



ETHIOPIA
Safer migration
Annual report 2024-2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Ethiopia, the Freedom Fund works with local partners on two hotspot programs: safer migration and child domestic work. This report covers progress and outcomes during 2024 from our safer migration program, which aims to prevent the exploitation of Ethiopian migrant domestic workers going to the Middle East.

The year 2024 brought positive progress in the migration space, primarily on policy and systems change. A number of those changes were made possible by the ongoing influencing and work of our partners. Some of the highlights of the year include removing barriers to access safer migration pathways by bringing government services closer to rural communities and by strengthening how recruitment agencies operate. During the year, Freedom Fund partners recorded 314 recruitment agencies bringing practical changes to the service they provide to women migrating to the Middle East, including better follow-up with women who have left Ethiopia.

In places like Amhara, where unsafe migration has been prevalent, our partner recorded a 35% decrease in the dropout rate from schools that ran anti-trafficking clubs in the last two academic years. Dropouts were determined to be a proxy indicator for irregular migration in many of the communities where partners work.

Partners supported 6,766 people to access social and legal services including microfinance support. Returnees' associations in Amhara have organised themselves to advise the local government on reintegration of survivors, enabling 33 women to access loans and advocated the government to provide space for more than 50 businesses. Two survivor-led associations successfully lobbied their local labour and skills department office to provide urgent support for returnees, resulting in 12 returnees receiving social and economic assistance.



In 2024, more than 1,400 returnees/survivors received comprehensive shelter services in Addis Ababa and Amhara from Freedom Fund partners, with 457 reintegrated into their communities. Assistance included support with vocational training and alternative livelihoods were provided to 962 women, with 449 women earning a sustainable income six months after completion of training.

A Kuwait-based Ethiopian workers group, funded by the Freedom Fund, received 1,230 calls through its support hotline and opened 440 new cases, with 72% of the cases successfully resolved. Almost 40% of those cases concerned labour issues and unpaid salaries.

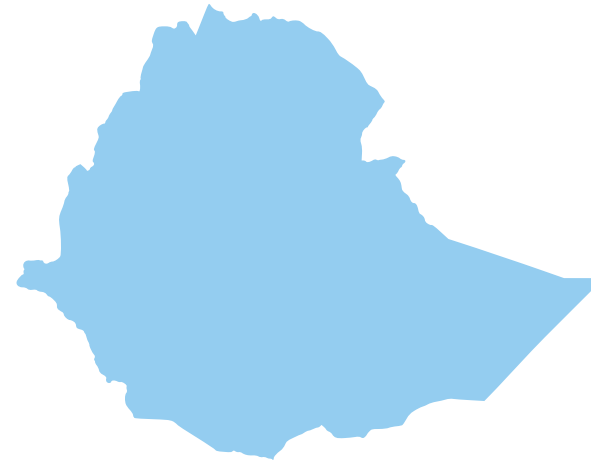
This report covers the progress and activities under the safer migration hotspot in Amhara and Addis Ababa, during 2024.

OPERATING CONTEXT

The year 2024 remained one of high instability, primarily due to the fragile peace deal in Tigray and the major insurgencies that affected the Amhara and Oromia regions in particular. As reported by the Ethiopia Peace Observatory, Amhara and Oromia continue to be the most unstable regions in the country. The federal government has been fighting various insurgent groups including the FANO group in Amhara. This has resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths and injuries, including refugees, and several attacks on civilian infrastructures such as hospitals and schools. Schools, including those in our partners' areas, were forced to close, thereby delaying the September start of the academic year, with some schools not reopening until November 2024. The conflict severely affected humanitarian aid delivery and presence, with eight aid workers killed during the year. In October, the UN was considering suspending its operation in Amhara due to attacks on aid workers. The authorities also interrupted internet services throughout 2024, affecting communication across the Amhara region.¹

The ongoing fighting between the Ethiopian military and the militia in Amhara increases risks of ethnic conflict with Tigray and Oromia, as well as transborder instability with Somali, Eritrea and Sudan.² Ethiopia's MoU with Somaliland, which Somalia consider its territory, has also put extra strains in Ethiopia's relationship with Somalia and Eritrea (and Egypt), bringing additional concerns about the stability of the Horn of Africa.

