



# PRE-DEPARTURE

Information Needs of Migrant Workers in  
the East and Horn of Africa-Gulf Corridor

BACKGROUND REPORT



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

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

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## ACRONYMS

ADD	Abu Dhabi Dialogue
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUSCO	Australian Cultural Orientation
BLA	Bilateral Labour Agreement
BLMA	Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement
CAR	Central African Republic
CIOP	Comprehensive Information and Orientation Programme
COA	Canadian Orientation Abroad
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCIC	Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
EHoA	East and Horn of Africa
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GFMD	Global Forum for Migration and Development
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JLMP	AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa
MIDA	Migration for Development in Africa
MIFOTRA	Ministry of Public Service and Labour
MINAFFET	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development
MOLPSHRD	Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource Development
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoPSLE	Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Employment
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPFA	Migration Policy Framework for Africa
NCM	National Coordination Mechanism
NEA	National Employment Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NITA	National Industrial Training Authority

PAO	Post-Arrival Orientation
PDO	Pre-Departure Orientation
PEO	Pre-Employment Orientation
PRO	Pre-Return Orientation
RCA	Rwanda Community Abroad
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TaESA	Tanzania Employment Services Agency
ToT	Training of Trainers
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAERA	Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

In the last couple of decades, increasing numbers of nationals from the East and Horn of Africa (EHoA)<sup>1</sup> are leaving their countries of origin to seek employment opportunities in the Gulf States of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Often facing difficult circumstances such as unemployment and underemployment, and in some cases, political instability and the adverse effects of climate change in their countries of origin, migrant workers from the EHoA leave for the Gulf for the promise of economic opportunity. However, many migrant workers who make the journey face significant challenges throughout the labour migration cycle; from recruitment through to return. From learning about job opportunities in the Gulf through private employment agencies, brokers and family and friends, to preparing for departure, and managing post-arrival adjustment, migrant workers from the EHoA can face exploitation, abuse and discrimination during their journey, particularly those who migrate through irregular channels. This exploitation is often enabled by both a critical lack of information and an abundance of misinformation throughout the labour migration cycle.

Over the course of the labour migration cycle migrant workers typically lack access to timely and accurate information. Insufficient access to key information heightens existing vulnerabilities for migrant workers, who often must depart for the Gulf with little or no information about their rights, labour laws, diplomatic and consular support, cultural norms, access to redress in case of grievances, and in many cases, even their places of employment or residence. Information asymmetry is among the most pressing challenges that migrant workers from the EHoA face in migrating safely to the Gulf States for employment (Fernandez 2013, Malit & Naufal 2016).

This report aims to better understand the information ecosystem in which migrant workers find themselves, and the information gaps they may contend with at the pre-departure stage of the labour migration cycle. To do so, this report assesses the information needs of EHoA migrant workers preparing to depart for the Gulf. Against the backdrop of what is described as an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration, this report presents an overview of existing pre-departure information, programmes, good practices and common challenges, and puts forward targeted evidence-based recommendations. Its findings will be of interest to a wide range of stakeholders in the EHoA-Gulf labour migration cycle, including governments, embassies, civil society organizations (CSOs), private employment agencies, development partners and migrant workers themselves in both countries of origin and countries of destination.

**Note:** For the purpose of this report, EHoA comprises the following countries from the subregion that were included in this mapping: Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

## COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

This report is framed by the Comprehensive Information Orientation Programme (CIOP) approach of harmonizing the information migrant workers receive at four key stages of the labour migration cycle:



**Pre-Employment Orientation (PEO):** Equips prospective migrant workers with information to support well-informed decision-making processes on foreign employment and provide accurate information on safe and ethical recruitment.



**Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO):** Supports outgoing migrant workers to ensure their departure process is safe while also providing information on the upcoming journey, adjustment period and how to access support and assistance.



**Post-Arrival Orientation (PAO):** Provides newly arrived migrant workers in the country of destination with information regarding national labour laws, sociocultural norms and practices, workplace expectations and good conduct.

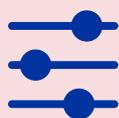


**Pre-Return Orientation (PRO):** Helps prepare returning migrant workers before leaving the country of destination, with useful information to support their access to social protection schemes, skills development opportunities and related resources.

Within the CIOP approach, this report is informed by key guiding principles for harmonized and tailored orientation:



**Harmonized** between countries of origin and destination to ensure that the information provided is accurate and relevant.



**Tailored** to distinct information needs and custom-made for specific labour migration corridors and industries.



**Timely** to deliver relevant information at the most appropriate point during the labour migration cycle.



**Responsive** to different learning needs, taking into account gender considerations and dimensions of possible vulnerability.



**Rooted in a multi-stakeholder** approach involving prospective and current migrant workers, employers, training institutions, CSOs, migrant associations and governments of countries of origin and destination.

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is structured into three parts: This report is structured into three parts:

- **Part One: Background** provides an overview of labour migration trends between the EHoA and the Gulf States. Focusing in particular on African countries of origin, this chapter explores key institutions, legal frameworks and policy measures that contribute to fostering enabling environments for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.
- **Part Two: Pre-Departure Orientation in the East and Horn of Africa** assesses migrant workers' pre-departure information needs and presents a country-by-country overview of PDO, differentiating between those with and those without more formal approaches to the design and development of PDO.
- **Part Three: Key Findings and Recommendations** provides key findings and tailored evidence-based recommendations that target a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, embassies, international organizations and civil society in countries of origin in the EHoA.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (ABRIDGED)

While the 10 countries in focus present a diverse range of challenges and opportunities, our research for this report identified some common trends across the subregion:

- For the most part, **pre-departure information remains fragmented** and most countries in the EHoA are yet to develop a formal approach to the provision of PDO.
- In place of PDO programmes, outbound **migrant workers tend to rely on brokers, unlicensed recruitment agents and their personal networks** for pre-departure information, possibly putting them at greater risk of exploitation and abuse.
- In countries that have adopted a more formal approach to the provision of pre-departure information and PDO – including Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda - **the Government tends to shape the information landscape, while private employment agencies play the role of key PDO provider.**
- Commitment to the provision of pre-departure information correlates strongly with broader efforts to strengthen labour migration policy and **foster an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.**
- Where formal programmes have been established, **PDOs tend to assume as their audience** outbound migrant domestic workers, at times, at the expense of other skill levels and job categories.
- Amidst a growing consensus around the critical importance of timely and accurate information, **countries in the EHoA are working closely with international organizations and collaborating across borders** to learn from each other's experience in designing and developing PDO.

These subregional trends speak to a range of key findings and recommendations, which, given the diversity of challenges across the EHoA, have been categorized as follows:

- All countries in the EHoA.
- Countries with formal PDO initiatives (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda).
- Countries without formal PDO initiatives (Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania).

## ALL COUNTRIES IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

**Key Finding: A consensus has emerged around the critical importance of harmonizing labour migration between the EHoA and the Gulf States**



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin should consider closely collaborating with countries of destination, and in relevant cases, transit countries, to ensure synergy and accuracy of information over the course of the labour migration cycle. Orientation programmes across all four stages of the labour migration cycle – PEO, PDO, PDO and PRO – should be designed and developed collaboratively by key stakeholders in both countries of origin and countries of destination to ensure that information provision is harmonized and responsive to the needs of migrant workers.

**Key Finding: PDO is a key feature of an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration**



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider PDOs as a key component of broader efforts to foster an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration, which includes strengthening formal communication channels and sources of information related to labour migration, regulating the recruitment industry to promote ethical recruitment and strengthening coordination on labour migration with Gulf countries of destination. Strong labour migration policy and bilateral partnerships between countries of origin and countries of destination are crucial to ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration.

**Key Finding: Critical data gaps exist in the EHoA-Gulf labour migration corridor**



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin should consider prioritizing strengthening data collection in the labour migration corridors between the EHoA and the Gulf States. This should include building national capacity to collect, manage and disseminate official migration statistics and develop dedicated migration data strategies targeting labour migration corridors between the EHoA and the Gulf States. Better partnerships between countries of origin and countries of destination on data collection could lead to more effective evidence-based PDO programming. Keeping in mind the principle of 'leaving no one behind', migration data strategies in these corridors must include irregular migration.

**Key Finding: There is a lack of awareness about labour migration to the Gulf in the EHoA**



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider employing an information ecosystem approach and undertaking dedicated sensitization and awareness campaigns on labour migration to the Gulf at both national and local levels. Grassroots campaigns – encompassing television, radio and the Internet - can spread awareness on the risks of using unlicensed recruitment agencies, and emphasize

the importance of pre-departure information in general, and PDO in particular. Given that most prospective migrant workers are young and get their information from their personal networks and the Internet, social media campaigns would be particularly effective in spreading awareness about formal channels of migration to the Gulf. Dedicated efforts should be considered to ensure outreach to rural populations who are often far removed from centralized government initiatives, typically in large urban centres.

**Key Finding: Existing PDO in the EHoA typically prioritizes women migrant domestic workers**



**Recommendation:** While governments in the EHoA should continue to prioritize women migrant domestic workers and ensure the provision of dedicated PDO tailored to the particular challenges they could face, they should also consider designing and developing PDO that caters for the full range of occupations and skill levels common in the EHoA-Gulf corridor.

## COUNTRIES WITH FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES

**Key Finding: Existing PDO does not currently reflect the multi-stakeholder nature of labour migration**



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider adopting a multi-stakeholder whole-of-cycle approach to the design, development and implementation of pre-departure orientation programmes. Recognizing the complexity of the information landscape, governments should include CSOs, NGOs, diaspora groups and representatives from countries of destination in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of PDOs. In particular, returnee migrant workers with experience in the Gulf should be recognized as critical influencers in the information ecosystem, and should be consulted on the design, and included in the delivery, of PDO.

**Key Finding: PDO and pre-departure training are often conflated**



**Recommendation:** While adding PDO to existing pre-departure training programmes might prove practical in some contexts, it is important to recognize and make clear the distinction between the two. Pre-departure training (which is concerned with competence and preparing outbound migrants for work in the Gulf) and PDO (which focuses on rights and responsibilities) are complementary and should both be incorporated into the practical design and delivery of comprehensive pre-departure programmes.

### Key Finding: The design and delivery of PDO would benefit from becoming more migrant-centric



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider embracing a migrant-centric approach that puts migrant workers at the heart of the design and development of PDO, with respect to both content and delivery. While PDO benefits a wide range of stakeholders in both countries of origin and countries of destination, first and foremost they should be conceived around the practical needs of outbound migrant workers. In terms of content, PDOs should be tailored to specific countries of destination and to particular skill levels and industries. In terms of delivery, PDO needs to be widely accessible for all outbound migrant workers, removing as many barriers to participation as possible. They should be delivered in local languages to ensure comprehension, and special provisions should be made to ensure outreach to outbound migrant workers coming from rural settings. In the case of women migrant workers, particular attention must be paid to ensure PDO is gender sensitive. While efforts to enhance the provision of timely and accurate information are critically important, they must be responsive to the needs of migrants, and make sure not to impose criteria and requirements so strict that irregular channels are perceived as more appealing.

### Key Finding: There is limited monitoring and evaluation of the impact of information on labour migration outcomes



**Recommendation:** Governments should incorporate a rigorous monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning system to better understand the information needs of EHoA migrant workers and the impact of PDO. Such a system should include a set of tools, including regular and targeted information needs surveys, pre- and post-PDO surveys and interviews with information users. Information and awareness campaigns should be monitored on a regular basis and enhanced based on insights gained from continuous evaluations.

## COUNTRIES WITHOUT FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES

### Key Finding: Most countries in the EHoA are yet to develop PDO



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin in the EHoA should continue working on developing formal PDO in partnership with key stakeholders. To ensure standardization of information, governments should consider making PDO mandatory for all outbound migrant workers. Informed by global good practices and the principles of accessibility, relevance and impact, EHoA countries may wish to leverage existing resources and programming to tailor PDO to their national contexts. In contexts that currently lack the resources or capacity to provide formal PDO, governments can consider exploring a range of efficient and cost-effective initiatives, including developing formal information channels and providing pre-departure information services, such as websites and literature that address key information needs.

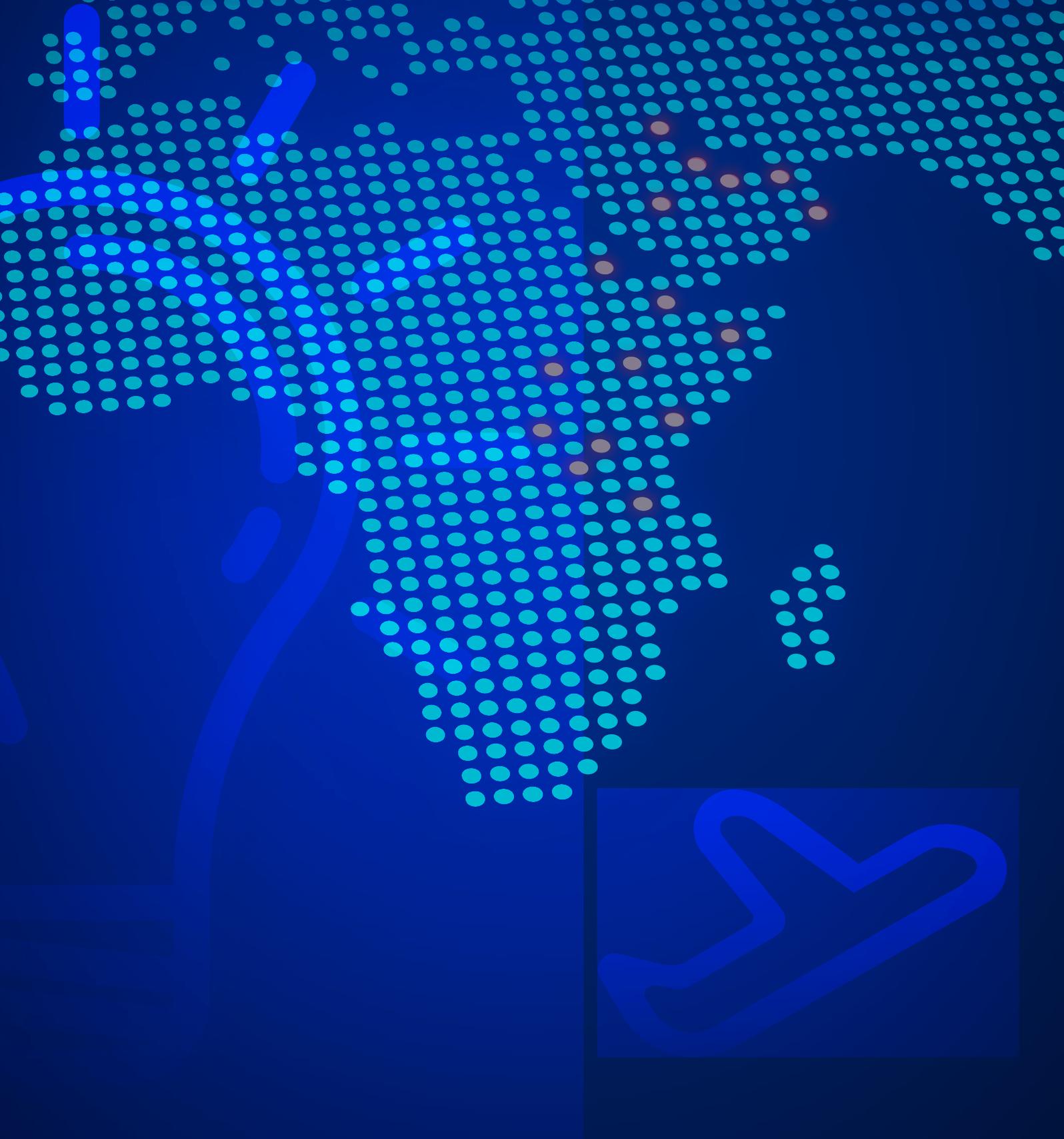
**Key Finding: Countries in the EHoA share a range of common challenges and can benefit from enhanced regional collaboration**



**Recommendation:** Governments in countries yet to develop PDO should consider leveraging regional experience and expertise and should look to emerging good practices in the design and development of PDO. In addition to collaborating with countries that have already developed PDO, governments should consider working closely with international organizations that have extensive expertise in the design and development of PDO curricula and programmes in the EHoA. Regional and interregional platforms can serve as venues for the exchange of good practices and can enhance regional collaboration and solidarity around the protection of migrant workers.

# BACKGROUND

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## INTRODUCTION

Growing numbers of migrant workers from the East and Horn of Africa (EHoA) are leaving their countries of origin for the promise of better economic opportunities in the Gulf States. While African countries of origin such as Egypt and Sudan have traditionally seen the most migrants making the journey to the Gulf, recent trends have seen higher numbers of migrants from the EHoA, and countries like Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda in particular (IOM 2020). Amongst other factors, this trend can in part be ascribed to the growth of the domestic sector, which also accounts for increasing numbers of women migrants. This trend has been furthered by a shift in demand away from domestic workers from Asian countries of origin due to rising wages.

Despite wide-ranging labour migration reforms, migrant workers in EHoA-Gulf corridor can find themselves contending with deceptive recruitment practices, contract substitution, confiscation of personal documents, poor occupational and workplace safety, and, in the case of women migrant domestic workers in particular, gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Due to a range of factors – including a general lack of pre-departure orientation (PDO), high levels of irregular migration, and the relatively recent history of migration from the EHoA to the Gulf States – migrant workers from the EHoA are often unable to access timely and accurate information and can find themselves vulnerable to a range of unscrupulous practices. This vulnerability is in part at least a by-product of the lack of timely, transparent and accessible information at critical points throughout the labour migration cycle. This report will focus on the pre-departure stage.

Research has shown that the provision of accurate, comprehensive and timely information can not only serve to mitigate a range of risks that migrant workers face over the course of the labour migration cycle but can also serve to empower migrant workers and contribute to their overall well-being and that of their families. This report aims to better understand the information ecosystem in which migrant workers find themselves, and the information gaps they may contend with at the pre-departure stage of the labour migration cycle. To do so, this report assesses the particular information needs of EHoA migrant workers preparing to depart for the Gulf States of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Against the backdrop of what is described as an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration, this report presents an overview of existing pre-departure information, programmes, initiatives, good practices and common challenges, and puts forward targeted evidence-based recommendations. Its findings will be of interest to a wide range of stakeholders in the EHoA-Gulf labour migration cycle, including governments, embassies, CSOs, private employment agencies, employers, trade unions and workers' organizations and migrant workers themselves in both countries of origin and countries of destination.

**Note:** For the purpose of this report, EHoA comprises the following countries from the subregion that were included in this mapping: Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

## INFORMATION

The central importance of the provision of timely and accessible information in the labour migration cycle has long been recognized. In addition to governments around the world developing innovative approaches to disseminating and making readily available key information for migrant workers at different points of the labour migration cycle, information itself has emerged as a key theme in international migration discourse. *The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (2006)*,<sup>2</sup> for example, highlights the importance of:

- Providing information to employers' and workers' organizations concerning the rights of migrant workers (10.9).
- Disseminating information on trafficking to warn potential victims of its dangers and raise public awareness on the issue (11.8).
- Facilitating migrant workers' departure, journey, and reception by providing, in a language they understand, information, training and assistance prior to their departure and on arrival concerning the migration process, their rights and the general conditions of life and work in the country of destination (12.1).

More recently, the *Global Compact on Migration* (2018)<sup>3</sup> dedicated one of its 23 objectives to the theme of information. Five actions are laid out under Objective 3 - *Provide accurate and timely information at all stages of migration* - including:

**(a)** Launch and publicize a centralized and publicly accessible national website to make information available on regular migration options, such as on country-specific immigration laws and policies, visa requirements, application formalities, fees and conversion criteria, employment permit requirements, professional qualification requirements, credential assessment and equivalences, training and study opportunities, and living costs and conditions, in order to inform the decisions of migrants.

**(b)** Promote and improve systematic bilateral, regional and international cooperation and dialogue to exchange information on migration-related trends, including through joint databases, online platforms, international training centres and liaison networks, while upholding the right to privacy and protecting personal data.

**(c)** Establish open and accessible information points along relevant migration routes that can refer migrants to child-sensitive and gender-responsive support and counselling, offer opportunities to communicate with consular representatives of the country of origin, and make available relevant information, including on human rights and fundamental freedoms, appropriate protection and assistance, options and pathways for regular migration, and possibilities for return, in a language that the person concerned understands.

**(d)** Provide newly arrived migrants with targeted, gender-responsive, child-sensitive, accessible and comprehensive information and legal guidance on their rights and obligations, including on compliance with national and local laws, obtaining of work and resident permits, status adjustments, registration with authorities, access to justice to file complaints about rights violations, as well as access to basic services.

**(e)** Promote multilingual, gender-responsive and evidence-based information campaigns and organize awareness-raising events and pre-departure orientation training in countries of origin, in cooperation with local authorities, consular and diplomatic missions, the private sector, academia, migrant and diaspora organizations and civil society, in order to promote safe, orderly and regular migration, as well as to highlight the risks associated with irregular and unsafe migration.

The critical importance of orientation programmes has also been advocated for in Africa. In 2018, for example, governments in Africa adopted the *Migration Policy Framework for Africa* (MPFA) and its *Plan of Action* (2018 – 2030). To fulfil commitments under the MPFA, Member States are recommended to, for example:

- Provide access to accurate information on labour migration at pre-departure and post-arrival stages, including terms and conditions of work, remedies and access to legal advice in the event of violations.
- Provide comprehensive socio-economic, psychological, legal, and orientation services to returning women and girls, before, during and after the returning process, with the aim of facilitating their reintegration. Provide access to complaints/reporting mechanisms that protect women against reprisals, identify and address coercion and abuse and ensure safe and sustainable reintegration, including services to recognize and certify the skills and competences of returning women and girls.
- Promote the integration of migrants into host societies, including through public information and education campaigns, in order to prevent xenophobia, foster mutual cultural acceptance and ensure that the rights of migrants are respected and protected.
- Promote informational/educational campaigns to raise awareness about the gender dimension of migration among migrants, those affected by migration, and policy makers and personnel involved in migration, especially in the managing of the migration process.

In October 2019, the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP), gathered African ambassadors in Addis Ababa to discuss labour migration to the Gulf States. During this meeting, discussions were held on the need for a more integrated approach to address challenges for African migrant workers to the region, including diplomatic and consular support and access to information throughout the migration cycle. The need to adopt a common position and speak with one voice to ensure the protection of African workers was underlined.

Furthermore, article 7(a) of the *AU Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers* calls for AU Member States to **“Strengthen the capacity of [our] regional and national systems to provide free and accurate information about migration to migrant workers and members of their families that is gender responsive and includes information about the general working and living conditions in countries of destination, immigration laws and policies, terms and conditions of work, and access to legal advice and remedies in a manner and language that can be readily understood.”**

Following the *High Level Regional Ministerial Forum on Harmonizing Labour Migration Policies in East and Horn of Africa* in January 2020, a *Communique and Call to Action Priorities (2020-2023)* was signed by participation of the 11 countries within the EHoA (including the 10 countries covered in this report and Sudan). Included in this important communique were some emerging priorities that resonate with the key findings and recommendations of this report:

- Advocate for cooperation on diplomatic, consular and labour attaché services in key labour destination countries.

- Strengthen national statistical institutions and data collection mechanisms as well as cooperation on exchange and analysis to inform policies and labour migration governance, including for effective development, drafting, negotiation and implementation of BLMAs and their monitoring and evaluation.
- Improve remittance data, and leverage the potential impact of remittances on social and economic development.
- Establish interstate collaboration on diplomatic and consular assistance for migrant workers in particular in countries where some states don't have diplomatic representation; while at the same time promote and support the role of diasporas in assisting migrant workers and protecting their rights in vulnerable situations.
- Cooperate towards establishing a common platform for engagement with the Gulf Cooperation Council on labour migration.
- Promote access to justice by strengthening consular services and posting labour attaches, for effective protection of human rights of migrant workers in destination countries, as part of addressing impunity, provide remedies and ensure the rule of law.

A year later, the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) emphasized the importance of coordination between countries of origin and countries of destination, looking to the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), and in particular the Comprehensive Information Orientation Programme (CIOP) as best practices (Bisong 2021). As dialogue on the critical importance of information and orientation continues to occupy a prominent place in regional platforms such as the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme on Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa (JLMP), there is a growing recognition of the need to develop orientation programmes throughout key stages of the labour migration cycle.

## THE CIOP APPROACH

IOM is a strong advocate for the provision of accurate, timely and relevant information. Since 2017, and building on its history of over 70 years providing tailored migrant orientation at the request of governments, IOM has been managing the implementation of the CIOP, tailored for Member States of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), which include countries in Asia and the Gulf. The CIOP was designed to strengthen the labour market integration and protection of migrant workers by addressing critical information gaps and misinformation among the migrant worker population arriving to the Gulf from ADD-participating countries of origin. To accomplish this, CIOP takes the approach (hereafter referred to as the CIOP approach) of harmonizing the information migrant workers receive at four key stages of the labour migration cycle:



**Pre-Employment Orientation (PEO):** Equips prospective migrant workers with information to support well-informed decision-making processes on foreign employment and provide accurate information on safe and ethical recruitment.



**Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO):** Supports outgoing migrant workers to ensure their departure process is safe while also providing information on the upcoming journey, adjustment period and how to access support and assistance.



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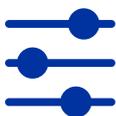
**Pre-Return Orientation (PRO):** Helps prepare returning migrant workers before leaving the country of destination, with useful information to support their access to social protection schemes, skills development opportunities and related resources.

