

GIRLS ON THE MOVE IN EGYPT, ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN DISPLACEMENT AND MIXED MIGRATION

At the end of 2019, **nearly 32 million children had been forcibly displaced. This does not account for those who are not captured in official records**, who have been compelled or have chosen to join mixed migration flows to urban centres within their country or into neighbouring countries and onwards. There are 272 million migrants living outside their country of birth, and children and youth represent a significant share of these.

What are mixed migration flows?

Mixed migration flows comprise both displacement (forced or otherwise) and migration (both regular and irregular).

Typically, these movements follow fluid migratory paths and involve tens of thousands of people annually. The proportion of children in mixed and complex flows has risen significantly in recent years, with some regions seeing exceptionally rapid increases.

- On their journey, migrants have to navigate harsh physical environments, cross heavily secured borders and traverse territories of oppressive regimes not dissimilar to the hostile circumstances they were seeking to escape in the first place.
- Because irregular migration is criminalised in several countries in the region, children and youth on the move are often exposed to criminal gangs, militias, smugglers and corrupt officials seeking to take advantage of their precarious legal status, which makes them vulnerable to predatory behaviour by the different people they interact with.

- Those facilitating irregular migration may see asylum-seekers and migrants as a source of income and even easy prey for financial or sexual exploitation, kidnapping and torture. Because migrants often have no legal status in countries of transit and destination, violations and crimes against them go unreported and unpunished.

THE SITUATION FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN: VULNERABILITY AND AGENCY

While an important body of knowledge on women and children on the move exists, there is a dearth of information on the specific experiences of girls on the move. This study aims to rectify this situation.

Gender norms constrain girls and young women's rights and opportunities, throughout the migration experience. Gendered challenges also face them in transit or destination, and they employ a number of coping strategies in different migration contexts.



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Meanwhile, however, **women and girls also choose to migrate**, and **their agency is key**. This runs contrary to the view of women as either dependants of male figures or victims of circumstance. While it is true that girls and young women rely more on smugglers, whose actions, in turn, can devolve into trafficking, tragic stories may be used by those with vested interests to mobilise support for greater restrictions on young women's mobility. The adoption of restrictive migration policies can then have the effect of exposing them to greater dangers.¹

Beyond a focus on trafficking or 'vulnerable groups', recent work thus stresses the risks that women and girls who migrate face but also the opportunities migration can create. **Migration can be empowering for girls and young women**, allowing them to access education and employment; can improve equality and norms around the capabilities and roles of women and men, girls and boys; and can enable them to make independent decisions and escape family control, which can entail harmful practices.²

METHODOLOGY

This study looks at girls on the move, in particular unaccompanied minor girls and young women moving alone. It analyses how gender affects access to resources, and gendered differences in power and equality in economic, social and legal structures. It pays specific attention to girls' current strategies and obstacles and the inter-sectionality of gender with age, sex, ethnicity and disability, as well as the likely differences in the

experiences of boys and girls, and in the risks and needs of younger girls, adolescents and youth.

Focused mainly on the East African route, with Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan considered countries of origin, transit and destination, the study investigates the choices, decision-making and risks/vulnerabilities of the target group in/over the three countries. It looks at their journeys holistically, including the decision to migrate, transit and experiences in the destination (whether temporary or permanent).

The study carried out focus group discussions (FGDs) with girl and young women migrants mostly from Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan, in Ethiopia and Egypt. While Ethiopia is an important transit country for migrant girls, the scale of internal migration is also particularly significant. Therefore, FGDs in Ethiopia were split into internal migrants and cross-border migrants to make it possible to also reflect local migration dynamics.

In each country of study, information was sought from service providers, to complement the information derived from the FGDs as well as to enable an understanding of some of the key challenges in the provision of services and support to young migrant girls.

- 1 Berman, J. (2003) '(Un)popular Strangers and Crises (Un)bounded: Discourses of Sex-Trafficking, the European Political Community and the Panicked State of the Modern State'. *European Journal of International Relations* 9(1): 37–86
- 2 O'Neil, T., Fleury, A. and Foresti, M. (2016) 'Women on the Move: Migration, Gender Equality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. Report for SDC. London: ODI.



INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION FOR GIRL AND YOUNG WOMEN MIGRANTS

Increasing attention has been paid to gender and migration, resulting in the inclusion of specific actions in many of the relevant frameworks in this area, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees include many provisions to protect girls and young women on the move. The degree of gender-responsiveness of these varies.³ Importantly, though, all three countries studied here have signed off the compacts.

