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## Chapter 6

### Trafficked Arsi Women's Profiles, Experiences and Responses to the Anti-Trafficking, Legal and Policy Frameworks

This chapter is empirical and aims to present a number of main research findings so as to further elucidate the processes and contributory causes of human trafficking, as narrated by trafficked women who returned to Arsi Zone. It commences with presenting the socio-economic profiles of the women who participated in the study, before delving into the causal factors and consequences of their trafficking – thus moving from the general to the specific.

The sections which make up this chapter are divided according to three data collection method categories. The first set of sections and subsections presents data collected using the interview method (78 respondents) and is concerned mainly with individual perceptions, recruitment and transportation-to-destination experiences. The second set presents material collected using the (focus) group discussion method (80 respondents). The data resulting from using this method were collected by using virtually the same questions as those posed with the interview method. The third set of sections and subsections presents data collected via the questionnaire method (273 respondents). The chapter concludes with a section on the overall findings of all the data.

#### 6.1 Presentation of First Results Using the Structured Interview and Focus Group Discussion Methods

##### 6.1.1 Victims, Victims' Families, and Official Personnel Profiles

A total of 78 key informants were interviewed from different relevant sections of Arsi Zone, from women victims and families. Interviews were also conducted with law enforcement officers working for bodies such as the Office of the Attorney General, federal and regional institutions (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Arsi Zone and Arsi West Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs, the Federal Police Commission and the Ministry of Women and Youth Affairs.) The interviewed officials worked in departments

related to women and/or human trafficking. The number of key informants interviewed from the population of women trafficking victims is 40. As the research focuses on trafficked women all the victims interviewed were females. Male informants were interviewed but were not trafficking victims and included key officials, law enforcement officers and individuals from women affairs-oriented institutions.

In order to get a deeper insight into causes of trafficking, 12 family members of female victims of trafficking were interviewed. Moreover, eight human trafficking law enforcement officials and 10 officials working in human trafficking institutions were also interviewed. During the fieldwork, 10 imprisoned traffickers and trafficking agents were interviewed.

With respect to age distribution, 95% (38 out of 40) of the victims interviewed were within the 'productive age' category<sup>130</sup> (their age was between 20 and 30 years). The other two respondents were 32 and 34. The age and sex distribution corresponded to the 2018 figures (US Department of State 2019: 194) which claims that "substantial numbers of those trafficked are under the age of 30".

Not only young unmarried females become victims of trafficking, as the interviews reveal that 13 women were married (32.5%), 25(62.2%) were unmarried and two (5%) were divorced. The relatively small number of divorcees among the victims of trafficking reveals that either other data sources have exaggerated their numbers or that there was sampling bias. However, in either case, the objective of our interviews in this study had no intention to come up with a totally representative sample from a population of over 100,000 trafficked persons the majority of whom are women.<sup>131</sup> The intention was, rather, to draw insights from the 40 women victims and their families.

Because the majority of the Arsi Zone populations are Muslim, it is not surprising that the majority of the trafficked women are Muslims (75%), followed by Orthodox Christianity (22%) and Protestants (3%).

Over two-thirds of the trafficked women (68%) completed between grades five to eight of secondary school (68%), while the rest 31% completed high school education (i.e. grade nine and ten). This education level is higher than the national average level of primary and high school education, which is to be explained by the migration-cum-trafficking agencies' preference for educated women over illiterates. Chapter 4 showed that government

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<sup>130</sup> I.e., working age: roughly from 15-64 years (the OECD definition, see; <https://data.oecd.org/pop/working-age-population.htm>, accessed 5 September 2020).

<sup>131</sup> United States Department of State 2019: 194.

and transnational organizations such as the IOM and ILO offer training to aspirant migrants who completed at least grade 8. As explained earlier, some of those trained in preparation of become victims of trafficking when they failed to find legal migration opportunities.

There is a general perception among all informants interviewed that there is a high magnitude of women trafficking: 84% claimed that the magnitude is ‘very high’ (84%) while the remaining (16%) described it as ‘high’. None of the informants whether victims, families of government officials perceived the magnitude of human trafficking as low.

In interviews with those working in counter-trafficking institutions, most responded to the question whether human trafficking is prevalent in Arsi Zone and Ethiopia by stating that women trafficking is ‘endemic’ in Ethiopia and in Arsi Zone, and they know it is an offence against the law. A few expressed their view that women trafficking is unacceptable but should not be an offense in the absence of viable livelihood conditions and functioning legal protection, while others indicated that they felt there is no problem with women trafficking being seen as an offence but more with the reluctance in law enforcement.

#### 6.1.2 Recruitment of Trafficked Women

In answering a question about how the recruitment process unfolded, the majority of the victim responded that they were first informed about what they referred to as an “opportunity” to work abroad by friends and/or neighbours (78%). Among the victims, about 12% responded that they were informed about the possibility to work in the Middle East by returnees, while 10% mentioned that they first came to know about ‘the opportunity to work abroad’ from families who had sent their children abroad.

After being informed about the so-called “opportunity” to be trafficked to one of the Middle East countries, most of the victim respondents were introduced to agents who in most of the cases were located in Addis Ababa. The agents then processed the visas, took them for medical check-up, and arranged the plane tickets for those who went to the Middle East through Bole International Airport. The officials from government institutions concurred with the victims’ description of the process, which is also consistent with what the researcher gathered informants from institutions, who have also described similar recruitment processes.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> These interviews took place in Addis Ababa, Asella and Shashemene towns in Arsi Zones in March 2018, and follow-up interviews to plug-in data gaps were conducted in the data in July and July 2019.

Three issues deserve some attention: 1) the victims' description of trafficking as an "opportunity" shows that they are not aware (or were plainly 'misled') of what awaits them once embarked in the pursuit of being trafficked; 2) The recruiters of the women victims of trafficking are very often family, relatives, neighbours and other acquaintance and not completely distant strangers; 3) Government officials are not unaware of the practices and although they are responsible for implementing anti-trafficking legal and policy instruments, a minority of them are not convinced that human trafficking is an offence against the law. The importance of these three observations is that they have serious practical implications for government responses to the women trafficking phenomena in Arsi Zone and elsewhere in Ethiopia. Although a large majority of trafficker respondents do consider human trafficking as objectionable, this does not prevent them from recruiting victims of trafficking, often using illicit means, as discussed earlier in Chapter 4.