To harmonize this information, the CIOP approach makes an investment in ensuring that the information provided along the labour migration cycle is based on evidence and is tailored to the specific technical and administrative needs of the migrant workers and both the countries of origin and destination.

### Guiding principles for CIOP



**Harmonized** between countries of origin and destination to ensure that the information provided is accurate and relevant.



**Tailored** to distinct information needs and custom-made for specific labour migration corridors and industries.



**Timely** to deliver relevant information at the most appropriate point during the labour migration cycle.



**Responsive** to different learning needs, taking into account gender considerations and dimensions of possible vulnerability.



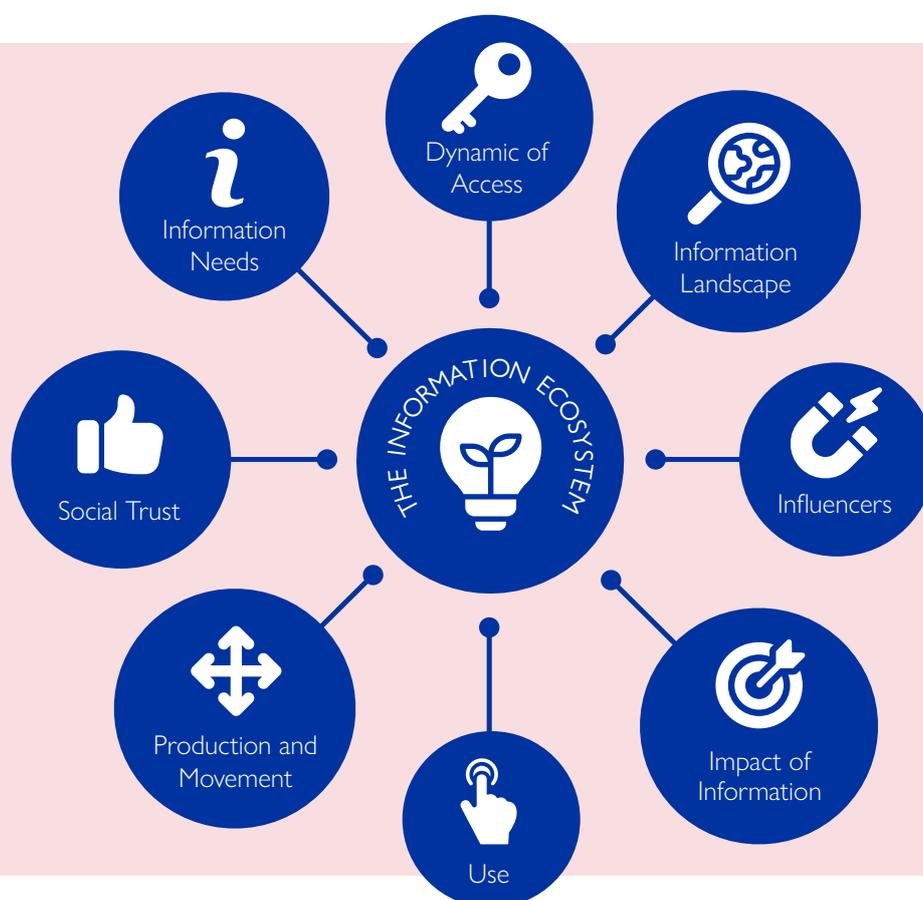
**Rooted in a multi-stakeholder approach** involving prospective and current migrant workers, employers, training institutions, CSOs, migrant associations and governments of countries of origin and destination.

## THE INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

This report is informed by an information ecosystem approach that seeks to better understand the range of actors, institutions, channels, policies and programmes through which information is produced, disseminated and consumed (see Figure 1). This includes formal initiatives such as PDO and training or State-supported information and awareness campaigns, but also informal information flows, such as community and kin networks, social media and word of mouth. Adopted from fields as diverse as environmental studies, media and public health – and often referred to as ‘information ecology’ – an ‘information ecosystem’ can be defined as a **“loose, dynamic configuration of different sources, flows, producers, consumers, and sharers of information interacting within a defined community or space”** (Susman-Peña et al. 2015).

Recognizing the inherently social nature of information, the information ecosystem approach privileges the lived experience of information users; in this case prospective EHoA migrant workers. It seeks to understand the channels through which information flows, and the various ways in which information, or a lack thereof, impacts the well-being of migrant workers. As Susman-Peña et al. note, **“Without the ability to access, create, disseminate, and share critical information about the world around them, individuals are incapable of understanding the challenges they confront, adapting to an evolving environment, nor ultimately, improving their lives”** (2015).

Figure 1: Information ecosystem



An information ecosystem can be understood in terms of eight critical dimensions, several of which will be elaborated throughout this report:

- **Information Needs**  
Information needs of the target community
- **Information Landscape**  
The organizations and infrastructures that underpin information production and flow
- **Impact of Information**  
The effect of information on individual and community well-being and its potential to foster positive change
- **Dynamic of Access**  
The range of power structures and dynamics that inform migrant workers' access to critical information
- **Production and Movement**  
The variety of types and sources of information available
- **Use**  
The factors that inform how relevant information is and how information is applied
- **Social Trust**  
Influence of social dynamics and trust networks on the flow and use of information
- **Influencers**  
The range of actors and institutions that influence how information is circulated and used

## METHODOLOGY

This report employed a qualitative research design, focusing primarily on data collection through in-depth semi-structured interviews with a wide range of stakeholders involved in the labour migration cycle in the EHoA-Gulf corridor. These included government officials, private employment agencies, PDO providers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CSOs, and migrant workers themselves, including women domestic workers. A total of 61 informants were interviewed across Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The research in the EHoA was complemented by simultaneous data collection for the *Background Report on the Post-Arrival Information Needs of Migrant Workers in the East and Horn of Africa-Gulf Corridor*, which included more than 26 key informant interviews across Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Desk reviews included analysis of labour laws, migration policies, bilateral labour agreements and recent labour migration trends and developments between the EHoA and the Gulf States. This research applied a gender-sensitive lens in terms of both the methodological approach and the substantive analysis undertaken, endeavoring to understand the particular challenges and information needs of women migrant workers in the Gulf. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a number of key informant interviews were undertaken virtually. Limitations included gaps in available disaggregated data on the flow of migrant workers in the EHoA-Gulf corridor.

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

# 1

**Part One: Background** provides an overview of labour migration trends between the EHoA and the Gulf States. Focusing in particular on African countries of origin, this chapter explores key institutions, legal frameworks and policy measures that contribute to fostering enabling environments for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.

# 2

**Part Two: Pre-Departure Orientation** in the EHoA assesses migrant workers' pre-departure information needs and presents a country-by-country overview of PDO, differentiating between those with and those without more formal approaches to the design and development of PDO.

# 3

**Part Three: Key Findings and Recommendations** provides key findings and tailored evidence-based recommendations that target a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, embassies, international organizations and civil society in countries of origin in the EHoA.

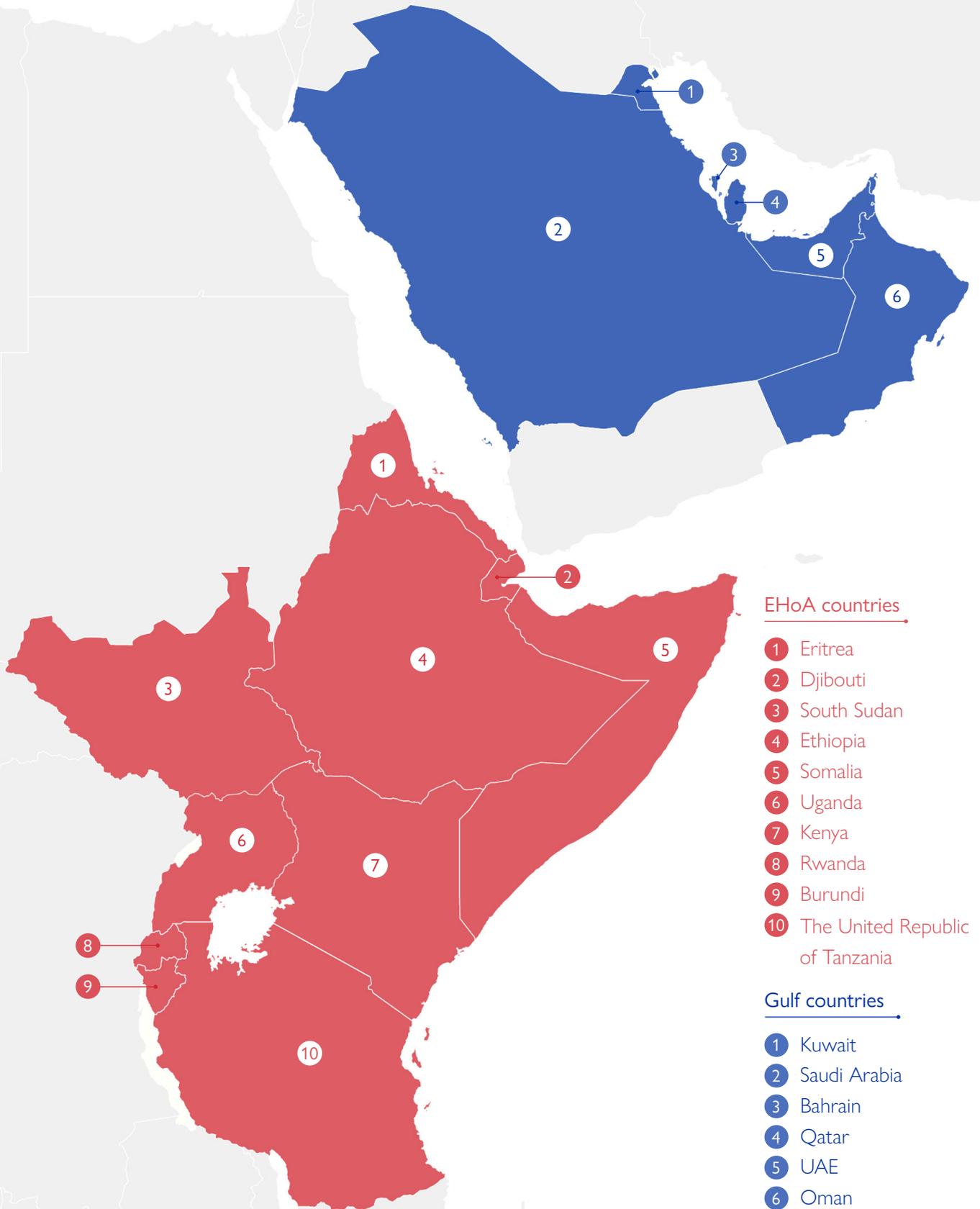
PART ONE

# LABOUR MIGRATION BETWEEN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA AND THE GULF STATES

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Figure 2: Map of the East and Horn of Africa and Gulf States



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

## INTRODUCTION

An abundance of natural resources in the Gulf has fueled rapid economic growth in the region. Gulf States have reinvested their wealth to undertake large-scale construction projects, including roads, schools, hospitals, malls and stadiums, and expand the institutions serving their citizens. Swift development in the region also depends on the large number of migrants employed in sectors like construction, agriculture and healthcare.

During the last two decades, the number of migrant workers in the Gulf has steadily increased. Today, the Gulf hosts one of the largest populations of migrant workers in the world, a status that is unlikely to change in coming years. The makeup of the migrant population, however, is shifting. In previous decades, the largest numbers of migrant workers in the Gulf came from South and South-East Asia. More recently, an increasing number of migrants from Africa, particularly Egyptians, have moved to the region, and migrants from the EHoA have followed suit. Though EHoA–Gulf migration has been occurring since the 1980s with the arrival of many Ethiopians to the Gulf, it is now found on a larger scale; there is a substantial number of Kenyan and Ugandan migrant workers, and Gulf States are also becoming popular destinations for migrants from other EHoA countries.

As numbers continue to rise, migrant workers in the EHoA-Gulf corridor continue to lack critical information throughout the labour migration cycle. At the pre-departure stage, particular information gaps around terms and conditions of employment, national labour laws, rights and responsibilities, grievance mechanisms and cultural norms, for example, are common. Before assessing pre-departure information needs and PDO in more detail in [Part Two](#), this chapter provides an overview of labour migration policy and trends in the EHoA. The 10 country profiles present a focused analysis on the current context, challenges and opportunities in Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, and are critical to understanding what this report describes as an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration. As this report will detail, PDO programmes are a key feature of such an enabling environment and often correlate strongly with broader efforts to strengthen labour migration policy and bilateral relations with countries of destination.

## REGIONAL CONTEXT OF LABOUR MIGRATION

With a total population estimated at around 221 million, the EHoA has a very young population, with more than 40 per cent aged 15 or below (UN DESA, 2021). Limited economic opportunities, political instability, conflict, natural disasters and climate change push large numbers of people to migrate from the region. Although migration flows in the EHoA are predominately internal and regional, labour migration to the Gulf is growing.

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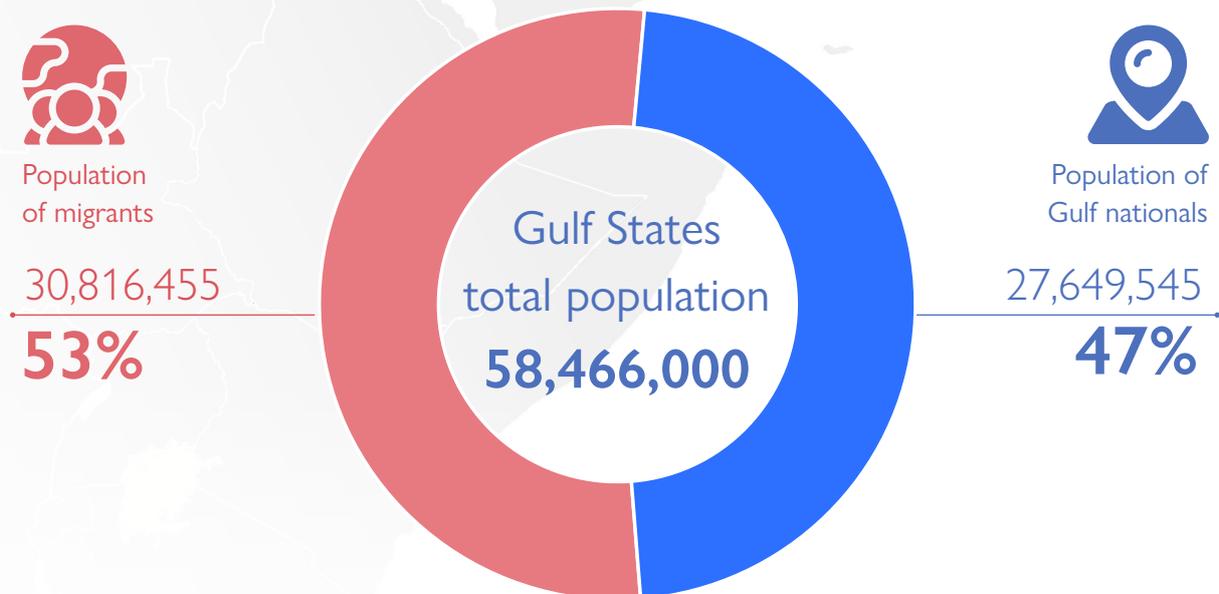
*It is quite phenomenal seeing how employment abroad changes people's lives. People build houses, they start businesses...I feel like we are doing some good for the society.*

*Private Employment Agency, Uganda*

”

Since the discovery of oil in the 1930s, the six Gulf States — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE — have depended heavily on imported labour. Migrant workers make up the majority – and in some cases, the overwhelming majority – of the Gulf States' total labour force (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). Representing more than half of the population in each Gulf State, migrants make up as much as 89 per cent in the UAE. Today, the Gulf States are home to approximately 31 million migrants, representing more than half of the region's total population and 8.3 per cent of global migrant workers (ILO 2021). In 2019, migrant workers in the Gulf sent home USD 115 billion in remittances; the UAE and Saudi Arabia are two of the top three remittance sending countries globally.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 3: Proportion of migrants in Gulf States (2020)**



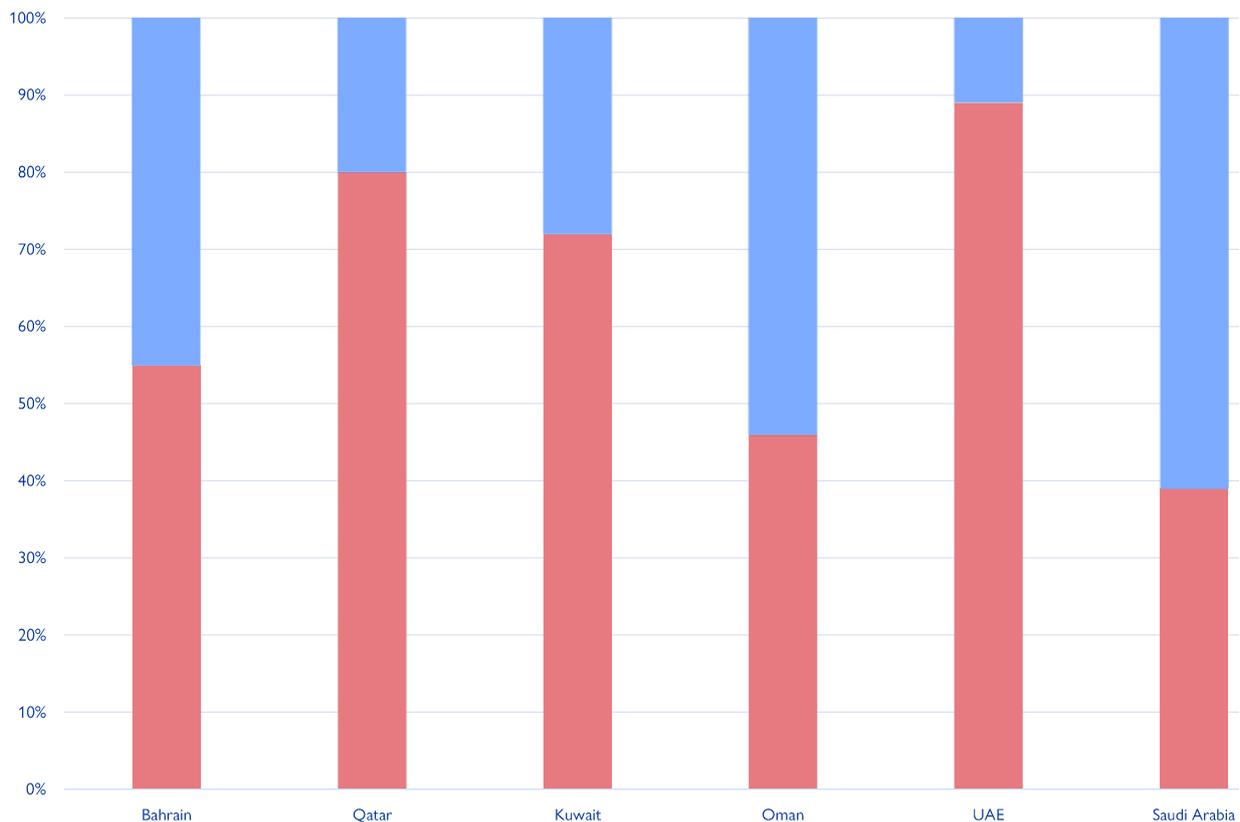
Source: UN DESA

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

Due to a range of different factors, including varying socioeconomic backgrounds and opportunities for training, many EHoA migrant workers are employed in low-pay sectors. The most common jobs of migrant workers include domestic workers, healthcare providers, construction workers and service jobs like waiters, porters and attendants. Migrant workers to the Gulf mostly consist of individuals or families seeking economic opportunities. Given the prevailing labour migration policies, most are issued one or two-year visas by governments of countries of destination. When possible, some renew their visas and extend their stay, while others return to their countries of origin. Much labour migration to the Gulf is circular, with many making numerous trips to the region and periodically returning home.

The demand for low-wage jobs in the Gulf has increased in the past decades. This trend is likely to continue as Gulf countries attract foreign investment, develop their human capital and host global events like Expo 2020 in Dubai and the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. However, Gulf countries are also aware of the need to diversify their economies and may move towards producing goods and services, as is emphasized throughout Gulf States' respective national Vision documents.<sup>5</sup> This shift is likely to change the levels and skills composition of labour demand, which could affect the demand in low-wage sectors like construction and, consequently, reduce migration flows.

**Figure 4: Breakdown of migrants and citizens in the Gulf States (2020)**



Source: UN DESA

As levels of labour migration in the Gulf have grown, so too have reports of migrant exploitation throughout the labour migration cycle. Deceptive recruitment practices, violation of contractual agreements and issues with employers surface frequently in the testimonies of many migrant workers. From learning about job opportunities in the Gulf through private employment agencies, brokers and even family and friends, to preparing for departure, and managing post-arrival adjustment, migrant workers from the EHoA can face exploitation, abuse and discrimination during their journey, particularly those who migrate through irregular channels. This exploitation is often enabled by both a critical lack of information and an abundance of misinformation throughout the labour migration cycle.

Since early 2020, migrant workers in the Gulf, as elsewhere, have also had to contend with the additional health and social risks brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. For many, due to shared living accommodations, there has been difficulties in practicing social distancing as well as navigating public health policies that restricted movement. As in many countries, low-skilled and low-income migrant workers bore the biggest brunt of the restrictions put in place to contain COVID-19, facing job loss, reduced wages and insecurity in income, housing and food. In addition, stigma towards migrant workers was reported across the region. The pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities and highlighted the precariousness of migrant workers' situation in the Gulf States.

## BILATERAL RELATIONS

Several African countries, including some in the EHoA, have imposed bans on labour migration to the Gulf States; for example, Kenya (2012-2013), Ethiopia (2013) and Uganda (2016). These bans often focus in particular on domestic workers; for instance, private recruitment agencies were banned by the Government of Kenya from sending domestic workers to the Gulf States between 2014 and 2017. As recently as September 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kenya recommended a temporary ban on Kenyan domestic workers traveling to Saudi Arabia for employment. On the other side, in 2019 Kuwait banned the recruitment of domestic workers from 23 African countries and two Asian countries, including six EHoA countries (Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Djibouti, Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania). Bans like these, while intended to better protect migrant workers, often have the unintended consequence of dramatically increasing irregular migration.

In recent years, however, EHoA governments and Gulf States have strengthened inter-State collaboration and cooperation on labour migration management, as is reflected in the increasing number of bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs). Djibouti has signed BLAs with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, while Kenya has appointed labour attachés in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE to monitor labour agreements and the well-being of their nationals, to take just two examples. Developments such as these, will be further outlined in this report, are important steps towards broader efforts to create an enabling environment within which PDOs can be developed to support migrant workers to thrive.

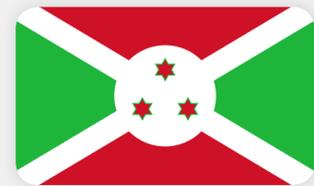
Compared to Asian countries of origin – that often have dedicated labour attachés, community welfare attachés (Pakistan), and social welfare attachés (Philippines) – EHoA embassies in the Gulf often still lack adequate resources to provide the same level of support and assistance to their nationals. This is unsurprising, given the much longer history of labour migration in the Asian corridors, and the relatively recent influx of EHoA migrant workers in the Gulf States. Although many migrant workers interviewed for this report highlighted that they would turn to their embassy or consular representation in the case of an emergency, many also noted a preference for seeking support within their community, with CSOs or official government authorities.

As countries in both the EHoA and the Gulf take steps towards reform and closer bilateral and multilateral engagement, migrant workers from the EHoA continue to arrive in growing numbers. At the heart of the challenges migrant workers face in coming to the Gulf is a lack of timely information that they could use to prepare and protect themselves throughout the labour migration cycle and to gain the most benefit out of their work experience. Limited access to accurate information, often coupled with an abundance of misinformation, leaves migrant workers vulnerable to predatory recruitment practices. This in turn informs migrant workers' decision-making; with some knowingly and others unknowingly bypassing formal recruitment processes and engaging in irregular migration (Fernandez 2017). The timely provision of comprehensive information related to safe and ethical recruitment can serve to support the empowerment of migrant workers to avoid dangerous and unethical recruitment actors and practices that would increase their risk to exploitation, abuse and trafficking.

## COUNTRY PROFILES

The following country profiles provide an important backdrop to the next chapter's overview of PDO in the EHoA. While this report points to several regional trends and makes observations across borders, assessing context-specific challenges in each of the 10 countries in focus in the EHoA is crucial to understanding how PDOs develop in different contexts. As is true in other labour migration corridors, PDOs do not develop in isolation, but typically feature alongside broader efforts to enhance labour migration policy and legislation and foster an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.

### BURUNDI



Many Burundians migrate abroad to access better livelihood opportunities – most are young and employed informally. Most Burundian migrants reside in other countries in the EHoA, with top countries of destination including the United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and South Africa. Many migrate irregularly and work in sectors like agriculture in the United Republic of Tanzania or Kenya.<sup>6</sup> Though there are no data on how many Burundians migrate to the Middle East, regional migration trends and reports from neighbouring countries suggest that more Burundians are choosing to migrate to the Gulf. Many are women domestic workers transiting through Kenya, Uganda or the United Republic of Tanzania with unlicensed recruitment agencies.

At the time of writing this report, there were no current data on how many Burundian migrants reside in Gulf countries, nor have any studies identified the common sectors of work of Burundians in the Gulf. However, regional trends and reports of Burundian migrants being intercepted on their way to the Gulf point to the increasing popularity of these countries of destination. According to one key informant, domestic work – which is mostly undertaken by women migrant workers - is the most common occupation of Burundian migrants to Gulf countries. Migration between Burundi and the Gulf is not direct. Migrants

transit through Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, often receiving help from unlicensed recruitment agents and intermediaries on their journey to Gulf countries.