In 2024, significant economic reforms impacted communities and partners. To open the Ethiopian market to more investment, the central bank floated the birr in late July. Prior to that, the birr's value was pegged to the U.S. dollar. This action is intended to facilitate Ethiopia's transition to a market-based foreign currency and aligns with the country's efforts to secure foreign



currency loans from institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. However, one of the direct results has been the decline in the purchasing power of average families as the birr depreciates and the cost of living increases.³ As more vulnerable families struggle to make a living in Ethiopia through formal or informal jobs, migrating to the Middle East becomes a more viable option, especially as government has been pushing for its women workforce in particular to migrate abroad as domestic workers. The overall economic situation has contributed to increasing the push factor for both migrant workers and child domestic workers (CDWs).

Climate change is also a push factor for migration and internal displacement in areas where our partners have been working. Amhara is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, facing issues like drought and potential conflict due to resource scarcity. In arid pastoral areas, Ethiopia has experienced some of its most severe droughts of recent years, while flooding damaged livelihoods and infrastructures in other parts of the country. The Ethiopia Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) released in early 2024 raised the alarm about the increasing impact of climate change on the Ethiopian economy, predicting that it will push millions more people into poverty.⁴

1 See: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

2 See: <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/africa-file-september-26-2024-fano-offensive-ethiopia%E2%80%99s-amhara-egypt-arms-somalia-rebel>.

3 See: <https://epo.acleddata.com/2024/12/13/unrest-in-amhara-and-oromia-threatens-ethiopias-stability/>.

4 See: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/4f599a4a-b79f-4979-826c-d8ca1fb35d24>.

PROGRESS TOWARDS SYSTEMS CHANGE

Policy/legislative

In 2024, the Government of Ethiopia continued its effort to improve its migration governance system, with support from Freedom Fund partners. The presence of our PEMS partners in the National Partnership Coalition⁵ reflects their strength and recognition of their work in the anti-trafficking space. Through their work in the national and regional partnership coalitions, partners have been able to inform, advise and influence government policy and systems on migration. What follows is a summary of the main progress made during the year.

There has been progress towards protecting domestic workers and migrant rights. Partners such as Comunità Volontari per il Mondo (CVM) and the Mission for Community Development program (MCDP) have been working for years on the adoption of the ILO Convention No. 189 (C189) recognizing that domestic workers have the same basic rights as other workers. Efforts to ratify the C189 continued to be a focus of our partners and in 2024 resulted in a stronger commitment from government ministries. Following ongoing advocacy work from partners, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) has for the first time formally endorsed the ratification of the C189 by including it in its annual workplan for 2024/2025. MoWSA is expected to play a key role in influencing other ministries. The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MOLS) also took the initiative in 2024 to protect domestic workers through the inclusion of paid domestic work in the Labor Proclamation 1156 and by proposing to the parliament the ratification of C189. The aim is to have sufficient ministries endorsing the C189 to force a discussion at parliament.

⁵ The National Partnership Coalition (NPC) is a key initiative led by the Ministry of Justice, bringing together government and civil society actors to address challenges like trafficking, smuggling, and irregular migration.

Following months of intense advocacy by CVM, the MOLS finally shared its action plan detailing activities to be undertaken and resources required to better protect domestic workers' rights. The following activities, which have now been formally included in the plan, are a positive move towards better safeguarding the rights of domestic and migrant workers. Activities in the plan include:

- To prepare a uniform employment contract for "personal service workers" (the government's new term for "domestic workers") that can be implemented at the national level.
- To ratify Convention 189 and put it into effect.
- To prepare a regulation determining the working conditions of domestic workers.
- To ratify and put into action Convention No. 190 (on prevention of workplace violence and harassment), Convention No. 97 (requiring that prior to departure all migrant workers have a contract setting out the conditions of work and remuneration, as well as information on living and working conditions in the country of destination) and Convention No. 143 (to prevent abusive conditions in migration and ensure the protection of the rights of migrant workers).