### 6.1.3 Trafficked Women's Experiences at Destination

The material presented in this section is collected from trafficked women who returned to Arsi Zone and who described the situation at the destination where they were trafficked. Some of the victims saw the experience as 'very bad' (35%) while others mentioned that it was 'bad' (47%). They here generally meant insecurity, long working hours, and lack of freedom of movement, humiliation, and abuse. Still there were few (10%) of the victims who contended that the situation was 'not that bad'; even if they were abused, they considered it as suffering that 'comes with the opportunity'. The stories of those who thought that the trafficking experience was not that bad were often not told what mishaps they could expect, and the reasons they gave for the positive statement is that only "in rare cases" some ended up doing what they had to do to be accepted. Others claimed that their recruiters had ties with their families and feared reprisals or being reported to the police, should they hear about the abuse of those whom they recruited. From the interviews, it became clear that those who mentioned that the situation was 'very bad' have mostly lower levels of education, had no social network in the receiving country, and did not have sufficient Arabic communication skills.. In the latter case, such women were often mistreated by family members with whom they worked (See Chapter seven).

Officials working in anti-trafficking institutions stated that in most cases trafficked women experience severe physical and psychological abuses, while others were ill-treated and denied payment for their labour. They tend to generalize that verbal abuse and threats of

being thrown out of the house or asking the authorities to deport them to Ethiopia was frequent. Women victims of trafficking are illegally in the country of destination, and therefore feel that they are not entitled to any labour rights or cannot ask about them. As the following section shows, sadly, the fact that some trafficked women explain their experiences as “not that bad”, stems from compelling causes for *accepting* to be trafficked.

#### 6.1.4 Trafficked Women’s Narration of the Causes of Consenting to be Trafficked

Trafficked women have their own views on the ‘causes’ and motivations that made them embark on irregular migration or become victim of trafficking. This is not to say that their views are to be taken at face value; usually in interviews they ignore or omit serious reference to their own choices and motives to ‘try something’ and ‘get experience’ in migration, often responding to a tradition of work-related mobility that exists in their own society, family or region of birth. This harks back to what was said above about the ‘agency’ of women: not all are ‘victims’ from beginning to end, although the focus of this study was on the group that came into problems and lost control over their migration destiny.

The interview questions about the causes behind accepting being trafficked, poverty was the answer of the overwhelming majority (72%). They mention that they were unemployed or had jobs that did not make ends meet and were to be performed under inhumane working conditions (long working days of almost 18 hours, verbal abuse, and no paid holidays to visit their relatives. Unfortunately, some of these working conditions were similar to those they experienced in the destination country.

Some of the victims mentioned that pressures from family, friend and neighbours made them consider the option. Some also indicated that the lure by the traffickers, which they *later* found false, influenced them to migrate.

Some officials working for anti-trafficking institutions mentioned that poverty is one of the major causes of women trafficking. Others tended to put more emphasis on the role of traffickers and the gaps in awareness creation and law enforcement. Ironically, these are the duties that these officers should be performing. When asked why they did not create more awareness and enforce the law, the answer always was lack of financial and skilled human resources. To assess whether these claims were justified is beyond the scope of this study.

### 6.1.5 Trafficked Women Assessing Anti-Trafficking Efforts: Preliminary Responses

Most of the victims (56%) indicated that the efforts that the Ethiopian government has been making in managing or reducing women trafficking were not satisfactory (low). Even though awareness creation trainings are provided for preventing women trafficking, their impact is very meagre and limited in scope and reach. This is partly due to lack of follow-up and monitoring the impacts of those trainings and the problem with how they are designed. These trainings need also to be followed by offering opportunities to stakeholders, notably potential victims, that can produce models for others, to stakeholders, notably potential victims, that can produce models for others, i.e. reduce the local incentives to move away and ‘try their luck’ elsewhere.

Officials working for anti-trafficking institutions stated that there are big deficiencies in key government institutions and in law enforcement in ensuring protection and prosecution of recruiters and traffickers. One of the reasons for not effectively dealing with the problem is faults and omissions in the laws themselves. For instance, an informant from the Federal Attorney General’s office argued that the anti-trafficking proclamation did not clearly stipulate *who* the trafficker is. In addition, the subtle and intricate nature of the offence and difficulty of getting witnesses to testify against traffickers have made the work of law enforcement difficult.

In the first instance, as mentioned earlier, there are many people involved in the trafficking process, families, relatives, friends, recruiters, agents and brokers - a process similar to what has been described by Fernandez (2019). Families, relatives and friends involved in the trafficking process by encouraging or financing the trafficked persons do not accept to testify against traffickers, whom they consider “helpers” to fulfil the aim of migrating to find work, and subsequently to “fulfil their dreams”. The long list of other people involved also blurs the picture, as, in a sense, all of them are part of the trafficking ring. But legally, as the federal Attorney General of Ethiopia has submitted,<sup>133</sup> the law does not punish them collectively but the person identified by the victims as the traffickers.

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<sup>133</sup> Interview, Addis Ababa, 15 April 2019.

## 6.2 Results of Focus Group Discussions

### 6.2.1 Focus group discussions: participants profiles

A total of eight Focus Group Discussions were conducted. Four Focus Group meetings were conducted with (former) victims, whereas the other four were with relatives of victims. In each selected *woreda* in Arsi (Adabba, Gadab Asasa, Sude, and Robe), between eight and twelve individuals participated in every Focus Group Discussion. The total of 80 participants (35 from victims and 45 from families of victims), were involved in the discussions. The category, number and distribution of the Focus Group Discussions conducted are summarized in table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Victims and family of victims who participated in the focus groups discussions by *woreda*<sup>134</sup>

<b>Participant Category/<i>Woreda</i></b>	<b>Adabba</b>	<b>Gadab Asasa</b>	<b>Sude</b>	<b>Robe</b>	<b>Total</b>
Families of victims	10	12	12	11	45
Victims	8	9	8	10	35
Total	18	21	20	21	80

The sex distribution of respondents who participated in the Focus Group Discussions show that 72% (44% are victims and 28% from families of victims) females while 28% of those were males. All the male participants are from families of victims. In other words, an equal number of female and males participated from the families of victims. This ratio is the result of the fact that all the victims included are the women victims.