Demographic shifts, political instability, climate change, and economic recession have driven many Burundians to migrate in recent decades. In 2020, the size of Burundi's diaspora was estimated to be just under 624,000 equivalent to 5.2 per cent of its population.<sup>7</sup> Remittances account for around 1 per cent of Burundi's GDP.<sup>8</sup> Burundi had an estimated GDP of USD 3.2 billion in 2020. Displacement shapes the migration landscape in Burundi; in December 2020, over 381,000 Burundians were living as refugees, having fled violent political unrest beginning in 2015.<sup>9</sup>

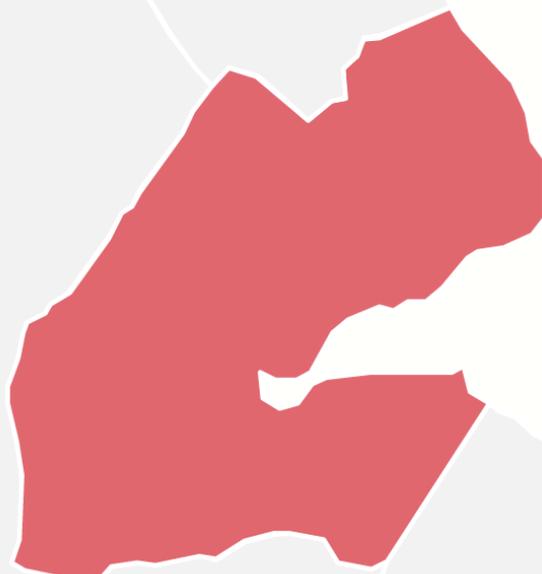
Economic growth further slowed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>10</sup> The lack of formal employment opportunities and a lack of diversified initiatives to integrate its large youth population into the labour market will continue to push Burundians to migrate. Regular channels for labour migration and sources of reliable information on migration are thus crucial.

Women make up a significant percentage of those migrating; in 2017, they represented 50.7 per cent of those abroad. However, data do not account well for irregular migration, which is more common among men.<sup>11</sup> Industrial and service sectors are dominated by the male population – women are usually employed informally in the agricultural sector in precarious conditions and receive low wages.<sup>12</sup> This pushes many women to seek employment abroad, especially as domestic workers, since pathways for migration in this sector are well established in neighbouring countries.

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Labour migration management falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Employment (MoPSLE) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since late 2018, Burundi has been in the process of developing a national policy on labour migration, a project which is set to conclude in 2021.<sup>13</sup> The MoPSLE has implemented programmes like Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) to engage members of the diaspora. However, programmes like these tend to focus on labour migration within Africa. As of October 2021, however, Burundi has signed two cooperation agreements with Saudi Arabia to facilitate the safe recruitment of Burundian migrant workers in different sectors, including domestic work, as well as enhance their protection.<sup>14</sup>

The Government of Burundi has established policies to prevent human trafficking. Its 2014 Anti-Trafficking Act established an action plan to criminalize sex and labour trafficking, hold traffickers and private recruitment agencies accountable for fraudulent recruitment, fund a hotline to assist victims of trafficking and conduct anti-trafficking awareness campaigns among other measures.<sup>15</sup> The Government of Burundi, in partnership with IOM, also started the Burundi Counter-Trafficking 2019–2022 project to streamline cooperation between government bodies, law enforcement and civil society to implement its anti-trafficking policy.<sup>16</sup>



Djibouti represents both a country of origin and transit for migrants to the Gulf. Most movements consist of EHoA nationals, mainly from Ethiopia and Somalia, transiting across the country, traversing the Bab al-Mandab strait, and heading onwards to Yemen and Gulf countries. An IOM study measuring migration at key points of transit found over 215,710 movements of migrants, mostly of Ethiopian nationality, in Djibouti in 2019.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, migrants and asylum seekers passing through Djibouti on their journey to the Gulf are at high risk of exploitation by traffickers. Their journey is dangerous – many have drowned while attempting to cross the Gulf of Aden, and face detention, violence and exhaustion while travelling through Yemen.<sup>18</sup>

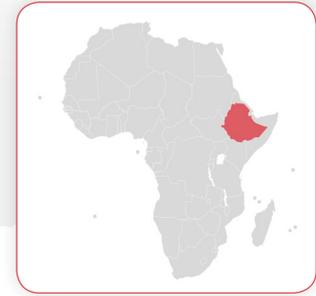
Djiboutians are pushed by high rates of poverty and unemployment, especially among youths. Djibouti's population is young and growing, with 73 per cent of Djiboutians under 35 years of age, and unemployment and underemployment among young Djiboutians is common, driving some to migrate abroad.<sup>19</sup> The main countries of destination for migrants from Djibouti are France, Ethiopia, Canada, Belgium and Saudi Arabia. There are no data on the number of Djiboutians living in Gulf countries, however, many are believed to be employed as construction workers, drivers and domestic workers.

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of migration legislation include the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training. In July 2021, a National Coordination Office for Migration was established to discuss and implement migration policy, which emphasizes the prevention of human trafficking and the protection of migrants.<sup>20</sup> In 2017, Djibouti passed decrees to streamline the asylum process and grant refugees greater access to public services and employment.<sup>21</sup> The 2016 Law No. 133 (On the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Illicit Smuggling of Migrants) mandated harsher

penalties for human traffickers.<sup>22</sup> In 2021, with the support of IOM, the Government of Djibouti launched a national strategy for the engagement of the Djiboutian diaspora, and later, its first National Strategy for Migration.<sup>23</sup>

Djibouti has signed BLAs regulating the employment of Djiboutian nationals with Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The BLA with Saudi Arabia, however, was halted due to reports of exploitation of domestic workers, and migrant workers under this agreement were repatriated. The agreement with Qatar allowed private agencies to recruit Djiboutian drivers and childminders to work in the country.



Ethiopians are migrating to the Gulf in increasing numbers, mostly due to high unemployment and underemployment rates. Climate disasters and conflict may add to migration push factors in coming years. Most migrants are young, and many are women. Most Ethiopian men migrants use irregular pathways to reach Gulf countries, while women mainly migrate through private recruitment agencies. As the number of Ethiopians abroad has grown, migration has increasingly shaped the country's society and economy. Estimates place the Ethiopian diaspora at around 3 million.<sup>24</sup> According to an IOM survey, an estimated 839,000 Ethiopians migrated after 2016.<sup>25</sup> The top destinations of Ethiopian migrants include the United States of America, South Africa, Yemen and two Gulf countries – Saudi Arabia and the UAE.<sup>26</sup>

Ethiopia is the fastest growing economy in the region, experiencing an average GDP growth rate of 9.4 per cent between 2010 and 2020.<sup>27</sup> However, income per capita remains low, and Ethiopia's growing youth population continues to overwhelm the national labour market (around 2 to 3 million people join Ethiopia's labour market each year).<sup>28</sup> As a result of demographic pressures combined with a weak labour market, its youth unemployment rate stood at 25.3 per cent in 2018, placing pressure on many of Ethiopia's young to find work elsewhere.<sup>29</sup>

The top countries of destination for Ethiopian migrants in the Gulf include Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait. Since 2016, most Ethiopians migrating abroad have been young persons, with 78 per cent between 15 and 29 years old. Between 2008 and 2013, nearly 300,000 Ethiopian migrants worked legally in the Middle East – the number of migrants in irregular situations residing in the region in those years is believed to be double.<sup>30</sup> Among migrants to the Gulf, the most common occupations are domestic workers, cleaners, labourers, construction workers, cattle keepers and security guards.<sup>31</sup>

More and more women are migrating from Ethiopia to the Gulf. National records show that most migrants from 2008 to 2013 were women, and rates of female migration continue to rise.<sup>32</sup> Since regular pathways

for domestic work, a highly gendered sector, are well established, women may be more likely to seek out licensed recruitment agencies. However, many women are also using irregular means to reach the Gulf.<sup>33</sup> Abuse and exploitation by traffickers, brokers and employers is commonplace. Recruitment fees are limited by law; however, on average, the fees illegally levied on migrants by recruitment agents and brokers represented nearly one-fourth of a migrant's yearly earnings.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, many face death, injury and arrest on their journey to Gulf countries.<sup>35</sup> Most take the Eastern Route through Djibouti or Somalia across the Gulf of Aden into Yemen to reach Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States.<sup>36</sup> Tens of thousands of migrants have gone missing on this journey, and many are unaware of these risks before departing.<sup>37</sup>

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Although Ethiopia does not have a labour migration policy, a preliminary draft is being developed. BLAs were reached with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar after the Government of Ethiopia lifted a labour migration ban to the Gulf.<sup>38</sup> This ban was imposed between 2013 to 2018, to prevent labour migration to Gulf countries like the UAE and Qatar, in an effort to curtail employer abuse and human trafficking.<sup>39</sup> This decision followed the deportation of more than 170,000 Ethiopians in 2013 and 2014 from Saudi Arabia after they were deemed to have been illegally residing in the country.<sup>40</sup> The Government of Ethiopia then fully established guidelines for the registration of private employment agencies, began developing pre-departure training materials, and set up private vocational training centres for migrants.<sup>41</sup>

*The Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016* aimed to safeguard the well-being of migrant workers by outlining the responsibilities of recruitment agencies and employers. It provides an overview of standard hiring procedures for three types of employment (public employment, agencies and direct employment); prohibits the employment of workers to countries without bilateral agreements; sets agency fee limits for workers during the recruitment process; prohibits the deployment of workers under 18 years of age; and allows the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA)<sup>42</sup> to draw up a model contract that includes provisions like wages, working hours and overtime pay.<sup>43</sup> The most recent amendments to the Proclamation were made in 2021.<sup>44</sup> Other relevant legislation includes the revisions to the *Employment Exchange Services Proclamation No. 632/2009*, which regulated the responsibilities of private recruitment agencies and improved monitoring mechanisms for these agencies, and the *Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Person and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation No. 909/ 2015* to investigate human trafficking cases and penalize traffickers.<sup>45</sup>

The main organs governing labour migration include the MoLSA, which decides on employment standards, supervises and licenses agencies and assigns labour attachés.<sup>46</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs engages in dialogue with countries of destination, monitors country of destination employers and oversees the work of labour attachés. Policy changes and lengthy bureaucratic procedures have contributed to an increase in the use of irregular migration pathways. A 2017 survey of returnees and migrants found that 83 per cent of Ethiopian migrants migrated irregularly.<sup>47</sup> Since migrants must be adults that in a lot of cases must have successfully completed a vocational training course, and gone through a lengthy recruitment process, many outbound migrants that cannot meet these qualifications opt to migrate irregularly.

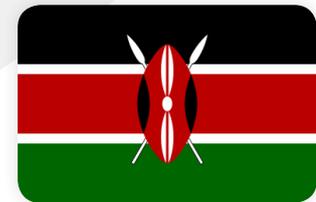
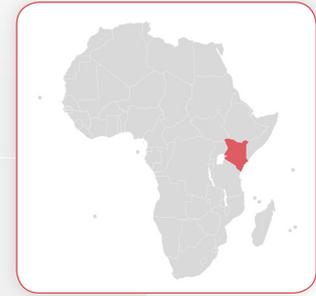

**ERITREA**


As of 2020, the Eritrea diaspora consisted of over 750,000 in a country with a population of just 3.5 million. Eritreans are driven to migrate due to limited domestic economic opportunities. The top countries of destination for Eritrean migrants include Ethiopia, Sudan, Sweden, Germany and the United States.<sup>48</sup> The Eritrean economy is reliant on remittances, which make up just over a 1.5 per cent share of its GDP. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Oman have also been noted as top countries of destination in the Gulf. The largest country of destination for Eritreans in the Gulf is Saudi Arabia, with nearly 100,000 migrants.<sup>49</sup> Many Eritrean migrants are young, in their twenties and thirties, and most have attended secondary school. Common occupations for Eritreans in the Gulf include domestic workers, traders and drivers.

For a range of reasons, including the illegality and tight Government control of labour migration in Eritrea, many migrate irregularly and transit through neighbouring countries like Sudan and Ethiopia. From there, they either search for employment or make plans to migrate onwards. Some have access to resettlement schemes and are subsequently relocated, mainly to Canada. While neighbouring countries host most Eritrean migrants and refugees, a growing number of Eritreans are migrating onwards. For example, in Ethiopia, despite gaining rights and increased access to education following the Refugee Proclamation of 2019, migrants often seek to migrate onwards to Europe, citing a lack of opportunities in refugee camps as a push factor.<sup>50</sup>

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Eritrea has neither labour migration policies nor institutions dedicated to migration management. Eritrea has no labour attachés or BLAs and does not permit the operation of private recruitment agencies. According to *Proclamation No. 17/1991 (Proclamation to Provide for the Collection of Rehabilitation Tax)* and *Proclamation No. 67/1995 (Tax Payment Proclamation for Eritreans in Diaspora Who Have Income)*, members of the diaspora must pay an income tax of 2 per cent to the Government of Eritrea.<sup>51</sup>



Most of Kenya's population is young, and its population growth rate is high (2.3 per cent in 2020). This indicates opportunities for Kenya – policies to strengthen access to education, training, health, employment creation and regular migration could enhance Kenya's demographic dividend. Kenya's urban population, which increased from 20 to 25.7 million people between 2005 and 2015, represents the largest source of potential migrants. Most rural–urban migration in Kenya is a response to high unemployment rates and the lack of a social safety net programmes. Many of those migrating from rural areas reside in informal settlements. More than half of urban Kenyans live in areas classified as slums, with very little access to education and health services. Youth unemployment and underemployment drive migration. Estimates from the Government of Kenya place the unemployment rate at approximately 7.4 per cent, with about 85 per cent of the unemployed younger than 35. This is recognized as a major development challenge of the country, driven by the incapacity of a rigid labour market to absorb the rapid growth in population.

Remittances increasingly support Kenyan livelihoods. In 2020, the size of remittances as a share of GDP was 3.1 per cent.<sup>52</sup> Given different socioeconomic characteristics and the varying opportunities for training provided by the Government and agencies, Kenyan migrant workers are usually found in low/semi-skill, low-pay sectors. The most common jobs of Kenyan migrant workers, highlighted by our key informants, include domestic workers, healthcare providers, construction workers, transport workers and other service jobs like waiters, porters and attendants. Most of the jobs that Kenyan migrant workers perform are gendered. For example, domestic work is for the most part performed by women, while the overwhelming majority of those working in construction are men.

Available information suggests that demand for migrant labour in Gulf countries has increased over the past decade. The number of Kenyan domestic workers to Gulf countries increased after 2013, when Ethiopia temporarily banned labour migration to these States.<sup>53</sup> In less than a year – between March 2019 and January 2020 – 29,448 Kenyan migrant workers were cleared to work in Saudi Arabia as domestic workers.

Furthermore, in 2021, the Government of Kenya signed BLAs to provide avenues for over 30,000 workers to go to work in Jordan, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.<sup>54</sup>

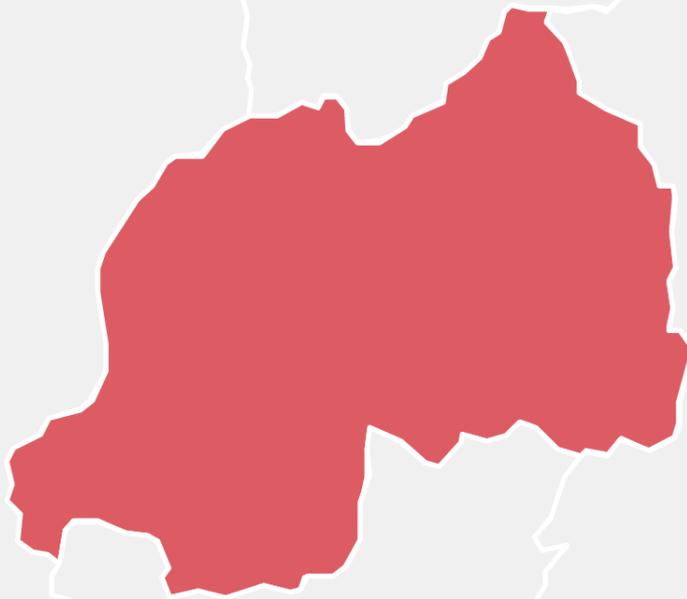
While many highly educated Kenyans migrate to Canada, Australia and Europe, Kenyans with lower education levels and fewer resources tend to migrate to Gulf countries for employment. Despite the Government of Kenya's efforts to encourage and monitor regular migration pathways, irregular migration from Kenya may be rising due, in large part, to the clandestine activities of dubious private recruitment agencies. The number of unlicensed recruitment agencies is said to greatly outnumber licensed agencies.<sup>55</sup> Irregular migration to the Gulf is predominantly male and skewed towards younger age groups, while regular migration channels are largely used by women who go through recruitment agencies.<sup>56</sup> The proportion of women migrants from Kenya to Gulf countries is also believed to be increasing, and the average age of these migrants is believed to be decreasing.<sup>57</sup>

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Several ministries are involved in migration governance in Kenya, including the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs negotiates BLAs and appoints labour attachés. Kenya's National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) engages several agencies on migration issues; it coordinates discussions on labour migration, with a special focus on migration to Gulf countries. Implementation of migration policy is fragmented, though efforts are underway to develop a common policy framework.

The Government of Kenya has appointed labour attachés in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to uphold the rights of Kenyan migrant workers in these countries of destination. These BLAs monitor labour agreements, the host labour markets and the well-being of Kenyan migrants. Kenya's BLA with Saudi Arabia ensures that Kenyan migrant workers are recruited through licensed agencies, sign an employment contract before departure and observe Saudi regulations and traditions. Kenya's agreement with Qatar commits to developing pre-departure training sessions for domestic workers and streamline recruitment processes for Kenyan migrant workers. The 2018 MoU between Kenya and the UAE mandates employers to provide a detailed employment offer to the worker, requires that job offers are registered with the UAE Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation and allows private recruitment agencies registered in the UAE to request migrant workers from licensed Kenyan recruitment agencies.

To regulate its large number of recruitment agencies, the Government of Kenya has implemented guidelines for the operations of private recruitment agencies, licenses them and publishes the names of licensed agencies on the website of the National Employment Authority. As of 2016, over 900 agencies in violation of regulations had their licenses revoked.<sup>58</sup> In response to reports of abuse and trafficking, the Government of Kenya also banned labour migration to Gulf countries in 2012; this ban was rescinded one year later.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, the Government of Kenya is establishing and piloting an oversight mechanism through which illegal and unethical recruitment practices of recruitment agencies are identified and reported.



Gulf countries represent increasingly popular destinations for Rwandan migrant workers. These migrants, mostly young, are pushed to go abroad by high rates of unemployment and underemployment and pulled by the possibility of higher wages in countries of destination. Migration represents an important element of the Rwandan economy and labour market. Large waves of out-migration began during the Rwandan Civil War, lasting from 1990 to 1994, during which over two million fled the country, mostly to neighbouring countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, Uganda, the Republic of the Congo and beyond, to Europe and North America. In 2020, the size of the Rwandan diaspora was approximately 588,500.<sup>60</sup> Remittance flows to Rwanda made up 2.3 per cent of the country's GDP in 2020.<sup>61</sup>

Immigration, emigration and the return of many Rwandans in the decades following the Rwandan Civil War have encouraged the Government of Rwanda to continue to develop a strong framework for sustainable migration, attracting nationals from other EHoA to the country for employment, mostly for higher-wage positions.<sup>62</sup> Rwanda grants mobility and access to social services to many refugees, mostly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).<sup>63</sup> Despite the Government of Rwanda's efforts to integrate refugees and returnees, foster closer ties with its diaspora, and promote skilled migration, less attention has been paid to Rwandan labour migration, especially that to Gulf countries.

Underemployment in Rwanda is significant, with many reliant on the informal economy and/or subsistence agriculture.<sup>64</sup> Rwanda is challenged in integrating many of its citizens, mainly youths, into the labour market. As part of its plan to become a middle-income country by 2035, Rwanda aims to create 1.5 million jobs by 2024.<sup>65</sup> However, Rwanda will be challenged by its high population growth rate, resulting from a high (though slowly decreasing) birth rate and declining death rate – its youth population is projected to increase from 2.2 million to 3.9 million in 2065.<sup>66</sup> Due to the precarity of the jobs available in rural areas, Rwanda has also experienced high rates of rural–urban migration, mostly to urban areas in and around Kigali.<sup>67</sup>

Exploitation and abuse connected to irregular migration are commonplace. Rwandan women, especially those in more vulnerable occupations such as domestic work, can face high levels of abuse.<sup>68</sup> Many Rwandan women, for example, were repatriated in recent years after having been sold as sex slaves or having worked for little to no pay.<sup>69</sup>

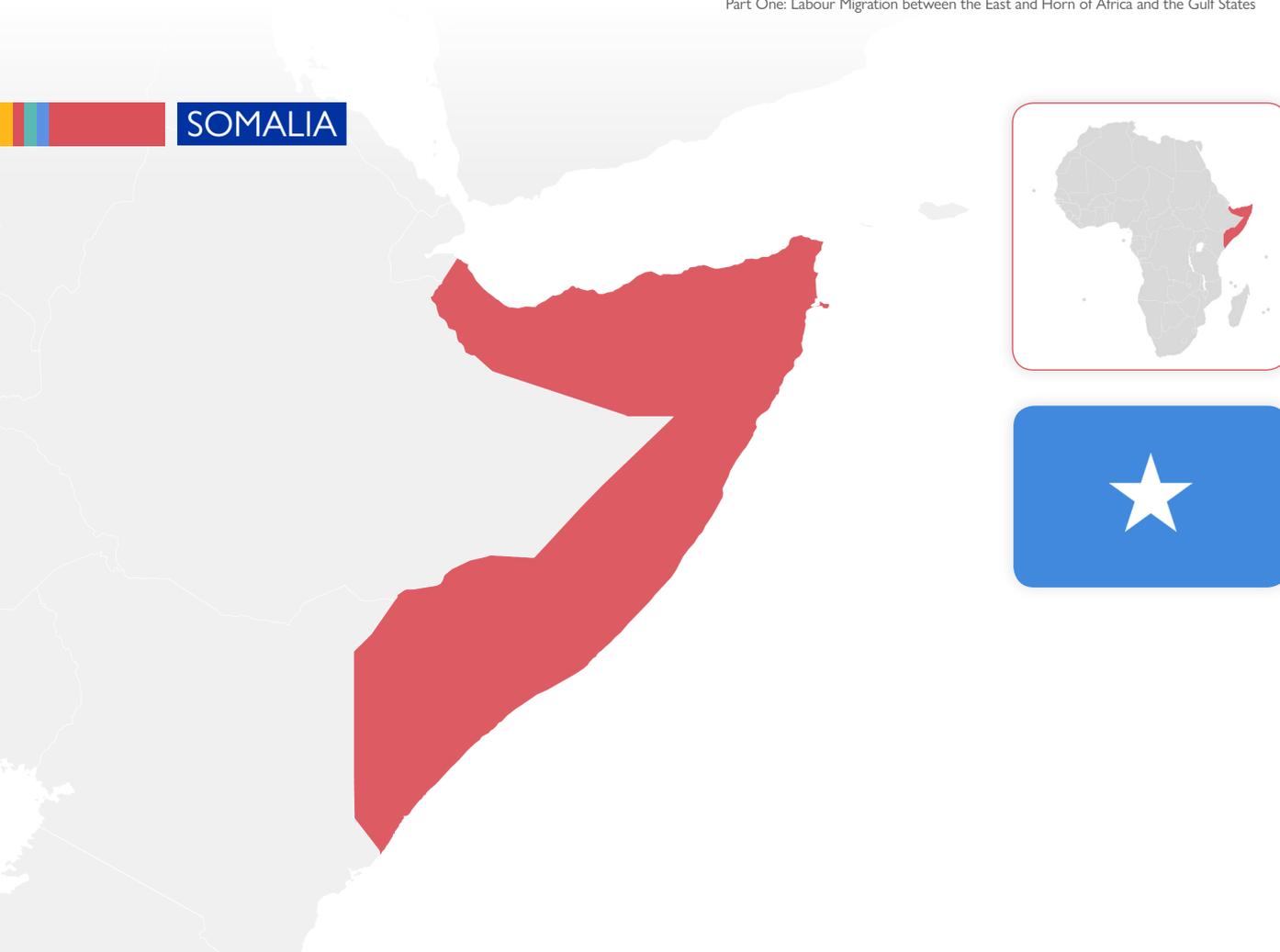
Irregular migration to the Gulf usually occurs through unlicensed recruitment agents and brokers in local communities that connect prospective migrants to smugglers that take them to countries of destination in the Gulf. Brokers approach Rwandan youths with a promise of a better life and higher wages in the Gulf. Migrants often pay a fee for their services and transit through countries like the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and/or South Sudan, where they are taken onward to the Gulf.

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The main organs involved in migration governance in Rwanda include the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA), the General Directorate of Immigration and Emigration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MINAFFET), the Rwanda Community Abroad (RCA) and the Rwanda Development Board (RDB). Private recruitment agencies in Rwanda are, at the time of research, only permitted to operate domestically.

