

# PUBLIC LECTURE: THE STATUS OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION IN ETHIOPIA: DEVELOPMENTS, CHALLENGES IN RESPONDING TO IT AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK

Ethiopia is facing significant challenges related to forced displacement and migration. Join us for an insightful lecture in which Professor Abebaw Minaye Gezie explores the developments, challenges, and responses to this pressing issue. Discover the crucial role that social work can play in addressing the economic, health, and psychosocial problems associated with migration and displacement in Ethiopia.

## prof. dr. Abebaw Minaye Gezie

Chair of the Forced Displacement and Migration Studies Center at the College of Education and Behavioral Studies at Addis Ababa University



Abebaw Minaye Gezie has a PhD in Social Work and Social Development. He is Associate Professor in Social Psychology. He has 27 years of experience in teaching Social Psychology, Social Work, Education and Research Method mainly at MA and PhD levels.

Ethiopia is the second populous nation in Africa (130 million). The country is going through a serious political dynamism in the last 50 years. Ethiopia is a major source, transit and destination country for migration of various forms (IDP, Refugee, Labour Migration, Smuggling and Trafficking). Particularly the recent decade long poly crisis involving armed conflict, climate change, economic crises, political turmoil and poor governance has resulted in significant internal displacement and outbound migration. There are 3.45 million IDPs and 2.53 million IDP returnees. Ethiopia is found in one of the most volatile and fragile regions of the world, East and Horn of Africa and hence it hosts a disproportionately high number of refugees (1.059 million) from neighboring countries largely from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan and other East African countries (UNHCR 31 April 2024). This makes Ethiopia the second largest refugee hosting country in Africa. Every year close to 250,000 Ethiopian leave the country.

WEDNESDAY, 12TH OF JUNE

10:00 AM - 12:00 AM

## PROGRAMME

10:00-10.10

Introduction by  
Ashenafi Tifie Tizazu  
(UGent/UNU-CRIS/Wollo  
University)

10:10-11.00

Lecture of  
Prof. dr. Abebaw Minaye  
(Addis Ababa University)

11:00-11.20

Reflections by  
discussions  
Prof. dr. Ine Lietaert  
(UGent/UNU-CRIS)

10:10-11.00

Q&A

## LOCATION

Campus Dunant  
Dunantlaan 2  
2nd Floor (Room 2.1)  
9000 Gent

OR Online

Paradoxically in the last 10 years close to 700,000 Ethiopian's are deported from the Middle East in the last 10 years mainly from Saudi Arabia. Making the situation like filling water in a broken jar. A recent development is the plan to send over 500,000 labour migrants to Saudi Arabia using the legal channel. This year alone in the last 10 months 238,000 have been sent via the regular channel. Though this seems a positive development as we have to encourage legal migration to counter irregular migration, how it is going to be handled is a concern. There is a fear that this may led to vulnerability of these citizens given the human rights record of Saudi Arabia and the kafala Sponsorship system which most associate it to trafficking in persons. There are frequent reports that most Ethiopians' awaiting deportation in Saudi Arabia stay in concentration camp like detention centers. And hence the future of Ethiopian labor migrants in Saudi Arabia seems bleak.

These crisis situations have led to dire economic, political, social and psychological problems. Alarmed by the unprecedented massive deportation of over 163,000 migrants from Saudi Arabia in 2013, Ethiopia took various measures including the establishment of a national council led by the deputy prime minister and a national partnership coalition council that brings together various line ministries, UN agencies, local and international NGOs, CSOs, media, and other stakeholders guided by the whole of government approach and the whole of society approach for migration governance. The country has also enacted various proclamations related to countering trafficking and smuggling, facilitating safe labor migration, and enhancing refugee protection. Apart from this Ethiopia has adopted many UN provisions, African migration and forced displacement frameworks and IGAD provisions.

In responding to the economic, health and psychosocial problems associated to unsafe migration and forced displacement what can social workers in Ethiopia contribute is a crucial question to ponder at. Thus, the current presentation will give an overview of the status of forced displacement and migration in Ethiopia, the country's responses to the challenge and the possible role of social workers in addressing the problem.

This lecture is jointly organized by the following partners: the Centre for the Social Study of Migration and Refugees (CESSMIR), the department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy (UGent), the United Nations University-CRIS, the Africa Platform of the Ghent University Association (GAP) and Wollo University



## REGISTRATION

Participation is free yet registration is obligatory

<https://event.ugent.be/registration/LectureMinaye>



Lecture can be followed online via:

[Microsoft Teams](#)



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