



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
COUNTRY OFFICE FOR ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA

Concept Note

**Fostering cooperation and partnerships for joint action against human trafficking:
Building the capacity of media personalities for improved delivery of public information
directed towards potential MDWs and MDWs and their families**

Background and Justification

The ILO's Country Office for Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan is implementing a three year project: "Development of a Tripartite Framework for the Support and Protection of Ethiopian Women Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs) to the GCC States, Lebanon and Sudan." The project aims at better protecting decent standards at work and the human rights of MDWs from Ethiopia during the process of migration – from their place of origin to their destination, all through their employment in private households in the GCC, Lebanon and in Sudan, and up until their return home. The specific objective of the project is to develop a coherent multi-stakeholder framework to ensure the rights of MDWs from Ethiopia to the GCC countries; to streamline and de-centralize the migration process in the country of origin and strengthen monitoring process in receiving countries; and to provide MDWs with relevant information and substantive training prior to departure and on arrival in receiving country, and on return home to ensure their successful performance and reintegration.

Labour migration from Ethiopia mainly to Arab countries dates back to the late 1980s of recent however, Women constitute a higher proportion of migrants as they are considerably more in demand for domestic work. According to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), annually about 200,000 domestic migrant workers of which 90 % are women migrate through legal routes or legal channels. Over the past years, the outflow of Ethiopians using irregular route has been steadily increasing. Further, Trafficking in Persons (TIP) has become a widespread and serious problem in Ethiopia. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and irregular migration as they might accept any employment offer even if it entails risks. The demand for cheap labour, commercial sex, removal of organs, organized crimes and other forms of exploitation has exasperated the problem. The supply side is primarily poverty, lack of economic opportunity, lack of awareness of the migration process, family and peer & family

pressure, deception and manipulation disguised as an opportunity for better life. The pull factors involve of perceived opportunity for a better quality of life for them and their families.

Some of the major factors for choosing irregular routes among other things include society's inadequate knowledge on the possibilities and benefits of legal labour migration and absence of adequate intervention that aid the migrants and the community to understand and internalize the risks involved in irregular migration. Most don't know that the fate of trafficked victims worsens in destination countries as they face exploitative conditions at work places, including long working hours, unbearable workload, having to work in other households, restricted movement and isolation, inability to change employers, lack of leisure, denial of wages, and irregular payment of wages. Their freedom of movement and communication outside the household is also restricted through confiscation of passports and work permits, as well as through monitoring of their contacts with families and friends. Victims may also be subjected to different forms of violence such as physical, sexual, and emotional in the hands of traffickers and employers. Moreover, the threat of deportation in the event of disagreement with the employers is used to keep the victims in exploitative conditions.

These conditions amount to strong and medium indicators of deception, coercion, exploitation, and abuse of vulnerability to characterize labour migration cases as human trafficking. Trafficking has a massive negative impact, first on the affected people and their families, and also on the societies of which they are part. The consequences for victims materialize in their personal, social and economic situations and their health. These also translate into adverse financial, social, and economic impacts at the household, community and national levels.

The media is an important vehicle through which information can be obtained and exchanged. Indeed nowadays public knowledge about crises such as human trafficking, relies heavily on mass media. The project acknowledges that the media is also a powerful tool in influencing public opinion and raising awareness about the issue. With such power, however, comes also the responsibility to provide educated information to the public on the given issue. Thus, these forum will promote the media as a useful vehicle to spread awareness and understanding of human trafficking while at the same time advocating for a socially responsible journalism. The media is critical in shaping public opinion and generating deeper insight into human trafficking. The project recommends that all media personalities should be educated as comprehensively as possible about the nature and complexity of human trafficking before setting off to create awareness or investigate and report on a story as there are many facets to this crime – both causes and effects - which need to be understood and reflected in media coverage.

Henceforth, the project targets to delivering knowledgeable and clear information that enables potential migrants to make informed decisions about migration, to protect them from deceptive recruitment, human trafficking, forced labour, and deportation. The protection of migrant

domestic workers as a result needs to begin before they leave their homes and communities through awareness raising and behavioural change displaying the need to step up efforts to protect migrant workers, and to make sure they know their rights, but mainly, that they understand the laws and the importance of legal and safe migration, thereby improving the migration experience and offering protection to this vulnerable group of workers.

Accordingly, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has propositioned to address this issue through a workshop for members of the media, key artists and government representatives with the aim to encourage a larger and more informative media coverage of human trafficking and labour migration stories. The proposal emphasis is determined on the delivery of awareness raising by giving emphasis at the legal empowerment of Migrant Domestic Workers through media reliable, clear, and simple information on legal and safe migration.

Objective

The specific objectives of the workshop include:

- To further build synergies between media personalities and relevant government stakeholders to increase the representativeness of MDWs in advocacy and public awareness raising campaigns for the protection and support of Ethiopian migrant workers;
- To build and strengthen the capacities of media personalities and relevant stakeholders towards the creation of knowledge on the newly adopted revised overseas employment proclamation 923/2016 for enhanced awareness raising and advocacy by media;
- To strengthen the capacities of the media personalities in providing reliable, clear and simple information on legal and safe migration to MDWs;
- To strengthen media personalities and artists capacities in voicing, organising, negotiating and networking with regards to MDWs situation with the public and concerned authorities.

Structure of the Workshop

The discussion will spread with consultations among media personalities and government in Ethiopia, and will revolve around key opportunities to promote cooperation and partnerships in combating human trafficking and promoting safe and fair migration.

Expected Results

- Enhanced opportunities of decent employment for Ethiopian labour migrants especially MDWs in GCC states, Lebanon & Sudan;
- Enhanced awareness of MDWs on their obligations and rights.

Target Group

- Artists and media personalities
- Film producers and directors
- Film and TV series production companies
- Policymakers: MoLSA, MoFA
- Law enforcement agencies, including Ministry of Justice
- Relevant regional and national authorities

Methodology

The forum is designed as a panel discussion which is participatory exercise encouraging situation and gap analysis as well as information sharing through discussions and working group activities.

Schedule and Venue

Whole day workshop on June 2, 2016 at Eliliy Hotel

Resources

This forum will be supported by ILO TC project: “Development of a Tripartite Framework for the Support and Protection of Ethiopian Women Domestic Migrant Workers to the GCC States, Lebanon and Sudan, 2013-2016 (funded by the European Union”).