IOM REGIONAL DATA HUB FOR EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

NETWORK MIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONAL TIES IN FIVE ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITIES OF HIGH EMIGRATION

Insights from the Regional Data Hub (RDH) Research on Young Ethiopian Migration along the Eastern and Southern Corridors: Case Study Report 4

June 2022

Project funded by the European Union
Project implemented by IOM

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RDH
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UN MIGRATION

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ABOUT IOM

The International Organization for Migration (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.

ABOUT THE REGIONAL DATA HUB

Established in early 2018 at IOM's Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa, the Regional Data Hub (RDH) aims to support evidence-based, strategic and policy-level discussion on migration through a combination of initiatives. The RDH aims to enhance the availability of migration related data in the region and promote its dissemination to achieve stronger governance outcomes and positive impacts for migrants and societies as a whole. Through a combination of IOM data collection methodologies, research initiatives, and continuous engagements with National Statistical Offices (NSOs), key line Ministries and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the RDH aims to fill the existing gaps in strengthening the regional evidence base on migration. This contribution will, in turn, help improve policy-making, programming and coordination between all the stakeholders involved. The RDH strategy is structured along three pillars, in line with IOM's Migration data Strategy. Publications can be consulted at https://eastandhornofafrica.iom.int/regional-data-hub. The RDH and this 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).

ABOUT THE EU-IOM JOINT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME

The EU-IOM JI programme was launched in December 2016 and is funded by the European Union (EU) Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. The programme brings together 26 African countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa, and North Africa regions, along with the EU and IOM around the goal of ensuring that migration is safer, more informed and better governed for both migrants and their communities. The programme enables migrants who decide to return to their countries of origin to do so in a safe and dignified way. It provides assistance to returning migrants to help them restart their lives in their countries of origin through an integrated approach to reintegration that supports both migrants and their communities, has the potential to complement local development, and mitigates some of the drivers of irregular migration. Also within the programme's areas of action is building the capacity of governments and other partners; migration data collection and analysis to support fact-based programming; as well as information and awareness raising.

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ACRONYMS

BLA	Bilateral Labour Agreements
CHAID	Chi Square Automatic Interaction Detection
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EHoA	East and Horn of Africa
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FM	Flow Monitoring
FMP	Flow Monitoring Points
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HoH	Head of Household
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
RDH	Regional Data Hub
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
USD	United States dollar

DEFINITIONS[1]

Country of destination

A country that is the destination for a person or a group of persons, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

Country of origin

A country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

Country of transit

The country through which a person or a group of persons pass on any journey to the country of destination or from the country of destination to the country of origin or of habitual residence.

Head of household

The person who is acknowledged as head by the other members and is the main decision-maker for decisions concerning the household.

Household

A group of people living together and sharing the same dwelling and cooking arrangements.

Regular migration

Migration that occurs in compliance with the laws of the country of origin, transit and destination.

Irregular migration

Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.

Migration system

"A set of places, two or more, linked by flows and counter-flows of people, goods, services and information, which tend to facilitate further exchange, including migration, between the places".[2]

Migrant network

"Sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship and shared community origin".[3]

Returnees

Individuals who have migrated internationally and then returned to their country of origin.

Remittances

Personal monetary transfers, cross border or within the same country, made by migrants to individuals or communities with whom the migrant has links.

Social remittances

Transfers of non-monetary value as a result of migration, such as transfer of knowledge, know-how, networking and skills.[4]

1 All definitions are taken from the IOM glossary unless stated otherwise.

2 Mabogunje, 1970.

3 Massey et al., 1994.

4 Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2011.

"I went to Saudi Arabia for religious reasons but returned to Ethiopia to work. I also came back because I had to be here to support my family. I now have one son who lives in Saudi Arabia.

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BACKGROUND

In 2019, the IOM 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 Ethiopians[5] along the Eastern Route from Ethiopia to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, in particular the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, via Djibouti and Somalia. The project included conducting original research with individual migrants along the route (phase one and two) and in communities of high emigration in Ethiopia (phase three).

The first two stages of the research project were carried out in Obock, Djibouti and Bossaso, Puntland, where research teams interviewed a sample of migrants transiting through these two main embarkation hubs from where they cross over the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea to Yemen. Three different types of migrants were interviewed: individuals migrating for the first time, individuals who have attempted or successfully completed this journey before, and individuals who have decided to stop their journey and return to Ethiopia. Quantitative surveys were administered to 2,140 migrants in Obock and 1,526 migrants in Bossaso. Qualitative, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with a sample of 66 migrants in Obock.

The third stage of the project was conducted in the first half of 2021 in communities of high emigration in Ethiopia. This stage's aim was to gain a better understanding of the environment in which migration was taking place and investigate how it was lived and experienced at household and community level. Phase three was also designed to better understand how money, information, knowledge and ideas flow transnationally between communities in Ethiopia and migrants abroad, as well as to gauge whether the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) had changed the migration environment and impacted migration from and to these communities. This report builds on the findings of this third phase, based on the methodology highlighted on the following page.

5 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.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection was carried out by JaRco Consulting PLC in five communities in Ethiopia. Research findings from phases one and two guided the initial selection of target woredas of origin of migrants, which were chosen according to the volume of flows and the presence of a mixed pool of migrants.[6] Selected woredas were then triangulated with annual IOM Flow Monitoring (FM) data on migration flows along the Eastern Route. Selected woredas included (Amhara), Setema (Southwest Oromia), Deder (East Oromia) and Erer (Harari).[7] The additional woreda of Misha in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR) was selected through FM data as representative of communities of high emigration towards the Southern Route.

RAPID ASSESSMENT

A rapid assessment was carried out in each woreda to assess whether it was suitable for the research and fulfilled the study requirements, as well as to generate community profiles for each of the planned areas. The rapid assessment involved both primary and secondary data collection on the socioeconomic, environmental, security and migratory landscapes in each location and helped contribute to a better understanding of the local environment, define the geographical boundaries of each data collection site, identify research areas within each woreda (areas with a high concentration of households with at least one member who is currently abroad or has returned),[8] generate an understanding of local migration dynamics and identify key informants (KIs) such as community leaders and former migrants for the qualitative part of the research.

Primary data was collected through observation of study sites and by interviewing KIs to gather in-depth, context-specific information from each target woreda. Within each area, individuals with different areas of expertise were interviewed, including a representative of the economic sector, a representative of women's affairs, government representatives, religious leaders and informants from the migrant community. Secondary data was collected through a review of relevant literature including research papers, academic studies, migration data and publications from non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and the Government of Ethiopia.

HOUSEHOLD SAMPLING

A listing was carried out at each area to understand the distribution of migrants' households throughout the area and identify the potential households to interview. Listing was conducted prior to data collection and more households than the target sample size for each domain were identified. The target sample was set at 500 households per area, half with and half without experience of migration to allow for comparison – the target sample was raised at 600 households in Misha since it was the only community representative of the Southern Route. In addition to the presence of migrants and returnees, information on gender, age and intended destination of migrants was also collected. Overall, 4,396 households were listed across the five communities, with a total of 2,439 migrants identified of whom 991 were returnees.

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Based on the listing, a sample of 2,600 households was randomly selected, with an equal proportion of migrant households to non-migrant households. The survey covered information on the characteristics of households, their living conditions, attitudes towards migration, direct experience of migration, the impact of COVID-19 on migration and migrant or would-be migrant future intentions. Tools were translated into Amharic and Oromifa by JaRco and surveys were administered individually to household heads following their informed consent by trained enumerators in each area. To ensure that data collected were as accurate and reliable as possible, interviews were conducted individually and out of earshot

6 These included first-time migrants, returnees, re-migrating individuals, female migrants and former internal migrants.

7 Although the Tigray region is a main region of origin of migrants surveyed in the first two stages of the research, woredas of high emigration in Tigray had to be excluded from the research due to conflict and security issues that erupted in Northern Ethiopia in November 2020.

8 Each area of research roughly corresponds to 4–5 kebeles for each woreda, except for Erer, where all kebeles were screened and selected, due to low population density and lower incidence of migration.

of other community members; data collectors of the same gender as participants conducted surveys, as this is deemed more culturally acceptable in a traditional Ethiopian context and helped to create safe, comfortable environments in which respondents felt able to speak more freely and answer honestly.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data were also collected at each research area through focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) to obtain more in-depth views from different perspectives and allow for a more nuanced understanding of the household survey findings. Tools were developed to assess parental attitudes towards migration; risk awareness, information sources and knowledge gaps among would-be-migrants; returnees' ambitions and return experiences; migration dynamics before and during COVID-19; the importance of remittances and how the remittance system works; and transnational communication and technology. Tools were translated into the relevant local languages to ensure that the appropriate local vernacular was used so that participants would be able to understand and respond to questions easily.

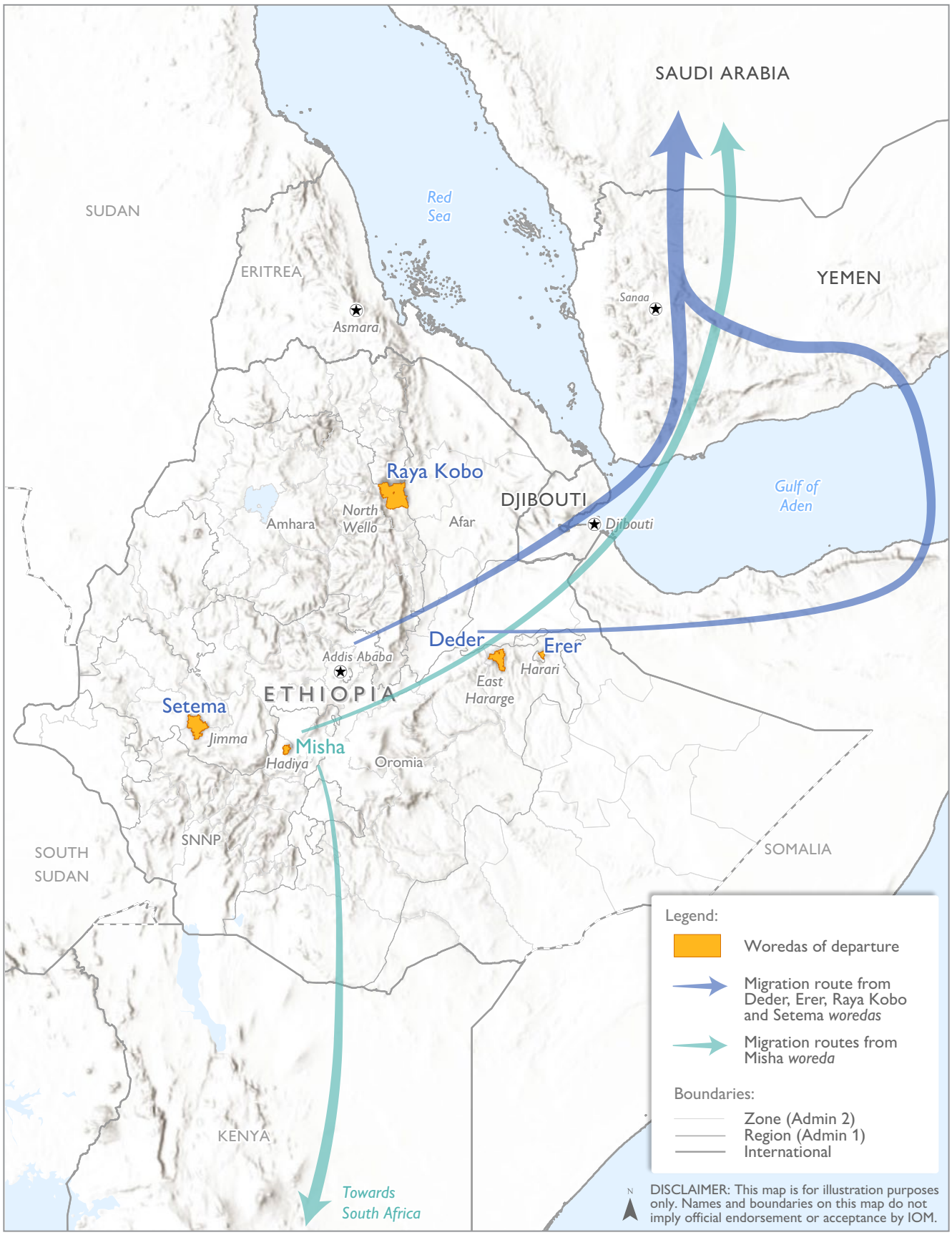
Overall, 40 KIIs and 24 FGDs were conducted across the five locations. FGDs were conducted in groups of six to eight participants who were purposefully selected based on their profiles and willingness to participate. All FGDs were separated by gender due to cultural sensitivities and to promote an environment where all participants felt free to speak openly. FGDs were also grouped homogeneously in terms of social backgrounds and employment histories to ensure everyone's opinion was heard and participants could feel they were discussing in a safe space. KIs were identified during the rapid community assessments and included representatives of community groups, informal foreign exchange providers, returnees, teachers, community elders, local officials, youth representatives and other relevant stakeholders.

Data from the listing and rapid assessments have been used to profile areas of research. Data from surveys have been used to compare findings across communities and different population groups, such as households with one migrant currently abroad or who has returned versus households with multiple migrants and/or returnees. Qualitative data from FGDs and KIIs have been used to confirm quantitative findings and further explore specific issues. When possible, triangulation with data on individual migrants collected during the first two phases of the research was also carried out.

Table 1. Research Areas and Data Collection Activities

RESEARCH SITES	PHASE 1 AND 2		PHASE 3			
	Individual Surveys	Individual Semi-structured Interviews	Households Screened (listing)	Households Surveyed	Focus Group Discussions	Key Informant Interviews
Bossaso	1526					
Deder			649	500	4	8
Erer			1523	500	5	8
Misha			805	600	6	8
Obock	2140	66				
Raya Kobo			626	500	5	8
Setema			776	500	4	8

RESEARCH AREAS



“I have four brothers and three sisters. Two of my brothers are in South Africa. One has been living there for 12 years, the other for five years. I do not want to go to South Africa. I own a metal shop and I had to save a lot of money to be able to open it. I want to expand my shop because I am talented in this field. My brothers do not seem to be living a good life in South Africa and I wish they would come back so we can all work in the shop together.

INTRODUCTION

Migration networks can be defined as "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship and shared community origin" (Massey et al., 1994). The role of these networks has been explored by theories on the internal dynamics of migration processes (Massey, 1990; de Haas, 2010b). Such theories posit that networks can facilitate the establishment of migration systems[9] by lowering the costs and risks of movements, once broad structural factors – such as war, colonialism, immigration policies, labour recruitment, or economic development – have determined the necessary conditions for large-scale migration between places to occur (Castles and Miller, 2009; Massey et al., 1994).

Through networks, would-be migrants learn about travel opportunities, and are offered information and advice on organizing the journey, on the journey itself as well as on employment at destination. Relationships with previous migrants or migrants abroad can therefore be a strong predictor for migration. The increased use of communication technologies further facilitates movement, as information can be accessed more rapidly across borders and is not limited to face-to-face interactions. Large migratory flows may become self-sustaining as strong networks are established between origin and destination through which information, money and other forms of assistance can flow (De Haas et al., 2020).[10]

Network migration is observable on both the Eastern Route to the GCC countries and the Southern Route towards South Africa.[11] Migration from southern Ethiopia to South Africa dates back to the 1990s, when the Derg's military regime in Ethiopia ended, facilitating international mobility. At the same time, the early 1990s also marked the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and with it the introduction of progressive asylum laws permitting asylum seekers and migrants to work and study while their claims were being processed. These developments laid the foundation of the Southern Corridor and led to the establishment of the first diaspora generation in South Africa. In the early 2000s, migration along the Southern Corridor increased in response to the appointment of an Ethiopian ambassador to South Africa, who arranged job opportunities for migrants from the Hosaena and Durame areas in SNNP, the main region of origin of Ethiopians along the Southern Route to this day (Kanko, Bailey & Teller, 2013).