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<sup>134</sup> The source for and all subsequent table is fieldwork by the author between June and July 2019.



### 6.2.2. Trafficked Women's Perception of the Causes of Consenting to be Trafficked

The overall result of the Focus Group Discussions indicates that there are only slight differences in the understanding of levels, feelings and causes of women trafficking across the groups in different *woredas*. Across all the Focus Group Discussions, the perception is that the number of women trafficking is between 'very high' and 'high'. By these terms is meant that it is a problem that society at large talks about as having a major impact on the trafficked women. However, it is observed also that there were differences in the understanding as to whether women trafficking was legal or illegal. Some Focus Group Discussion participants insisted that in practice it cannot be considered illegal, as it occurs with the participation and support of officially recognized agencies. Moreover, there were heated debates on whether human trafficking is acceptable. Although respondents tend to agree that the harms inflicted on the trafficked women are unacceptable, a significant number feels that whether trafficking is acceptable or not depends on the availability and affordability of other, *legal* migration arrangements.

There were also differences across *woredas* and family members of victims on whether human trafficking is a crime (an offence). Even if some know that women trafficking is officially a crime, others question why many traffickers and agents of traffickers are walking free, with the knowledge of government officials. They asked: "How can women trafficking be a crime when people openly seek the assistance of trafficking agents and operators to help them to find employment outside the country?" Obviously, these views run counter to the already cited UN *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress And Punish Trafficking in Persons* (see UN 2000c), where Article 3(b) stipulates that: "The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used".<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> The reader is reminded that supra paragraph (a) reads as follows: "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs".

### 6.2.3 Experience at Destination

The question about their feeling at their destination was posed to the victim Focus Group Discussions. Although there was a difference in terms of the level of feeling about the situation at the destination mainly depending on the specific destination country each of the victim went to and what some victims call their ‘a chance’ (i.e., the attitudes and behaviour of the employers). For instance, many of those who were in Saudi Arabia expressed that the situation was very bad while those who were in Dubai (UAE) and Kuwait mentioned that the situation was bad. Therefore, when it comes to how victims express their experiences at destination, it is observed that there are differences among victims across wordas depending specific country of destination and depending on the so-called their chance even within a single destination country.

### 6.2.4 FGDs on the Causes of Women Trafficking

The question on what caused the trafficking was posed to both categories of Focus Group Discussions (the family and victim Focus Group Discussants). All the victim members across all the Focus Group Discussions agreed that poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities, lack of the accurate understanding about the process, family and peer influence, and family disintegration, with varying degrees among the members, have caused their being exposed to trafficking and being susceptible to being recruited.

Similarly, the Focus Group Discussion members from families of the victims agree on most of the causes identified by the victim Focus Group Discussion members. However, they tend to emphasize some of the factors more than others. For instance, the factors most raised were: the influence from friends; lack of accurate knowledge about the process; deception by people who work with traffickers about the process, the route and the job; and failure in education.

## 6.3. Presentation of the Questionnaire Results

### 6.3.1 Questionnaire Respondents’ Profiles

A questionnaire (Annex 3), was issued to 270 victims and their families in Arsi Zones (both Arsi and Arsi West), of which 60% were females and 40% were males. This ratio (of more females than males) is because the study purposely focused on women, while the male sample was included for comparative purposes.

The majority of the respondents (56%), belong in the age range from 20 to 30 years, followed by the age group ranging between 36 to 55 years, which is 23%, and the age group ranging between 31 to 35 years (21%). The majority of the respondents fall in the 30-or-less age category. If one adds the first age categories it shows that the overwhelming majority (77%) – especially the trafficking victims - fall in the productive age category.

According to the survey results, the majority of those who participated are married (56%). The second largest number of the respondents reported that they are single (26%) while some (12%) responded separated (i.e., previously married and no longer together, although not formally divorced). The smallest category (6%) reported that they have divorced or that their relationship is ‘complicated’.

The survey participants were Muslim and Ethiopian Orthodox, taking 65% and 25% respectively. A smaller group (8%) is Protestant-Evangelical, while the remaining selected the ‘other’ category. As to education level, the survey results showed that the largest number of the respondents belonged to the category from grade 5 to 8 (57%), while the second largest number (35%) had completed high school (grade 10). The remaining group of respondents (8%) reported that they joined preparatory classes.

### 6.3.2 Attitudes towards Women Trafficking

Attitudes toward the problem of women trafficking consisted of general statements designed to measure respondents’ attitudes related to women trafficking. E.g.: “Do you think women trafficking is unacceptable”? Table 6.2, shows that out of the 273 study participants, for the statement, ‘I think women trafficking is unacceptable’, nearly 80% of the respondents (n=219) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 4.4% of respondents (n=12) responded undecided with the statement, and 14.3% of respondents (n=39) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Thus, the findings show that the vast majority of the respondents (80%) normatively think that woman trafficking is unacceptable. Still, more than 14% (strongly) disagrees and apparently find it entirely acceptable.

As there is a common popular belief is that women trafficking is unacceptable, it means that there is little or no doubt on the ethical categorization of the activity. Therefore, the prevalence of the trafficking activity is rather explained by other factors than this one.

Table 6.2: Respondents attitude towards women trafficking as ‘unacceptable’:

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly Agree	162	59.3
Agree	57	20.9
Neutral	12	4.4
Disagree	9	3.3
Strongly Disagree	30	11.0

Table 6.3 is directed to family members of the communities from which the women were trafficked. The question is about whether in their communities women trafficking is ‘normal’ and therefore ‘cannot be prevented’. Of the 270 distributed questionnaires 267 (97.8%) were returned and 3 (1.1%) went missing or were not returned. From the table we see that 34.1% (n=93) strongly disagrees with the statement that women trafficking is normal and therefore cannot be prevented. When adding up those who disagree (14.3% (n=39), almost half of the respondents (48.4%), think that women trafficking is not normal and therefore, can be prevented. Those who agree with the notion that women trafficking is ‘normal’ are those who also support women family members to be trafficked and negotiate the amount of money demanded by the agents and the brokers.