Ethiopia and Sudan are members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which in 2012 adopted the Regional Migration Policy Framework. This contains provisions to protect the rights of women migrants, as does the revised Migration Policy Framework for Africa (2018–2030). All countries in this study have ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Youth Charter. Only Ethiopia has ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, or the Maputo Protocol, which came into force in 2005.

National legislation affecting girls takes two forms: migration legislation and legislation aiming to protect women. Laws governing the movement of persons across borders do not often target women and girls specifically, yet they undoubtedly affect them differently, which frames the below stories by girls. A key exception is Anti-Trafficking legislation whose explicit inclusion of trafficking for sexual exploitation is often gendered. In spite of specific efforts to protect victims, this type of legislation often seeks to prevent and criminalise irregular movement across borders, potentially forcing women and girls to take riskier journeys.

Looking at legislation focused on gender-based violence (GBV), Ethiopia and Egypt have legislation that prohibits child marriage and all three countries have criminalised the performance of female genital mutilation (FGM), even though both are practiced. Sudan only recently repealed a restrictive public order law that controlled how women acted and dressed in public, and by April 2020, the criminal code was amended criminalising. None of the three countries considered include marital rape in their criminal law's definition of rape.⁴

Even though the legal landscape varies across countries, cultural norms and the widespread acceptance of patriarchal attitudes result in a high prevalence of child marriage and GBV, which is undoubtedly a driver of girls' and young women's migration, esp. where communities ostracise, stigmatise and punish girls' and women's non-conformity.

DRIVERS OF MIGRATION AT ORIGIN (ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, SUDAN)

Gender norms at source often constrain rights and opportunities for girls and young women. Their migration may be discouraged where it is equated with 'moral corruption';⁵ it may be coerced as a means to support the family; it may be performed to escape abuse and discriminatory practices. Other drivers include the desires of young girls to improve their lives and subvert existing norms and practices. In this process, friends, acquaintances and family are a significant influence on migration decisions and destinations.

A number of Eritreans in Ethiopia and Egypt who had migrated on their own were trying to escape a repressive regime and avoid military service; some had come in search of relatives, to escape acute poverty and assist their family.

*I thought of leaving many times, especially after we hear from family that left or when my friends and I talk about what we want to become one day. But I only took the decision when a relative – who was also a soldier – came to tell my father that I should get ready to go. I left three days later.
(Eritrean refugee in Ethiopia)*

One young girl explained how neighbours had assisted her to leave the country because she had been subjected to repeated physical and emotional abuse by her alcoholic stepfather to the point that she did not sleep at night out of fear.

A number of Eritrean girls had initially emigrated to Saudi Arabia with their parents but after a few years had been forced to leave, as their fathers' work contracts had been terminated as a result of the new tax imposed on companies hiring overseas workers from 2017.

Ethiopian irregular migrants leave as a result of a combination of political tensions, violence and endemic poverty, exacerbated by natural disasters such as drought and floods. Adolescent girls face challenges that range from child marriage, FGM and GBV to limited opportunities to realise their rights and aspirations. Most experience corporal punishment by parents; those who go to school face it also from teachers. Girls are at risk of verbal harassment when they are young and, increasingly, of sexual assault as their bodies mature.

3 Hennebray, J.L. and Petrozziello, A.J. (2019) 'Closing the Gap? Gender and the Global Compacts for Migration and Refugees' International Migration 57: 115–138.

4 For resources on child marriage, visit <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/> and on FGM, visit <https://www.28toomany.org/>

5 O'Neil, T., Fleury, A. and Foresti, M. (2016) 'Women on the Move: Migration, Gender Equality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. Report for SDC. London: ODI

Most internal migrant participant had moved to Addis Ababa to take part in domestic work in the homes of extended family or friends. In many cases, parents had played a key role in getting the girls to make the journey.

Some girls had migrated for personal reasons, including to escape verbal abuse brought about by changes in home circumstances and a desire to challenge discriminatory gender norms:

*My uncle brought someone to introduce to my family, he wanted me to marry this man, my mother was happy, she said I would be safe if I got married, that's why I left them.
(Internal migrant in Ethiopia)*

For young women from Sudan, ensuring their own safety and that of their family members was their primary reason for migration.