Migration along the Eastern Corridor towards the GCC countries originated along historical trade routes, yet the surge in irregular labour migration and consolidation of broker networks along this corridor began in the late 1990s with the onset of large flows of labour migration of Ethiopian women for domestic work. Eastern Route migration witnessed another increase following the 2011 agreement between the Ethiopian and Saudi Arabian governments to supply unskilled, cheap labour (Fernandez, 2017). Today, Saudi Arabia is the second largest host country of the Ethiopian diaspora worldwide and the fourth remittance-sending market (Remitscope, 2020), with an estimated stock of migrants at around 170,000 in 2019.[12] According to figures provided by the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, these estimates appear to be conservative and the total number of Ethiopian migrants abroad is closer to 3 million – approximately 17 per cent of whom reside in Saudi Arabia (Yeshitla, 2019). Over the last two decades, both regular and irregular labour migration along the Eastern Corridor grew in response to several push factors including famine, climate shocks such as droughts and floods, overpopulation, land scarcity and extreme poverty.

In recent years, the Eastern Route to the GCC countries – in particular Saudi Arabia, via Djibouti and Somalia – has become the largest international migratory route

9 A migration system can be defined as a set of places linked by flows and counter-flows of people, goods, services and information (Mabogunje, 1970), resulting in a rather neat geographical structuring and clustering of migration flows.

10 During the first two phases of this research project, many migrants reported that they were migrating in the footsteps of friends, family and community members who had migrated before them and many had received support from returnees or the Ethiopian diaspora abroad in planning and financing their journeys. For more in-depth analysis on this topic, please refer to IOM, 2021; To change my life. Risk perception, expectations and migration experiences of young Ethiopians migrating along the Eastern Route toward the Arabian Peninsula.

11 Network migration is also evident on other migratory routes from Ethiopia such as the Northern Corridor via Sudan and Libya to Europe. This research focuses on the Eastern and the Southern Corridors, due to the migratory profiles of the communities studied.

12 World Bank estimates based on UN Population Division, 2015-2020.

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from Ethiopia. Despite movement restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, almost 270,000 movements of Ethiopians headed to GCC countries were observed at IOM Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) in the EHoA between January and December 2021. During the same period, around 41,000 Ethiopian migrants were observed by IOM at Moyale FMP along the Southern Route, of whom around 25 per cent were headed to South Africa. Data collected from the first two phases of this research indicate that along the Eastern Route, movements largely originate from the regions of Oromia, Amhara and Tigray, with the highest incidence in specific zones, such as Arsi, Jimma, East Hararge, North Wello and Mekelle. Migration along the Southern Corridor largely occurs from Hadiya and Kembata zones in SNNPR, and to a smaller extent from the Oromia region.

Modern-day migratory flows along both corridors thus occur in a context of strong historical ties between origin communities in Ethiopia and the diaspora in the Middle East and Southern Africa. Migration networks along both routes are well established and migration is considered a common livelihood strategy and a means to diversify income sources and generate capital to invest in economic activities in all five communities in the study. Over time, transnational communication, social and smuggling networks helped perpetuate movement from these areas of high migration. Multiple, distinct flows of migrants can originate from one specific area. Flows along both corridors are also highly gendered, with irregular labour migration more commonly associated with male migration, while regular labour migration to the GCC countries for domestic work and marriage migration to South Africa are predominantly female.

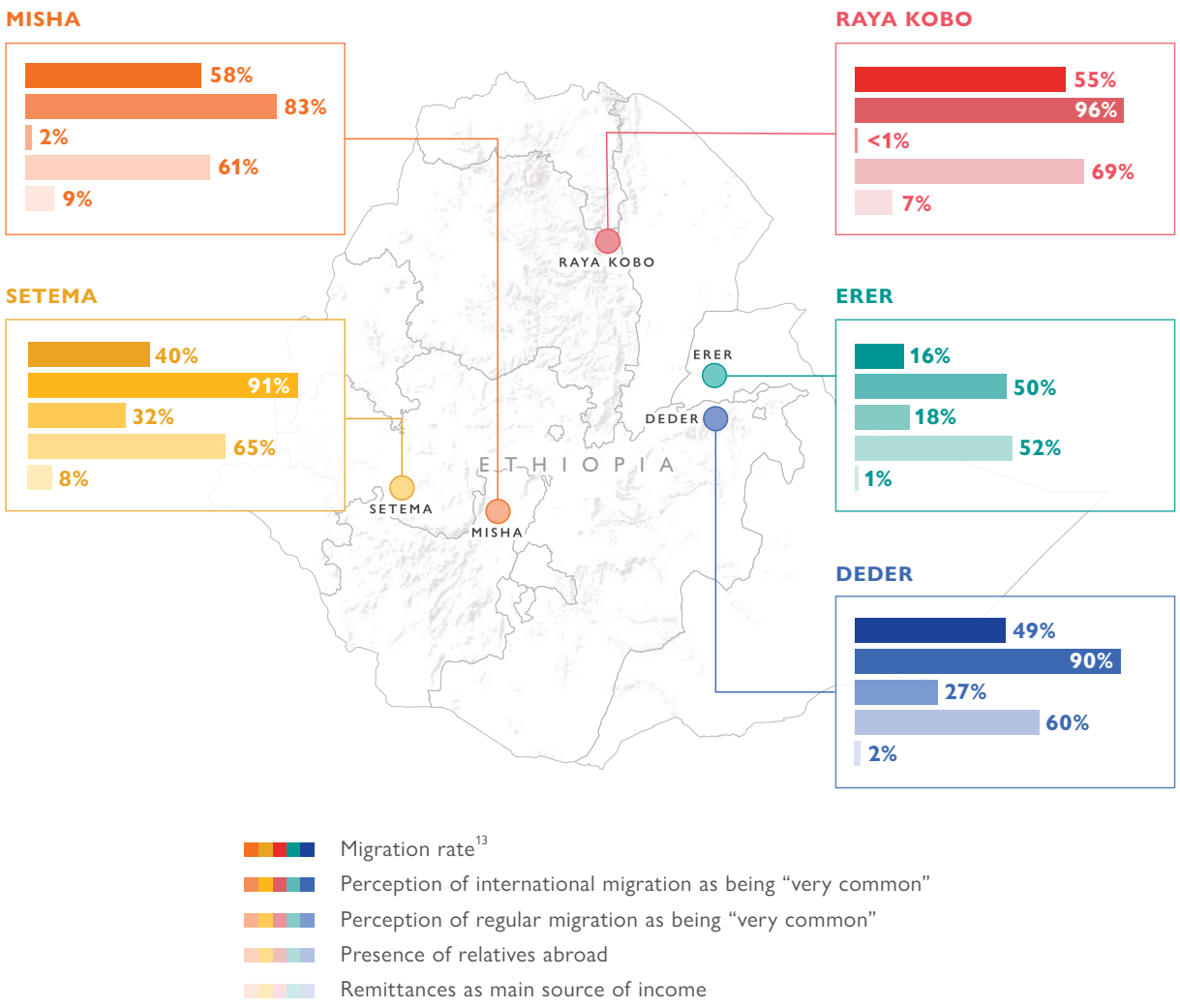
This briefing paper is the fourth in a series of thematic reports that build on the analysis of data collected during the various stages of the research project. It aims to explore the role of networks in the migration systems of five different communities of Ethiopia. Flows from each community have been compared to each other, highlighting their specific characteristics in terms of types of flow, migrants' profiles, their destinations and community and family networks. Family networks have been investigated with an emphasis on the migration experiences of households where one member has migrated compared to the experiences of households where multiple members have migrated – with particular focus on the outcome of migration and the most relevant elements for success. Migration was defined as 'successful' in this study when at least one migrant in the household reached the intended destination and was able to remit home. Success is assessed from the household perspective and does not consider the cost at which the outcome was achieved.

COMMUNITY MIGRATION PROFILE

Overall, 4,396 households were listed across the five communities of research. Data derived from the community listing show that 39 per cent of households have at least one member who has migrated in the past or is currently abroad. Figures range from 16 per cent in Erer to 58 per cent in Misha, with Raya Kobo (55%), Deder (49%) and Setema (40%) also exhibiting high migration rates.

Raya Kobo and Misha display similar profiles with high international flows, nearly all of which are irregular, and strong ties to migrants in destination countries through remittances. In these two communities, migration of multiple members within the same household is also very common – around one in two households have more than one member who has migrated. In Setema and Deder, flows are only slightly smaller than in Misha and Raya Kobo, but regular migration is perceived as being common. Remittances seem more relevant in Setema (8%) than in Deder (2%), possibly due to the high return rate observed in the latter, which makes migration less successful. Erer displays the least movements of people and capital, although the presence of regular flows seems relatively sizable.

Migration profile by research area (Data from listing and surveys, percentage of households)



13 Data from listing. Overall, 4,396 households were screened in the five communities and 2,439 migrants were identified of whom 991 were returnees.

Migration patterns reflect conditions and change at origin and destination and result in geographical structuring and clustering of migration flows where each community presents a distinct profile. In Raya Kobo, flows tend to move along one consolidated path towards Saudi Arabia, while Deder, Erer, Setema and particularly Misha, display slightly more multidirectional flows. In Deder, Erer and Setema, the primary flows are towards Saudi Arabia, while secondary flows are headed towards Yemen (in Deder and Erer) and several other Middle Eastern Countries (in Setema). In Misha, the main flow is directed towards South Africa, while secondary flows are directed towards the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. Marginal movements towards Sudan were observed in all communities, while movements to Europe and other countries in the Global North were observed in Deder and Erer, supporting IOM FM data that see flows from Ethiopia along the Northern Route towards North Africa and Europe as much smaller in scale. As of December 2021, only 0.2 per cent of migrants identified by DTM in Libya were Ethiopians (1,263 individuals)[14] and Ethiopians represented fewer than 1 per cent of all arrivals to Italy and Malta in 2021 (413 arrivals).[15]

"I sent my two children to work in Saudi Arabia. Through their work there, they are able to support our family. I also spent two years working in Saudi Arabia.

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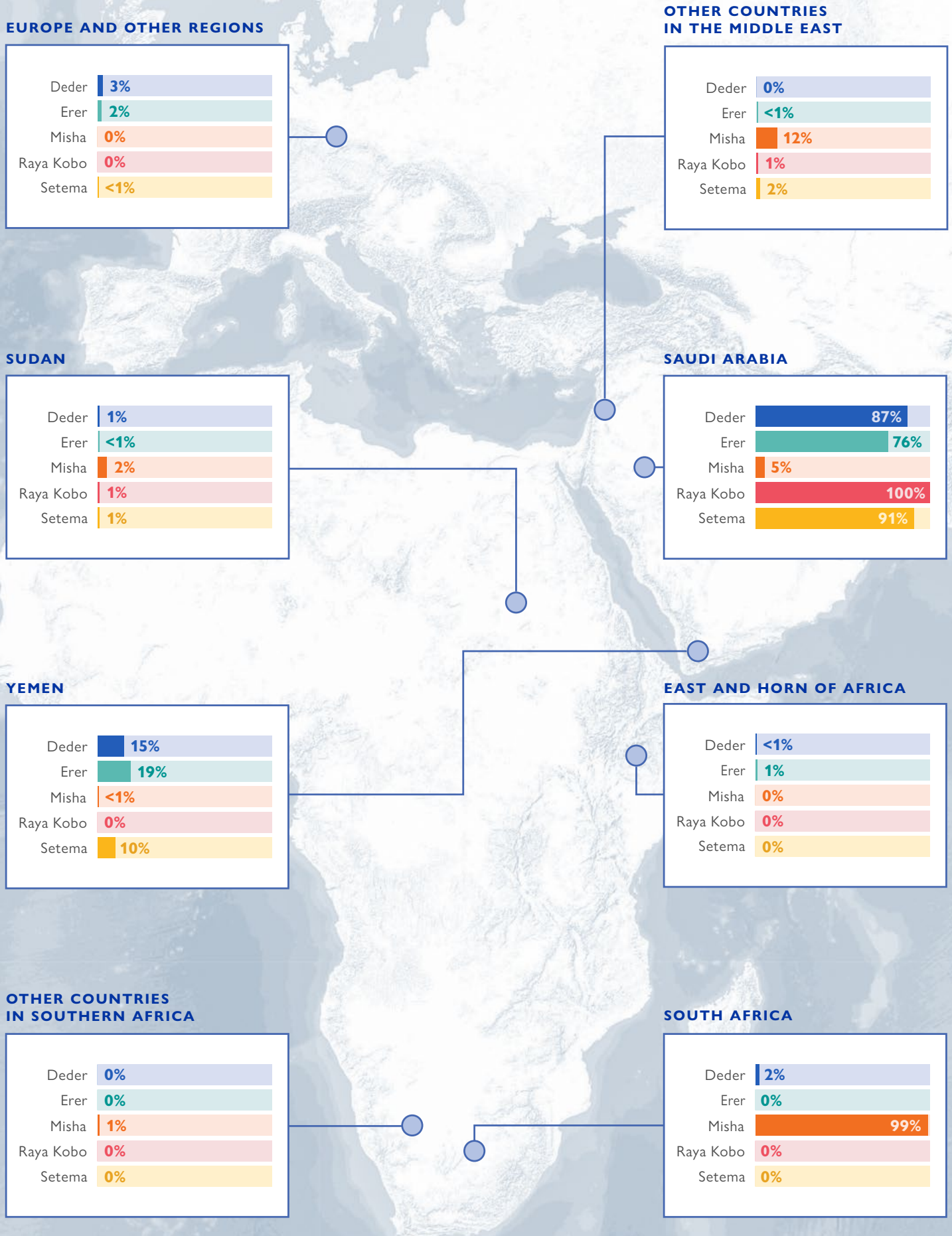
14 IOM, 2022. Libya – Migrant Report 40 (Dec 2021– Jan 2022).

15 IOM. Migration flows to Europe – Arrivals.

MAIN CORRIDORS BY RESEARCH AREA

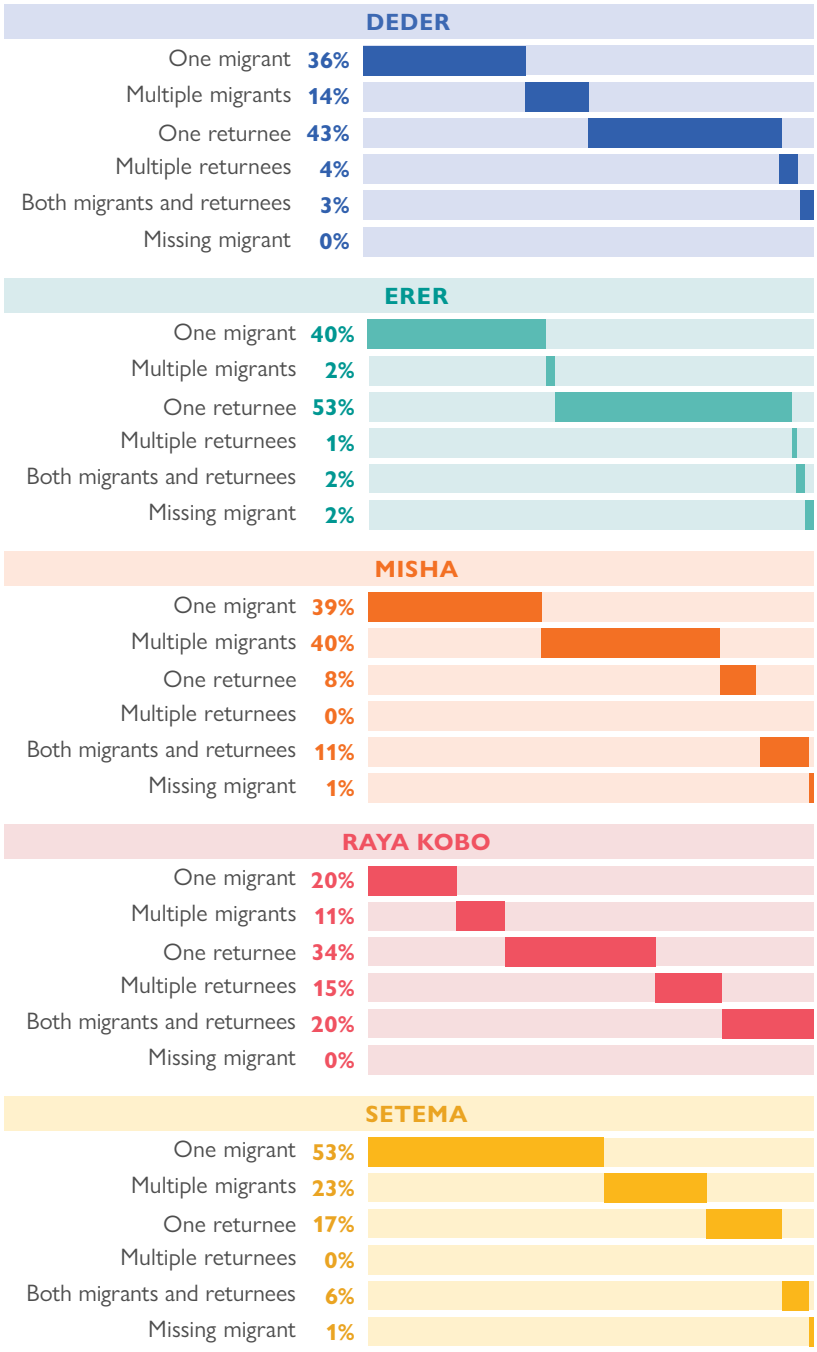
(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, multiple responses possible)



Irregular flows along the Eastern and the Southern Route tend to result in significant return migration movements as irregular migrants are often unable to regularize their status. Forty-three per cent of households with experience of migration have at least one returnee. Return rates are particularly high in Deder, Erer and Raya Kobo: individuals who migrated to Saudi Arabia and Yemen are almost three times more likely to return compared to those who migrated to other GCC countries and South Africa.[16] High return rates in communities of emigration often lead to mixed situations where returnees and would-be migrants live together under the same roof.