Table 6.3: ‘Women trafficking has been normalized and cannot be prevented?’

<b>Respondents categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	39	14.3
Agree	54	19.8
Neutral	42	15.4
Disagree	39	14.3
Strongly disagree	93	34.1

Still, it is rather remarkable that 39.1 % (n=93) strongly *agree* that women trafficking is normal and cannot be prevented. There is a need find out the basic explanations for such an attitude. Data collected through unstructured interviews tend to show that some people believe that trafficking is about life choice, which implies that as long as people consider it as a means to make their “dreams” come true, it will be tried , in the absence of good alternatives. In the view of these ‘relativists’, women trafficking will continue to be part of an alternative way to gain sources of livelihood for some people. Therefore, as a norm or a phenomenon that has been normalized as part of daily life and ideals, it cannot be prevented.

It was mentioned in Chapter 1 and 2 that religion and traditional attitudes play a role in women’s choice of the Middle East as a destination. As mentioned in Chapter two, being Muslims contributes to making the Middle East their destination of choice. Of 273 participants 255 (93.4%) responded and only 18 (6.6%) did not respond. Table 6.4 shows that 42 (15.4%) ‘strongly agree’ and 69 (25.3%) ‘agree’ that cultural factors, such the division of labour between men and women (where women attend to domestic activities such as cooking, cleaning, and washing, and raising children) make women ‘more suitable’ than men for being trafficked to serve as domestic workers. We also see that 48 (17.6%) who ‘disagree’ and 63 (23.1%), who ‘strongly disagree’ to the notion that women trafficking has anything to do with culture, although they still admit that in the conservative Islamic Middle Eastern societies, women are ‘more suited’ for domestic work, which is only one of several other types of work.

Table 6.4: ‘Does ‘culture’ encourage women trafficking?’

<b>Respondent’s categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	42	15.4
Agree	69	25.3
Neutral	33	12.1
Disagree	48	17.6
Strongly disagree	63	23.1

Respondents mentioned, for example, that male laborers are needed as unskilled workers in construction, drivers, and street and company building cleaners. On the other hand, because

families give preference to education of males (see Chapter 2), the better educated men tend also to get office jobs or work in factories, construction, restaurants or agriculture. The fact that trafficked women are preferred to men as domestic workers has probably more to do with the social conservatism of the Middle East society than something that is inherently part of the society of origin or local Arsi culture. We see that opinions are divided 50-50 on this, but the respondents who (strongly) agree in majority tend to be Muslims, noting that, as was explained in Chapter 2, that being able to work in Saudi Arabia (the holy land of Islam) is considered a privilege. This is so despite the fact that women are mistreated, not only in Saudi Arabia but also in other Middle Eastern countries, as expressed by the women interviewed in Chapter 6. Hence, Chapter 2 showed that trafficked women from Arsi chose the Middle East as a preferred destination probably because the majority of the Arsi population are Muslims. Saudi Arabia is their preferred destination.<sup>136</sup> Working in Saudi Arabia offers the possibility to parents of visiting relatives and performing the *Hajj* – the pilgrimage, one of the five duties that a Muslim should perform once in his or her life time. There is also a preference for the wealthy Gulf States, in close geographical proximity to Saudi Arabia.

On the question of whether Islam *encourages* women trafficking or not, of 270 participants, 258 (94.5%) responded and only 15 (5.5%) did not d (Table 6.5) below reveals that 150 (55%) of the 270 respondents disagreed that religion (Islam) is a determining factor in trafficking, but 81 (29.7%) (strongly) agreed with the notion that the Muslim religion plays a role. While the majority of the respondents disagree with the notion that religion is ‘a cause of human trafficking’ this, nevertheless does not exclude the possibility that some individuals with strong religious beliefs are inclined to take opportunity of being at the holy places and perform the *Hajj* to Mecca. In more in-depth interviews we did not follow up the statement that “there are religious traditions which uphold women trafficking”, but from this answer it seems that many people suggest that some religious attitudes or values, e.g. related to making the *Hajj* or obeying religious or familial authorities/leaders, may condone or stimulate out-migration in whatever form. A religious practice such as the Haj can also be used as a pretext by some to stay behind in Saudi Arabia illegally.

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<sup>136</sup> Saudi Arabia is of course the birthplace of Islam and it hosts the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Mecca is the holy place towards which Muslims are supposed to pray to and to visit at least once in their lifetime for the *Hajj*.

Table 6.5: Does Islam discourage women trafficking?

<b>Respondents' category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	42	15.4
Agree	39	14.3
Neutral	27	9.9
Disagree	48	17.6
Strongly disagree	102	37.4

Field discussions revealed that most respondents either did not believe that exploitation could take place in the “holy places”, or that when some have functions or a job, it is a price worth paying to improve one’s life chances. The messages and meaning of such statements should be considered against the backdrop of the poverty and lack of opportunity in their home areas, and domestic workers’ exploitation also takes place in Ethiopia and in the rest of the Middle East.<sup>137</sup> As explained by one respondent, “In Ethiopia, there is exploitation without good income, while in the Middle East there is sometimes the possibility of making ends meet and save a little money to send home”.<sup>138</sup> In terms of whether Christians, Muslims, or believers in traditional religions are more prone to be recruited than others, it is clear that there is no difference.. Lebanon is the only Middle Eastern country with a large Christian population, and therefore recruiting Christian women for this destination is more acceptable.

### 6.3.3 Knowledge and Attitudes within the Anti-Trafficking Institutions

This subsection is devoted to gauging the attitudes and views of officials working institutions and agencies geared towards combating human/women trafficking commencing with the Federal Attorney General, who stated the official Ethiopian position in line with national and international legal instruments. In an interview he stated that: “Human trafficking is a

<sup>137</sup> Nisrane *et al.* 2020; Demissie 2018, Busza 2017, Frantz 2013, Minaye 2012a, De Regt 2010, Kedir *et al.* 2010, and Atnafu 1984.