Rwanda's National Labour Mobility Policy, developed in consultation with various stakeholders, provides a framework for labour migration governance. The main custodian of the policy is the MIFOTRA, while the RDB is charged with monitoring its implementation. The policy includes plans for the expansion the responsibilities of Rwandan diplomatic missions, protection of the rights of Rwandan migrants abroad, the development of guidelines for private recruitment agencies and the facilitation of PDO.<sup>70</sup> The National Labour Mobility Policy also acknowledges the importance of a gender-sensitive framework and seeks to address the vulnerability of women migrants.<sup>71</sup> The policy was approved by the Rwandan Cabinet in 2019, though regulations for its implementation have not yet been finalized.<sup>72</sup>

In 2019, Rwanda signed a MoU with the UAE permitting the recruitment of Rwandans by private-sector firms in the UAE.<sup>73</sup> The MoU also aims to raise awareness among Rwandan on migration expectations in the UAE. The MoU with the UAE has yet to come into force, and the Government of Rwanda is negotiating a similar agreement with Qatar.<sup>74</sup> Rwanda has appointed no labour attachés, however, they are included in the National Labour Mobility Policy.<sup>75</sup>



The number of Somali migrants living abroad continues to increase, more than doubling to around 2 million from 1990 to 2015. As a result of Somalia's protracted conflict, recurrent droughts and economic stagnation, Somalis have been internally displaced or pushed to seek employment abroad. Recent evidence suggests that an increasing number of low-wage Somali labourers are choosing to migrate to the Gulf. Somali migrant workers to Gulf States are mostly young, are not highly educated and often face unemployment and underemployment at home. As women's participation in the labour market has grown, Somali female out-migration has increased along with reports of abuse, exploitation of women migrant workers and human trafficking for sexual exploitation.<sup>76</sup>

Remittances represent a large share of Somalia's GDP and supplement the incomes of many Somali families. Remittances sustain the livelihoods of more than 40 per cent of Somalis – around 80 per cent of those collecting remittances receive them from only one sender, demonstrating a high level of vulnerability and dependence on earnings abroad.<sup>77</sup>

Somalis considering migration are increasingly attracted to the Gulf by employment opportunities and prospects to earn higher wages. Furthermore, Somalia is one of the key transit points of the Eastern Route. The Eastern Route, in which migrants from the Horn of Africa pass through Yemen, has also increased in popularity in recent years. According to the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, over 138,000 people crossed the Gulf of Aden to Yemen in 2019, significantly more than the 110,000 migrants crossing the Mediterranean to Europe that same year.<sup>78</sup> Since Somalia represents a transit country for other EHoA migrants, especially from Ethiopia, Somalis are exposed to more information from migrants on their journey to the Gulf.

Legal migration pathways remain a challenge – obtaining passports can require travel to Mogadishu or other big cities, and the lack of Gulf embassies and consular services in Somalia itself means that any formal

international travel can require a visit to a Gulf embassy in Nairobi (which necessitates a visa issued by the Kenyan embassy in Mogadishu). This, and the challenges highlighted above encourage irregular migration to Gulf countries.

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Migration policies in Somalia focus primarily on issues of immigration rather than outward migration.<sup>79</sup> The lack of initiatives targeting migrant workers, a particularly vulnerable subgroup, creates barriers to their social protection. A 2016 assessment of mixed migration governance in Somalia identified weaknesses in migration governance, including limited understanding of national and international migration frameworks among governmental actors, and inadequate financial resources.<sup>80</sup> Other challenges included technical capacity, a lack of long-term funding, and insecurity in southern and central Somalia.<sup>81</sup> A non-unified legal system limits the State's capacity to develop a cohesive response to migration issues.

No BLAs or multilateral agreements on the social protection of migrant workers have been agreed upon, however, Somalia has MoUs with Kuwait and Qatar, and negotiations are ongoing with countries in the Gulf and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Social protection laws do not directly reference migrant workers, though some laws may benefit them. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) is thus drafting a policy paper addressing the social protection needs of migrant workers and labour migration. This paper will clarify migrant workers' rights to insurance and ensure the protection of children affected by child labour and human trafficking, especially young girls. Moreover, the MoLSA cooperates with countries of destination to ensure that the rights of Somali citizens abroad are addressed. The Federal Government of Somalia recently appointed labour attachés in Kuwait and Qatar responsible for liaising with stakeholders to provide feedback on programmes, policies and initiatives and report on recurrent issues to be addressed in future initiatives. The Federal Government of Somalia plans to discuss possible agreements with other Gulf countries, which may include Oman, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.



## SOUTH SUDAN



Gulf countries are increasingly popular destinations for South Sudanese migrant workers, most of whom take irregular pathways, are employed in low-wage jobs and migrate repeatedly. The most popular occupations for South Sudanese migrants are drivers, domestic workers, construction workers, cargo handlers and security guards. South Sudan is one of the world's youngest countries, having seceded from the Republic of Sudan in 2011. Data on South Sudanese migrants are scarce, and many sources do not differentiate between migrants from South Sudan and those from Sudan. At the time of writing this report, no estimates could be found on the current size of the South Sudanese diaspora. However, remittances are estimated to constitute more than 35 per cent of the country's GDP, suggesting the substantial impact of migration on South Sudan's economy and society.<sup>82</sup>

Displacement shapes South Sudan's migration landscape. South Sudan's civil war, lasting from 2013 to 2018, forced more than four million people from their homes. Nearly two million South Sudanese became internally displaced, while another two million fled to surrounding countries.<sup>83</sup> Uganda hosts the largest contingent of refugees from South Sudan at over 900,000 followed by Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.<sup>84</sup> South Sudanese refugees and internally displaced persons often live in precarious conditions in camps, with many classified as food insecure. Despite the signing of a peace agreement in 2018 that put an end to South Sudan's civil war, many internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees have not returned to their home communities, believing a return to be unsafe due to ongoing local conflicts.<sup>85</sup> With few options for safe relocation or return, IDPs and refugees may decide to migrate onward.

### LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The main governing bodies of migration in South Sudan include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Department of Nationality, Passports, and Immigration; and the Ministry of Labour, Public Service, and

Human Resource Development (MOLPSHRD), including the Office of the Labour Commissioner, the Directorate of Labour and Industrial Relations, the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health, and the Directorate of Vocational Training. An NCM ensures inter-ministerial cooperation on migration issues.<sup>86</sup> While the Government is yet to appoint labour attachés or sign BLAs with Gulf countries,<sup>87</sup> the MOLPSHRD has drafted a policy framework on labour migration in 2018 and 2019 which has not yet been finalized.<sup>88</sup>

Central to South Sudanese labour policy is the Labour Act of 2017, which establishes a framework with minimum standards for employment and labour institutions, though not specific to labour migration.<sup>89</sup> However, it requires every South Sudanese working abroad to register with the Office of the Labour Commissioner before departure.<sup>90</sup> In addition, private recruitment agencies must be licensed by this office. To be licensed, all private recruitment agencies must state the benefits their recruits will receive from employment and demonstrate their knowledge of minimum employment requirements in South Sudan.<sup>91</sup> Licenses are issued for a validity period of two years. However, no mechanisms exist for monitoring or renewing the licenses of agencies. At the time of data collection for this report, only one agency was registered and actively deployed South Sudanese workers abroad, due to a lack of institutional capacity and monitoring mechanisms.<sup>92</sup>

The Government of South Sudan and non-governmental actors have established technical and vocational education and training (TVET) centres. Though not specifically for migrant workers, prospective migrants can attend training sessions for sectors like hospitality and metalworking and earn certifications. Training centres have their own certification processes, and courses are not yet standardized.<sup>93</sup>



Hosting the largest population of refugees and migrants from the EHoA, Uganda is an important country of origin, destination and transit. Ugandans, especially youths, increasingly migrate to Gulf countries, many to Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, pushed by high unemployment and underemployment, and pulled by the expectation of higher wages in the Gulf. While some migrate with licensed recruitment agencies, others migrate irregularly or with unlicensed agencies.

Though Uganda boasts significant economic development in the last three decades, it represents a country of origin for many migrants. There are few recent data indicating the true size of the Ugandan diaspora. However, in 2015, an estimated three million Ugandans resided abroad.<sup>94</sup> The top countries of destinations for Ugandan migrants include Kenya, South Sudan, Rwanda, the United Kingdom and the United States.<sup>95</sup> Remittances from the Ugandan diaspora support its economy, making up around 5 per cent of its GDP in 2017.<sup>96</sup> Poverty rates have halved from the early 1990s, accompanying improvement across development indicators like life expectancy and literacy rates.

Uganda's growing youth population, representing those under the age of 30, may be pushing working-age Ugandans to emigrate. In 2019, more than 75 per cent of Uganda's population was under the age of 30, posing challenges for the Government to fully integrate its youths into the workforce. This is evident in Uganda having one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2019. More than half of all young people (55 per cent) are employed in agriculture – earning low wages, they are vulnerable to poverty and climate shocks.<sup>97</sup> Many youths act as heads of household and are under financial pressure to support family members.<sup>98</sup>

Our respondents for this report noted that most migrants are young and migrate abroad in response to high youth unemployment and underemployment. The predominant pull factor was higher wages abroad, especially for work in sectors that require little professional training. Demand for workers in Gulf countries

includes trained professionals in engineering, construction, medical care and teaching as well as janitors, cooks, hotel staff, domestic workers and security guards.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) estimated that in 2021 around 40,000 Ugandans were living in the Gulf States – however, irregular migration may increase this number.<sup>99</sup> Gulf countries are increasingly popular countries of destination due to several factors, including their geographic proximity to EHoA countries and established recruitment flows – which lower the cost of migration – as well as high relative wages in countries of destination.<sup>100</sup> The increase in Ugandan migrants to Gulf countries may also result from tighter immigration restrictions in Western countries in recent decades.<sup>101</sup> Common destinations for Ugandan migrant workers in the Middle East include Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, many migrant workers lost their jobs, were stranded in Gulf countries and were subsequently repatriated, indicating the precarity of their work.<sup>102</sup>

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Migration governance in Uganda involves cooperation between several agencies and ministries. The MoGLSD plays the biggest role in overseeing labour migration. It is supported by the Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The MoGLSD works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to negotiate BLAs, vet private recruitment agencies in countries of destination and assist nationals in need of repatriation. The NCM for Migration was established in 2015 as an inter-agency platform to harmonize migration policy and is located at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Uganda has signed BLAs with Saudi Arabia (2015 and 2018) and is expecting to sign another with Qatar in 2021. It has also signed a MOU with the UAE (2019) that has not yet been implemented.<sup>103</sup> The Government of Uganda promotes BLAs as an approach to curb national unemployment. At the same time, they aim to better protect migrant workers by requiring employers to provide decent accommodation and benefits such as health insurance, a minimum wage and caps on working hours.<sup>104</sup> After reports of employer abuse, Ugandan authorities suspended its BLA with Saudi Arabia in 2016.<sup>105</sup> Some reports, though, point to the ban's ineffectiveness in preventing trafficking.<sup>106</sup> Flows continued to the Gulf as migrants transited through Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, and the ban was lifted in 2017.<sup>107</sup>



## UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



Economic and environmental factors are driving increasing numbers of Tanzanians to migrate to the Gulf. As a result, many find work in different low-wage sectors in Gulf countries. These migrants often arrange employment abroad through registered recruitment agencies; however, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has tightened restrictions on agencies after reports of exploitation. In recent years, this has contributed to many migrating via irregular pathways.

Though most Tanzanians migrate to other States within the East African Community (EAC), they are increasingly migrating to Gulf countries in search of better economic opportunities. They are usually employed in sectors like domestic work, construction and transport. The most significant Gulf countries of destination for Tanzanian migrant workers are the UAE and Oman.<sup>108</sup> Migration flows are connected in particular to Zanzibar's colonial and pre-colonial history. Arabs from Oman occupied the region starting in the sixteenth century and began returning to Oman in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>109</sup> Shared cultural and religious ties have facilitated migration flows of many Tanzanians, especially from Zanzibar, to Oman.

While there is no specific data on the exact number of Tanzanians residing in Gulf countries, regional trends and recent environmental and economic shocks suggest that labour migration is increasing. Officially, Tanzanian migrant workers must contact the labour ministries in Tanzania or Zanzibar, respectively, to process their applications to go abroad, but many violate this rule.<sup>110</sup> For example, a key informant from the Immigration Section of the Government noted that in 2020 nearly 500 migrants were returned to the United Republic of Tanzania by Oman Air after their stay in Oman was deemed illegal. Some Tanzanian migrants have been also acquiring passports and reporting that they will travel to Kenya – however, they later travel onward to the Gulf through Kenyan recruitment agencies.

## LABOUR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

There are no specific laws regulating the flow of migrant labour to Gulf countries. Before 2010, migrants seeking employment abroad submitted their work contracts from foreign employers to the Prime Minister's Office Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation to be granted travel documents. Since 2010, Tanzanian prospective migrants have been required to go abroad through a registered recruitment agency. However, instances of human trafficking and exploitation among recruitment agencies led the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to place tighter restrictions on agencies, such as banning the issuance of group passports.<sup>111</sup> They also implemented a two-year national Anti-Trafficking in Persons Action Plan<sup>112</sup> and annulled the licenses of around 70 recruitment agencies involved in human trafficking and smuggling.<sup>113</sup>

Another key institution is the Tanzania Employment Services Agency (TaESA), a State institution established in 2008 under the Prime Minister's Office Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability. It is responsible for providing recruitment and employment information, verifying standards of employment both in the United Republic of Tanzania and abroad, and conducting some pre-departure training sessions for outbound migrant workers.

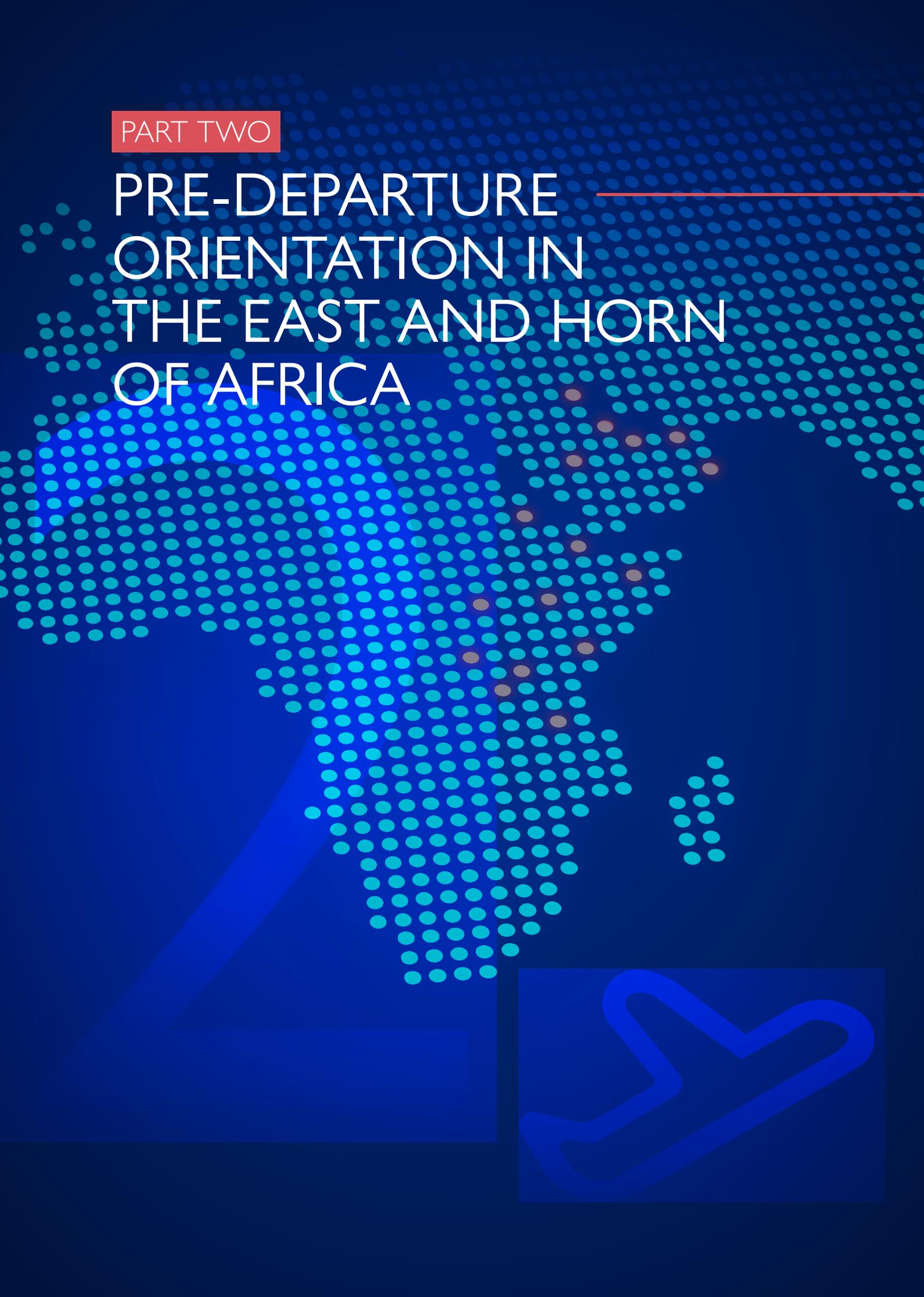
Since 2011, the Government has required employers to issue contracts that meet minimum employment conditions and guarantee a minimum salary. It has also implemented contract verification support at its embassies in the UAE and Oman.<sup>114</sup> The United Republic of Tanzania has signed BLAs with Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, however, access to social protection and other employment benefits in countries of destination varies depending on whether the countries of destination have ratified international laws protecting workers' rights. The Access to Information Act of 2016 requires Tanzanian government institutions in possession of information to provide that information to any citizen who demands it. This Act helps to ensure that employment contracts for Tanzanian migrant workers are valid, that they adhere to -countries of destination and Tanzanian labour laws, and that their provisions are fully understood by the employee.

From 2017 onwards, the TaESA has redirected those seeking employment abroad to use registered recruitment agencies. While the Government intended tighter regulations to institutionalize and formalize labour migration, their efforts have been counteracted by bureaucracy and lengthy procedures that have pushed migrants towards irregular migration. This may heighten their risk of falling victim to traffickers and smugglers. A study interviewing returnee migrant domestic workers in Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar in 2018 and 2019 found gaps between migrant workers' expectations and their experiences working abroad. Domestic workers were found to understand little of official migration processes and their labour rights. Most of these workers migrated without proper legal documents, and some misinformed labour immigration authorities about the nature of their travel and stay abroad.<sup>115</sup>

PART TWO

# PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA

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## INTRODUCTION

All the migrant workers interviewed for this report, who were either preparing to leave for or had returned from the Gulf, lacked key information. Many had a poor understanding of the labour laws in the country of destination, for example, and more still lacked a basic understanding of the nature of the work that they would be expected to undertake. Several returned migrants interviewed spoke of ‘culture shock’ and found working in the Gulf very difficult, particularly in the first weeks and months post-arrival. The majority of migrant workers interviewed for this report had experienced some form of exploitation, like deceptive recruitment practices, contract substitution or wage theft. While several had the benefit of some form of PDO, most of the migrant workers had relied on other sources for information on life in the Gulf.

Having provided an overview of challenges and opportunities in labour migration management and governance in the EHoA in Part One, this chapter will look more closely at PDO across all 10 countries against the backdrop of key information needs. While highlighting the important role played by governments and private employment agencies, this chapter also points to the need to better understand the broader information ecosystem within which outbound migrants find themselves. This will involve assessing both the information needs of outbound migrants and exploring the informal landscape within which they seek to satisfy those needs.

## INFORMATION NEEDS

The information needs of outbound migrant workers at the pre-departure stage are largely similar to those of migrant workers at the post-arrival stage; of course, the difference between the two stages is typically a matter of days. While pre-departure and post-arrival needs may share a lot of similarities, however, those same information gaps can have very different implications at different stages of the labour migration cycle. For example, our research found that at both pre-departure and post-arrival stages of the labour migration cycle, EHoA migrant workers typically have little information about the terms and conditions of their employment. While access to this information might encourage better decision-making and preparation at the pre-departure stage, however, learning for the first time about the expectations of their employer after having arrived in the country of destination leaves little room for changing course or having adequate time to digest new information. Learning about common forms of exploitation and abuse – such as contract substitution and wage theft, for example, at the pre-departure stage, can empower migrant workers to protect themselves from scrupulous recruitment practices. Learning about this for the first time at the post-arrival stage, however – as many migrants do – leaves most feeling powerless to pursue justice. Migrant workers, then, often have the same information needs at the pre-departure and post-arrival stages, but access to that information can have profoundly different impacts on the trajectory of the migrant workers’ experience depending on when it is provided.

There are a wide range of key areas in which EHoA migrant workers lack access to useful information at the pre-departure stage. The following list – although not exhaustive - captures some key information needs that emerged during conversations with migrant workers:



### 1) RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT WORK

#### **Terms and conditions of employment**

Most prospective and outbound migrant workers are not fully aware of the terms and conditions of their employment in the Gulf, and what implications those terms and conditions will have on their daily lives and their prospects for supporting themselves and their families back home. Migrant workers are typically unaware of what may be included in a standard

employment contract, for example, and in many cases do not even receive an employment contract. In some cases, recruiters will not be transparent on which country of destination they would be working in:

“

*[Sometimes] they don't even know which country they are going to. They're just told that the job is ready and that they will go to work in Arabic countries. So in the rich Middle East somewhere, usually Dubai, is when they now know that they are destined for Oman, Qatar or some other countries.*

*Director, Kenyan NGO*

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### **National labour laws and reforms**

Outbound migrant workers are typically not familiar with the national labour law and/or ongoing reform efforts (for example, a wage protection system or policies enhancing internal labour mobility), and what implications such efforts have on the rights and responsibilities of both employer and employee as well as opportunities. In many cases, this means that difficulties in accessing the most progressive provisions and protections available to them.

### **Rights and responsibilities**

Outbound migrant workers lack awareness around what is expected of them and what they are entitled to as employees. They are typically unaware of rules around working hours, periods of rest and annual leave, for example. Domestic workers in particular are often misinformed or lack accurate information about the consequences of absconding and leaving their sponsor without following regulations.

“

*The biggest challenge they face, is that they are not usually aware of the details of what entails the job that they wish to undertake. So this lack of awareness places them in a very precarious situation in the sense that they leave the country, some of them are not quite sure even which country they are going to...they are not aware of the contents of their contracts, circumstances of their work, the cultural context of their work and generally they find it difficult to.... they're basically not aware. That is the biggest problem.*

*Director, Kenyan NGO*

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## 2) THE LABOUR MIGRATION PROCESS

### Ethical recruitment

Prospective and outbound migrant workers are typically not aware of the processes that underpin their own recruitment or the obligations of various stakeholders throughout the cycle, and are therefore often unable to identify whether or not they have been, or could be, victims of unscrupulous recruitment practices. Furthermore, a lot of migrant workers interviewed for this report were not sure how to distinguish licensed from unlicensed recruitment agencies. While this information is encouraged to be included earlier in the process, ideally in pre-employment orientation (PEO), modules highlighting ethical recruitment can support participants in recognizing and reporting unethical practices they may have been exposed to, as well as assisting their engagement with partner recruitment agencies in countries of destination.

### Travel information

For many migrant workers making the journey from the EHoA to the Gulf, it is their first experience with international travel, and there are often a lot of anxieties around airport procedures, such as check-in and security. Migrant workers are often unsure of what documents they need to present at both departure and arrival, and worry about being able to navigate airport terminals, particularly if they are not comfortable with English and Arabic.

### Common forms of exploitation and abuse

In addition to broader considerations around ethical recruitment, prospective and outbound migrant workers lack insight into understanding and recognizing signs of exploitation and abuse. In many cases, some only learn that they themselves were victims months or years after the fact, when they often feel it is too late to seek redressal. This contributes to a culture of impunity in the recruitment sector, and results in a certain acceptance among migrant workers themselves that exploitation is part and parcel of the labour migration journey. Awareness of forms of exploitation and abuse is critically important at the pre-departure stage as it can potentially serve to mitigate negative outcomes by providing participants with clear information on recognizing situations of exploitation.

“

*It isn't easy to get money there. We suffer a lot. We work many hours a day. They openly tell you that you have to sweat before getting their money. You may be stopped in the middle of your meal to go and work. You may have finished all the assigned work, and suddenly you are obliged to wash a wall...*

*Burundian woman migrant domestic worker*

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### Immigration policies and visa rules

Although some EHoA migrant workers choose to deliberately circumvent visa rules, many make the journey to the Gulf without fully understanding the rules and regulations around visas and residency. It is not uncommon for migrant workers to arrive without the necessary doc-

umentation, or to overstay on a temporary visit visa, only to subsequently fall into irregularity, often without being aware of the implications of their status.



*Workers face several challenges in the process of preparing to travel as well when they arrive at the country of destination. The challenges include exploitation by unscrupulous recruitment agencies and cultural shock and language barriers on arrival in the country of destination. Also, they face challenges of violation of employment contracts, contracts written in foreign languages, exorbitant and illegal fees charged by recruitment agencies and delays in payment of salaries. In addition, they lack crucial information on the countries of destination*

*Homecare Management Course Trainer's Guide, Kenya*



### 3) LIVING IN THE GULF

#### **Living conditions**

EHoA migrant workers typically have a poor understanding of living conditions in the Gulf before they arrive. They are often surprised to find that they must share living space with fellow migrant workers and are not aware of regulations around worker accommodation. The extent to which outbound migrant workers have insight into living in the Gulf typically depends on whether they have personal connections with first-hand experience in the region.

#### **Financial management**

This assessment highlighted that EHoA migrant workers typically lack useful information around available banking services, budgeting and safe modes of remittance transfer. While educating migrant workers about remittance management in the country of destination is key, it is particularly crucial at the pre-departure stage that migrant workers understand the importance of opening a bank account in the country of origin before traveling. Even though migrant workers are often assumed to have low financial literacy, several key informants pointed to the fact that migrant workers are typically very financially literate and must budget well to support (often extended) families back home. What they lack, rather, is timely and actionable information about, and access to, safe financial services.