Large return migration flows from Saudi Arabia began in 2017, when the Government of Saudi Arabia tightened its immigration policy and began cracking down on undocumented migration to reduce unemployment within the country. IOM has electronically registered 425,239 Ethiopian returnees at Bole International airport between May 2017 and December 2021 (IOM, 2021d).[17] More information on return migration flows to Ethiopia and their impact on migrants, their families and communities can be found in the briefing paper on return dynamics in five Ethiopian communities of high emigration.

Household profiles by research area (Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration)



16 Migrants may reconsider their migration while in transit for reasons such as illness, injury, fearing the dangers of the journey ahead or running out of money. Some migrants are also detained in transit countries and deported back to Ethiopia, particularly along the Southern Route. While migrants who successfully reach South Africa often tend to stay and settle there more permanently, migrants in Saudi Arabia often return to Ethiopia involuntarily due to deportation (IOM, 2022).

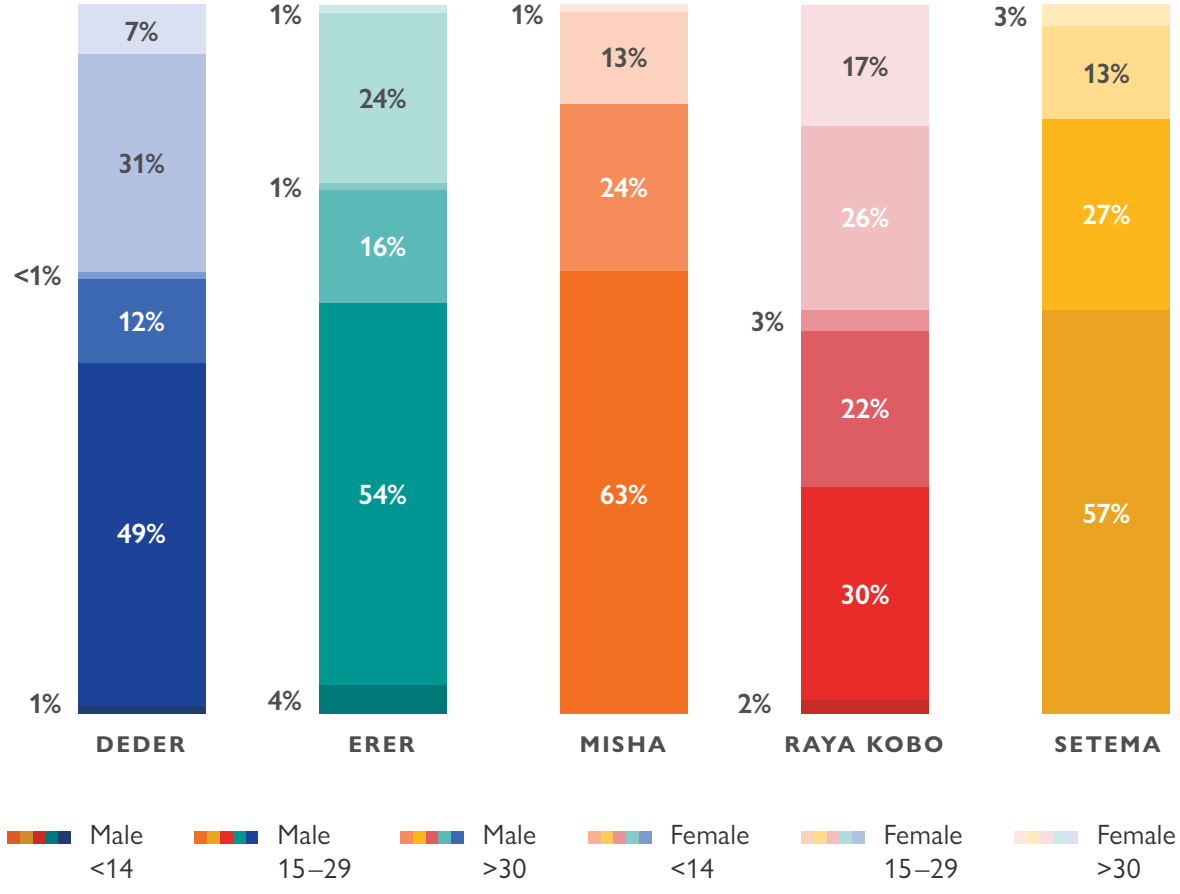
17 Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, deportations from Saudi Arabia were temporarily halted but resumed in reduced numbers towards the end of 2020. In the first half of 2021, figures remained at around half of the average number of returnees registered per month in pre-COVID-19 years, while mass deportations took place in July, when 31,911 returnees were recorded. This constitutes the highest number of returnees ever registered by IOM since this data collection began in May 2017. More information on returns from Saudi Arabia can be found here.

The comparison of the different migration trajectories does not only reflect the dynamics of the communities within Ethiopia, but also the specific labour market demands of countries of destination. The presence of ethnic businesses and niches in the economy can reinforce network effects and attract an increasing number of migrants at a specific destination (de Haas, 2010). For instance, females dominate the flow of domestic workers to Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries. The prevalence of female migration is particularly visible in Raya Kobo, where nearly one in two migrants is a woman or young girl who migrated to Saudi Arabia.[18] In Misha, the primary migratory flow is composed of male migrants traveling irregularly to South Africa, often through diaspora recruitment, to work in the retail business. In small towns and townships across the country, Ethiopians have taken advantage of the lack of retail trade to establish a plethora of small and informal businesses and activities (Estifanos and Zack, 2020). In Johannesburg, they have created a retail enclave – the 'Ethiopian Quarter' otherwise known as 'Jeppe' (MIDEQ, 2021).

Although most migrants in all five communities were 15–29 years old, migration in Raya Kobo, Misha and Setema seems to span a larger age range. Misha and Raya Kobo are not only the areas with the highest migration rates, but both locations also have long histories of migrating internationally and KIs in both areas reported that many families in these woredas rely on migration as a livelihood strategy. Conversely, flows in Deder and Erer are mainly composed of young migrants in the 15–29 years age group, or even younger. In Erer, 4 per cent of migrants were younger than 14 years.

Migrant demographic profiles by research area

(Data from surveys, percentage of migrants and returnees)



18 More information can be found in Gendered Patterns of Women and Girls' Migration along the Eastern Corridor.

MIGRATING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OTHERS

Migrant networks can be conceived as "a form of location-specific social capital that people draw upon to gain access to resources elsewhere" (Massey et al. 1993). Migrants and would-be migrants can tap into their networks for assistance before and during the journey. Such assistance can take many forms, including the provision of information, money, transport, documents, a broker, a place to stay while in transit as well as support once at destination, with an accommodation or even a job (MacDonald & Mac Donald, 1964).

During FGDs, when asked about their preferred destination, most would-be migrants explained that Saudi Arabia (or South Africa in the case of Misha) was their preferred destination because they had family and/or friends there who could advise and support them in planning the journey and in finding a job once they arrive. Participants also discussed that knowing migrants abroad who they could ask for advice meant that they could plan their journeys easier and faster compared to other destinations where they had no network and no means of acquiring information: "Most of our friends migrated to Saudi Arabia and we don't know the situation of other countries. That's why I preferred to migrate to Saudi."[19] Despite having mixed information on Saudi Arabia, simply having information was considered important and swayed decision-making for the known versus the unknown.

Similarly, returnee KIs who maintained contact with family and friends in Ethiopia while they were abroad reported that friends, family members and/or other community members such as neighbours had contacted them for advice on how to migrate while they were away. In addition to providing would-be migrants with information on migration, several returnees mentioned that they had been asked to assist friends and family members who became stranded during their journey.

Household surveys show that Misha is the community where migrant households hold both sizeable networks and the ability to activate them. Almost 70 per cent of households where someone migrated reported that they had relatives or friends at destination and around half of households suggested that migration occurred with the support of an earlier migrant.[20] In nearly all multi-migrant households (86%), at least one individual chose to migrate to the same country of another family member.[21] Likewise, in Raya Kobo, in most households, migrants joined relatives or friends abroad (95%), although they were less likely to receive their support (26%). Around one third of households in Deder and Setema reported networks at destination (and in 22% and 14% respectively of them, migration was 'supported'), whereas linkages at destination or support were very rarely reported in Erer (6% and 11% respectively).[22] The presence of relatives or friends in transit countries seems quite common in Deder (15%) and Raya Kobo (21%).[23]

19 Female FGD respondent in Erer.

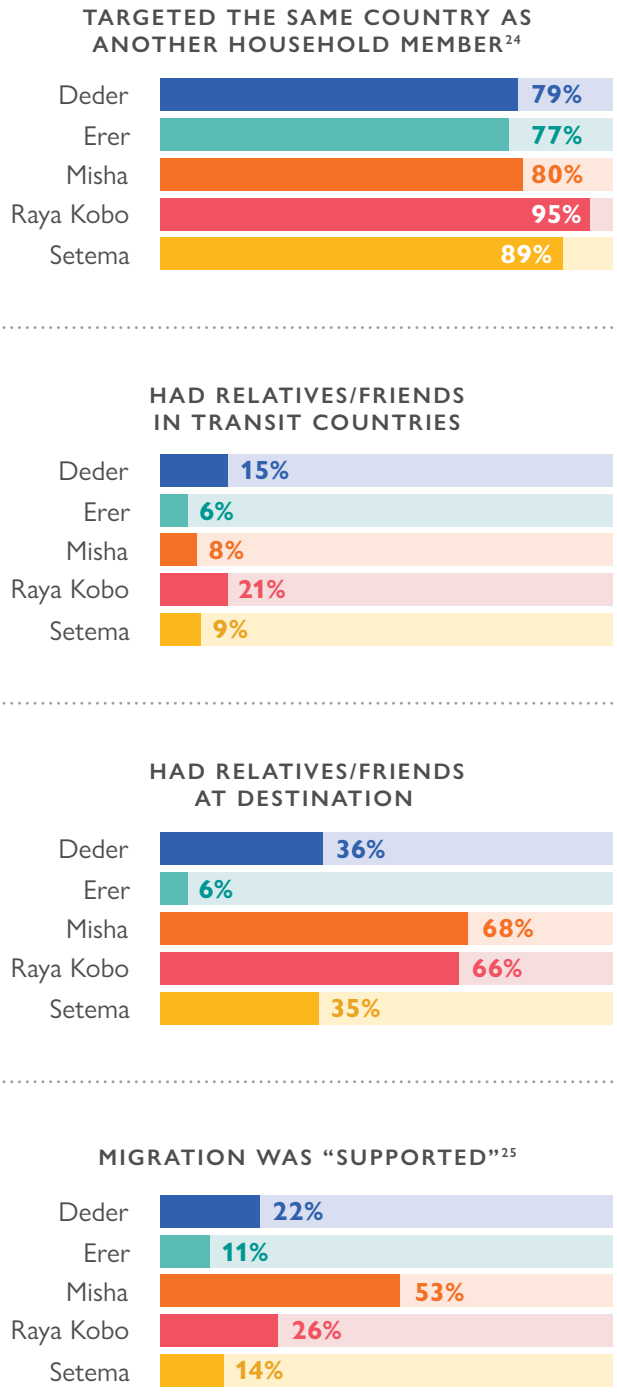
20 For the study, the following options were considered as "receiving support": individuals migrated because they had an arranged marriage/job at destination and/or based on relatives/friends offering support at destination and/or the journey was partly or fully financed through remittances and/or relatives abroad arranged for the broker.

21 For a detailed description of the migration experience in multi-migrant households see further below, "Family networks and the migration of multiple members."

22 This finding seems to indicate that migrations in Erer may have been supported by relatives or friends not necessarily in the country of destination, but most likely in countries of transit as well as in other countries.

23 In Deder, this finding points in the direction of family in Yemen, while in the case of Raya Kobo, it may indicate friends either in Yemen, Djibouti or Somalia, since the presence of relatives in these countries was not reported.

Migrating in the footsteps of others
(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration)



ETHIOPIAN MARRIAGE AND LABOUR MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

More than one in ten migration journeys in Misha were pre-arranged at destination, with individuals migrating either because they had a job offer or for an arranged marriage (12% versus 2–3% in other communities). Marriage migration of women to marry members of the Ethiopian diaspora in South Africa is a prime example of a transnational, economic space in which migrants abroad facilitate the journeys of subsequent groups of migrants. All female would-be migrant FGD participants in Misha reported that their migration, including obtaining relevant travel documents such as passports and visas, plane tickets and all communication with brokers was being arranged and paid for by their prospective husbands. Moreover, none of the participants were aware of the costs of their travel.

Male FGD participants in Misha also described that their family and friends in South Africa were covering the cost of their migration, although in the case of male migrants, journeys are sponsored by prospective employers as a loan. Once the migrant reaches South Africa, he will work in the friend or relative's business for around three to four years until the money received for travel including interest can be paid back. Members of the Ethiopian diaspora in South Africa often run successful businesses and study respondents explained that they are often searching for migrants from their home communities to move to South Africa and work for them. Respondents suggested that supporting and encouraging the migration of at least two or three family and community members is not only voluntary for the Ethiopian diaspora, but a cultural obligation for those who have successfully entered and settled in South Africa.

24 Multi-migrant households only.

25 For the study, the following options were considered as "receiving support": individuals migrated because they had an arranged marriage/job at destination and/or based on relatives/friends offering support at destination and/or the journey was partly or fully financed through remittances and/or relatives abroad arranged for the broker.

“I only went to school until the fourth grade and my brothers and I wanted to make better lives for ourselves, so we migrated to Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia, I was working as a guard and shepherd. It has been three years since two of my brothers and I came back to Ethiopia, but we still have one brother living in Saudi Arabia. After living there for four years, I was deported because I was working illegally. I have no intention of going back to Saudi Arabia. I have a wife and child here and was able to build my own house and small farm.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS IN MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

Network migration not only relies on the presence of family and friends abroad, but also on a host of other actors such as immediate and extended family, friends and peers, returnees, brokers and other intermediaries at origin who help initiate movements and encourage migration along certain pathways over others. Migrants do not necessarily interact with all these individuals, but the decision-making process is often influenced by a combination of them, depending on the characteristics of the migrant, his/her household and community.

According to household surveys, most migration journeys were initiated by a single actor (78%) – generally the migrant himself/herself (52%). This is the case, for instance, in Deder and Setema, where most movements were self-initiated. A large degree of agency in the decision-making process tends to be associated with the availability of personal resources to finance migration[26] – although agency does not prevent the involvement of networks at later stages, as the journey progresses or once migrants arrive at destination. Data collected on individual migrants during the first two phases of the research suggest that girls and young women were less likely to be the primary decision-maker of their migration: around 20 per cent stated that the decision to migrate was made for them by their family or spouse or collaboratively with family members, which was slightly higher than for male migrants (13%).[27]

The involvement of multiple actors was more common in Erer (24%), Misha (32%) and particularly Raya Kobo (40%). In Misha, migrants are the least likely to have initiated migration (33%), due to a higher involvement of close and extended family, with relatives abroad often acting in synergy with the broker. In Raya Kobo, migration was initiated either by the migrant alone (52%) or together with a combination of actors, most frequently returnees and friends, but also household members and relatives abroad or in Ethiopia. In Erer, brokers, friends and returnees were the most frequently mentioned 'initiators' after migrants themselves, reflecting the weaker networks in this community.

