whole problem and identifying the obstacles to such efforts

In dealing with these objectives, particular emphasis was given to

Recruitment process,

Employment conditions and

Situations of victim returnees
1.5 Research questions

The study is designed to answer the following research questions:

- What are the causes of the dilemmas the Ethiopian domestic workers face in the in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait?

- What are the obstacles to the efforts of combating the problems Ethiopian domestic workers are facing?

1.6 Significance of the study


Hence, this research particularly gives emphasis on the trafficking of women and girls facilitated by legitimate and licensed PEAs. Exploring the problems and their causes the legally migrated domestic workers are facing, the present study is expected to have the following contributions:

- Exploring the practical gaps the provisions of the Employment Exchange Services has in the protection of the rights of Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

- Identifying the causes and consequences of the problems of Ethiopian domestic workers. Emphasis is given on to explore the lived experiences of the domestic workers through their perspectives.

- Shedding more light on and creating awareness about the various problems the domestic workers are facing in the countries of employment and after return so that the different stakeholders become aware of the actions they are supposed to take.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Ethiopian women migrate through illegal and legal trajectories to different Middle East countries. The scope of this research study is limited to those domestic workers who use the legal means of recruitment process through PEAs. In addition, the scope of this study is narrowed to focusing on migration to the Gulf Countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait where the majority of the domestic workers migrate to in search of work and better living conditions. The study doesn’t include labour migrants who are successful on their journey.
1.8 Limitations of the Study

While conducting this research, there were a few unexpected scenarios that posed a limitation in conducting the research.

- Developing trust with trafficking victim returnee informants was a rather difficult task that took an extensive time. They had been in desperate situations because of the problems they faced in the countries they worked and this made them hesitant to cooperate and share their experiences.

- Informants in the recruitment process were found to be unwilling to speak out. Since most of them were from rural areas and they were warned by their families and relatives not to trust and approach urbanites, the effort to convince them about the research was not an easy task.

- One of the research methods planned to be conducted was a focus group discussion with victim returnees. Most of the victims found in an organization that works in rehabilitation issues were having mental problems which made focus group discussion impossible.

1.9 Overview of Chapters

The study contains five chapters. In the introductory part, a brief topical overview is given. Definition of the key topical concepts is provided and the problem needed to be addressed is discussed to clarify what purpose initiated the research. The objective and the questions of the research are also covered. In chapter two different literatures are revised with the aim of getting a broader understanding and identifying research gaps. The global as well as the national contextual overview of human trafficking in general and women trafficking in particular, the causes and consequences of the crime are also discussed. International as well as national Conventions and instruments are also briefly analyzed. In addition, a theoretical perspective that explains the issue under discussion is highlighted in this chapter. Chapter three focuses on the methodological approach of the research study. Ethical and objectivity issues of the research are also covered in this particular chapter. In Chapter four the information obtained through interview and observation is analyzed. The lived experiences of the domestic workers are given much emphasis in the discussion. The last chapter provides the discussion of the research in light of the theoretical framework and research questions. Concluding remarks and recommendation are also the focus of this chapter.
CHAPTER TWO–Literature Review

In this chapter, topic relevant literatures are reviewed in order to get a broader insight and understanding. The global as well as local meaning of human trafficking is discussed. The theoretical model of the discussion is also covered in this section.

Human trafficking is a universal human right violating crime and a contemporary concern of states, international organizations, local NGOs and individual scholars. The problem initiates discourses and resulted in various kinds of literature; books, research articles, dissertations, theses and different kinds of reports that are available on print and non print formats. For the purpose of this particular study, literature on human trafficking in general and trafficking of Ethiopian women in particular are consulted. In addition to such literature sources; newspapers and magazines, employment contract papers, victims and families’ complaint documents at MoLSA and MoFA Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate and legal cases in Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) are also analyzed.

2.1 Global Overview of Trafficking

Trafficking in human is a rising global phenomenon and concern that is considered as contemporary form of slavery and a crime against humanity Ebbie (2008), Brazal et al (2011). Involving the various means and resulting in a series of human right abuses stated in the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, human trafficking exists and victimizes vulnerable persons throughout the world without discriminating national, ethnic, or cultural boundary. Cameroon and Newman (2008) stated that although human trafficking inflicts universality of risks on men, women, girls and boys, it operates in a highly gender-targeted way constituting a form of violence against its most frequent victims women and girls. According to the United States Department of State (2005) Trafficking in Persons Report, approximately 600,000 to 800,000 persons are trafficked each year across international borders generating an estimated annual benefit of USD 5-7 billion and among the trafficked, 80% are women and girls for the purpose of prostitution and other kinds of exploitations. Due to conceptual confusion of what constitute trafficking and the illicit nature of the crime, there are disparities in measuring and reporting the magnitude of the problem by different states as well as international organizations. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) compilation of various indicators of worldwide human trafficking estimates, the number of individuals trafficked each year and exploited in various sectors range from 500,000 to four
million among whom the number of women takes the significant share. Lobasz (2009) argues that the disparity in the number of trafficked persons resulted from the illicit nature of the crime as well as the difference in attention given by states.

According to US Department of State trafficking in persons report (2012), Ethiopia is a source country for men, women, and children trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation within and outside the country. The report indicates that trafficking is increasing at an alarming rate exposing victims to various kinds of exploitations and abuses. A study conducted by ILO (2011) states that women mostly use the formal migration channel involving services of brokers and legal agencies where as men mostly follow desert routes using the service of smugglers.

2.1.2 Trafficking of women and girls
Although trafficking occurs globally without respect to gender, age, ethnicity, social and economic aspects of individuals, young women and girls of economically deprived countries are highly vulnerable as a result of the different societal and economic factors compared to their men counterparts as well as women of economically developed countries. As the majority of the world’s poor, women and girls are the primary vulnerable group of the society and the economic inequality ensures supply of desperately poor women and girls willing to do anything to survive as indicated by ILO (2011). Ehrenreich (2003) explained that there are a huge number of women in motion from poor countries to rich in search of livelihoods to take up work as domestic or maids and in many cases end up in various kinds of human rights abuses and exploitations.

According to Beydoun (2006) Ethiopian women initially migrated as domestic workers into Lebanon and suffered from various stereotypical discriminations and violence as early as 1989. Similarly, Fernandez (2010) in his research states that a large number of Ethiopian women and girls are migrating to the Gulf States with the displacement disguised by voluntary labour migration and better employment opportunities. The demand for domestic workers, particularly Ethiopian ones, is likely to continue in the long term, as they are ‘cheaper’ and perceived as more compliant than domestic workers from the Philippines and Indonesia. The research further explains that as of 2008 and 2009, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait became the top destination countries for Ethiopian migrant domestic workers, recruiting 61 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. Studies conducted by Kebede (2002), Reda (2012) Endeshaw (2006) show that large number of Ethiopian women have become victims of
trafficking these days; the migration is lured by false promises of better opportunities and comfortable livelihoods. Most of these women end up as modern day slaves facing unbearable workloads, physical and psychological abuses. According to a research conducted by IOM (2006) however the official Ethiopian migration records indicate that the number of female migrants has been steadily increasing, the exact number and magnitude of trafficked women is not clearly recorded due to the extensive migration of women and children through unofficial and illegal channels.

2.2 Factors that cause Trafficking
People fall victim to trafficking for many reasons. Although the root causes of trafficking vary from country to country, there are however many factors that tend to be common to trafficking in general according to US Department of State (2012) report. Social, economic and political factors are major driving forces. Socially marginalized, economically deprived and poverty stricken individuals are primary victims of trafficking through deception and coercion. Such marginalized people strive to pursue an opportunity that they believed would change their livelihood and their families’, they seek for stable and peaceful life. Traffickers see and understand this reality, and through imbalances in power and information and a willingness to use coercion and violence they take advantage of their victims’ hope for a better future; Fernandez (2010), Beydoun (2006). Cameroon and Newman (2008) divided the factors that drive individuals to vulnerability as structural and proximate broad categories. Structural factors according to Cameroon and Newman constitute economic deprivation and market downturns, social inequality, attitudes to gender, and demand for prostitutes. Proximate factors with the same token comprise lax national and international legal regimes, poor law enforcement, corruption, organized criminal entrepreneurship and weak education campaigns. The causes are also been categorized as push and pull considering the phenomenon from the supply and demand sides respectively. Disparities in economic and social conditions provide a clear explanation for the direction and flow of trafficking.

2.2.1 Push factors

Economic
Poverty is an important factor leading to vulnerability. Poorer countries are suppliers of cheap labour due to higher unemployment rate within. A study by Fitzgibbon (2002) indicates the labour migration for better work opportunities and livelihood turns to be trafficking since traffickers exploit the aspirations of those living in poverty and seeking better lives.
The inflow of remittance to the sending country is the other economic factor that drives migration. The money sent by migrants working abroad makes a significant contribution to the survival of migrants’ families and other dependents. It also contributes to the overall resilience of the national economy Fernandez (2010). Quoting National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), Fernandez (2010) shows that the remittance flow from Ethiopians working abroad worth over US$800 million in 2008 where unofficial estimates suggest that the figures of unrecorded migrants and informal remittances are at least equivalent, if not higher. Since the families as well as the state benefit from this inflow, migration is encouraged in one or another way.

Social
Deprived individuals are also often powerless – physically, legally and politically – to extricate themselves from coercive exploitative labour, partly as a result of their social position (Cameroon and Newman, 2008). However trafficking is a phenomenon that shows no prejudice towards gender and age, women and girls are highly vulnerable groups due to the socially constructed gender roles and devalued positions they are given in the society. A report of Human Rights Watch (2007) indicates women and girls of underdeveloped countries experience various forms of gender-based violence and gender inequality such as marginalization from economic activities. This, according to the report gender inequality profoundly influences their access to education and employment and drives them to consider migration as the only survival strategy.

Political
Political instability, lack of human rights, civil unrest and war also play significant role in making individuals vulnerable to the crime.

All the above mentioned factors combined with the high profitable nature of trafficking for the perpetrators play significant role in making individuals vulnerable. The United States Department of State, in its 2005 Trafficking in Persons Report, states that the pervasive number of persons trafficked each year across international borders generates an estimated annual benefit of USD 5-7 billion for the criminals.

2.2.2 Pull factors
As economic deprivation from the sending countries is served as a push factor, economic development in the receiving countries that would result in high demand of cheap foreign labourers play significant role in attracting migrant workers. Studies Kebede, (2002), Reda, (2012), Fernandez (2010) also show that large numbers of women have been deceived by
false promises of traffickers of attractive jobs, high salaries as and comfortable life that are considered to be the major pulling factors of trafficking.

2.3 Consequences of Trafficking

Trafficking violates basic human rights and has serious negative consequences on individuals who fall prey to trafficking; Cole (2006), Fernandez (2010), (Beydoun, 2006). According to the study conducted by ILO (2011), the violation starts from the recruitment process within the country by illegal brokers as well as legally recognized agents. It then extended in the destination countries exposing the migrant workers for abuses by the receiving agents and employers. Human Rights Watch’s report (2012) indicates pervasive abuses and labor exploitation, including excessively long working hours, unpaid wages for months or years; forced confinement in the workplace; food deprivation; verbal, physical, and sexual abuse; and forced labor including debt bondage. With the same token, US Department of State’s report (2012) affirms many Ethiopian women working in domestic service in the Middle East face severe abuses, including physical and sexual assault, denial of salary, sleep deprivation, withholding of passports, confinement, and murder. All these abuses would inflict physical as well as psychological damages on the victims that might last for the rest of their lives.

2.4 International and National instruments to combat trafficking

Declaring effective action to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, requires a comprehensive international approach in the countries of origin, transit and destination. The Palermo Protocol (2000), stated that effort to abolish trafficking should include measures to punish the traffickers and to protect the victims of such trafficking, including by protecting their internationally recognized human rights. A range of policy options exist at the national and international levels to address the problem. In this part of the research, policy and legislative frameworks will be highlighted.

2.4.1 International instruments

As contemporary slavery is a global crime against humanity, the effort to combat the problem requires a universal policy framework and action according to US Department of State reports (2005, 2006). The global recognition of the problem at least dates back to the Paris conference on trafficking in women held in 1895 and the adoption of the International Agreement for Suppression of the White Slave Trade in 1904 (Cole, 2006). The United Nations also plays role in taking actions on the problem of trafficking in the early years of its establishment by adopting a Convention in 1949 for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the
Exploitation of the Prostitution of others as indicated in the study by Endeshaw (2006). Effective anti-trafficking laws and policies need to consider a clear and broader definition of what constitutes trafficking in human. Providing a comprehensive definition of the concept, the universally entertained anti-trafficking instrument is known as the Palermo protocol which is adopted in 2000. Endashaw, et’al, (2006) show in their research that the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially of Women and Children is considered as the first international instrument dealing comprehensively with the issue of trafficking in persons. The ILO Convention 189 which is also referred to as the Domestic Workers Convention (2011, No. 189) is the other international instrument that offers protection for domestic workers and the right to be entitled for descent work.

According to the US Department of States Trafficking in Persons Report 2012, however the Government of Ethiopia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; it is making significant efforts and taking measures to address the problem.

2.4.2 National Instruments
However Ethiopia does not have a single and comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation, rules dealing with various aspects of trafficking are found in different legislations. The issue of trafficking is covered in the fundamental law of the country as well as more rules covering various aspects of trafficking are provided in other legislations of the country according to Endeshaw (2006).