<sup>138</sup> Statement by a returnee trafficked woman in Asella, Arsi Zone.

criminal activity that is understood as an act, means and purpose. The act component is about the recruitment, transportation and facilitation process involved in human trafficking whereas the means basically implies the coercion/deception of the trafficked. The purpose component is about whether the intent is for exploitation or not.” According to the Federal Attorney General, the legal provisions provide the framework within which human-trafficking, particularly women trafficking is to be prevented.<sup>139</sup>

All other respondents from other government institutions stated the same and had similar knowledge of what human trafficking meant and expressed awareness of the role allotted to their institutions to combat the human trafficking. Knowledge levels, however, varied and some were more aware of the main components of human trafficking, while others could hardly articulate a definition of human trafficking. However, all respondents were aware that human trafficking involves deception by a chain of traffickers and that their mandated responsibility is to protect the trafficked persons along the chain. For instance, respondents from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs said that human trafficking involves sending migrants to certain destinations without having a license or using the acquired license as a cover for illegal activities. Thus, traffickers are found among rogue agencies with legal licenses for migrants’ recruitment to certain destinations, as well as those without licenses and involved in clandestine trafficking activities. It was found that there are a number of employment agencies that in principle have a license to legally prepare and send migrants abroad but who actually are engaged in trafficking human beings. In this way, the trafficking agencies create a smokescreen of willful confusion among potential victims of trafficking. The situation is made worse by the fact that the general public in Ethiopia is not aware of the procedures and processes that distinguish legal migration from illegal human trafficking activities.

Unfortunately, confusion also stems from the existence of multiple agencies, and to figure out what agency to use and which one has a license and which one does not, is difficult for individuals with little knowledge of how government and private sectors operate. While officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs are aware of their responsibility, they found the web of private, illegal, semi-legal agencies and their role and support-base in Embassies, countries of destination, etc. difficult to grasp. For the Ministry personnel, disciplining these actors is not within their mandate and therefore they do not interact directly

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<sup>139</sup> Interviewed at his office in Addis Ababa 15 April 2019.



with them.<sup>140</sup> These responses, therefore, demonstrate the complexity involved in human trafficking, such as the multiplicity of actors, and the secrecy and deceptive nature of the operations.

Adding to the above complexities, many officials found it difficult, from a purely legal understanding, to distinguish between the consequences of human trafficking and migrant smuggling. For them, answering this question is important because government officials who come in contact with smuggled and/or trafficked victims should identify whether the latter are smuggled or trafficked. They stated that they often let all smuggled and trafficked victims go free and arrest the smugglers and traffickers. Since ignorance of a law cannot be an excuse, smuggled/trafficked persons should be held responsible for illegally crossing borders and violating the immigration law. Needless to say, the trafficked/smuggled persons are made to walk free even though it is clear that they have committed a crime. This encourages the smuggled or trafficked persons to try again, knowing that they will be released if caught by the authorities.

#### 6.4 Deception, Legality and Illegality of Human Trafficking

From the interviews with community leaders, the general public and key stakeholders' institutions, the understanding of human trafficking involves some common elements. Some of the elements usually associated with human trafficking include deception, suffering, abuse, secrecy and deportation.

*Deception* is about inspiring the potential victims for migrating by using misleading and fraudulent means. This sometimes involves the presentation by the traffickers of the process of migration as a simple practice and the rewards after migration as highly attractive. But in reality, from the day travel starts (especially for those who take the land route) the trafficking process is understood as very rough. What emerges from the interviews is that the migratory process is characterized by a lot of unforeseen problems, harsh conditions, suffering due to the physical harm and insecurity often inflicted by the traffickers, or because of the little or lack of experience of the trafficked for a long journey filled with uncertainties. The suffering includes lack of food, water, or other basic necessities. It can also be manifested in the form of beatings, sexual assault, intimidation and creation of an

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<sup>140</sup> According to the Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs of Arsi Administrative Zone, coordination between anti-trafficking institutions at the lower level is rather lax.

environment of fear among the trafficked persons, sometimes leading to a process of dehumanizing the victims.

Hence, *abuse* is also considered to be one of the elements in human trafficking. Once the trafficked begin their journey, the traffickers would often exploit their vulnerability by manipulating the situation and ask for more money than what they had agreed and/or already charged. Traffickers often force the trafficked persons to let their parents or families send more money to get them out of their disparate situation.

Another common element associated with common understanding of human trafficking is certain degree of *secrecy* involved in the process. Many of the respondents in the research area indicated that the traffickers are in most cases invisible agents, and their activities are hidden from the common people. This, perhaps, is due to the traffickers' knowledge that once the people are aware of what is actually happens, it would be easy for them to recognize that it is illegal and risky activity - they just will not take chances

The trafficked persons are often deported without any sympathy on the part of the destination countries. The news of the *deportation* of trafficked persons has nowadays become a regular headline in major global media outlets. Watching the periodic unfolding of deportation of Ethiopians and others from major Arab countries (notably Saudi Arabia<sup>141</sup>) appears to have already created a sense of denial and deep anxiety among the population. That is why the respondents tend to associate human trafficking with deportation of trafficked persons to their home country, mostly with no or little accumulated wages to take home.

When asked about whether they have heard of human trafficking, 213 (78%) of the respondents answered that they have and 60 (22.0%) answered that they know about people who travelled for the Middle East for work but do not know the term human trafficking. Also, when asked whether they have read about human trafficking, 216 (79.1) respondents answered positively and 57 (20.9) answered that they did not.

Table 6.6 shows the answers to the question whether women trafficking is illegal or an offence against the law. The majority (171 strongly agree and 63 agree) or 62.86% and 31.1%, respectively. While it is often the case in groups discussions that fewer people

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<sup>141</sup> See e.g. on an 2014 expulsion of Ethiopian migrants, in B. Muechler, 'Ethiopian migrants, expelled by Saudis, remain in limbo back home', *New York Times*, 8 January 2014, and 'Deported from Saudi Arabia, Ethiopian migrants find dilemma at home', Addis Ababa, 9 January 2014 (IRIN news message). More recently, in 2017: Elias Meseret, 'Ethiopians deported en masse by Saudi Arabia allege abuses', AP news message, 29 December 2017. See also: Tom Gardner, 'Ethiopians face beatings and bullets as Saudi 'deportation machine' cranks up', *The Guardian*, 16 August 2019.

express descending opinions, in the case of women trafficking, 12 (4.4%) agree that human trafficking is legal, and the same number of the respondents agree strongly that human trafficking is legal.