#### **Cultural norms and customs**

Outbound migrant workers often have little understanding of the different cultural norms and customs in the Gulf. While those who arrive from countries with large Muslim populations might have more insight into religious customs, many EHoA migrant workers struggle at first with 'culture shock'. Domestic migrant workers in particular face a steep learning curve, as they must learn and adapt, typically on their own, in private homes. This is not something unique to EHoA migrant workers, but a common challenge faced by all in the process of adjusting to a new country and way of life.

“

*[Migrant workers] need to understand the GCC [Gulf] culture; it is totally different from the African culture. Violation of GCC [Gulf] culture could lead to dire consequences like imprisonment. They also need to know the food there. It will be difficult for them to adapt if they are not given this kind information — like what kind of food they'll eat there — and others. They need to understand financial literacy — how much money am I going to spend, how am I going to spend it, what are my goals and how do I reach them, how do I send money back home to my people? They need to understand the details of the contract — what kind of job are you going to do, how many hours are you going to work, do you have days off, what are your obligations, what are your employer's obligations?*

*Private Recruitment Agency, Uganda*

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### Language

The process of adjustment after arrival in Gulf countries can be further compounded by language barriers. Many often lack either English or Arabic language skills and feel particularly isolated in the first few months of their arrival. Basic language skills are particularly important for domestic workers.



## 4) SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

### Sources of support and assistance

In most cases, EHoA migrant workers are not familiar with available support and assistance in the country of destination. This not only includes services provided by the governments of the countries of destination, but also consular services provided by their diplomatic missions (including updating personal documents or legal assistance, for example). Additionally, community support and assistance provided by NGOs or community-based organizations is also lacking.

### Social protection

EHoA migrant workers have little awareness about available social protection measures in the Gulf, provided either by the country of origin or destination. Clear information on social insurance, healthcare coverage or emergency assistance, for example, is often not readily available. This information gap has become increasingly apparent in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Grievance and redressal mechanisms

Outbound migrant workers are for the most part unfamiliar with grievance and redressal mechanisms. It is noted that they typically learn about them through their social networks

only after having experienced a form of exploitation. Awareness of these avenues and being aware of how to access them is critical. This is recommended to be highlighted throughout the labour migration cycle, with PDO acting as a key space to relay information and answer questions or concerns.

## THE INFORMATION LANDSCAPE

With these information needs and gaps in mind, it is important to understand the information landscape; the organizations and infrastructures that underpin information production and flow. What, in other words, are the sources through which information flows, and who are the influencers that inform its circulation? The main producers of information across the EHoA include governments, private recruitment agencies, and often, unfortunately, unlicensed brokers who fail to provide outbound migrants with timely and accurate information. While in some cases, information is disseminated through structured PDO programmes – typically mandated by the State and provided by the private sector – information (and misinformation) also circulates through informal social networks, including friends and family, returnee migrants and members of the diaspora.

Migrant workers in the EHoA-Gulf corridor must contend with profound information asymmetry, often lacking key information around the labour migration rules and regulations that shape their everyday lives in the Gulf. In the absence of formalized sources of information, they must depend on other stakeholders in the labour migration process – such as recruitment agencies, brokers and friends and family. These stakeholders are what are referred to in an information ecosystem as *influencers*, **‘the people, organizations, and institutions that influence how different types of information flow’ (Susman-Peña et al. 2015)**. Over the course of the labour migration cycle, different influencers can shape the flows of information in different ways.

### IN THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN:

- The **Government** can play an important role in mandating the provision of, and developing curricula for, PDO, and providing formal information services on labour migration to the Gulf States.
- **Public employment authorities** are particularly well placed to regulate the recruitment industry, provide employability services for outbound migrant workers, promote ethical recruitment across borders and ensure the provision of timely and accurate information.
- **Private employment agencies** play a key role in facilitating the migrant’s journey from their country of origin to the country of destination and are often the first and last point of contact for a migrant worker departing for the country of destination. In the EHoA, private employment agencies – including brokers and intermediaries – can play a particularly prominent role as key providers of pre-departure information. They are well placed to champion principles of ethical recruitment and provide clear and transparent information. However, it is critical to put in place measures to prevent agencies deliberately deceiving migrant workers by withholding information or providing misinformation.
- **Civil society organizations** (including NGOs, social enterprises and international organizations)<sup>116</sup> can provide some forms of PDO and can contribute meaningfully to disseminating key information to migrant workers, particularly as often they have the social trust of their communities. This positions them well to serve as effective service providers as they may be able to address questions and concerns that participants may not express in alternative settings.

- A prospective migrant worker's **social network** – composed of typically strong ties like friends, family, neighbours and colleagues, and weaker ties like members of the diaspora – is an often overlooked, but critical factor in migrant workers' decision-making processes. A lot of migrant workers learn about opportunities in the Gulf from close friends and family, and are convinced to travel abroad for employment based on informal conversations. While information flows through social networks, however, so does misinformation, and it has been reported that migrant workers can also be deceived by their closest friends and family.
- **Social media** is playing an increasingly prominent role in labour migration, as migrant workers often learn about opportunities abroad online. While online platforms have the potential to fill information gaps, they have also become an important recruitment tool for private employment agencies and recruiters. This has the potential of increasing accessibility of opportunities to those who may not be able to reach agencies. However, this assessment came across many platforms that used the power of social media to advertise false jobs for the purposes of deception and exploitation. Online platforms then have become central hubs of both information and misinformation (see Figure 5). Private messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram are also becoming increasingly influential sources of information.

**Figure 5: Vacancies advertised on social media**



#### IN COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION:<sup>117</sup>

- The **Government** can play an important role in developing or mandating PAO programmes and information and awareness campaigns for newly arrived migrant workers, and working with countries of origin to enhance their PDO programmes.

- **Employers** can ensure that all incoming employees are provided a dedicated orientation or onboarding, and have ongoing access to information and updates on labour laws and grievance mechanisms. Employers can also advocate and/or invest in orientation programming before arrival at their workplace. This can be in the form of PEO and recruitment fairs which can result in more informed decision-making, improved skills-matching and enhanced preparedness of incoming employees.
- **Employers of domestic workers** are particularly important and sometimes overlooked actors in the labour migration cycle. They are uniquely well placed to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees, and ensure that they are not subjected to any forms of exploitation or abuse. Employers of domestic workers can ensure that their employees are kept abreast of updates to the labour laws, and have a key role to play in ensuring they have access to key information and opportunities for personal and professional development, including upskilling, education and training.
- **Diplomatic and consular missions** in the country of destination are an important source of information, support and assistance for migrant communities, and can work closely with national governments, CSOs and community leaders to ensure that important information is disseminated widely within their community. Diplomatic missions are encouraged to work closely with host governments to support the development and evaluations of PAO programmes managed by relevant national authorities, and support broad participation among their community.
- **Private employment agencies** are well placed to provide clear and transparent information to incoming and newly arrived migrant workers and ensure they are well informed about national labour laws and grievance mechanisms, however, often have little incentive to do so. As governments, migrant workers and the private sector more broadly are seeing the social and economic benefits of ethical recruitment, private employment agencies can commit to ethical recruitment practices, beginning with the provision of timely and accurate information.
- A newly arrived migrant worker's **social network** (sometimes including friends and family and other migrant workers) can be an important source of information and support. When migrant workers need information or advice, they often first turn to other migrant workers, and so it is crucial to ensure that accurate and accessible information targets migrant communities at the grassroots level. Particular consideration needs to be paid to migrant domestic workers who often face difficulty in accessing their social networks and building social ties.
- **CSOs** (including community-based organizations, church groups, NGOs, social enterprises and international organizations) are another key resource, and along with social networks, represent perhaps the most trusted sources through which information flows. In different contexts, CSOs can be key service providers for PAO for different migrant communities.
- **Social media** has become increasingly important, particularly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, during which migrant workers often bore the brunt of restrictions designed to mitigate the spread of the virus, and communicated important updates online. In one sense an extension of the various nationality-based community organizations in the Gulf (which themselves have found a strong footing on platforms like Facebook), social media has also allowed migrant workers to efficiently share important information and offer each other advice and support. Private messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram are also becoming increasingly influential sources of information.

## PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

For decades now, PDOs have supported migrant workers in better navigating work and life in countries of destination. Often spearheaded by governments in countries of origin, there are dozens of examples of PDOs around the world within the context of labour migration. Pakistan was an early adopter (1979), while the Philippines mandated PDO in 1983. Developed specifically to assist outbound migrant workers preparing to depart for employment abroad, IOM provides support by developing PDOs that are based on the principles of accessibility and inclusiveness, and where possible, are harmonized with orientation at other key stages of the labour migration process. Important exceptions notwithstanding,<sup>118</sup> PDOs are relatively new in the EHoA.

Migrants in the EHoA often receive training prior to their departure, provided by governments, private recruitment agencies or other stakeholders. This may consist of pre-departure training sessions, often facilitated by private recruitment agencies and geared towards the acquisition of vocational skills and logistical information, or orientation sessions, which aim to provide a more comprehensive overview of migration and information about the labour laws in the country of destination, working conditions, culture, languages, financial literacy, travel logistics and common experiences and expectations, among other topics. While pre-departure training is common across the EHoA, however, PDO is more ad hoc. Formalized PDOs have a much more recent history in select countries, with others recognizing the potential benefits and expressing a desire to develop similar information interventions. As this chapter will explore, PDO is often integrated into pre-departure training programmes, which often problematically serves to conflate the two.

Our research identified three countries with formalized approaches to the design and delivery of PDOs: Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.<sup>119</sup> Discussions around developing PDOs are also in advanced stages in Rwanda, while the United Republic of Tanzania, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti are either in the early phases of exploring formal PDO initiatives or are yet to take action towards developing them. In the three countries where formal initiatives to develop PDOs were identified - while the Government was primarily responsible for mandating, developing and monitoring PDOs as the primary provider - private employment agencies greatly influence their content and delivery. PDOs often include information on financial literacy, cultural norms in countries of destination, migration expectations, and travel logistics and tips, for example. However, our research found that PDOs tend to lack strong emphasis on migrant protection - namely, labour laws, social benefits and emergency contact information for embassy representatives in countries of destination. Furthermore, as PDO is often integrated into existing pre-departure training programmes - that are typically designed for migrant domestic workers - PDO itself tends to cater to that same demographic, often at the expense of other industries and skill levels.

While migrant workers across the EHoA get their information from a range of both formal and informal sources, in countries where formal PDO initiatives do not exist, migrant workers were forced to rely almost exclusively on their personal networks, other migrants and returnees, brokers or private recruitment agencies for pre-departure information on employment, travelling to the Gulf and life in the countries of destination. These alternatives are, at best, imperfect. Private recruitment agencies often prioritize information useful for their own operations or profit. While migrants and returnees often provide valuable first-hand experiences, their testimonies do not always represent the reality on the ground. Friends, relatives and other community members spread both information and misinformation. Furthermore, deceptive recruitment practices, and even cases of human trafficking can often be linked to brokers who are part of a victim's personal network.

### Countries without formal PDO initiatives

- Burundi
- Djibouti
- Eritrea
- Rwanda
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- The United Republic of Tanzania

### Countries with formal PDO initiatives

- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Uganda

This chapter will provide an overview of PDOs and pre-departure information in the EHoA, paying particular attention to countries where the provision of PDOs has been mandated and programmes have been implemented in recent years, including Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. This focus is deemed crucial in order to highlight good practices, challenges and lessons learned; all pivotal in contributing to a shared understanding of PDOs and information needs across the subregion. In other countries, where PDO has yet to be widely established and formalized, including Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania, this chapter will point to the growing consensus around the importance of, and emerging plans for the development of, dedicated PDO. To ensure a migrant-centric and evidence-based approach, **Part Three** will then explore regional trends in terms of migrant workers' pre-departure information needs and key stakeholders in the information ecosystem.

## COUNTRIES WITH FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES

### Ethiopia



The Government plays a leading role in the design and development of PDO in Ethiopia, particularly since it was mandated in 2016. The Proclamation Ethiopia's Overseas Employment Proclamation (No. 923/2016) stipulates that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) must:

- Provide pre-employment and pre-departure orientations.
- Undertake regular pre-employment and pre-departure awareness-raising to citizens who show interest to take-up overseas employment pertaining to the conditions of receiving countries, the required skill for a job position they are taking, their rights and duties and similar other matters.
- Conduct continuous national awareness-raising activities to the public at large by using mass media and disseminating correct and up-to-date information regarding overseas employment.

PDOs are the main information dissemination tool used by the Government of Ethiopia, and are provided in regional and district level offices, depending on the country of destination. Migrant workers who will be employed in Gulf countries receive PDOs at the federal office of MoLSA; those who find employment in other Arab countries via private recruitment agencies or recruiters usually receive PDOs in regional- and district-level offices. PDOs represent the last step in the recruitment process. They are recommended

to take place over the course of two days at dedicated MoLSA PDO centres around one to two weeks before departure, and the orientations are delivered in Amharic.<sup>120</sup> There are 12 centres located within the Amhara and Addis Ababa regions alone, with many more dispersed throughout the country.

While the 2016 Proclamation stipulates the provision of PDO for all outbound migrant workers, the design and delivery of PDO has tended to implicitly assume an audience of women migrant domestic workers. This became clear during key informant interviews with senior Government officials, during which the particular information needs and challenges faced by domestic workers in the Gulf were typically the focus of discussion. This is also reflected in the formal pre-departure information resources developed by the Government.

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*Government should lead information provision, document authentication, contract approval and protecting migrant workers. Private enterprises are more focused on profit making than the well-being of migrant workers.*

*Official, Directorate of Overseas Employment and Workers' Safety Protection*

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The guidelines for PDOs, including the curriculum and modes of delivery, are prepared by the MoLSA and disseminated across the country. PDOs for migrant domestic workers are guided in particular by the *Pre-Departure Training Manual For Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers* published in 2016 by the MoLSA (with the support of the European Union, ILO and UN Women). This manual is accompanied by 21 video modules, which can benefit rural Ethiopians and can be used in place of an in-person session during the COVID-19 pandemic. This consideration of alternative modalities of disseminating key pre-departure information is considered good practice as it allows service providers to be more responsive and can be utilized in any future health pandemic and during events which may limit in-person sessions. This manual presents nine core modules (designed to be taught over the course of 12 hours):

1. Travel Advisories and Airport Custom Procedures.
2. Build Smooth Working Relationships with Your Employer / Sponsor.
3. Labor Rights and Responsibilities of Migrant Domestic Workers.
4. Health and Occupational Safety Issues.
5. Protection from Sexual Violence and Becoming Non-tolerant to Sexual Abuses.
6. Managing and Sending Money Back to Ethiopia.
7. Coping with Stress and Shocks, Dispute Settlement and Living in Harmony.



Source: MoLSA, Pre-Departure Training Manual For Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers published in 2016

8. Knowing Arab countries' religious/cultural practices and legal conditions and their implications on domestic migrant workers.
9. Returning Back Home and Reunion.

In addition to making use of case studies in each section, the manual provides trainers with a range of practical tips to include in the PDO, including:

- You are entitled to annual, medical and holiday leaves as agreed in your employment contract. You need to agree with your employer when you will take these holidays and inform him/her about your plans.
- Discuss your job with your employer so that you and your employer have a clear and common understanding of the job. Discuss also the sequencing of the job so that you work out your timetable accordingly.
- Do not sign on any blank paper. Please be aware that such act may expose you to other potential risks.

“

*PDO should be given in local languages, it should incorporate informational need of skilled and professional migrant workers, it should be given at every stage of migration. We should know some people learn by seeing, some by hearing and still some learn by touching. Our delivery approach is mainly oriented towards those who learn by seeing and hearing - videos and power points presentations. We have no equipment and materials to demonstrate to migrant workers<sup>121</sup>*

*Official, Directorate of Overseas Employment and Workers' Safety Protection*

”

Complementary knowledge products have been developed by the Ethiopian Government, again focusing on migrant domestic workers. For example, an *Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers* focuses on the information needs of migrant women who would be going abroad to take up jobs as domestic workers. Catering for those with possible lower levels of literacy, it uses visuals and straightforward language, conveying information on the common expectations and realities of migrants, travel logistics and cultural differences in the Gulf countries as well as return procedures. This targeted effort of relaying key information is gender sensitive as it takes into account the some of the specific areas of vulnerability and challenges experiences by women migrants. Additionally, it should be noted that it can be a key resource for

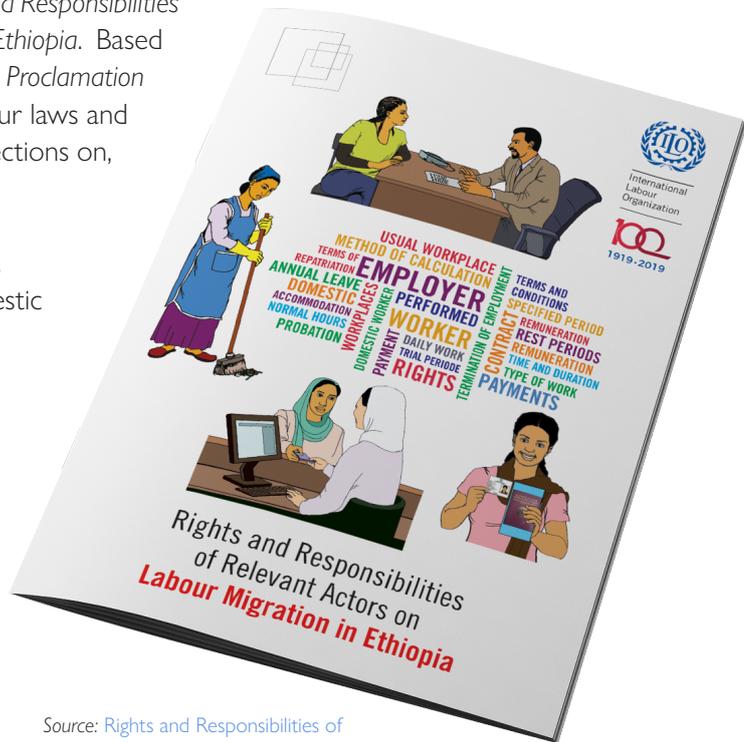


Source: Ethiopian Government, Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers

migrants, with its development not requiring high costs, with the possibility of easily being translated into other languages and tailored for other skill levels and job categories.

In 2019, ILO published a booklet on *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*. Based on the *Ethiopian Overseas Employment Proclamation 923/2016* and covering a range of Gulf labour laws and bilateral agreements, this booklet includes sections on, for example:

- Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers.
- Obligations of Migrant Domestic Workers.
- Rights of the Employers.
- Obligations of the Employers.
- Responsibilities of Private Overseas Employment Agencies.
- Roles and Responsibilities of Government in Countries of Origin and Destination.



Source: [Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia](#)

Acknowledging the importance of harmonized information across countries of origin and destination, this booklet usefully identifies rights and responsibilities at both the pre-departure and the post-arrival stage.

Our research for this report found that migrant workers often feel abandoned by their government and private recruitment agencies upon arrival, at which point many feel they are unable to report violations of their contracts or employer abuse. In the perceived absence of support, particularly in countries of destination, many migrant workers are choosing to migrate irregularly.

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*The skill training takes six weeks. The skill training was delivered by private companies. The content of the training was on sanitation, food preparation, home management, childcare etc.*

*Ethiopian woman migrant worker*

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In addition to PDO sessions, migrant domestic workers must undergo skills training. Pre-departure training takes the form of vocational training sessions lasting between 6 to 12 weeks. These sessions are provided to outbound migrants for free at Government-owned TVET centres. However, the demand for these services greatly exceeds supply, leading many to turn to the private market. The Proclamation regulates private institutions that host pre-departure training; evidence suggests that in 2019, these institutions could charge up to 1,800 Birr (approximately USD 39), a sum which many cannot afford.<sup>122</sup> There is, however, anecdotal evidence of corruption in TVET institutions – some migrants bypass training sessions and instead pay for

their certificates, leaving them without vital information.

While PDO and pre-departure training are conceived separately, and are typically undertaken in separate spaces, the Government understands both to be important and complimentary. As is stated in the *Pre-Departure Manual for Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers*, **“the pre-departure training does not replace other skill specific training programs. It rather complements the basic vocational and Arabic language skill training programs that shall be attended by domestic migrant workers in separate sessions prior to their departures.”** It is also interesting to note that several respondents could not distinguish between skills-oriented pre-departure training and the MoLSA-developed PDO.

While PDO has become formalized since 2016, and manuals such as those described above often put special emphasis on Gulf countries of destination, several respondents believed that the information provided during PDOs does not adequately inform migrants of the conditions in the Gulf. Some were unaware, for example, that they would be tied to their employers. Others did not know that employers often do not respect the working hours and days of rest included in the employment contract. Some migrants find themselves working in two or three households after agreeing to work for one employer.

“

*“The Social and Labour Affairs office gave us a training for short time. I don’t consider it as a training. The content focuses on female hygiene and expectations of the Arab women. The way we should respond to the madam, and how we can handle them. They gave us more about behavioural expectations and demands of our employers. They also trained us on key words of Arabic language. No one gave us information about the work in specifics...They don’t even tell you the size of the family that I am going to serve. For instance, currently, my sister is serving 9 household members including children...I did three 15-minute training sessions over three days... it was a quick lesson in personal cleanliness and how to please our bosses. The information that I get mainly focuses on personal hygiene, to keep our body clean.*

*Ethiopian female migrant domestic worker, reflecting on her PDO*

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The theme of practicality emerged prominently over the course of our key informant interviews. Migrants are told about their rights, for example, but often do not feel they have enough information to protect themselves in the event of exploitation or abuse. Migrants are advised to open a bank account but are not informed about the concrete steps they must take to do so. Indeed, an assessment of migrant information needs reveals gaps in financial literacy. Although this topic is covered by PDOs, our respondents noted a lack of understanding of formal money transfer and banking systems. Some migrants entrust employers with the safekeeping of their earnings or lack personal bank accounts to access their funds, leaving them unable to benefit from their salaries. Many migrant workers report their regret sending money to their relatives with the hope that their family will save or choose to invest remittances. PDO can act as a significant opportunity to relay key information, allowing participants the time to reflect and ask questions, before the pressure of moving to a new country and workplace.

“

*I've worked for 11 years in several [Gulf] countries but have never been able to hold money. I didn't know anything about banks or how to save money. There should be an easy and accessible option to save money in a safe area. There was previously no structure in place that allowed foreign employees to save their wages safely...After spending 11 years abroad, banking information would have revolutionized my life.*

*Ethiopian woman migrant domestic worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

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In addition, the various pre-departure resources described above are designed with women migrant domestic workers in mind. While there is a significant need to address this target audience in particular, and efforts to support highly vulnerable migrant workers should be applauded, several stakeholders felt that this focus undermined the efficacy of PDO for migrant workers bound for other industries, as well as occupations within the domestic work sector that are typically occupied by men, such as personal drivers and guards:

“

*PDO focuses on domestic workers and females. So, in terms of gender, the existing PDO neglects male and other sectors of work and skilled labourer. Further, the existing PDO do not consider the unique contexts of the countries of destination. We have a one size fits all approach which is the other limitation of PDO.*

*Official, Directorate of Overseas Employment and Workers' Safety Protection, Ethiopia*

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While Ethiopia has made significant progress, in particular since the 2016 Proclamation, the influence of PDOs may be limited by technical and human resource shortages. To further strengthen PDO and its impact on participants, the Government may consider channeling or mobilizing resources to cater to all outbound migrant workers, as well as provide information that address some of the gaps identified in this assessment.

## Kenya



Though the Government of Kenya has laid the foundations for PDO, it has not yet been standardized, and relevant pre-departure information is typically featured within broader pre-departure training programmes. A Government informant explained how more formal pre-departure training arose from ad hoc information provision. The same representative noted that the Government of Kenya's involvement in only particular aspects of its facilitation – namely, licensing the institutions to provide programmes. Thus, private recruitment agencies fill in the gaps, often structuring the curriculum to best meet their own needs:

“

*There are some parts that the Government cannot [participate] in...that can be adequately [provided] by private companies, private citizens. So, the government has not been involved directly in that, although it is in terms of licensing the training institutions in developing the curriculum for the PDO, but in terms of establishing the institutions for doing that, that's being done by the private sector.*

*Official, National Migration Coordination Mechanism, Kenya*

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As diaspora remittances continue to grow – and overtake key traditional exports and sectors – the private recruitment industry has boomed, and many recruitment agencies provide pre-departure training and information to outbound migrant workers. As explained by a recruitment agent interviewed, the biggest source of information is through referral – namely, those who have migrated before. If outbound migrants are not in contact with anyone who has lived in their country of destination, however, their biggest source of information is the recruitment office. According to the interviewee, migrants contact recruitment agencies for information even when other governmental resources exist. Recruitment agencies also make the most of the arrangements for migrants' travel and employment abroad and facilitate medical examinations for prospective migrants, providing them with medical information they may not have been able to access to previously.

However, respondents suggested that many recruitment agencies are unlicensed and operate outside of the legal framework – and often deceive migrant workers, providing only information that serves their interests.