A national migration policy drafted but is not yet approved. The absence of an approved national migration policy remains a critical gap in advancing the migration legal framework. While the migration policy draft has been finalised and previously celebrated as a great achievement, its approval from the Council of Ministers is still pending. Sustained advocacy efforts to adopt the policy in 2025 is paramount to ensuring a comprehensive and sustainable migration governance system.

Government performance

Government service for regular migration has been brought closer to communities. Biometrics fingerprint scanning machines, previously provided



only in Addis Ababa at the central level, has been decentralised and brought to Dessie City in Amhara to provide services to people wanting to migrate. By reducing the cost of applying and bringing the migration services closer to their home, this is making it easier for women who seek employment in the Middle East to do so through regular channels.

The government began repatriating stranded Ethiopian migrant workers from the Middle East. In 2024, Ethiopia agreed to repatriate 70,000 of its nationals who had been living in squalid conditions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The International Organization for Migration's (IOM's) assessment revealed that most of the returnees had migrated irregularly. Our partners Agar Ethiopia Charitable Society and Beza Posterity Development Organization (BPDO) were provided with emergency funding to provide shelter and reintegration services to 500 Ethiopians deported from KSA in the first half of 2024.

Using its modernised migration system, the government made progress toward its goal of actively recruiting a half million women to fill domestic worker placements overseas. The Ethiopian government has been pushing for orderly migration, using its latest digitalised migration system (LMIS) to recruit and place 500,000 women as domestic workers in overseas employment, mostly in the Middle East. As reported by the MOLS by summer 2024, more than 345,000 trained migrant workers were deployed

to destination countries under signed bilateral labour agreements, including KSA, the UAE, Qatar and Jordan. However, critical challenges remain regarding the protection and the lack of follow-up with women newly arriving in destination countries.

Business performance

International private employment agencies (IPEAs) opened branches in different regions and recruiters formally registered. In the first quarter of 2024, six IPEAs that benefited from our partners' training and support opened offices in different regions to facilitate access to legal pathways of overseas employment for those living outside Addis Ababa. Partners also worked in 2024 to engage unregistered recruiters. CVM, for example, worked with 24 brokers (unregistered recruiters) with the goal of ensuring their legalization and managed in the first quarter of the year to get eight of them registered and licensed as IPEAs.

Community organisation

Survivor-led organisations (SLOs) launch a new coalition. In 2024, four survivor-led organisations that were supported by the Freedom Fund's Survivor Leadership Fund collaborated to form a coalition in Ethiopia. The new group is designed to strengthen solidarity and allyship within the nascent survivor networks in Ethiopia. During the year, the coalition was joined by the Ethiopia Domestic Workers Network (ANDINET) and two other SLOs established independently of the Freedom Fund. Together, the members of the coalition intend to galvanise learning, skills and resources for the recognition and support of survivor leadership in the migration system in Ethiopia.

There was increased support to Ethiopian migrant women workers in Kuwait. The Ethiopian workers group in Kuwait, supported by en.v. and Sandigan with funding from the Freedom Fund, has been managing increased numbers of cases and working more closely with the Ethiopian embassy to set up improved systems of follow-up with and provide support for migrant domestic workers. Further information on the impact of their work is detailed in the following sections of this report.



HOTSPOT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Hotspot Objective: Prevent the exploitation of Ethiopian migrant domestic workers going to the Middle East

Progress towards hotspot objectives

1 *Building community understanding of safer migration*

Fifty-two community bylaws against offenses linked to trafficking have been created by 163 Iddir, income-generating activities (IGA) and community conversation groups in Amhara. These provisions hold members accountable for engaging in any illegal activities under Ethiopia's anti-trafficking law, Proclamation 1178. They also mandate leaders to educate their communities about safer migration and related topics, a key pillar towards sustainability of the work of partners in communities thus far. These bylaws disrupt the networks of irregular brokers and give community members a way to report issues without having to go to the authorities themselves.

Anti-trafficking school clubs. The African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN-Ethiopia) has recorded a 35% decrease in the dropout rate from schools in which it has supported anti-trafficking clubs in the last two academic years. Dropouts were determined to be a proxy indicator for irregular migration in many of the communities where they work. Initially, concentrating time and resources on the anti-trafficking clubs and peer mentoring aimed to reduce dropout by 5%, so this unexpected success validates the importance of this key preventative approach.