*I miss my brothers and my parents and I worry if they have anything to eat, so I have to find a job to help them.
(Sudanese refugee in Ethiopia)*

In addition to its large refugee population, Sudan is home to approximately 3 million people displaced by conflict, violence, poverty, food insecurity and GBV, mainly from South, North and

Central Darfur states. Gender norms and discrimination are deeply ingrained in society and the country has among the highest rates of child marriage and FGM globally, although the government is taking steps to stamp out the practice. There is no law criminalising domestic violence, and marital rape is not recognised in law.

A number of young women from Sudan, from Darfur, painfully shared that a parent or sibling had been killed during the conflict or they themselves had been beaten; others recalled seeing relatives killed or maimed. Several said they had left because they and their family members feared being raped, murdered or having their house burnt down.

THE JOURNEY

Gender can exacerbate vulnerabilities in the migration experience. For instance, girls and young women often have less information to support them on their journey and fewer options for regular migration than boys and men. This puts them at greater risk of physical and sexual exploitation and abuse, including trafficking.

The FGDs and interviews pointed to three main countries of departure: Eritrea, Sudan and Ethiopia. Eritreans travel either to northern Ethiopia, moving on to Addis Ababa and staying there awaiting resettlement; or directly to Sudan, to Khartoum as a place of transit, and then on to Egypt. Ethiopian migrants from the north-west of Ethiopia also travel to Sudan, via Gedaref, to reach Khartoum as their destination. In contrast, Sudanese participants travel from different parts of Darfur to Khartoum, as part of their transit, and then onwards to Egypt.

Routes from Eritrea and Ethiopia to Sudan



Children and youth migrants crossing from Eritrea to Ethiopia are most at risk on the route inside Eritrea, as their dependency on smugglers exposes them to high levels of sexual exploitation and violence. The journey from Eritrea to Ethiopia is both mentally and physically taxing; boys tend to cope much better than women and girls with the physically challenging parts of the journey, like crossing rivers and climbing mountains. Boys and girls are bullied and ordered about by smugglers; boys are often given the dangerous task of walking ahead to clear the path and check for snakes in the long grass.

We travelled at night since it was too dangerous to travel during the day – we would be detected by the guards easily during the day. Crossing the River Mereb (a river at the border) was difficult. The river was so full. We had to wait until the river subsided. We waited until 2am, but there was no change on the fullness of the water. We were young, and we had to wait for the broker to help us cross the river. There were also other children in the group. So we were all waiting for other older people to help us cross the river.
(Eritrean refugee in Ethiopia)

There are four camps in Tigray and two in Afar in north-eastern Ethiopia. Eritrean refugees are brought to the reception centre for screening and registration. Some girls had stayed for two months in the centre before being taken to a refugee camp.

Asylum-seekers are received and registered at the camp by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They receive a medical check-up and some food, water and shelter but there are no mental health services.

I was so happy to see the camp, I thought I would die on the journey.
(Eritrean refugee in Ethiopia)

Eritrea to Khartoum

The internal movement to Tesseney and into Kassala (Sudan) is not only dangerous but also extremely stressful. Some girls rely on smugglers. Movement takes place on foot, with limited food and water, and mostly at night. Girls move together either with other girls or with boys in a group. The constant fear of arrest means some girls barely sleep.

I was panicking from being arrested in Eritrea while smuggling. In that case, that would have been destruction. That would be a life sentence. Therefore, I was disturbed. At Tesseney, there was a great panic. If you get caught in the border, you're done! Because if someone is caught in the border and asked to stand still and does not stop, she will be shot. (Eritrean refugee in Egypt)

They asked: 'Where are you going?' I did not tell them I am going to Sudan. I was poisoned and spent three months in Sawa Prison in Eritrea. It was very difficult in prison... there was torture and training. Then I escaped.
(Eritrean refugee in Egypt)

There is limited information on what girls experience at the checkpoint in Tesseney. It is possible that, since they rely on smugglers, they are able to navigate the checkpoint. Some girls said they had had to change smugglers when they reached the border.

Buses leave from Kassala to either Khartoum or Port Sudan. Some girls said they had been brought by smugglers to a house where there were many girls staying. They managed to escape sexual abuse by smugglers but were arrested and imprisoned after their bus was intercepted. The police officers showed kindness towards them and gave them their first proper meal in days. Nonetheless, they were terrified that they would be deported. Other young Eritreans knew people in Kassala who helped them move on to their next destination.

