



EU-IOM
Joint Initiative for
Migrant Protection
and Reintegration



RDH
IOM Regional Data Hub
East and Horn of Africa



Project funded by the European Union
Project implemented by IOM

THE DESIRE TO THRIVE REGARDLESS OF THE RISK

Risk perception, expectations and migration experiences
of young Ethiopians migrating along the Eastern Route
towards the Arabian Peninsula

Background Analysis by Migrant Category: Bossaso, Puntland

IOM Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa

August 2020

THE REGIONAL DATA HUB

Established in early 2018 at IOM's Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa (EHOA), the Regional Data Hub (RDH) aims to support evidence-based, strategic and policy-level discussion on migration through a combination of initiatives. The RDH strategy is structured along four main pillars: **data collection capacity**, strengthening regional primary and secondary data collection and analysis to ensure harmonization and interoperability of key methodologies used to monitor population mobility; **information management capacity**, increasing information management capacity to strengthen data consolidation and quality control across the various data sources; **regional research and analysis**, conducting regional research and analysis on mixed migration topics and enhancing data dissemination and knowledge sharing across programmatic and policy-level stakeholders; and **capacity building development initiatives**, providing technical support to key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to enhance their migration data portfolio in line with regional and global initiatives. Publications and the 2019 RDH snapshot can be consulted at <https://ronairobi.iom.int/regional-data-hub-rdh>.

The RDH and this particular research project are largely funded through the generous support of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa (EU-IOM JI). Launched in December 2016 with funding from the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration is the first comprehensive programme to save lives, protect and assist migrants along key migration routes in Africa. The programme enables migrants who decide to return to their countries of origin to do so in a safe and dignified way, and to help them restart their lives in their countries of origin. This is done through an integrated approach to reintegration that supports both migrants and their communities. The Joint Initiative covers and closely cooperates with 26 African countries in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Lake Chad, and North Africa. More information can be found at: <https://migrationjointinitiative.org/>.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed, and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

© International Organization for Migration (IOM) August 2020

Permission is required to reproduce any part of this publication. Permission to be freely granted to educational or non-profit organizations. Please contact: Regional Data Hub (RDH): rdhronairobi@iom.int

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS.....	4
DEFINITIONS	4
INTRODUCTION.....	5
Research context.....	7
Bossaso sample	9
01 FIRST-TIME MIGRANTS.....	11
Description of population.....	12
Origin and destination.....	13
Main drivers of migration	14
Migration decision-making.....	16
Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction.....	17
The future.....	18
02 RE-MIGRATING INDIVIDUALS	19
Description of population.....	20
Previous journeys.....	21
Time spent in the KSA	21
Migrants' role in providing information	22
Origin and destination.....	23
Main drivers of re-migration.....	24
The future.....	26
03 RETURNING MIGRANTS	27
Description of population.....	28
Origin and destination.....	29
Main drivers of migration	30
Migration decision-making.....	32
Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction.....	33
The decision to return	34
04 YOUNG WOMEN ON THE MOVE.....	35
Description of population.....	36
Origin and destination.....	37
Main drivers of migration	38
Migration decision-making.....	40
Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction.....	42
The future.....	43
05 FORMER INTERNAL MIGRANTS.....	44
Description of population.....	45
Origin and destination	46
Previous internal migrations	47
Main drivers of migration	48
Migration decision-making.....	50
Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction.....	52
The future.....	53

ACRONYMS

DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EHoA	East and Horn of Africa
FM	Flow Monitoring
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HoA	Horn of Africa
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ethiopia)
MRC	Migration Response Centre
RDH	Regional Data Hub
SNNP	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
USD	United States Dollar

DEFINITIONS

First-time migrants: individuals migrating along the Eastern Route to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) for the first time.

Re-migrating individuals: individuals migrating along the Eastern Route to the KSA who attempted or successfully completed previous migration(s) to this destination.

Returning migrants: individuals migrating along the Eastern Route to the KSA who have decided to stop their journey in Bossaso and are returning to Ethiopia.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs): individuals who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

Internal migrants: individuals who have migrated internally within Ethiopia prior to their current experience of international migration¹. Internal migration can be spontaneous or forced by external causes.

Risk perception: refers to migrants' awareness of challenges along the route and at arrival in the KSA, such as the lack of food and water, the crossing at sea, the war in Yemen and the risk of deportation.

Risk preference: refers to migrants' willingness to take on risks according to the perceived successful outcome, that is, reaching the KSA and finding a job that will ensure sufficient earnings.

Risk reduction: refers to migrants' strategies to mitigate risks against potential challenges along the route and upon arrival in the KSA. These strategies can be voluntary, for instance obtaining information on the journey, or involuntary, for instance travelling in group when the group is set up by the broker.

¹ Although internal migration remains limited – in the period between 2008 and 2013 about 6.5 per cent of the Ethiopian adult population moved zone of residence – this type of migration is growing and is increasingly directed towards urban areas and their fringes. Most internal movements take place from rural to urban areas (34%) or intra-urban migration (25%, from one city to another) and happens within the boundaries of the regional states. Rural–urban migration is often the first step towards international migration, as urban migrants usually experience welfare improvement, which may give them the means and aspirations to migrate. In our sample, around 10 per cent of individuals are former internal migrants (165 individuals), around 60 per cent of whom were 'forced', i.e. due to conflict, persecutions, personal enmity and/or natural disaster/environmental disaster. Bundervoet T. Internal Migration in Ethiopia: Evidence from a Quantitative and Qualitative Research Study. Washington, DC: World Bank Group; 2018. Available from: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/428111562239161418/Internal-Migration-in-Ethiopia-Evidence-from-a-Quantitative-and-Qualitative-Research-Study>.

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the Regional Data Hub (RDH) for the East and Horn of Africa (EHOA) launched a multistage research project aimed at better understanding the experiences, decision-making, perceptions and expectations of young Ethiopians² along the Eastern Route regarding their migration projects. The project aims to investigate the nexus between decision-making, migrant expectations and realities on the ground by interviewing migrants leaving the Horn towards the Arab Peninsula. Although a reasonable body of work examining migrants' decision-making processes exists, most of this research was conducted outside of the EHOA region. A more nuanced understanding of the migrants' decision to migrate will help inform strategy and programmatic planning for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other humanitarian and development actors in the region.

Obock, Djibouti, and Bossaso, Puntland, were selected as the main study sites – both being gateways to Yemen, they receive a large number of Ethiopian migrants travelling on the Eastern Route.³ The project involved a quantitative phase in each study location and a qualitative phase in Obock only,⁴ during which semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample of young migrants. To capture both outward, return and re-migration movements, three different types of individuals migrating along the Eastern Route to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) were included in the sample: (i) individuals migrating for the first time, (ii) individuals who have attempted or successfully completed this journey before; and (iii) individuals who have decided to stop their journey and return to Ethiopia. The final phase of the project will target communities of high emigration in Ethiopia, where both returning, re-migrating and potential migrants will be interviewed to get a more comprehensive picture of their motivations, perceptions and expectations as well as a better understanding of the environment in which migration is taking place.

2. Young Ethiopians are defined as young adults between 15 and 29 years old. Interviews with migrants younger than 15 years were not conducted for ethical reasons.

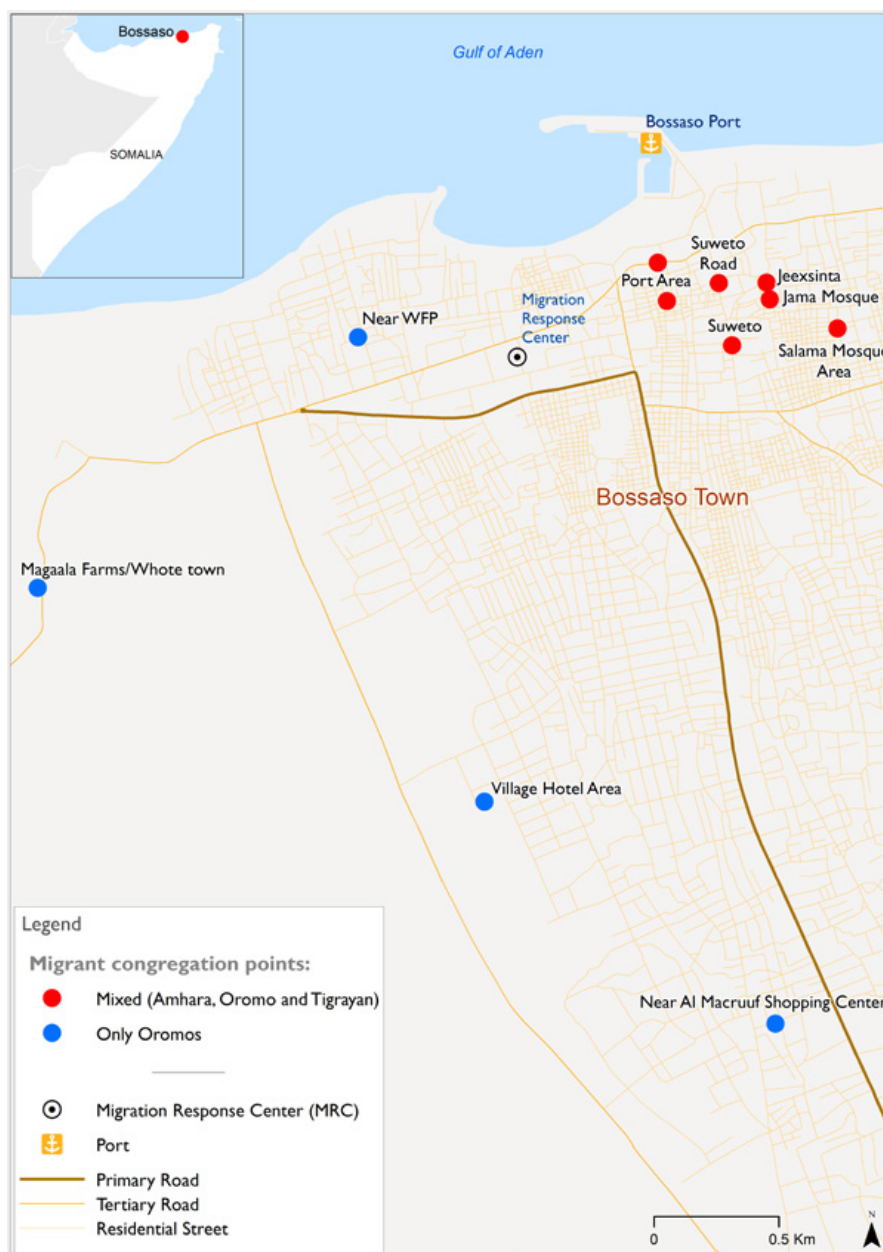
3. Between January and December 2019, around 140,000 arrivals of migrants were recorded at the five Flow Monitoring Points along the southern coast of Yemen. Bossaso was the main area of departure (62%), followed by Obock (38%). Migrant crossings continued at a sustained pace between January and March 2020, witnessing a significant decline afterwards due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2019 Mobility Overview in the East and Horn of Africa and the Arab Peninsula, January–December 2019. Nairobi: IOM Regional Data Hub for East and Horn of Africa; 2020. Available from: https://ronairobi.iom.int/sites/default/files/document/publications/IOM_RoMR_2019.pdf

4. A qualitative phase was scheduled in Bossaso too but could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Impact of COVID-19 Movement Restrictions on Migrants along the Eastern Corridor (as of 30 June). Available from: https://ronairobi.iom.int/sites/default/files/document/publications/IOM_Eastern%20Corridor%20Migrant%20Situation_15072020.pdf

While the research is still under way, this document presents the findings for the second stage of the project conducted in Bossaso, Puntland, in March and April 2020. Structured surveys were administered to a sample of 1,526⁵ young adults between 15 and 29 years old. Surveys were conducted in 10 locations across Bossaso including: the port area, Suweto, Salama Mosque Area, Suweto Road, Jeexsinta, Jama Mosque Area, World Food Programme office area, Magaala Farms (Whote town), Al Macruuf Shopping Centre and Village Hotel Area.

Main findings are presented as factsheets on five specific population sub-groups of interest: first-time migrants, re-migrating and returning individuals, young women and former internal migrants (including former IDPs). Each factsheet presents a profile of the population group based on multiple indicators including the sociodemographic characteristics of migrants, the place of origin in Ethiopia and intended destination in the KSA, the livelihood conditions at home and main drivers of migration, the decision-making process (including the role of families and friends), the awareness and willingness to take risks and future intentions. Additional indicators on previous journeys, the role of returnees and/or family members who already migrated to the KSA as providers of information as well as the consequences of the decision to return were added to the profiles of re-migrating and returning migrants.

Map 1: Data Collection Sites By Migrants' Regions of Origin (Bossaso, Puntland)*



* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

5. The total number of individuals asked for interviews is 1,532, of whom 1,526 volunteered to be interviewed and completed the full questionnaire, with a refusal rate of less than 1 per cent.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The Eastern Route – to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries via Djibouti and Somalia – is one of the three main international exit routes in Ethiopia.⁶ Although exact figures on outward migration are largely unknown,⁷ the World Bank cites the 2017 stock of Ethiopian emigrants to be at around 850,000 – of which around 20 per cent in the KSA alone.⁸ According to figures provided by the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), these estimates appear to be largely conservative and the total number of Ethiopian migrants abroad is closer to 3 million – 17 per cent of whom are in the KSA.⁹ Data on flows are also very limited; between 2008 and 2014, MoLSA estimates that around 480,000 Ethiopians migrated to the Middle East through legal channels – 79 per cent of whom to the KSA.¹⁰ However, most movements are believed to have been irregular, with MoLSA further estimating that regular labour represents only 30–40 per cent of all Ethiopians in the GCC countries.¹¹

IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) data confirm the importance of the Eastern Route in the context of the EHoA region and Ethiopia: of the approximately 753,000 movements tracked through the region in 2019, 63 per cent were observed along the Eastern Route alone, towards Yemen (which is ultimately a transit country to reach the KSA) and to the KSA and other GCC countries (nearly 475,000, with a 50% increase compared to 2018).¹² In line with previous observations, Ethiopian nationals were by far the majority of those moving along the Eastern Route (95%) and Flow Monitoring (FM) teams in coastal points in Yemen confirm the arrival of around 140,000 migrants from the EHoA between January and December 2019, nearly all Ethiopians.

The sea corridor that connects the town of Bossaso and the small coastal maritime centres on the Somalia side – including Bargaal, Bareedo, Tooxin and Xaabo – to Mukalla and the smaller seaports of Al Shihir and Qusay'ir on the Yemen coast are known as the Bossaso - Mukalla corridor and have a longstanding history of trade and mobility.¹³ In 2019, they accounted for nearly 65 per cent of all arrivals tracked by FM teams on the Yemeni coast.

Economic factors are at the root of migration flows along the Eastern Route: nearly all movements observed at IOM EHoA Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) had economic drivers and mainly pulled towards the KSA. This is because in the GCC countries and particularly in the KSA, there is a strong structural demand for the low-skilled labour that Ethiopian men and women undertake. This demand allows for the rapid absorption of newly arrived irregular migrants into employment within weeks or often even days of their arrival,¹⁴ making flows not particularly sensitive to changes in immigration policies – Ethiopian migration to the KSA continues despite strict border control and mass deportations – and risks along the route, including the conflict in Yemen.¹⁵

According to IOM FM data on arrivals to Yemen, migrant crossings continued at a sustained pace throughout 2019 and between January and March 2020, witnessing a significant decline only since the emergence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Between January and December 2019, around 87,000 arrivals of migrants were recorded at the four Flow Monitoring Points of Al-Khabyah, Ber Ali, Eyn Bamabad and Tajamo SharjAl-Falahein along the southern coast of Yemen facing Bossaso, Puntland.¹⁶ An additional 19,750 migrants arrived between January and June 2020. During the month of June, only around 750 arrivals were observed.

6. Three main migration routes out of Ethiopia exist: the first includes movements through Sudan and sometimes Egypt to Libya (Northern Route); the second includes migration towards Yemen and the KSA via Djibouti and Somalia as international transit countries (Eastern Route); and the third one entails movement towards South Africa via Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi as the main international transit countries (Southern Route).

7. Obtaining an accurate picture of the current migration situation in Ethiopia is extremely difficult. Limitations of migration data include the existence of different definitions for different categories of migrants, and the lack of documentation on irregular migration.

8. World Bank staff estimates based on UN Population Division, OECD, the Australian Bureau Statistics, the German Federal Statistical Office, the UK Office of National Statistics, and the US Census Bureau. Available from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.TOTL?locations=ET>.

According to UNDESA and UNICEF, the crude net migration estimate (per 1,000 population) in Ethiopia is of -0.11 for the period 2015–2020. Available from: <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>

9. Presentation by Zerihun Yeshitla, Illegal Labour Recruitment Prevention Team Leader at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs at a workshop organised by GAATW, CVM, Freedom Fund and Agar in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 16 July, 2019.

10. Ibid.

11. MoLSA data in Frouws B., A certain catalyst: an overview of the (mixed) migration and development debate with special focus on the Horn of Africa region. Nairobi 2015, The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS). Available from: <http://www.mixedmigration.org/resource/a-certain-catalyst/>

12. Elaborations of DTM FM data, January–December 2019, Nairobi, IOM Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa.

13. Nisar Majid and Khalif Abdurahman, Mobility, Trust and Exchange: Somalia and Yemen's Cross-border Maritime Economy, Rift Valley Institute, 2019. Available from: <http://riftvalley.net/sites/default/files/publicationdocuments/Mobility%2C%20Trust%20and%20Exchange%20by%20Nisar%20Majid%20and%20Khalif%20Abdirahman%20-%20RV1%20X-Border%20Project%20%282019%29.pdf>

14. Bina Fernandez, Irregular Migration from Ethiopia to the Gulf States, Gulf Research Center, Cambridge 2017. Available from: <https://gulfmigration.org/media/pubs/book/BookChapters/GLMM%20-%20IM%20Volume%20-%20Chapter%20XIII%20-%20Extract%20-%202017-05-19.pdf>

15. In February 2019, the UN declared that the humanitarian crisis in Yemen continues to be the worst in the world, with close to 80 per cent of the population in need of assistance and protection and the number of individuals in acute need 27% higher than in 2018, when the Yemeni crisis was already considered to be the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. Available from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/02/1032811>

16. Migrant arrivals and Yemeni returns from Saudi Arabia in 2019, Flow Monitoring Points, DTM IOM Yemen. Available from: <https://migration.iom.int/reports/yemen-%E2%80%94-flow-monitoring-points-migrant-arrivals-and-yemeni-returns-saudi-arabia-october-2019>

Conditions in the Middle East for Ethiopian migrants, both men and women, are very challenging. A growing literature documents the exploitation that female domestic workers face in the Middle East, including delayed or partial payment of salaries, food deprivation, psychological, physical and sexual abuse, confinement and social isolation.¹⁷ At the same time, there is evidence of the many hardships faced by Ethiopian male migrants, who are mostly employed as guards or daily labourers, or on farms. Verbal violence, refusal by employers to pay wages, discrimination and cultural shocks were all challenges faced by Ethiopian workers while abroad.¹⁸ Not only is this a consequence of irregular migration,¹⁹ but also of the kafala system of sponsorship that binds migrants to sponsoring employers.

In addition to being informal, economically driven and highly risky, migration to the Middle East tends to be temporary, meaning that most migrants return to Ethiopia after a few years abroad. In the last five years, due to the regularization of the KSA labour market, returns have mainly been involuntary – IOM estimates that around 390,000 Ethiopians have returned to Ethiopia since the 2017 decree on irregular migrants²⁰ was issued, 99 per cent of whom returned involuntarily.²¹ Given this sudden and unprepared forced repatriation, the reintegration of these returnees has been painfully slow and largely unaddressed.²² According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), most returnees face severe difficulties in reintegrating, as they return empty-handed because they used their earnings for living expenses and remittances. Many of them also experienced severe hardships during their stay and during return, causing medical and psychological conditions.²³

Because of its intrinsic characteristics, migration along the Eastern Route is only bound to increase, as more young job-seekers enter the labour market,²⁴ move from rural into urban areas²⁵ and benefit from the circle of remittances and/or transnational networks.²⁶ According to MoLSA, main regions of origin and transit for irregular migration include: Addis Ababa, Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPRS).²⁷ Numbers collected by the Labour and Social Affairs Bureaus at local level confirm an increasing trend in illegal migration towards Arab countries, especially among youth, in many zones of the country – including Bale, West Hararghe and South Wollo.²⁸ This survey indicates that the Eastern Route – with Bossaso as the main transit point – is increasingly used by migrants originating from specific central eastern areas such as Dire Dawa; Harari; Bale, East and West Hararghe in Oromia; Zone 3 in Afar; North Wello and North Shewa in Amhara,²⁹ which points to consolidated transnational community networks as well as smuggling networks in these areas.

17. Women's labour migration on the African-Middle East Corridor: experiences of migrant domestic workers from Ethiopia, Meaza Ayalew, CVM Ethiopia, Geremew Aklessa, CVM Ethiopia, and Nkirote Laiboni, Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), Addis Ababa; 2019. Available from: https://www.gaawt.org/publications/Ethiopia_Country_Report.pdf

18. Situations and Needs Assessment of Ethiopian returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, International Labour Organization, Geneva 2018. Available from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-addis_ababa/documents/publication/wcms_670539.pdf

19. A migrant cannot change his or her employer/job or leave the country except with written consent from the sponsor, along with a new sponsorship from a new employer and approval from the concerned authorities. Those who do so without permission are considered undocumented or illegal and liable for imprisonment and deportation.

20. Migrants can become irregular in five ways: entry through unauthorized border crossings, 'overstayers' on temporary or tourist visas, entry with "free visas," through irregular employment, and at birth, when children are born to irregular migrants. The distinction between legal and irregular migration is often blurred as migrants can easily switch from one condition to another. Bina Fernandez, cited.

21. https://ronairobi.iom.int/sites/default/files/document/publications/IOM%20RDH%20Eastern%20Route%20Research_Background%20Analysis_Obock%20Djibouti.pdf

22. De Regt, M. & Tafesse, M. (2016). Deported before experiencing the good sides of migration: Ethiopians returning from Saudi Arabia. *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*. 9:2, 228-242, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17528631.2015.1083178>

23. Situations and Needs Assessment of Ethiopian returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, cited.

24. Ethiopia has a population of almost 120 million, 39% of which is younger than 35 years. According to Ethiopian MoLSA, as of mid-2019 there were approximately 11 million youth job-seekers, with a projected increase of two million each year. Zerihun Yeshitla, cited.

25. Rural-urban migration is often the first step towards international migration, as urban migrants usually experience welfare improvement, which may give them the means and aspirations to migrate. Frouws B., cited.

26. Migrant local and transnational social networks play an important role in triggering or structuring migration. Case studies suggest that once migration is added to a community's social capital it is more likely than other forms of capital to induce migration. Girmachew Adugna, Migration patterns and emigrants' transnational activities: comparative findings from two migrant origin areas in Ethiopia, 2019. CMS 7, 5 (2019). Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-018-0107-1>

27. Main zones/sub-cities of origin and transit are: Addis Ketema, Arada, Kirkos, Kolfe, Lidata, Yeka in Addis Ababa; Eastern Tigray, North Western Tigray, Southern Tigray in Tigray; North Gondar, North Shewa, North Wollo, Oromia, South Wollo in Amhara; Arsi, Bale, East Hararghe, Jimma, West Arsi, West Hararghe in Oromia; and Gurage, Hadiya, Halab, Kembata, Selti, Tembaro, Wolayta in SNNPR. Zerihun Yeshitla, cited.