2.4.2.1 The Constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in its proclamation no. 1/1995 article 18 declares prohibition against inhuman treatment and makes it clear that everyone has the right to protection against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. No. 2 of this article prohibits trafficking in human beings for any purpose and states that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude. In addition, article 32 of the constitution guarantees the freedom of every Ethiopian to move and reside within the country, to leave the country whenever one wishes, and to return to the country. However in practice, any Ethiopian who wishes to travel abroad for any reason is provided with a travel document or passport. The challenges associated with this freedom, is the situation of Ethiopian women and girls who migrate to the Middle East and Gulf countries to seek for employment. The challenges include the issue of how to prevent such situations while respecting the constitutional and human rights of movement of all Ethiopian citizens.
It is reported in Sudan Tribune (July 26, 2012) online that the Ethiopian government has banned its citizens from migrating to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to stop the widespread human rights abuse and inhumane treatment Ethiopian domestic workers face in the Middle Eastern countries. Ethiopia’s Consular General in UAE said that the rationale behind the suspension of the labour migration from Ethiopia to the UAE is to protect the rights of citizens through initiating a bilateral agreement. According to the official, the ban also helps to control the activities of legally approved recruitment agencies that are found be involving in illicit activities.

This ban raises discussions and debates among citizens in different social forums. On one hand, those who support the decision claim it is a good move of the government until a bilateral agreement is made with the destination countries and a sustainable solution is secured. On the other hand, others oppose the decision arguing the government is violating the constitutional rights of its citizens by barring their freedom of movement. In addition, there are people who argued that the ban will encourage smuggling of citizens through illegal routes rather than bringing the aspired solution. Outlawing labour migration should not be a way of dealing with human trafficking and controlling the illegal activities of recruitment agencies since trafficking is a phenomenon involving various stakeholders and resulted from different factors. A statement quoted by Beydoun (2006) reads;

*Trafficking does not occur in a vacuum. It is a crime as a result of various and combined social situations and circumstances, legal systems, people and their needs. Trafficking is not one event, but a series of constitutive acts and circumstances implicating a wide range of actors. When seeking a solution, extracting one aspect of the equation would be futile (for example restricting migration) since the combined forces would continue to act (people’s need, social situations, poverty, violence, demand, and criminal intent) even with the elimination of one of its links.*

2.4.2.2 The Criminal Code of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2005

Articles (596, 597, 598, 635 and 637) of the Criminal Code of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2005) deal with the issues of enslavement and the trafficking of women and children providing a clear contextual definition that comply with the comprehensive definition of the Palermo Protocol, (Art. 3a UN, 2000). Article 597 under the title *Trafficking in Women and Children* underlines;
Whoever by violence, threat, deceit, fraud, kidnapping or by the giving of money or other advantage to the person having control over a woman or a child, recruits, receives, hides, transports, exports or imports a woman or a minor for the purpose of forced labour, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment from five years to twenty years, and fine not exceeding fifty thousand Birr.

However the code doesn’t provide a clear distinction between smuggling (Where the migration is irregular and a smuggler, who will facilitate illegal entry into a country for a fee, may assist the migrant and trafficking, it has a broader conceptualization of trafficking in women and minors for labour purpose and prostitution.

2.4.2.3 Employment Exchange Services Proclamation No. 632/2009

With the purpose of protecting the rights, safety and dignity of citizens employed and sent abroad, the government of Ethiopia found it necessary to enact a law that govern the employment exchange service. The Employment Exchange Service Proclamation 632/2009 imposes different obligations and responsibilities on the PEAs. They are mainly responsible for the protection of the rights of citizens they recruit and send abroad. The obligation of the PEAs ranges from recruiting job seeker without receiving any payment to returning the worker to homeland covering all the expenses in times of difficulty a worker faces. The obligations provided in articles 16a; to not recruiting a job seeker below the age of eighteen years and articles 18-25 to ensure the rights, safety and dignity of a worker is protected during the employment period and to provide a worker who has sustained an employment injury with the necessary medical aid on return are found to be of much relevance for the discussion of this particular study. The proclamation also puts an obligation on the PEAs to deposit a money guarantee for the purpose of protecting the rights of workers in accordance with the number of workers a particular PEA deployed abroad. The proclamation states that it would be punishable to be found involving in unlawful activities like trafficking either by obtaining a working license for employment exchange service provision or brokering without a license. The kind of punishment provided in this proclamation has more or less similar nature with the punishment defined in the Criminal Code of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

2.5 Theoretical Framework of the study

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon resulted from various social, cultural and economic situations and circumstances as it is stated by Cameroon and Newman (2008). It is difficult to have a single explanation of a sequential chain of causes, means and processes of
the crime and its outcomes as a result of its illicit nature. The authors suggested that understanding the complexity of human trafficking requires understanding its broader social, economic and political contexts of a particular society. Economic deprivation, social inequality and attitude towards gender are given emphasis to be causative factors of trafficking and the resulting abuses.

Feminist theories deal with power relations including the social construction of gender and sexuality, discrimination, oppression and stereotyping in society as a result of one’s identity and status. Human trafficking is one of the many agendas of Feminist theorists. There are different feminist theories that provide competing scientific explanations to understand the crime from different paradigms like socio-cultural, economic, political and religious to mention some.

In this research, Feminist Intersectional theory is found to be of significance and relevance to better understand and explain the phenomenon under discussion. The theory is adopted for the research of trafficking of women for domestic purpose to analyze there vulnerabilities from different vantage points. In her article Just Another Job? The Comoditization of Domestic Labour (Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and sex Workers in the new Economy, 2003 p 104-114) Anderson describes domestic work as deeply embedded in complex status relationships that fall among multiple axes. These relationships are mainly among women of different races and nationalities, certainly of different classes.

2.5.1 The Feminist Intersectional Theory
The idea that people could fall into several disadvantaged groups at the same time, and suffer aggravated and specific forms of discrimination in consequence, was first recognized and termed as “multiple” or “intersectional” discrimination in the late 1980s and in the beginning of the1990s. Intersectional analysis has evolved into an understanding that all grounds of discrimination may interact with each other and produce specific experiences of discrimination Makkonen (2002). The feminist sociological theory of intersectionality; originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989 claims black women in the United States are suffering from interrelated oppressions as a result of a combination of identities; as blacks, women, and members of working class Yuval-Davis (2006). Yuval-Davis further stated that Intersectional theory is a close relative of the socialist feminism that describes and explains all forms of social oppression using the knowledge of class and gender hierarchies as a base from which to explore systems of oppression centering not only on class and gender, but also on race, ethnicity, age, sexual preference and location within the hierarchy of nations. Davis
(2008) by the same token argues that the theory asserts there is no one singular force that puts women in a vulnerable position; rather the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination; gender, class and race are the major intersecting forces that make marginalized group of society, such as women of color vulnerable to variety of problems argued Crenshaw (1993), Collins (1998). In the context of violence against women argued Crenshaw, in addition to their marginalized gender identity, their economic and class position in the society and their race play significant roles in their victimization. Davis in the same manner argued that learning the ropes of feminist scholarship requires attending and understanding to multiple identities and experiences of subordination where the concept of the feminist intersectionality theory primarily focuses on.

**Intersectionality** refers to the interaction between class, gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power according to Crenshaw (1993), Davis (2008), Makonnen (2002). Makonnen furthers the argument and stated when situation involving discrimination which is based on several grounds operating and interacting with each other at the same time, and which produces very specific types of discrimination, it is called intersectional discrimination. There are intersections of multiple forms of discrimination that stereotyped women including race, gender, class, ethnicity and other social divisions. These divisions play role in shaping social locations within a certain social structure. The politics of housework as Ehrenreich (2003) describes it, is becoming a politics of not only gender but also race and class which is at the heart of feminist intersectional theory discourse. In this research, the focus will be on the three major identities that puts women domestic workers in a vulnerable position; Gender, Class and Race.

### 2.5.1.1 Gender

_Boring Job: Woman Wanted,” and “Low Pay: Woman Wanted_8

The UN special ‘rapporteur’ on violence against women (2001) defined the concept on the as follows;

*Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of men and women ascribed to them on the basis of their sex. Gender roles depend therefore on a particular socio-economic, political and cultural context, and are affected by other factors, including*

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8 In the second feminist wave, the New York Radical Feminists, and other significant feminist groups joined the 1969 protest to make their message loud and clear. _Boring Job: Woman Wanted,” and “Low Pay: Woman Wanted_ was one of the posters they carried.
race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and age. Gender roles are learned and vary widely within and between cultures.

Radical feminists see society as a system characterized by oppression between classes, casts, race, ethnic and religious, age and gender categories. Of all these according to the feminists, the fundamental structure of oppression is gender and the system of patriarchy. Men’s patriarchal power over them, the economic deprivation and lack of opportunities for education and employment made women highly marginalized in the social structure and lack competency in decision making in their daily life, family matters as well as in societal engagement. The socially constructed gender inequality and role assignment is rooted in the male-female power relationship where men are dominant over women in various aspects so that women are assigned to a degraded and low position jobs of which domestic work is one. As it is quoted in Ehrenreich (2003), radical feminists argued that housework defines a human relationship and, when unequally divided among the social groups, reinforces preexisting inequalities.

In addition to this societal discrimination of women, the crime human trafficking operates in a highly gender-targeted way making women more vulnerable to various kinds of abuses and exploitations. The demand for women trafficking victims to the growth of certain “feminized” economic sectors such as commercial sex, the “bride trade” and domestic service and other sectors characterized by low wages, hazardous conditions, and an absence of collective bargaining mechanisms argued Coomaraswamy (2009).

2.5.1.2 Class
The class dimension of woman’s identity is another category that leads to marginalization. Deprived individuals as stated in Cameroon and Newman (2008), are often powerless physically, legally and politically to free themselves from coercive, exploitative labour, partly as a result of their social position. Crenshaw’s argument of class as a factor of oppression is supported by Marx’s concept of class oppression as a source of methodological and theoretical insights as Gimenez (2005) argues. The wealthy enjoys their power of decision making because there exist large number of unemployed workers eager to secure work at any price, thus driving down the cost of labor exploiting the proletariat at the very bottom of the class hierarchy. Women are oppressed by their class inequality and possessed a lower social and economic position in the socio-economic structure within the society they belong to. Rich women according to Ehrenreich (2003) regard housework is dirty, tedious and undesirable
work, and they are willing to pay to have it done by women who possess low social and economic status. Anderson (2003) argues that having done a housework by employing a low paid migrant domestic worker facilitates a status reproduction in which the rich women upgraded their status with regard to downgrading the poor employee. With the same token, housework as radical feminists once proposed, defines a human relationship and, when unequally divided among the social groups, reinforces preexisting inequalities.

2.5.1.3 Race
The violence that many women experience is shaped by one of the ‘difference’ identities, race which highly marginalized women of color as Crenshaw (1993) indicated. According to Crenshaw (1993), racial stereotyping plays significant role in ‘othering’ women of different nationalities and race which would result in discriminating them by precise shades of skin colour. Ehrenreich (2003) agrees with Crenshaw’s opinion in her statement; One thing you can say with certainty about the population of household workers is that they are disproportionately women of color: ‘‘lower’’ kinds of people for ‘‘lower’’ kind of work.

Increasingly often, the house cleaner is a woman of color and a migrant from the Third World, so that it implicitly gives a lesson for the household’s children that anyone female with dark skin is a person of inferior status-someone who has ‘nothing better’ to do than dealing with the mess in that particular household. What we risk as domestic work is taken over by immigrant workers is reproducing, within our own homes, the global inequalities that so painfully divided the world sated Ehrenreich.

Intersectional subordination might not be intentionally produced to marginalize women; in fact, it is frequently the consequence of the imposition of one burden that coupled with preexisting vulnerabilities to create yet another dimension of disempowerment as Crenshaw (1993) stated in her article. In the case of trafficking in women, gender, class and racial discriminations rooted and developed through various social, cultural, and economical of walks of lives of women. Being marginalized as a result of one identity will lead to another identity discrimination and further multiple identity discriminations. The sum of being a woman, black and domestic worker is a highly disadvantaged and vulnerable stand point to suffer from the ‘triple oppressions.’
CHAPTER THREE – Methodology of the study

This chapter provides an overview of how the research is designed and conducted. A field work is conducted and data for this research was collected within a period from February 17, 2013 to March 25, 2013 in Addis Ababa; the capital of Ethiopia where different offices and stakeholders are found to process the recruitment and travel of the domestic workers. Formal as well as informal interviews were conducted with 15 informants, of whom 8 are considered as key informants and approached with formal in-depth interviews.

3.1 Description of study participants and areas

There are at least four categories of potential subjects count to be important informants for the research. These are stakeholders who are involving in the process of the legally initiated womanpower supply to the Gulf countries; specifically Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Women in the recruitment process as well as returnee domestic workers, Private Employment Agents and Ministry of Labour and Social Affair authorities. In addition, families and relatives of women and girls in the recruitment process as well as returnees, an NGO named Good Samaritan Association (GSA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Security Authority and Ethiopian Airlines are also included in the research to gather data through interview and observation.

- Women and girls in the recruitment process: most of them are from rural areas, some having elementary, few with secondary and many with no education. Informal and short interviews were conducted with four informants of this category.