Table 6.6: ‘Is women trafficking illegal?’

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	171	62.6
Agree	63	23.1
Neutral	15	5.5
Disagree	12	4.4
Strongly disagree	12	4.4

### 6.5 Causes of Women Trafficking as Expressed in Group Discussions

The aim of this sub-section is to go beyond generic explanations of the causes of women trafficking (as in Chapter 1 and 2) to gauge the views of the returnees themselves. It is also meant to complement the materials collected by using the interview and group discussions method.

Two related questions on poverty are often advanced regarding causes of human trafficking with the first question being general and the second specific to the situation of the respondent. In the first instance, the respondents were asked, generally, whether poverty was the ‘main cause of human trafficking. Table 6.7 shows that the majority (177 or 64%), strongly agrees that poverty is the no. 1 factor that makes people accept to be trafficked. Moreover, 39 or (14.3%) agree that poverty is one of the main causes of trafficking. Together the percentage of people who associated the phenomenon of human trafficking with poverty is 79.1%. Therefore, as also commonly perceived and argued by many researchers,<sup>142</sup> durable poverty being seen as the main cause of the problem of human trafficking also holds true for people in the Arsi Zones.

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<sup>142</sup> See for instance: Gabriel 2014, Gacinya 2019, Russell 2014, Truong 2006; also, Alexis Aronowitz: [http://www.endslavery.va/content/endslavery/en/publications/acta\\_20/aronowitz.html](http://www.endslavery.va/content/endslavery/en/publications/acta_20/aronowitz.html) (accessed 14-2-2020).

However, a total of 14.3% of the respondents disagreed (4.4%) or strongly disagreed (9.9%) with the assertion that poverty is one of the main causes of poverty. Some argued that they knew some of the trafficked people in person and they could testify that these people were not poor. They point to the fact that some people pay tens of thousands of US dollars or hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian *birr* to be trafficked, and when they fail, they return to their well-to-do families. Others sell their houses and property and leave: some succeed to repay their debt and others ruin their lives by making the wrong decisions. Some are lured by friends and families who were trafficked to join them and lead a better life than they did in Arsi.<sup>143</sup>

Table 6.7: ‘Poverty as the main cause of women trafficking’<sup>144</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	177	64.8
Agree	39	14.3
Neutral	9	3.3
Disagree	12	4.4
Strongly disagree	27	9.9

In answering the second, personal question, 117 victims of trafficking were asked whether poverty was one of the personal reasons for them to accept being trafficked. Of the respondents, 111 (94.9%) mentioned poverty as indeed the prime reason they accepted to be trafficked, and only six (5.1%) mentioned that it was *not* a factor. The latter group of respondents mentioned that they decided to “embark on the journey” to seek a better future and live a “good life” where all the necessity of life would be much easier to obtain. Among other reasons given by those who claim poverty is not a factor for accepting being trafficked

<sup>143</sup> Interviews conducted in February 2019 in Adabba, Gadab Asasa and Robe.

<sup>144</sup> Of the participants of the study 264 (96.7%) responded and only 9 (3.3%) did not respond.

is peer influence, through emails and videos sent by relatives and friends who embarked on the journey.

Similarly, two questions were asked about unemployment: whether unemployment was a general cause of human trafficking, and whether the unemployment was a personal factor in deciding to seek the trafficking route. Table 6.8 shows that out of 273 respondents, 108 (39.6) strongly agreed and 81 (29.7%) agreed that unemployment was one of the main causes of human trafficking. Only 7.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed: unemployment was not a cause in human trafficking, arguing that some people leave their jobs in Arsi to simply seek better employment and income elsewhere. When asked on a personal level whether unemployment was the cause of a person’s decision to consent to being trafficked, out 117 respondents, 98 (83%) replied in the affirmative, while 19 (16%) respondents disagree that unemployment was a major factor in their decision to consent to being trafficked.

Table 6.8: ‘Unemployment as the main causes of women trafficking’<sup>145</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	108	39.6
Agree	81	29.7
Neutral	30	11.0
Disagree	15	5.5
Strongly disagree	6	2.2

The next Table 6.9 is an attempt to examine whether the “good life” or the promise of trafficking as a means to escape poverty and attain a “good life” in the country of destination was one of the factors that influenced the decision to accept being trafficked.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Of the total of 273 respondents 261 (95.6%) responded and only 12 (4.4%) did not respond.

<sup>146</sup> The ‘good life’ in the social science debate is summarized as follows: ‘the good life’ is not an ethical statement nor a value statement of any kind, and the primary interest is in individual personal viewpoints on what people think ‘the good life’ is for them (Pessi 2008: 62-63). Torbert (1994) described it (cross-culturally) as the image of conditions in which one has “good money, good work, good friends and good questions to answer”, with money as a means, not intrinsically good but used to support the other three goods (*ibid.*, 65). Similar views were expressed by Brülde (2007: 8) on his work on happiness and the good life.

The table shows that out of 273 respondents, 108 (39.6%) strongly agreed and 81 (29.7%) agreed that the promise of a “good life” in the country of destination influenced their decision to accept to be trafficked. A much smaller number of 39 (14.3%) either disagreed (9.9%) or strongly disagreed (4.4%).

When asked the personal question whether they had personally been *promised* that trafficking would give them the opportunity to experience “the good life”, 100 (85.5%) of 117 answered yes, and 17 (14.5%) of the respondents said they were not promised “the good life”.