28. About Migration, Seven Researches of the five Ethiopian Universities on the roots causes for migration, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Addis Ababa, 2017. Available from: https://www.aics.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ABOUT-MIGRATION_2017_AICS.pdf

29. In addition to destination countries' migration policies and historical links, geographical proximity and transnational migration networks are important factors in explaining patterns of migration at sub-regional level. For instance, north-western regions, like Gondar and Gojam in Amhara, show patterns of migrating along the Northern Route through Sudan to Libya (and then Europe, North America and Australia); southern regions, like Kembata and Hadiya in SNNPR, display a stronger preference towards the Southern Route; while movements from the eastern regions tend to occur along the Eastern Route. Girmachew Adugna, cited.

BOSSASO SAMPLE

Figure 1: Sample distribution

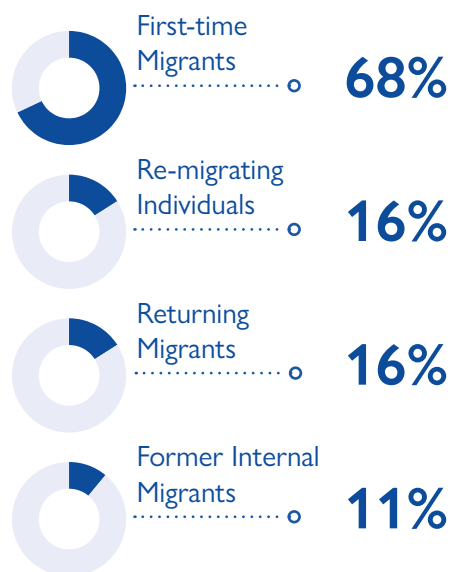


Figure 2: Education level completed by sex*

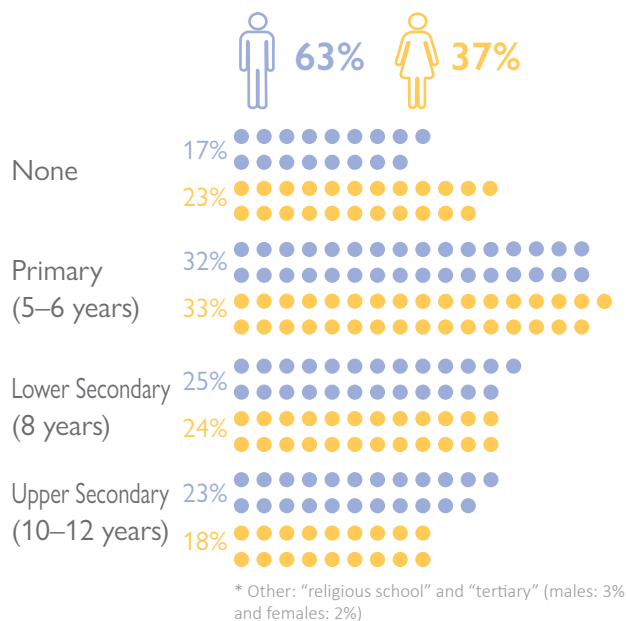


Figure 3: Age group by sex

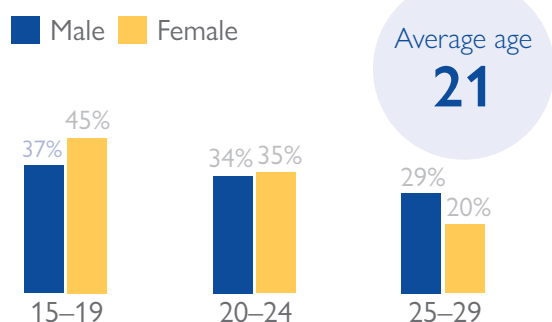
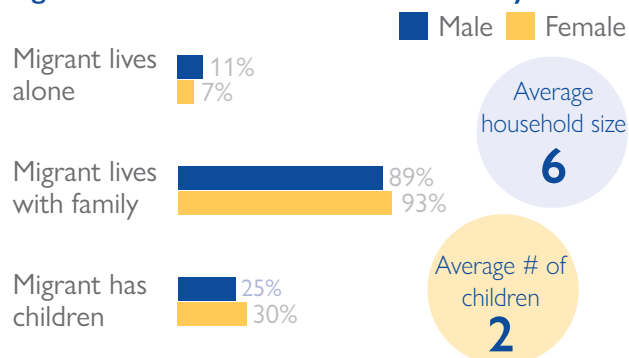


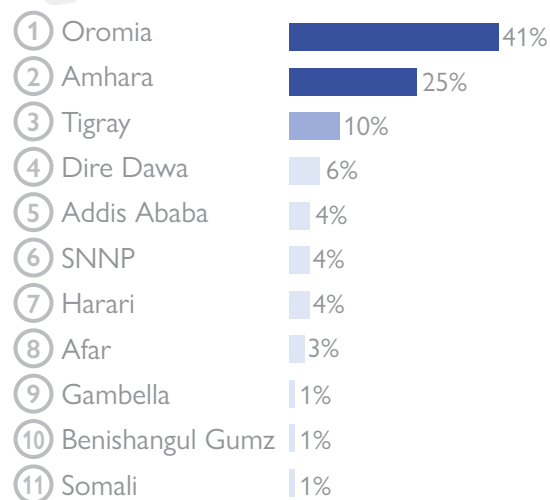
Figure 4: Household size and children by sex



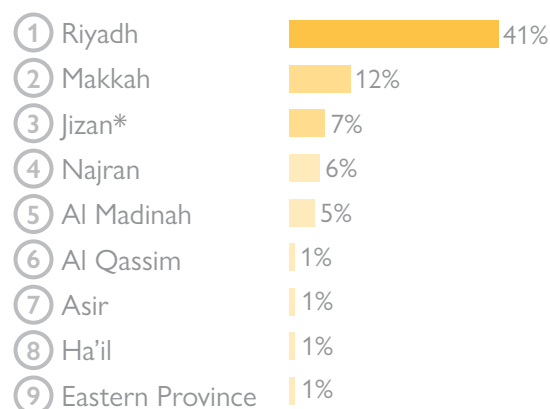
Migrants walking in the desert near Burco, Somaliland. Photo: © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

Map 2: Regions of Origin in Ethiopia and Area of Destination in the KSA*

Regions of Origin in Ethiopia



Regions of Intended Destination in the KSA



25%
are unsure of
their destination
in the KSA

* Jizan includes participants headed to the border region known as 'Ragu'.

* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

A woman wearing a pink headscarf and a blue dress with a colorful geometric pattern is looking out of a window. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange color with a faint image of a boat's interior.

01

FIRST-TIME MIGRANTS

Figure 5: First-time migrants' sample

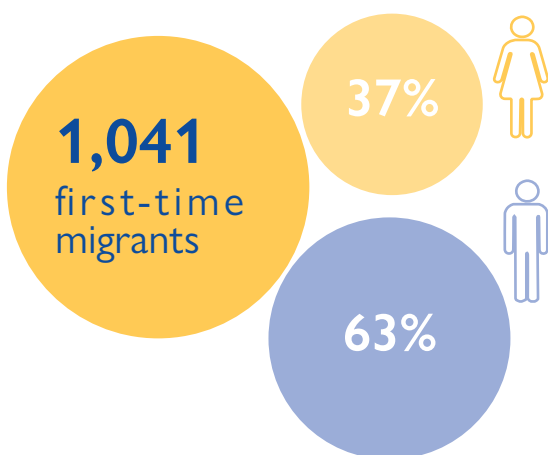


Figure 6: First-time migrants' age group by sex

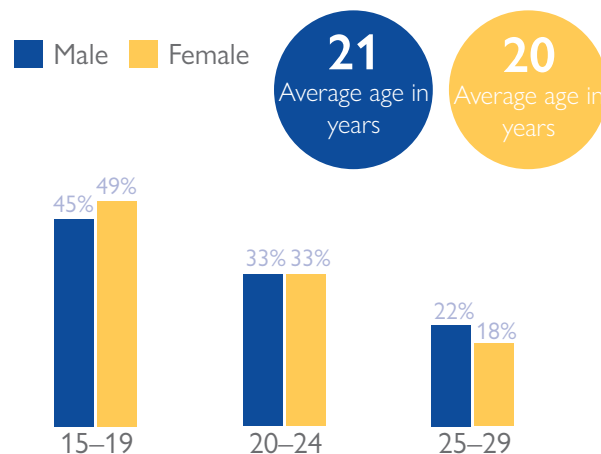


Figure 7: First-time migrants' education level completed by sex

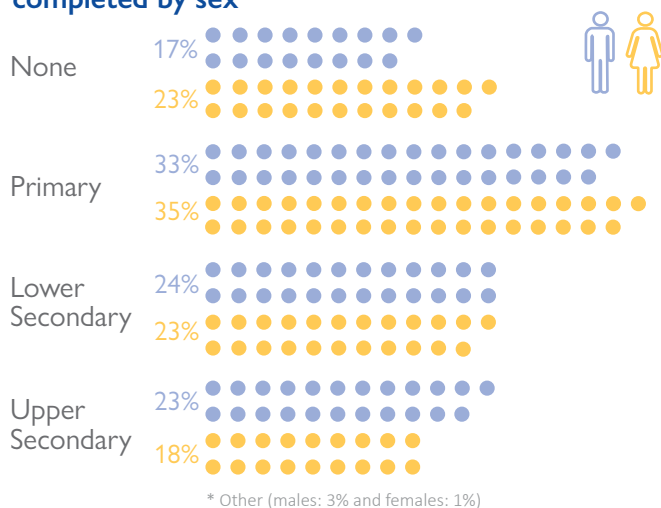
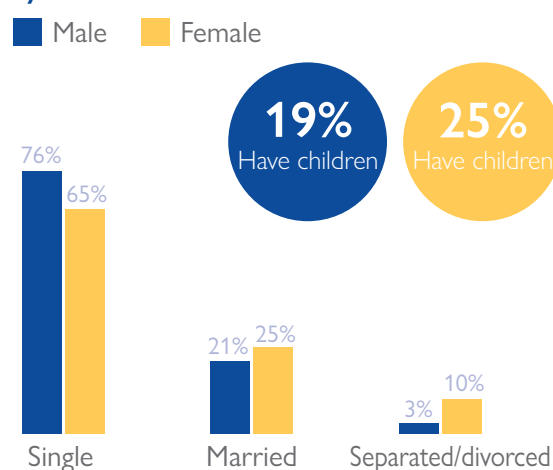


Figure 8: First-time migrants' marital status by sex



DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

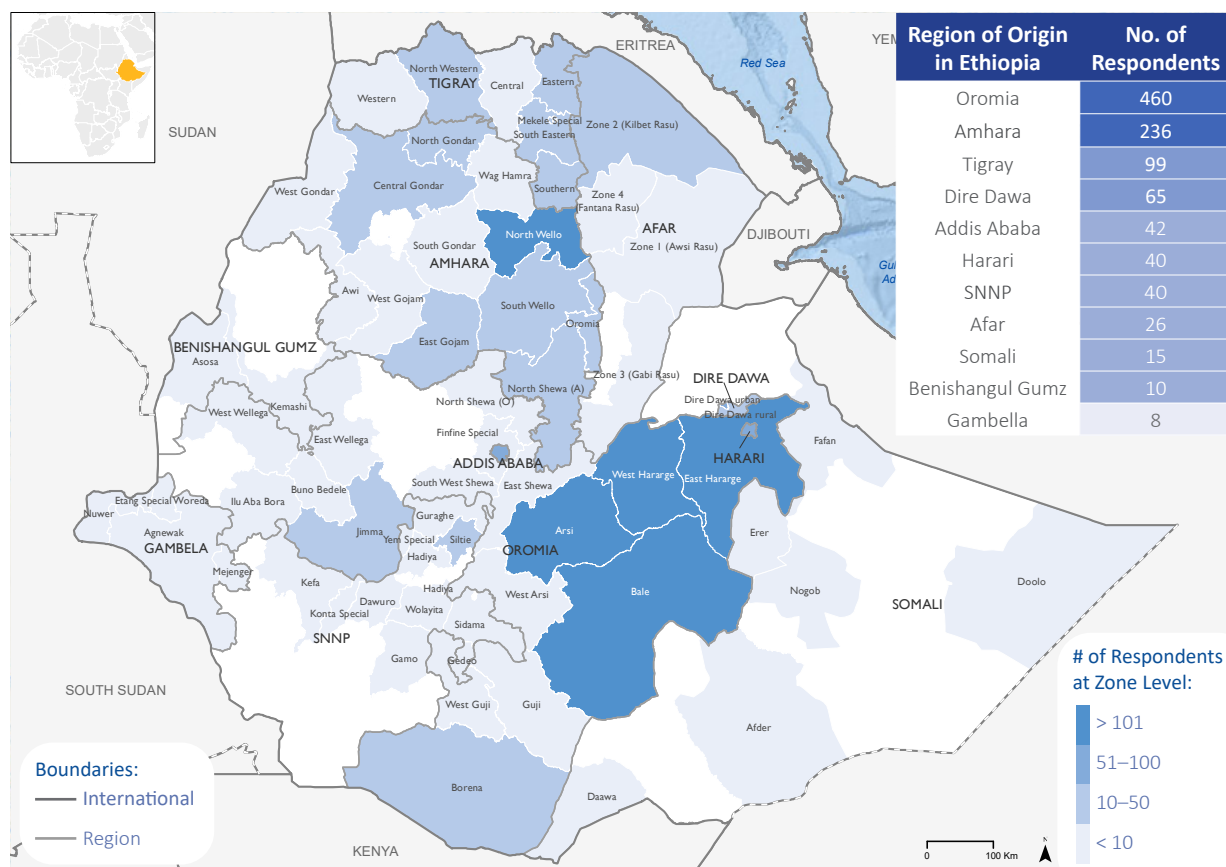
First-time migrants are mostly men (63%), single (72%), with low levels of education (20% have no education and 34% have gone no further than primary school). Upper secondary school is often the threshold for considering alternatives, including migration, especially if boys/girls are not performing well in school and are at risk of failing the exams.³⁰ The higher prevalence of men and boys on this migratory route can be explained by the fact that women are more likely to use legal channels for migration, including the use of registered recruitment agencies.³¹ The average age of first-time migrants is 21 years; 22 per cent of them already have an average of 2.3 children – with a higher prevalence among older migrants and women. Women are also more likely to be married, separated or divorced (35% versus 24% of men).³²

30. According to the Ethiopia DHS 2016, there is a very low enrolment rate in upper secondary (26%) together with a very low completion rate (13%). Apparently, this is where the investment in education becomes not – or somewhat less – convenient compared to other options, including migration. Ethiopia Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2016, cited. Several studies also indicate that individuals with lower educational qualifications are more vulnerable to irregular migration. About Migration, 7 Researches of the 5 Ethiopian Universities on the roots causes for migration, cited.

31. Legal female migration from Ethiopia to the KSA is relatively recent but largely outnumbers male migration. Data from the MoLSA show that between 2008 and 2014 women accounted for about 95% of all documented migration to the KSA. See Girmachew Adugna, Ethiopian female domestic labour migration to the Middle East: patterns, trends, and drivers, cited.

IOM data on departure from the Horn of Africa, arrivals to Yemen and post-arrival registration data from the KSA also show that females account for only around 20% of migrants' arrivals as well as involuntary returns due to deportation and irregular migration. Return of Ethiopian migrants from the KSA, Regional Data Hub- 5 May 2017–31 December 2019, Nairobi 2019. A region on the move, 2019 Mobility Overview in the East and Horn of Africa and the Arab Peninsula Available from: <https://ronairobi.iom.int/regional-data-hub-rdh>. IOM Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa, Nairobi 2020. Available from: <https://migration.iom.int/reports/east-and-horn-africa-%E2%80%94-region-move-%E2%80%93-2019-mobility-overview-east-and-horn-africa-and-arab>.

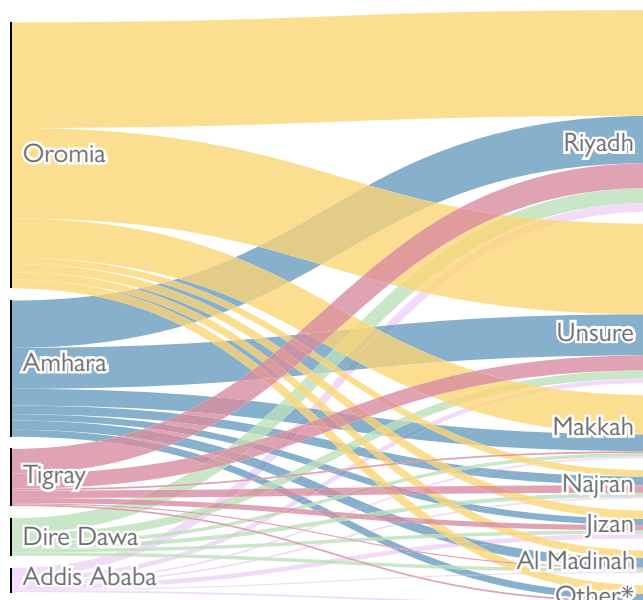
32. On average, women marry about 6.6 years earlier than men. Median age at first marriage is 17.1 years among women and 23.7 years among men at age 25–49. At age 15–19, 17 per cent of females are already married (versus 1% of males) and 5 per cent separated/divorced (versus 1%). Marriage figures for women are 60 per cent and 80 per cent respectively for the 20–24 and 25–29 age-groups (versus 23% and 58% for males) and 6–7 per cent for separated/divorced (versus 3% of males). Ethiopia Demographic Health Survey (DHS) 2016, Central Statistical Office, Addis Ababa; 2017. Available from: <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>

Map 3: First-time Migrants' Zone of Origin in Ethiopia*

* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

The main regions of origin of migrants are Oromia (44%), Amhara (23%) and Tigray (10%). More than one third of movements towards the KSA are intended towards Riyadh (39%), with Makkah (12%) being the only other frequently reported destination. Around one third of migrants (30%) are unsure about their final destination, which can be interpreted as a “I will go wherever I find a job” choice. Regional and sub-regional patterns are also linked to the establishment of transnational networks that encourage chain migration:³³ around 40 per cent of migrants have at least one family member who has migrated to the KSA and, in most cases, their intended destination coincides with the region where relatives have migrated.

Figure 9: First-time migrants' top five regions of origin by intended destinations in the KSA

* 'Other' includes Asir (1.4%), Al Qassim (0.6%), Ha'il (0.6%) and Eastern Province (0.7%)

33. Chain migration, encouraged and/or facilitated by family or network ties, is a common phenomenon. Chain migration is influenced by policies of the country of origin and settlement (for instance policies regarding the definition of who is “family,” or the policy of setting an income bar). The possibility of helping others migrate and the likelihood of chain migration change over time and differ according to class, gender, marital status and legal status. Available from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781118663202.wberen592>

MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION*

Figure 10: First-time migrants' characteristics and drivers of migration



* Respondents were asked to rank their top three reasons for leaving.

Economic motivations are the main driver for migration (77% of first-time migrants mentioned such motivations among the top three drivers of migration and 66% as the main driver), which is expected considering that three quarters of individuals did not have any source of income prior to migration. Of those who did, half earned less than 1,500 Birr per month (45 United States dollars -USD). Daily labour and informal salaried employment are the primary sources of earnings of working migrants, with only 10 per cent formally employed and 17 per cent who can count on farming, although land is often not sufficiently large or productive to support the household. Around half of migrants come from households where members occasionally adopt coping strategies such as skipping meals and/or reducing portions. Conflict or environmental conditions are the second most common push factor.³⁴ Around one third of migrants were pulled to the KSA by the desire to achieve a higher social status – migrants often plan to return to Ethiopia with enough savings to start a business, build a house or, in general, enjoy a 'better life'. Less than 5 per cent of migrants were pushed to migrate by family, their spouse or friends.

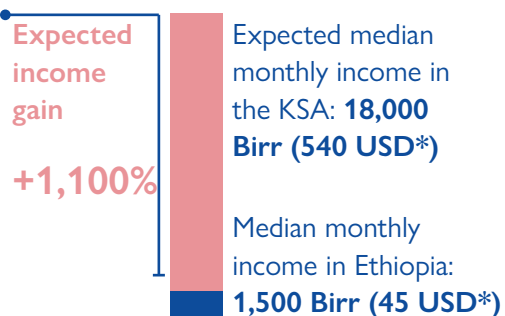
34. In 2018, Ethiopia recorded the third highest number of new displacements worldwide – around 3.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Most displacements are conflict-induced, largely related to ethnic and border-based disputes, such as the contestation of the Oromia-Somali regional border. Droughts and floods are another major cause, especially during the kiremt rainy season. DTM Ethiopia's National Displacement Report 4, IOM February 2020, Addis Ababa; 2019. Available from: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ethiopia-%E2%80%94national-displacement-report-4-february-%E2%80%94march-2020>.

Figure 11: First-time migrants' comparison between actual and expected occupation in the KSA

25% had a source of income in Ethiopia prior to migration

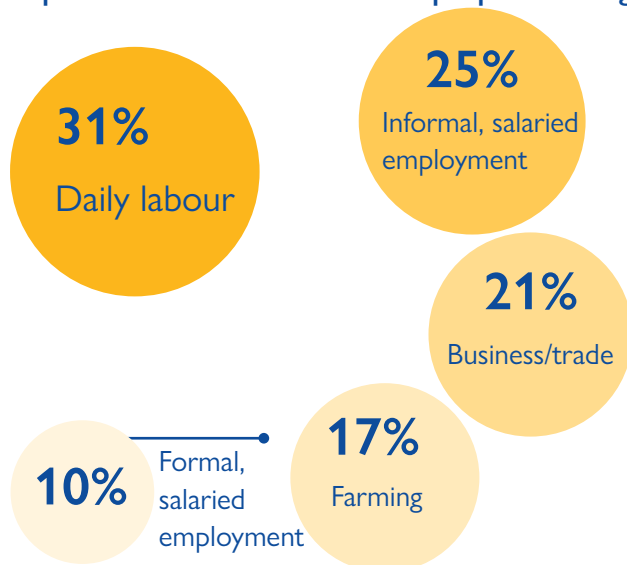


74% deem it 'likely' or 'very likely' to find a job in the KSA

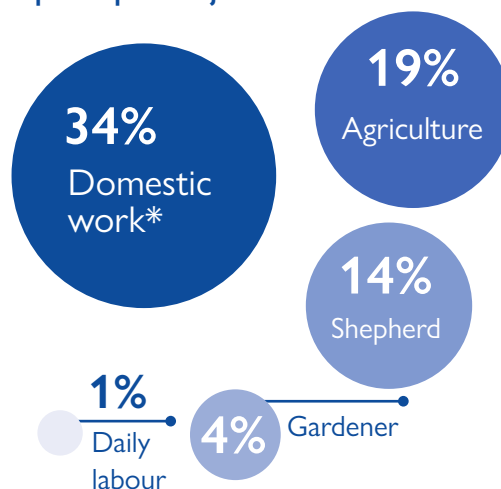


* Exchange rate: 1 USD = 29.5 Birr

Top 5 sources of income in Ethiopia prior to migration



Top 5 expected jobs in the KSA



* Women and girls are the most likely to search for domestic work (56% versus 2% of males).



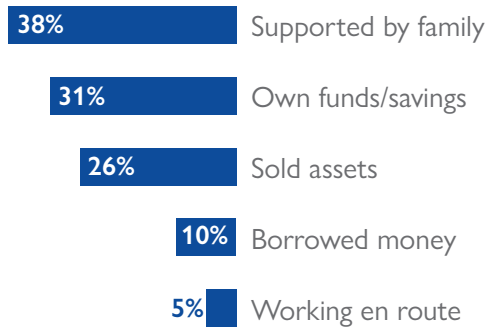
Photo: © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

Half of first-time migrants made the decision to migrate alone. Most (65%) made their migration decision less than one month before departure. Around 20% reported that their decision was 'spontaneous'. Friends were involved more often than family – although families, if informed of the decision, were the main financial contributors to the migrants' journeys. Only around one third of individuals was able to pay for the journey with their own funds; another third had to sell assets (26%) or take on loans (10%). On average, the journey to Bossaso took 23 days and cost 403 USD. Migrants expect to pay 897 USD in total to reach the KSA and nearly all had an idea of the cost before leaving (91%). Nearly all are traveling with a broker.