2 *Improving functioning of the migration system in Ethiopia, such as supporting government responses, promoting fair and transparent recruitment practices, and strengthening law enforcement actions*

Institutionalisation of recruiter monitoring by the Addis Ababa City Bureau of Labour and Skills (AA BOLS). Partners CVM and Hiwot Ethiopia have worked closely with the Ministry of Labour and Skills (MOLS), the Ministry of Justice and the AA BOLS to incorporate regular monitoring of recruitment agencies into their activities. Agencies are monitored on key responsibilities as defined in Ethiopia's overseas employment law (Proclamation 1246). On average, 150 companies are monitored per quarter, with those that require improvement being referred to partners for further training. Monitoring has also supported investigations of corruption and trafficking, as reported by state media.

Better monitoring leading to 120 enforcement actions (recruitment license revoked, court judgments/orders) made against non-compliant recruitment agencies. For example, CVM supported the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in a case of an agency requesting payments from eight migrants (USD 459-1652) to support their migration. As charges for recruitment fees are illegal under overseas employment regulation 923/08, the license was revoked and the heads of the organisation were fined.

Twenty-two convictions for trafficking offences were supported during 2024 through work with migration partnership coalitions. However, monitoring and reporting of cases was hampered in the second half of the year as security forces focused attention on the continued intra-state conflict in Amhara. ANPPCAN-Ethiopia supported the establishment of the coalition against human trafficking in Woldia city, enhancing collaboration among government offices and creating a clear action plan to sustain awareness and response efforts.

There was collaboration between shelters and government offices to improve outcomes for returnees in government shelters. Agar Ethiopia, supported by the Freedom Fund, has trained government shelters on the shelter reintegration model to enhance government's ability to provide effective and consistent support to vulnerable individuals within shelters and transit centres. The lack of follow-up budget on the government side and the de-prioritisation of shelters in Addis Ababa have undermined some of those efforts.

Strengthening the capacity of civil society actors to influence and hold the government accountable

Furthering policy development. MOLS has established a task force to lead and conduct an assessment of conventions relevant to labour laws, as part of the effort to ratify ILO workplace violence and harassment Convention Nos. 189 and 190. The ratification of such convention would contribute to improve conditions for work within Ethiopia that can both support more women to claim their rights in situations of abuse and put the onus on more employers to ensure protected workplaces, so decreasing push factors for women to migrate. This decision is the culmination of cross-thematic efforts led by SM partners with participation from CDW partners like BCSG and MCDP.

MOLS has signed an MoU with CVM Ethiopia and completed an assessment study on the employment situation of domestic workers (DWs) in six regions. CVM has been assigned to the working group to support tasks related to the legal framework of DWs. The federal government has approved a standardised national contractual agreement for local domestic workers, paving the way for greater protections for DWs both in Ethiopia and for Ethiopians in domestic work abroad.

Increased visibility and recognition for survivor-led organisations. Four SLOs received grants to support their community work and develop their organisations in the latter half of 2024. Alongside these grants, the Freedom Fund mobilised the SLOs to create a survivor-led organisation coalition that includes all four supported SLOs, as well as ANDINET (Domestic Workers Association) and ANI CSO (founded by a former member of Mesawat in Lebanon).

Returnees associations, initially supported by partners are advocating for themselves in Amhara. For example:

- The Hayik Town Returnees Association has supported 275 members to access microfinance, legal aid and training for its members, as well as advising local government on reintegration of survivors. The work of this group has enabled 33 women to access loans. The group has also persuaded local government to provide space for more than 50 businesses to be operated by the association's members.
- Two survivor-led associations under PADeT successfully lobbied their local MOLS to provide urgent support for returnees, resulting in 12 returnees receiving social and economic assistance.

SLOs were supported by partners to join the Migration Partnership Coalition, the main federal body overseeing trafficking and smuggling.

Agar Ethiopia has developed manuals that align with the curriculum provided by MoLSA to offer pre-departure orientation through the survivor's alliance members. Additionally, they created flyers outlining the terms of travel and overseas employment for the survivor's alliance members to distribute to potential migrants.