The role of less durable and weaker networks came up as a key point of discussion during interviews with KIs who work in education. KIs explained that particularly boys younger than 18 years, who have a very strong desire to change their lives in a short period of time, are more likely to become inspired by returnees, brokers and peers and decide to migrate together with friends. KIs also suggested that decisions based on these weak networks often put young migrants at risk: they are the most likely to leave spontaneously, without informing their families and with no planning, and end up deported or return before even reaching destination.[28]

FGDs with would-be migrants showed a stronger involvement of friends abroad as "initiators" of migration journeys – an occurrence families seem mostly unaware of according to the household surveys. Several would-be migrants reported that they discuss with their peers when their families are not around, out of fear that their families will prevent them from migrating: "When we chew khat with my fellow friends, if one of us has a mobile with IMO we call our friends who are living in Saudi to talk about migration. But we do this very secretly after making sure that there is no one around us. We don't call friends abroad in front of our families".[29] KIs and FGD participants in all communities explained that migration and its benefits are key topics of these discussions and that young migrants are particularly vulnerable to being influenced by the success of others.[30]

26 A positive correlation was found between self-initiation and self-financing of migration.

27 More information can be found in Gendered Patterns of Women and Girls' Migration along the Eastern Corridor.

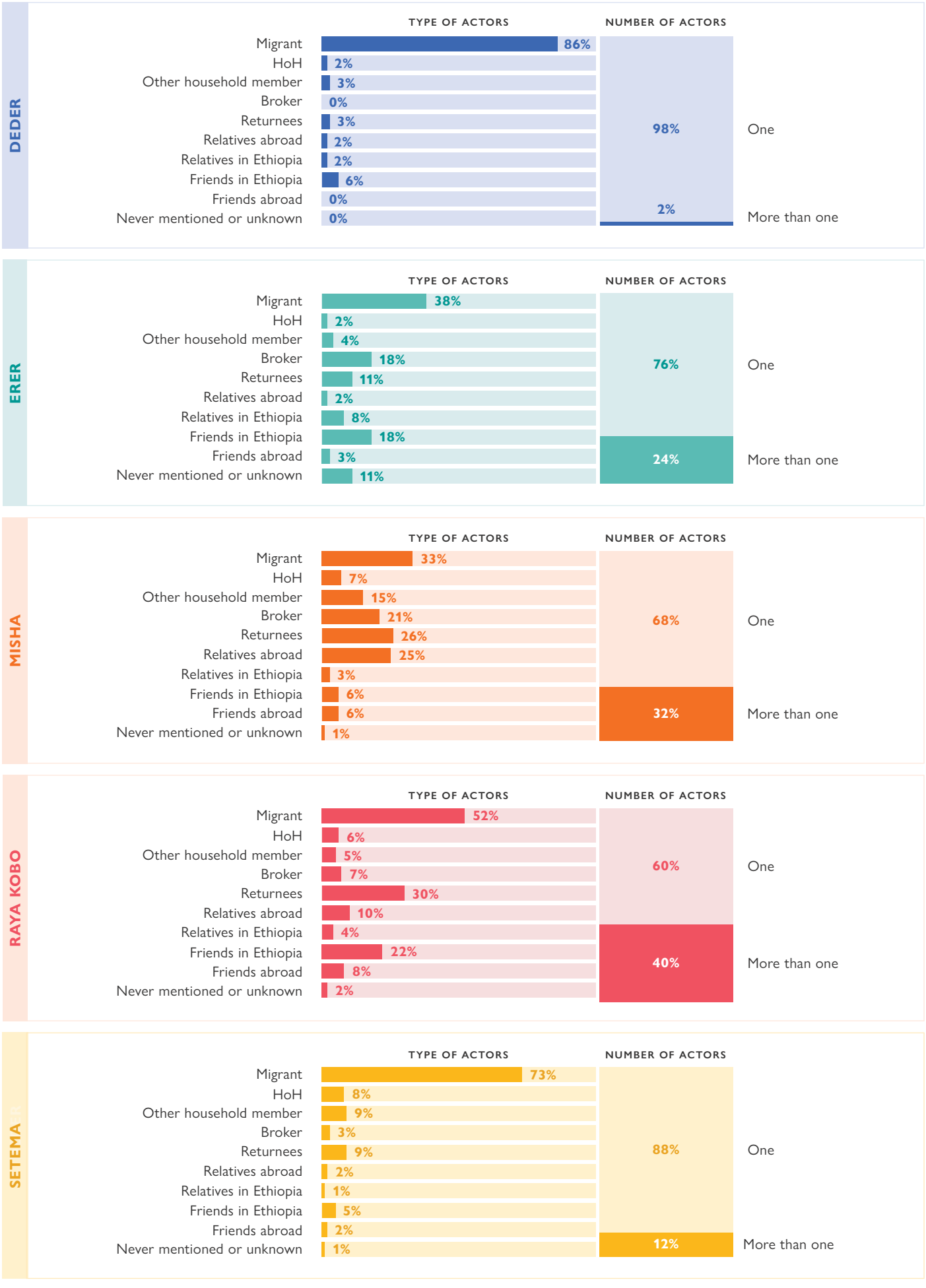
28 See further below, "A Successful Outcome".

29 Male FGD Respondent in Erer.

30 More information can be found in To Change My life. Risk perception, expectations and migration experiences of young Ethiopians.

Who first mentioned/suggested the possibility of migration?

(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, multiple responses possible)



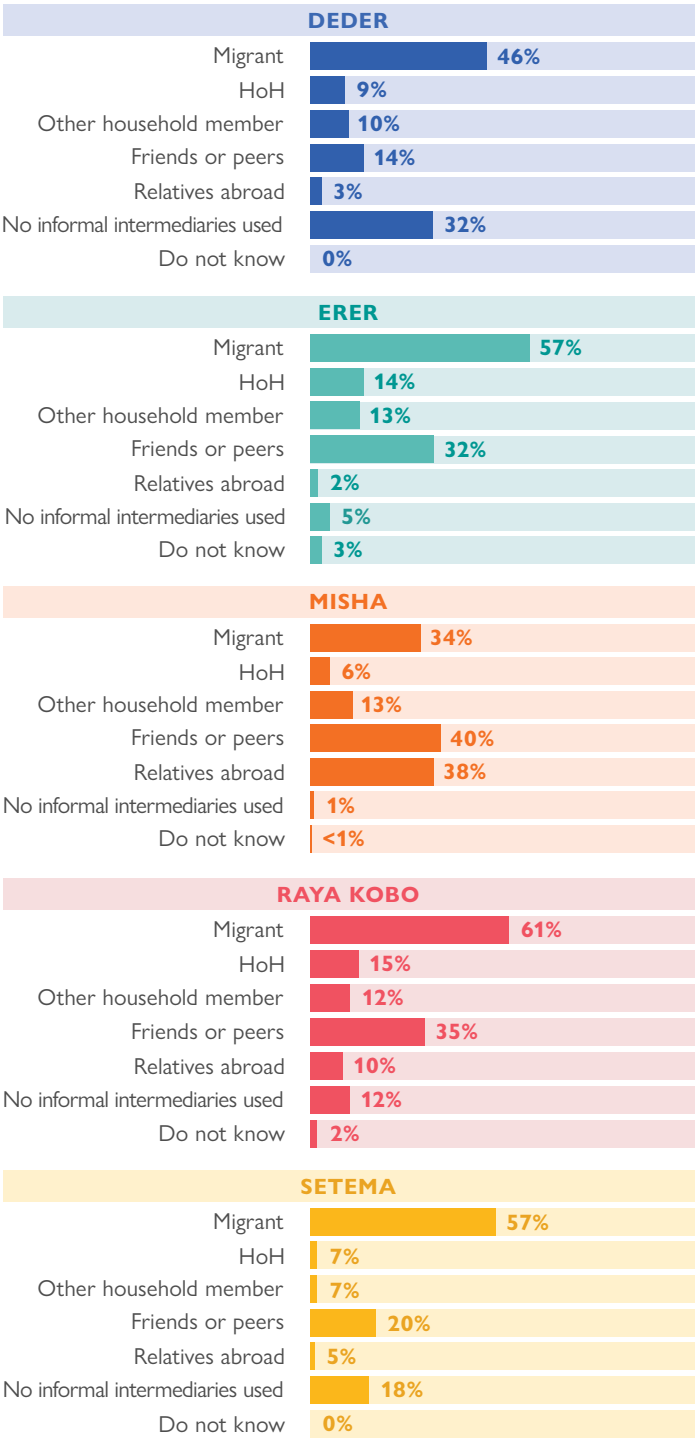
“I have been teaching at this school for the last four years. I decided not to migrate because my country is great, and I want to make an impact in Ethiopia. My uncles are abroad, and they always encourage me to join them there. Sometimes when I think about my economic situation, I think it may be a good idea, but then I see how hard it is for many people and I say ‘no’. Students here are so excited to travel and don’t value the work that we do as teachers. They often see us as failures because they see how little money we make and how we struggle to support our families.

TRANSNATIONAL INFORMATION FLOWS AND TRUSTED NETWORKS

Networks are instrumental in improving individuals' ability to migrate because through them people can learn about which route to take, receive recommendations of a broker, information on salaries, living and working conditions at destination and potential job opportunities.

The selection of a broker is particularly important for prospective migrants as they are essential to migrate in the first place (it is nearly impossible to travel without a broker)[31] and inter-personal connections are key in securing a reliable and trusted facilitator. Networks also help migrants to make better arrangements with their brokers. FGDs confirmed that none of the would-be migrants suggested that he or she was planning on travelling without a broker. At the same time, would-be migrants explained that rather than finding a broker themselves, they would rely on their networks of relatives and friends abroad, returnees or peers to arrange brokers for them: "Our friends talk to the brokers from abroad and take the information to let us know where to travel to or which city to go to and who to contact. Once we arrive at the place or town our friends told us to go, such as Harar or Dire Dawa, we are then given the contacts of the brokers to call."[32] According to household interviews, 32 per cent of migrants' contacts with brokers were arranged through friends and 20 per cent by relatives abroad, with peaks in Misha (38%).[33]

Arrangements with informal intermediaries
(Data from surveys, percentage of households informed of migration, multiple responses possible)



31 In less in than 5 per cent of households, migrants travelled without a broker. Contrary to the first two phases of the research, where 'travelling without a broker' indicated the most dangerous journeys, these events seem slightly associated with regular migration: they were more frequently observed in Deder and Setema (where regular migration is more common) and display a slight positive correlation with households indicating formal intermediaries such as labour recruitment agents or public officers among their preferred sources of information about migration.

32 Female FGD Participant in Erer.

33 Figures relate to households who were informed of the decision to migrate only.

Would-be migrants across several communities also emphasized that the fact that they had received the contacts of brokers through individuals and personal connections they trust meant that they were able to put faith in the broker themselves: "Our overseas friends found and arranged the broker to facilitate our travel. We have trust in our friends overseas, so we should trust the broker brought through them."[34] Other would-be migrants reported that they chose their broker as they know the broker's family: "The families of some brokers are living in our community, we know their families well, but we don't meet the brokers in person, we deal only with phone calls. But, because their families are in our communities, we trust them."[35] Thus, would-be migrants' trust in their potential brokers seems to depend on the trust and relationship they have with the person who gives them the broker's contact details and the social connection they have to the broker and his family.

THE ROLE OF THE MIGRATION INDUSTRY

Migration processes also feed into the creation of a 'migration industry', wherein networks of formal and informal intermediaries, such as travel agents, lawyers, bankers, labour recruiters, brokers and smugglers, have an interest in, and tend to facilitate, the continuation of migration. Research data collected during all three phases show how migrants are heavily dependent on these formal and informal networks to plan and carry out their journeys and support the flow of remittances.[36] Among these, smuggling networks, in particular, play a crucial role and using their services seems to be the norm.[37] During the first and second phases of the research, less than 2 per cent of migrants interviewed in Bossaso and 10 per cent of migrants in Obock reported that they were travelling without a broker.

During the FGDs conducted for this phase of the research, none of the would-be migrants suggested that he or she was planning on travelling without a broker and several migrants reported that travelling without a broker is impossible for those who are migrating the first time, unless they are travelling with re-migrating individuals. Due to the illicit nature of the industry, brokers and loan facilitators are often settled in urban centres near communities of high emigration. Their presence and their visibility largely depend on the extent to which migration is common and accepted in the community and such networks are likely to be more sophisticated and established in areas with a long-standing tradition of migration, which makes it somewhat a more "viable and accepted option" than elsewhere.

In contexts such as Misha, with its decade-long history of successful labour migration to South Africa, smuggling networks have developed based on personal relationships and brokers are often perceived as service providers and named 'Berri Kefoch' which translates to "door openers" or 'Askoblay' which means "migrant helpers" (Adugna et al. 2019; Adugna et al. 2021). Conversely, in Setema, Deder and particularly in Erer, facilitators tend to operate outside of the community. Erer is the community where, according to KIs, migration is considered most dangerous and least accepted socially (especially if it involves women). Urban centres are also central hubs for the collection of remittances, either through banks or, more often, through informal intermediaries.

34 Female FGD Participant in Erer.

35 Male FGD Participant in Misha.

36 More information can be found in the Comparative Eastern Corridor Route Analysis.

37 During the first and second phases of the research, fewer than 2 per cent of migrants interviewed in Bossaso and 10 per cent of migrants in Obock reported that they were travelling without a broker (IOM, 2021).

During FGDs, respondents also highlighted how they tend to seek (and receive) different types of information from different actors. For instance, would-be migrants in Deder and Erer stated that they prefer to reach out to friends or family who live abroad for information about salaries, living and working conditions in countries of destination than to returnees.[38] This preference is because people abroad are perceived as successful and have achieved what FGD participants were hoping to achieve: "I already saw my overseas friends changing their lives, I only want to hear advice from them."[39] Once again, FGD participants stressed the aspect of 'trust' and the fact that they can validate the information they receive from friends abroad through their own eyes while video calling them: "I have to trust what I see with my eyes over IMO video call with my friend abroad."[40]

In general, the more a community has a tradition of migration (as Misha and Raya Kobo), the stronger is the reliance on people abroad (either currently or previously) as a trusted source of information about migration. Conversely, where family and community networks are weaker, households mentioned formal and informal networks more often. In Setema, public officers are the first source of information about migration – this is likely due to the presence of strong regular migration flows. In Erer, brokers are the second most mentioned source of information after friends in Ethiopia.[41]

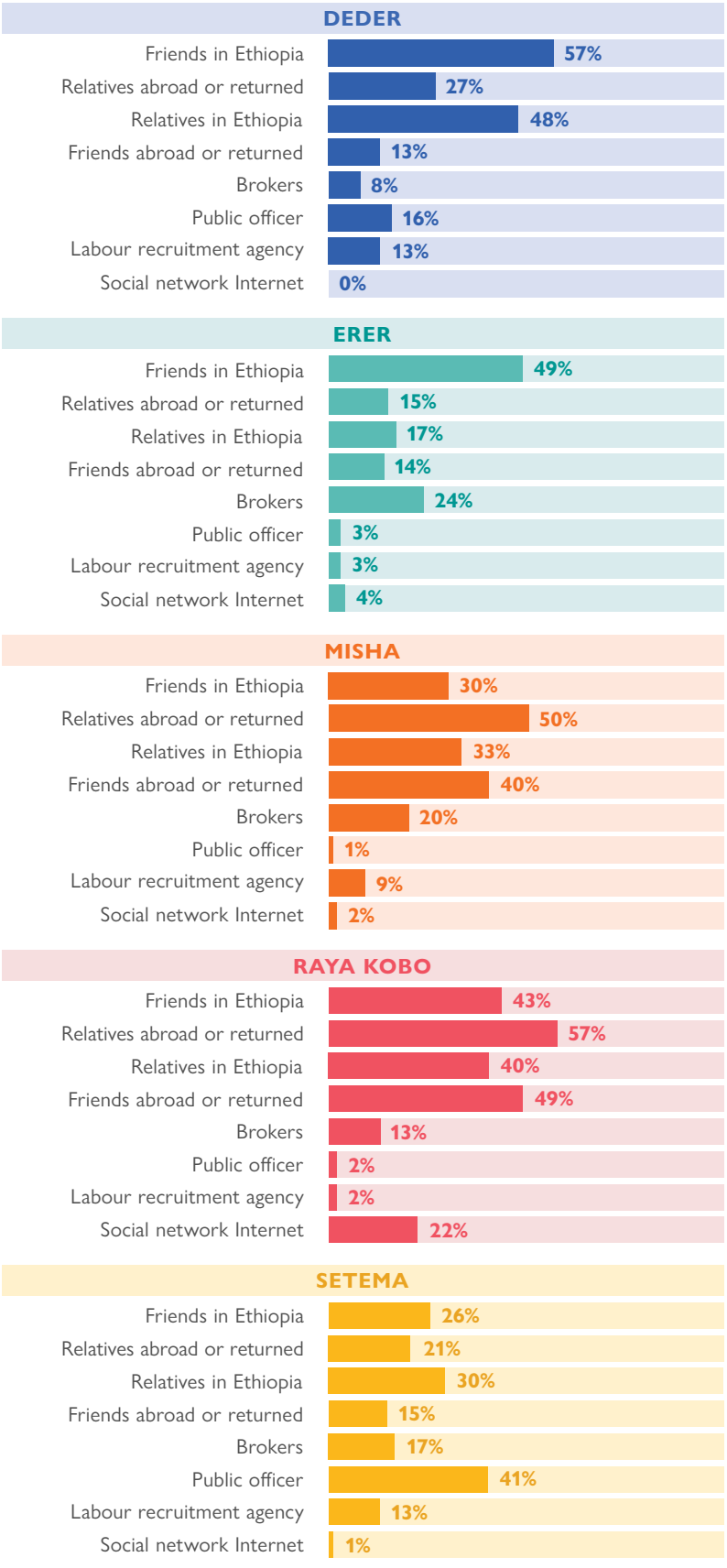
38 According to qualitative interviews, returnees tend to be perceived as less trustworthy than people abroad because they may have personal reasons to encourage migration, such as direct connection with brokers or desire to secure better deals for themselves to re-migrate. In some cases, KIs and FGD participants directly linked returnees to the spreading of success stories or over-emphasizing its positive aspects, such as job opportunities or salary differentials between Ethiopia and countries of destination.

