

Migration and Rural-Urban Linkages in Ethiopia

Migration Briefing 2: Policy February 2007

Key Topics

1. Migration complexities
2. Avoiding negative effects of excessive migration on sending areas
3. Promoting an enabling migration environment
4. Recognising problems migrants face
5. Protecting migrants rights
6. Affirmative action for women, youth and children

This briefing was produced by the Wellbeing in Developing Countries Ethiopia Research team under the auspices of the University of Bath (UK). The WeD Research Group funded by the Economic and Social Research Council of the UK is working in four countries: Bangladesh, Peru Thailand and Ethiopia.

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www.wed-ethiopia.org

INTRODUCTION

The Wellbeing in Developing Countries Research Project (WeD Ethiopia) produced a Research Report for Irish Aid based on research carried out in two urban sites within Addis Ababa and Shashemene and three rural sites in Amhara, Oromia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region. This report was used to prepare a **Research Briefing Paper**.

This paper describes ten types of migration and rural-urban linkages, and discusses the reasons for and consequences of migration for migrants, their households and communities and receiving areas.

To discuss the findings and draw out the policy implications WeD Ethiopia organised a **Consultation on Migration Research Findings and Policy Implications** held on November 28, 2006 inviting a range of stakeholders including government, donors, NGOs and academics.

Presentations were made by:

- Philippa Bevan on the WeD research programme and policy and practice
- Feleke Tadele on Migration, Rural-Urban Linkages and Development,
- Alula Pankhurst on Gender and Women's Migration,
- Yisak Tafere on Migration and Youth Unemployment

This **Policy Briefing Paper** summarises major points arising from discussions following the presentations and in the two working groups, and proposes recommendations under three headings relating to measures for containing excessive rural-urban migration, promoting an enabling environment for migrants, and protecting the rights of migrants, particularly of women, youth and children.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES OF MIGRATION

All workshop participants recognised that migration is ongoing in Ethiopia, though it is not easily visible and its importance is often not acknowledged. For example, seasonal migration is a well-established coping system in many rural areas.

There are several types of migration involving differences in terms of:

Time period: Short-term; Seasonal or long-term; Permanent.

Direction and distance: Rural to urban; Rural to rural; Urban to urban; Urban to rural; International.

Motivation: Pushed by poverty or discrimination in places of origin; Pulled by attractions and opportunities in places of destination.

Linkages: Relations with home community broken off; Resources from seasonal migration brought home remittances from long-term migrants; Cross-community social networks established through marriage; Regular exchanges of goods, services, and information between migrant and homebased family.

Furthermore the consequences of migration are experienced at different levels:

by *individuals* – the migrant and close relations,

by the *sending household*,

by the *sending and receiving communities*,

at *regional* and

country levels.

These complexities imply that there cannot be simple blanket solutions for all the problems associated with migration. Policy recommendations need to take this variation into account.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants recommended that government, donors and NGOs should network on migration issues.

They agreed that currently there are three priority areas for migration-related policy and practice:

To avoid the negative consequences of excessive rural-urban migration by improving conditions in rural migrants' areas of origin:

- Improve micro-credit provision with group collateral provisions
- Promote opportunities for multiple and non-farming livelihoods, including trade and business
- Promote rural town development as key centres of services and economic opportunities for surrounding rural population to avoid adverse effects of excessive migration to cities
- Improve health care in rural areas and small towns and providing testing, care and support for HIV/AIDS
- Promote affirmative action for women including in education, skills training, access to credit, legal rights to land including through certification, rights to property on divorce, and the effective implementation of the family code.
- Promote access to resources by the youth, particularly access to land and other communal resources.

To create an enabling environment for migration, recognise the problems faced by migrants and establish a strategy to protect the rights of migrants:

Facilitate free movement and mobility through:

- Protection of property rights and entitlements of seasonal and short-term migrants while away
- Enabling access to identity cards
- Improving access to housing
- Facilitating rights to obtain credit
- Preventing expulsions of migrants
- Promoting rights to work even if not permanent residents
- Providing relevant information through the media