Increased support from workers groups in Lebanon and Kuwait to Ethiopian workers at risk or in situations of exploitation. In 2024, the Ethiopian workers group in Kuwait that the Freedom Fund has supported since 2023 has increased its mobilising and response capacity in support of migrant workers' rights. Through its hotline, the group received 1,230 calls during the year and opened up 440 new cases, with 72% of those cases successfully resolved. Almost 40% of those cases concerned labour issues and unpaid salaries. More than a third (35%) of all new cases were under police prosecution, and almost half of those were for women fleeing rights abuses (absconding according to the Kuwaiti and Lebanese legal framework). Through this process, the workers' group has been strengthening its relationship with the local authorities and the Ethiopian embassy in particular.

The group also rolled out an awareness campaign in June 2024 to provide information in the Amharic language to Ethiopian domestic workers about the relevant laws, as well as give visibility to the resources and services offered to the Ethiopian migrant community (such as the hotline). The goal is to make migration law more easily comprehensible for members of the Ethiopian community, which ideally will encourage women to file complaints at early stages when they see their rights being violated.

In Lebanon, Mesewat provided emergency support to 520 migrant workers in the last quarter of 2024. Those workers were primarily displaced Ethiopian women who had been pushed out into the streets of Lebanon after being evicted from their places of work or rejected from shelters that were being prioritised for Lebanese citizens during the war. Mesewat was able to reach out to desperate community members who were not necessarily “visible” to traditional aid actors. They conducted rapid assessments of needs and oversaw food distribution in different areas where migrant workers had been identified, taking part in an inter-agency coordination group led by IOM. Mesewat referred 25 Ethiopian domestic workers for repatriation by IOM and actively mobilised to defend the rights of migrants, using collective grassroots platforms like the “Voices of the Unseen.”

3 Improving access to and quality of reintegration services for returnees

Provision of comprehensive shelter support for returnees/survivors in Addis Ababa. Approximately 6,800 people accessed services through the PEMS and Thrive programs, with 346 women and children provided with access to shelter. Two partners, Agar Ethiopia and BPDO, run shelters where they provide a wide range of services to women to enable their sustained reintegration. Provision of these services requires strong relationships with more than 20 health care facilities to treat psychological and medical needs.

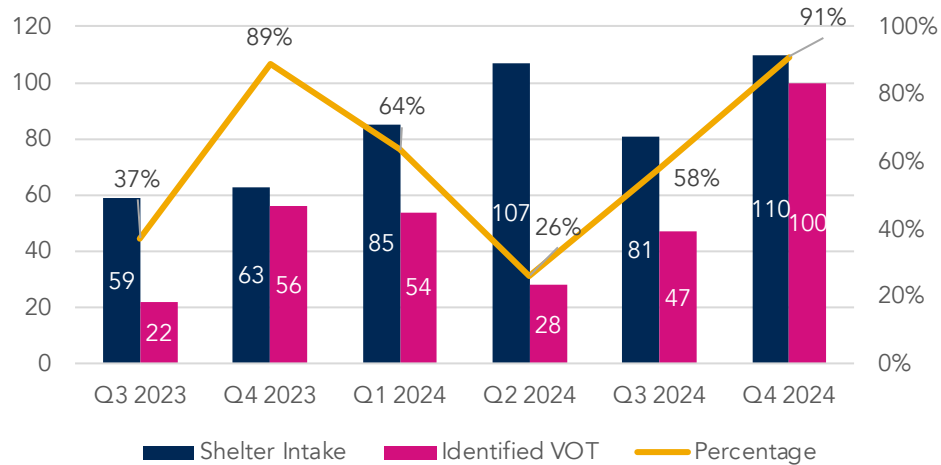
Continued mass deportation of migrant workers from Saudi Arabia. In 2024, the Freedom Fund supported Agar Ethiopia and BPDO in providing non-financial items and cash assistance for 500 women mass deportees from KSA (about 103,000 were deported during the year). The support offered immediate relief for their basic needs but also assisted in their reintegration process by providing the necessary items to restart their lives in their

communities. This type of support acts as a preventative measure against re-trafficking and exploitation by addressing immediate vulnerabilities and reducing the risk of falling back into precarious situations.