- Returnee women and girls: One of five informants from this category was contacted in MoLSA office where disputes between the returnees and PEAs are settled. One of them has a broken leg; her employer thrown her from a building’s first floor. Three in-depth and two informal interviews were conducted in this regard.

- MoLSA: is the authority responsible for the issuance of license for PEAs who fulfill the conditions specified in the Employment Exchange Services Proclamation 632/2009. It also monitors, supervises and evaluates the work of the licensed agencies whether they are performing their duties according to the terms and conditions specified in the proclamation. Four kinds of informants were found in this study area; Staff from the authority, the women and girls who sign employment contracts and get
orientation, returnees who have claims on and disputes with their sending agents, and agency representatives who came to sign the employment contract. Agency representatives who came to deal with the dispute case are among too.

- In addition to the formal interviews conducted in the authority’s surrounding, informal discussions with some men who claimed to be ‘brothers’, ‘husbands’ and ‘fathers’ of the women and girls in the recruitment process was held. The men were waiting their family members who came to sign employment contracts and attend orientation.

- Employment Agencies: Two PEA managers are interviewed in their office. One of them is approached in MoLSA dispute management office during a dispute resolution talk between his agency and a psychologically traumatized returnee victim.

- Good Samaritan Association (GSA): according to the information obtained from the website of the organization, it is a local nongovernmental, nonprofit making and non religious voluntary organization established in December 1996. It works to address the Ethiopian women and marginalized sections of the population to become free from poverty. Providing shelter and other cares for returnee victims from Arabic countries is an additional duty the organization is performing. Interview with two of the organization’s officials is conducted and observation in the shelter is performed.

- In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate’s office, the director provided an in-depth interview.

- IOM: A short interview is conducted with a human trafficking program officer

- Immigration and Security Authority is the office that the women and girls get their travel documents. Observation is held in this particular area.

3.2 Research Design and methodology

3.2.1. Design
This research has employed qualitative method to gather the data required for the issue under study. The method is considered to be appropriate to deal with the scientific questions the research tries to address. Qualitative research according to Russell (2011), takes place in natural settings employing a combination of observations and interviews as primary data sources and scientific literature as well as document review as secondary source. Both
primary as well as secondary sources are applied to generate data and information in the study.

3.2.2 Methodology

This theme is about the scientific approach which allows me to gather the necessary information from the perspectives of the subjects under study.

3.2.2.1 Phenomenological approach

Phenomenology as qualitative research inquiry is applied in this study. According to phenomenological perspective, a phenomenon under discussion is best perceived, thoroughly understood and narrated by the actors who have a lived first person experience. As a third person who have an indirect knowledge of a certain phenomenon, gathering data applying phenomenological approach allows the researcher obtain deep perceptions and understanding through the qualitative research methods; interview discussions, observation and other relevant methods as it is directly experienced by the subjects in the life world. As Dahlberg (2008), King & Horrocks (2010) noted, the phenomenological attitude to science and research involves describing the world the way it is experienced by humans; what the world is and means to humans, how humans related to this world, to each other, to different situations and to all possible things of the world they are living in. Feminist standpoint theory in the same manner, states that a particular phenomenon experienced by women should be seen from the perspectives and standpoints of the women themselves yielding direct knowledge of phenomenological facts about what it is like for them to be in the situation; Anderson (2011), Bowell (2011). According to Lobasz (2009), feminist research takes into account the fact that participants of a certain study are experts of their own reality and that they recognize the phenomenon that influences their social world. Such kinds of researches would reveal the true account of women’s experience in any kind of field under consideration by making them targets of a certain study. Lobasz further suggests that it is important for feminist research on trafficking to begin with analyses of the experiences of trafficked persons to dramatize abuses and to make their plight more concrete. Their standpoint as vulnerable and victims gives them experience and knowledge of the social phenomenon and they are in better positions to narrate and share what they have been through.
3.3 Data Collection Sources, Methods and Instruments

3.3.1 Data Sources
In order to conduct this research both primary and secondary data sources were employed. The data from primary sources were gathered from different categories of informants through in-depth semi-structured and unstructured interviews and informal discussions. Direct observation was also employed in the natural settings and the activities of the subjects of the study are recorded at the spot. Through secondary sources, data basically was gathered from books, journals, published and unpublished research papers, legal documents, working papers, newspapers and the internet.

3.3.2. In-depth Interview
According to Bernard (2011), in-depth interview allows the researcher digging into a certain issue until the required information is obtained from participants of a research. The method is helpful for the researcher to gather the thoughts, feelings and lived experiences of informants in certain topic under study. By either allowing the informants to be free in order to express their life world as they experienced a certain phenomenon (unstructured interview) and by having full control through guided interview questions and at the same time letting the respondent to follow new leads within the topic range (semi structured interview), the researcher is able to generate the relevant data for the particular research study.

3.3.2.1 Unstructured interview
The informants’ category included in unstructured interview was returnee domestic workers. As it is suggested by Bernard (2011), by giving a little guidance to the them about the topic of discussion and what information is required, unstructured interview helps to get the informants open up and express themselves in their own words and ways during the interview, enough time was assigned to let the informants disclose their personal feelings, thoughts and experiences without restrictions nevertheless within the boundary of the topic under study. The method is usually helpful to approach marginalized group having sensitive issues to be heard of. This approach is applied for the reason that the interview topic is considered to be sensitive for the informants who are victims of various kinds of abuses in their work places. As Bernard (2011) suggested, it requires a great deal of effort to get the trust and consent of informants for the interview in the case of sensitive and personal issues.

3.3.2.2 Semi-structured interview
Involving guided and formally administered questionnaire, the informants interviewed in this regard include MoLSA authorities, PEA managers, Foreign Affair director, GSA manager and
program officer and IOM staff. Bernard suggested that semi-structured interview is employed where the informants are expected to be in a high-level bureaucratic position and are not easy to access, are accustomed to efficient use of their time and might not give an interviewer a second chance. As it is practically experienced, it was not an easy task to approach such informants due to a work burden they have and bureaucratic procedures one should pass through to approach them. Semi structured face to face interview was conducted following a general script of open-ended questions that covered the topic under discussion. Follow-up questions were also raised for further explanation and in order to elicit the informants’ complete knowledge and experience related to the research topic. In some instances, the informants were left free to discuss in detail what they know and think about the subject matter without imposing restriction.

3.3.3 Direct Observation
Activities of the potential informants was observed in the natural setting and recorded at the spot; the observation employed both unobtrusive and obtrusive approaches based on the nature of the settings and informants being observed according to Bernard (2011). In this research, the informants were observed and their behaviour is interpreted in different natural settings involving in different activities and performing their duty. Following are the settings where the different actors are found;

- Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs (DINA): Thousands of women from different parts of the country flood every day to Immigration and Security Authority and queued since 3:00am or earlier.

- MoLSA is one of the natural settings to make observation of the different actors and actions. The women and girls in the Employment contract signing process with PEAs that is mediated by MoLSA, pre-departure orientation given by MoLSA for the recruited domestic workers, dispute resolution by MoLSA among the agents and the returnee domestic workers are observed and the behaviours of the actors are interpreted.

- PEAs’ offices where the recruitment deal and process held are the other natural settings. Observation is made to identify how the agents communicate with the women; what information they provide about the work situation, rights and obligations of the women. The subjects of the observation in this case were informed about the observation’s purpose which imposed its own drawback because the staffs in the agencies were performing their duty carefully considering they are under observation.
- Gulf Approved Medical Centers’ Association (GAMCA) where pre-departure medical test is given for the domestic workers.

- GSA shelter where the association takes care of returnee victims most of whom are psychologically traumatized was a good site and observation setting.

- Ethiopian Airlines is a setting where the confused and excited women in their country of origin are observed before facing the strangeness of the destination country; it is a place of haste and mess going here and there failing to read and understand where to go and what to do, fearing to face the reality of their dream. In addition, returnees are also been observed in the airport.

The observations in the settings were accompanied by interviews in some cases based on convenience to get in-depth understanding of the behaviours of the actors under study.

3.3.4 Data collection procedure

Data for this research was collected within a period from February 17, 2013 to March 25, 2013. Before the interview process began, interview guides were prepared in English which were appropriate to gather the required data for the issue under study. The questions were later translated in Amharic to make them understandable by all interview participants.

Research participants were approached in different places and asked if they would be willing to participate in this particular study by introducing the objective of the research. Securing participants’ consent to participate, the researcher scheduled the time for conducting the interview taking into consideration the time that would be convenient for the participants. The actual interview was conducted in places convenient for the informants; offices, waiting halls and homes were interview premises.

After the beginning of the interview, few questions which appeared to be vague and general to interview participants were made to be focused and detailed to be able to gather detailed information in the course of conducting the interview. The interview time taken during each interview was approximately 45 to 90 minutes.

Voice recording as well as note taking was employed securing the permission of the respondents in order to collect the data. In situations where informants were not comfortable with voice recording, note taking was used as the only instrument. Even if the nature of the study and the time limit didn’t allow the researcher to immerse in the life of the subjects involving as a participant observer, the necessary data through direct observation is also
collected by going to the natural settings of the actors. Short notes were taken at the spot to memorize what has been observed.

3.3.5 Data Analysis
Combining and synthesizing the collected data into meaningful patterns and themes is the next step taken in the research process. This is done after each data collection procedure; interview and observation. The interviews were translated from Amharic to English and transcribed at the same time after each day they are conducted. They are classified according to the type of informants so that it would be easier to categorize into specific subjects and related themes. The whole data collected through interview and observation is incorporated into meaningful manner so that it would provide a clear picture of the whole theme of the study.

3.4 Ethical Considerations
The purpose of social science research through social enquiry is to generate knowledge and understanding of phenomena within society so that to benefit the wider community. In doing so, the social researchers need to follow ethical guidelines in order not to contravene with the values, social principles and obligations of the society. Social Research Association’s guideline for social scientists (2003) provides workable guideline on how to deal with the ethical matter in conducting a research.

If social research is to remain of benefits to society and the group and individuals within it, then social researchers must conduct their work responsibly and in light of the moral and legal order of society in which they practice their research. They have a responsibility to maintain high scientific standards in the methods employed, in the collection and analysis of data and the impartial assessment and dissemination of findings.

This research was conducted based on the ethical guidelines social researchers should follow while conducting a research. In order to conduct research within a particular group of society, researchers should consider understanding the ways of life of that particular society so that to conform to the ethical standards and value systems. In this particular research, the fact that the researcher conducted the study within the society she belongs to, the familiarity and clear understanding of the culture and social value of that particular society allows raise relevant social enquiry in accordance with the proposed ethical considerations.
With regard to subjects of a research, it is said that social researchers must make sure the well being of the subjects of the research is ensured. According to the SRA guideline;

*Social researchers must strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects’ participation should be voluntary and as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration.*

It is an ethical obligation of the researcher to keep the anonymity of informants regarding disclosed sensitive information asserted Russel (2011). Even if the ethical issue is important to consider in a research on every kind of study subjects, marginalized groups of society who disclose their personal lives to the researcher who gives voice to them are the primary kinds of informants that needs a due consideration and loyal stand regarding keeping their anonymity.

In this research, there are very sensitive issues especially regarding returnee victims of trafficking, issues that they wouldn’t dare to be exposed to public. Sexual exploitation is the main sensitive issue that imposes a big psychological and physical impact on the victims. Subjects of this research were therefore informed of the objective of the research in the language they understand. They were also made aware that the knowledge obtained from this study will be of great value in contributing to the efforts of overcoming the problem the study dealing with. Subjects were also informed that whatever information gathered from them will be anonymously put in the research report and their names and any other identifying details will never be revealed in any publication of the results of this study. The confidentiality and privacy of subjects was maintained by the researcher. Finally the researcher made clear for the informants that participation in the study is voluntary and they are free to withdraw and discontinue their participation in the research at any time without prejudice.

Despite these ethical considerations that social science researchers must follow, there are particular cases where a researcher considers conducting uninformed observation in a particular premise. According to Russel (2011) there are situations where unobtrusive direct observation is used as a method in order to record the activities of the actors/participants of an activity at the spot without informing them that they are under observation. Such approach is applied by author and journalist Günter Wallraff as a research method to explore important information. During direct observation of certain activities of subjects of the study, if they are aware of the study, they might act differently than they usually do which leads to generation of invalid data. In this study, there was one case that the researcher didn’t disclose the
objective of the visit. It was in one of the observation settings of a PEA office. This observation rendered a very different and important data that couldn’t be obtained otherwise.

The identity of the informants in this research has been kept anonymous and general identification terms have been changed and pseudo names are used in the analysis of the interviews.

3.5 Positionality

Social science researchers should avoid applying their personal beliefs and judgments and remain emotionally distant from what they are studying as Payne (2004) suggested. An emotional immersion of a researcher risks the nature of the findings to be personally biased according to him. Research findings, further argues Payne, should not depend on who conduct the research. deRoche (2010) with similar instance asserts that however it is not easy to attaining objectivity, researchers have the responsibility to avoid distortion of research findings by abstaining from personal wants, value and ideology.