Table 6.9 Women are deceived by the promises of “the good life” in the country of destination <sup>147</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	147	53.8
Agree	60	22.0
Neutral	15	5.5
Disagree	27	9.9
Strongly disagree	12	4.4

## 6.6 Trafficked Women’s Views on Government Policy Responses

An important aim of this study was to give trafficked women an opportunity to express their views on the main factors which determined their attraction to and consent to be trafficked, as well as vis-à-vis government policy responses. As some trafficked women claimed the main problem is that seeking the legal orderly migration route is almost impossible because of the years spent on the waiting-list to eventually be called to sign a contract for a job abroad. Others complained that, in some cases, huge amounts of money are involved (between US\$ 20 to 40,000), money which involves a whole package of payments to agents,

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<sup>147</sup> Of the total respondents 240 (87.9%) responded and 33 (12.1%) did not respond.

tickets, contractors and other illicit purposes). Some women pay more or less the same amount to traffickers, but in this case, one can start the journey within weeks. The trafficked women claimed that the legal route is safer and more predictable but takes time and is even not without the risk that you hand your money over to the agents and they may disappear.

Table 6.10 shows that out of 273 respondents over two-thirds 189 (69.3%) either strongly agree (40.7%) or agree (28.6%) with the statement that the difficulty of migrating legally is a major cause of resorting to traffickers. When the same question was posed to 117 women who were trafficked, 82 (70.1%) claimed that the difficulty in migrating legally was a major cause of their consent to trafficking, while and 35 (29.9%) disagreed. The 16.5%neutral or with answers such as “we don’t know” claimed that either they have not attempted the legal route because they know from others that it is practically impossible to take that route unless one has so much money or knows important people in the migration chain, both in Ethiopia and abroad. Others claimed that they had attempted the legal route and were successful, but it is expensive and they or their parents could afford to pay.

Table 6.10: ‘The difficulty to migrate legally contributes to women trafficking’,<sup>148</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	111	40.7
Agree	78	28.6
Neutral	45	16.5
Disagree	33	12.1
Strongly disagree	6	2.2

The respondents’ experiences of the difficulty to seek legal migration can be both a cause of resorting to trafficking but also an indication that the policies regulating legal migration do not work equally for the poor and the well-to-do, as well as that they ‘lack the right connections’ in the migration chain. The well-to-do are more likely to buy their way

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<sup>148</sup> All respondents, 273 (100%), answered the questions.

through, while the less fortunate have to resort to illegal migration and put their fate in the hands of the traffickers.

Table 6.11 shows the answers to the question of whether Ethiopia has a good anti-human trafficking policy framework. As the trafficked women are not experts in government anti-trafficking policies and legal frameworks, their answers are of course expressions of perceptions and not based on deep knowledge or grounded policy analysis. Those who ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’ (113 or 45.1%) are relatively higher in number than those who ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ (87 or 31.9%), while 48 (17.6) do not agree or disagree either because of lack of knowledge or not being prepared to criticize government policy.

Table 6.11: 'Ethiopia's anti-trafficking policy framework or laws are not functioning' <sup>149</sup>

<b>Respondents' category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	33	12.1
Agree	54	19.8
Neutral	48	17.6
Disagree	57	20.9
Strongly disagree	66	24.2

## 6.7 Cross-Stakeholders' Views on Government Policy

This section includes the results of answers to questions on government policy-about whether the current Ethiopian legal frameworks contain adequate anti-human trafficking policies and about what are the main factors hindering these policies from delivering results. Because the majority of respondents (except most government officials) are obviously not anti-human trafficking policy experts, what is provided here is more of a general public opinion or rather perceptions of the respondents. Only 10 government officials were included in the sample, but their views are given the same weight as those of the public. Naturally, the answers given here are not representative of the views of all those trafficked, the agents, or families but represents an attempt to capture the views of the ‘stakeholders’ that were interviewed.

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<sup>149</sup> Of the 273 participants 258 (94.5%) responded and 15 (5.5%) did not respond.



Table 6.12 shows the answers to question of whether it is thought that Ethiopia has a comprehensive national legal framework to respond to the problems of human trafficking. A large number of the respondents (78 (28.6%) are neutral, due to their lack of knowledge of the framework or not being prepared to express an opinion or criticism of government policy, for personal considerations. 101 (37.4%) ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that Ethiopia has a comprehensive national legal framework to respond to the problems of human trafficking. Their justification of this positive view is that “the policies are good but the government did not put sufficient human and financial resources to resolve it”. This view, however, is assessed in the next table 6.13.

On the other hand, 57 (20.9%) viewed the national legal framework as inadequate to respond to the problems of human trafficking, basing their answer on the view that if the policies would have been sufficiently comprehensive, they would have resolved not all but some important part of the problem. The fact that the problem is increasing instead of decreasing, in their view, is a sign that the policy framework is not comprehensive or adequate.

Table 6.12: ‘The Ethiopia anti-human trafficking framework is not comprehensive enough’  
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<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	33	12.1
Agree	69	25.3
Neutral	78	28.6
Disagree	36	13.2
Strongly disagree	21	7.7

Table 6.13 below deals with the question whether the national policies of anti-trafficking are (or are not) matched with adequate financial and human resources to implement them, with special reference to women trafficking. Of the respondents 189

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<sup>150</sup> Of the participants 237 (86.8%) responded and only 36 (13.2%) did not respond.

(69.3%) agree with the view that the resources do not match the policy requirement to address women trafficking. 45 (16.5%) of the respondents ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’ that the resources availed to national anti-trafficking policies are not adequate. The number of those who abstained from answering the question 39 (14.3) expressed their lack of knowledge of how much resources the government has allocated for the implementation of anti-trafficking policies, particularly women trafficking.

Table 6.13: ‘Ethiopia’s anti-trafficking policies are not matched by resources to addressing women trafficking’ <sup>151</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Strongly agree	99	36.3
Agree	90	33.0
Neutral	39	14.3
Disagree	36	13.2
Strongly disagree	9	3.3

If the national policy and legal anti-trafficking frameworks would be comprehensive and if resources would have been allocated to match the policy ambitions, the failure to respond adequately could be attributed to *loopholes* in the existing legal and policy frameworks. Table 6.14 shows that in answering this question, 147 (53.9%) either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that there are loopholes in the policy framework, while 57 (20.9%) ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’ that there are loopholes in the anti-human trafficking legal and policy frameworks. Table 6.15, also shows that 69, or just one quarter of the respondents, were neither agreeing or disagreeing.