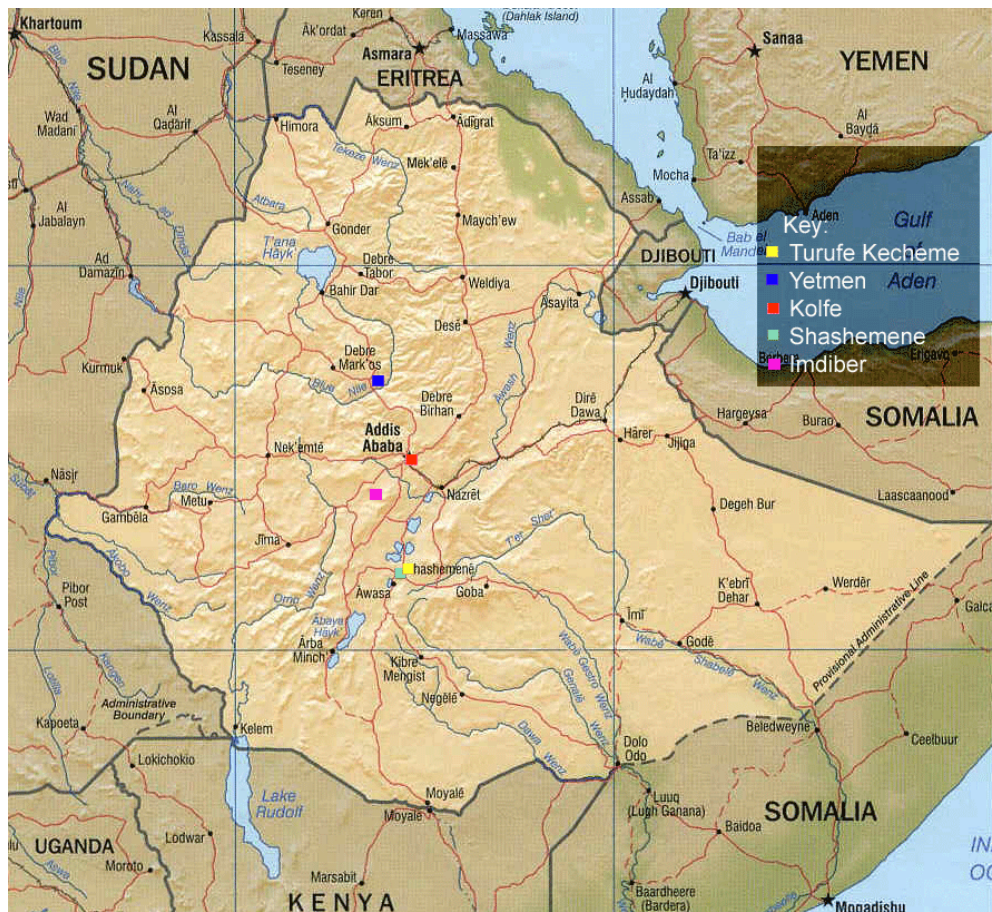
Promote the wellbeing of migrants through:

- Ensuring rights to health and other social services
- Promoting the formation of migrants' associations

- Supporting collective action by migrants
- Promoting /protecting the right to become members of local community associations
- Promoting the establishment of minimum wages norms
- Regulating employment agencies and establishing minimum standards
- Regulating brokers particularly to avoid trafficking

Establish affirmative action measures and special protection for the most vulnerable categories of migrants - women, youth and children:

- Protect women from violence and rape
- Promote youth employment policies
- Protect children from abuse by brokers and employers
- Protect domestic workers from abuse by brokers and employer
- Protect sex workers from abuse by customers, pimps and owners of work premises
- Protect international migrants from abuse in countries in which they work



Ethiopia – Site locations

The following related documents on migration can be found on www.wed-ethiopia.org

- 'Migration and Rural Urban Linkages in Ethiopia' *Research Briefing Paper*, November 2006
- 'Migration and Rural Urban Linkages in Ethiopia. Case Studies of five rural and two urban sites in Addis Ababa, Amhara, Oromia and SNNP Regions.' *Final Report*, June 2006.
- 'Consultation on Migration Research Findings and Policy Implications,' *Programme* November 28, 2006.
- 'Introducing the WeD Research Programme and the Ways in which it can Inform Policy' *workshop presentation summary*
- 'Migration, Rural-urban Linkages and Development', *workshop presentation summary*
- 'Gender and Women's Migration', *workshop presentation summary*
- 'Migration and Youth Unemployment'. *workshop presentation summary*

For further information on the WeD Programme see www.welldev.org.uk