Figure 12: First-time migrants' financing of the journey*



* Multiple options allowed.

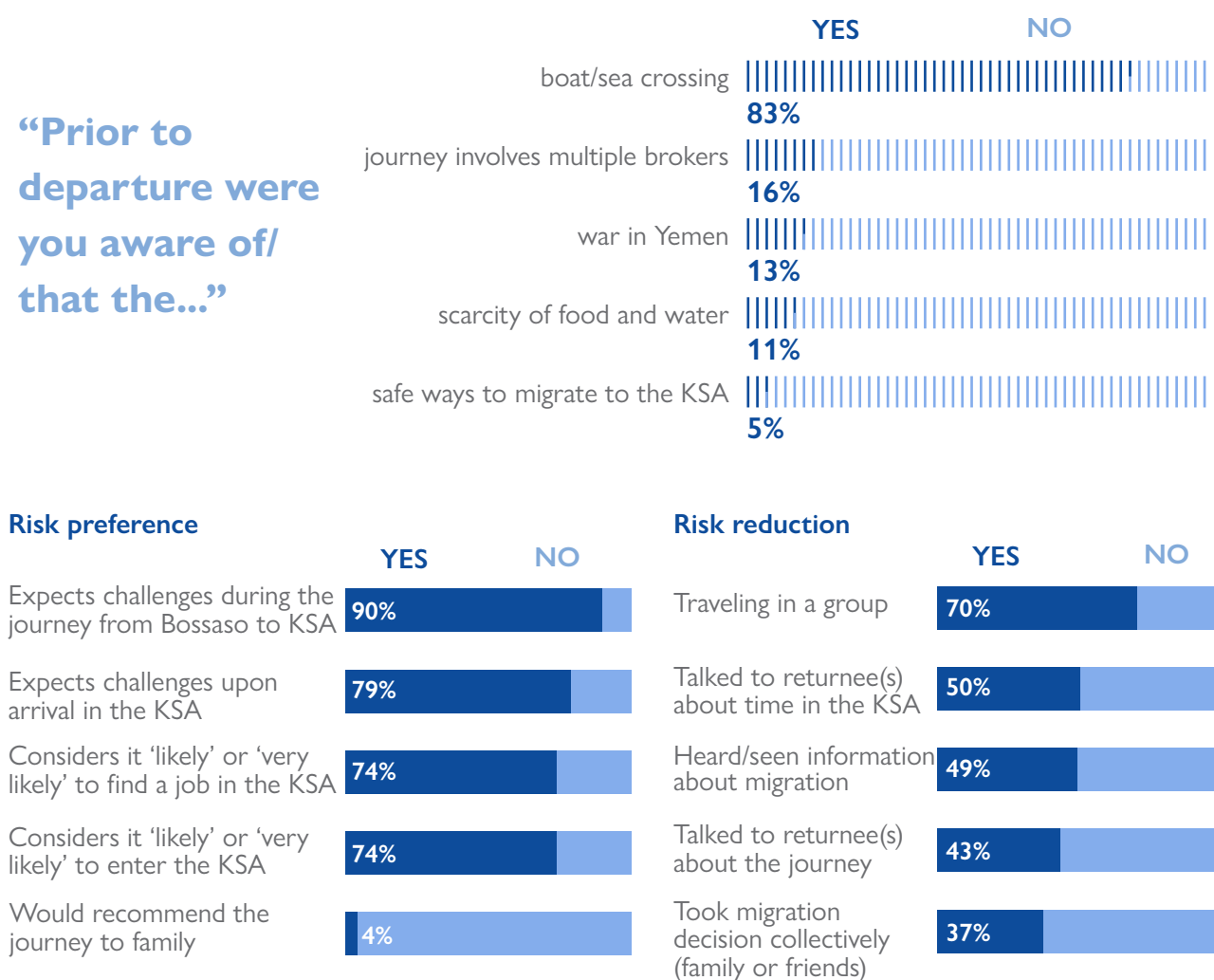


Seventeen year-old stranded migrant from Harar waiting to return to Ethiopia. © IOM Somalia 2020

RISK PERCEPTION, RISK PREFERENCE AND RISK REDUCTION³⁵

Except for knowledge of the boat journey, migrants seem largely unaware of specific risks – less than 15 per cent of migrants said that they were aware of the scarcity of water and food during the journey or of the war in Yemen. Nonetheless, nearly all had experienced problems during their journey to Bossaso and less than 5 per cent would recommend the trip to a family member. Nearly all migrants expect further challenges during the rest of the journey and some also upon arrival in the KSA. Nevertheless, most feel confident that they will enter the country and find a job: only 5 per cent of migrants deem it ‘unlikely’ or ‘impossible’ versus around 75 per cent who deem it ‘likely’ or ‘very likely.’³⁶ Migrants expect to be employed as shepherds, domestic workers, drivers or in agriculture and construction – except for women and girls who primarily aim for jobs as domestic workers (72%) – with an expected monthly median income of around 450 USD.³⁷ Among measures to reduce the risk, around 40 per cent of migrants took the decision to migrate collectively, either with family members or friends, and around half talked to returnees about their journey and time in the KSA. Travelling with family or in a group of known people was also very commonly reported (70%), although it is unclear whether this was a deliberate risk-reduction strategy or the result of a group arrangement with the broker.

Figure 13: First-time migrants’ risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction



35. Risk perception refers to migrants’ awareness of challenges along the route, risk preference refers to their willingness to take these risks according to the perceived outcome (reaching the KSA and finding a job), while risk reduction includes potential precautions against these challenges, whether taken voluntarily or not.

36. Two additional factors should be considered to explain why migrants are willing to take risks. When individuals believe that some advantages are only achievable when taking risks, they may resort to non-rational strategies – such as faith or hope – for dealing with risk. Jens O. Zinn (2019) The meaning of risk-taking – key concepts and dimensions, *Journal of Risk Research*, 22:1, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/13669877.2017.1351465. Many migrants regarded a strong belief in God as an important factor that could minimize their probabilities of an adverse outcome. Similarly, hope and optimism made them willing to engage in high-risk behaviour despite acknowledging the reality of possible adverse outcomes.

37. Although it is worth remembering that only around 30 per cent of individuals had a source before embarking on current migration.

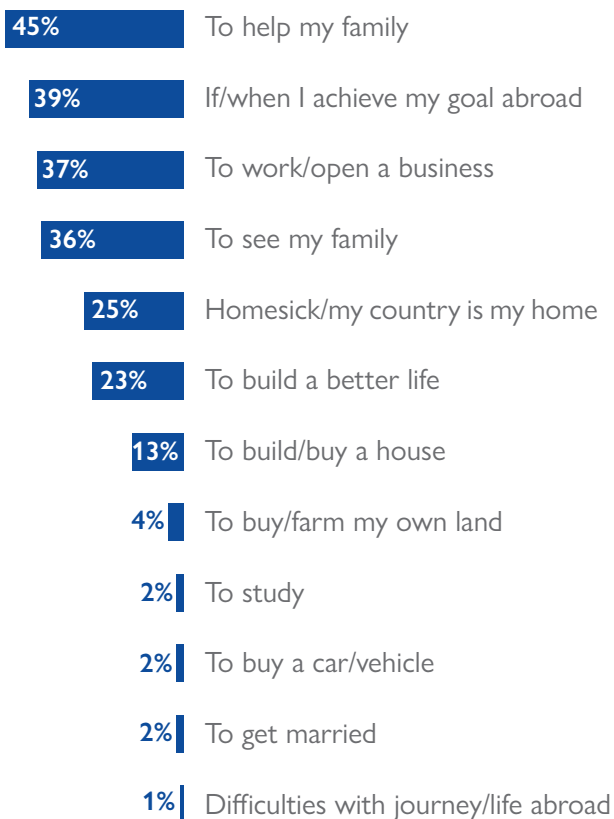
THE FUTURE

87%

of migrants plan
to return home

Only 13 per cent of migrants are planning on 'not returning home'. The issue of return is very much dependent on the expectations of the migration outcome: one out of five migrants linked the expectation to the generic achievement of their goal (39%), one out of three specifically mentioned the desire to start a business (37%), build a house (13%) or buy and/or farm land (4%). Homesickness (25%) and the desire to see family (36%) are also very strong pull factors for return. Only 1 per cent mentioned negative push-factors related to the journey or life in the KSA, while 45 per cent of migrants want to return to help their family and 4 per cent expressed the desire to get married or study.

Figure 14: First-time migrants' reasons to return home



IOM water point © IOM Somalia 2020





02

RE-MIGRATING INDIVIDUALS

Figure 15: Re-migrating individuals' sample

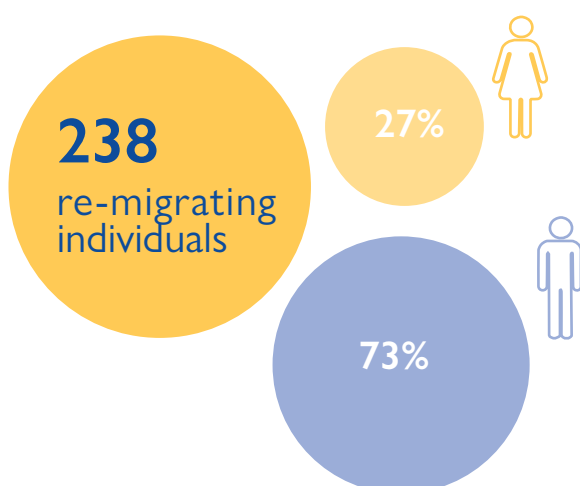


Figure 16: Re-migrating individuals' age group by sex

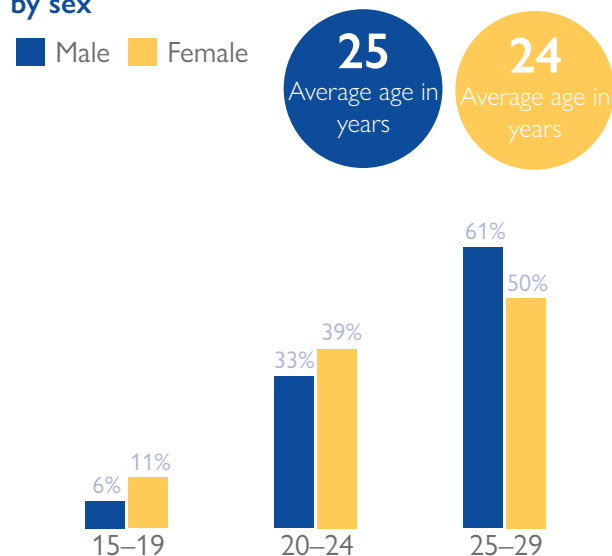


Figure 17: Re-migrating individuals' education level completed by sex*

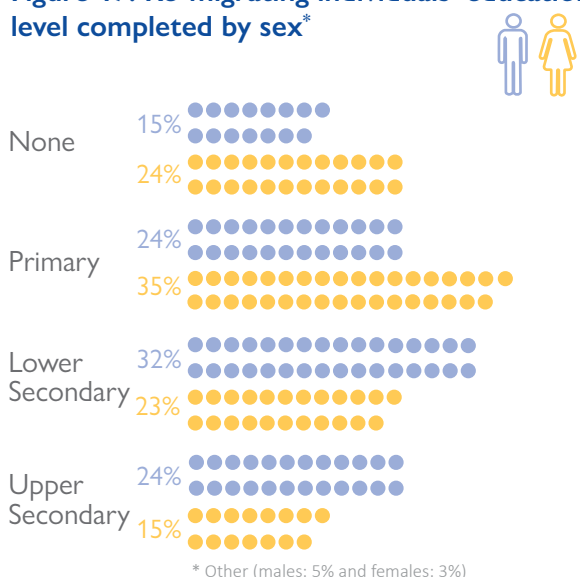
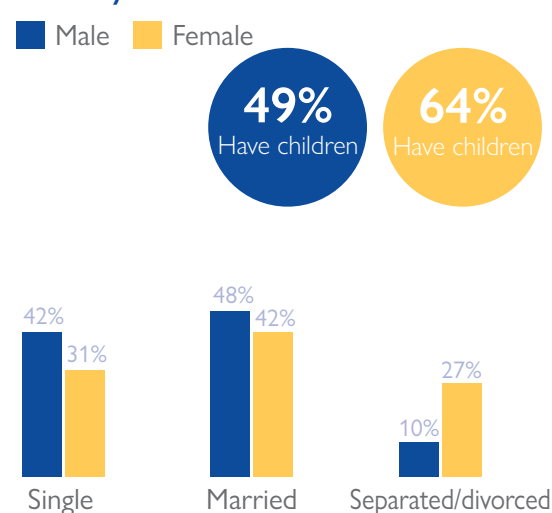


Figure 18: Re-migrating individuals' marital status by sex



DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

Re-migrating individuals are mostly men (73%) and relatively older compared to first-time migrants (58% are older than 24 years). This age difference – which is not surprising, considering that half of individuals have already attempted or completed the journey to the KSA at least twice – affects their marital status as well as their likelihood of having children. Women, especially, tend to have children and be separated or divorced – both conditions potentially acting as triggering factors.³⁸ Re-migrating men display higher levels of education than other male migrants: around 60 per cent have completed lower secondary school or above – the figure is 45% for first-time migrants. Women's levels of education were lower on average.

38. In some cases, the older age at marriage and the high incidence of divorces could be an outcome of migration or the intention to migrate rather than its cause. Assefa Admassie; Nuru, Seid; Ferede, Tadele. Migration and forced labour: an analysis on Ethiopian workers. International Labour Organization, ILO Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Addis Ababa: ILO, 2017. Available from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-addis_ababa/documents/publication/wcms_621555.pdf

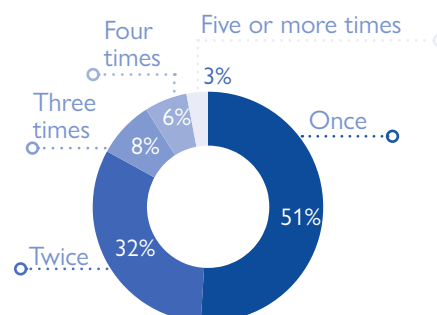
PREVIOUS JOURNEYS³⁹

Half of the migrants have already attempted the journey to the KSA at least twice before their current migration (49%) – with nearly 20 per cent having done so at least four times. Repeating journeys is less common for women:⁴⁰ multiple journeys are physically challenging, and women are more likely to employ regular channels for migration and/or find employment in the KSA and less likely to be deported.⁴¹ Migrants tend to travel along the same route,⁴² the most mentioned alternative being Djibouti (mentioned by 34% of people who changed route). Half of the migrants took 21 days or less to reach the KSA and spent 835 USD or less.

49% have already attempted the journey to the KSA **at least twice**

66% are travelling along the **same route** of previous migration

Figure 19: Re-migrating individuals' number of previous journeys to the KSA



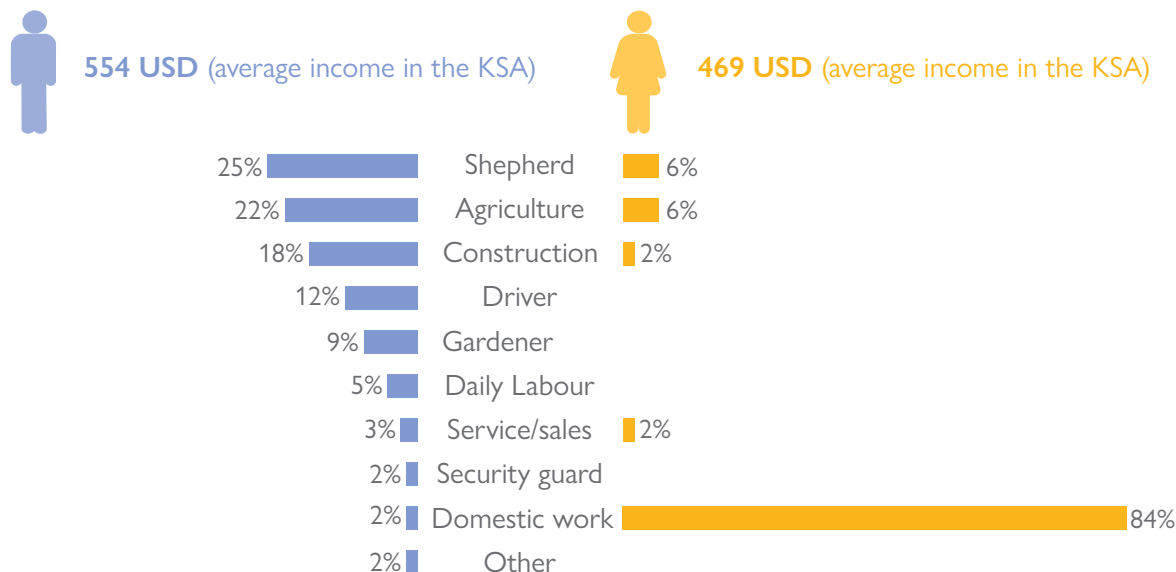
TIME SPENT IN THE KSA

81% have **entered** the KSA and **found a job**

54% of them stayed in the KSA **more than one year**

92% were **deported** from the KSA

Figure 20: Re-migrating individuals' employment in the KSA, income and occupation



39. Note that all information on previous journeys may be affected by a recall bias because individuals do not remember previous events or experiences accurately or omit details. The accuracy and volume of memories may also be influenced by subsequent events and experiences.

40. Most women have attempted to reach the KSA only once before the current journey (around 60% versus 49% of men). Of those who managed to reach Saudi Arabia, around 80 per cent had been deported versus 96 per cent of men.

41. See Young women on the move factsheet. According to DTM data, around 72 per cent of male returnees from the KSA were unemployed there, versus 40 per cent of female returnees. Most women and girls working in the KSA are employed as domestic workers (60%). 2019 A region on the move, DTM IOM, cited.

42. Most migrants tend to migrate along the same route followed during previous journeys and are not willing to introduce any change. Their conservative attitude can be linked to a very high rate of success – around 80 per cent managed to enter the KSA, nearly all of whom found a job – but also to the fact that most communities have only one broker. Even where there is more than one, changing brokers is hard since brokers tend to establish very strong linkages with the territory where they operate or the migrants they smuggle. As a general pattern, smaller-scale smugglers are either ethnically linked to the territories where they operate or share ethnic or linguistic ties with the migrants, which enables them to establish and secure a 'reliable' connection with the migrants in an otherwise unregulated market. Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. New York: UNDOC; 2018. Available from: https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glosom/GLOSOM_2018_web_small.pdf.

The outcome of previous journeys was successful for most migrants: around 80 per cent managed to enter the KSA, and nearly all found a job (94%). The most common types of employment were in agriculture and herding, with 20 per cent of migrants working as shepherds and 17 per cent in agriculture. Domestic work was the main source of earnings for women and girls (84%). Only 3 per cent found work in services or sales. Men earned an average of 554 USD monthly (versus 496 USD for women) and reported a wider differential across wages, reflecting a greater variety of jobs. More than half of migrants spent at least one year in the KSA (56%) and nearly all returned to Ethiopia because they were deported.

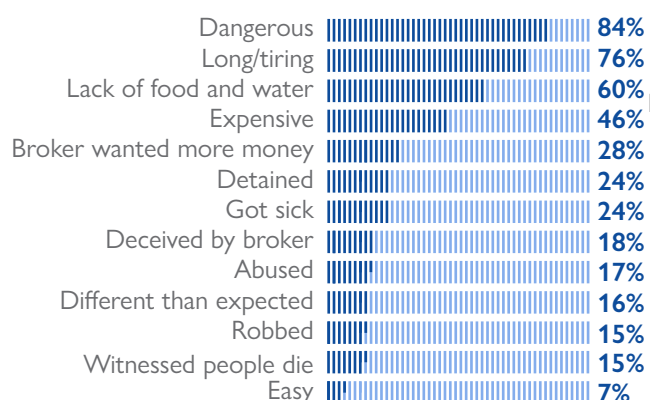
MIGRANTS' ROLE IN PROVIDING INFORMATION



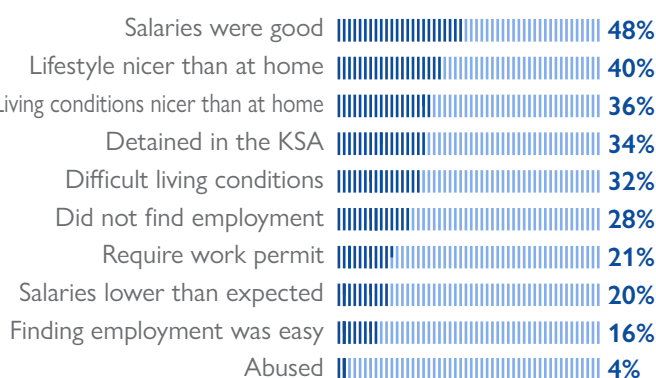
Nearly 60 per cent of re-migrating individuals were asked to provide information about their journey or the time they spent in the KSA upon returning to their communities of origin and all shared their experience. Most migrants (84%) reported a difficult journey, the main reasons being its length, the lack of food and water and the dangers, including detention (24%) and/or abuse (17%), deception by the broker (18%) or additional request for money (28%). Around 15 per cent of migrants recalled 'people dying' along the route. The feedback is more positive with regard to the time spent in the KSA, with only 28 per cent of migrants encountering difficulties in finding employment, and many reporting good salaries (48%), quality of lifestyle (40%) and living conditions (36%). Nevertheless, only one in four recommended the journey – not necessarily via Bossaso – and most of those who provided feedback warned the others against migration (56%).

Figure 21: Re-migrating individuals' description of previous migration journey(s) and time spent in the KSA*

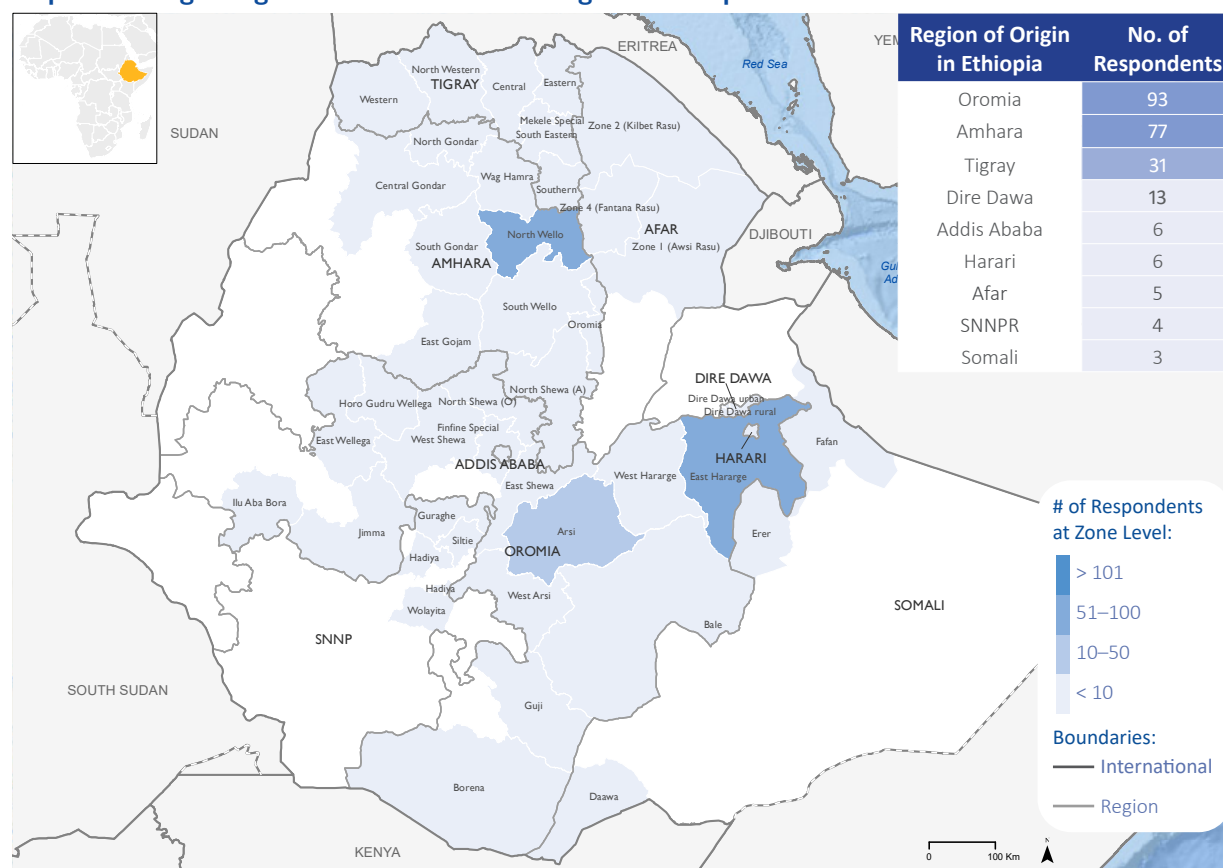
“How did you describe your migration journey when others asked about it?”