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*There's heavy commercialization of [training]. So you find that everyone and everybody is being registered to run a training centre without due regard for background, quality and then very poor supervision...As we speak now, there's almost 100 schools from a pilot of six schools.*

*Director, Kenyan NGO*

”

While the private sector has played an important role in the provision of pre-departure training, it is the Government, and in particular the National Employment Authority (NEA), established in 2016, who have taken a lead in designing and developing the curriculum. In 2018, with the support of IOM, the NEA standardized the Homecare Management Course and published both the Syllabus and Regulations and a Trainers' Guide. In addition to sections on homecare, life skills and childcare, for example, the syllabus also includes a dedicated section on what is referred to as 'Pre-Departure Training' (which, in this case, is in fact a PDO) designed to provide key information and raise awareness among outbound migrant workers. Units included in the 40-hour long pre-departure training cover:

- Travel document processing (passports, visas).
- Country of destination (climate, cultural profile, transport, food and so forth).
- Travel process (such as airport procedures, and safekeeping documents).
- Work ethics (ethical norms, time management and so forth).
- Government and recruitment agencies in labour migration (dispute resolutions).
- Support services for migrant workers.
- Return and re-integration.
- Emerging issues and trends in travelling.

“

*We have these PDOs for domestic workers... which means that they are trained. But again it is not so much orientation. There are two things here. There is one ...eh...the skill. 'Am a doctor. Applying to work in the UK and as a qualified doctor, there is no problem. But there is the second orientation which nobody seems to be worried about. And for me, that is an area where everyone should be worried even more.*

*Director, Kenyan NGO*

”

Following the approval of the new pre-departure curriculum, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the NEA and IOM conducted a Training of Trainers (ToT) in 2018.<sup>123</sup> Supported through the “Promoting Safe and Fair Labour Migration from Kenya to the Gulf States” project, the ToT touched upon a range of themes, including:

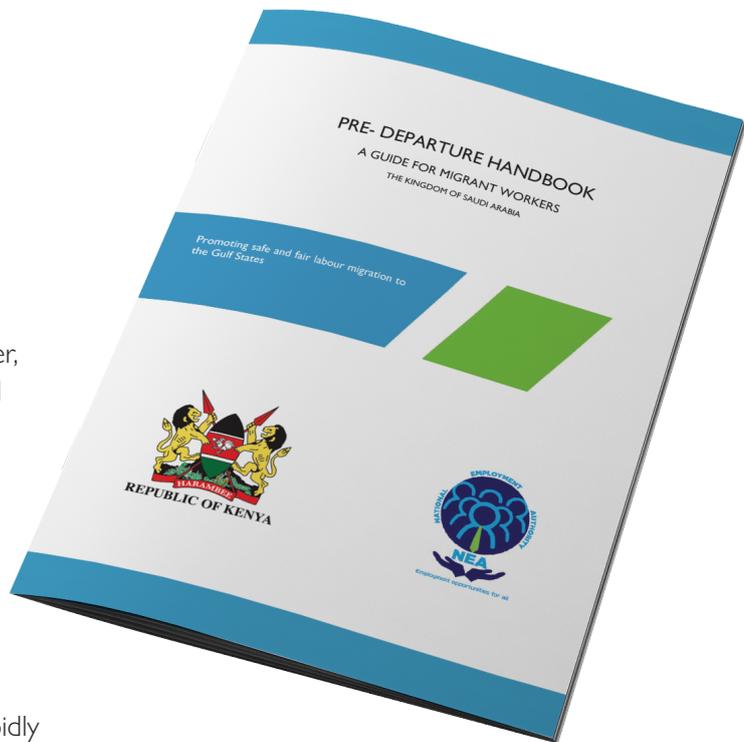
- Introduction to labour migration.
- Labour migration trends and bilateral agreements in the Kenyan context.
- Planning and conducting effective training sessions.
- Effective communication.
- Introduction to homecare management course.
- Preparation for journey and packing.
- Culture shock and adjustment tips.
- Human trafficking for labour exploitation.
- Remittances.

In addition to serving an important regulatory function – licensing over 480 registered private employment agencies – in 2019, with the support of IOM, the NEA also published a series of *Pre-Departure Handbooks* for several Gulf countries of destination, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE (with whom Kenya signed BLAs); similar handbooks are in the pipeline for Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman. This focus on providing country-specific information and guidance for different countries of destination must be highlighted as this approach recognizes the benefits of providing readers with a nuanced understanding of their destination, compared to a generic information. These handbooks include sections on, for example:

- Country information
- Religion and language
- Dressing
- Currency and remittances
- Culture
- Labour laws
- Dispute settlement
- Pre-departure requirements

The NEA also published a weekly e-newsletter, *The Weekly e-Shot*, which provides useful information on safe labour migration practices, job vacancies, the responsibilities of recruitment agencies and remittances, for example. Information and tips for Gulf countries of destination are a regular feature.

Although PDO for migrant workers is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is also influenced by a rapidly changing landscape that has recently been subject to some controversy. In February 2021, the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) introduced a new curriculum that stipulates that outbound migrant workers must have a Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and must undergo one-month pre-departure training. The homecare management training, for example, which targets migrant domestic workers, has been extended from 14 days to 21-30 days, and fees have increased substantially. The extension of time is an indication of the growing recognition of the importance of skills development and having access to comprehensive information. However, this change has been implemented at a time when Kenya is already struggling to accommodate monthly training targets and has been met with a mixed reception.



## Uganda



The Government of Uganda's international recruitment legislation - the 2005 Employment Acts (revised and endorsed in May 2021) - provides the framework for labour migration in Uganda. The acts regulate the recruitment of Ugandan migrant workers abroad by requiring recruitment agencies to register with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD). The External Employment Unit, which is overseen by MoGLSD, is in charge of licensing and regulating private recruitment agencies. Agencies must provide migrant workers with a PDO on working conditions, must comply with Ugandan and country of destination labour legislation laws, and must ensure that migrant workers have read their contracts before signing.

“

*UAERA [The Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies] is an umbrella body that regulates all these agencies. UAERA and MGLSD work together to ensure that all the agencies are conforming to the rules and regulations here in Uganda and abroad. However, the challenge comes in for the unregistered, unregulated companies as they come in as traffickers to offer what these other companies are not offering, they are lucrative deals and Ugandans have good appetite for money which is a problem. This makes it difficult for the Government to regulate what it cannot see.*

*Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda*

”

As of 2021, over 200 international employment agencies are registered with the ministry. The Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies (UAERA) was formed in 2013 by private recruitment agencies themselves to increase cooperation with the Government of Uganda, create a code of ethical and professional conduct for recruitment, register recruitment companies, and devise guidelines on labour recruitment – all recruitment agencies in Uganda must join the association and must simultaneously be registered by the MoGLSD.

“

*We handle all aspects of the immigration process—all the way from lobbying for these jobs from these [Gulf] countries to advertising, to the document acquisition process for workers, to passport processing, to Interpol certification<sup>124</sup>, to yellow books [proof of vaccination against yellow fever] processing, to air ticketing, to visa application – we handle everything.*

*Private Recruitment Agency, Uganda*

”

By law, outbound migrants must complete PDO before going abroad for employment. PDO is based on a curriculum developed by the MoGLSD in 2015 and the orientations are provided in 17 accredited training centres. While PDOs are designed to cover a range of topics, our research found that their delivery and content vary. PDOs represent the last phase in the recruitment process – migrants are sent to PDOs just before going abroad. They are carried out over the course of one week; however, the MoGLSD has opted to expand them into two-week programmes following the development of a new holistic PDO that is at its final stage of endorsement. PDOs may be conducted only by approved training centres, a licensed recruitment agency, an association of licensed agencies, NGOs working closely with migrant workers, or diplomatic entities in countries of destination, with close supervision by the MoGLSD.<sup>125</sup> Recruitment agencies must submit a schedule, including information like the names of facilitators, participants to the MoGLSD and country of destination, in advance of the PDO.

“

*The MoGLSD has certain regulations that before a migrant goes into another country, they are given some basic training, for instance they are trained on how to use household appliances like gas ovens and cookers, flat iron, microwave, washing machines and so forth...they are trained about the culture and religion for instance how to greet in Arabic...*

*Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda*

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While PDO is mandated, most respondents commented that its implementation was rather ad hoc, and information remains fragmented. Greater emphasis is needed on social protection and resources provided by Ugandan embassies abroad. Many respondents noted migrants' needs for information on their legal rights and social benefits in countries of destination. Although many migrant workers in Gulf countries are entitled to benefits, as outlined in BLAs between the Government of Uganda and countries of destination, they are unaware of these provisions because they were not discussed adequately in PDOs. This was confirmed by a migrant returnee, who noted that leave and healthcare were provided in her contract, though she was not aware of them and did not benefit. Many are also unaware of the consular and embassy services they can contact in the event of employer abuse or exploitation or are unable to navigate these resources. Migrants often have little information on their rights as employees. Migrants do not see recruitment and employment as a mutual agreement between two parties; instead, they feel indebted to recruitment agents and employers.

“

*Labour exporting companies pay for PDO and it is 50 dollars per head. That's the standard fee. And the ministry is pushing it to 150 dollars to make it two weeks [of training], which I think is going to cause a lot of havoc because people will be forced to take short cuts. This is what happens in Africa. I think they are making it difficult without adding anything new. People will not be willing to part with that much money to train one person, so they'll be forced to take the short cut.*

*Private Recruitment Agency, Uganda*

”

The information needs of migrants also include an understanding of the licensing process and statuses of recruitment agencies. Many prospective migrants, however, are not aware of which companies are licensed, and therefore often rely on intermediaries to guide them to agents that are often operating outside of the legal framework. A Government official also noted that the language used and provisions listed in employment contracts are often incomprehensible to migrant workers, who sometimes need support to fully understand the terms and conditions of their employment.

“

*It's critical that the migrant is well informed of the contract they are signing and [have] a good awareness of what the terms mean. It is paramount that the document be translated into local languages for the migrants to easily understand or to get the services of a lawyer to ensure that the terms are clearly understood by the migrant worker and the recruiting agency.*

*Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Uganda*

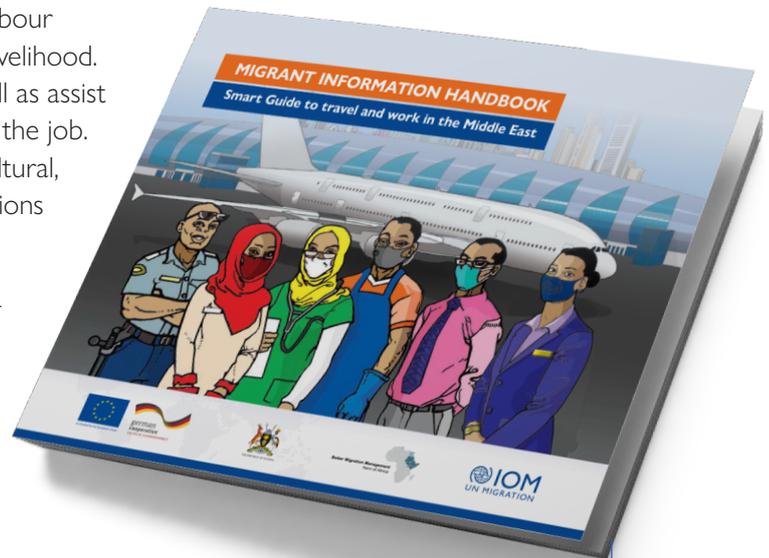
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PDO curricula include information on the working conditions that could be expected in the countries of destination, cultural and behavioural norms of Gulf countries, career orientation and the country of destination labour market, financial literacy, English vocabulary and methods of communication. At the time of writing this report, however, and with the support of IOM, the MoGLSD was finalizing a new pre-departure curriculum and training manual that target migrant workers from all categories and destinations.<sup>126</sup> The new PDO curriculum, which will be provided over the course of 120 hours (and is recommended to last two weeks), covers a range of topics, including:

- **Introduction to migration**  
Including content on the benefits and challenges of migration.
- **21st century competencies for migrant workers**  
Including subunits on personal and psychological well-being and foreign language and communication.
- **Employment contract, laws and regulations**  
Including subunits on employment contract, work ethics, and complaints and grievance management.
- **Job specification**  
Including tailored industry specific content and information on roles and responsibilities.
- **Country of destination**  
Including content on climate, geography and cultural and religious norms.
- **Financial literacy**  
Including content on accessing key banking services.
- **Migrant support system**  
Including subunits on support services and diplomatic missions (in the country of destination).
- **Smart, easy travel and behavior**  
Including subunits on travel document processing, easy and safe travel, and return and reintegration.
- **Health and emerging issues**  
Including subunits on information on access to healthcare.

The goal of the new curriculum is to **“To create a qualified productive, health workforce with practical knowledge, skills and appropriate methods of carrying out their jobs as well as aim at acquainting migrant workers with knowledge and skills to envisage challenges in the new environment in the host country”**.<sup>127</sup> The intended target audience is Ugandan migrant workers who are travelling to the Gulf to work in sales or customer service, or as drivers, construction workers and security guards, for example, with specially tailored units designed for domestic workers. The objectives, as listed in the curriculum, are as follows:

1. Develop awareness of the importance of labour migration as a source of employment and livelihood.
2. To change the mindset of the trainee as well as assist in setting realistic goals and expectations of the job.
3. Develop realistic expectations about the cultural, social, economic, health and working conditions in the country of destination.
4. To create awareness of the importance of complying with the terms and conditions of employment.
5. To enhance self-esteem and assertiveness in their relationships with the employer, workmates and peers.
6. To develop the right attitudes and values towards work.
7. Provide tools in the management of their incomes and other available financial resources.
8. To understand the roles of the different key stakeholders in the labour migration process.
9. Return and re-integrate into social and economic life after the expiry of the employment contract.



<b>3</b> YOUR MIGRATION JOURNEY	<b>9</b> SAFE AND SMART TRAVEL	<b>21</b> LIVING ABROAD	<b>27</b> BRIEF ON GCC COUNTRIES
4 CONTRACT INFORMATION	10 BEFORE YOU TRAVEL	22 GENERAL WORK-RELATED INFORMATION	28 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)
5 YOUR RIGHTS	14 INSIDE THE AIRPORT	24 DOs & DON'Ts	31 QATAR
6 YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES	15 WHILE ON THE PLANE	26 WORKING DAYS AND TIME	33 OMAN
7 YOUR STATUS	17 ON ARRIVAL		35 KUWAIT
	19 HOW TO KEEP SAFE		37 SAUDI ARABIA
			39 KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Source: IOM in Uganda has also produced a *Migrant Information Handbook* for outbound migrant workers traveling to the Gulf. The handbook includes sections on rights, traveling and living in the Gulf.

As Uganda moves to strengthen its PDO curriculum, however, several respondents interviewed for this report worry about what they perceived as additional burdens:

“

*We also have the issue of unnecessary bureaucracy; it delays the entire deployment process – forcing migrants to opt for trafficking...[the whole process takes] about four to five months. And that is the minimum; it can go up to eight months. For instance, getting a passport can take three months today. Once you get the passport, you go for training, which is being increased from 7 days to 14 days. But why are they increasing the days [for training] when the curriculum has not changed? You've not added anything!*

*Private Recruitment Agency, Uganda*

”

Many noted that what they understood as excessive training, orientation and ‘unnecessary bureaucracy’ would have the undesired effect of pushing more migrant workers to pursuing irregular channels. Furthermore, a general lack of awareness around foreign employment was also cited as a reason why many migrant workers would turn to unlicensed recruiters. This feedback underscores the benefit of information interventions earlier in the labour migration cycle, such as PEO. This orientation targets those considering foreign employment, providing guidance to make well-informed decisions and highlights the importance of safe recruitment. Investments in responsive PEO programmes can act to ease the burden of information required to be included in PDO as key topics would have been covered prior.

“

*As a result of limited sensitization and awareness, many intending Ugandan migrant workers have been left susceptible to exploitation by traffickers and unlicensed recruitment agencies. Results from interviews with migrant workers in UAE and Saudi Arabia and analysis of online survey results conducted through the labour liaison officer in Saudi Arabia show that 129 of the 384 respondents had gone through unlicensed recruiters.*

*Regulation of Labour Externalization by Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development: A Report by the Auditor General (2017)*

”

As in other countries in the region, and indeed the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread disruption to labour migration flows, and in turn to the provision of PDO, which at the time of writing, have ceased. However, those interviewed for this report underlined the intention to restart PDO programmes as soon as possible.

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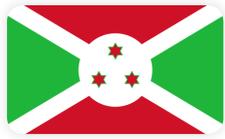
*I can say that the pre-departure programme is on but the question that remains is its implementation especially during the pandemic - how countries have been opening and closing their borders; we can't say implementation is 100 per cent because today we are closed, tomorrow we are open. A lot has been going on, but we can say that the Pre-Departure Orientation Programmes are on.*

*Government official, Uganda*

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## COUNTRIES WITHOUT FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES

### Burundi



While no formal PDO initiatives currently exist in Burundi, the Government is working in close cooperation with IOM to develop a plan to implement PDO. According to a key informant, the Government of Burundi has drawn up a “zero draft” of a policy to regulate labour migration to Gulf countries. However, the drafting of this policy has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In place of formal PDO initiatives, Burundian migrants rely on brokers, unlicensed recruitment agents in transit countries and their personal networks for relevant information, putting them at greater risk of possible exploitation.

Currently, outbound migrants typically receive information through word of mouth, most often through friends, relatives and returnees in their communities. Others receive information from private recruitment agents and intermediaries while transiting through Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda or the United Republic of Tanzania. Their pre-departure information most often comes from a combination of both personal networks and unregulated private recruitment agents in neighbouring countries, as was the case for a returnee interviewed:

“

*I went when many people in Burundi had not heard about such job opportunities, but I didn't get the information from any organization. I got it from some other individuals through my husband. When my husband heard about it, he became interested and asked about the process to take. He was then told that there were recruiters in Uganda and Kenya to facilitate the process.*

*Woman migrant domestic worker, Burundi*

”

Outbound migrant workers typically have little information about transiting through neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda. As a migrant worker noted on her journey via Kenya:

“

*If I had known we were to take such a difficult route to Kenya, I really wouldn't have gone there. No one had ever told me what the journey was going to look like; I simply had thought it was going to be easy. I hadn't thought we were to walk on our feet, and I hadn't ever thought we were to travel during the night as we did. Had I known it before, I would have stayed in Burundi. I would have waited until laws and regulations are voted.*

*Woman migrant worker reflecting on her journey to the Gulf*

”

Due to the lack of formal channels of information, the information landscape in Burundi is predominately shaped by personal networks, brokers and recruitment agencies in neighbouring countries. Information often passes through multiple sources, as was the case for a returnee from the Gulf.

“

*I got [information on job opportunities] from my father, and my father had heard it from the advertisement of that Arab association. Things weren't as they are today... it was advertised publicly. My father simply told me that he had gotten the news from another person, but he didn't tell me whom.*

*Woman migrant worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

”

However, informal channels of information can often be misleading. Brokers and agents who intend to exploit nationals often withhold information or provide them with misinformation, as reported by a Government representative.

“

*Agents have been taking prospective migrants' money and keeping them in isolated places as they wait to travel without adequate assistance. These migrants have very limited or distorted information about where they are going and what is awaiting them.*

*Government official*

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After arriving in countries of destination, migrants mainly access information through WhatsApp and social media. It is also evident that many use WhatsApp to seek advice from one another. Given the absence of BLAs and labour attachés in the Gulf, the main sources of information for migrants are from the Government of the host country and through Burundian diasporic networks.

“

*Burundians working [in the Gulf] have now created so many WhatsApp groups to discuss their concerns. Everyone there is now, more than ever, encouraged to own a phone for their security reasons.*

*Woman migrant worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

”

Given the formal information vacuum in Burundi, channels of communication and irregular recruitment have become more organized. Unlicensed agents in Burundi and brokers in Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania challenge the Government's efforts to tackle misinformation and prevent human trafficking. Pre-departure information provided to migrants by brokers and unlicensed agents is incomplete and geared toward the interests of the agents rather than migrants' protection and well-being, pointing to the need for formal channels.

## Djibouti



While Djibouti has no formal PDO initiatives, those migrating under BLAs or other partnerships have been provided with orientations. Most migrants rely on information provided from other Djiboutians abroad, family and friends, or brokers. A Ministry of Labour representative noted that the National Institute of Public Administration, in close collaboration with IOM, provides information to migrants bound for countries with BLAs in operation, such as Qatar. It was added that the production and dissemination of pre-departure information as well as the monitoring and regulation of private recruitment agencies should fall under the jurisdiction of the National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training, which delivers trainings and information to migrants and deal with recruitment and deployment. The agency led efforts to sign BLAs with Qatar and Saudi Arabia. However, it currently lacks the policy framework for labour migration necessary to carry out these duties. In the case of Djiboutian childminders bound for Qatar, a PDO was overseen by an NGO, the National Union of Djiboutian Women, and conducted by a Qatari private recruitment agency.

The information needs of migrants include knowledge of labour laws, social benefits, working conditions, and cultural and social norms as well as language skills. PDO can become key resources for women who plan to work as domestic workers in being able to recognize and report any mistreatment by employers. Even women who participated in PDOs, like those headed to Qatar, were not fully aware of the working conditions commonly experienced by migrant women in Qatar.

“

*The training the girls had undergone here in Djibouti and what was waiting for them there did not match. The girls were shocked [by the working conditions], and...complained to our embassy...All the girls who did not want to continue their work in these conditions returned to Djibouti without delay.*

*NGO representative*

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The information landscape in Djibouti surrounding migration is influenced predominately by informal channels. Most migrants rely on personal networks, family members and brokers to find opportunities abroad and gather information before departure. Other Djiboutian migrants play a crucial role in providing information; many provide their acquaintances with contact information for private recruitment agencies, as noted by a migrant to Qatar.

“

*We sometimes act as matchmakers between companies that want to recruit and Djiboutians looking for work, whether they are in Djibouti or in another country. This is often done verbally by telephone and via social networking channels. It's not systematic, but everyone does it according to the people they know.*

*Diaspora organization representative, reflecting on his experience in the Gulf*

”

The Djiboutian diaspora is organized in some countries of destination analyzed. In Qatar, many have joined a workers' association providing aid to Djiboutian migrant workers. However, this organization neither collaborates with the Government of Djibouti nor provides any information to prospective migrants intending to travel to Qatar. Information is informally shared between Djiboutians via word of mouth and social media. Although transit migrants constitute the majority of those travelling from Djibouti to the Gulf, there are no formal channels of information targeting this population. They rely on information provided by other migrants, brokers and traffickers. Many are unaware of the possible challenges they could face crossing the Gulf, transiting through Yemen, and after arrival.

## Eritrea



There is currently no PDO operating in Eritrea; in the absence of formal information resources, Eritreans tend to rely on their personal networks for pre-departure information. According to our respondents, most are informed about the wages they will receive abroad as well as the risks they may face on their journey

to the Gulf and after arrival, however, the information landscape in Eritrea is predominately influenced by the close personal networks of Eritreans. Family members are particularly important – due to the country’s large and diverse diaspora, most Eritreans know of a family member abroad. Unlicensed brokers, mostly located in urban areas, sometimes recruit Eritreans to work abroad. However, fearing legal repercussions, migrants mostly trust close personal connections over brokers.

In the Eritrean context, smuggling is seen as a covert transaction between a client – the prospective migrant – and a service provider – the smuggler. Since labour migration is mostly illegal and strictly controlled, migrants are often unable to report human trafficking, placing them at higher risk of exploitation. Additionally, as there are no formal sources of information on labour migration for migrant workers, most rely on family and friends abroad. The Government does not promote migration, and many migrants face punishment for migrating irregularly.

## Rwanda



In Rwanda, there are several sector-specific orientations for professionals, but this mapping did not identify a fully developed PDO. The National Labour Mobility Policy, adopted in 2019, laid the foundation for the development of PDOs and established a framework for regular migration pathways. However, as the policy has only recently been implemented, there is evidence that many migrants rely on irregular migration pathways and informal information channels, placing them at greater risk of exploitation.

“

*While in desperate need of employment, I talked to this family member. He told me about the job opportunities and business opportunities in Dubai and interested me to go there myself...he guided me through almost everything... However, he did not tell me about the skills necessary to thrive in Dubai...He also did not tell me about social protection, possibly as he also does not know about it.*

*Man migrant worker, reflecting on his experience in the Gulf*

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The National Labour Mobility Policy acknowledges the importance of PDOs to the protection of migrant workers. It outlines the stakeholders to be involved in the provision of PDOs, including the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA). PDOs will include information to help migrants “make well-informed decisions” and cover labour laws in countries of destination.<sup>128</sup> However, the National Labour Mobility Policy does not currently include a PDO curriculum or specifies whether PDOs will be tailored to the sector, gender or country of destinations.

Rwanda’s employment service centres will play a central role in PDO facilitation. Currently, there are three employment centres – in Kigali, Musanze and Huye. At the time of research, these centres only

provided services related to domestic employment. However, according to a representative from the Rwandan Development Board (RDB), once the National Labour Mobility Policy is implemented, the centres will advertise jobs abroad, suggest suitable candidates for positions, ensure that contracts are clear and valid, make travel arrangements and facilitate PDOs for all migrant workers.<sup>129</sup> Currently, the RDB lists employment opportunities, career guidance, and information about the centres on [Kora](#), an online job portal.<sup>130</sup> The assessment noted this portal includes a video that provides information on human trafficking and recognizing red flags for those looking to work abroad. It details tactics that traffickers use to lure victims, including promises of scholarships or high-paying opportunities abroad. With these significant investments made in launching this national campaign to combat trafficking, the development of formal PDO initiatives can already leverage material used and dissemination platforms, including radio and television shows.

Pre-departure training is sometimes provided to those traveling via Government scholarships or special initiatives. This mostly excludes those without extensive professional training and those that work in low-wage positions. A representative from the RDB noted that Rwanda has a PDO manual that has been used in specific cases, such as for recent graduates from agricultural study programmes in certain countries of destination. No details were provided on the curriculum, scale, or modes of delivery.