39 Male FGD Participant in Erer.

40 Male FGD Participant in Deder.

41 See Box: The role of the migration industry.

Sources of information about migration (Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, multiple responses possible)



“I sold my cows to send one of my sons to Saudi Arabia and he is doing very well there. He is working hard to try to bring his brothers there as well. Everyone around us seems to be changing their lives for the better by migrating.

MOBILIZING FINANCIAL RESOURCES THROUGH NETWORKS

While people abroad and friends in Ethiopia tend to be the main provider of information on migration, the household often bears the cost of it, financing or co-financing the journey of its members. In around 40 per cent of households, migration was funded with households' savings or selling of assets versus 23 per cent of households where migration was paid for by migrants themselves (5% self-sustained and 18% co-financed). In addition, only one in two migration journeys were financed by a single source, whereas most migrants had to rely on multiple sources (38% on two and 12% on at least three different sources). This shows that migration is still a costly endeavour for the migrant and the individuals supporting them, wherein multiple sources are necessary to afford the broker fees and other migration costs.

In Misha and, to a lesser extent, Raya Kobo, households and relatives abroad (through remittances) played a significant role in this regard – with less than one in five migrants financially supporting their own migration. In Deder and Setema, the financial reliance on family networks was weaker and a larger share of migrants were able to finance or co-finance their migration (49% and 38% respectively). In Erer, money for the journey was mostly obtained through friends and peers in Ethiopia (46%) or loans with informal intermediaries (32%). In this case, the high percentage of migrants who reached out to families during the journey to ask for additional financial support (61%) points in the direction of migration journeys where funds collected at departure proved insufficient to sustain the entire cost of the journey.

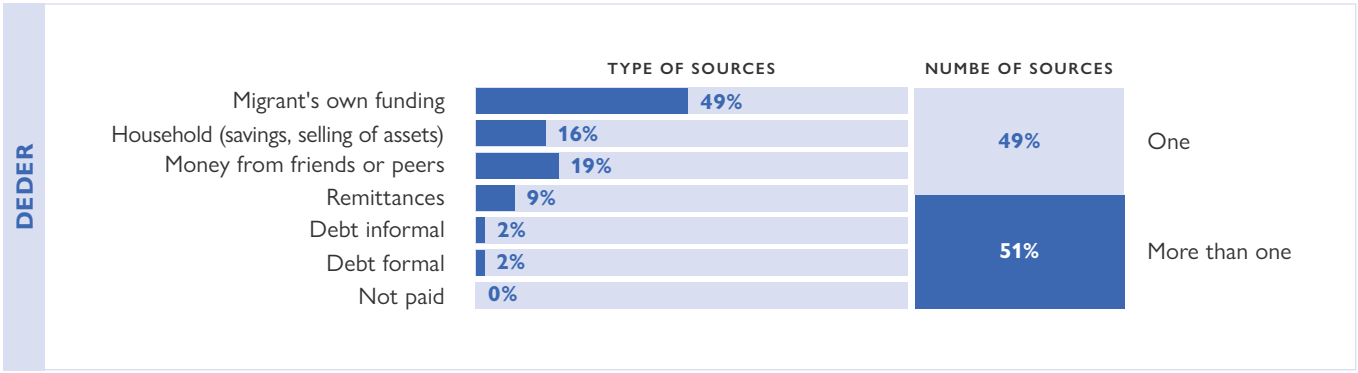
Funding through friends and peers, displays a negative correlation with arrival at destination, emphasizing how migration journeys that are family-funded are more likely to succeed. Data from the first two phases showed how running out of money can lead migrants to being abandoned by their brokers or brokers and other actors extorting migrants' families at home by threat of torture. Migrants interviewed in transit in Djibouti also suggested an element of deception, with brokers often hiding the true cost of the journey from prospective migrants and asking for unexpected fees during different stages of the journey in addition to requiring money for necessities such as food and water.[42]

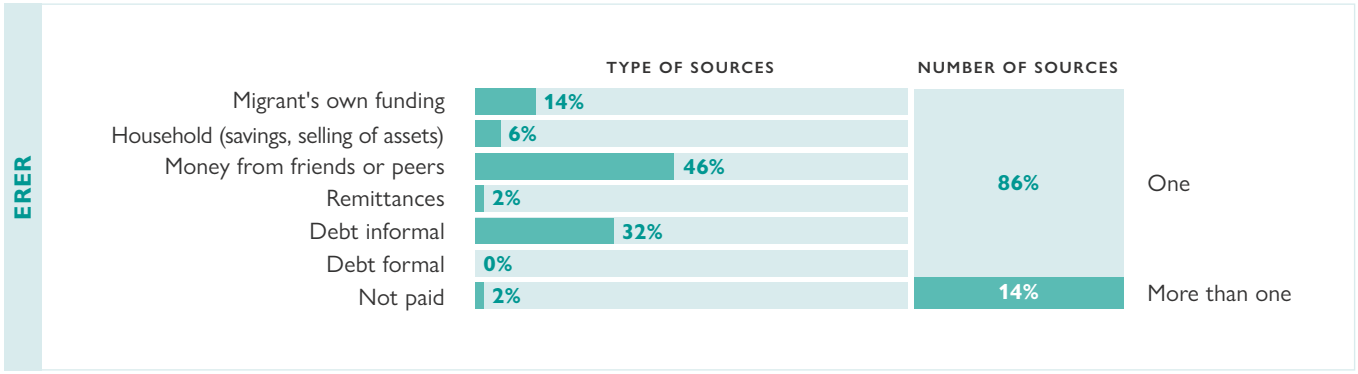
Data on individual migrants from the first two phases also showed that financing from families was more common for female migrants: around half of the female respondents had been supported by their families compared to around one third of men. The involvement of the household in the migration of daughters, spouses or siblings seemed to have an impact on how females' journeys progress. On average, females reported slightly shorter – though slightly more expensive – journeys compared to men and boys. Females were also slightly more likely to benefit from network support during the journey and travel with other household members.[43]

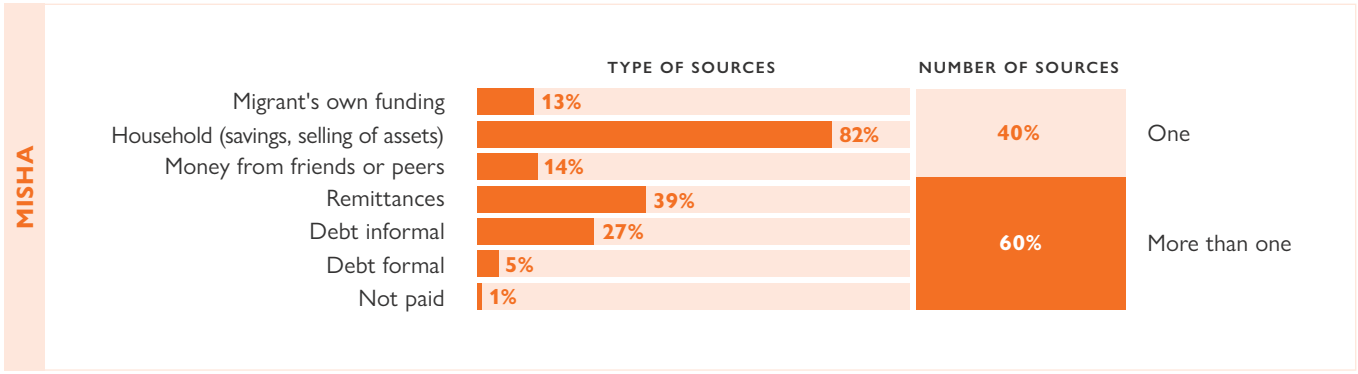
42 This seems to be the case, considering that migrations initiated by brokers are the most likely to be financed by friends and peers (IOM, 2021).

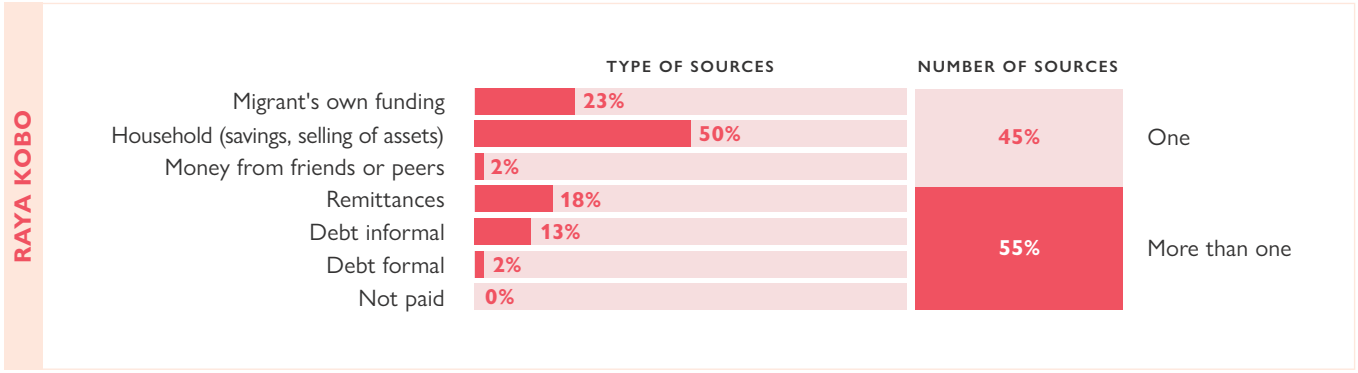
43 This did not imply easier or less dangerous journeys. According to feedback provided by re-migrating women, nearly all reported having had a difficult experience, especially on the route to Bossaso. During the qualitative interviews, eleven of the female respondents reported that they felt their journey had been harder for them than for the men in their groups as women are often sexually harassed and assaulted and find the physical challenges of going through long days on foot with little food and water harder to withstand (IOM, 2021).

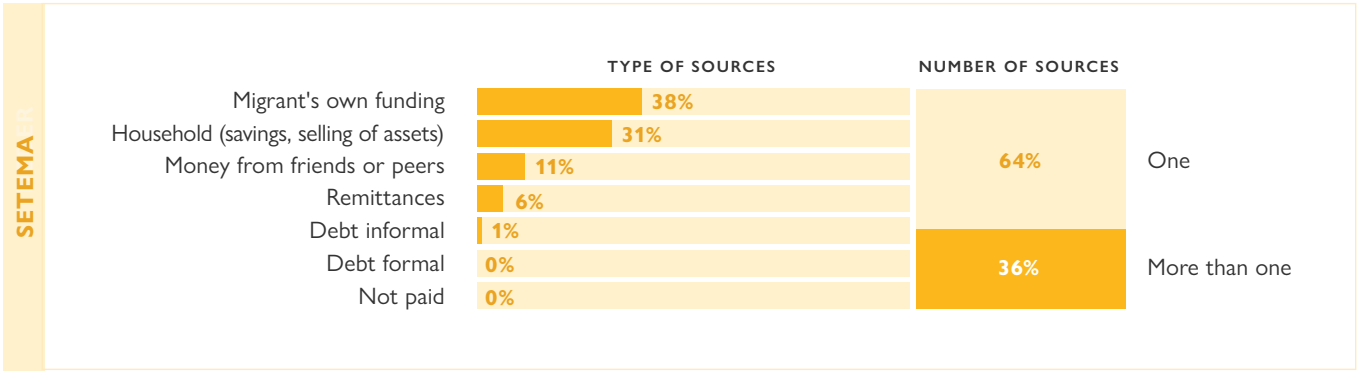
Through which sources was migration financed? (Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, only households who were involved in the decision, multiple responses possible)











"I sent my two sons to Saudi Arabia before they finished school. In Saudi Arabia they are working as shepherds and have been able to send money to Ethiopia to support me.

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FAMILY NETWORKS AND THE MIGRATION OF MULTIPLE MEMBERS

Family networks – that is, ties based on direct kinship – are among the strongest facilitators of migration. They are often referred to as the first 'chains' of the network (de Haas, 2010), the ones that, under favourable circumstances, can result in (community) network migration. Through their lens, migration can be interpreted as part of broader household livelihood strategies to diversify income risks, improve the well-being of members and generate capital through remittances to invest at origin as well as in the migration of other suitable family members.

Despite the irregularity of most movements hindering official reunification and sponsorship systems, migration of multiple members within the same household was observed in all five communities. Overall multi-migrant households that is HHs with more than one migrant currently abroad or returned from abroad represent 31 per cent of all households with experience of migration (409 households), ranging from 5 per cent in Erer to 21 per cent in Deder, 30 per cent in Setema and 46 per cent and 52 per cent in Raya Kobo and Misha where multi-migrant households are very common.

Just like with community networks, migrants tend to follow the footsteps of family members and target the same country of destination as their kin (79%), particularly when migrants share the same gender. [44] KIs confirmed that younger migrants are often supported by siblings who have already migrated abroad: "Once the older children successfully migrate irregularly, they assist their younger brothers and sisters by paying the costs needed to let the younger siblings migrate." During the first phase of the research, just under half of all qualitative respondents (31 individuals) indicated that members of their family were already working in Saudi Arabia, with two migrants explaining that it was the majority of their family: "Most of the members of my family are in Saudi, three of my brothers and two of my sisters" (IOM, 2022).

Another effect of multi-migration of active young members is that elderly Heads of Household (HoH) are almost twice as common. Female-headed households are also very frequent (33%), although not more common than in single-migrant households. Children and youth in multi-migrant households also seem more likely to be in education, training or employment compared to their counterparts living in households with one migrant only (or no migrant), pointing in the direction of a selective usage of resources for those who are left. This may corroborate findings from the first two phases of the research, where re-migrating individuals often reported that their remittances had been used to "fund the education of their siblings."[45]

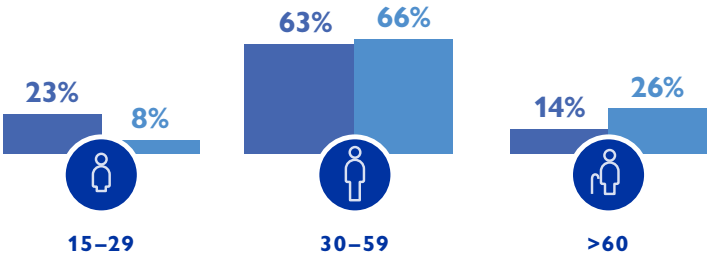
44 Figures range from 89 per cent for household with multiple male migrants and 85 per cent for multiple female migrants to 61 per cent of households with migrants of mixed gender. Migration of more than one member to Saudi Arabia or South Africa tends to be higher than to Yemen and other GCC countries.