“How did you describe your time in the KSA to community members at home?”



* Multiple options allowed.

Map 4: Re-migrating individuals' Zone of Origin in Ethiopia*

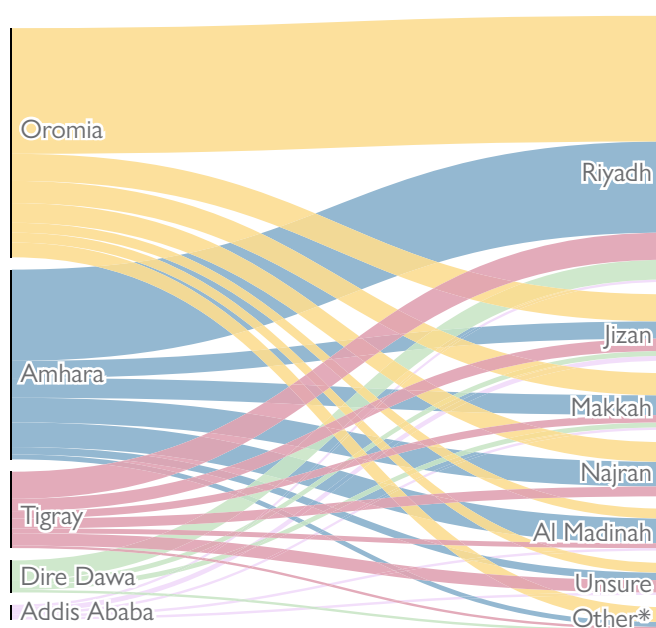
* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

27%

spent less than one month in Ethiopia before re-migrating

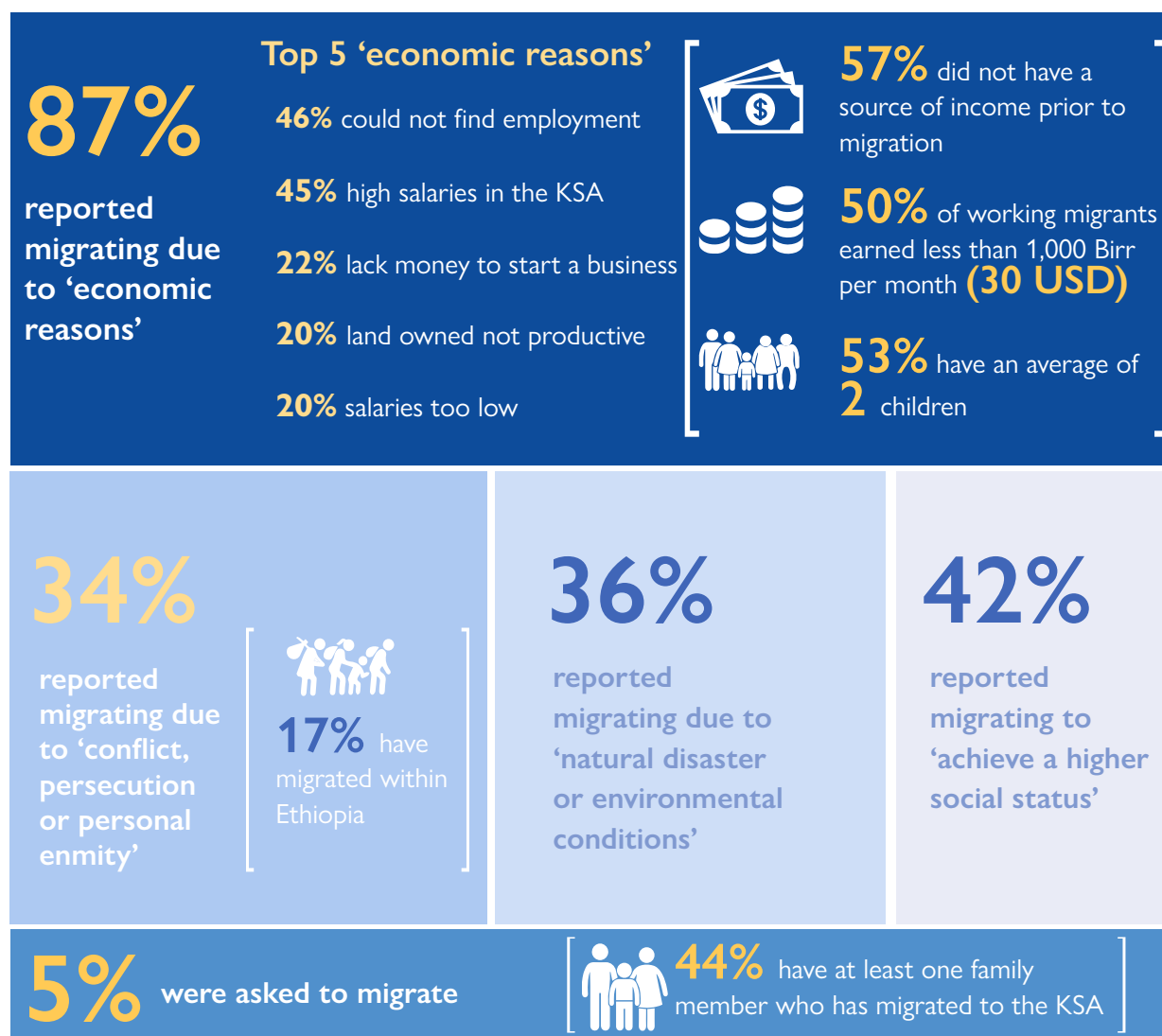
Similar to those attempting their journey for the first time, re-migrating individuals mostly originate from the two regions of Oromia (39%) and Amhara (33%), with Tigray being the third most commonly reported region of origin (13%). In general, migrants are quite sure about their intended destination – with only 5 per cent being 'undecided' (this figure is 30% for first-time migrants). Half are headed towards Riyadh (48%); around one in ten mentioned either Jizan, Makkah or Najran. The time between migrations is very short: half spent less than three months at home before attempting a new migration – 27 per cent less than one month.

Figure 22: Re-migrating individuals' top five regions of origin by intended destinations in the KSA (current journey)

* 'Other' includes Al Qassim (1.7%), Asir (1.3%), Ha'il (0.4%)

MAIN DRIVERS OF RE-MIGRATION⁴³

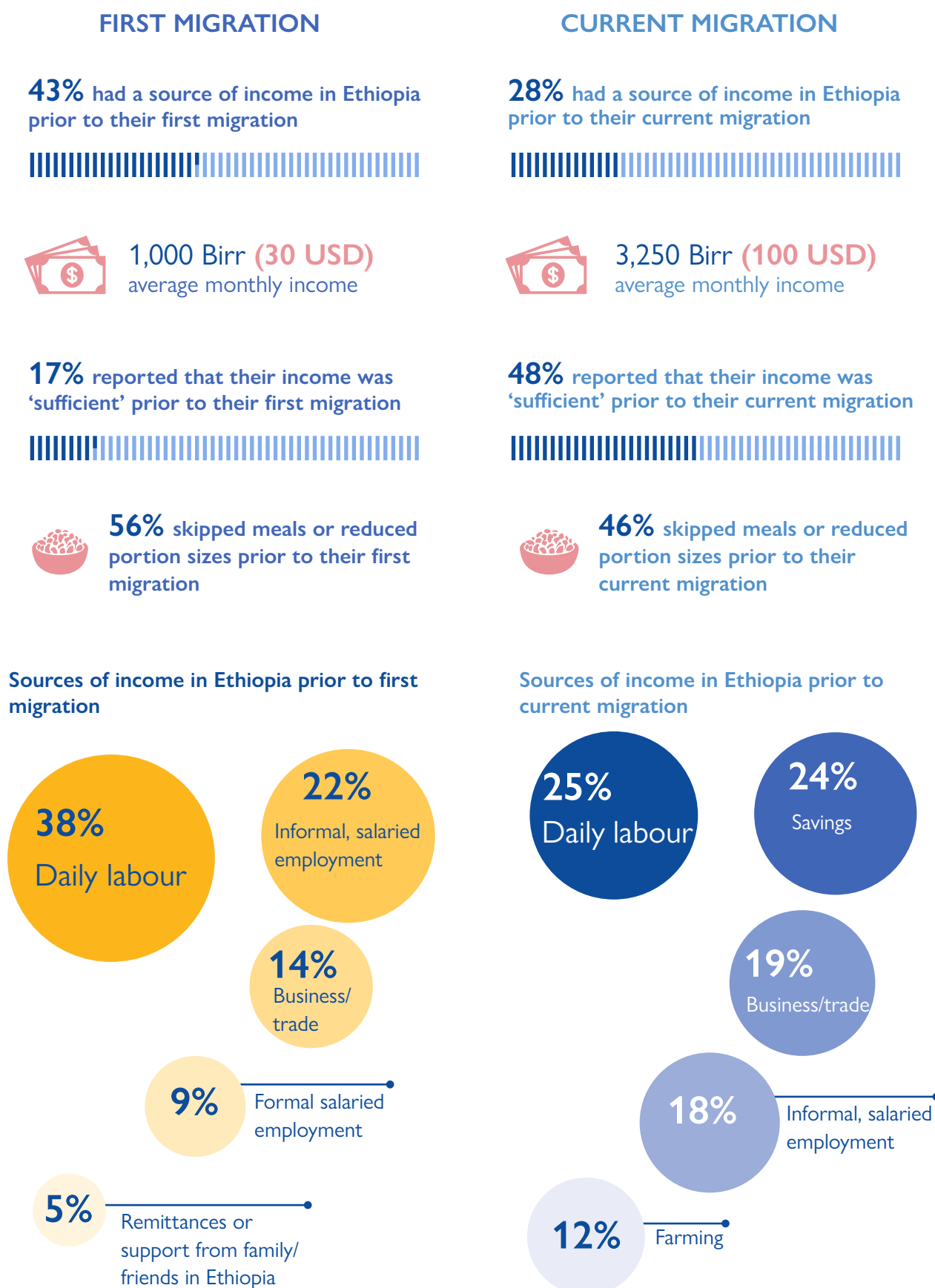
Figure 23: Re-migrating individuals' characteristics and drivers for re-migration to the KSA



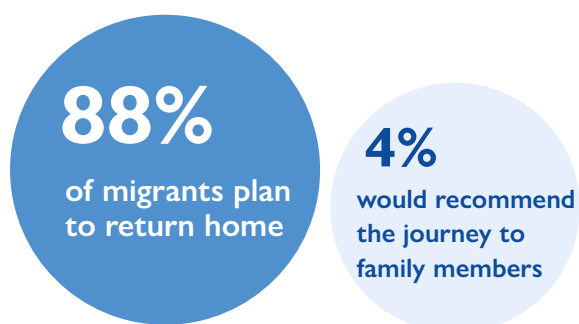
Economic motivation – and the related desire to achieve a higher social status (42%) – is the first and foremost driver of multiple migrations (87%) and more so compared to first attempts. Migrants are dissatisfied with the quality of the land and/or the jobs they can access back home and are aware that they could earn more in the KSA, possibly enough to start their own business when they return. According to sample data, only 28 per cent of migrants have a source of income compared to 43 per cent before the first migration, which could indicate that migrants do not find it easy nor worthy to look for employment in Ethiopia. However, among the few who report a source of income, some were able to switch from daily and informal labour to trade and farming and/or slightly increase their standards of living and save some money – the average monthly income went from approximately 30 USD to 100 USD between the first and the current migration. The need to provide for family members (around half of re-migrating individuals have an average of two children), a solid migration culture (around half have at least one family member who already migrated to the KSA) and the attractiveness of high salaries in the KSA are also very strong drivers. Conflict or environmental conditions are other reported push factors – around 20 per cent of migrants had been previously displaced within Ethiopia.

43. The top three reasons for migrating were asked.

Figure 24: Re-migrating individuals' comparison between livelihoods at first migration and livelihoods before current migration

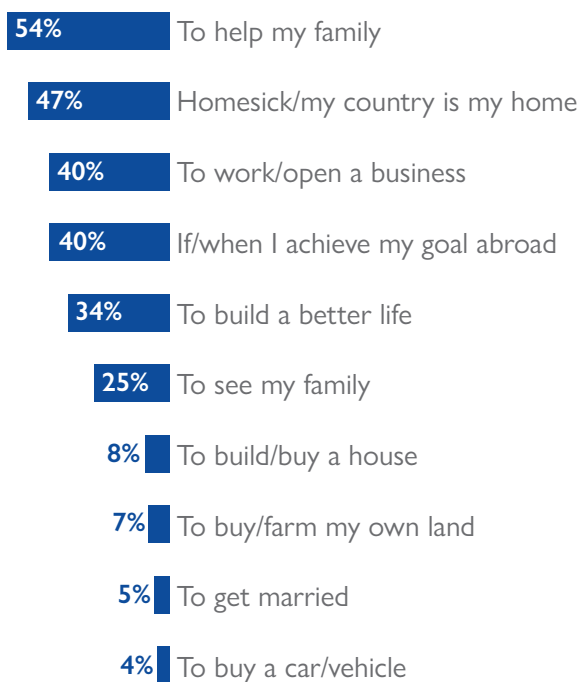


THE FUTURE



Nearly all migrants are planning on returning home from the KSA. Family plays a significant role in the prospect of return (just like it does in the decision for leaving): over half of migrants stated that they wish to return to help family. Achieving their goal abroad, whether this means having enough money to open a business (40%, their first objective), build/buy a house, buy/farm land, get married, buy a vehicle or, in general, achieve a better life, is also very important. Re-migrating individuals tend to be more realistic than first-time migrants: they acknowledge the difficulties of the experience, would not recommend it to family members, and nearly half feel that they will miss their country, which will always be their home.

Figure 25: Re-migrating individuals' reasons to return home



*Migrant in Burco, Somaliland.
© Mohammed Muse/ IOM*



03

RETURNING MIGRANTS

Ethiopian migrant holds her baby girl as she waits in a clinic in Hargeisa, Somaliland. The 18 year-old Ethiopian and her husband plan to migrate to Yemen and then to the Gulf in search of a better life. © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

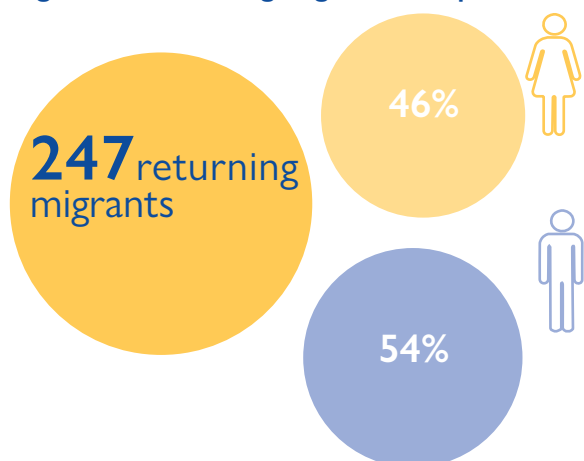
Figure 26: Returning migrants' sample⁴⁴

Figure 27: Returning migrants' age group by sex

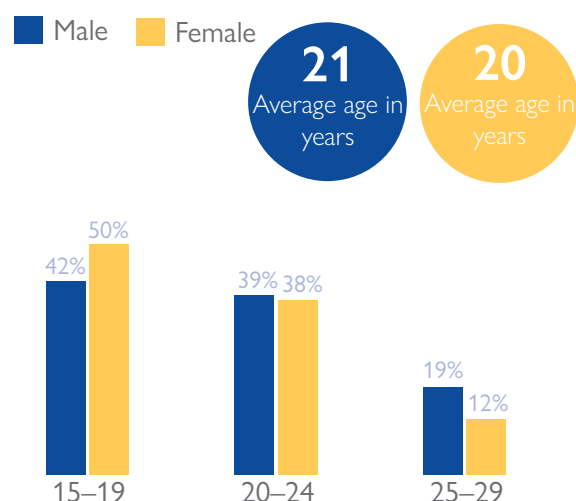
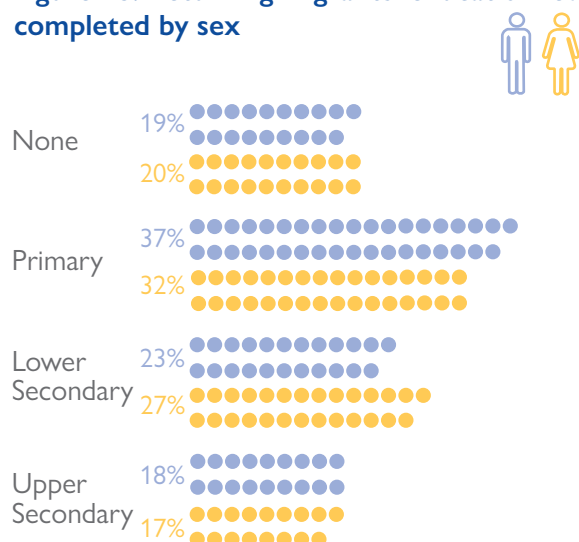
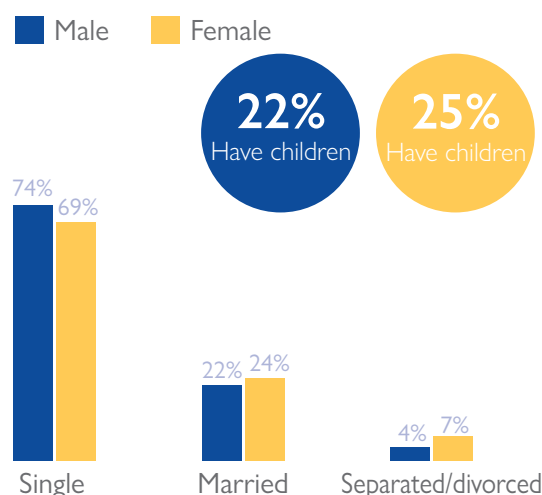


Figure 28: Returning migrants' education level completed by sex



* Other (males: 3% and females: 4%)

Figure 29: Returning migrants' marital status by sex



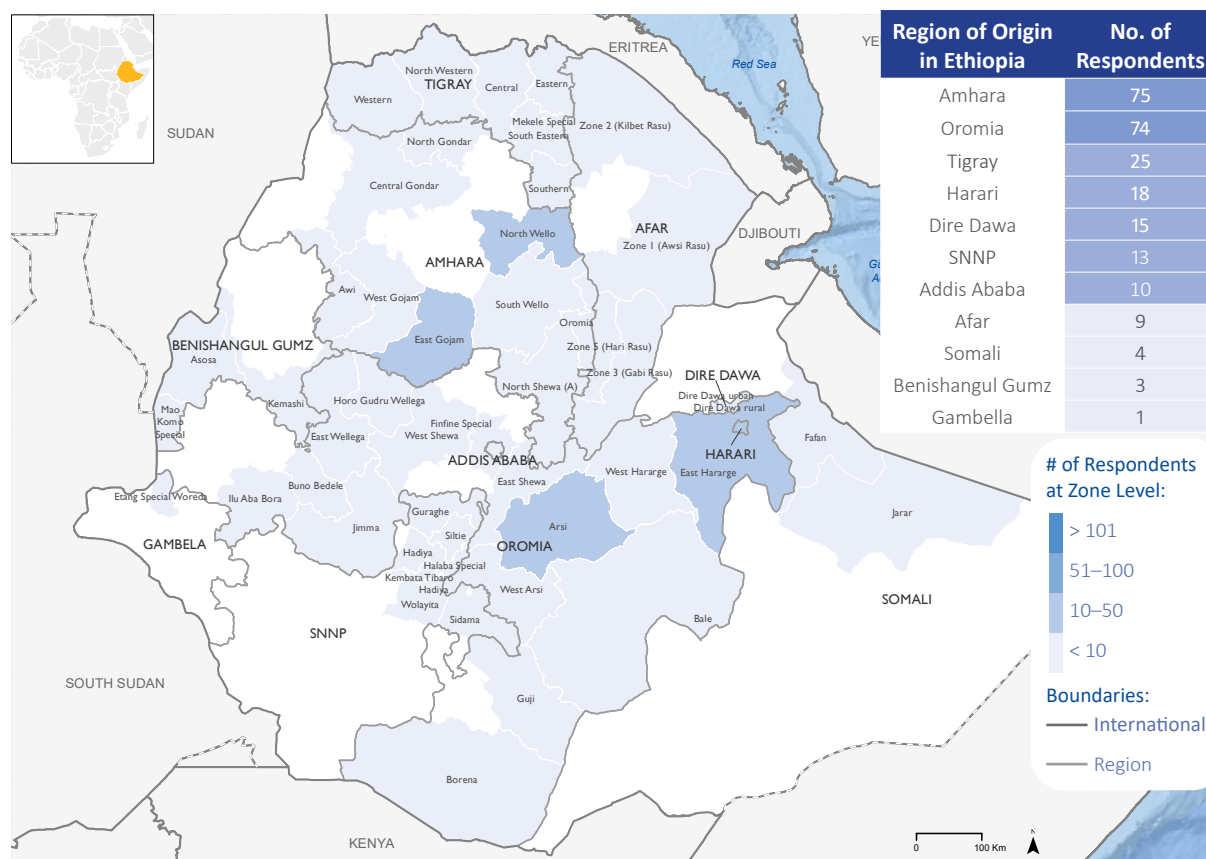
DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

Migrants who have decided to stop their journey in Bossaso and return to Ethiopia are very likely to be young (only 16% are older than 24 years), single (only 22% are married) and with a poor level of education (over half have no education or have gone no further than primary school). One in two is a woman – which is much higher than for first-time migrants and, especially, for re-migrating individuals. The physically challenging experience,⁴⁵ youth and the fact that one in four female migrants has children may as well act as discouraging factors. The most common carer of migrants' children are household members; however, around one in five children of returning migrants were left alone (21%), which may account for the decision to return.

44. Returning migrants are defined as migrants who have decided to stop their journey in Bossaso and return to Ethiopia – the vast majority of whom with the help of IOM's Assisted Voluntary Returns Programme (AVR).

45. In general, returning women are more likely to say that the journey is dangerous (25% versus 16% of men) and that they are needed at home (8% versus 2%) despite being slightly less likely to report 'issues' during the journey, such as lack of food/water and/or lack of funds.