It appears that Rwandan migrants would benefit from access to additional information to ensure their protection and well-being while abroad. Our respondents cited knowledge of the language and sociocultural norms of Gulf countries of destination, expected working conditions, digital communication, employment laws and benefits and financial literacy as vital to the success of migrants. Many migrants do not have a clear picture of the kind of work they will be expected to perform. Concerned primarily with increasing their wages, they do not pose questions.

“

*To be honest, I knew nothing. I was just very excited about working abroad and making more money. I didn't care about the rest. I didn't know my employer. I didn't know exactly which work I was going to do. I knew it might be cleaning because they had asked me about my capabilities... so I suspected I would work as a cleaner. I knew whatever it was, I was willing to adapt.*

*Woman migrant domestic worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

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Some migrants do not consider contracts as a way of ensuring protection and guaranteeing decent working conditions for employees. One woman migrant in Kuwait interviewed for this report noted that her initial contract was issued for two years. When it expired, she was not given another contract and instead worked without a contract. She perceived this to be a sign of her employer's trust rather than an action placing her at greater risk of exploitation. Though she noted that health insurance was included in her initial contract, she was unaware of other benefits, such as a pension or unemployment money. Examples like this highlight how PDO can act as a vital junction to address their informational gaps and correct misinformation before migrants leave the country.

“

*The contract was for two years, and after it the two years elapsed, I was given paid leave for a month and then I returned to work. . . After the first two years, many people here do not need contracts anymore. Our employers trust us, and we trust them.*

*Woman migrant domestic worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

”

In the absence of any formal sources of information on labour migration to the Gulf, the information landscape in Rwanda is predominately shaped by informal channels, including migrants' personal networks, social media and illegal brokers. Many rely most on the information provided to them by trusted family and friends as well as other migrant workers and returnees. This can prove vital in understanding realities on the ground and to receive practical information, but it also can be breeding grounds for the replication of misinformation. For example, returnees who do not possess accurate information on labour laws and social benefits themselves passing this information on an outbound.

Lesser-known acquaintances and community members with experience in Gulf countries also provide information to migrants. For example, the returnee from the UAE noted that many Rwandans approach businesspeople in Kigali with known ties to the Gulf for information. However, in many cases, brokers are members of a migrant's local community, concerned more with their ability to profit from the fees they collect from migrants than with protecting migrants.

## Somalia



Tens of thousands of migrants undertake the hazardous journey across the Gulf of Aden to the Gulf each year. Perhaps as a result of many taking irregular pathways, and the relative informality of recruitment procedures, pre-departure planning and information among migrants in Somalia is largely informal. Rather than depending on formal channels to gather information when making the decision to migrate, most prospective migrants rely on unverified information from personal networks, which can greatly increase their risk of exploitation.

While Somali authorities have demonstrated an interest in facilitating formal PDO initiatives, there are currently no structured PDOs operating in Somalia. The Somali authorities have expressed the desire to delegate PDO development to private recruitment agents. It is critical to put in place the necessary oversight to ensure that PDO is responsive to the informational needs of participants.

A respondent from the Ministry of Labour indicated that the development of PDO would likely follow the issuance of a policy framework for migrant workers that, at the time of interview, was being developed. The Ministry of Labour reported the Federal Government plans to be involved in the certification and issuance of licenses to private recruitment agencies throughout the country to establish PDOs. This highlights the Government efforts toward making labour migration more regular. They also indicate that private recruitment agencies may play a prominent role in the future development of PDO.

Although details of plans for the design and development of PDO are yet to materialize, many respondents noted the particular risks faced by women migrants and domestic workers, including their vulnerability to abuse. In addition, all respondents believed PDO should be tailored to countries of destination in the Gulf, pointing to sector-, gender-, and destination-specific information. Adopting this tailored and harmonized approach to the development of PDO material is highly recommended to ensure participants are equipped with accurate information for their time abroad.

## South Sudan



There is currently no PDO in South Sudan, however there are efforts to put in place a structure that would support such interventions. Although the Labour Act of 2017 requires private recruitment agencies to register with the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource Development (MOLPSHRD), very few agencies have done so due to a lack of institutional capacity to oversee and monitor the registration process. Migrants are dependent on private recruitment agencies, licensed or unlicensed, for pre-departure information; they also rely on those in their personal networks. According to a representative from the MOLPSHRD, the Government of South Sudan has plans to model PDOs after neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Uganda.

“

*Being a young country trying to develop here and there, the system is not in place yet. [We do not have] much experience with migrant workers yet. However, the country is looking at examples of packages of support by other countries for guidance when developing a policy.*

*MOLPSHRD Official*

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According to the manager of a private employment agency interviewed for this report, the MOLPSHRD has formed a committee to discuss PDO development as well as guidelines for the work of private recruitment agencies. At the moment, it appears that these agencies are not involved in these discussions.

The information needs of migrants are many, ranging from knowledge of the culture of Gulf countries and labour laws to financial literacy, employment benefits, migration expectations and embassy contact information. The outbound migrants interviewed felt unprepared for their journey; for example, one migrant interviewee compared pre-departure training in South Sudan to that in Kenya.

In the absence of formal information channels, the information landscape is predominately shaped by recruitment agents. Migrants and recruitment agents do not seem to perceive pre-departure information as crucial to their well-being. While we found some evidence to suggest that private recruitment agencies provide some pre-departure information, the basic information they provide is neither standardized nor mandatory. Some migrant workers have access to social media, where they gather information on countries of destination from their personal network. Popular platforms include Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. Several migrant interviewees noted that those advising them were other South Sudanese migrants to the

Gulf that were acquaintances or distant connections. This suggests that information moves through loose, informal networks, allowing misinformation to spread.

“

*In my research I found that in Kenya, they have a lot of training for people going out. And Kenyans are going out every month. I have really not gotten this kind of training.*

*South Sudanese migrant worker commenting on Kenyan training opportunities*

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## The United Republic of Tanzania



While there is currently no structured PDO for Tanzanian migrant workers to Gulf countries, there appears to be pre-departure training opportunities. Recruitment agencies and the Tanzania Employment Services Agency (TaESA) provide select pre-departure trainings, focusing mostly on job skills. As a result of the lack of dedicated orientation, however, many Tanzanian migrants are not fully aware of their rights and responsibilities in countries of destination. TaESA training covers the topic of “tolerance at work” – namely, coping with the demands and behaviour of foreign employers. In addition to TaESA pre-departure training sessions, recruitment agencies also conduct their own pre-departure training focused on skills necessary for common jobs, such as domestic work. Although training was provided to migrants before departure, these sessions taught practical skills deemed essential by the agency and were not based on best practices or curricula developed by the Government.

This research understands that within the pre-departure training, there is PDO-like information that is also provided. Pre-departure training by recruitment agents consists of weekly seminars for migrant workers – according to a recruitment agent interviewed, these sessions include information on **“customs and traditions, relationships with their employers, self-respect, receiving their salary through bank deposits, keeping records and being patient”** in the country of destination. Additional sessions are held over the course of a few days before departure.

Informal pre-departure training sessions focus on ways to integrate – benefiting the employer and recruitment agencies – rather than on ways for migrants to claim rights and benefits abroad. Rather than responding to the needs of migrants, pre-departure training in the United Republic of Tanzania seeks to fulfil the requirements of Gulf-based employers and private recruitment agencies. To date, no guidelines are available on PDOs in the United Republic of Tanzania.

## CONCLUSION

In recent years, and amidst an emerging consensus on the need for PDO in the EHoA, countries across the subregion have taken important steps towards mandating, regulating, designing and developing formal PDO. While pre-departure training is relatively widespread, particularly for migrant domestic workers, PDO has a more recent history, and has often been dovetailed with or integrated into broader pre-departure training programmes. For the most part, PDO is driven by governments, and provided by the private sector, including TVET centres and recruitment agencies, for example. In theory, this model can work well, however, in practice, information remains fragmented and there are several challenges to note.

In the absence of close monitoring and evaluation, recruitment agencies can dictate which elements of the established curriculum to follow, and which to leave out. As their main aim is to fulfil the requirements of Gulf-based employers, recruitment agencies typically put more emphasis on skills and obligations than they do on rights and safe recruitment. And while the importance of PDO is gaining recognition, PDO is still often conflated, and in some cases confused with, pre-departure training. Although the latter typically takes much longer, and is focused on practical skills, many respondents were not aware of the distinction. Furthermore, while pre-departure training represents an important opportunity for upskilling, in the EHoA pre-departure training programmes tend to focus on technical and vocational skills and less on transversal skills, language skills and attitudinal skills that could serve to empower migrant workers in their workplace in countries of destination.

Many migrant workers interviewed for this report questioned the practicality of the PDO and training they attended:

“

*The training should be tailored to the work we do in the country of destination. There is no training information, for example, on how to care for children. I've seen migrant workers from the Philippines and Indonesia who were trained in babysitting and were paid more than we were. These migrant workers have a superior understanding of how to prepare Arab cuisine not because their food culture is similar to that of Arabs, but because they receive sufficient training prior to deployment. We have no idea how to blend spices. To avoid problems, abuses and harassment from employers, every migrant worker should receive comprehensive training... Trainers are less knowledgeable about the living and working environment in Arab countries.*

*Ethiopian woman migrant domestic worker, reflecting on her experience in the Gulf*

”

In addition to feeling that programmes were not practical enough, many also felt that they had been designed with domestic workers in mind, but were less suitable for other skill levels and job categories:

“

*The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development drafted the curriculum for pre-departure training. And the only curriculum they drafted was for migrant domestic workers. So without the curriculum for these other jobs, we have to employ an alternative training curriculum... The only reason why the ministry only issued a curriculum for domestic workers was because they are the biggest and most vulnerable group.*

*Private Recruitment Agency, Uganda*

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Another common concern that was noted, particularly by private recruitment agencies, was the potential unintended consequences of strengthening and extending PDO programmes (as has happened in Kenya, and as has been proposed in Uganda, for example). Bureaucracy, and lengthy processes around labour migration are already pushing many migrants to opt for irregular channels, according to several respondents, where they are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. While efforts to enhance the provision of timely and accurate information are critically important, however, they must be responsive to the needs of migrants, and make sure not to impose criteria and requirements so strict that irregular channels are perceived as more appealing.

Despite the existence of formal sources of information, however, informal channels are key in migration decision-making across all 10 countries in the EHoA. Prospective migrants build up their expectations of migration through interaction with people in their personal networks – stories of success and wealth often nudge otherwise hesitant prospective migrants toward deciding to migrate. Many migrants rely on social media, friends, family and recruitment agents for information when making the decision to migrate and when preparing to migrate.

In countries without formal sources of information and dedicated PDO programmes in particular, migrant workers are often faced with an information vacuum; a vacuum which is typically filled by misinformation spread by predatory self-interested actors. The lack of formal channels of information particularly affects migrants in rural areas, who are more influenced by brokers and thus more likely to migrate irregularly or be charged unlawful amounts for migration arrangements. Brokers are often returnees who use a lack of trust and confusion between prospective migrants, private recruitment agencies and the Government for their own benefit. Some approach the agencies on behalf of the migrant's family and demand exorbitant fees for their services. Others lead migrants to traffickers. Migrants who do not have access to PDO and training, especially those in rural areas, typically have to rely on brokers – or intermediaries – for information.

As countries like Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda develop experience in the design and delivery of PDO, several other countries such as Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia, are working closely with IOM to explore and develop dedicated PDO programmes. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has put a halt to efforts across the region in the last 18 months, there are many positive signs and opportunities for cross-border collaboration. Along with strengthening labour migration policies and legislation, and fostering closer ties with Gulf countries of destination, the implementation of PDO in the EHoA will prove a key milestone in efforts to ensure an enabling environment for the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.

PART THREE

# KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key findings and recommendations speak to the pre-departure information needs of migrant workers in the EHoA-Gulf corridor. Given the diversity of challenges across the EHoA, the findings and recommendations have been categorized as follows:

- All countries in the EHoA.
- Countries with formal PDO initiatives (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda).
- Countries without formal PDO initiatives (Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, and the United Republic of Tanzania).

### ALL COUNTRIES IN THE EHOA

#### **Key Finding: A consensus has emerged around the critical importance of harmonizing labour migration between the EHoA and the Gulf States**

As the number of EHoA migrant workers continues to grow in the Gulf, a general consensus has emerged around the need for enhanced collaboration between countries of origin and countries of destination to ensure information needs are met over the course of the labour migration cycle. Platforms like the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) have emphasized the importance of coordination between countries of origin and countries of destination, and the need to collaborate on implementing dedicated orientation programmes for EHoA nationals traveling to the Gulf for employment.



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin should consider collaborating closely with countries of destination, and in relevant cases, transit countries, to ensure synergy and accuracy of information over the course of the labour migration cycle. Orientation programmes across all four stages of the labour migration cycle – PEO, PDO, PDO and PRO – should be designed and developed collaboratively by key stakeholders in both countries of origin and countries of destination to ensure that information provision is harmonized and responsive to the needs of migrant workers.

#### **Key Finding: PDO is a key feature of an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration**

Across the EHoA, PDO emerges in countries that foster an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration. In addition to, and in part at least, as a consequence of, sending the largest numbers of migrant workers to the Gulf, countries that have developed PDO and make pre-departure information available tend to also have in place a range of measures that enhance the protection of nationals abroad. These countries have invested in strengthening labour migration policies and regulating the recruitment industry, for example, often making particular provisions for labour migration to the Gulf. They have worked towards strengthening bilateral relations with Gulf countries, with some signing bilateral labour agreements, and in the case of Kenya, appointing dedicated labour attachés to look after the welfare of nationals in countries of destination. PDOs should not be considered a standalone measure, but rather are a key component of broader efforts to ensure an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration.



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider PDOs as a key component of broader efforts to foster an enabling environment for safe, orderly and regular migration, which includes strengthening formal communication channels and sources of information related to labour migration, regulating the recruitment industry to promote ethical recruitment and strengthening coordination on labour migration with Gulf countries of destination. Strong labour migration policy and bilateral partnerships between countries of origin and countries of destination are crucial to ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration.

### **Key Finding: Critical data gaps exist in the EHoA-Gulf labour migration corridor**

Due in part to the scale of irregular migration, but also a lack of migration data capacity, critical data gaps exist in the labour migration corridor between the EHoA and the Gulf States, and countries of both origin and destination are often forced to rely on estimates of numbers of EHoA nationals in Gulf countries. These data gaps could serve to undermine bilateral and multilateral efforts to strengthen labour migration policy and evidence-based PDO programming, and therefore heighten the vulnerability of EHoA migrant workers in the Gulf.



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin should consider prioritizing strengthening data collection in the labour migration corridors between the EHoA and the Gulf States. This should include building national capacity to collect, manage and disseminate official migration statistics and develop dedicated migration data strategies targeting labour migration corridors between the EHoA and the Gulf States. Better partnerships between countries of origin and countries of destination on data collection could lead to more effective evidence-based PDO programming. Keeping in mind the principle of 'leaving no one behind', migration data strategies in these corridors must include irregular migration.

### **Key Finding: There is a lack of awareness about labour migration to the Gulf in the EHoA**

Across all 10 countries in focus in the EHoA, there is a general lack of awareness about the processes surrounding labour migration to the Gulf States, particularly in rural areas. In the absence of strong formal channels, information is fragmented and outbound migrant workers typically turn to informal social networks and recruiters for information before departing for the Gulf. In an information vacuum, prospective migrant workers are less informed about the risks of irregular migration and the benefits of PDO, and are therefore more susceptible to deceptive recruitment practices. The goal of an inclusive and comprehensive approach to pre-departure assistance should be for beneficiaries to acknowledge PDO as a right and not a privilege.



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider employing an information ecosystem approach and undertaking dedicated sensitization and awareness campaigns on labour migration to the Gulf at both national and local levels. Grassroots campaigns – encompassing television, radio and the Internet - can spread awareness of the risks of using unlicensed recruitment agencies, and emphasize the importance of pre-departure information in general, and PDO in particular. Given that most

prospective migrant workers are young and get their information from their personal networks and the Internet, social media campaigns would be particularly effective in spreading awareness about formal channels of migration to the Gulf. Dedicated efforts should be considered to ensure outreach to rural populations who are often far removed from centralized Government initiatives, typically in large urban centres.

### **Key Finding: Existing PDO in the EHoA typically prioritizes women migrant domestic workers**

Due to a range of factors – including the growing numbers of women traveling to the Gulf for employment in recent years and increasing visibility around specific vulnerabilities faced by women in countries of destination – existing PDO in the EHoA tend to assume their audience as women migrant domestic workers. Furthermore, as existing PDO are often integrated into existing pre-departure training programmes (on homecare management, for example), women migrant domestic workers tend to have more consistent opportunities to avail of PDO as part of their preparation for working abroad. While there is a significant need to address this target audience in particular, and efforts to support highly vulnerable migrant workers should be applauded, this focus could also serve to undermine the efficacy of PDO for migrant workers bound for other industries, as well as occupations within the domestic work sector that are typically occupied by men, such as personal drivers and guards.



**Recommendation:** While governments in the EHoA should continue to prioritize women migrant domestic workers and ensure the provision of dedicated PDO tailored to the particular challenges they could face, they should also consider designing and developing PDO that caters for the full range of occupations and skill levels common in the EHoA-Gulf corridor.

## **COUNTRIES WITH FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES**

### **Key Finding: Existing PDO does not currently reflect the multi-stakeholder nature of labour migration**

Even though labour migration between the EHoA and the Gulf States involves a wide range of stakeholders in both countries of origin and destination, PDO is for the most part designed and developed by governments in countries of origin, and are provided for the most part by private employment agencies. There is typically a lack of collaboration with civil society, diplomatic missions in the Gulf, governments of countries of destination, and returnee migrant workers with experience in the Gulf, which could enhance industry specific, gender responsive and support oriented curriculum development. In the place of multi-stakeholder collaboration, private employment agencies tend to exert excessive influence over the delivery of PDO, often at the expense of the well-being of migrant workers.



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider adopting a multi-stakeholder whole-of-cycle approach to the design, development and implementation of PDO programmes. Recognizing the complexity of the information landscape, governments should include CSOs, NGOs, diaspora groups and representatives from countries of destination in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of PDO. In particular,

returnee migrant workers with experience in the Gulf should be recognized as critical influencers in the information ecosystem, and should be consulted on the design, and included in the delivery, of PDO.

### **Key Finding: PDO and pre-departure training are often conflated**

PDO is seldom provided as part of a stand-alone programme, but is typically integrated into wider pre-departure training packages, most often overseen by private recruitment agencies. Prospective migrants themselves often cannot distinguish between vocational pre-departure training, provided by private recruitment agencies, and PDO mandated by governments. PDO is thus rarely viewed as critical in the lead-up to departure. While pre-departure training is an important step in the labour migration cycle, and can afford important upskilling opportunities, it tends to focus on responsibilities at the expense of rights, leaving migrant workers ill-informed and therefore at a heightened vulnerability of exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, while pre-departure training is common for domestic workers, it is much less common for other skill levels and industries, meaning a lot of migrant workers cannot avail of the opportunity to participate in PDO.



**Recommendation:** While adding PDO to existing pre-departure training programmes might prove practical in some contexts, it is important to recognize and make clear the distinction between the two. Pre-departure training (which is concerned with competence and preparing prospective migrants for work in the Gulf) and PDO (which focuses on rights and responsibilities) are complementary and should both be incorporated into the practical design and delivery of comprehensive pre-departure programmes.

### **Key Finding: The design and delivery of PDO would benefit from becoming more migrant-centric**

Many migrant workers interviewed for this report questioned the practicality of the PDO sessions they attended. Many felt that the information provided was not tailored to the Gulf countries of destination, and that they were not adequately prepared for the challenges that lay ahead. In addition to migrant workers themselves, private recruitment agencies often complained about recent efforts to enhance PDO. Many worried that efforts to strengthen PDO – such as extending their duration, for example - would have the unintended consequence of making them impractical, and speculated that prospective migrant workers would struggle to attend and would therefore be more likely to consider irregular migration.



**Recommendation:** Governments should consider embracing a migrant-centric approach that puts migrant workers at the heart of the design and development of PDO, with respect to both content and delivery. While PDO benefits a wide range of stakeholders in both countries of origin and countries of destination, first and foremost they should be conceived around the practical needs of prospective migrant workers. In terms of content, PDOs should be tailored to specific countries of destination and to particular skill levels and industries. In terms of delivery, PDO needs to be widely accessible for all prospective migrant workers, removing as many

barriers to participation as possible. They should be delivered in local languages to ensure comprehension, and special provisions should be made to ensure outreach to prospective migrant workers coming from rural settings. In the case of women migrant workers, particular attention must be paid to ensure PDO is gender sensitive. While efforts to enhance the provision of timely and accurate information are critically important, they must be responsive to the needs of migrants, and make sure not to impose criteria and requirements so strict that irregular channels are perceived as more appealing.

### **Key Finding: There is limited monitoring and evaluation of the impact of information on labour migration outcomes**

In recent years, governments in the EHoA have paid increasing attention to the provision of key information to migrant workers at the pre-departure stage of the labour migration cycle; this is a positive development. However, little is known about the impact of PDO on the labour migration outcomes for migrant workers. Do migrant workers who are exposed to pre-departure orientation fare better over the course of their stay in the Gulf? Do information and awareness campaigns mitigate the risks of exploitation faced by migrant workers? How effective are classroom sessions, brochures or booklets compared websites, mobile applications or social media, in terms of knowledge retention? A lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of PDO risks missing important opportunities to enhance the programme, and in turn, the well-being of migrant workers.



**Recommendation:** Governments should incorporate a rigorous monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning system to better understand the information needs of EHoA migrant workers and the impact of PDO. Such a system should include a set of tools, including regular and targeted information needs surveys, pre- and post-PDO surveys and interviews with information users. Information and awareness campaigns should be monitored on a regular basis and enhanced based on insights gained from continuous evaluations.

## **COUNTRIES WITHOUT FORMAL PDO INITIATIVES**

### **Key Finding: Most countries in the EHoA are yet to develop PDO**

While there are several examples of recently developed PDO, and different countries are at different stages of exploring dedicated programmes, most countries in the EHoA are yet to develop PDO. In the absence of PDO and formal sources of information on labour migration to the Gulf, the information landscape is shaped by informal flows, including migrants' personal networks, social media and illegal brokers. Without access to timely and accurate information, migrant workers are often at a heightened risk of exploitation and abuse.



**Recommendation:** Countries of origin in the EHoA should continue working on developing formal PDO in partnership with key stakeholders. To ensure standardization of information, governments should consider making PDO mandatory for all prospective migrant workers. Informed by global good practices

and the principles of accessibility, relevance and impact, EHoA countries may wish to leverage existing resources and programming to tailor PDO to their national contexts. In contexts that currently lack the resources or capacity to provide formal PDO, governments can consider exploring a range of efficient and cost-effective initiatives, including developing formal information channels and providing pre-departure information services, such as websites and literature that address key information needs.

### **Key Finding: Countries in the EHoA share a range of common challenges and can benefit from enhanced regional collaboration**

In recent years, and through regional platforms like the High Level Regional Ministerial Forum on Harmonizing Labour Migration Policies in East and Horn of Africa, a consensus has emerged around the critical importance of harmonizing labour migration between the EHoA and the Gulf States. While countries in the EHoA face a range of distinct labour migration challenges, they also share a range of common challenges in strengthening the protection of migrant workers in the EHoA-Gulf corridor. A common theme that emerged from our key informant interviews across the subregion was the extent to which countries in the EHoA turn to each other for advice and support. There are a range of good practices emerging from attempts to strengthen labour migration policy and develop and deliver PDO in the region, and countries in the EHoA are increasingly collaborating across borders to share knowledge and experiences.



**Recommendation:** Governments in countries yet to develop PDO should consider leveraging regional experience and expertise, and should look to emerging good practices in the design and development of PDO. In addition to collaborating with countries that have already developed PDO, governments should consider working closely with international organizations that have extensive expertise in the design and development of PDO curricula and programmes in the EHoA. Regional and interregional platforms can serve as venues for the exchange of good practices, and can enhance regional collaboration and solidarity around the protection of migrant workers.

# ENDNOTES

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116. While trade unions might also be considered an important stakeholder in both countries of origin and destination, they were not interviewed for the purpose of this report.
117. Please see the *Background Report on the Post-Arrival Information Needs of Migrant Workers in the East and Horn of Africa-Gulf Corridor* for analysis of the information ecosystem in countries of destination.
118. Non-Gulf PDO programmes in the EHoA include the Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA), Australian Cultural Orientation (AUS), Cultural Orientation for the United Kingdom (UK-CO) and the Kenyan Youth Labour Migrant Programme, for example. Many of these programmes are primarily designed for resettlement purposes, aiming to facilitate the integration of refugees into their country of destination. They provide eligible refugees and humanitarian visa holders with critical information related to their departure, journey and arrival.
119. For the purpose of this report, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda are identified as contexts where formal PDO programmes have been designed, mandated, and/or implemented by the Government, and can therefore shed light on the obstacles and opportunities for implementation in the wider subregion.
120. Not all PDO materials are available in local languages. The video modules, for example, are only produced in Amharic. Given Ethiopia's linguistic diversity, this creates gaps in understanding.
121. In 2020, as part of its capacity building support, IOM Ethiopia provided skills training equipment (including household equipment) to MoLSA, to be used in dedicated TVET institutions delivering skills training for prospective domestic workers.
122. Ayalew, M., et al., *Women's Labour Migration on the African-Middle East Corridor: Experiences Of Migrant Domestic Workers from Ethiopia*. Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, 2019.
123. IOM, *Trainers Trained on Pre-Departure Curriculum for Gulf States-Bound Migrant Workers* (Kenya, 2018).
124. On 8 October 2021, Uganda removed Interpol clearance as a requirement for migrant workers (with the exception of security guards) seeking employment abroad in an effort to reduce the time and cost of the recruitment process for the workers, employers and recruitment companies.
125. As of 2019, all prospective migrant workers need to undergo pre-departure orientation at a training centre accredited by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, under the Migrant Labour Trainers Association (MILTA).