45 IOM, 2021.

ONE MIGRANT/RETURNEE

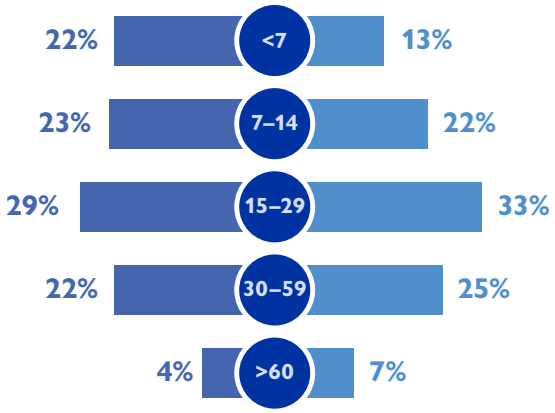
MULTIPLE MIGRANTS/RETURNEES

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD AGE



FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

AGE PYRAMID (IN YEARS)



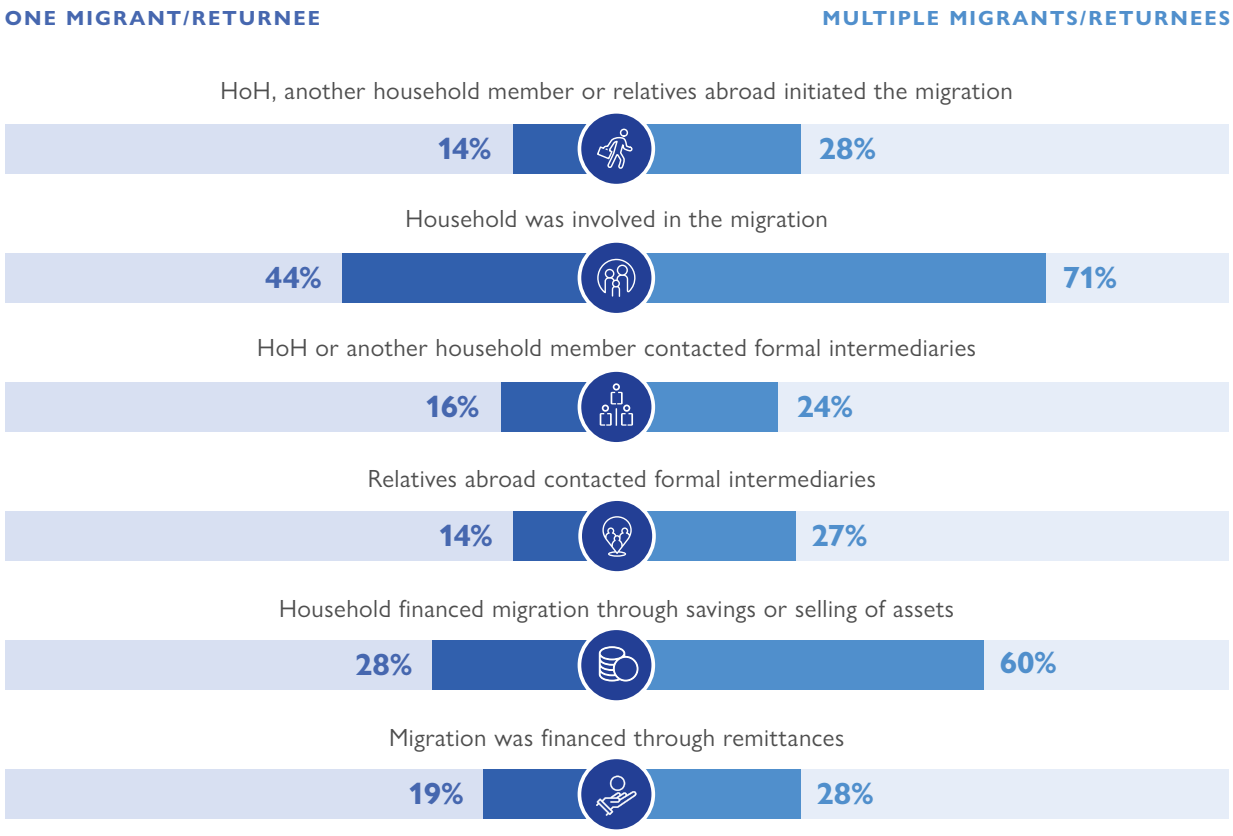
PRESENCE OF 7–14 NOT IN SCHOOL (ONLY HOUSEHOLDS WITH 7–14 YEAR OLDS)

PRESENCE OF YOUTH NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (ONLY HOUSEHOLDS WITH 15–29 YEAR OLDS)

“I want to send my oldest daughter (18, left) to Saudi Arabia and when my younger daughter (16, right) finishes school, I will try to send her as well. I am afraid, but I want them to be able to make money to help themselves.

Survey data support the idea that multi-migrant households are more involved throughout the migratory process (71% versus 44%), from initiating the process, planning the journey to gathering resources to fund it. In these households, migration is often less of an individual choice and more an enlarged family decision (taking into account relatives abroad who often finance or arrange for a broker) and where the current status of the migrant is weighted against his/her prospects in the host country[46] – notwithstanding financial difficulties, which remain the main push factor for migration. In around one third of multi-migrant households, migration was initiated by a household member (versus 14% of single migration household), was arranged by relatives abroad (versus 14%) and supported by remittances (versus 19%). Qualitative data collected during the first phase of the research show how financial contribution from family members in Saudi Arabia was not only common among migrants, but in many cases also 'expected'. One migrant explained that it is "their responsibility" to help those who migrate after them (IOM, 2021).

The family network (Data from surveys, households with experience of migration, selected indicators)

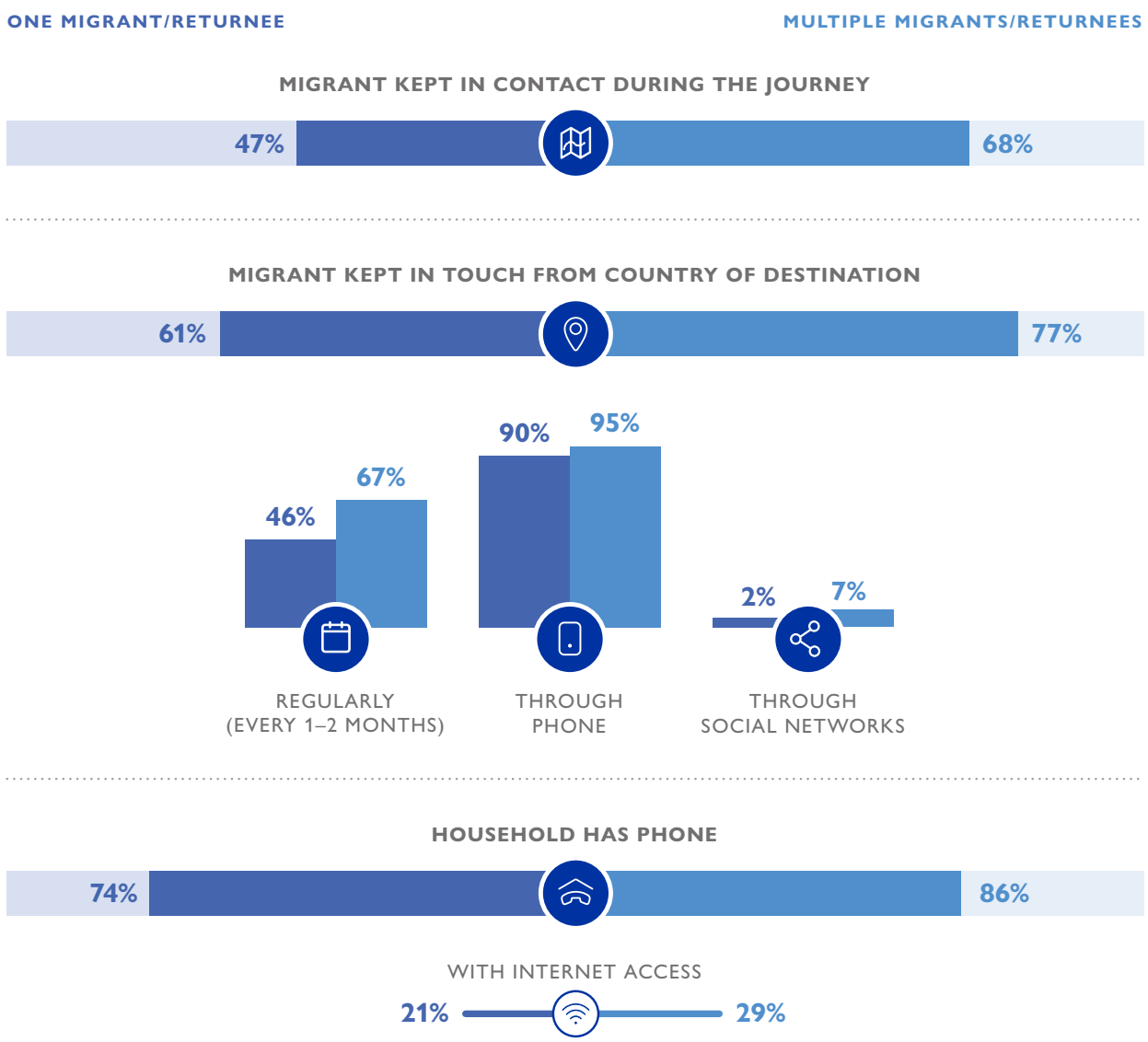


Migration of more than one member helps households operate within transnational spaces, allowing linkages to be maintained with relatively more ease and continuity. In these households, migrants were more likely to stay in touch during the journey and upon arrival in host countries. Contacts were more frequent (at least once every 1 to 2 months) and through direct phone calls or via social networks. Similarly, in communities of origin, ownership of mobile phones was more common in multi-migrant households, together with Internet access. KIs and returnees in all five communities reported that communication with people abroad is usually initiated by the migrant rather than his or her family members at home due to the high cost of making international phone calls and the lack of decent network and Internet coverage in many of the kebeles in the study.

46 In multi-migrant households, respondents were twice more likely to state that people left because they were unable to find work (43%), dropped out of school (29%), had relatives abroad who could support them (9%) and it was a household decision (10%) than in single-migrant households.

Transnational communication

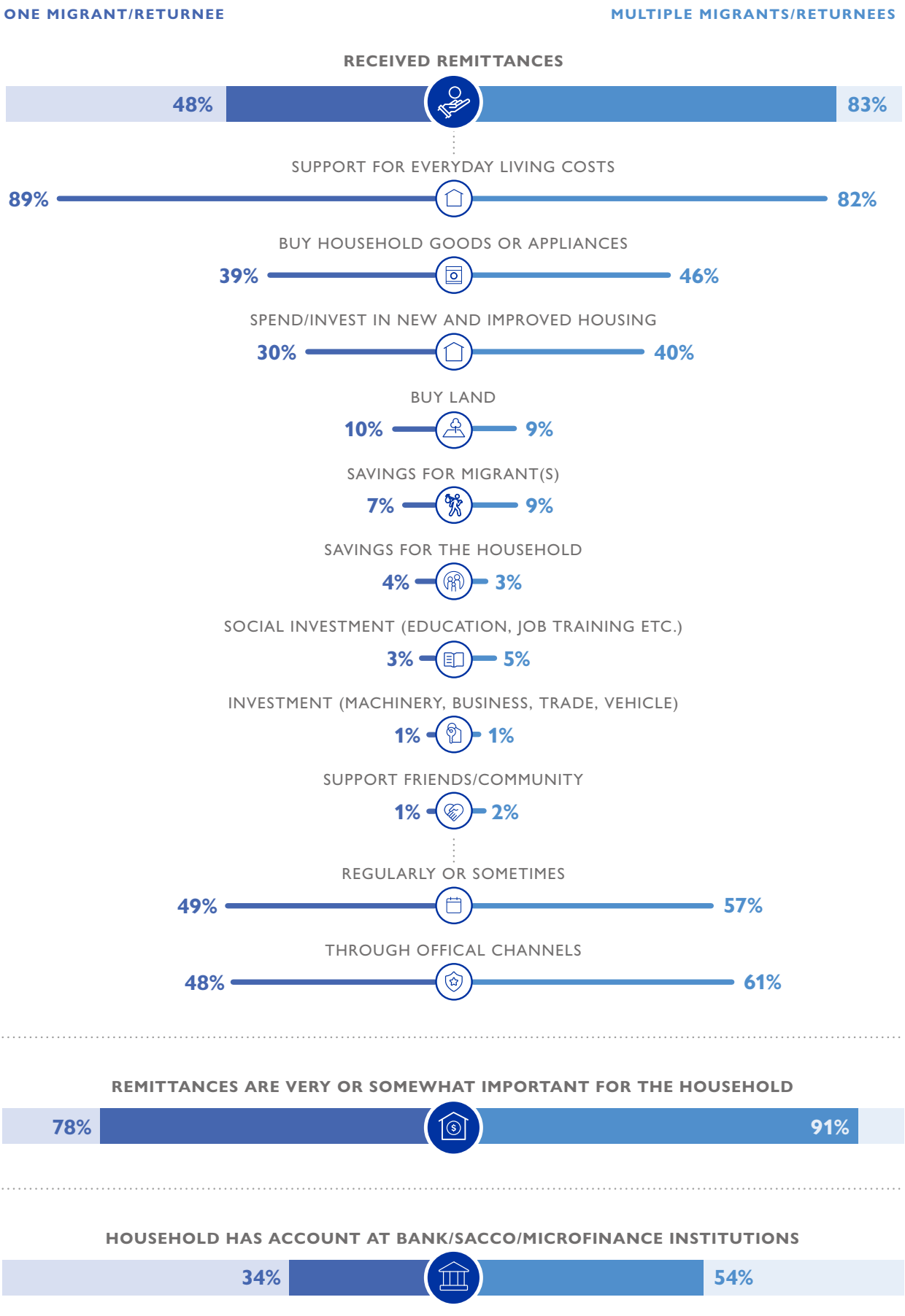
(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, selected indicators)



Similar findings were found with regard to remittance flows, the intensity and frequency of which was significantly higher in multi-migrant households. At least one migrant was able to remit in 83 per cent of multi-migrant households (versus 48% in single-migrant households). These households were also more likely to rely on official channels (61% versus 48%), such as banks, savings and credit cooperative societies or other microfinance institutions, post office or money transfer operators, and remit with slightly more regularity (57% at least once every one to four months versus 49% in single-migrant households). In communities of origin, having more stable remitters seems linked with a greater availability of financial resources (remittances were 'very' or 'somewhat' important in nearly all multi-migrant households), which in turn seems to lead to a slightly more diversified usage, from everyday living expenses to the acquisition of more durable assets or spent on new and improved housing. Nevertheless, the share of multi-migrant households who managed to accumulate savings, buy land, invest or engage in social investment is still very limited (the relative figures are each below 10%).