Shelter partners continue to use the Victim of Trafficking tool to assess all adult women entering shelters. During 2024, 60% on average met the criteria for trafficking survivors; however, the majority of women prefer not to pursue a legal case despite the offer of support. The graph below shows the variation per quarter in those received by shelter and those who meet the criteria of trafficking survivors. This data were presented to the National Partnership Coalition in November to advocate for improved timelines for legal proceedings.



Safer Migration



Reintegration and follow-up. Reintegration services from shelters supported 457 women and children in 2024. Follow-up after six months from both BPDO and Agar Ethiopia shows at least a third of women are either employed or running a business. To decrease the cost of seed grants, Agar Ethiopia has successfully managed to partner with microfinance institutions to support entrepreneurship among women returnees.

Vocational training and alternative livelihoods for returnees/survivors. This year, more than 1,000 women completed vocational training through either PEMS or Thrive programs. Of those, 660 (including 108 reintegrated from shelters) earned a new income or started a microenterprise. The Freedom Fund continued supporting a formal employment scheme in Addis with private service providers who provided training and long-term follow-up support to 288 women returnees. Coaching and accompaniment support remain critical to the economic success of returnees, through both partner intervention and peer group support. Self-help groups have been particularly useful in Amhara as both a financial and social safety net.



Challenges

In the last quarter of 2023, a new state of emergency (SoE) was declared in Amhara, due to expire in February 2024. However, by the end of 2024, the state emergency provisions and limitations were still in force in some districts, limiting partners' ability to host community conversations, find suitable operation training facilities and refer prospective migrants to active recruiters. The SoE also led to a reduction in migration partnership coalition attendance and reporting, affecting data collection and service referral for intercepted migrants, those who faced trafficking and recent returnees trying to access services.

For multiple partners working on vocational training and sustainable livelihoods, the conflict and violence has reduced the number of businesses in region, particularly in industrial parks, as well as the availability of microfinance, making the situation more challenging for those participants who have received training and seed grants and are trying to support themselves. To mitigate the situation, our partner CIFA held a meeting with stakeholders of the public-private partnership platform it operates to build critical will and commitments from businesses and government.

Addis Ababa City Corridor Project. Large informal settlement clearances and landscaping of existing infrastructure has forced a large number of people to relocate to other areas of the city. This has particularly affected PADeT whose Watch Groups reported a significant reduction in the number of families in the areas where they work. The clearances have also led to the breakdown of established communities, with Iddir groups reporting their members, including committees, are now too spread out to administer. The clearances have not received critique from mainstream media, but non-governmental sources⁶ report that there has been socio-economic cleansing in the centre of Addis Ababa in favour of small wealthy upper middle class families, as well as lack of compensation for those removed, inadequate provision of new social housing, and social housing lacking basic facilities like running water and electricity as well as proximity to transport and markets.

SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

In 2024, the community of practice (CoP) among safer migration partners contributed to stronger collaboration and mutual support. For example, partners leading advocacy efforts used the CoP to better coordinate their influencing work with the National Partnership Coalition. Through the CoP, they shared resources and aligned their strategies, resulting in more effective advocacy outcomes.

The CoP also served as a platform to enhance referral pathways between partners, improving access to shelter services for women survivors and returnees.

Additionally, partners addressed shared challenges in training International Private Employment Agencies. A key concern raised was the lack of participation from recruitment agency representatives. Partners collaboratively discussed solutions and agreed to route invitations through the Ministry, aiming to boost engagement from recruitment agencies. In Amhara, partners also used the CoP to raise common concerns and agree on a coordinated way forward. One issue highlighted was threats faced by community facilitators following successful discussions on safe migration. Partners such as BPDO reported these incidents to the police, who then provided protection to the facilitators.

6 See: <https://addisinsight.net/2025/02/07/gazanchis-the-gentrification-of-addis-ababa-disguised-as-urban-renewal/> and <https://addisinsight.net/2025/02/07/gazanchis-the-gentrification-of-addis-ababa-disguised-as-urban-renewal/>.