Although the concept of social structure & class hierarchy in Ethiopia is unofficially dubious regarding the existence of ‘middle’ class, I probably can identify myself at the middle class category being not directly affected by the problem under discussion. Having said this, the problems Ethiopian women are encountering abroad; specifically in the Middle East have indirect effect on my essence. Different experiences of friends, neighbors and others have the power to move my emotions. During the interview with returnee victims, I experienced pain and distress. Standing by the side of the voiceless is self evident. In addition, as a woman of colour, I have a personal and professional interest in the topic; women trafficking and the constructed intersectional discrimination. Despite all this subjective reality, I as much as possible tried to avoid biased and personal judgments regarding the study results.
CHAPTER FOUR – Findings

In this chapter, the findings of the research are discussed in six major thematic categories. Information obtained through, interviews, observations and document analysis is presented to highlight the overall trend and magnitude of the labour migration through legal means and its resulting problems. The interviews' result from the returnee victim women and girls as well as the ones in the process of recruitment is given much emphasis to understand the situation from the stand point of individuals who have lived experiences. Interviews with PEAs, MoFA, GSA and other stakeholders are presented here in accordance to the relevance with the discussion.

4.1 Vulnerability

The vulnerability of Ethiopian rural women and girls emanates within the country. They do not have the privilege to education as well as job opportunities. They are obliged to get married at early age in order to fulfill the will of their parents. Their productive contributions to the agricultural sector are not given value as the men’s contributions do. Although article 35 no. 7 of the constitution privileges women equal rights with men in the use, transfer, administration and control of land, the rural tradition in most cases disregard their rights and marginalize them from resource use. According to Lemlem et al, (no year) a mixture of economic constraints, cultural norms and practices limit women benefiting from resources as well as the fruits of their productive effort. Such disadvantaged position forced them to look for other options making migration within and outside of the country their primary choice which resulted in creating a fertile ground for trafficking and exploitation.

4.2 The Driving Forces of Labour Migration from Ethiopia

Various factors are regarded to cause labour migration including economic, political and social situations. Economic factor, in this regard is the major push force for labour migration from Ethiopia. The country’s economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for 85% of the total employment according to CIA World Fact Book (2013). The supply of productive land in Ethiopian according to Gebreselassie (2006) has reduced as productive lands are decreasing due to land degradation and soil erosion that caused by a combination of different factors including lack of technical know-how or their affordability, declining labour productivity and high population pressure. This coupled with the land policy provision of
inter and intra household distribution of land, aggravated rural poverty and make the society, especially women and girls see labour migration as the primary option.

A 26 year old uneducated woman who came from Amhara region mentioned her frustration how her family couldn’t afford a living and decided to let her migrate in search of better opportunities. She shoulders a responsibility of fighting poverty to free her family; husband and son as well as parents and siblings. She said that she is ready to bear any kind of workload; ready to be as obedient as a slave in order to fulfill what she and her family need. Her husband as she said, who doesn’t own land works for other people to get a share from the production.

*Ploughing other people’s land for share makes my husband weary. He worked much and gains less. We do not have our own land to plough. Our parents are poor also and do not have any spare land for us. It becomes difficult to feed ourselves and our three year old son. So we decided that I have to go and make money to change the family’s life.*

With the same instance, in an informal discussion held at MoLSA waiting hall with men who claimed to be husbands, brothers and fathers of the women and girls, a husband of two wives and a bread winner of a total of twenty family members who came from Amhara region appeared to discuss the matter. The piece of land he owned wouldn’t anymore be enough to feed his large family as he said. The man asserted that the solution for the problem his family is facing is sending his daughter to Saudi Arabia.

*It is becoming difficult feeding my family anymore; I only have two hectare land which is not enough neither to build a house nor plauging to feed my family. In addition, the rainy season is not providing enough rain to cultivate crops. Twenty family members are waiting for my hand which is becoming unable to bring any through time. My daughter got divorced and joined the family with her four children. We have no option. She has to go and bring money to support all of us.*

Changing the livelihood of themselves and their family is the main rationale driving citizens to labour migration. The diminishing of opportunities in the rural area as well as the high unemployment rate in the country at large accelerated the magnitude of the problem.
On another side, economy also serves as a pull factor. Economic development of oil rich countries plays a role in creating a high demand of labour from other countries in a variety of fields including domestic work. According to Fernandez (2010), the Gulf Countries encouraged the import of migrant labour for the ‘dirty work’ that nationals do not want to perform. Such demand pulls workers towards the development which in most cases resulted in a slavery like exploitation especially for domestic workers. According to the findings of this study, the indicators of the economic development of the destination countries were revealed to the rural women and girls through ‘lucky’ returnee relatives and neighbors from the oil rich countries. The aspirations of an eighteen year old (but older in her passport) girl could be a typical example. She withdraws from her education of 8th grade when she decided to labour migrate.

_It is only me in the village. Every girl went to Saudi and some of them are sending money for their families. My neighbor who comes from Kuwait brings lots of things; lots of clothes, lots of jewelry, and dolls for her children and many other things. Her family even builds a modern brick house with beautiful painting. When I see all these, even if my parents do not want me to go, I decided for myself. I have to go and bring money and beautiful things for my family._

The offices of PEAs seem to confirming the pulling nature of the countries they supply women power. During the observation made at PEA offices, I realized that the outside and inside walls of the offices are decorated with pictures of sky rocketing buildings and beautiful beaches from the oil rich countries. Such kinds of glamorized pictures can easily attract individuals and give a deceptive perception of what the real picture of households will look like behind the locked door for the domestic workers.

The other pushing factor that specifically drives women to migration is the socially constructed gender discrimination within the society. The norm of Ethiopian rural society provides boys the privilege to attend education until the university level. Girls on contrary are mostly limited to the domestic sphere and are obliged to obey for their parents will. This limits them from involving in and competing for economic progress of themselves, their family as well as the state at large. The role assignment of rearing children among other duties kept them in the private realm of domestic life.
The 27 year old informant contacted during an observation at Immigration and Security Authority was waiting her turn in the long queue to apply for a travel document. She is not able to read and write and asked people around for help to see if her identity card has already expired or not. She came from the rural part of Ambo, the town located in the Oromia Region and 112 km. west of the capital. She worked as a housemaid in Addis Ababa for eight months but couldn’t continue because she became pregnant.

I never got the chance to go to school as my brothers do. After I came to Addis and hired as a domestic worker, I met a man who promised to marry me. But when I get pregnant, he denied it is his and left me. I went back to my village and stayed for three years. In addition to the burden I have to carry to raise my son, the fact that I gave birth out of wedlock made me marginalized from the society. People say lots of bad things when I am around; I made myself and my poor mother feel bad and looked down. Then I decided to go abroad. I left my son with my mother and came back to Addis Ababa. I am working again as a domestic worker until I finish the process to go. I want to go to change my son’s life, I never thought about migrating before I gave birth. It was ok for me to work as a domestic worker here for sometime; it is not that bad for a single life. If it was only me, I prefer to struggle in my own country. Now things are changed, I want to escape from poverty and the shame I encounter in front of the society.

Mergitu was not privileged to attend school. Her limited option drives her to migrate to Addis Ababa to be a domestic worker. The man who makes Mergitu pregnant declared his freedom to leave her adding a burden to her life. She not only is responsible to raise her son by herself but also to sustain the allegation the society inflicts on her. She is constrained to seek an escape through migration abroad which she claimed she never dreamed of. This is because of the society’s perception towards women and its resulting gender discrimination.

4.3 The recruitment: the legal-illegal mix

 Trafficking doesn’t necessitate forced recruitment of a job seeker and not all women are trafficked through illegal means (Jane, 1998). Not only recruitment agencies play role in the legal labour migration process that might end up on exploitation, they also engage in illegal recruitment activities. The research conducted by ILO (2011) stated that trafficking is more of an urban phenomenon even though the rural population is increasingly becoming victim of
the problem. However, the report obtained from MoLSA as well as the information gathered through observation and interviews indicate that the trafficking of women and girls is increasingly shifting from urban to rural areas where 85% of the country’s population resides. The following table indicates the number of domestic workers migrating through legal recruitment process facilitated by PEAs and approved by MoLSA.

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<td>11813</td>
<td>26774</td>
<td>11472</td>
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<td>13442</td>
<td>39141</td>
<td>186025</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1: Number of migrant domestic workers from five regions for 4 years and 8 months time

As it can be clearly seen in the table, the number of migrant domestic workers increased dramatically through the years with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait consuming the highest number of labour migrants respectively. When we compare the increase in the capital city, i.e. Addis Ababa with the three regions; Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP), Addis Ababa shows a relatively lower increasing rate in the woman power supply. The majority of migrant domestic workers these days not only come from regional states other than the capital but also in most cases from rural areas where access to elementary education is minimal and job opportunities are scarce. There are rationales and assumptions given by individuals interviewed regarding the shift of the labour migration from urban to rural. According to an interviewee from MoLSA, the fact that rural women and girls are not aware of their rights makes them the primary choices of brokers and employers for exploitation.

Women and girls from towns, especially from Addis Ababa are favoured in many instances compared to the ruralities. They have a better access to education and information. They also have a better understanding regarding the problems that their fellow sisters are facing as domestic workers in the in the Middle East. They now a day, are trying to make a better living within the country. Even if they decide to work abroad, they acquire information respecting their rights and what they have
to do and where to go in times of disputes with their employers. Rural women and girls on the other hand, are of much in lack of educational and job opportunities. They do not have access to media and information. The fact that the people from rural areas could easily be deceived and do not hesitate to pay the amount of money required by the brokers makes the rural women and girls easy targets of trafficking.

A returnee interviewee agreed with the above statement and how lacking awareness and being in a disadvantaged position makes rural women vulnerable to financial manipulation and even sexual exploitation by the brokers within the country.

Many brokers are spreading in rural areas and are knocking on each door to look for potential job seekers. The rural people do not even know that they do not have to deal with these illegal brokers and spend their money without reason. They are deceived with the false promises of better life that a daughter, a wife or a mother could bring to the whole family. A broker charges a family 8000 to 13000 or more Ethiopian Birr saying he/she will middle the recruitment process between the job seeker and the legally recognized agents whose office is found in the capital, Addis. The brokers put as many as possible women and girls in a small room and even they sexually exploit them. I do not think there would be any family in Addis Ababa that could be fooled like the rural families are.

In addition to lack of awareness, the centralized nature of all processes regarding recruitment and travel in the capital city plays its role in making the ruralities depend on illegal brokers for guidance. Besides, the rural people have more trust on the brokers who are close relatives and friends than a legalized body who come from a town especially from Addis Ababa.

The trafficking not only involves unaware rural people but also victimizes girls of ages as young as thirteen as indicated in a study conducted by ILO (2011). Lack of birth registration during birth and corrupt individuals in Kebele9 by providing falsified documents such as birth certificates and identity cards play significant roles in the trafficking of young girls below age eighteen. Although the proclamation in Article 16, 2a imposes obligations on the PEAs not to recruit a job seeker below the age of eighteen, according to informants, there are cases where the agents themselves advise the under-ages to get falsified documents with the age of twenty

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9 The smallest administrative unit of Ethiopia that is part of a Woreda (district), a neighborhood or a localized and delimited group of people.
and more. Besides, the family and the girls themselves are partly responsible to be manipulated by collaborating with the illegal deeds of some parties knowingly or unknowingly. I got the chance to talk with two girls of ages fifteen and sixteen and a brother of another girl age fifteen. They all came from Amhara region and were in the employment contract signing process at MoLSA. One can imagine they are younger than age eighteen by just looking at their physical appearance. There were several of such young looking girls at every office of recruitment and travel processes. It doesn’t require me to cross examine the girls to obtain information that their ages are falsified in their travel documents. I asked the following questions by randomly identifying younger looking girls. (Q. represents question and A answer.)

**Q. How old are you?**

**A.** Sixteen

**Q. But are you aware that you are not allowed to be recruited if you are younger than 18?**

**A.** (With unhappy and skeptic look) it is 24 in my passport!

Fearing I might report the situation to the authority, she disappeared from the area. The question continued for the other young looking girl.

**Q. How old are you?**

**A.** Seventeen

**Q. How old does it say in your passport?**

**A.** Twenty six

**Q. Who made you older?**

**A.** It is in the Kebele you know? The broker told me I can’t get a job if I am younger than age twenty two. So my family pays the Kebele people some money to give me an identity card with the age twenty six.

**A. But do you have any clue about the kind of heavy workload you are expected to bear?**
Heavy work? I am strong. You know in rural area, we girls do many heavy jobs since childhood to help our family; we are not like you girls from Addis Ababa. (Laugh)

Family members contribute their share in the process of trafficking by pushing their young daughters and sisters to unknown destinations where they have to shoulder burdens beyond their capacity for the purpose of bettering the life of the whole family. The twenty seven year old man whom I met at MoLSA said that he is waiting for his sister who is attending a pre-departure orientation.

My sister is fifteen year old but she has a travel document with age 22. It is me who want her to go because she is a very responsible and strong girl in the family. We couldn’t improve the family’s livelihood working and earning little money here. I will buy a car with the money she will be sending and start a business so that we will have a better income to support our farmer parents.

The PEAs are given a responsibility by MoLSA to identify and report those girls who doesn’t seem fulfill the minimum age requirement for recruitment. There was a list of names of girls at MoLSA accompanied with a statement that they are not allowed to labour migrate because of their failure to fulfill the age requirement. The lists are sent by different PEAs and approved by MoLSA. However, with the absence of formal birth certificate and other documents, it will not always be easy to identify underage girls by looking at their physique. The following case could be seen as a typical example.