Map 5: Returning Migrants' Zone of Origin in Ethiopia*

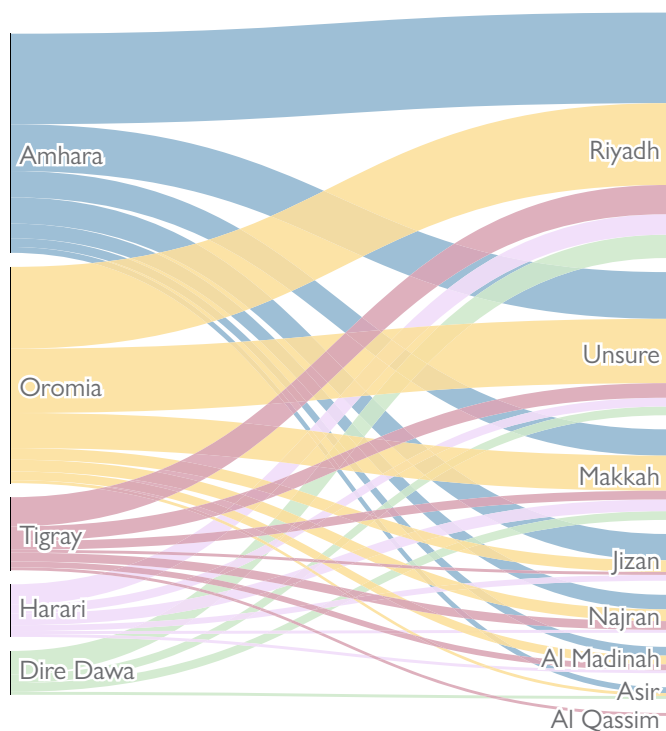


* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ORIGIN-DESTINATION

While Oromos represent the bulk of all migrants travelling to the KSA (41%), Oromos and migrants from Amhara (30% each) are equally represented among migrants who have decided to end their journey in Bossaso and return to Ethiopia. No significant difference was observed in terms of their intended destination in the KSA and most movements were aimed towards Riyadh (40%) and Makkah (16%) before they decided to end their journey. The share of 'undecided' individuals (23%) is also in line with the other first-time migrants who have decided to carry on with the journey.

Figure 30: Returning migrants' top five regions of origin by intended destinations in the KSA



MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

Figure 31: Returning migrants' characteristics and drivers of migration⁴⁶

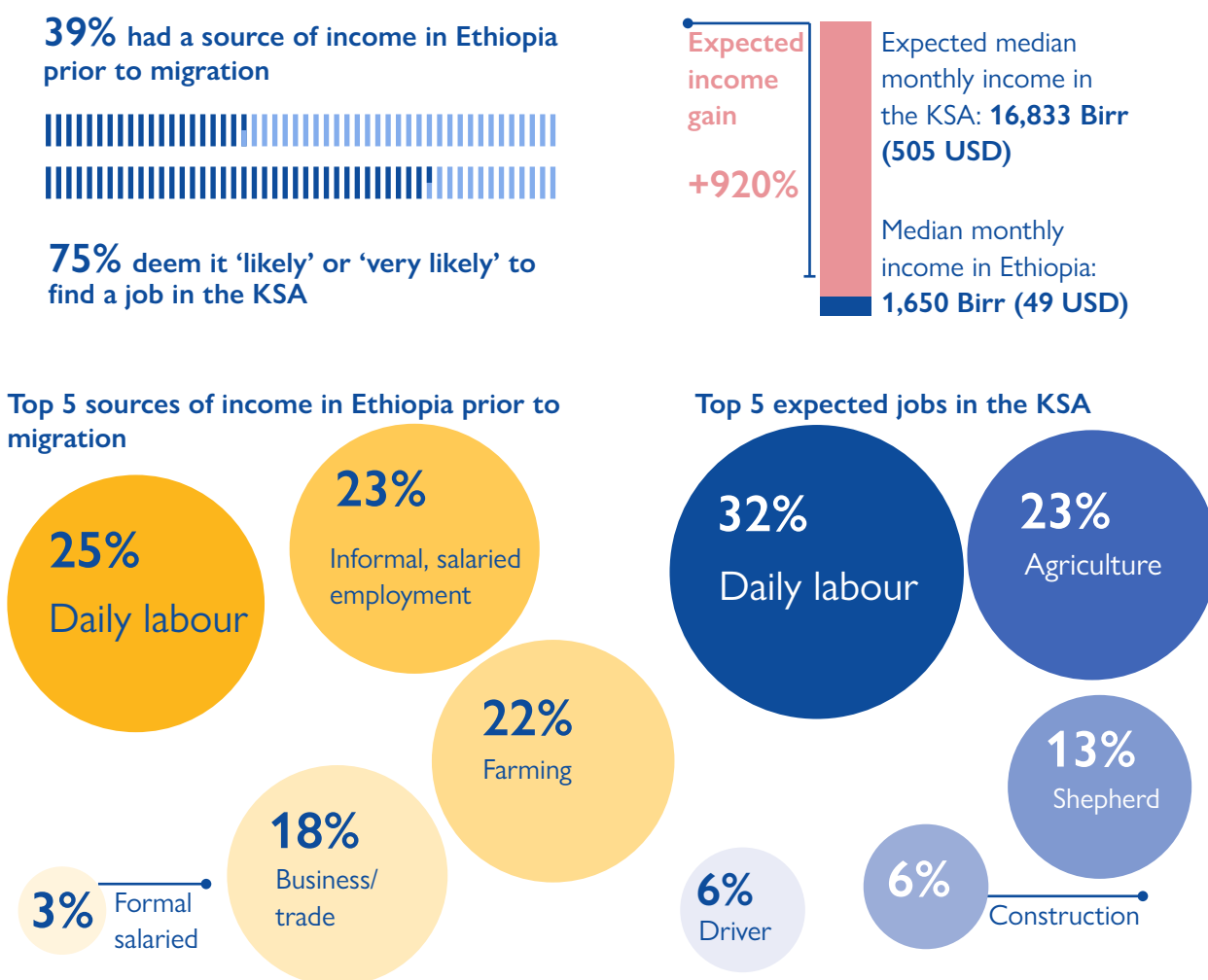


The analysis of drivers of migration helps to shed light on why some migrants may decide to interrupt their journey to the KSA. Returning migrants seem to enjoy slightly better conditions at origin compared to first-time migrants and, especially, to re-migrating individuals. They are more likely to have a source of income (38%) and/or land to farm,⁴⁷ which is bound to produce slightly higher earnings (around 50 USD per month) and self-sufficiency within the household (however, half of migrants still reported the need to skip meals or reducing portion size). As a result, economic motivations – although still the key push factor (79%) – seem to be slightly less compelling than they are for other migrants. Returning migrants are also less attracted by the high salaries in the KSA and the desire to achieve a higher social status. Around one in ten left to repay debts and loans and the same share stated that they were pushed/asked to migrate by family, spouse or friends.

46. The first three reasons for migrating were asked.

47. Only 6 per cent stated that they are migrating because they do not own land and 15 per cent (each) because land is not large or productive enough.

Figure 32: Returning migrants' comparison between actual and expected occupation in the KSA

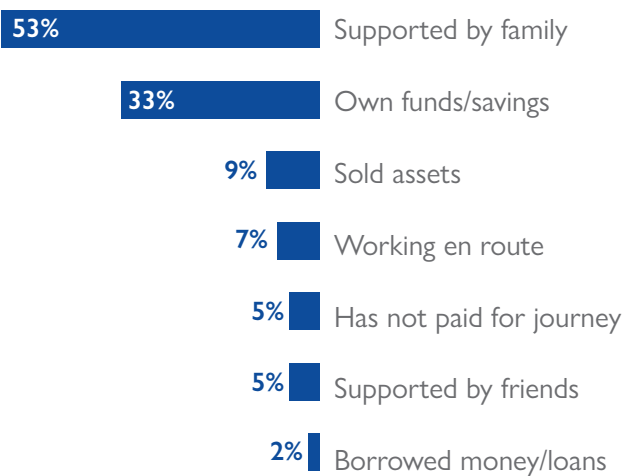


MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

Most migrants took the decision to migrate alone (62%), less than one month before departure (72%). Friends and particularly family were only rarely involved in their sudden and spontaneous departure. In most cases, migrants did not even inform families as they were afraid that family members would have stopped them from leaving because the journey is dangerous and because they are needed at home. Friends were consulted for planning and connecting with the broker, while families mainly supported financially during the journey. Only around one third of individuals was self-sufficient, and around one in ten sold assets (9%) or borrowed money (2%). On average, the journey to Bossaso took 23 days and cost around 405 USD. Nearly all individuals are travelling with a broker – although different from the one they started the journey with.



Figure 33: Returning migrants' financing of the journey*



* Multiple options allowed.

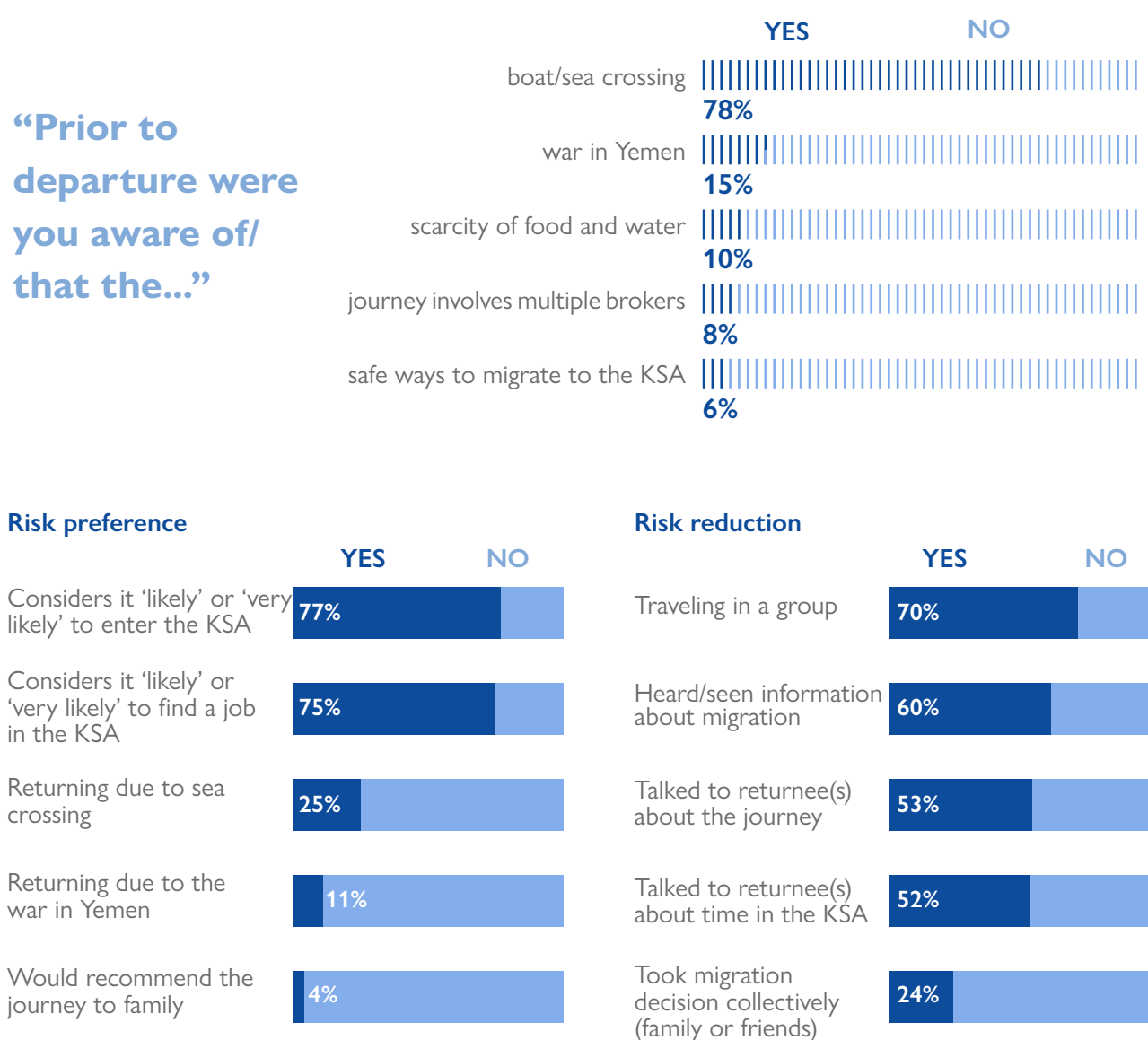


Migrant children abandoned by smugglers gather at a community centre for Ethiopian migrants in Hargeisa, Somaliland. © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

RISK PERCEPTION, RISK PREFERENCE AND RISK REDUCTION⁴⁸

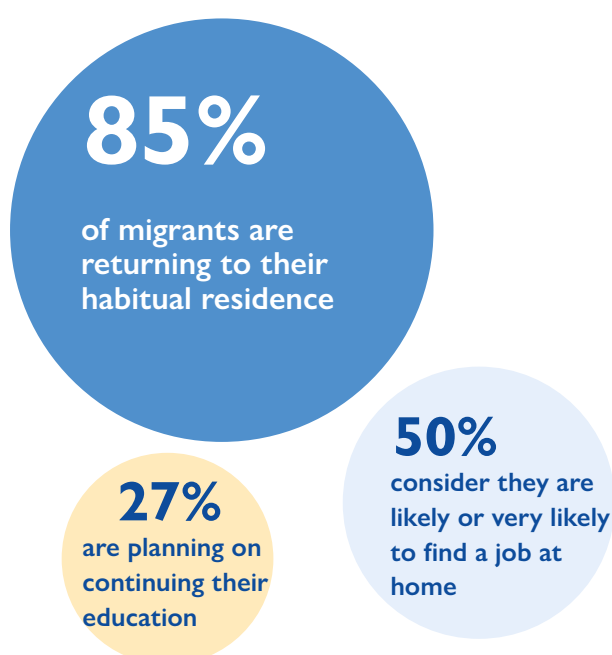
Migrants who have decided to stop their journey are quite likely to have heard information about migration to the KSA in the six months prior to departure. This relatively high exposure (60%) – which mainly would have taken place through returnees and media (traditional, social media and internet) rather than family – seems to have triggered expectations as well as sudden departures with scarce planning, at the expense of risk awareness. Less than 15 per cent of migrants were aware of the scarcity of water and food during the journey or of the war in Yemen. In retrospect, less than 5 per cent would recommend the same experience to family and peers back home. One in ten returning migrants said that he/she is so afraid of the war that he/she decided to return; one in four was similarly concerned about the sea crossing.

Figure 34: Returning migrants' risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction



48. Risk perception refers to migrants' awareness of challenges along the route, and risk preference refers to their willingness to take these risks according to the perceived outcome (reaching the KSA and finding a job), while risk reduction includes potential precautions against these challenges, whether taken voluntarily or not.

THE DECISION TO RETURN



In most cases, migrants decide to return because they ran out of funds (33%) or experienced severe hardships during the journey: 20 per cent mentioned 'illness or injuries', 10 per cent 'heat' and/or 'lack of food and water', and 5 per cent were detained. Nearly all plan on returning to their habitual residence (85%), while the rest plan to look for a job elsewhere. Of those returning to habitual residence, one third want to look for a job (33%), go back to school (27%) or farm their land (11%). One in five migrants is going to search for a job elsewhere in Ethiopia and around one in ten already plans a new journey to the KSA. Three quarters of migrants consider it likely or very likely that they will find a job in the KSA – versus half who consider they can do so in Ethiopia. Only one in two migrants have informed their family of their imminent return (47%) and even fewer told friends (25%), possibly because they did not inform them of their departure in the first place.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, reactions from families are mostly positive; only 10 per cent of migrants reported that the family was 'disappointed' or 'angry' or 'wants them to migrate again'.

Figure 35: Reasons to return to Ethiopia

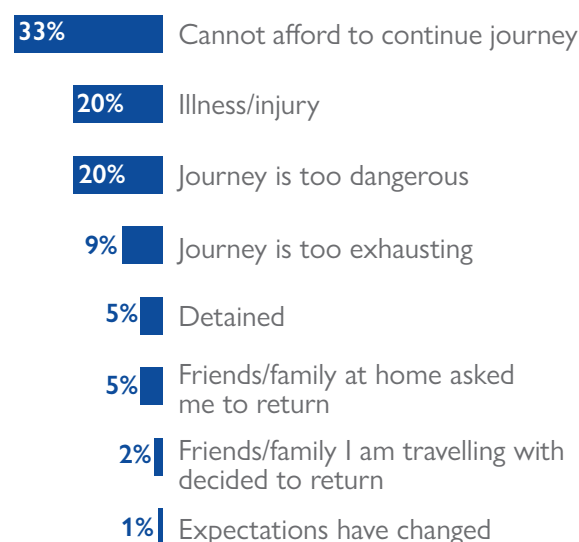


Figure 36: Reactions of family to news of migrant's return*



49. Some migrants are not able to contact their families as they do not have or know their contact details.

* Multiple options allowed.



04

YOUNG WOMEN ON THE MOVE

Ethiopian migrant in Somalia whose husband left Somalia in an attempt to get to Saudi Arabia through Yemen. She has not heard from him since. Photo: © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

Figure 37: Female migrants' sample

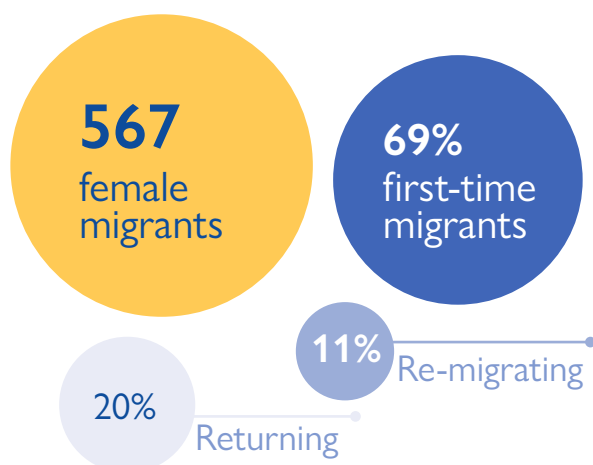
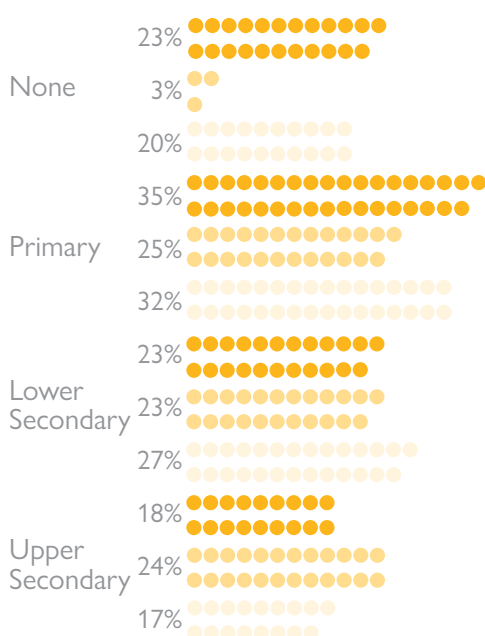


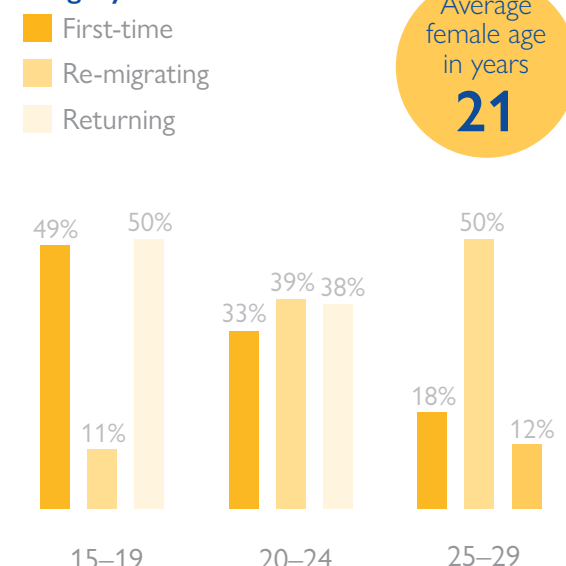
Figure 39: Female migrants' education level completed by migrant category*

■ First-time ■ Re-migrating ■ Returning



* Female/male comparison can be found in Figure 2 on page 9. 'Other': first-time (1%), re-migrating (25%) and returning (4%).

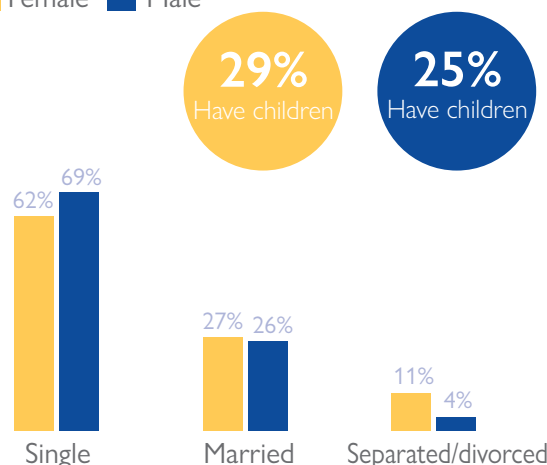
Figure 38: Female migrants' age by migrant category*



* Female/male comparison can be found in Figure 3 on page 9.

Figure 40: Migrants' marital status by sex

■ Female ■ Male

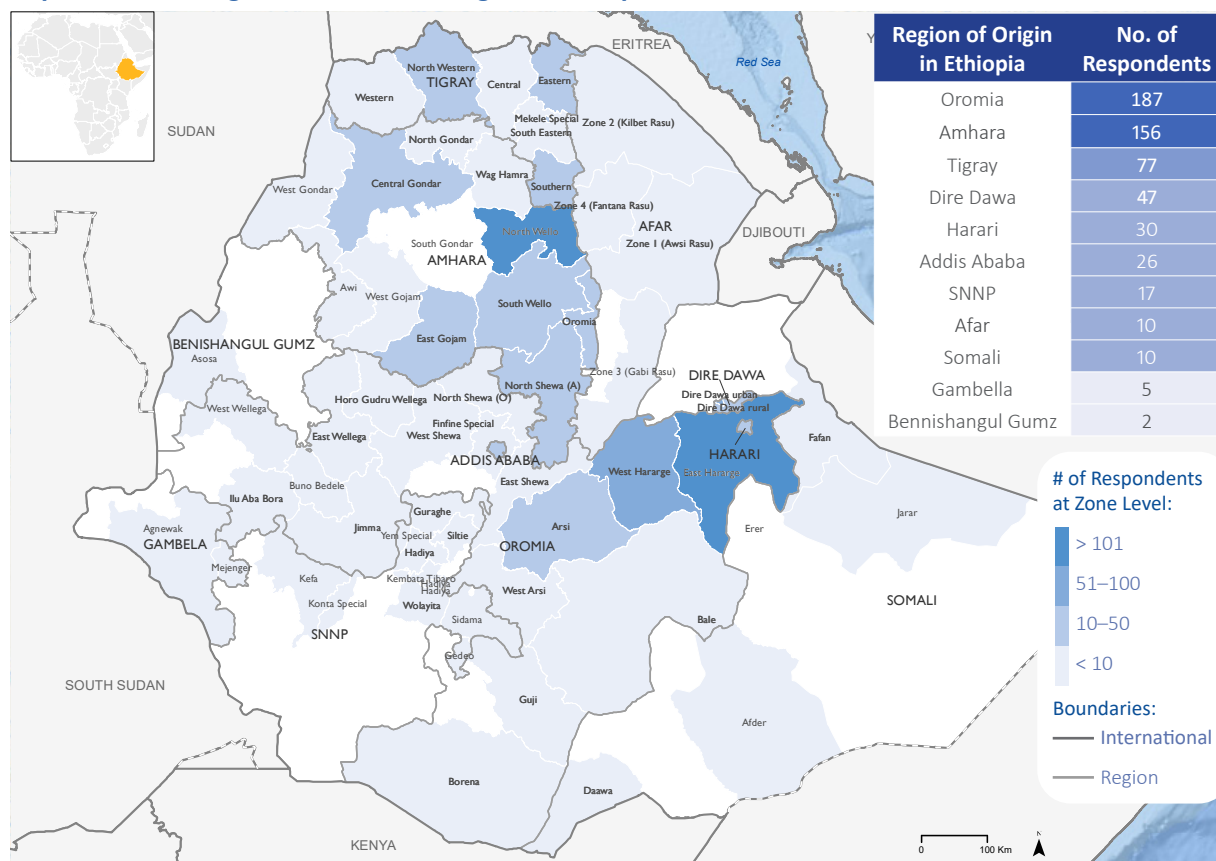


DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

Nearly 70% of young women on the move are attempting the journey to the KSA for the first time, while the remaining third are returning (20%) or re-migrating (11%). This relatively low share of re-migrating women can be explained by the fact that they are more likely to use legal channels for migration and find employment in the KSA (re-migrating men are around 20%).⁵⁰ Women also tend to be separated/divorced or widows (11%) and have children (29%). Some research has linked divorce and widowhood to migration, pointing that disadvantaged marital status could trigger migration. Migration (or aspirations to migrate) may well be delaying marriage too: according to Ethiopia's 2016 Demographic and Health Survey, female marriage figures for the 15–19, 20–24 and 25–29 year-olds are 17, 60 and 80 per cent respectively, versus 10, 32 and 56 per cent respectively for girls and women in the sample.⁵¹ Around one in ten female migrant lives alone and has been previously displaced within Ethiopia, which is slightly less than for males.

50. Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa (Regional Data Hub, 5 May 2017–31 December), cited.

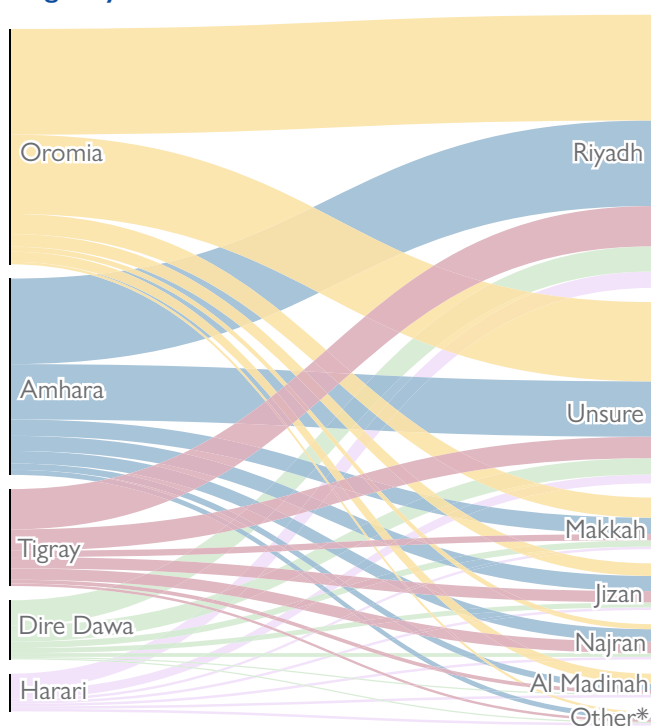
51. The custom of early marriage, which affects young girls' contribution to the household's income, may also increase the likelihood of sending the girls abroad to find employment. Girls and young women may also use migration as a strategy to 'escape' arranged marriages, especially in rural areas. In some cases, the older age at marriage and the high incidence of divorces could be an outcome of migration or the intention to migrate rather than its cause. Assefa Admassie; Nuru, Seid; Ferde, Tadele. Migration and forced labour: an analysis on Ethiopian workers. International Labour Organization, ILO Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Addis Ababa: ILO, 2017. Available from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-addis_ababa/documents/publication/wcms_621555.pdf

Map 6: Female Migrants' Zone of Origin in Ethiopia*

* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

Oromia is the main region of origin of female migrants (33%), although less than for male migrants (46%). Young women and girls are slightly more likely to originate from Amhara (28%), Tigray (14%) and the two cities of Addis Ababa (5%) and Dire Dawa (8%). Most movements are intended towards urban centres such as Riyadh (43%), Jizan (8%) and Makkah (8%), possibly due to the nature of their intended occupation as domestic workers. Over a quarter of women (28%) are uncertain about their final destination.

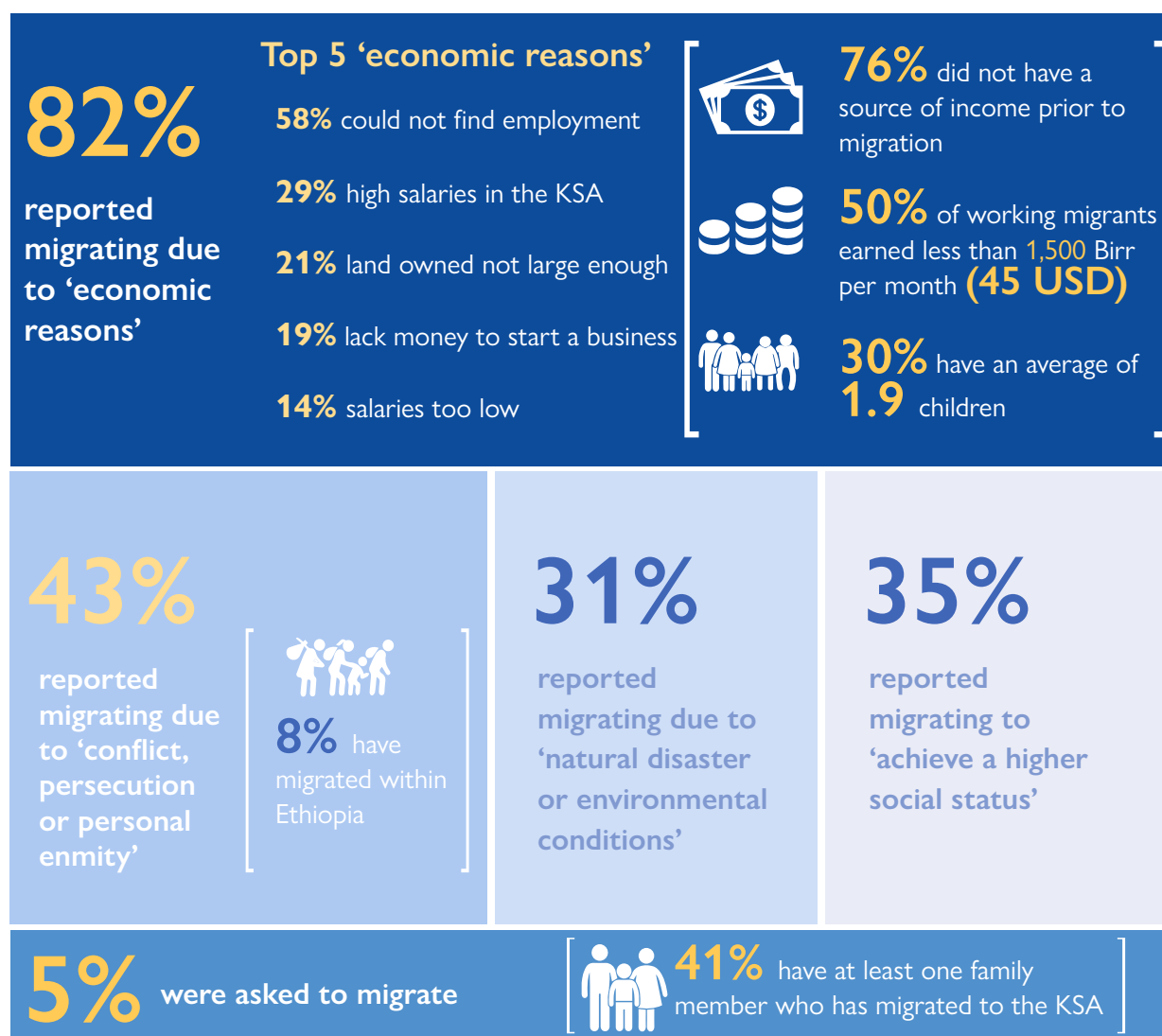
Figure 41: Female migrants' top five regions of origin by intended destinations in the KSA

* 'Other' includes Asir (1.06%), Al Qassim (0.35%), Ha'il (0.35%), Eastern Province (0.18%)

MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION⁵²

38

Figure 42: Female migrants' characteristics and drivers of migration



Economic motivations are the main driver of migration (82% of women mentioned such motivations among the top three drivers of migration and 61% as the main driver), which is expected, considering that three quarters of women did not have any source of income prior to migration (the figure is around 65% for men). Of those who did have a source of income, half earned less than 1,500 Birr per month (45 USD) despite being the main breadwinner. Informal and occasional employment are their primary sources of earnings, with less than 10 per cent of working women formally employed and/or farming their own land. As such, women are more likely to depend on remittances and/or support from family in Ethiopia (14% versus 3% for males). Conflict (43%) and/or environmental conditions (31%) are their second key driver, followed by the desire to achieve a higher social status (35%). Expectations regarding migration outcomes are very high: around 75 per cent of women consider they are 'likely' or 'very likely' to find a job in the KSA and earn an average of 540 USD per month. Most of them aim to find employment as domestic workers (76%).⁵³ Around 5 per cent mentioned jobs in services/sales, mostly those with a higher level of education. Female migration seems strongly encouraged by the presence of family members already in the KSA (41%).

52. The first three reasons for migrating were asked.

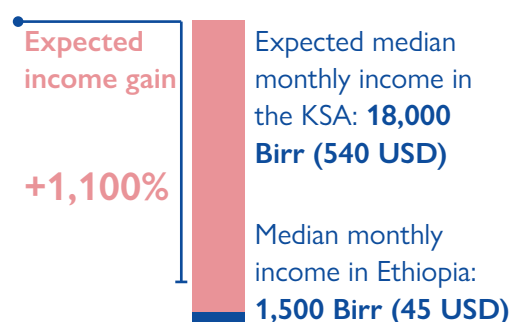
53. According to DTM data on returns from the KSA, around 80 per cent of employed women returnees were working as domestic workers. See Return of Ethiopian migrants from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Regional Data Hub, cited.

Figure 43: Female migrants' comparison between actual and expected occupation in the KSA

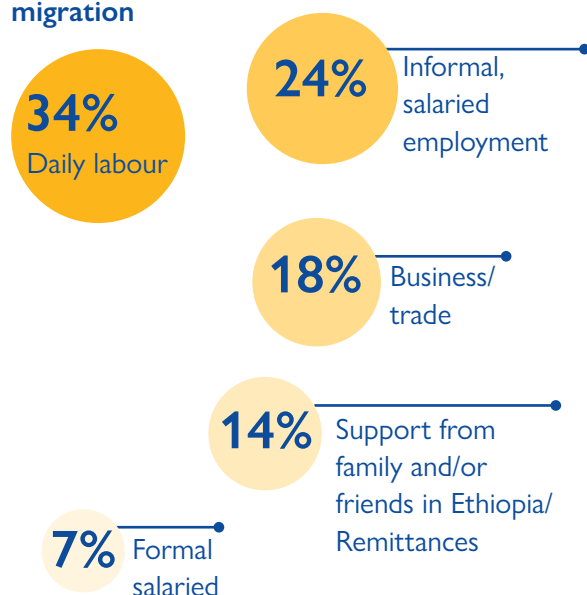
24% had a source of income in Ethiopia prior to migration



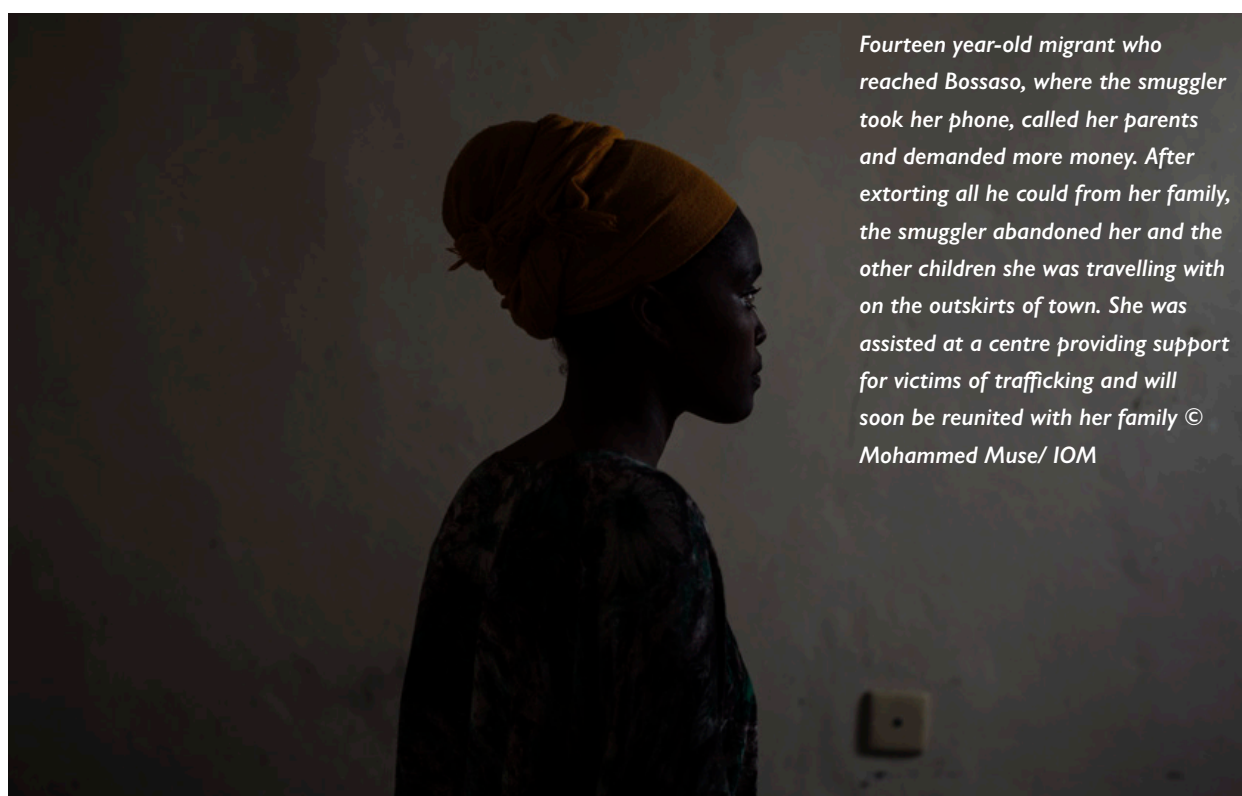
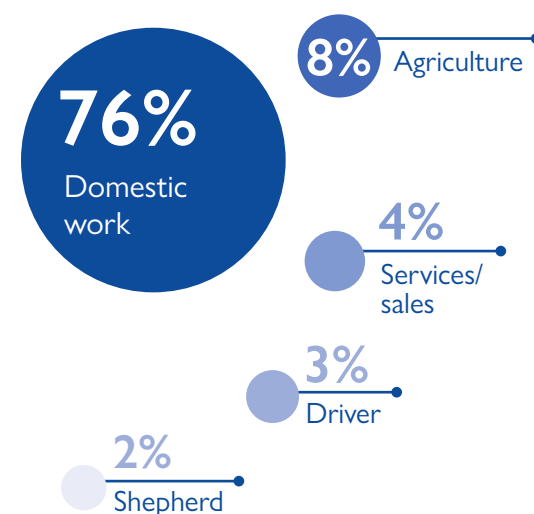
74% deem it 'likely' or 'very likely' to find a job in the KSA



Top 5 sources of income in Ethiopia prior to migration



Top 5 expected jobs in the KSA



Fourteen year-old migrant who reached Bossaso, where the smuggler took her phone, called her parents and demanded more money. After extorting all he could from her family, the smuggler abandoned her and the other children she was travelling with on the outskirts of town. She was assisted at a centre providing support for victims of trafficking and will soon be reunited with her family © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

For **15%** of females, the decision to migrate was **taken by or with their family**

Nearly **72%** of informed families **approved or even suggested** migration

The journey to Bossaso took an average of **22 days** and cost an average of **408 USD**

Most female migrants took the decision to migrate alone (51%), less than one month before departure (68%). However, families were more involved in the decision-making process (15% versus 10% for men) and the organization and financing of the journey (58% versus 47%). The role of women as stronger 'remitters' may have led to a more careful and supportive planning of their migration.⁵⁴ most informed families approved of, or even suggested migration (72%), and around half contributed with funds (43%). Around one third of females had enough savings to fund the journey, and another third had to sell assets (22%) or take on loans (8%). On average, the journey to Bossaso took 22 days and cost 408 USD. Only around one quarter of female migrants is undertaking the journey alone – without family, relatives or friends – nearly all are travelling with a broker.

Figure 44: Characteristics of the decision and journey by sex

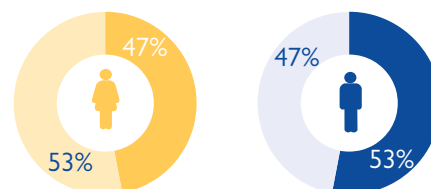
Female Male

Started thinking about migration (time before leaving)



Seen/heard information about migration

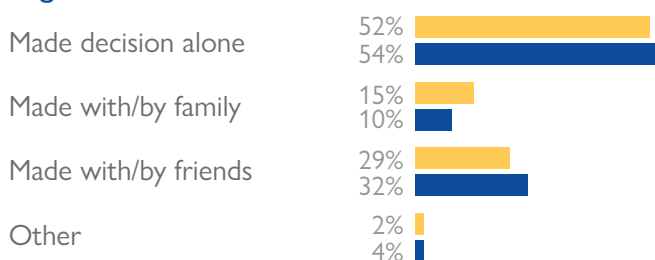
Yes No No answer



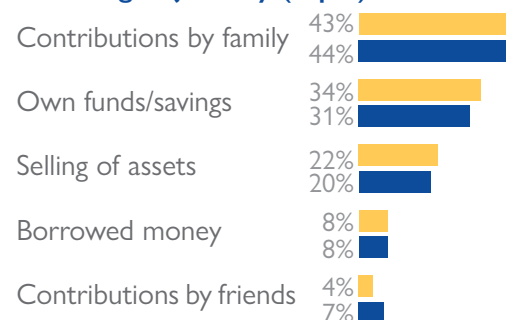
Traveling with family member(s)



Migration decision



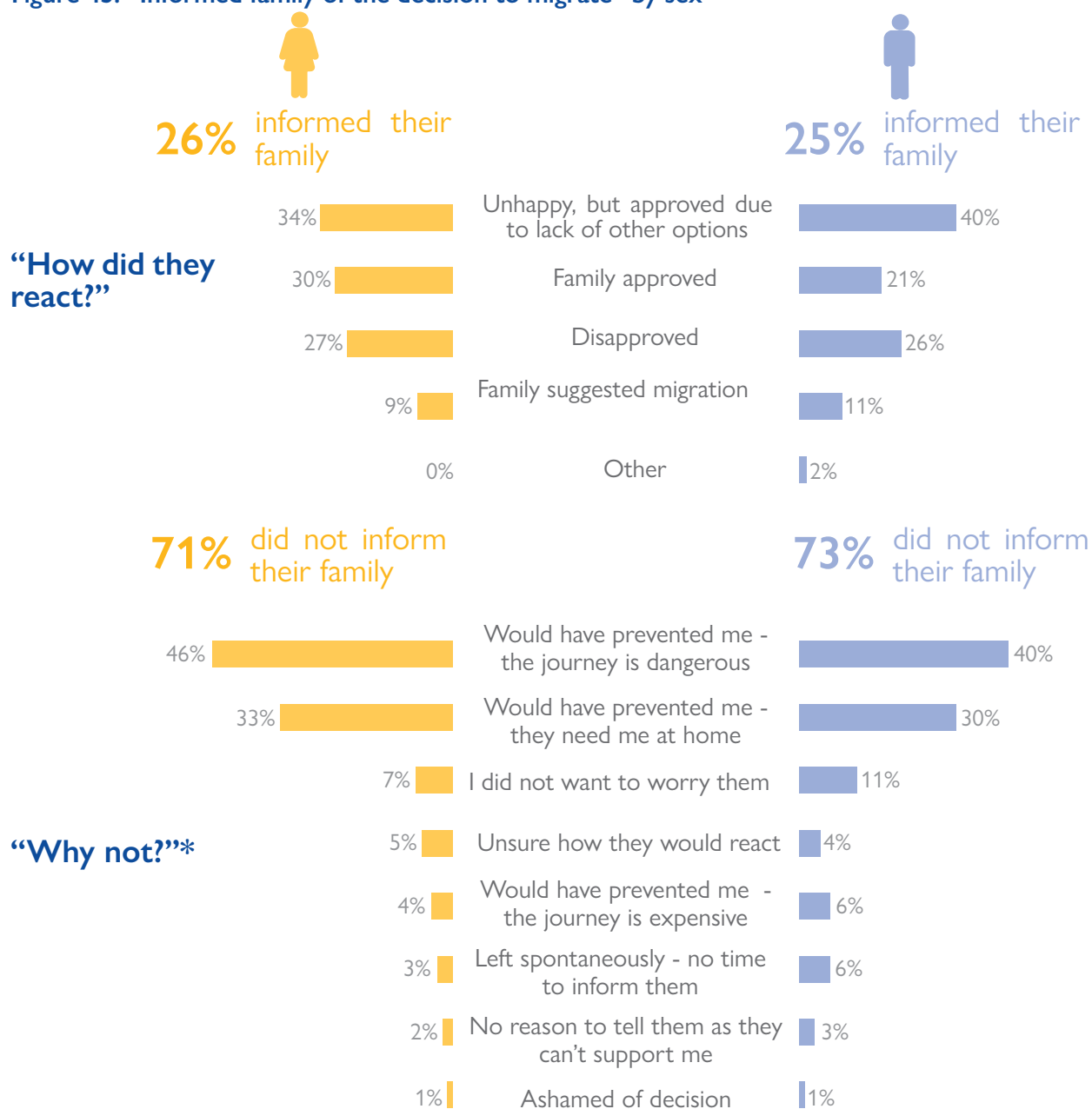
Financing of journey (top 5)*



* Multiple options allowed.

54. Even though their earnings may be lower compared to those of men, women are considered better remitters than their male counterparts: women show more stability and frequency in sending home remittances, and are more likely to remit when unexpected shocks occur, serving as a form of insurance. Migrant women's remittances also improve the family's well-being, with women again directing remittances to be used for health care and education for their families. See Understanding women and migration, KNOWMAD Working Paper # 8, KNOWMAD 2016, World Bank, Washington 2016. Available from: <http://atina.org.rs/sites/default/files/KNOMAD%20Understaning%20Women%20and%20Migration.pdf>

Figure 45: “Informed family of the decision to migrate” by sex†



* Multiple options allowed.

† Numbers do not add up to 100%, as some migrants do not have a family.