CASE STUDY

“Rise above adversity and contribute positively to society”

Hawa Yimam, a 27-year-old woman from the Habiru district of Ethiopia, embodies resilience and determination. After enduring four challenging years in Saudi Arabia, she returned to her home country, filled with hopes of reintegration and a successful future. However, the transition proved to be more difficult than she had anticipated.

During her time abroad, Hawa faced numerous hardships that deeply affected her sense of dignity and self-worth. Upon returning to Ethiopia, she found herself struggling to reintegrate into her community, grappling with the stigma of being a returnee and facing a lack of viable opportunities. Her childhood home, which once felt familiar, became a space of uncertainty as she sought stability and support from her family.

In a fortunate turn of events, Hawa was selected for ANPPCAN-Ethiopia’s income generating activities (IGA) seed support program. This initiative aims to encourage and support people like her by providing vocational skills training and resources to foster sustainable livelihoods. With a renewed sense of purpose, Hawa embraced the training with enthusiasm and commitment, determined to turn her life around.

Upon completing her vocational training, Hawa received 18,473 Ethiopian birr, which she wisely invested in purchasing four goats. Drawing on the knowledge and skills in animal husbandry she acquired from the program, she dedicated herself to the responsible care and management of her goats. Her efforts paid off, as she successfully bred the animals, resulting in four offspring. Today, Hawa proudly owns a total of eight goats, symbolizing not just her hard work, but her capacity to thrive.

But Hawa’s journey didn’t stop at her personal success. Recognizing the importance of sharing her experiences, she became a resource for her community. Hawa actively engages in conversations about the dangers of unsafe migration, using her story as a cautionary tale. She emphasizes

the significance of safe migration practices, hoping to prevent others from enduring the challenges she faced.

Through peer-to-peer discussions, Hawa inspires those around her, proving that transformation is possible even after adversity. Her commitment to education and community support has made her a role model, demonstrating that one person’s journey can ignite hope in others.

Hawa Yimam’s success story serves as a powerful testament to the impact of vocational training and IGA seed support provided by ANPPCAN-Ethiopia. Through her hard work and determination, she has not only improved her own life but has also become a beacon of hope for her community. Her journey is a shining example of how individuals can rise above adversity and contribute positively to society, transforming their challenges into opportunities for growth and inspiration for others.

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

The Freedom Fund report “Between Hope and Hardship,” focusing on the experiences of Ethiopian domestic workers still living in the Gulf countries, was published in May 2024 and can be found in [here](#). An accompanying blog can be found [here](#).

A new study by New York University and the Freedom Fund explores the experiences of Ethiopian women before they depart for domestic work in the Middle East, highlighting that their vulnerability to exploitation begins even before they leave their home country. [Link here](#).

The Thrive Pilot Program Evaluation was published in August 2024. The Thrive pilot program enrolled 240 women returnees who had previously worked as domestic workers in the Middle East and were unable to find work upon returning to Ethiopia. Data collected at the end of the pilot period showed that 93% of the participants went on to start on-the-job training, 80% remained in employment for at least three months and 68% were still in employment after six months. [Link here](#).

IMAGES

Saudi returnees, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. ©UNICEF Ethiopia/2013/Ayene	Cover
Luggage to be loaded onto a bus of Saudi returnees, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. ©UNICEF Ethiopia/2013/Ayene	Page 1
A group of Saudi returnees prepare to go home. ©UNICEF Ethiopia/2013/Ayene	Page 4
Frealem, a returnee migrant from the Middle East, holding eggs from her chicken coop in Legetafo, Oromia region, Ethiopia. ©Genaye Eshetu/The Freedom Fund	Page 5
Hana, a returnee migrant from the Middle East, in the classroom where she takes vocational skills training in hairdressing in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. ©Genaye Eshetu/The Freedom Fund	Page 5
Samrawit, a returnee migrant from the Middle East, at the Agar shelter. ©Genaye Eshetu/The Freedom Fund	Page 7
Samrawit, in the classroom where she takes her food preparation skills course. ©Genaye Eshetu/The Freedom Fund	Page 8

VISION

Our vision is a world
free of slavery.

MISSION

We invest in frontline organisations
and movements to drive a measurable
reduction of modern slavery in high-
prevalence countries and industries.

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