Ethiopia to Khartoum

The Ethiopia border area of Gondar and Metema is a key crossing point into Sudan. Gondar is the town before Metema, which has become the last stop before the border. Metema is described as being 'built by migrants', since the local community makes money by hosting, feeding, guiding, transporting and arranging border crossings for migrants. Despite huge security crackdowns, the flow of migrants remains steady, with many often risking death.⁶

Gondar is teeming with young girls, these days it is not uncommon to see many girls involved in the sex trade – all standing on the main road in Gondar
(Ethiopian service provider)

Some female migrants rely on smugglers; others cross the bridge by disguising themselves as residents of Metema, who can visit market centres during the day to exchange goods and services. Others wait until night to cross.

⁶ Ayalew, T., Adugna, F. and Deshingkar, P. (2018) 'Social Embeddedness of Human Smuggling in East Africa: Brokering Ethiopian Migration to Sudan'. African Human Mobility Review 4(3)

Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees and migrants reported being robbed and beaten at the border. They are also vulnerable to kidnapping for ransom by armed groups. This border is known for its lawlessness, and cross-border conflict between Ethiopians and Sudanese, resulting from land disputes, has rendered the region conflict-ridden and extremely dangerous for children and young people, both boys and girls.

On arriving in Sudan, many migrants are registered by UNHCR at Shagarab Refugee Camp and given basic support (food, water, medical assistance). However, a sizeable number enter Sudan undocumented, with the help of a smuggler, and do not pass through the camp.

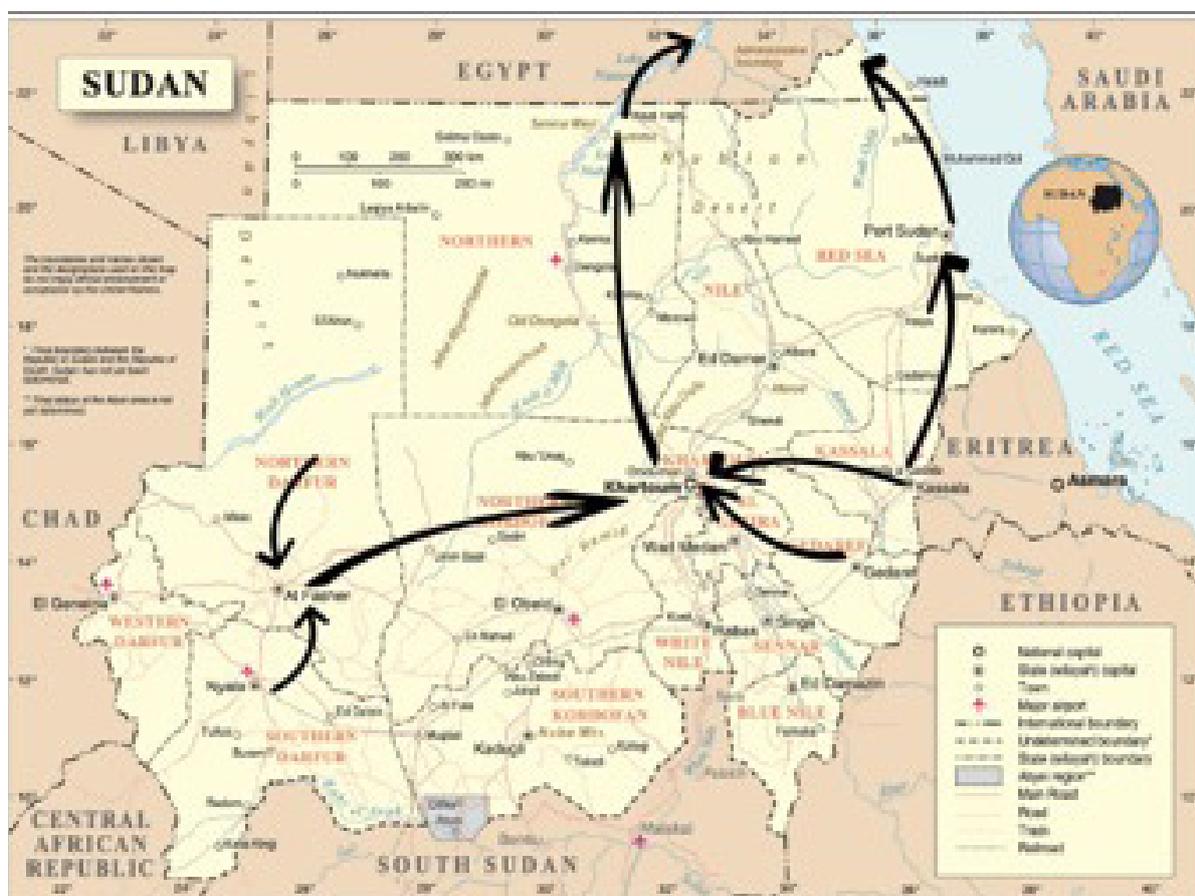
Those travelling with the help of smugglers usually travel straight through to Khartoum by car. The road to Khartoum has many roadblocks and checkpoints; if caught, migrants face detention and deportation. A number of migrants attested to witnessing smugglers pay off the checkpoint guards and being allowed to pass through unhindered.