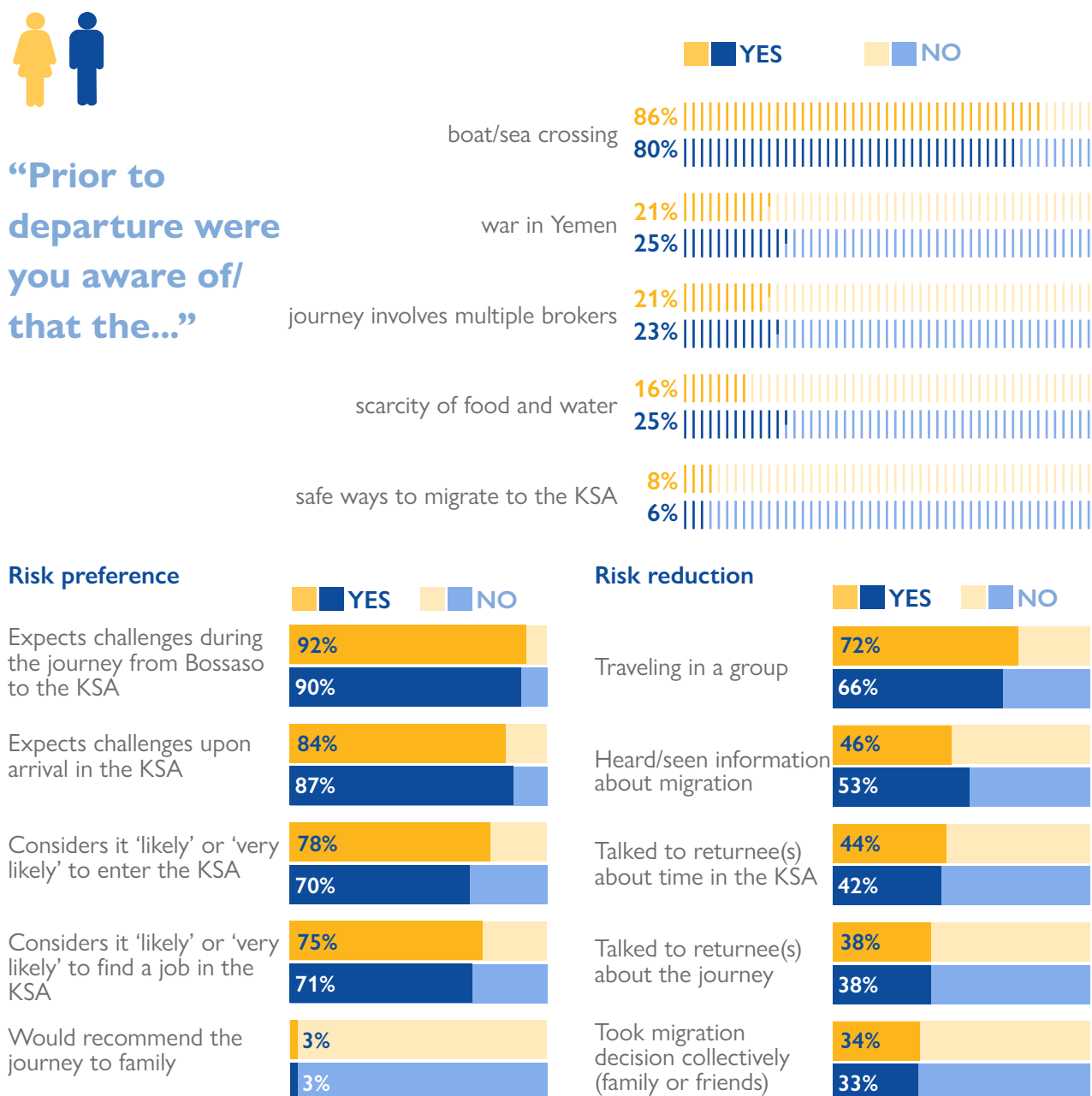


IOM raises awareness of community members in Banadir region on COVID-19. © IOM Somalia

RISK PERCEPTION, RISK PREFERENCE AND RISK REDUCTION⁵⁵

Only around one in five female migrants were aware of the scarcity of water and food during the journey and/or the war in Yemen (versus one in four males) prior to reaching Bossaso. This low risk awareness may be a consequence of their lower exposure to information about the KSA upon leaving (46%) and the stronger involvement of their families in the journeys. Although less aware of risks, women are slightly more likely to report easier journeys – having suffered incidents and/or lack of water and/or food slightly less than males. Young women are also very optimistic about reaching the KSA and finding a job; nonetheless, nearly all expect future challenges and would not recommend migration to a family member.⁵⁶ Most females tend to travel in a group (72% versus 66% of men), with around 5 per cent traveling with family.

Figure 46: Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction by sex



55. Risk perception refers to migrants' awareness of challenges along the route, and risk preference refers to their willingness to take these risks according to the perceived outcome (reaching the KSA and finding a job), while risk reduction includes potential precautions against these challenges, whether taken voluntarily or not.

56. Two additional factors should be considered to explain why migrants are willing to take risks. When individuals believe that some advantages are only achievable when taking risks, they may resort to non-rational strategies – such as faith or hope – for dealing with risk. Jens O. Zinn (2019) The meaning of risk-taking – key concepts and dimensions, *Journal of Risk Research*, 22:1, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/13669877.2017.1351465. Many migrants regarded a strong belief in God as an important factor that could minimize their probabilities of an adverse outcome. Similarly, hope and optimism made them willing to engage in high-risk behaviour despite acknowledging the reality of possible adverse outcomes.

THE FUTURE

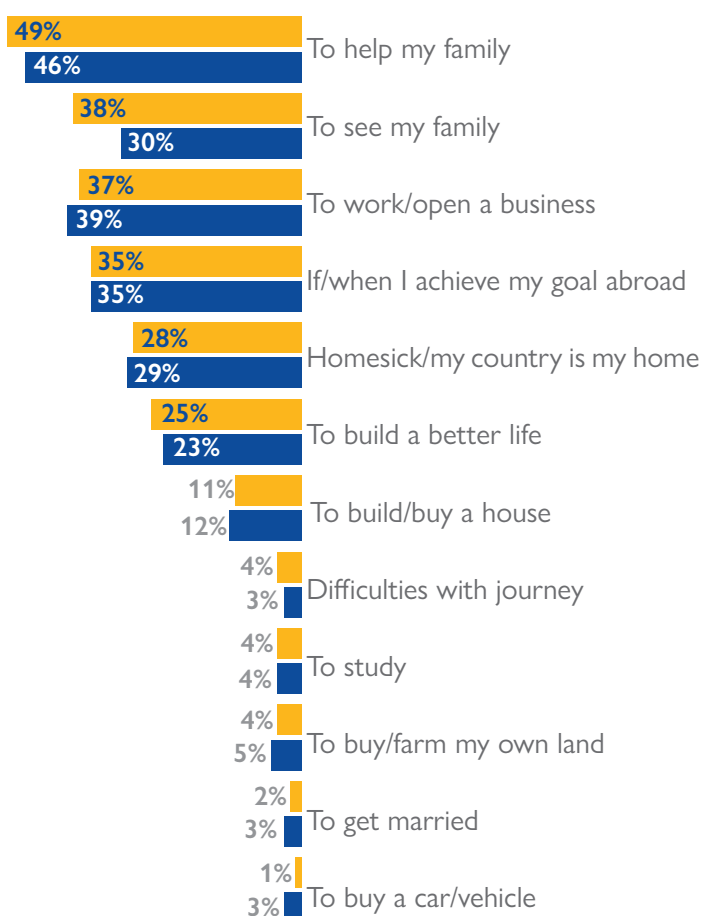
91%

of young women
plan to return
home

Nearly all female migrants are planning on re-turning to Ethiopia after a few years abroad. In women's case, the issue of return is very much dependent on the attachment to family – including the children they may have left behind. Only less than 10 per cent of females are planning on 'not' or 'never' returning home and the main reason to return is 'to help my family' (49%), followed shortly by 'the desire to see family' (38%). Homesickness (28%) is also a very strong pull factor. Between 25 and 40 per cent of female migrants linked the issue of return to the achievement of their goal, the desire to start a business or have a better life. Only less than 5 per cent mentioned the desire to get married, resume studying and/or buy/farm their own land; a similar figure linked it to negative push-factors related to the journey or life in the KSA.

Figure 47: Reasons to return to Ethiopia by sex

Female Male



Female migrants at an IOM water point. © IOM Somalia

A person wearing a headscarf is seen in profile, looking out from under a tent. The scene is dimly lit, with light filtering through the tent fabric, creating a somber and protective atmosphere.

05

FORMER INTERNAL MIGRANTS

Child abandoned by smugglers in a shelter for unaccompanied victims of trafficking in Bossaso, Puntland. Photo: © Mohammed Muse/ IOM

Figure 48: Internal migrants' sample

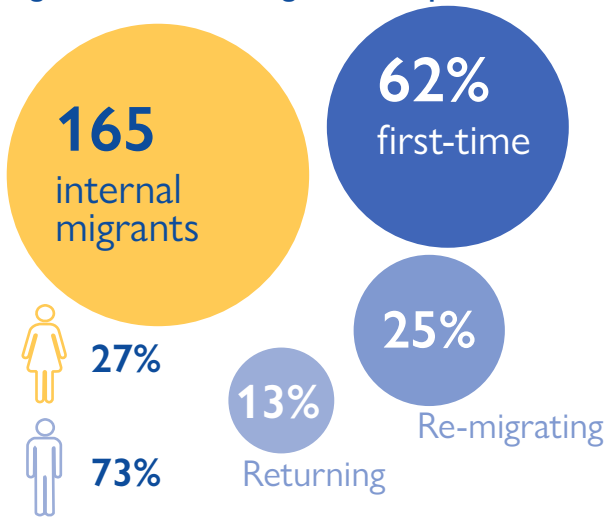


Figure 49: Migrants' age group by previous internal migration

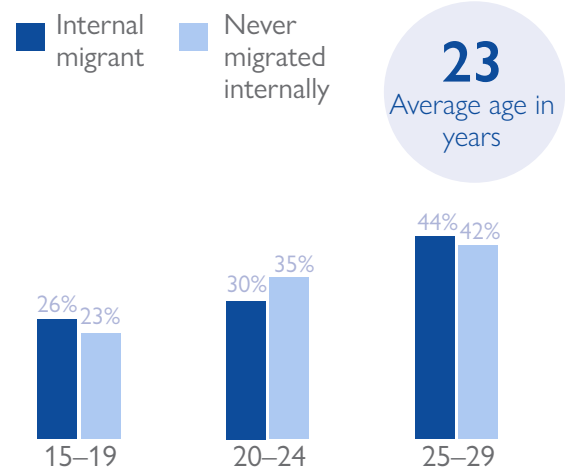


Figure 50: Migrants' education level by previous internal migration

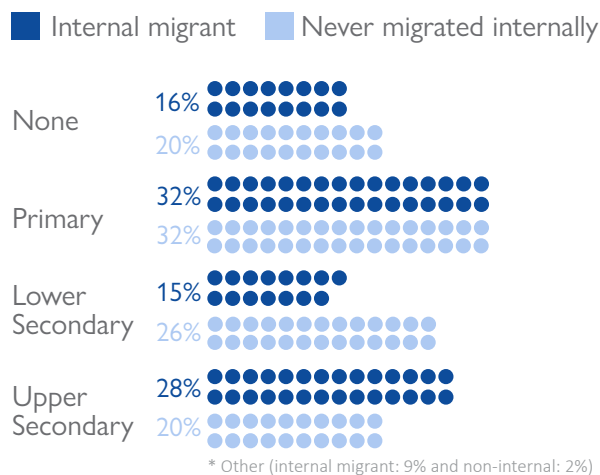
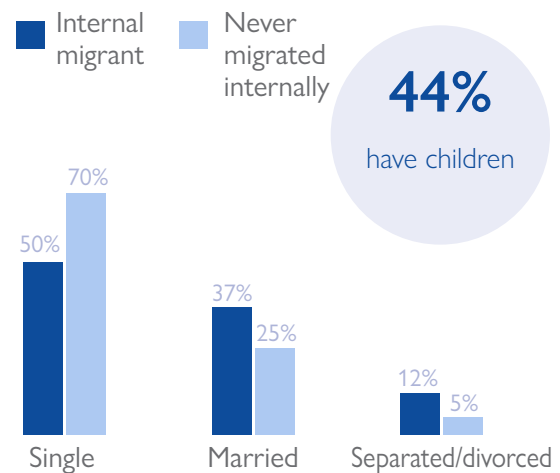


Figure 51: Migrants' marital status by previous internal migration

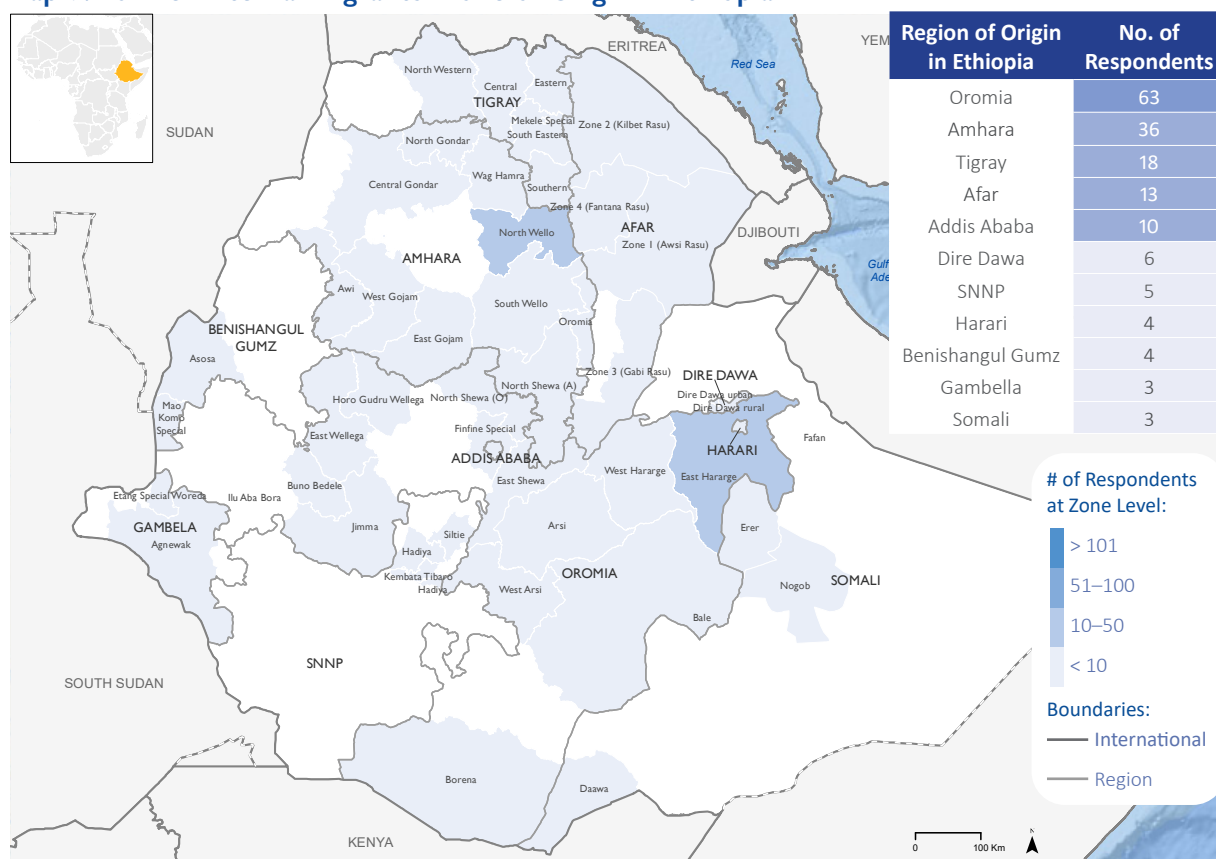


DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

Around one in two individuals who have migrated within Ethiopia prior to their current international migration is older than 24 years, married or separated/divorced and has children – the latter can act as a triggering factor for migration. Women are underrepresented compared to the other migrant categories (27% versus 37%), suggesting a lower tendency of women to undertake an international migration, for instance compared to an internal migration,⁵⁷ or return home after being displaced – the gender breakdown of displaced Ethiopians is fairly equal, while that of returnees is slightly skewed towards women.⁵⁸ It is not uncommon for previous internal male migrants to migrate to the KSA multiple times (25% have attempted the journey to the KSA at least once before). Three factors stand out when comparing male former internal migrants to other male migrants headed towards the KSA: first, they are relatively better educated (33% have completed upper secondary or tertiary education versus 23% for other male migrants), and educated people are more likely to move. Second, around half have relatives who have already migrated to the KSA (48% versus 38%), which denotes a stronger migration culture. Finally, around half are the main provider of the household's income – 43% versus 32% for other migrants.

57. Moving internally for work has become increasingly frequent in Ethiopia over time, which partly reflects the expansion in education in recent decades (educated people are more likely to move). However, if disaggregating by gender, looking for work is by far the most important reason for migrating for men, followed by shortage of land, while for women, searching for work is an important motivation, together with marriage arrangements and living with relatives. Bundervoet T. Internal Migration in Ethiopia, cited.

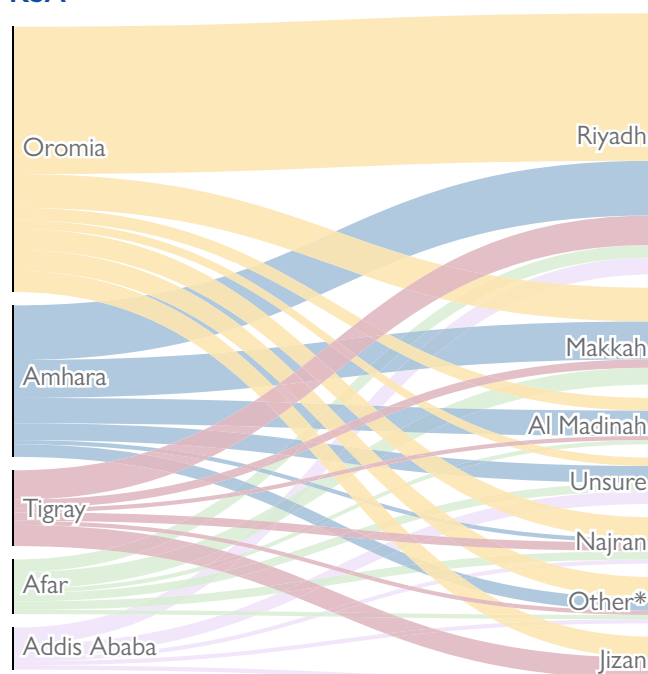
58. According to IOM Site Assessment, which was conducted from 1 to 29 February 2020, DTM captured 1,735,481 IDPs (323,589 IDP households), half of whom were females. There are also an estimated 1.4 million returning IDPs (240,315 households), 52% of whom females. DTM Ethiopia's National Displacement Report 4, IOM February-March 2020, Addis Ababa: 2020. Available from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-national-displacement-report-4-round-21-february-march-2020>

Map 7: Former Internal Migrants' Zone of Origin in Ethiopia*

* This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

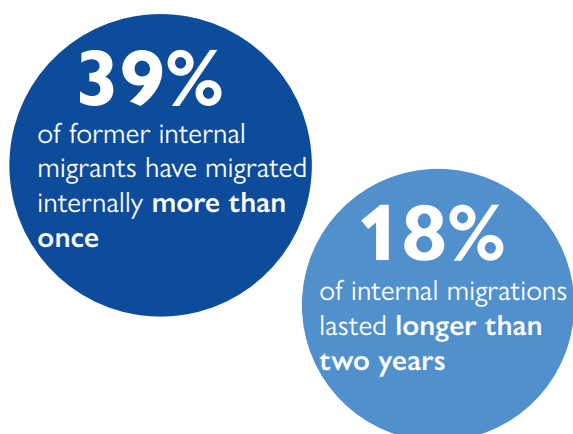
Oromia and Amhara are the two main regions of origin of former internal migrants (38% and 22% respectively), within which the main zones of origin are respectively East and West Hararge, North Wello and East Gojam. The remaining migrants come from Tigray (11%), Afar (8%) and Addis (6%), while all other regions account for less than 15 per cent.⁵⁹ Most movements are intended towards Riyadh (45%) and Makkah (15%). Al Madinah and Najran (8% each) were also frequently mentioned. Interestingly, the percentage of 'undecided' migrants is very low (8%, versus 30%, for instance, for first-time migrants) possibly reflecting the stronger migration culture, older age and higher incidence of re-migrating persons.

Figure 52: Former internal migrants' top five regions of origin by intended destinations in the KSA

* 'Other' includes Ha'il (2.4%), Asir (2.4%), Al Qassim (1.8%), and Eastern Province (1.2%).

59. According to IOM Ethiopia Site Assessment, conflict, largely related to ethnic and border-based disputes, such as the contestation of the Oromia-Somali regional border, is the main cause of initial displacement for most IDPs. Ethiopia is also riddled with climate-induced displacement, mainly caused by drought and floods, especially during the kiremt rainy season in many low-laying areas. Since June 2019, Ethiopia has been combating the worst desert locust invasion in 25 years, which has affected Afar, Amhara, Dire Dawa, Oromia, SNNPR, Somali and Tigray regions. After peaking in March 2019 at 3.04 million, the number of IDPs has witnessed a drastic decline and currently stands at 1.74 million, mostly due to the government-led return operations which began in April 2019. Factors preventing return as cited by respondents include a lack of livelihoods, house damage or destruction and insufficient food. As such, the preferred durable solution of IDPs for the time being is local integration. IOM Site Assessment 2020, cited.

PREVIOUS INTERNAL MIGRATIONS



Around 60 per cent of individuals were 'forced' to move due to conflict, persecutions or enmity and/or natural disasters or environmental conditions, which means that they are former internally displaced persons. Conflict, persecutions or personal enmity are the main cause of migration for individuals originating from Addis Ababa, Benishangul Gumuz, Dire Dawa, Oromia, Somali and SNNPR, while natural disasters is the key driver for those coming from Amhara and Tigray. Around 40 per cent of former internal migrants have already migrated internally more than once and around 20 per cent spent more than two years away from home.