The fifteen year old girl sheltered at GSA went to Kuwait two years ago when she was only thirteen year old. Her recruitment was facilitated by a legally recognized agent who doesn’t have any clue what she has been through and where she is by now. She spent two years as a domestic worker in a locked apartment and three months in prison being tortured by the police. The scars on her two hands show she has been chained for her stay in jail. Finally she was deported to her country being psychologically traumatized. GSA took the responsibility of taking care of her since her arrival at Addis Ababa airport. During my visit, the girl was getting a medical treatment in a mental hospital and she is in a better condition as compared to her original sate according to the information obtained from the organization. However she is still three years younger than the required age, she looks much older than age eighteen.
If a domestic worker of age fifteen claims she is nine years older, under normal circumstances, there is nothing wrong from the employer’s side to expect her perform duties required from a twenty four year old woman. In countries where employers demand their domestic workers to work round the clock, girls of age below eighteen can be considered as victims of child labour based on the Minimum Age Convention of ILO (1973) considering the long hour work as ‘hazardous’. The accountability in this instance lies on the sending country; Ethiopia.

Knowingly or unknowingly, the sending PEAs are engaging in such and other illegal activities in the recruitment process. According to the information obtained from MoLSA, there are 334 legally recognized agents at work currently. As the number of agencies increased, there would be high competition among them in getting more customers. To win the competition and survive, there are agents who involve illegal brokers in recruiting rural women and girls from their villages.

I conducted interviews with two PEAs’ managers raising the issue that PEAs are involving in illegal activities. They both agreed on the fact that most PEAs are performing their duties as per the provisions of the proclamation 632/2009. Every owner of a PEA, according to them, knows the consequence of engaging in illegal activities i.e. disqualification of license and in the worst case being charged. However one of the agents doesn’t deny that he in the beginning of his work involved illegal brokers.

_When I started the work, I didn’t know how to approach my customers. Employing brokers was the solution I came up with and it was easy for them to recruit job seekers from rural villages. Later, I learned that it is the disadvantage that outweighs. In addition to being disobedient to the law one must face negative consequences. When the recruited and sent abroad domestic workers face different problems, it was only the sending agent that would be responsible and accountable for their safety. The brokers get more money than we do. They get 4000 to 15,000 Ethiopian Birr per person for just bringing a girl from her village to the agency. An agency gets 100 USD; i.e. 1800 ETB per person doing a lot of job in the recruitment process. The responsibility of protecting the rights of the domestic workers only lies on PEAs, not the brokers. If an agency performs responsibly, the customers themselves serve as promoters of the good deeds of that agency. So there is no need to engage illegal brokers._
Although the interviewed agents say that, there are still cases indicating that there are agents working contrary to the provision of the proclamation. In an informal discussion made with a family of a labour migrant, I found out that one agent performed an illicit activity in sending a woman to Kuwait collaborating with an illegal broker in the destination country. In addition to this, the agent made one of the family members of the domestic worker sign an obligation contract to pay 20,000 ETB if the worker would like to leave her job or change an employer before three months has passed. As the informant says, the agency gets payment from the illegal broker in Kuwait. But the domestic worker will remain illegal and if anything happens to her, no one would be accountable. This illegal activity was actually done by one of the agents who had strongly argued in my interview that PEAs are working according to the proclamation.

There is another case I encountered regarding the involvement of a PEA in illegal activity in recruiting and sending a domestic worker. Kune is a widow and a mother of four children. She worked as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia for four months without a salary, jailed for two months and deported home for being an escapee from her employer. Kune arrived in Ethiopia the day before I met her. MoLSA sent her to the responsible agent for her recruitment and whose address is found on a sticker labeled at the back of her passport. I followed Kune to the agent’s office to observe the situation. Although the question of ethical issue could be raised, I preferred to approach the situation with undercover identity as Kune’s close relative. The particular agent whose address is labeled on Kune’s passport denied that he is not responsible for her recruitment. It was an illegal broker, whom the agency collaborates with that recruit and send her. The secretary in the office took Kune’s passport and detached the labeled address. Kune doesn’t have any clue what to do next. She told the agency people that she is already banned from entering five United Arab Emirate (UAE) countries. Kune insists that the only thing she requires from the agency is not to claim her right, rather to help her go back to some country as soon as possible. One of the women in the agency suggested ‘Sudan’.

I took the initiative to interfere and ask questions.

Q. Sudan? Is there any agency that is licensed to send to Sudan?

A. No, but there is a possibility to go and work there. Sudan, now a day is even better than Saudi or Kuwait. I know a man who can send her there.
Kune liked the idea of going to Sudan. She wants it to be quick. She wants to leave the country before her children know she is back. She was in desperate situation; she is in a vulnerable position to be target of the so-called legal as well as illegal traffickers.

The decision I made to apply the covert identity in approaching the PEA renders important information that helps me validate the data I collected from my informants regarding the legal-illegal mix of the recruitment activity. I have been learned from my interview and informed observation that subjects provide invalid data and perform learned activities to avoid liability to a certain activity. My method of initiating a discussion of the issue under study with everyone I met also allows me to obtain coincidental and important information from my neighbors about the illegal activity of a PEA I already interviewed.

4.4 The pre-departure orientation

You do not have to pay illegal brokers any money. You can be recruited and travel for free through PEAs. (A belated reminder by MoLSA)

Every ‘legally’ recruited domestic worker who is waiting for her employment visa gets a three hours pre-departure orientation provided by MoLSA. It is during this time the recruited labour migrants are told not to be deceived by brokers and make unnecessary payment. Unfortunately, most of them already paid from their families’ meager income or those who were not able to pay have made a deal to pay later from their salary which makes themselves and their family victims of debt bondage. The pre-departure orientation provides a brief overview regarding the rights and obligations of employees, the nature of the domestic work and the culture of employers, what the domestic workers need to do when they face problems in their work place with their employers and so. A film is also included in the orientation to make the labour migrants visualize what the situation looks like. The orientation is important in at least providing a kind of introduction of what the domestic workers will be facing; however there are lots of limitations that could obstacle the effort. In the particular orientation session I attended the following drawbacks are observed.

- Most of the women look tired and seem to be falling asleep. According to some informants, they are told to come to the orientation a day or two earlier and they have to travel day and night across many kilometers.
The fact that the orientation is given only in the official language of the country, i.e. Amharic, leaves many who do not understand the language having no clue what has been said.

The orientation hall is full of people; some sleeping, others talking to each other or through phones, and others lacking interest.

There is electric power interruption several times during the film session.

Had the orientation been provided in a more convenient method and situation, it would have been good for the migrants to have certain understanding what they will be facing. It is better than nothing even if the practical situation they will encounter on the ground is far reaching.

4.5 The Employment

After the employment contract is signed between an employer, an employee and a PEA and approved by MoLSA, the employer is expected to cover all the necessary costs of the employee who fulfilled all the necessary requirements and is hired as a domestic worker. Visa fee for the country of destination, round trip ticket, resident and work permit fees and insurance coverage are the expenses needed to be covered by an employer.

The following table depicts the number of migrant domestic workers from Ethiopia by country of destination. Currently it is mainly to two countries that the PEAs are allowed to supply woman power; Saudi Arabia and Kuwait taking 76% and 24% of the domestic workers respectively.

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Table 2: The number of migrant domestic workers to the Gulf from September 2008 to February 2013

4.5.1 Working and living condition

The domestic workers’ right abuse in most cases starts right at the arrival by confiscating travel documents to have full control over their movement and make them dependent on their
employers. After domestic workers are locked in apartments, the abuse will continue in different magnitude. Long working hours with heavy workload, withholding of salary, and discrimination in defiance of racial, religious and gender identities are common trends exercised against domestic workers. According to Perry (2002) the Arab world ancient tradition and practice of discriminating black people still existed in this globalization era. Beydoun (2006) confirmed this statement in his work emphasizing how the racial and sectarian landscape of Lebanon becomes the most troubling destination of Ethiopian housemaids having black and female identities.

Lebanese commonly refer to Africans using the derogatory term ‘abid’ which literally translated as slave. Householders in Lebanon refer to their foreign maids by their nationalities. They do not say, ‘my maid,’ but rather ‘my Sri Lankan’ [or ‘my Ethiopian’]. National identity has thus become reduced to a signifier of class, status and power relations.

In general, brown and black domestic workers according to Beydoun suffer from racism by their employers in the Middle Eastern countries. Fernandez (2010) in his article also indicates how domestic workers serve as a status symbol of the luxuries life of the oil-rich countries’ people. Fernandez furthers his argument as follows; a status quo is maintained among domestic workers by employers based on racial distinction and are ordered in a racialised hierarchy, with Filipina women at the top, signaling the highest status and commanding the highest salaries, followed by Indonesian and Sri Lankan women, and African women at the bottom.

From returnnee informants, Dinqe’s encounter is found to be a typical showcase for all kinds of discrimination domestic workers can suffer from. Her experience of working for more than five employers gave her a stand point that provides her an in-depth understanding of the situations she and other domestic workers have been through and face every day in the locked apartments of their employers.

I travelled to Kuwait as a domestic worker without changing my identity; religion and name. I was not told to do so. When I arrived, it was an Ethiopian woman who was waiting to take me to my employer. She told me to remove the cross I have on my neck. I asked why? It is because my employers are told I am a Muslim. I do not have a Muslim name; my picture in my passport is not with a Muslim clothing style and I didn’t dress like a Muslim at the moment too. The woman told me she will
convince the employers I am a Muslim. Though the idea scares me, I couldn’t say no because I didn’t have any choice. My mom had borrowed 8000 ETB to pay a broker. I have to be obedient enough in order to achieve my goal. My employers gave me a Muslim dress that covers my whole body except eyes. There were many people in that house; it is a kind of extended family. I became the servant of this big family with lots of work to do. But my only fear was about the ritual prayer which I had no idea how to do; not the burden of work. I tried to learn what and how they are practicing in the religion. Since it is not my belief, I sometimes forget to perform the ritual. They were supervising every movement of me. I was working like a slave for long hours. If I refuse to do so, I will be fired. I have to do this until my contract period ends. I came for a purpose of escaping poverty. I worked for a month and didn’t get my salary. I waited for days but got nothing. I have to pay back the money my mother borrowed. I waited for more 15 days and called the woman who brought me here and told her to remind my employers to pay my salary. She promised to call them but she never did. Thinking about my mother and the debt and the situation I am in makes me out of my mind. One day, I found myself undressed except underwear. I was screaming and running in the surrounding. When I became conscious, I found myself like that. I have no clue what had happened to me. At the moment I realized I was in the situation and made a cross with my finger, they saw me and knew I am not Muslim. They fired me right away without paying my salary.

Dinqe’s exposure to right abuse didn’t end there. She is hired by more employers and fired repeatedly because of her religion. When she found foreigner and non Muslim employers, she thought the time for her dream to be fulfilled comes. This hope lasted for only four days until her employers’ son tried to approach her sexually in his bedroom. His mother found out this and fired Dinqe. As the odds are by her side always, she repeatedly asked herself in between her narrative; how a misfortune girl am I? She worked more than eight months with four employers but never got paid.

I didn’t even know what their money looks like all this time. My next employers were rich. It is a household with an extended family again. But I was not afraid of workload. The night I joined that family, the woman prepared dinner and I was helping her. The kind of food she was cooking makes me disgusted. It is a kind of sea food; worms may be. At dinner time I was not able to eat that; I threw it away when
she didn’t see me. Then when they finished eating and started to do other things, I went to the kitchen and fried an egg. The woman saw me doing that. I am fired with the tag ‘thief’!

Hired with another Indian girl by a pregnant woman, Dinqe spent a full day working without getting a rest and food. Her employment, for no surprise ended that same day.

My duty was a bit easier than the Indian girl; she is supposed to wash a house full clothes. I feel pity for her. I was cleaning the house and taking care of the kids. We didn’t eat at all. At the end of the day, the woman got angry on the Indian girl because she is not able to finish washing. She beat her severely until her face is covered by blood. The madam as I think was a nine month pregnant. I was afraid something might happen to her and we will be rotten in jail. When she thinks it is enough with the Indian girl, she came to me. I was beaten without trying to defend myself; I didn’t want something to happen to this pregnant woman. Her elder daughter already locked the door so that we can’t try to escape. When neighbors who heard our scream came to middle, I used that opportunity to run. Run in the dark, I do not know where to go; what I knew is I have to run for my life.

Dinqe’s last experience was with a poor woman whose husband doesn’t help the family, a poor woman who hired two domestic workers whom she is not able to pay and feed. Dinqe was starved but liked to stay with this poor and nice woman. She sometimes helped the woman’s mother-in-law who lives in the same building to get something to eat for survival. Six months passed in this condition and she finally managed to escape to the Ethiopian embassy after working for more than a year without getting paid. The taxi driver who took her to the embassy showed sympathy and left without bothering her when he learned she doesn’t have any money to pay.

He was such a good man who helped me a lot to find the Embassy which is very far from where I was. The Embassy took my case to court to make the poor woman’s husband pay my salary. When the Embassy called him, he shouted he wanted me as a slave throughout my life. He used to come to the house sometime to visit his children. The woman protected me from him so that he will not rape me. I heard that he raped another girl and when she got pregnant he fired her to keep the secret. I think he was angry that his wife didn’t allow him to approach me. The court ruled against him and made him pay my six month salary. He threw the money on my face.
in front of the court. I even was afraid he would beat me when I saw he was not afraid to disgrace me in the court. But it ended that way and I didn’t take time to buy my travel ticket home!