In August 2019, the International Organization for Migration opened a drop-in centre at the Gedaref border. This aims to serve vulnerable migrants in or transiting through Sudan, as well as host and migrant communities and local institutions.

The migrants when they arrive at the camp are exhausted and hungry. However, the conditions in the camp are absolutely below standard and migrants leave as soon as possible, so they don't stay very long in the camp and head to Khartoum. Some take a bus, whilst other can get the services of a smuggler outside the camp to help them get to Khartoum.

(Ethiopian service provider)

Routes from Sudan towards Egypt



Darfur to Khartoum

For many Sudanese young women migrants, the road to Khartoum is a psychologically distressing experience. During this internal movement, they are exposed to armed men, bombings, attacks and people being killed in front of them. Many travel on foot, even on donkeys in some remote areas. There is limited food, water and services, since many humanitarian organisations have been 'chased away by the government'. Migrants reach Khartoum mostly by bus; a few travel by private car on a road characterised by regular checkpoints. Generally, migrants bring food and drink with them.

Journey into Egypt

Girl and young women's choice of Egypt as a destination is influenced by peers and acquaintances met while in transit. Whether they come from Khartoum or Port Sudan, they all travel through Aswan, in the south of Egypt. Access to documentation makes a significant difference to the border crossing and the risks involved. Sudanese and South Sudanese can obtain passports but they cost money. Children under 16 from Sudan do not require a visa to enter Egypt. In Eritrea, it is very hard for young people to get a passport.

Girls who do not have passports often need to take part in clandestine movements to negotiate borders and authorities, where smugglers acquire centre stage. The psychosocial stress involved in this was palpable for some girls. There had been afraid constantly that someone might detect them, but this was exacerbated by having to travel through the desert at night, with little or no access to food and water.

*It was a very difficult journey, and the situation was difficult. I did not know what will happen on the road. I saw battles in my country, Eritrea, and in Sudan. I saw the humiliation and harassment. Thus, I was scared.
(Eritrean refugee in Egypt)*

In contrast, some Sudanese girls who were smuggled from Port Sudan to Aswan through Halayeb and Shalateen said they did not experience any harassment:

Most girls said that travelling from Aswan to Cairo was less traumatic than other parts of the journey, although at least one had experienced an attack as she arrived in Aswan. All those who came through Aswan boarded the train to Cairo.

One South Sudanese girl's experience

Before I got on the bus, I spent six months getting my passport. Since I was working, I paid for the ticket and the visa. I did not want to travel 'smuggling'. I do not want to be exposed to harassment on the way. I do not want to be alone in the street. On the way from Khartoum to Aswan, I went out at 1am in a bus. I woke up from sleep at 9am. There was a checkpoint on the road. They looked in the bus; they found nothing the first time. But then there was another checkpoint on the road, so they said, get off the bus to look. They said that they found drugs on my seat. I said that these things are not mine. They investigated, and I said that the first checkpoint is the evidence that I had nothing, and they let me go. Then they started asking, 'Where are you going? What will do?' I told them I was going to Egypt, and after a while, we crossed after a heavy discussion.

Despite her having documentation, the harassment continued at the Sudanese border with Egypt, where this girl was asked to pay entry fees. But she stood up for herself again.

Then we reached the Sudanese border. They said they want us to pay entry fees. I heard that the entry is 180 Sudanese pounds. They said it is 500 pounds. I did not have the money. After negotiation, they said that you have to return to Al Khartoum or you will stay here until tomorrow and return on the bus. I said no, I will not stay and will not return... Then there was someone, whom I did not know if he is an Egyptian or a Sudanese, who said he would pay me. I gave him 150.