Figure 53: Former internal migrants' regions of origin

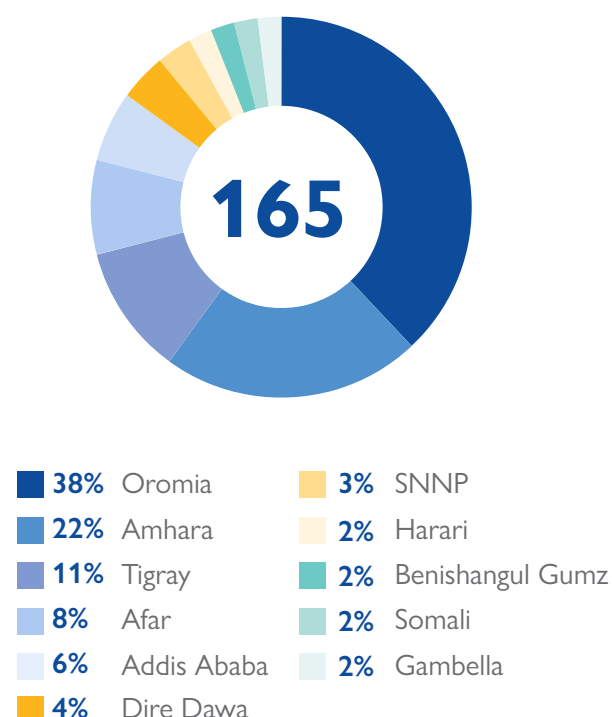
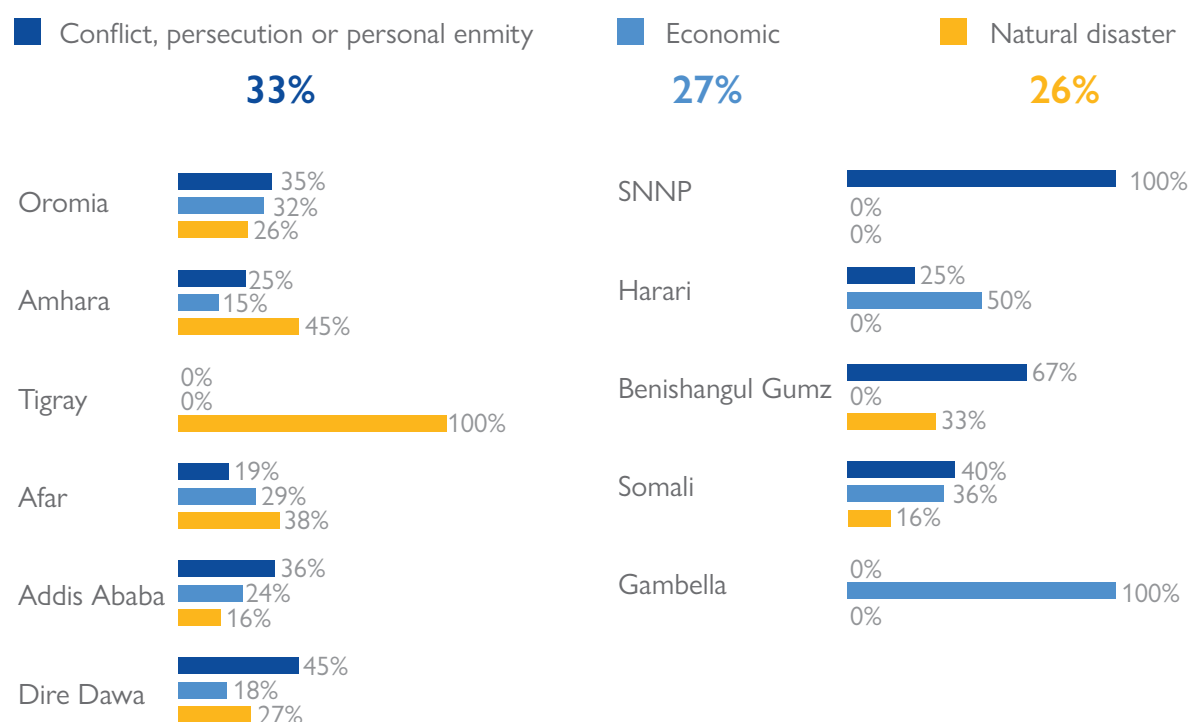


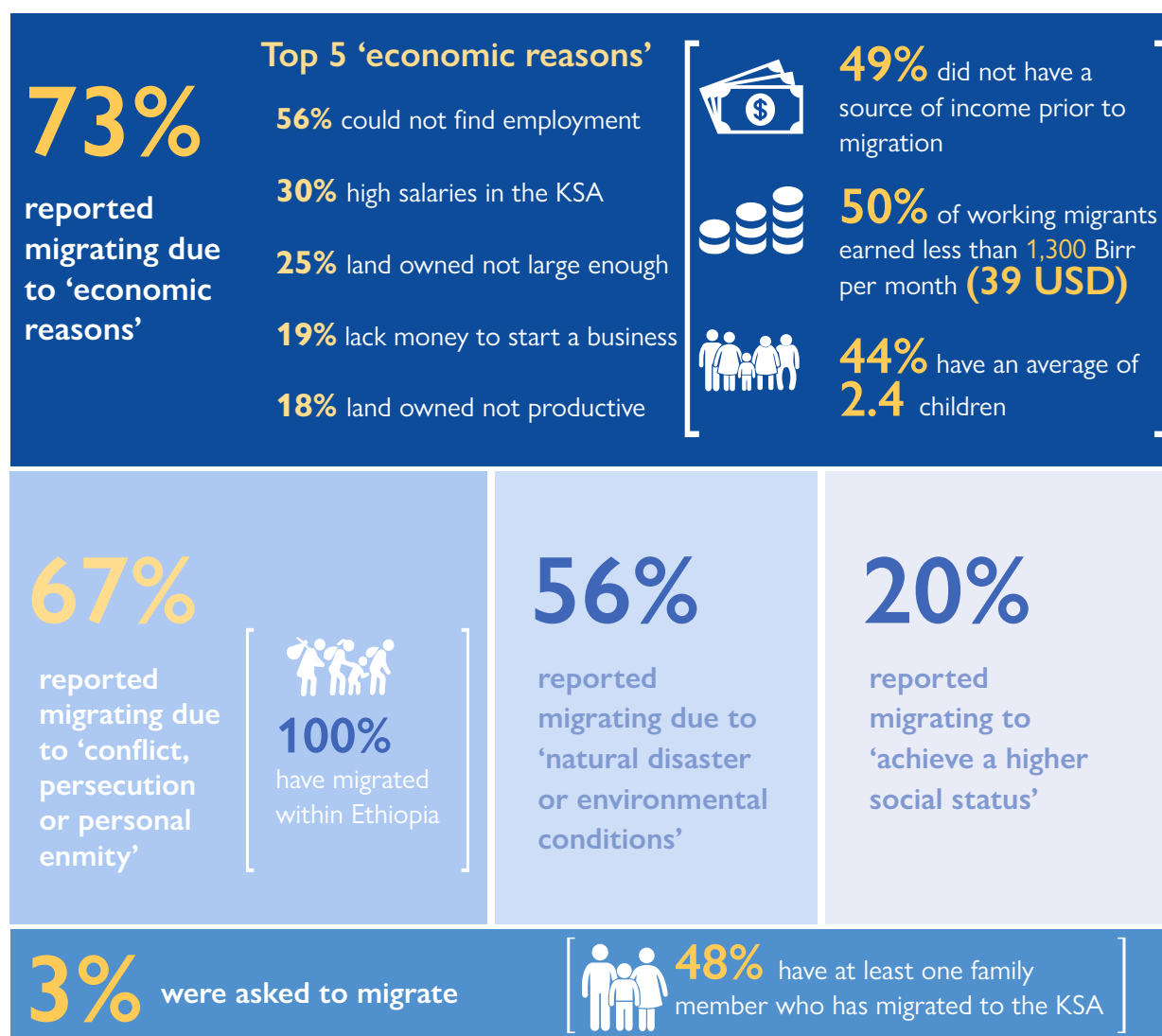
Figure 54: Former internal migrants' main reasons for internal migration by region of origin



MAIN DRIVERS OF MIGRATION⁶⁰

48

Figure 55: Former internal migrants' characteristics and drivers of migration

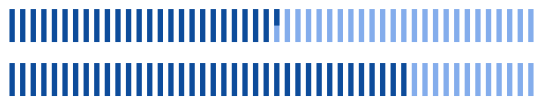


The main reason that former internal migrants migrate to the KSA is conflict, persecution or personal enmity (75%), that is, as important as economic drivers (73%). One in two also mentioned natural disasters or environmental conditions (56%). On average, former internal migrants are more likely to report having a source of income compared to other migrants (51%); however, it is often through daily labour or other informal employment, meaning they earn less: half of working individuals earn 1,300 Birr (39 USD) or less per month, and most come from households that adopted coping strategies in the year prior to their departure (62%). The expectations of former internal migrants regarding the outcome of the journey are very high: nearly 80 per cent consider 'likely' or 'very likely' to find a job in the KSA – possibly as domestic workers (26%) or in agriculture (24%), and expect to earn a median monthly income of around 540 USD. Nearly half have at least one family member who migrated to the KSA – a factor that might trigger their high expectations.

60. The first three reasons for migrating were asked.

Figure 56: Former internal migrants' comparison between actual and expected occupation in the KSA

51% had a source of income in Ethiopia prior to migration



76% deem it 'likely' or 'very likely' to find a job in the KSA

Expected income gain

+1,284%

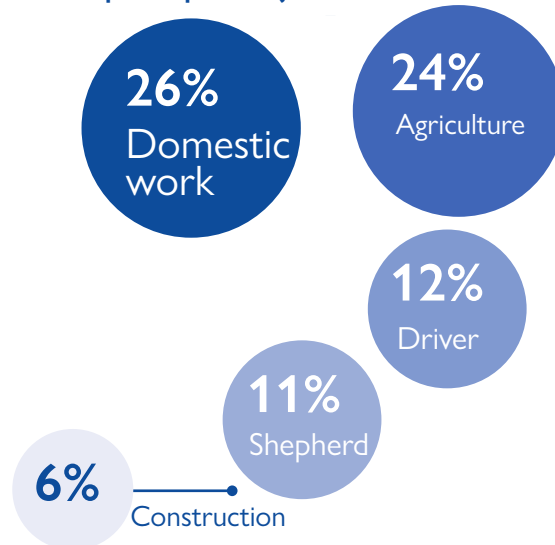
Expected median monthly income in the KSA: **18,000 Birr (540 USD)**

Median monthly income in Ethiopia: **1,300 Birr (39 USD)**

Top 5 sources of income in Ethiopia prior to migration



Top 5 expected jobs in the KSA



IOM mobile health clinic in Dhobley, Somalia.
Photo: © IOM Somalia 2020

MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

50

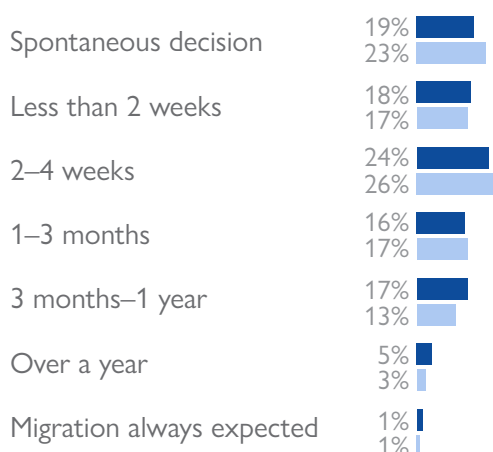


Nearly three quarter of former internal migrants have seen or heard information on migration to the KSA in the six months prior to departure. This is the highest level of exposure of all groups and is largely attributable to the high number of relatives who already migrated to the KSA (48%) in addition to the usage of internet and social media (40% of those who heard about migration mentioned such sources versus 23% of other migrants). However, the lower salaries of former internal migrants affect their ability to self-finance migration (27%) and make them more dependent on families (46%), slightly lengthening the preparation of the journey: around one in four started thinking about migration more than three months before leaving. In addition to informing family members (35%), former internal migrants are also slightly more likely to travel with them (7%). Around one in three is travelling alone.

Figure 57: Characteristics of the decision and journey by previous internal migration

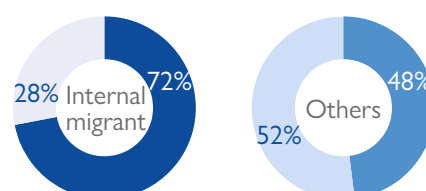
■ Internal migrant ■ Never migrated internally

Started thinking about migration (time before leaving)



Seen/heard information about migration

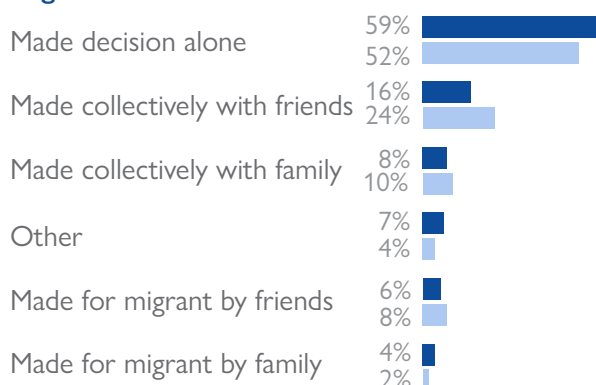
■ Yes ■ No



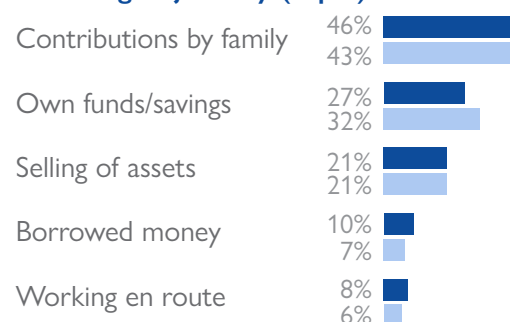
Migrant is traveling alone



Migration decision

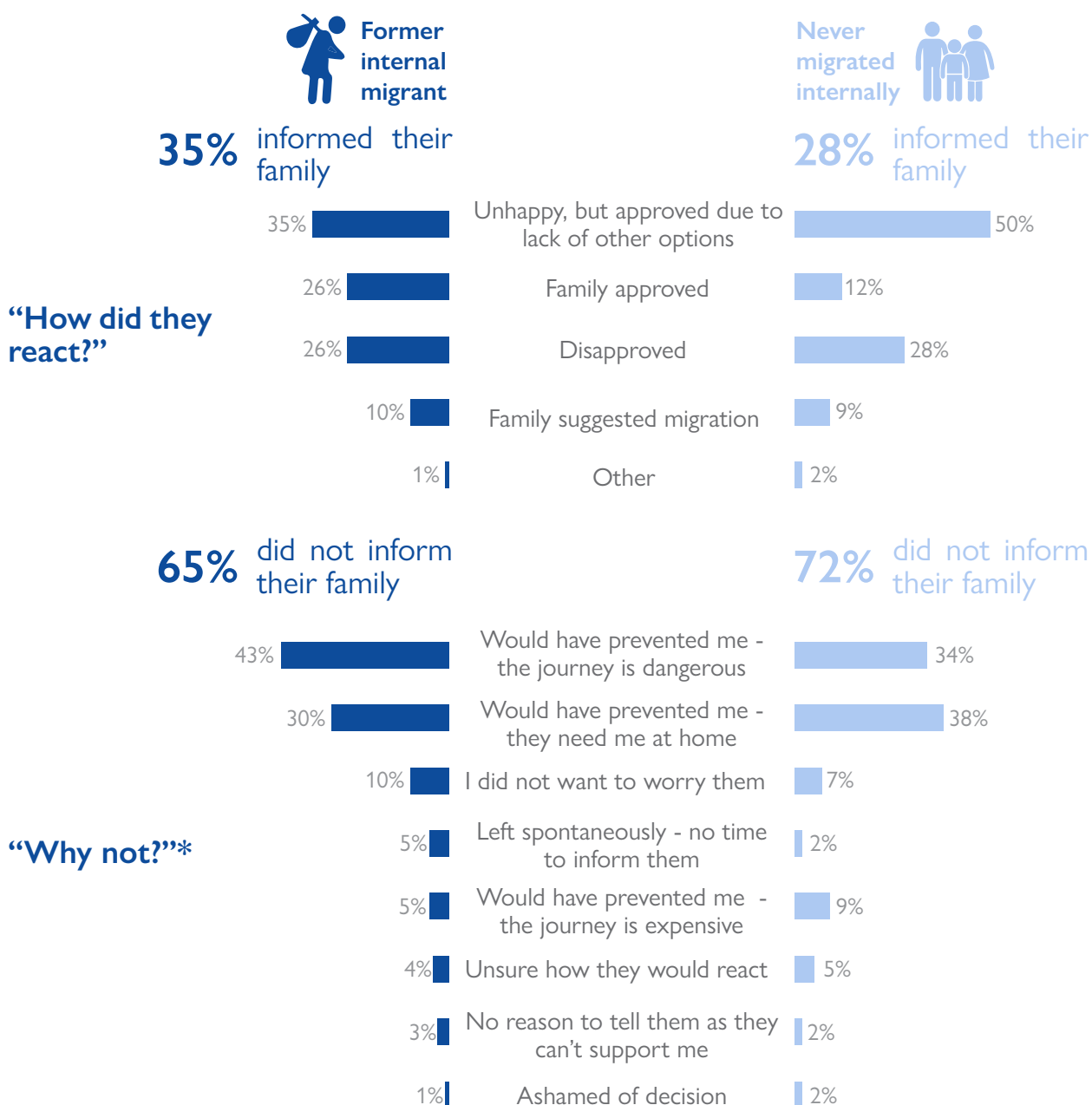


Financing of journey (top 5)*



* Multiple options allowed.

Figure 58: “Informed family of the decision to migrate” by previous internal migration



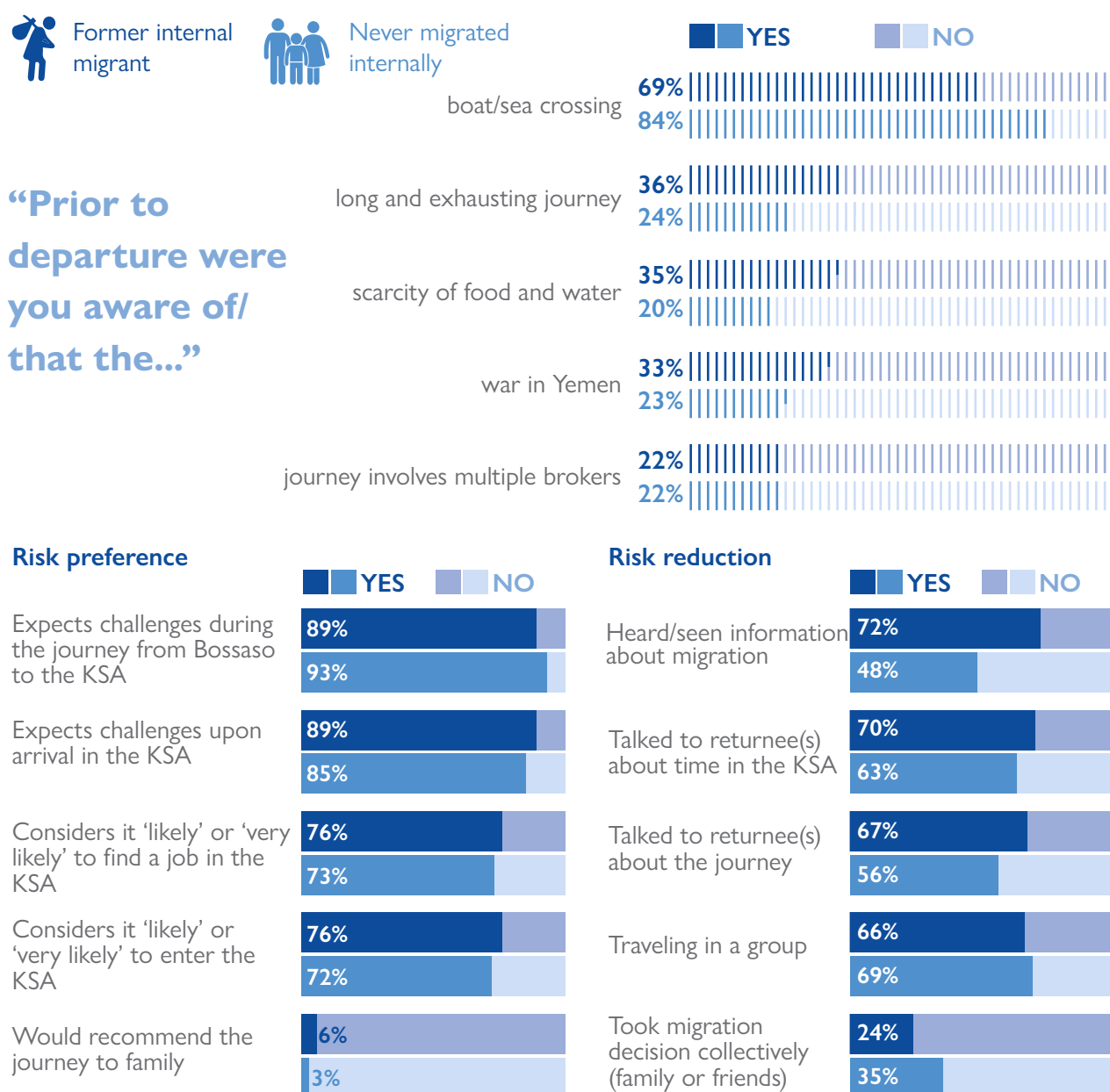
* Multiple options allowed.



RISK PERCEPTION, RISK PREFERENCE AND RISK REDUCTION⁶¹

Former internal migrants seem to be slightly more aware of risks than other migrants: between 20 per cent and 35 per cent knew about the scarcity of water and food during the journey, the war in Yemen and multiplicity of brokers prior to reaching Bossaso. This higher risk awareness may be a consequence of their greater exposure to information about the KSA prior to departure (72%), the stronger involvement of families in their journeys and the presence of relatives who have already migrated. Although nearly all expect challenges along the way and upon arrival, around three quarters are confident they will enter the KSA and find a job.⁶² Around 70 per cent are travelling in a group – around one in ten with family. Only 6 per cent would recommend the same experience to a family member.

Figure 59: Risk perception, risk preference and risk reduction by previous internal migration



61. Risk perception refers to migrants' awareness of challenges along the route, and risk preference refers to their willingness to take these risks according to the perceived outcome (reaching the KSA and finding a job), while risk reduction includes potential precautions against these challenges, whether taken voluntarily or not.

62. Two additional factors should be considered to explain why migrants are willing to take risks. When individuals believe that some advantages are only achievable when taking risks, they may resort to non-rational strategies – such as faith or hope – for dealing with risk. Jens O. Zinn (2019) The meaning of risk-taking – key concepts and dimensions, *Journal of Risk Research*, 22:1, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/13669877.2017.1351465. Many migrants regarded a strong belief in God as an important factor that could minimize their probabilities of an adverse outcome. Similarly, hope and optimism made them willing to engage in high-risk behaviour despite acknowledging the reality of possible adverse outcomes.

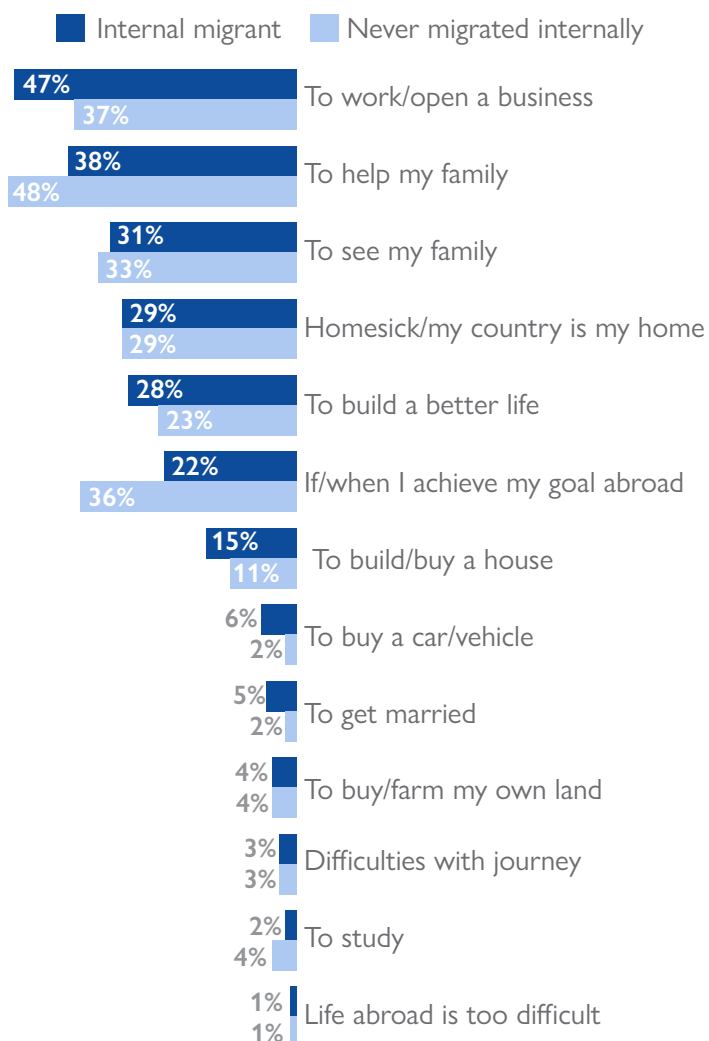
THE FUTURE

86%

of former internal migrants plan to return home

Nearly all former internal migrants plan to return to Ethiopia in the future (86%). In their case, the issue of return seems strongly linked to the outcome of their migration – especially if this means earning enough to open a business (47%), improve their lives (28%), buy a house (15%), a vehicle (5%) and/or land (4%) or even get married (5%). On the other hand, the family factor, although still very important, appears to be slightly less pressing than for other migrants. Around 30 per cent mentioned ‘homesickness,’ revealing a strong attachment to their country although many were forcibly displaced prior to migration.

Figure 60: Reasons to return to Ethiopia by previous internal migration



Migrant awareness sessions in Kismayo
© IOM Somalia 2020



*Migrants walking along the side of the road in the desert
near Burco, Somaliland. © Mohammed Muse/ IOM*