Dinqe was not the only person to escape to the Embassy. She gives a witness that she saw many Ethiopians sheltered there. There were many raped, severely beaten, psychologically traumatized girls there; hundreds of them. Employers demand their domestic workers serve them like slaves without even getting paid. The employment contracts signed before departure are of no use. The work condition and the employees’ fates are determined only according to the will of the employers. They do whatever they wish to do on their domestic workers; beat them, rape them, starve them, fire them, and so many other oppressions.

There are many more abuse experiences of Ethiopian domestic workers in the two Gulf Countries.

Kune in her short term stay experienced different kinds of violence. Her stay in Saudi Arabia, as she described it, is staying in ‘Jahannam’ (hell). Her employer was a ‘cruel’ woman who beat her every day and she requires her to perform household duties almost twenty four hours a day. She was never got paid her salary during her stay for four months’ time, was denied food and never allowed to contact her family. The worst thing happened when her ‘Madam’ threw boiling water on her hand which resulted in severe wound. She was not entitled to get medical treatment and unfortunately, she ended up in prison.

*Police arrested me when I tried to escape from my employer. I spent approximately two months in prison which was horrific. There were many Ethiopians; most of them psychologically traumatized, Sri Lankan’s, Indonesians, Philippine’s and some Kenyans. Ethiopians are the worst treated of all. There were raped Ethiopians; one girl was raped by four men and had severe physical problem. The police themselves take girls saying forensic check is required but it is just to rape them in turn. The police officers even were mocking on us saying ‘your leader is dead; who is going to rescue you?’ Since the prime Minister is passed away, they think no government body will be caring for us. They are right somehow. We are forgotten.*

Overwork, denial of salary and food, physical and psychological abuse are the day to day experiences of many domestic workers in locked apartments. Such conditions contradict the promises that brokers and legal agents give them and the better living situations the domestic
workers aspired for. The violence are committed not only by employers but by receiving agents of the destination countries who are representatives of the sending agents in Ethiopia. These agents share the responsibility of protecting the rights of the domestic workers. An Ethiopian agent representative in Kuwait abused a domestic worker that she has a responsibility to protect. The victim narrates her story as follows;

*I worked for an old Kuwaiti woman for a month and she was nice to me. After she passes me to her newlywed daughter, things became changed. Even though I do not have workload, I didn’t have anything to eat. The couple was I think eating in hotels and they did not bring any food to their home. I became weak through days and finally sick. When I asked them to give me food, they decided to deport me. But I refused to come back home and they took me to the agency. Although the agent is an Ethiopian, she didn’t show any sympathy hearing my problem. She beats me until my one tooth is broken and as the hospital said four other teeth are in danger.*

The responsibility of feeding live-in domestic workers lies up on their employers. The responsibility of protecting the rights of domestic workers recruited through legal means lies up on their sending agent and the receiving representative. When both fail their duties, it is the domestic worker that suffers as the result.

Many employers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have bad impression regarding Ethiopians already. They consider that migration from Ethiopia is prevalent because the population is ‘starved’. This bad image of course stem from past history of famine in the country that affects millions of citizens. NEWS of failure could easily be disseminated and stick to people’s mind especially when they want to use the matter as a discriminating tool. In this light, there are cases where domestic workers are expected to work for only food. Martha’s experience describes such conditions.

*My employers hesitated to pay my salary. They consider that I left my country because there is nothing to eat. They think it is enough for me if I get a small amount of food to survive. There are times my madam says ‘it is enough for you if you get some food; not money’. I need to beg her crying to get my salary. I always have to remind her I have a 12,000 ETB debt to pay for a broker.*

“bad” experience with a specific domestic worker might lead employers to hasty-generalize about the entire nationality as Anderson (2003) mentioned it in her article *Just Another Job?*
The Commodification of Domestic Labour. She mentioned an experience of an Athenian employer with Ethiopian domestic workers.

I have a problem with women from Ethiopia: they are lazy, and they have no sense of duty, though they are good-hearted. . . I have a lot of experience. I have had ten girls from Ethiopia. They like to be well-dressed-hair, nails; for that they are good.

Such stereotypical judgment not only restricts the particular individual from having a positive impression for nationals of a certain country but also misleads other people; like family members, friends and relatives to have prejudices against the entire nationality as Anderson asserted.

4.5.2 The protection of rights, safety and dignity
The Employment Exchange Service Proclamation 632/2009 mainly appoints PEAs for the protection of the rights, safety and dignity of man power they recruit and supply abroad. According to the data presented in table 2, if we take the number of migrant domestic workers from September 2011 to February 2013 which is less than the duration of one contract period, i.e. two years and forty five days, 292,566 domestic workers have travelled to and been employed in only Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. If we further divide this number to the number of PEAs currently active, i.e. 334, each PEA would be responsible to protect the rights, dignity and safety of at least 875 domestic workers for every two years period. There are also cases where the contract period could be extended based on the agreements between the employer and employee. In such cases, the number of domestic workers under the responsibility of each PEA would be doubled or even tripled as the years of the contract keep being extended. Although all domestic workers might not face problems, they still need close follow up by their sending agents. The information obtained from victim returnees indicates that those who are in trouble and require help from their agents are not able to get the help and end up abused and even murdered. Martha’s experience is a case in point.

I was not comfortable with the condition of my employment. I am supposed to work for more than eighteen hours a day without getting any rest. My employer even didn’t want to see me sit for three minutes to eat the food she gave me. I told my sister to report my problems to my agent so I would be transferred to another employer. The agent always promised my sister to solve the problem but she never tried. I always need to beg my employer so that she would pay my salary. I was sleepless. I was locked in the apartment and never saw what the outside world
looked like. They say here if we go by legally recognized agencies, our rights will be protected; but it was not true. The agents act nicely until they send us and get their payment. I sent many short messages to my sister telling her I might be killed someday. My sister brought the case to MoLSA. When my agency got to know that the case had reached MoLSA, she started to interfere in the situation. She called my employer and told her to return me to my country. My employer got mad and threw me down from the apartment’s first floor. See? What do I gain? Broken legs! I spent 13,000 Birr and came with broken legs and frustration. I am going to be a burden on my poor mother.

According to the PEAs association president, it is not easy to protect the rights, dignity and safety of domestic workers who are locked in their employers’ apartments. With the absence of the government’s interference through deploying labour attachés to the Embassies and making labour agreement with receiving countries, it is beyond the capacity of PEAs to follow up the conditions of each and every domestic worker facing violence. However, the association is working to improve such conditions cooperating with the Embassies even though the embassies lack capacities and budget according to the interview the president provided for a newspaper. With all these gaps, it is the vulnerable domestic workers that suffer.

Conforming to the information obtained from MoFA Consular Monitoring & Support Directorate on the other hand, as long as the PEAs obtained their license claiming they have the capacity to work with respect to the provisions of the proclamation, they are fully responsible for every domestic worker they recruit and sent. MoFA and Embassies are cooperating with the PEAs when they face difficulties to handle cases. MoFA is trying to cover the works that need to be done by a labour attaché. This, according to the informant, will create a burden for the ministry and should be done by a separate party whose work should mainly focus on the cases of citizen labour migrants in a particular country. This, and lack of bi-lateral agreement with destination countries are obstacles to the effort of solving the problems citizens are facing. The only country Ethiopia made a labour agreement with is Kuwait. Whereas Saudi Arabia, that receives approximately 1500 domestic workers a day, avoids the question of having labour agreement with Ethiopia.

There are many cases consulted at MoFA Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate office that indicate how the protection of the rights and safety of citizens in the Gulf region is not
easy for the PEAs. Deaths of citizens, which most of them appropriated to be suicidal cases, sexual, psychological and physical abuses require the Embassies’ and MoFA’s assistance.

4.6 The conditions of victim returnees

After the various problems they encounter in the countries of employment, victims of trafficking face many challenges to return to their country. Since their passports and travel documents in most cases are in the possession of their employers, they are not able to make legal travel arrangements. Financial problem to cover their travel expense is another constraint they face. The financial expectations of parents, family members and neighbors had become an additional burden to them. They feel ashamed to return back home without having earned money to pay their debt as well as support themselves and their family. Even if they return overcoming all such limitations with the help of Ethiopian Embassies and/or IOM, the situations that await them in their country are not promising. Life becomes even more difficult than before because they have to deal with the psychological and physical complications they encounter as well as the new socio-economic challenge they are likely be facing.

There are two NGOs; AGAR Ethiopia and GSA that provide temporary accommodation and financial support in Addis Ababa. I get the chance to contact one of these NGOs that work on the support of returnees. GSA is a non-profit organization that in general is working on the issue of economically empowering women. It provides returnee victims shelter and helps them get medical treatment. In addition, the organization works on re-integrating the returnees with their families and empowering them through financial assistance to encourage them to work in their own country. However the initiative of the two NGOs to support the returnees needs to be acknowledged, it should be noted that the services provided by them are not enough with regard to the magnitude of the problem.

If the returnee victims do not get the necessary support in their country, they would likely be entrapped in the trafficking chain again. A returnee; a victim of severe beat by an Ethiopian agent representative in Kuwait refuses to let know her family she is back because she came home empty-handed. She doesn’t even change the cloth she wore when she travelled three months ago.

*I worked for three months and gain nothing; rather I lost a tooth and three more teeth need to be removed as the doctors say. I didn’t want to come back if they do
not deport me. I do not want to go see my family and relatives like this; with broken teeth and no money. That is really a shame for me. I want to migrate to another country; any country!

The information I later obtained from MoLSA indicates that the medical treatment to replace her teeth requires 19,000ETB and the sending PEA has the responsibility to cover this expense. But the victim needs the cash than the medical treatment. She needs the money in order to support her family; husband and three children so that she can get rid of her shame, so that they can get rid of their poverty for sometime on the cost of her teeth; her health.

One of the key informants in this research is Martha. She was helped by her mother and two crutches to come to MoLSA in order to claim her medical expense from her sending agency. Her legs are broken because she was thrown by her employer from the first floor of a building. There was a bargain between two parties; Martha in one side, the PEA manager and her husband on the other; the MoLSA dispute resolution worker is trying to settle situations.

My agent promised to take me to hospital and help me get medical treatment. I waited for fifteen days without getting any help. Finally I went to hospital by a contract taxi spending 500 ETB a day for five days. I want a refund from the agent.

Martha’s sending agent was strongly declining not to pay her the money she is requiring because he thinks that it is too much. There was no balance of power in the bargain. Martha was alone standing for her right and owners of the PEA were two; husband and wife. In addition to medical expense, Martha was also claiming that her employer took back her three months salary when she was hurt. The PEA manager on the other hand indicates with evidence that Martha was paid all her salary. There is a paper signed by Martha that assures she took her salary.

I didn’t have any choice than signing the paper. I wanted to save my life and come back home so I did whatever my employer requires me to do. You have no idea what stressing condition I have been through.

A black and white paper written in Arabic shows Martha has no salary to claim as her agent asserts. She on the other hand, is strongly saying she didn’t have a bargaining power against her employer at that moment she was forced to sign. A girl who walks in to the airplane on her two legs eleven months ago on her way abroad, come back home and got out from the airplane carried by airport personnel. The PEA who took the responsibility to look after her
safety is strongly refusing to refund her transportation and the expenses for medical treatment for a damage caused by her employer.

When I asked Martha if she has a thought of migrating again after she gets better, her answer was not a definite ‘no’; rather ‘I do not think so’. This implies that Martha is not seeing any hope of opportunities in her own country. She didn’t get any financial, legal or other necessary supports. In this case, it is not a surprise that she again might see migration as the only option.

The damage is not only physical. Victims also sustain moral damage which cannot be given intrinsic economic value. As it is indicated in the findings, the returnees’ barefaced physical problems do not get due attention let alone the moral, psychological and social aspects of their dilemmas.

I get a chance to revise a document at a legal service providing organization about a case of returnee victim. Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), among other legal services it provides for disadvantaged women, also provides legal assistance for returnee victims of trafficking.

It is recorded in the document that the volunteer legal advisers to the organization exerted their effort to come up with a solution the returnee victim was facing. Nigist, a returnee from Kuwait, has suffered various problems during her work especially because of her religion; Christianity. Her woman employer abused her physically and psychologically for long time. Finally she is beaten with iron rod severely, spent three months in Kuwait hospital and six months in her receiving agent’s house. Police arrested her when she tried to fly back home without a passport; she spent a month in prison. Finally the police get her passport from her employer and she comes home with the pain from her damage of the physical violence. The medical certificate provided by Ethiopian Black Lion hospital indicates Nigist has a broken leg and vertebral fracture with 28 percent damage that needs operation. The victim affirms that her sending agency didn’t exert any effort to protect her from abuses even if she reported the problem. In addition, the PEA is refusing to pay her two years salary that she is denied by her employer. The legal team at EWLA tried to settle the disputes between Nigist and the PEA. But the sending agent refuses to provide compensation for the victim. The legal team decided to take the case to court. But the time limit to take a case into a court, i.e. a year has been passed and it seems there is no other means to help the returnee victim however the legal team is ready to try every opportunity.

Nigist returned home on a wheelchair. She had been getting medical treatment and was not able to deal about her case with her sending agent or any other party for months. Nobody gave
due attention for her case; including MoLSA until she brought it to the fore. MoLSA before 
she required EWLA’s assistance, mediated between the two parties; Nigist and the PEA and 
the agent covers her medical expense. Further claims by Nigist about unpaid salary and 
insurance were denied by the agent. Now, even though she gets legal assistance, the law 
doesn’t support her because the time limit has passed.