*There were no medical services, because I came through smuggling and even if I need medical care I cannot ask the government, because it will deport me.
(Refugee in Egypt)*

Girls and young women who migrate employ a number of coping strategies in different migration contexts. These include travelling in groups; taking contraception ahead of time or taking emergency contraception; and dressing to blend in with the local population.

Transit and destination

Gendered challenges in transit and at destination

Gendered challenges facing migrant girls and young women often continue after they reach places of transit or destination. Limited access to services, as well as stigma and a lack of sensitivity among service providers, is exacerbated in the absence of documentation. Meanwhile, women and girls are primarily to be found in informal sectors such as domestic work and care, which are often unregulated and thus beset by abuse and exploitation. Girls and young women also face discrimination based on ethnicity and language, as well as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Girls and young women often live with other girls and young women migrants, often from their own country, for financial and social reasons. Moreover, to cope with the threat of harassment while living in metropolitan places, they walk with someone, limit their movements during evenings and, in cases where they feel particularly unsafe, refrain from going outside as much as possible.

The following lists some of the challenges in Addis Ababa (as transit and destination mainly for Eritreans and Ethiopians), Khartoum (as transit and destination mainly for Eritreans, Ethiopians and South Sudanese) and Cairo (as transit and destination mainly for Eritreans, Ethiopians, South Sudanese and Sudanese).

Situation for refugees in Addis Ababa

- Eritrean young women and girls have developed a strong support system and social network (inside and outside of Ethiopia), including with relatives in the diaspora, to provide them with a social and financial safety net to enable them to survive in Addis; however, such support has become a cause for discrimination against some of them, as it feeds local perceptions that Eritrean refugees are well resourced.
- Ethiopia has recently passed progressive laws to allow refugees to live outside of camps and work legally in the country; however, the issuance of refugees and asylum-seekers with work and residence permits is still a gap.
- Many Eritrean female migrants regard Addis as a temporary stopover, with resettlement with family abroad being their key objective.
- Lack of Eritrean education certificates has a negative impact on the willingness of many Eritrean children and youth to continue with their education.
- Many girls and young women face verbal and sexual harassment from local residents. To protect themselves, they stay at home or make sure a family member or friend accompanies them when they go out.

Situation for internal Ethiopian migrants in Addis Ababa

- Unlike their refugee counterparts, internal migrant girls and young women who participated in the study had a limited support and social network in Addis.
- Internal migrants are dependent on the relatives they

live and work with for support; despite being family, these relatives are often abusive. Internal migrants also cannot rely on family support in rural areas because their family also requires support.

- Internal migrants spend most of their day working inside the home of their relatives, with limited social interaction, and are often denied promised opportunities to study.
- Irrespective of their age, child migrant girls not only focus on working but also aspire to improve their education, through formal qualifications or vocational training.
- Internal migrants had come to Addis to begin working in households as a first step to carving out a future for themselves. Though this was not revealed from FGDs with internal migrants, reports indicate that internal migration could be a first step, and many internal female migrants plan to peruse their journey outside the country.⁷

Situation for migrants in Khartoum

- Migrant girls and young women face discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and religious lines, and a precarious legal status in the country.
- Undocumented young women migrants live under the constant threat of being harassed, arrested and possibly deported. They avoid public spaces and do not seek assistance.
- Without valid permits that enable them to access formal employment, the majority of young women migrants are able to secure jobs only in the unregulated informal sector, as domestic workers, cleaners or tea-sellers, among other jobs.
- Currently, Ethiopian and Eritrean young women and girls are unable to access public schooling in Khartoum; they rely on refugee community schools funded through independent sources where they are taught in their own language. Young women migrants often drop out as they cannot afford the fees or have to work.
- Migrants in Sudan, particularly those from Ethiopia and Eritrea, often live together with other migrants from their respective country of origin. They are often forced to live in crowded places, which can expose them to violence and health risks.
- According to one service provider, a number of girls arrive in Khartoum and after a month or so realise they are pregnant. Girls who can seek help eventually acknowledge that they were raped along the way, either by criminals operating in the border region or by brokers on the way to Khartoum.

Situation for migrants in Cairo

- In Cairo, there is a strong service platform focused on addressing SGBV; however, a number of these services do not include girl and young women migrants.
- In view of the risk of harassment and discrimination, safety is a primary consideration for young women and girl migrants. Coping mechanisms include staying at home; not going out during evening hours; travelling accompanied; and minimising speaking in public.