Remittance flows

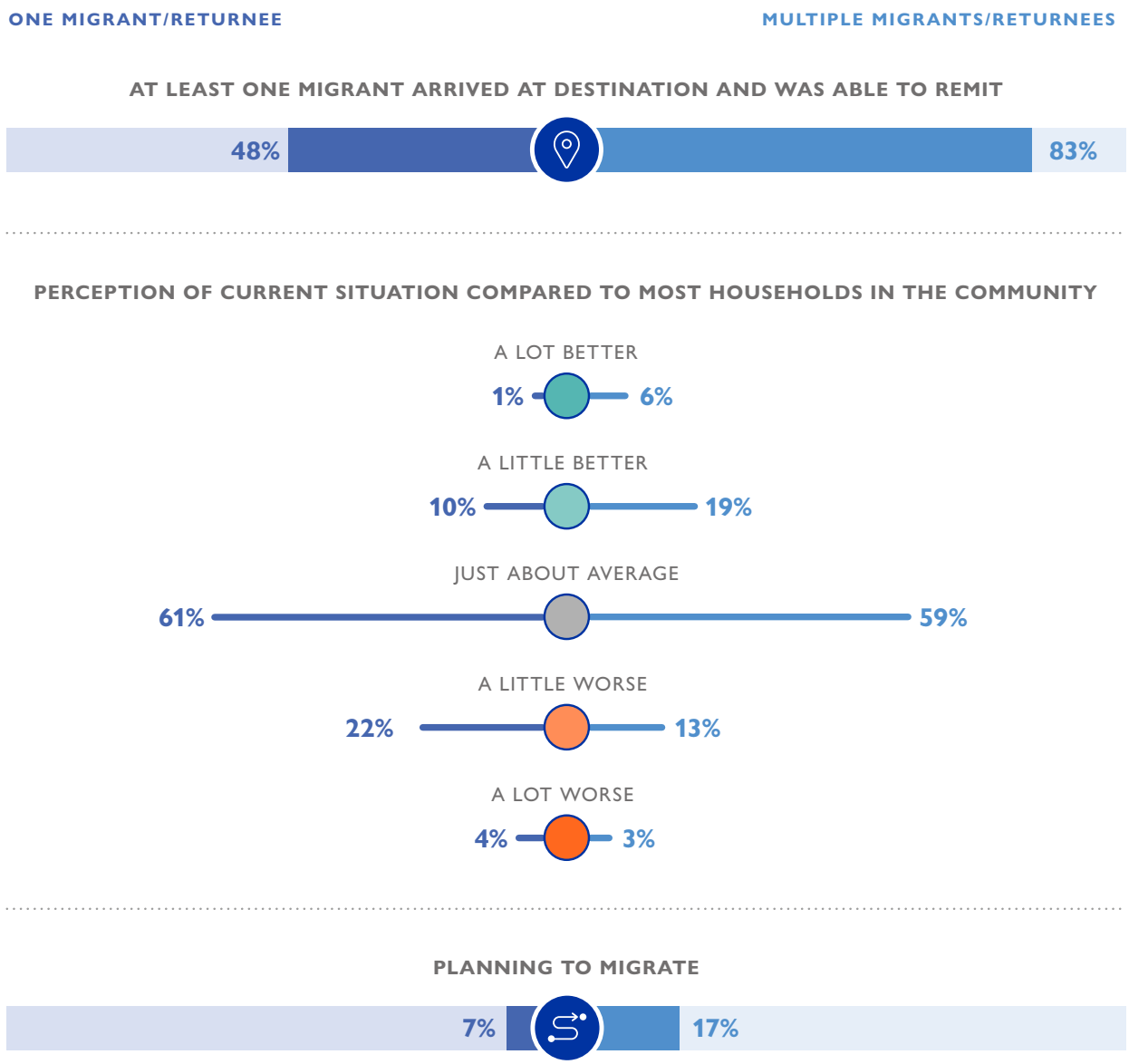
(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration, selected indicators)

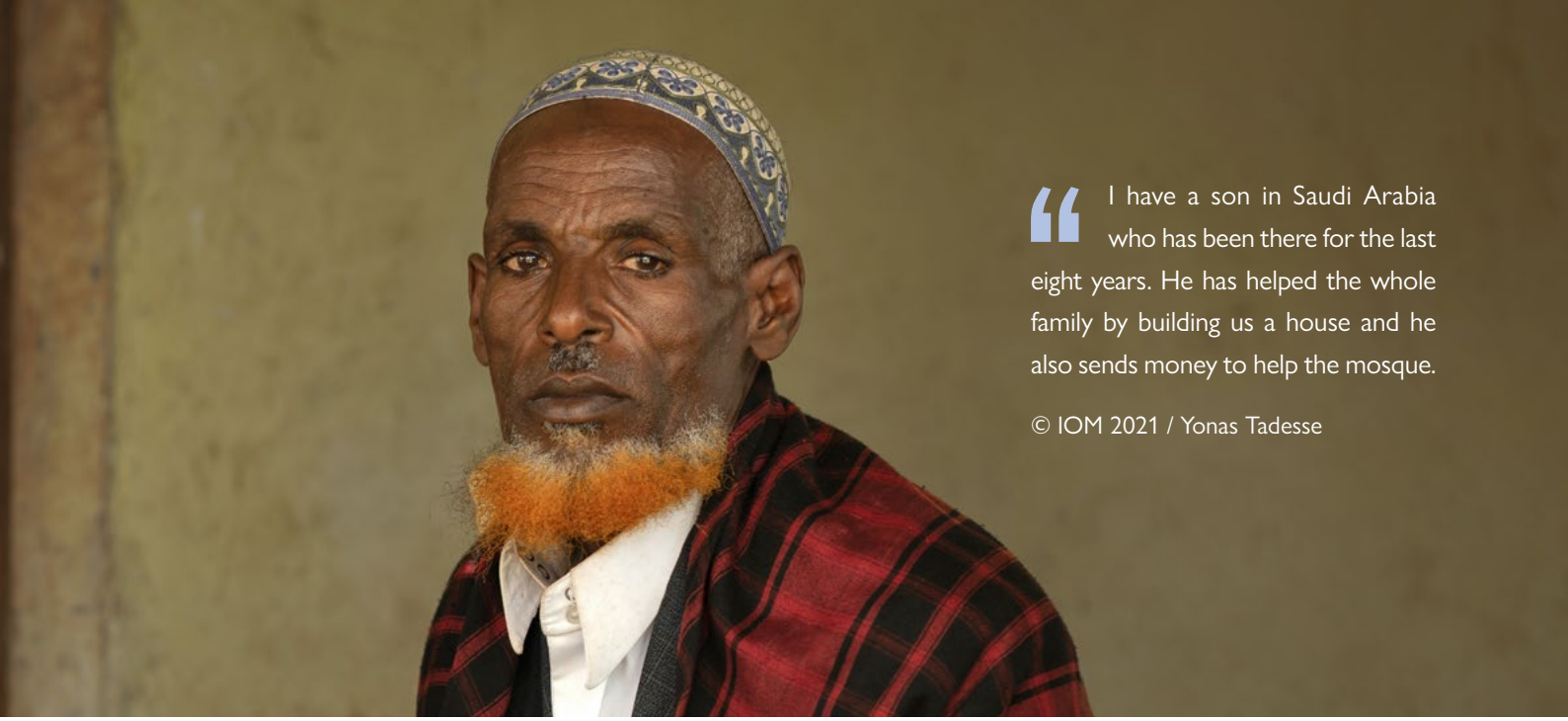


The greater rate of success reported by multi-migrant households is supported by their perception of relative well-being: around one in four households felt that their situation was "better than most households in the community" (versus around 10% of households with one migrant/returnee or no migrant). KIs in all five communities confirmed that families with migrants working abroad were generally better off than families who were not receiving remittances, tend to be more respected and often hold a higher status in the community due to their improved living standards. Concurrently, data on future intentions suggest that, in time, these households are the most likely to successfully keep the networks alive and encourage further migration movements. In this regard, the higher intention to migrate observed within multi-migrant households may indicate both the willingness of other (young) members to 'take their chance', the potential intention to remigrate of returnees, and the dependence of the households on remittances (IOM, 2021d).

Perceptions of migration and future intentions

(Data from surveys, percentage of households with experience of migration)





"I have a son in Saudi Arabia who has been there for the last eight years. He has helped the whole family by building us a house and he also sends money to help the mosque.

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TRANSNATIONAL ECONOMIC SPACES

Cross-border, monetary transfers (that is, remittances), are another example of a feedback mechanism which is endogenous to the migration process itself. They can perpetuate network migration from Ethiopia to Saudi Arabia and South Africa because their economic impact on the lives of migrant families inspires and enables future generations to migrate. According to KIs, remittances are sent in several different ways that differ across communities and routes. KIs in some communities reported that the families of migrants abroad receive their money through the official banking system. Since irregular migrants in Saudi Arabia cannot use official transfer companies such as Western Union or banks due to their irregular status, they give the money they are remitting to migrants residing legally in Saudi Arabia who send the money via their bank account directly into the Ethiopian bank account of the recipient. Some KIs also reported that regular migrants who are traveling back to Ethiopia from Saudi Arabia often carry remittances for other migrants' families. Irregular migrants who are deported from Ethiopia reportedly don't carry money with them, as it is confiscated during the deportation process.

KIs in multiple communities also reported that migrants abroad were sending money through a Hawala system as it is cheaper than the regular banking system and easily accessible to irregular migrants. The Hawala system is an informal system where money brokers in Saudi Arabia and South Africa receive money from migrants and transfer the money through a network of brokers to a broker in nearby towns such as Hosaena in the case of Misha or Kobo in the case of Raya Kobo. KIs also reported that some migrants abroad also send goods such as clothes and mobile phones to their families in Ethiopia. Goods are mostly sent through returning relatives or friends who are traveling back to Ethiopia regularly. KIs in all communities stated that migrant families had to travel to central, urbanized hubs in the vicinity to access banks and/or informal intermediaries. Data collected during KIIs and FGDs suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic caused remittance flows to decrease, as many migrants abroad lost their jobs and authorities cracked down on irregular migrants in the country due to the pandemic. This may leave families who are reliant on remittances for their daily expenses highly vulnerable: "Some families in this community depend their livelihoods on the money that is sent from their children abroad. If their child stops sending money, the families may suffer from an economic crisis and they may not be able to buy food, household goods, and send their children to school. I know families who were receiving remittances regularly from their children but could not receive money during COVID-19 as some migrants lost their job in Saudi Arabia or were unable to send money due to this pandemic. These families have been affected very much." Although the magnitude of the decrease in remittance flows to Ethiopia since the onset of COVID-19 is unclear, KIs in all communities reported that it was having an economic impact on migrant families.

A 'SUCCESSFUL' OUTCOME

In this last section, data from household surveys were used to further investigate the importance of networks in the outcome of migration and identify the elements most linked to success. Migration was defined as 'successful' when at least one migrant in the household reached the intended destination and was able to remit home, and 'unsuccessful' when no migrants reached their destination or, if some did, they were unable to remit home.[47] Success was assessed exclusively from a household perspective and it did not consider the individual cost at which the outcome was achieved.

Overall, 17 variables were selected to explore their relationship with 'success' among those touching upon the involvement and contribution of family and community networks prior and during the migration experience – in terms of providing the initial impulse to migrate, planning the journey, (gathering information and arranging with formal or informal intermediaries)[48] and financing migration. The role of relatives or friends in transit countries or at destination was explored, together with the ability of migrants to keep in touch with family during the journey and, if needed, mobilize additional financial resources. The contribution of regular migration was also screened in terms of the involvement of formal intermediaries (labour migration agencies or public officers) as privileged sources of information and the "perception" of its frequency. For a full list of variables that were included in the model, see Table 1 of Annex.

Overall, in 768 of the 1,300 households with experience of migration, at least one migrant arrived at destination and was able to remit home (59%). Success rates varied significantly across communities, from 12 per cent in Erer, where nearly all migrants were unable to send remittances even when they arrived at destination, to over 75 per cent in Misha, Raya Kobo and Setema. In Deder, at least one migrant in nearly one in two households was able to arrive at destination and remit home. Data suggest that the most significant element for success is the community of origin, which reflects the specific migration profile of the area – that is, familiarity with international migration (and relative incidence) and presence of a developed migration industry, whether regular or irregular.

Misha and Raya Kobo, the two communities with the highest rates of migration, enjoy similar rates of success due to the extensive family and community networks that are in place (including a migration industry developed around irregular migration) on which migrants can rely on, regardless of the route they are migrating on. In both communities, families' involvement, a previous experience of migration within the household and the presence of relatives or friends in transit countries are crucial elements in determining success. Conversely, the involvement of 'weaker' networks in the initiation of migration (such as friends and peers, local brokers or returnees) was identified as an element of unsuccess, though less important, since the number of individuals who mentioned them was very low.

Setema and Deder also share some similarities despite their different profiles in terms of outcome that sees migrants in Setema as much more successful (82%) compared to those in Deder (48%). In both communities, the presence of networks at destination (family or friends) is the most striking aspect, where the element of success is also explained by families' involvement in planning the journey (in Setema), or the ability to keep in touch during the journey (in Deder). Data suggest that success may also be linked to the somewhat 'regular' nature of the migration experience, especially in Deder.

In Erer, where most migration journeys do not have a positive outcome and where both the incidence and the culture of migration are weaker, two elements can make a difference and both are related to the journey. Migrants who kept in touch and did not ask for money along the journey appear to be slightly more successful, confirming how 'asking for additional funds' in transit is an indication of poorly planned journeys that even intervention at later stages may be unable to rectify. Regular migration and multi-migration also appear to yield higher rates of

47 Dissent or the desire to escape may also account for those who did not maintain financial (or social) ties from destination countries although this seemed rarely the case. During the first two phases of the research, even when migrants left without informing the households, most explained that they did so because they knew that the journey was dangerous and they did not want to worry their family. Nearly all displayed a very strong attachment to their household and community of origin, attested by their willingness to return (IOM, 2021).

48 Travelling without a broker seems to point in the direction of 'regular migration', a rather different situation from what was observed during the first two phases of the research, where 'travelling without a broker' indicated extremely risky journeys.

success: individuals coming from multi-migrant households or migrating through regular channels seem to be the only ones to have been able to reach their destination and remit and yet their number was too low to be significant (in the order of 10 individuals or fewer). In Erer, the overwhelming majority of these 'failed' experiences fall into what literature has labelled 'herd' migrations, that is, when migrants target a specific destination assuming that it is the right one because it is the destination where most initial migrants have gone (Epstein, 2008). This is a rational choice for individuals with no or limited network (and information) and yet, the sole reliance on networks of brokers or friends and peers allows for reaching destination but proves insufficient to getting ahead upon arrival, finding a job and remitting home.[49]

If the identified elements of success are ranked according to their importance (excluding the community of origin), the availability of close connections at destination scores at the top of the list, followed shortly by all elements relating to the involvement of family in the planning or financing of the migration experience, including multi-migration, and, further below, by individual characteristics of migrants (such as sex and age), the presence of relatives in countries of transit and the indication of 'regular' migration. The need for money along the journey and all elements pertaining to the involvement of weak ties (including friends and peers, brokers or returnees) contribute negatively to the migration outcome, although the number of households reporting these behaviours was sometimes too low to be statistically significant.

Findings also suggest that more information would be needed to explore the dynamics of success (or failure) once migrants arrive in their country of destination, including the role of networks in providing emotional support (which may ease the transition in countries of destination) and that of individual characteristics that may help migrants better adjust at destination, enter the job market and/or take advantage of their networks (such as the ability to speak the language or other specific skills).[50] For instance, data seem to suggest that females and migrants older than 30 years perform better compared to males and younger migrants – although it is unclear if they have a relative advantage for success (better skills, stronger network) or may be simply more prone to remit: females because they are more 'reliable'[51] and older migrants because they left their children behind.[52,53]

49 In Erer, 67 per cent reached the country of destination but only 12 per cent were able to send remittances. This dynamic also seems to affect migrants in Deder.

50 Available data was collected indirectly through households at origin and mostly relates to the aspects prior to migration or during the journey.

51 Women are often considered more reliable remitters than men and boys even though their earnings may be lower (IOM, 2020b).

52 A positive correlation was found between households with at least one over-30 migrant and the need to take care of their children.

53 Older migrants' relative success may also reflect that migrating several years ago may have been easier.

CONCLUSION

Migration along the Eastern and Southern Corridors has been taking place for decades, and although the COVID-19 pandemic did temporarily reduce the volume of movements recorded along these routes, young Ethiopians continue to use them in large numbers. In areas of sustained transnational flows, where information, capital and people move through well-established networks, migration can become an intrinsic part of the social and economic fabric of society. Network migration is observable along both corridors, with many migrants and migrant households reporting that they or their household members are migrating in the footsteps of friends, relatives and household members who migrated before them.

Migration between particular areas tends to be sustained through social ties that are formed between origin and destination through bi-directional flows of people, information and money. Past and current generations of successful migrants not only spark migration aspirations through their success in improving their families' livelihoods, but also help facilitate migration by supporting future generations of migrants in planning their journeys, providing information and financial support. They also hold a strong influence over the location choice of subsequent migrants with whom they connect through social networks, allowing them to facilitate migration through information sharing and support in organizing travel, selecting routes and brokers, and finding work at destination, all of which can decrease the risks, and economic and psychological costs of moving. Transnational networks may also decrease the social cost of migration as they allow for migrants to communicate with family and friends abroad and at home.