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<sup>151</sup> All 273 (100%) respondents responded.

Table 6.14: ‘Are there loopholes in the existing anti-trafficking legal and policy frameworks?’<sup>152</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	69	25.3
Agree	78	28.6
Neutral	69	25.3
Disagree	36	13.2
Strongly disagree	21	7.7

During the fieldwork, we heard there were contradictory comments on the extent of cooperation between officials working in anti-women trafficking agencies and societal agents and organizations, and therefore, a question was posed to address this important aspect. Table 6.15 below shows that 156 (39.6%) of the respondents either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that there is good cooperation, while 42 (15.4%) either ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’ that there is good cooperation between the officials and society. A relatively large number of the respondents (66 or 24%) are neutral, claiming that they do not have personal encounters with the officials or that for personal reasons they cannot answer either way.

Table 6.15: ‘Society (i.e., people in general) do not cooperate with the authorities in preventing the trafficking of women’<sup>153</sup>

<b>Respondents’ category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	75	27.5
Agree	81	29.7
Neutral	66	24.2
Disagree	36	13.2
Strongly disagree	6	2.2

<sup>152</sup> All participants responded (100%).

<sup>153</sup> Of the 273 respondents 264 (96.7%) responded and 9 (3.3%) did not respond.

In discussions with officials working in the anti-trafficking units of the two Arsi Zones they claimed that some families encourage their family members to embark on the trafficking journey and therefore are not prepared to cooperate or report them to the authorities. Eager to embark on the journey, some women prepare for trafficking in secrecy, including not informing their families of their plans. As Section one has shown, because the majority of agents who recruit women from Arsi Zones are family, relatives, husbands and friends, they do not cooperate with the authorities in fear that they themselves become accused or subject of prosecution for human trafficking.

#### 6.4. Conclusion

At least six important findings relevant to method and theory can be teased out here to be further examine in the next chapter so as to examine the efficacy of the analytical framework presented in Chapter3. Where these findings resonate with or challenge previous research findings will also be elucidated.

First, the *profiles* of women victims of human trafficking are in the productive age category (between 20 and 34 years) and most are under the age of 30. Not only unmarried, but also married women are trafficked and most cases with the consent of their husbands. However, the claim by some researchers that divorce is a major cause for women to decide to vanish from the community is not found to be significant. Trafficked women, who were separated from partners after a long-term relationship or divorcees are too few to merit designating divorce as a major factor. Similarly, the contention that religious and cultural factors do play almost an equal role as motivators for consenting to trafficking as a justification for elder family members to visit the holy places in Saudi Arabia. However, religion and culture cannot be totally dismissed as factors.

Second, an overwhelming number of the respondents agree that *poverty* is seen as one of the main causes of people seeking to work overseas, including consenting to go along with being trafficked. The trafficked women's aspiration to pursue 'the good life' is pronounced in both. There are the poor who define the good life as having money, a better job and a good standard of living, and the better-off, who define the good life' as being part of another world with opportunities and connections because they have the financial resources to be part of it. Paying thousands of US dollars to join the promises of the "good life' denotes that the trafficked women are socially highly stratified along the poor and well-

to-do scale. The discourse that poverty is not a major motivation for human trafficking is true only for a very small number of trafficked people, as the answers to this particular question have revealed.

Third, the respondents are divided in their assessment of the *legality or illegality* of women trafficking. Even a few government officials question the illegality of human trafficking, in contravention to legal provisions in Ethiopia national policy and legal frameworks, which are consistent with the UN Protocol against the trafficking in persons. One implication of such a view is that such officials could be considered a risk in anti-trafficking policy implementation. Similarly, a large number of the families of victims do not consent to the legal provisions that consider consent to trafficking a crime and therefore end up *not cooperating* with the authorities. The respondents' answers to questions about societal cooperation with the authorities show that people who seek to be trafficked and their families often do not cooperate with the authorities. Such a finding highlights the fact that human trafficking is *socially embedded*, despite the fact that a large number of people think that it is not a norm but born by necessity.

Fourth, a worrying finding with respect to the difficulties involved in fighting trafficking is that the victims *are treated as criminals*. But therefore, they are released immediately after being intercepted by the authorities. Two serious implications emanate from releasing the victims: there is no support for them to make them more aware of the dangers of trafficking and how it could ruin their life. The other implication is that the victims are left with the impression that they can try again and again, and will just be released without charge or even a reprimand, should they try again. No wonder that the victims of trafficking who fail to make it to their final destination keep trying hoping that one day they can be successful.

Fifth, the area where legal migration begins and human trafficking ends is fraught with confusion, as both anti-trafficking officials, victims and families of trafficked women find that there is a zone of subtle, *secretive dealings* that align the traffickers and licit licensed overseas employment agents. Women who intend to pursue legal migration routes and cannot distinguish between traffickers and legally licensed agents can easily be exploited by both. Therefore, it is not difficult to disagree with the majority of the respondents who perceive the national anti-trafficking policies and legal frameworks as not sufficiently comprehensive and inadequately sourced in terms of financial and human resources.

Sixth, and last but not least, government and multilateral *training programmes* for aspirant immigrants such as those described in chapter four, *cannot determine the destination*

of the trainees (see section 3, Chapter 3, section 3.3 on the training programmes designed as part of the activities of the national institutions mandated with the task to implement human trafficking prevention programmes). Although not intended, those who complete programmes informing potential migrants of domestic work are found to be an attractive target both for legal migration agents and traffickers alike. To be sure, the problem here is not training, but training in the absence of placement policies by responsible migration agents. This also reflects as to what some of the anti-human trafficking officials referred to as the lack of coordination at the regional and woreda levels.

After the next Chapter (7), illustrating personal experiences of trafficked/irregular migrant women to enliven and substantiate the problems discussed in the current chapter, I will summarize the major methodological and theoretical considerations of this study on the basis of the empirical data, and particularly, on the tension between the ‘freedom and emancipation’ paradigm and its efficacy if not integrated with the structural-material paradigm. This debate will be concluded with reference to the findings of Chapters 4 and 5, which provided the core argument raised here.