⁷ Save the Children and RMMS (2016) 'Young and on the Move. Children and youth in mixed migration flows within and from the Horn of Africa.'

- Language barriers limit access to education for younger migrants, and their integration into the Egyptian school system is limited (except Sudanese/Syrian migrants).
- Access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services for young women and girls is limited, including by stigma.
- There is an ‘abrupt’ break in financial support when girls turn 18 (this also affects boys), who are generally not ready to fend for themselves at this point.
- There is a great need for safe spaces for girl and young women migrants to share their stories, which could also serve in building supportive peer-to-peer networks for them.

TOP-LINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Countries of origin

- Implement gender-transformative interventions in source areas to transform power relations and gender norms at household and community levels, with men, women, boys and girls, to reduce GBV and discrimination, which act as negative triggers for migration. This would enable girls and young women to make informed decisions and enhance their ability to choose to migrate. Actions could include:
 - Use ‘best practices’ to enhance the socio-economic situation of girls and young women (including internal migrants);
 - Popularise campaigns and programmes (i.e. positive parenting with parents, caregivers and influential community figures and structures) to build the capacity, resilience and decision-making power of girls who may contemplate migration; and
 - Conduct baseline research in countries of origin to better understand risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and reasons why children move.
- Provide family reunification assistance at source to prevent separation and often unwanted and unsafe migration in search of family members;
- Raise awareness (e.g. through parent groups, peer-to-peer support groups) on the risks related to unsafe migration, including first-hand and up-to-date information about the experiences of girls and boys who have migrated (internally and across borders) and strengthen safety networks. This includes risks associated with internal migration for work in unregulated sectors such as domestic work.

During the journey

- Work with partner organisations to set up drop-in centres, mobile teams, listening points and child-safe spaces where children can access shelter, psychosocial support, family reunification and SRH services, including SGBV referral pathways.
- Work with partners to develop mechanisms that allow youth to alert service providers about their detention/possible deportation, and referral pathways for intervention.
- In view of operational restrictions and high-level security risks, strengthen monitoring, response and referral mechanisms in border areas and across borders in partnership with local

organisations that enjoy access to these areas.

- Raise awareness of police, government officials and border guards on gender-sensitive child protection and to develop mechanisms that are responsive to gender needs and aligned with international child protection standards.

At transit/destination

- Develop mechanisms, together with local partners, to identify and refer at risk migrant groups (i.e. unaccompanied, disabled children and young girls; survivors of SGBV, young and pregnant mothers).
- Enhance capacities of front-line workers (i.e. health workers, teachers, police), and refer at-risk girls or victims of abuse in child-centred, gender-responsive ways.
- Develop and distribute child-sensitive multi-lingual information packages to inform children of available services, including gender-specific information, such as on SRH and menstrual health management and what to do in an emergency situation.
- Support safe urban hubs (i.e. one-stop centres) with integrated service provision by different partners (i.e. language and life skills training, psychosocial support, SRH services and support for survivors of SGBV) to avoid stigmatisation.
- Establish community-based or, if unavailable, alternative care placement centres for girls and young women who are survivors of SGBV to enhance their sense of safety.
- Provide SRH and psychosocial support services with local partners for young women, girls and boys, regardless of nationality or migration status.
- Facilitate peer-to-peer counselling where girl and boy migrants of different nationalities (separately) can share their experiences in safe spaces. Support girls to attend through travel allowances and in awareness of their education or livelihood commitments.
- Consider mentorship for unaccompanied migrant children in Sudan and Ethiopia in order to provide on-going social support and guidance to at-risk migrant children.
- Support community-based primary and secondary education programmes for migrant children, and programmes that address discrimination and violence/conflict in schools, while advocating for the integration of migrant children into public school systems.
- Build social cohesion, life skills and inter-communal relations in urban centres of all three countries. Target migrants who are most at risk of different forms of discrimination, for example non-Muslim children living in Muslim societies; non-Arabic speakers in Sudan and Egypt; unaccompanied girls and boys; young women and girls; and, in Cairo, sub-Saharan Africans generally.
- Institute programmes that incorporate both migrant and local children; support child and youth participation in peace-building.



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This study was led by **Under the Stair Consulting** and edited by **Ruth Griffiths**.



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