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ANNEX I

# SAMPLING

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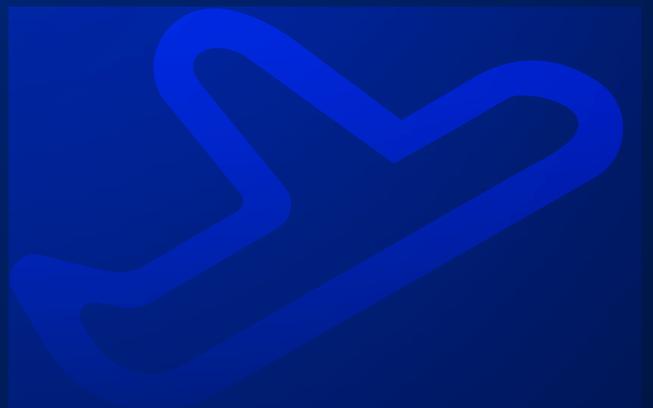


The sampling was selected with the diversity of the EHoA in mind; not all countries have PDO, provide information to nationals through official sources, or have the institutional capacity to produce and deliver such information. Therefore, sampling differed across countries: the goal of 10 interviews in countries with identified formal PDO was set out, and five interviews in countries without identified formal PDO:

Research Tool	Purpose	Sample reached	Locations included
Key informant interviews with government officials	Collect data on labour migration policies shaping information landscapes; data on the origins, status, challenges, and future developments of PDO programmes When relevant, gathering materials and data on publicly provided information and PDO programmes.	<b>15 interviews</b> with officials of relevant ministries	Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic Tanzania and Uganda
Key informant interviews with private employment agencies: PDO and other information providers	Understand the process and experience of migration for labour to the Gulf Collect data on information, trainings, and delivery mechanisms	<b>11 interviews</b> conducted	Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic Tanzania and Uganda
Key informant interviews with outbound and returned migrants	Focus on community-level experiences of migrants and returnees, migrant networks, and informal sources of information.	<b>22 interviews</b> conducted	Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic Tanzania and Uganda.
Key informant interviews with CSOs and NGOs	Gathering data from institutions that support migrants and who often provide information that substitutes or completes the one that is, or is not, provided by the government.	<b>13 interviews</b> conducted	Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic Tanzania and Uganda
Desk Review	Provides an overview of the socioeconomic and institutional characteristics of countries of origins and countries of destinations; as well as an analysis of migration trends and factors that drive them.		
Policy Review	Identifies and analyses existing policies and legislation relevant to labour migration.		
Policy & Stakeholder Mapping	Identifies key stakeholders and policies shaping the information landscape that migrants of the EHoA experience.		

ANNEX II

# MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA



**Burundi** is party to several conventions with implications for labour migration. These include the Convention Concerning Forced Labour, 1930; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It has signed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

**Djibouti** has not ratified the Migration for Employment Convention in 1949. However, Djibouti has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention in 2005. In 2018 Djibouti signed the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment and in 2019 ratified the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

**Eritrea** has ratified the Forced Labour Convention of 1930 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999. Eritrea has declined to sign several labour migration conventions, including the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant workers and Members of their Families and the Employment Policy Convention (ILO 1965). Eritrea is the only country in Africa that has decided not to sign the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement. Moreover, Eritrea has not signed the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Crime (UNCTOC, 2004).

**Ethiopia** has ratified the Forced Labour Convention of 1930 and the Private Employment Agencies Convention of 1997.[It has yet to ratify the Convention on Domestic Workers of 2011, the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949, the Migrant Workers' Convention of 1975, and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families of 1990.

**Kenya** is party to several conventions on labour migration. To regulate the activity of private recruitment agencies, the Government of Kenya implemented the Labour Institutions Act and Employment Act in 2007 and the Counter Trafficking in Persons Act in 2010. Additionally, Kenya is party to the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949 and the Migrant Workers' Convention of 1975. Discussions took place concerning the ratification of the Private Employment Agencies Convention of 1997; the Domestic Workers' Convention of 2011; the Violence and Harassment Convention of 2019; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families of 1990; and the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment.

**Rwanda** has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990; the Convention Concerning Forced Labour, 1930; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Its Law Relating to the Prevention, Suppression and Punishment of Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Others (2018) mandates prison sentences and fines human traffickers and aims to protect and assist human trafficking victims. Rwanda is one of four African countries that has ratified the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment.

**Somalia** has yet to ratify several labour migration conventions, including the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant workers and Members of their Families and the ILO Convention for Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

**South Sudan** has signed a limited number of labour conventions following its independence in 2012, such as the Forced Labour Convention of 1930, the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999. On the other hand, South Sudan has not ratified the Migration for Employment Convention and the Employment Policy Convention (ILO, 1965), nor the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143). South Sudan is a signatory of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment.

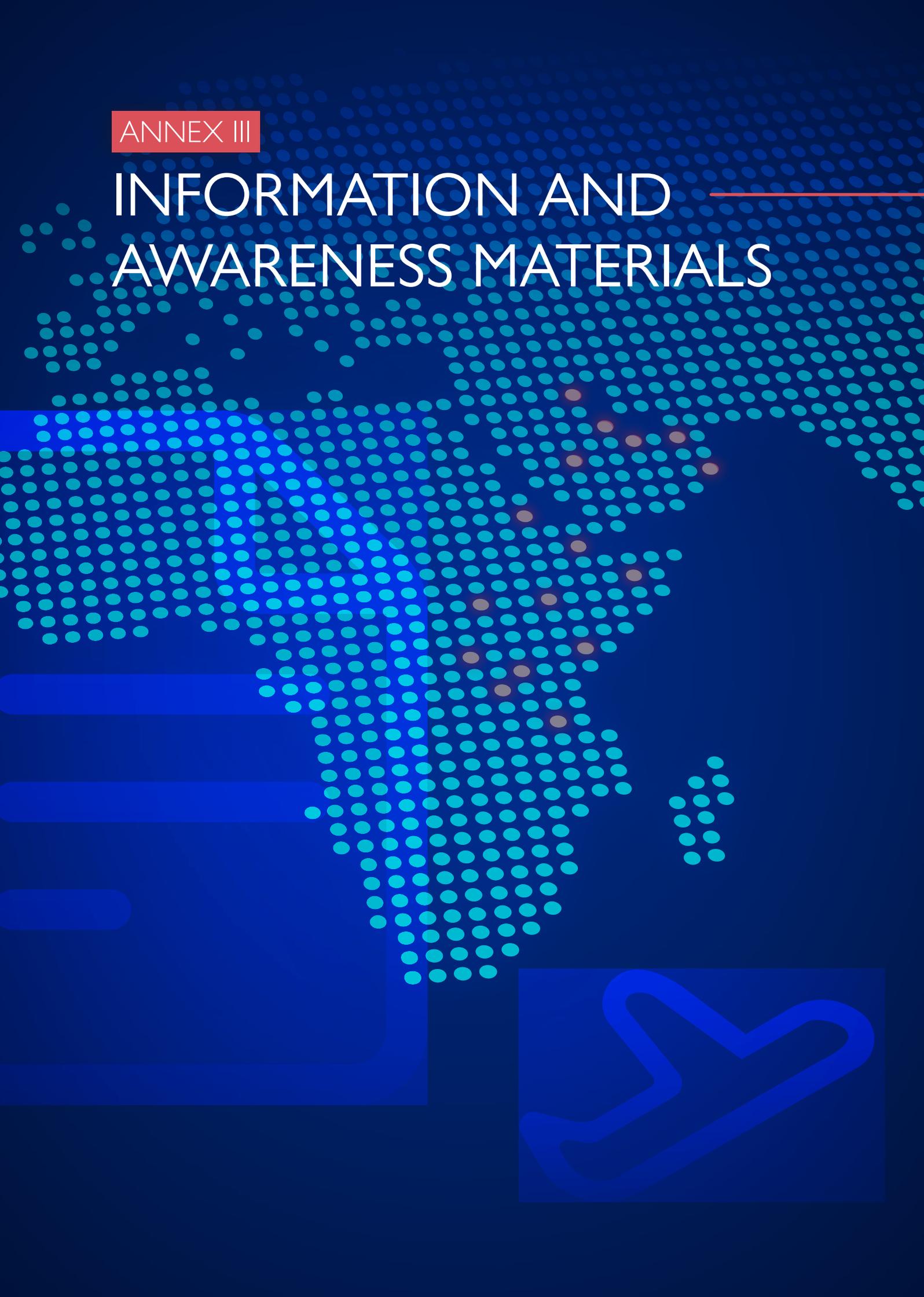
**The United Republic of Tanzania** is party to the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949. They have not yet signed the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence, and Right of Establishment.

**Uganda** has ratified the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention of 1975 and is working towards ratifying Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment Convention of 1949 and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Uganda has also ratified the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families of 1990 and the ILO Convention 143 of 1975. In addition, Uganda has signed the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment.

ANNEX III

# INFORMATION AND AWARENESS MATERIALS

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Extract from the National Employment Agency's weekly e-newsletter, the *Weekly e-Shot* (Kenya)

Issue No  
**7**



NEA

30<sup>th</sup> Aug-4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021

# Weekly e-SHOT

## This Week Let's Share Information on Kenya's Labour Migration in the Gulf Cooperation Council States



### ABOUT NEA

The National Employment Authority (NEA) was established in April, 2016 by an Act of Parliament (the National Employment Authority Act 2016). The Authority main policy priorities are the promotion of employment in all aspects of national development. Specific policy priorities are:

- 1 Employment creation, especially for the youth, minorities and marginalized groups
- 2 Provision of labour market information;
- 3 Re-engineering of public employment services; and
- 4 Promotion of foreign employment.



There are six Gulf Co-operation Council states: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Kenya workers heading for the Middle East typically end up in one of these. Across the Gulf States, Kenyan people are finding work in education, domestic households, security, construction and engineering, tourism, agriculture, finance and the medical professions

Non-citizens account for more than half the workforce across the Gulf States, while in four of the six, non-citizens also make up more than half the population. Emirati citizens make up just 20 per cent of the population across the UAE – the rest have come from Africa, India, Pakistan, Europe or America.

### HOW TO GET A JOB IN THE GULF

For you to work in the Gulf there are different requirements depending on the type of job. However, the following are mandatory minimum requirements for all jobs: –

- Passport that is valid for minimum two years
- Job contract
- Work permit
- Medical certificates
- Employee contract
- Professional and educational certificates

### THE PROCESS OF GETTING A JOB IN THE GULF

#### 1. Look out for Advertisement

Job opportunities are advertised by Registered Private Employment Agencies (PEA) through [www.neaims.go.ke](http://www.neaims.go.ke). You can access contact information of PEAs who have been registered and accredited by National Employment Authority (NEA) here. <https://neaims.go.ke/EmploymentAgencyList.aspx>

More information on Kenyan migrant workers is available on :<https://kmw.nea.go.ke>

Source: NEA Weekly e-SHOT (30<sup>th</sup> Aug-4<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2021).

## Extract from *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*



### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RELEVANT ACTORS ON LABOUR MIGRATION IN ETHIOPIA

#### *Upon arrival in destination country & during employment*

- ▶ adapt to the family and their ways of living within limits of recognized international human rights.
- ▶ carry ID card at all times and inform the employer before leaving the household.
- ▶ abide by the country's laws, social customs and traditions, as well as religious, cultural and moral values, as long as it does not violate internationally recognized human rights.
- ▶ carry out the work agreed upon in the employment contract with integrity and diligence.
- ▶ maintain confidentiality of information about your employers and safeguard money and property, of your employer and any people residing in the household or visitors,
- ▶ to act in good faith at all times.
- ▶ follow employer's instructions and orders with an optimum manner, unless they are in violation of the law or the labour contract, or expose his/her life, money, or the life or money of third parties to danger.
- ▶ safeguard the objects, which were handed to you to perform your work, and handle such objects in accordance with the nature of their use, and return to the employer upon finishing your service.

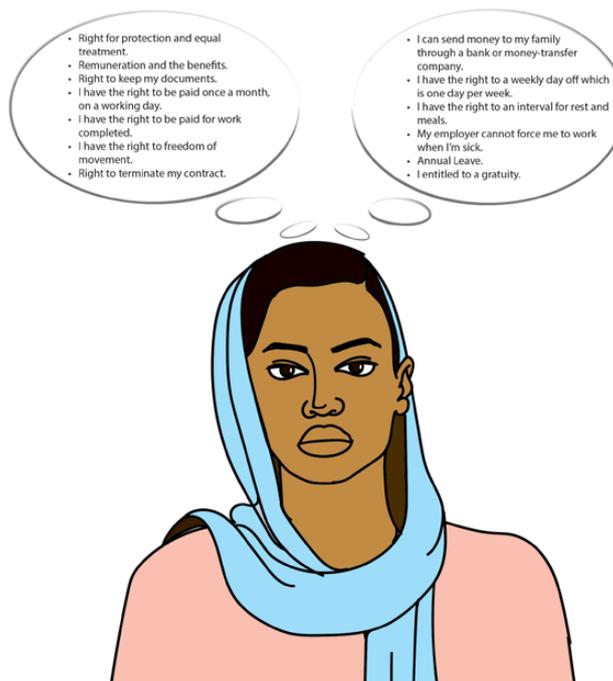


Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) - *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*.

## Extract from *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*



### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RELEVANT ACTORS ON LABOUR MIGRATION IN ETHIOPIA



## 1. Rights and Responsibilities of Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers

### *Rights of Migrant Domestic Workers*

Migrant Domestic Workers have the right to:

#### *Before Departure in Ethiopia*

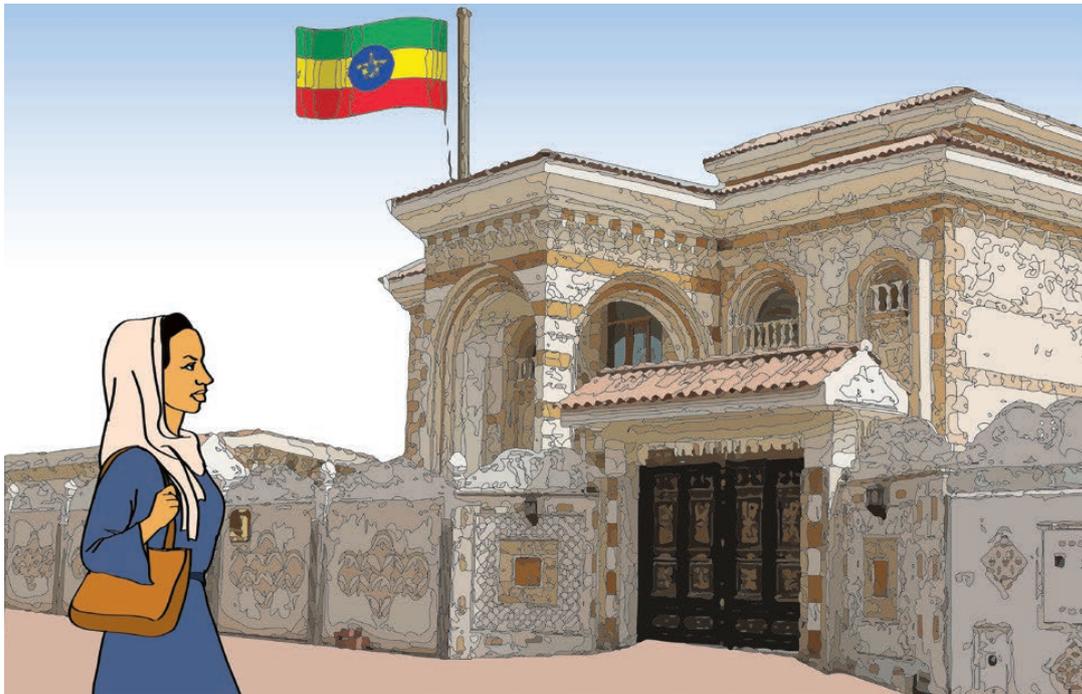
- ▶ access vocational skills training and information on regular labour migration, to better equip themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge to migrate;
- ▶ be informed of terms and conditions of employment in an appropriate, verifiable and easily understandable manner, including the name and address of the employer/workplace, contract period, type of work and working condition, remuneration and periodicity of payments, daily working hours; annual leave, daily and weekly rest periods, terms of repatriation and terms and conditions relating to the termination of employment;

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) - *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*.

## Extract from *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*



### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RELEVANT ACTORS ON LABOUR MIGRATION IN ETHIOPIA



## 4. Roles and Responsibilities of Government in Countries of Origin and Destination

### *Roles and Responsibilities of Government in Destination Countries*

Government in Destination Country has the obligation to:

- ▶ ensure that migrant workers have access to justice – access to the appropriate courts or shall otherwise obtain redress for his/her grievances or compliant through well-established complaint handling mechanism settle disputes between migrant workers and employers;
- ▶ ensure that laws and regulations protecting migrant workers are actually enforced and are effective deterrents – including regular inspections of working and living conditions and supervision of compliance with employment contracts and bilateral agreements;
- ▶ accord equality of treatment between migrant workers and national worker;

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) - *Rights and Responsibilities of Relevant Actors on Labour Migration in Ethiopia*.

## Extract from the *Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers*



# MODULE 1

## TRAVEL ADVISORIES AND AIRPORT CUSTOM PROCEDURES

### Session 1.1

#### Preparations for a Smooth Departure from Ethiopia

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**Objectives:** To ensure that departing migrants have sufficient knowledge on and preparation for possessing essential travel, work permit and other related documents before they legally depart from Ethiopia and enter other countries of destination. The session also informs the importance of proper handling practices of travel documents and advice the measures to be taken in case documents are lost.

**Materials:** Sample passport, visa, work contract and insurance documents, at least one cell phone apparatus with all the necessary emergency phone numbers and air ticket (to be shown to participants during the discussions)

**Activity:** Brainstorming, case study analysis and interactive plenary discussions

Ask the participants to enlist the types of travel, work related and other important documents that they are supposed to have at hand. Encourage also the participants to review the following case study of Hawaa, analyze her situation and come up with possible preventive measures that Hawaa should have taken not to lose her document. Probe further and ask them to know the steps that they should take to recover or replace the lost travel document.

**Time frame:** 30 minutes

### 1.1 Input for case-study analysis

#### The lost document of Hawaa

Hawaa, after bidding a farewell to her family, traveled to Addis Ababa to leave for her country of destination. She spent the last five days before her departure date at her relative home located in Kolfe, Addis Ababa. On her second day in Addis Ababa, she suddenly discovered that she lost her passport on her way to Addis Ababa. She was shocked and began to cry when she realized that departing migrants shall possess all essential travel documents at hand.

PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING MANUAL FOR ETHIOPIAN MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

Source: Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers.

## Extract from the *Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers*



# MODULE 2

## BUILD SMOOTH WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR EMPLOYER / SPONSOR

### Session 2.1

Establish rapport with your employer or sponsor at your first meeting

**Objectives:** To enable participants have a smooth experience in physically meeting their employers/ sponsors for the first time at their destination country.

**Materials:** Pictures that show a hypothetical employer's sample house, styles of greetings and daily language use.

**Activity:** Divide the participants into pairs and ask them to play roles of employer and employee to exercise basic language skills and information that they exchange for an average of 15 minutes. Then ask them to transpose roles and continue to exercise their language skills for the second round of 15 minutes. Once you have completed the role-playing; then encourage the participants to reflect on their peer exercises and what it means for them to meet their employers/ sponsors for the first time. Probe questions and ask them what their worries and concerns are.

**Time frame:** 45 minutes

### Guiding Tip 2.1

Be Confident in Exercising your Basic Language Skills and Ready to Create a Positive Presentation of Yourself upon your First Meeting with your Employer/ Sponsor.

- Keep practicing and memorizing some basic words in the language of the country of your destination for you to make a good start and a positive rapport with your employer.
- Be free to meet your employer with decent manner including with cultural/religiously accepted clothing style, proper facial expressions and willingness to respond to questions. Keep up your good manner and humble interpersonal communication with your employer at all times.
- Note that your employer is your sponsor, who is legally responsible for your stay and work in your country of destination under what they called a 'sponsorship' system.
- When you meet face to face; please feel free to provide key information about yourself with proper

PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING MANUAL FOR ETHIOPIAN MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

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Source: Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers.

## Extract from the *Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers*



# MODULE 6

## MANAGING AND SENDING MONEY BACK TO ETHIOPIA

### Session 6.1

#### Managing Cash Transfer and Remittance

**Objectives:** To ensure that participants have clear understanding about the importance of savings and managing their money and remitting their cash through reliable financial channels

**Materials:** Case-story

**Activity:** Ask the participant the reasons why and how migrants send money back to Ethiopia. Also encourage participants if they know migrants who failed to save or send money back to home. Why they think they failed to do so.

**Time frame:** 30 minutes

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### 6.1 Input

#### The Case of Lubaba

Lubaba is a migrant domestic worker, who left her rural village- Illu Aga, near Holota town two years ago to work in one of the Arab countries. When Lubaba informed her employer that she was planning to return back home to Ethiopia, she was offered used kitchen materials as a gift and she was paid her last six months' salary. Nonetheless, she had to pay considerable money for the freight of the materials she was given. She sent the remaining cash through her fellow friend to be delivered to her uncle, who was told to lease, on her behalf, a commercial house at the center of Holota town. She was having the dream of opening a small cafeteria to economically support herself. The situation back at home was not as she expected. When she finally arrived home, she discovered that what she spent for the freight of the kitchen materials could have been enough to buy new materials from Addis Ababa. She was also disappointed with her uncle who breached his trust and found him using her cash for consumption. Lubaba was finally in shock and she blamed herself for returning back home. She decided to re-migrate to another country.

PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING MANUAL FOR ETHIOPIAN MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

Source: Pre-Departure Training Manual for Ethiopian Domestic Migrant Workers.

## Extract from the *Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers (Ethiopia)*



### THINGS TO CONSIDER AND DO BEFORE DECIDING TO MIGRATE

- Consider your reasons for migration in order to achieve your goals.
  - Financial goals
  - Life style goals
- Have a financial plan and clear estimation of how much you can earn/save.
- Have an open discussion about your intended travel with the people that matter to you.
- Get the training you need for the job you want.
- Make financial preparations; open a bank account and /or find someone to handle your financial affair for you.

### POSITIVE THINGS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

- **Earning:** You may be able to earn well, save well and support yourself and your family; get out of poverty and give yourself and your family a better life
- **Skill development:** You may gain new skills, such as international cooking skills, language skills, ability to get along with different kinds of people, time management. These skills may, in turn, be put to productive use in Ethiopia.



Source: Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers (Ethiopia).

## Extract from the *Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers (Ethiopia)*



### THINGS TO BE AWARE OF BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE

- Get accurate and sufficient information on migration: Avoid misleading propaganda related to the characteristics of the various stages of migration.
- Be aware that there are various modes of recruitment: Government or government-regulated arrangements; private recruitment agents/agencies; through informal networks/kin/family and in some instance directly by the employer itself recruitments can happen.
- Be aware that your agent is legal/licensed, reliable and trustworthy: Recruitment agents are intermediaries between you and your employers and can handle the process of hiring.
- Be aware that traveling abroad has a cost: If you happen to be recruited or engaged by an employer, you should not pay the cost of your own travel. The recruiter or the employer should pay traveling expenses. In some cases, recruitment agency may charge you for some services.
- Pre-departure preparation and training: Pre-departure training informs and equips migrant workers with information related



Source: Information Package for Domestic Migrant Workers (Ethiopia).

Extract from *Migrant Information Handbook: Smart Guide to Travel and Work in the Middle East (Uganda)*



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### Basic Household Conversation

English	Arabic
1 Teach me how to use the cooker -	ealamani kayfiat aistikhdam altabakh
2 What is this ?	mal hdha?
3 I am sick	'iinaa tebanon
4 Can I rest please ?	hal yumkinuni alrrahat min fadlik?
5 Can I finish this first ?	hal yumkinuni 'iinha' hdha awlaan?
6 I am coming	'ana qadimaton
7 Can I call my family ?	hal yumkinuni letisal bi'asrati?
8 I have four children	ladaya albatu 'atfalyen

Source: Migrant Information Handbook: Smart Guide to Travel and Work in the Middle East (Uganda).

Extract from *Migrant Information Handbook: Smart Guide to Travel and Work in the Middle East (Uganda)*



**CONTRACT INFORMATION**

**Know the following!**

You should have a contract. If you are asked to sign a contract after arriving in the country of destination, kindly seek the advice of someone you trust to review the contract before you sign it. A contract is important because it is a legal document that states the duties and obligations of both your employer and you as a worker. Make sure you receive a copy of the contract and that you understand all the terms and conditions in the contract. At a minimum, the contract should include details of:

- N** your **name**;
- A** your work **address**;
- E** your **employer**;
- D** your **duties**;
- S** your **salary** and benefits;
- H** work **hours** (not over 12 hours a day, including overtime);
- O** how **overtime** pay is calculated;
- L** **leave** entitlements;
- D** any **deductions** that are to be made;
- T** details about contract **termination**



Source: Migrant Information Handbook: Smart Guide to Travel and Work in the Middle East (Uganda).