Multi-migrant households, in particular, seem to have established strong, transnational ties. Overall, these households seem to be more engaged in migration as a deliberate household livelihood strategy, wherein migration is taken as a family decision to improve income streams. Multi-migrant households are generally more involved in planning migration journeys and financing the migration of their household members, as compared to single migrant households. As a result, they tend to report more successful outcomes – that is, migrants arriving at destination and sending remittances, and a greater perception of relative well-being than households with one migrant only. Data on future intentions indicate that, in time, these households are the most likely to successfully keep the networks alive and encourage further migration movements.

Data also suggest that in communities where both strong family and community networks exist, such as Misha and Raya Kobo, migrants have a higher chance of success, even when migration is irregular. Households' involvement and a previous experience of migration within the household are the strongest predictors of a positive outcome. In Setema and especially Deder, alongside the 'success' of regular flows, the likelihood of arriving at destination and remitting home increases significantly with the presence of relatives at destination who can help migrants access the job market or ease the transition process and assist them until they are able to do so. In Erer, where the culture of migration is weaker, maintaining contact with the household during the journey grants a slightly higher rate of success – although most migrants successfully arrived at destination are unable to remit and end up deported.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, a set of policy recommendations can be formulated, which converge in expanding opportunities for more formalized pathways of labour migration that aim to protect migrants' fundamental rights and promote opportunities for Ethiopia and the countries of destination.

Transitioning from migration prevention policies and programmes to advancing more formalized safe, orderly and humane pathways for migration

Findings of this study show how the migration industry and network connections that facilitate these movements involve a variety of formal and informal actors and play a large role in sustaining migration. These systems are well established across the assessed communities and have shown strong resilience to multiple shocks and attempts to reduce irregular migration, including deportations and the COVID-19 pandemic. Migrants' desire to change their life and improve living conditions for themselves and their families at home have proved to be far more decisive in driving these processes, while strong networks continued to spark migration aspirations and facilitate irregular movements. Efforts to reduce movements through information campaigns on migration risks, or interventions aiming to persuade people to stay in Ethiopia may therefore only have partial impact in achieving their goal. Consequently, the focus should shift from migration prevention policies and programmes to advancing regular pathways for migration through a comprehensive approach – that is, pre-departure training, emigration and return assistance. The government of Ethiopia could consider establishing a one-stop migration system in coordination with destination and neighbouring countries and partners. The one-stop migration system could include facilitation of travel documentation such as ID cards and passports; pre-departure orientation inclusive of language, cultural, health and required skills-based training; increasing the accessibility to ethical recruitment information; negotiations for minimized remittance sending costs (3% as called for in Sustainable Development Goal 10.7); and facilitation of return and reintegration opportunities and the portability of social security benefits.

Application of gender perspectives in bilateral labour agreements (BLAs)

The predictive model showed that successful female migrants who manage to reach destination countries and are able to work tend to have higher rates of sending remittances to their families compared to male migrants. Therefore, the government of Ethiopia could strengthen the application of gender-responsive perspectives in its leading efforts to stipulate BLAs, in consideration of female domestic workers migrating to different GCC countries, including Saudi Arabia. Doing so would benefit the family at home through sustained flows of resources in a more regulated and protected manner. Furthermore, this may also reduce the pressure to make usage of informal channels. The establishment of gender responsive BLAs require mainstreaming of gender to address the needs of female migrant workers in the BLAs at all stages of the migration cycle, from recruitment and pre-departure training to return and reintegration in Ethiopia as well as in transit and destination countries. Training to officials and experts handling pre-departure, travel and return aspects could also be foreseen.

Expansion of sectors covered by BLAs

Related to the above, the scope of such BLAs could be expanded to cover other sectors, including drivers, gardeners, construction workers, shepherds, or more highly skilled cadres and other areas with identified labour market gaps in destination countries. Above all, such expansion should also include opportunities for male migrants, who have limited opportunities for regular migration and who constitute most of the irregular flows. Such interventions would require negotiations between the government of Ethiopia and interested destination countries to design programmes and arrangements informed by identified labour demand and supply needs and managed through harmonized Labour Market Information Systems under the leadership of the government. Required training to enhance the capacity of migrant workers to meet the needs of destination countries could be planned through the proposed one-stop migration system above.

ANNEX: THE DECISION TREE MODEL

Tree-based methods are a simple and yet powerful approach to handle large and complex datasets with many features interacting in non-linear ways; identify significant 'hidden' patterns and interpret them in a single and comprehensive model. They partition the space into smaller regions, where interactions are more manageable, and then fit a simple model in each region. They can be used for both classification and prediction (Hastle T. Tibshirani R. Friedman J., 2001).

The Tree structure comprises a hierarchically organized set of groups, called nodes. At the top of the tree (the root node) sits the full dataset of cases that is recursively split into a number of 'child' nodes – each containing a subgroup of cases – interconnected by branches, until no more partitioning is possible and only the terminal nodes (the 'leaves' of the tree) are left. The criterion for partitioning (or branching) examines all possible values of all available predictive variables and selects the grouping of cases that allows the maximum homogeneity in each group with respect to the value of the dependent variable. The branches and internal nodes at the top represent the independent variables with the strongest connection with the dependent variable (Breiman L. Friedman J. Stone C.J. Olshen R.A., 1984).

Different tree types are distinguished by the manner of node partitioning. In this study, the CHAID (Chi Square Automatic Interaction Detection) algorithm was applied, where CHAID denotes an automatic and iterative procedure of tree development based on Pearson's Chi-square statistic and corresponding p-value (IBM, SPSS_Decision_Trees_21).[54]

Variables listed in Table 1 were used in the model. The binary variable 'success' was defined as the dependent variable. It is a binary variable, where zero corresponds to "no migrant arrived at destination or migrant arrived at destination but did not send remittances" and one corresponds to "at least one migrant arrived at destination and was able to remit". Independent variables were screened with a univariate analysis and only those who were statistically significant predictors were included in the development of the model. All independent variables were defined as binary categorical variables.

54 A Classification and Regression Tree based on the Gini coefficient as criteria for node partitioning was also developed but tested lower for accuracy than the CHAID algorithm. Similar results were obtained with a Random Forest model, which allowed to further rank the selected variables according to their importance.

"I was the first person in my family to leave to South Africa. I lived there for six years. I did not go on foot, like many others do; I flew there. I came back to help my wife and raise the children. Later, I sent four of my sons.

South Africa is the most comfortable place for me to work. I bought land and built a big house in Ethiopia with the money that I made there. I even built a small hospital where one of my daughters works as manager.

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Table 1: Variables used for Analysis

VARIABLE		VALUES (MODALITIES)	STRUCTURE	
Names	Symbols		Cases	Percentage
Woreda of origin	X_1	Deder	252	19.4%
		Erer	250	19.2%
		Misha	300	23.1%
		Raya Kobo	250	19.2%
		Setema	248	19.1%
Household involved in the decision	X_2	Yes	682	52.5%
		No	618	47.5%
Migration financed by the household	X_3	Yes	500	38.5%
		No	800	61.5%
Household involved in planning	X_4	Yes	619	47.6%
		No	681	52.4%
Presence of relatives or friends in transit countries	X_5	Yes	150	11.5%
		No	1150	88.5%
Multi-migrant household	X_6	Yes	409	31.4%
		No	891	68.6%
Over-30 migration (at least one migrant older than 30 years)	X_7	Yes	436	33.5%
		No	864	66.5%
Female migration (at least one female migrant)	X_8	Yes	428	32.9%
		No	872	67.1%

VARIABLE		VALUES (MODALITIES)	STRUCTURE	
Names	Symbols		Cases	Percentage
Kept in contact during the journey	X_9	Yes	693	53.3%
		No	607	47.7%
Would ask to formal sources (public officer or labour recruitment agency) about migration	X_{10}	Yes	218	16.8%
		No	1082	83.2%
Migration initiated by returnees, friends/peers or broker	X_{11}	Yes	409	31.5%
		No	891	68.5%
Travelled with broker	X_{12}	Yes	1241	95.5%
		No	59	4.5%
Relatives abroad arranged for broker	X_{13}	Yes	126	9.7%
		No	1174	90.3%
Migrant asked for additional funds during the journey	X_{14}	Yes	753	57.9%
		No	547	42.1%
Presence of relatives or friends at destination	X_{15}	Yes	563	43.3%
		No	737	56.7%
Regular migration is somewhat, fairly or very frequent	X_{16}	Yes	218	64.4%
		No	1082	35.6%
Success	Y	Yes	768	59.1%
		No	532	40.9%

The elements and criteria defined for the development of the model are displayed in the first part of Table 2. The Pearson's Chi-square test is chosen, and a common level of significance (α=0.05) for node splitting and independent variable categories merging is determined, with automatic adjustment of p-values (to solve the problem of incorrect rejection of null hypothesis in the context of multiple comparison). The presence of missing values was not detected in any of the variables. During the process of model construction, ten-fold cross-validation model was applied.[55] The results of CHAID procedure indicate that the model contains, within five levels of the tree depth, a total of 29 nodes, of which 16 are terminal. From the 16 initially specified independent variables, the final model includes 10, which were selected as the best subset of predictors.

Table 2: Model Summary

SPECIFICATION	Growing method	CHAID
	Dependent variable	Success
	Independent variables	X_1 X_2 X_3 X_4 X_5 X_6 X_7 X_8 X_9 X_{10} X_{11} X_{12} X_{13} X_{14} X_{15} X_{16}
	Validation	Cross validation
	Maximum tree depth	6
	Minimum cased in parent node	50
	Minimum cases in child node	20
RESULTS	Independent variables included	X_1 X_2 X_4 X_5 X_6 X_8 X_9 X_{14} X_{15} X_{16}
	Number of nodes	29
	Number of terminal nodes	16
	Depth	5

55 Tenfold cross validation is a typical form of validation, where the original set of observed data is first randomly divided into 10 disjunctive partitions of approximately same size, and then, the evaluation process is conducted through 10 iterations, as follows: in each iteration, a single subset/partition is selected for testing while the union of the other nine subsets is used for model training. Training and testing are carried out the same number of times. In the end of the procedure, overall accuracy is calculated as arithmetic mean of 10 individual accuracies. Tenfold cross-validation method is demanding in terms of calculation, but can produce good results even with small number of observations (IBM, SPSS_Decision_Trees_21).

Tables 3 and 4 present basic information about the performance of the developed CHAID model in terms of its accuracy and predictive potential. The model accuracy is defined as the proportion of correctly classified data (true positives and true negatives) using the designed model. Specificity is the proportion of actual negatives that are correctly predicted as negatives while sensitivity is the proportion of actual positives that are correctly predicted as positives.

According to the classification matrix (Table 3), the overall accuracy of the model is 79.7 per cent. In other words, the model has accurately classified 1,036 (main diagonal of the matrix) out of 1,300 households in the observed sample. Observed by the categories of the success variable, significant differences in classification accuracy can be seen, with a specificity of 64.5 per cent versus a sensibility of 90.2 per cent. That is, the model has a stronger power in identifying success rather than unsuccess. However, the structure of the predicted values according to the categories of the dependent variable is not significantly different from that of the observed data. The risk that a household will be inaccurately classified in terms of success (based on entire sample) is 20.3 per cent and 23.0 per cent when a test sample is used in model cross-validation (Table 4).

`Table 3: Classification Matrix

OBSERVED	PREDICTED		
	Migrant did not arrive at destination or arrived but was unable to remit	At least one migrant arrived at destination and was able to remit	Percentage of correctly classified cases
Migrant did not arrive at destination or arrived but was unable to remit	343	189	64.5%
At least one migrant arrived at destination and was able to remit	75	693	90.2%
Overall	32.2%	67.8%	79.7%

Table 4: Risk

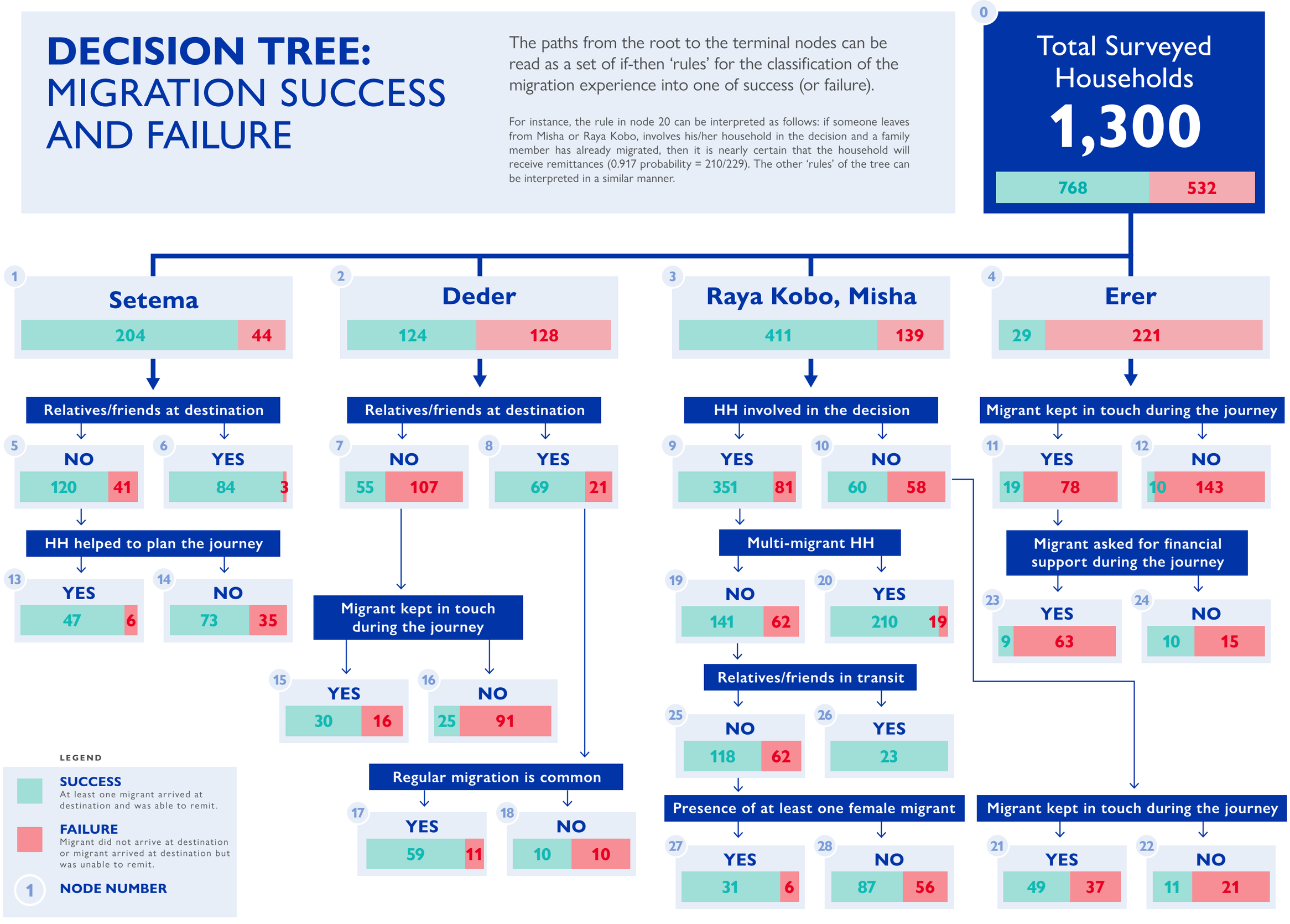
	PREDICTED	STANDARD ERROR
Re-substitution	0.203	0.011
Cross-validation	0.230	0.011

“My first son died in a car accident in South Africa. Even though I lost my son, I would encourage people to do their best to try to go to South Africa because everyone has a different story. Our life has changed a lot because four of my kids and my husband lived in South Africa.

DECISION TREE: MIGRATION SUCCESS AND FAILURE

The paths from the root to the terminal nodes can be read as a set of if-then 'rules' for the classification of the migration experience into one of success (or failure).

For instance, the rule in node 20 can be interpreted as follows: if someone leaves from Misha or Raya Kobo, involves his/her household in the decision and a family member has already migrated, then it is nearly certain that the household will receive remittances (0.917 probability = 210/229). The other 'rules' of the tree can be interpreted in a similar manner.



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