In an article published in the Reporter newspaper (April 28, 2013) where a lawyer gave 
analysis about a court rule regarding a returnee victim, the writer argued victims do not take 
such cases to court for different reasons. Lack of awareness about their right is one reason. 
Even if a victim knows she has to claim her right from a responsible agent, she doesn’t know 
where to go and all the bureaucratic procedures she has to pass through makes her hopeless 
and helpless. The other reason mentioned by the writer is lack of victim assistance by the 
concerned bodies such as families, neighbors, government bodies and NGOs. However 
returnee victims with physical disabilities and psychological problems require assistance in all 
aspects, no emphasis is given by the government and all other stakeholders.

In the case of the aforementioned analysis of a court decision, the writer indicates a legal gap 
in the decision of a federal first instance court that rejects the damage insurance claim of a 
returnee victim because she was not able to proof her damage is caused by the abuse of her 
employer. The victim initiated her case again through an appeal to the Supreme Court. 
Looking at the case thoroughly, the Supreme Court, in light with the provision of the EESP 
632/2009 article 26 regarding the burden of proof, reversed the first instance court decision 
and judged supporting the claims of the victim. Article 26 of the EESP reads as;

Where a worker who is deployed abroad by a private employment agency institutes 
an action relating to conditions of work, the agency or the employer shall, if it 
challenges the allegation, be responsible to disprove it.

Regarding returnees, article 31, 5 of the EESP states that the public employment service of 
MoLSA is responsible for facilitating the resettlement of citizens who return to their home 
country after deployment abroad.

Martha’s, Nigist’s and other returnees’ cases show that there is a big gap between what has 
been declared in the proclamation and what returnees are experiencing on the ground. In 
Martha’s case, it is herself without the help of anyone who brought the case to MoLSA’s 
attention. She was not directed what to do and where to go to claim her right. Although she is 
the weak and the disadvantaged, no one was standing for her right; but herself. Martha’s
permanent address is in Nekemte, a city situated in western part of the country and Oromia region, located 331km away from Addis Ababa. She, at the moment, is staying in Addis Ababa with her sister so that she could be closer to the hospital and MoLSA. Her sister lives on the fourth floor of an apartment with no elevator. I observed that it was difficult for her to go up and down the floor every time she has to go to hospital, MoLSA and other places. Martha’s temporary residence is also a bit out of city requiring her travel longer to the hospital she is getting medical treatment and MoLSA again. With all such inconvenient situations, no party is looking after her regarding health, resettlement and reintegration issues.

There are lots of puzzling cases observed at MoLSA regarding returnees. The following claim of a 24 year old woman is one. The conversation is held between a returnee domestic worker identified as (K) and MoLSA staff (B).

\[
K. \text{ I went to Kuwait three days ago} \\
B. \text{ Three days ago? And?} \\
K. \text{ Deported} \\
B. \text{ Why?} \\
K. \text{ I do not know!} \\
B. \text{ Me neither} \\
K. \text{ I want my 13,000 Birr back} \\
B. \text{ What was that? Did your agent take money from you?} \\
K. \text{ Not my agent; it is a broker} \\
B. \text{ A broker? Sue him then; get witnesses and go to a police!}
\]

The girl is politically constrained to take the case to court. The procedures to take a case like hers is to court are unclear and complicated. She is not aware of her rights in the first place when she made a deal with a broker. Even though she dares to go to court, the process is long and frustrating. Fear of a broker threatening her or her family could be a case that restrains her. The question why she is deported left untouched.
Victim assistance and empowering returnees should be on focus in the counter trafficking effort. The government at least, should support the volunteer NGOs working on returnees’ health, economic empowerment and social reintegration issues. According to the information obtained from GSA, the organization is financially limited from accomplishing its plan. In addition to providing accommodation for returnees for specific period, the main intention of the organization as the program officer stated, at first was to work on the issue of prevention of human trafficking through awareness creation among the job seekers, returnees and the society at large.

But the reality GSA encounters on the ground was different. We didn’t expect returnees would come to the shelter with various physical and psychological health complications. We were just prepared to provide shelter for them for few days and perform the re-unification with their family by providing financial assistance. But we couldn’t go further as per our plan because the magnitude and kind of the problem is beyond our expectation. It requires us additional fund. We needed more staff like health assistances and care givers. Even we needed guards to take the mentally ill to hospitals. The mismatch of the number of returnees the shelter could accommodate and those who actually come seeking shelter is another problem. We were not financially prepared.

As it is evidenced in the study, returnee trafficking victims suffer from not only the various psychological and physical problems they encountered in the destination countries but also with additional social problems back in their country. In addition to the stresses they had gone through because of isolation, abuse and discrimination by their employers, the families’ and relatives’ expectation of money, the stigmatization by the society because of mental disorder as well as physical impairment contribute to more emotional and psychological damage.

Stakeholders including the government, civil society, local as well as international NGOs and PEAs should collaborate in fighting human trafficking from Ethiopia. In addition to the concern of protecting the rights of labour migrants, returnee victim assistance program should also be an integral part of the country’s effort to abate the problem. If victims are left alone with their desperate situations, they will again be vulnerable to trafficking in their attempt to search better livelihood conditions that their country fails to provide them.
5.1 Discussion

In this part, information obtained through interviews and observations is evaluated in light of the theoretical issues covered and research questions raised in the study. It has been discussed in chapter two that intersections of different identities put individuals into vulnerable positions. Gender, Class, Racial as well as Religious differences are identified in the study as major factors to cause discrimination and abuse against Ethiopian domestic workers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Analyzing such themes with regard to the theoretical account through the lived experiences of the domestic workers provides explanation for the first research question that centers on the causes of abuse of Ethiopian domestic workers.

5.1.1 Gender discrimination

The major factor that places Ethiopian rural women and girls in a vulnerable position is the lower status they possessed based on the socially constructed concept gender. They are marginalized from their rights of access to education, job opportunities and resources unlike their men counterparts. They are limited within the domestic sphere taking care of the round-clock household duties that are not considered contributing to the economic development of the family. Women and girls are the primary victims when agricultural production is diminished and poverty strikes the society. They consider labour migration as an opportunity to escape from the conditions they are facing within the country and to come up with better livelihoods. Rural-urban migration used to be the option they used to come up with to engage in domestic work, street vending or prostitution in worst case scenario. Now a day, domestic work in the Middle East countries is the available position for the uneducated and unskilled women power from Ethiopia. Domestic work, as it is argued by feminist theorists is an overwhelmingly feminized type of work Holvino (2003), Anderson (2003), Collins (1998). As women and girls, sexual abuse by male employers or their sons and relatives as well as police is the major dilemma Ethiopian domestic workers are encountering. There are cases that indicate women and girls are suffering from severe physical and psychological damages as a result of sexual violence. In addition and related to sexual assault, the domestic workers face another problem with their women employers as a result of suspicion of affairs with male family members especially husbands. The women employers supervise every movement of their domestic workers in the house. The eating habit and dressing style of the domestic
workers is controlled by their employers. They have to look unattractive in front of male householders. They are not supposed to look at the face of their ‘lords’. In worst case scenario, physical violence ranging from simple beating to murder could also be an outcome.

5.1.2 Class discrimination

Gender difference resulted in a construction of a status quo. Rural women and girls are of lower status groups of the society because of their gender identity. This coupled with lack of educational qualification and skill, puts them in a marginalized position compared even with women from urban Ethiopia. They are limited in the domestic arena in the rural villages and if they migrate to cities, the job opportunities that could be available for them are of lower class. Domestic work and informal economic activities, such as street vending are their options as descent work. Otherwise they will fall prey to Prostitution that will make them double marginalized in the society in addition to jeopardizing their lives. Since the cost of living is an increasing phenomenon, the earnings of rural-urban migrants couldn’t be enough for them and their families’ survival. Migration to the domestic workers consuming countries is the better option to come up with these days. Labour migration as unskilled domestic workers to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait further diminishes Ethiopian rural women and girls’ position to even lower class as a result of simultaneous occurrence of their identities; women and unskilled. Anderson (2000) states that although domestic work is vital in social as well as economic aspects, it is a highly demeaned and disregarded feminized duty. As women and migrant domestic workers, Ethiopian women suffer from class exclusion. Their employers posses the rights of manipulating them as they wish. Making them work round-the-clock, denying food, withholding their salary, selling them to other employers, beating them and so are common trends. The perspective that domestic work, as stated by Anderson (2003), is regarded as an undesirable job by those who do not even want to touch it. Domestic work is embedded in a status relationship between the employer and employee since the former are able to pay seeing the later clear the household mess. But it is not always a case for employers to pay their domestic workers for their genuine effort. Many employers would like to see their household duty performed for free. There are many Ethiopian domestic workers whose basic human rights are violated by their employers. One returnee informant of this research reported that her employer forced her to sleep in a balcony where she is exposed to a bad weather condition during a rainy season. Being fed with the left-over food is a common trend many Ethiopian domestic workers experienced. They also are expected to wake before everyone in the household and sleep after everyone settling everything in the house.
5.1.2 Racial discrimination

Racial discrimination is the other oppression mechanism against domestic workers of colour as argued by feminist intersectional theorists; Crenshaw (1993), Davis (2006), Collins (1998), Davis (2008). The experiences of Ethiopian women and girls indicate that their employers have prejudice regarding Ethiopian domestic workers as a result of their origin or nationality. The perception Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti employers have about the country as a ‘starved nation’ made them expect Ethiopian women and girls to work for only food. Some employers even refused to pay their domestic workers’ salary claiming it is enough for an Ethiopian to be fed. One informant said that her woman employer considered herself as a savior of an escapee from famine. The employer expected the domestic worker to be grateful for the shelter and good food she is provided. Salary is therefore, a luxury for an Ethiopian domestic worker. The racial/Nationality discrimination furthers by providing the lowest position for Ethiopians in the domestic workers status quo. The preconception employers have towards black women who migrated from an economically deprived country make them degrade Ethiopians positioning them in the lowest status in the domestic sphere compared to Filipina and Indonesian domestic workers. In addition to the racial discrimination, religious stereotyping is also a factor for marginalizing Ethiopian domestic workers. They are fired from their work, imprisoned and abused as a result of their religious orientation. In general, as Anderson (2003) asserts, employers make a generalized assumption on the entire nationality having experiences with few domestic workers.

In general, constructing and reinforcing each other, the simultaneous processes of identity Ethiopian rural women and girls posses exposed them for various kinds of discrimination and abuses within their country as well as in countries where they were migrated and employed as domestic workers.

In addition to the above factors causing disputes between employers and employees that arise from the demand side, sending unskilled woman power is a gap identified from the supply side. Employers of destination countries bear the expense of employing domestic workers in order to get their household work done. In this case the responsibility is from the side of Ethiopia to empower citizens with the necessary skills for the kind work they are recruited for. The government’s reluctance on the matter as it has been noted from the experiences of the domestic workers in this study, contributes to the severe abuse of citizens right in the destination countries.
Considering the second research question of the study, the following are the obstacles identified to the efforts to combat the problems Ethiopian domestic workers are facing in the Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

- **The involvement of many perpetrators in the trafficking process including families, friends and relatives.** According to informants, close relatives and friends play significant roles in convincing families to send a member to the Gulf to improve the livelihood of the whole family. Such people serve as middle men or women between PEAs and the job seekers taking large sum of money from the meager income of the rural family. The other side of this coin is that, there are trafficking victims that are not willing to make allegations against their close relative traffickers. Martha paid 13,000 ETB for her sister-in-law so that she can facilitate her recruitment process with a PEA. Martha is now back with broken legs and claiming her right to get medical treatment’s expense from her sending legal PEA. But she leaves the case of her illegal sister-in-law for God as she asserts it.

- **The role of legitimate bodies such as Kebeles of especially rural areas by providing falsified documents for the trafficking of young girls as young as age thirteen.** Although MoLSA is trying to identify such cases by itself and through the PEAs, it is not always possible to pinpoint girls of young age by looking only at their physical appearance. The researcher found out cases of some girls being age fifteen, sixteen and seventeen and already employed.

- **The engagement of PEAs in illicit activities of recruiting rural women and girls through illegal brokers.** The high competition among the 334 PEAs and between them and the illegal brokers according to an informant from MoLSA, drives the PEAs to perform their activities illegally since their objective is to maximize profit by recruiting as many job seekers as possible. There are PEAs who comply with the provisions of the Employment Service Proclamation 632/2009 for the only reason of preserving their license from revocation rather than with the concern of protecting the rights of citizens. Quoted at Fernandez (2010) a Yemeni informant whose wife is the owner of a large and one of the oldest PEAs stated as follows;

  ‘I am in the business of exporting cattle from Ethiopia, while my wife exports women and let me tell you, it is easier to export cattle [because there are fewer government regulations to comply with]’
This implies that if there are no regulations regarding the woman power supply, women would be exported like cattle without considering what they would be facing in their owners apartments.

- **The inability of the government itself in making bi-lateral labour agreements with the receiving countries.** According to the information obtained from MoFA Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate’s, although Saudi Arabia consumes the lion’s share of domestic workers from Ethiopia i.e. per cent, the Saudi Arabia government is not willing to have a labour agreement. In addition, however it is stated in the Employment Exchange Proclamation that a labour attaché would be deployed in the countries to which Ethiopia supplies man power, this remains theoretical and the protection of citizens’ rights mainly fall on the hands of PEAs.

As described above, this study identifies the dilemmas that the rural Ethiopian women and girls face in countries to which they travel as domestic workers and it points out the different causes of disagreements between the domestic workers and their employers. In addition, the study also shows the obstacles to the effort of alleviating the problems of domestic workers in the Gulf.

### 5.2 Conclusion

The following major conclusions can be drawn from the study.

- Lack of educational and employment opportunities are major driving forces of labour migration. Rural women and girls’ lower economic and social position in their society make them consider migration as the only option of improving their and their families’ livelihood. This, coupled with the lack of awareness of rural society regarding the consequences of uninformed labour migration creates a fertile ground for traffickers.

- The experience that the domestic workers face on the ground includes; confiscation of travel documents for having full control of movements, heavy workloads, long working hours, serving more than one family even though they were hired for one, deprivation of food and sleep, denial and withholding of salaries and sexual harassment. This exposed the women to physical and psychological problems.
• As women and girls of a developing country that can’t supply enough for its citizens, their marginalized position makes Ethiopian domestic workers victims of racial, religious, class and gender stereotyping by the oil-rich countries employers.

• The responsibility of PEAs provided in the Employment Exchange Service Proclamation to protect the rights dignity and safety of citizens is an imposition in the absence of government intervention which should have been done through bi-lateral agreement with the receiving countries and by deploying labour attachés.

• The involvement of different perpetrators of trafficking is aggravating the problem and increasing the number of vulnerable people.

• Returnee victims are not getting the necessary support to be re-socialized with the society the society and to resettle in the country.

• To look at the problem from the standpoints of the trafficked women and girls is of utter importance in order to get a clear picture and understanding of the problem from their lived experiences and perspectives.

5.3 Recommendations

Abating a sophisticated problem; like human trafficking, perpetrated by a chain of criminals is an uneasy task. It requires a thorough understanding of its complex nature regarding factors, means, perpetrators and victims. Policy frameworks need to consider the economic, socio-cultural, legal and political aspects of the problem. In addition, the effort to combat trafficking necessitates a political will from the government side and building a strong coordination among stakeholders. Following are possible solutions suggested in this study.

• Research findings indicated that lack of economic opportunity is the major driving force of labour migration from Ethiopia. Creating educational and job opportunities has to be the primary measure to be taken by government and civil society in order to broaden the options of women and girls to support themselves and their families within their country instead of considering migration to be the only option they have.

On the other hand, labour migration benefits individuals, families and the state at large through remittance if managed properly and the rights of citizens is protected. If the government of Ethiopia due to the high unemployment rate within the country considers
labour migration of citizens as an alternative, certain conditions have to be fulfilled beforehand.

- Securing a bi-lateral labor agreement with each receiving country is a necessity as long as combating human trafficking is of interest to both sending and receiving countries. Not only the supplier has to make its citizens aware of their rights and obligations; the effort to make citizens aware of the rights of their employees and their obligations to respect human rights of their domestic workers should come from the demand side too. In addition, deploying a labor attaché at the Ethiopian Embassies in each receiving country should be done by the Ethiopian government.

- A minimum educational level needs to be set for labour migrants in order to enhance their understanding of situations they will be facing. In addition, practical pre-departure trainings should be given to introduce the domestic workers with the kinds of equipment they will be using and the nature of work they are expected to perform. Supplying a well trained and skilled man power allow citizens to get better payments and minimize disputes with employers that arise because of not being able to perform the required tasks.

- The eligibility criteria required from business making individuals or companies provided in the Employment Service Proclamation 632/2009 to obtain a PEA license needs to be revised. A man power supply business should have a different code of ethics respecting the moral value of each client as well as the larger society as it is proposed by (2007).

- The government, in cooperation with the various stakeholders, should control the illegal activities of brokers. Awareness creation programs regarding traffickers should be applied right at the rural villages. Allowing the PEAs to legally recruit job seekers from the villages will also be helpful to reduce the competition that the PEAs have with illegal brokers and discourage the PEAs engagement in illegal activities.

- All the recruitment, travel arrangements and information provision activities should be performed in decentralized offices in the different regions of the country so that the rural society is not exposed to traffickers who claim to serve as guides to the different offices in the capital Addis Ababa

- The government, non- governmental organizations and civil society should make great efforts to assist returnee who are victims of various kinds of abuses. Restoring their well-being should be prioritized through the provision of physical and psychological
medical treatments, protecting their rights through legal assistance and providing financial assistance to allow them to rebuild their life through reintegration with their society.

- National awareness creation programs should be launched to address the whole society. Police and the justice system should be well acquainted with the country’s laws and regulations regarding human trafficking.

In the study, it is manifested that lived experiences of trafficked domestic workers is of utter importance for the understanding of the problem. Therefore, I would like to suggest researchers with human trafficking interest and stakeholders who are working on trafficking issues and victim assistance to see the complex world of human trafficking from the perspectives of the victims.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent

Study Title: Vulnerability of Ethiopian Rural Women in the Gulf: The Case of Domestic Workers

Researcher Name: ………………………………………..

Before giving your consent to participate in this research, I strongly encourage you to read the following explanation of this study.

Introducing the subject and Purpose of the Study

Ethiopian women and girls are facing various problems in the Gulf countries they migrate to work. Involuntary servitude, physical and psychological abuse, sexual violence, murder and suicide are the major dilemmas they are facing. The government put an effort in establishing the Private Employment Agencies so that the labour migration is legal and the rights of citizens are protected. Although this encourages voluntary labour migrant women to use legal means of recruitment and travel, the problems they are facing are not yet abated. The purpose of this study is to find the answer for the research questions focusing on two themes. Exploring the causes of the dilemmas Ethiopian domestic workers facing Saudi Arabia and Kuwait is the first theme and identifying the obstacles that hinder the government’s efforts to combat trafficking of Ethiopia women is the second.

Explanation of Procedures

Participation in the study involves conducting a face-to-face interview, which will last for approximately one to two hours. The interviews will be conducted by the researcher, audio-taped and later transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. The interview will be held at your office or elsewhere based on your convenience. In addition, observation of the recruitment process will be conducted to get a real time data of what is happening.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no risks or discomforts that are anticipated from your participation in the study because the anonymity of informants will be kept.
Benefits
The anticipated benefit of participation is the opportunity to discuss feelings, perceptions, and concerns related to the experience of bridging a contract between employer and employee, dealing with problems of the domestic workers and other important issues.

Confidentiality
The information gathered during this study will remain confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the study data and information. There will not be any identifying names on the surveys or interview transcripts. Your names and any other identifying details will never be revealed in any publication of the results of this study. The tapes will be destroyed at the completion of the study. The results of the research will be published in the form of a research paper. The knowledge obtained from this study will be of great value in contributing its part for the effort of overcoming the problems the study dealing with.

Withdrawal without Prejudice
Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw and discontinue participation in this project at any time without prejudice. You are also free to refuse to answer any question the researcher might ask you.
Further Questions and Follow-Up

You are welcome to ask the researchers any questions that occur to you during the interview or observation. If you have further questions once the interview is completed, or if you have other questions or concerns about the study, you are encouraged to contact the researcher using the contact information given below.

I, ________________________________ (name; please print clearly), have read the above information. I freely agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the study at any time. I understand that my responses will be kept anonymous.

__________________________________________ _____________________
Participant Signature Date

If:
(a) you would like a copy of your interview transcript once it is available
(b) you are interested in information about the study results as a whole and/or
(c) if you would be willing to be contacted again in the future for a possible follow-up interview,
please provide contact information below:
Check those that apply:
____ I would like a copy of my interview transcript
____ I would like information about the study results
____ I would be willing to be contacted in the future for a possible follow-up interview

Write your address clearly below. Please also provide an email address if you have one.
Mailing address:
Email address:

Researcher contact information:

Name: ______________________________
Institution: _______________________
E-mail: ___________________________
Appendix B: Interview Questions for Returnees

- Tell me your Age, Religion, Place of origin, Educational background, Marital status?
- Tell me in what situations you were living before you migrated as a domestic worker?
- Where did you get the information about working abroad?
- Tell me how the whole process went from getting travel documents, recruitment to work abroad,
- What was your expectation before you migrated?
- How did you get everything there? How was the work as well as the living condition?
- Tell me your relationship with your employers?
- Have you ever face any problem?
- Did you have contact with your agent in Ethiopia?
- How did you manage to return home?
- Do you have any plan or thought to go back again?
- What is your general opinion about working in the Gulf as housemaid?
- What do you think need to be done by the women, their families, agents and government?
- Can I call you if I need to ask you further questions?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!
Appendix C: Interview Questions for newly recruited women and girls

- Tell me your Age, Religion, Place of origin, Educational background, Marital status?
- Where did you get the information about the job opportunities abroad?
- What motivates you to migrate as domestic worker?
- Does your family encourage you?
- Who told you about the legal recruitment process?
- Have you made any payment for a broker?
- Do you have any experience as domestic worker before?
- Do you get any training?
- Have you heard about the problems Ethiopian domestic workers are facing in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait? What do you think about that?
- What is your expectation about the conditions in your destination country?
- What is your future plan?
- What will you do if you encounter a problem?

Thank you and good luck!!
Appendix D: Interview Questions for MoLSA

- How many Private Employment Agencies are actively working by this time?
- What kinds of employees are sent abroad and to which countries mainly?
- Do the women get any orientation or training?
- How many housemaids employed and sent every month? For the past year?
- What is your opinion about Ethiopian Domestic Workers sent to the Middle East?
- Do you think the establishment of the Private Employment agencies brings a change in protecting the rights of citizens employed and sent abroad?
- Can we say that women recruited through these Employment Agencies are safer than those who migrate illegally? How?
- How does the ministry supervise the agencies are working according to the terms and conditions in the proclamation?
- Have the Ministry ever encounter a PEA engaging in illegal activities? If there are any, what measure does Ministry take?
- Does the ministry make sure that the agencies follow up the conditions of the women?
- Have the ministry ever middle any dispute between women employed in the Middle East and agencies?
- Do you think the ‘protecting rights and dignities of Ethiopians employed and sent abroad’ responsibility given to the agents is of their capacity and ability?
- There are information about Ethiopian housemaids are the least paid and least treated compared to their counterparts from other countries; why do you think is that?
- Why do you think the plight of the Ethiopian women in the Middle East is not abated?
- What do you think need to be done to curb this problem?

Thank you for your willingness to provide me the interview!
Appendix E: Interview Questions for Private Employment Agents

Background Questions

- When did you start this business?
- What were you doing before?
- What motivates you to start the business?
- Is it a profitable business?

The Recruitment and Employment process

- Who are your customers of the recruitment contract? Men? Women?
- How do you approach them? Or how do you make the first contact?
- Which countries are common to send housemaids?
- How do you contact the employers? Or agents of the destination countries?
- How many housemaids on average do you send to the Middle East per month?
- Do you give the housemaids orientations and so about the destination countries?
- Have you ever involved in illegal activities?

Protection of the Rights of Domestic workers

- The Private Employment Agency Proclamation states that the agent is responsible to protect the writes and dignities of citizens employed and sent abroad; how do you see this statement? Is it easy to perform that responsibility? If yes how? If not what are the challenges?
- Do you have contact with the housemaids you sent to the Middle East?
- Do you have follow up of their safety?
- Do you work with Ethiopia Embassies in country of destinations regarding such issues?
- Have you ever get a housemaid having problems with her employer? If yes. What problems? How do you solve them?
- Any violence on any housemaid your agency sent to the Middle East?
The Returnees

- Do you make contact with returnees who are victims of violence? Do you help them? In what way?

The challenges and solutions

- What problems/gaps in general do you see on the working relationship between the housemaids and their employers?
- What do you suggest to be done by all parties to tackle these problems? By government, agencies, the women, the government of the destination countries, the employers and so?
- Can I contact you again if I have further questions?

Thank you for your cooperation!
Appendix F: Interview Questions for MoFA

- What are the responsibilities of Consular Monitoring and Support Directorate office regarding citizens recruited and transported as domestic workers?
- What is your opinion in this labour migration issue? Is it a voluntary labour migration or trafficking?
- What do the Ethiopian embassies in the Middle East do regarding protecting the rights of citizens employed in the countries?
- Does Ethiopia have labour attaches in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait?
- Do you think providing the responsibility of protecting citizens’ right to PEAs would bring a solution for the problems domestic workers are facing? If yes how? If no, why not? Does the ministry interfere when problems far from being solved by the PEAs arise? How?
- What gaps do you see regarding domestic workers case?
- It seems that the case of returnee victims is ignored or not given due attention by the government; for there is no governmental organization that takes care of violence victim returnees, there is no rehabilitation center and so what do you say about this?
- What do you suggest to be done to abate the problem in general and by whom?

Thank you for taking your time and allowing me conduct the interview!
Appendix G: Interview Questions for GSA

- What is your opinion about human trafficking? What do you say about the case of Ethiopian women migrating to the Arab world?

- What is the duty of GSA regarding returnees?

- How do you contact them first?

- What kinds of problems do they come with?

- How does the organization deals with their situation?

- What support does the organization provides to victim returnees?

- Does the organization get any support from the government or any other party?

- What is your general opinion about the victim returnees?

- What do you suggest for stakeholders regarding victim returnees?

- Can I come back to your office if I need to raise further questions?

Thank you so very much!