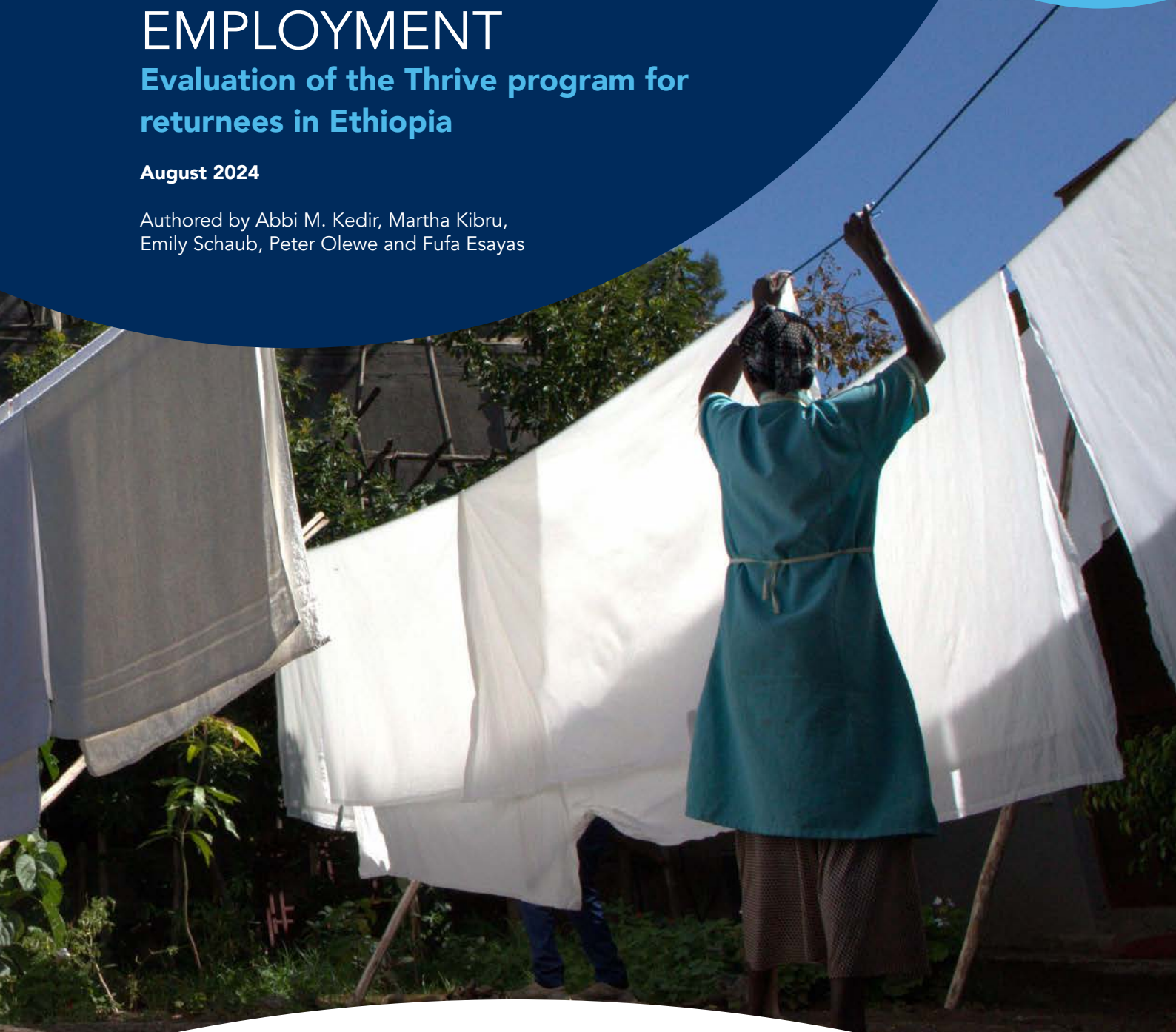


# TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

Evaluation of the Thrive program for  
returnees in Ethiopia

August 2024

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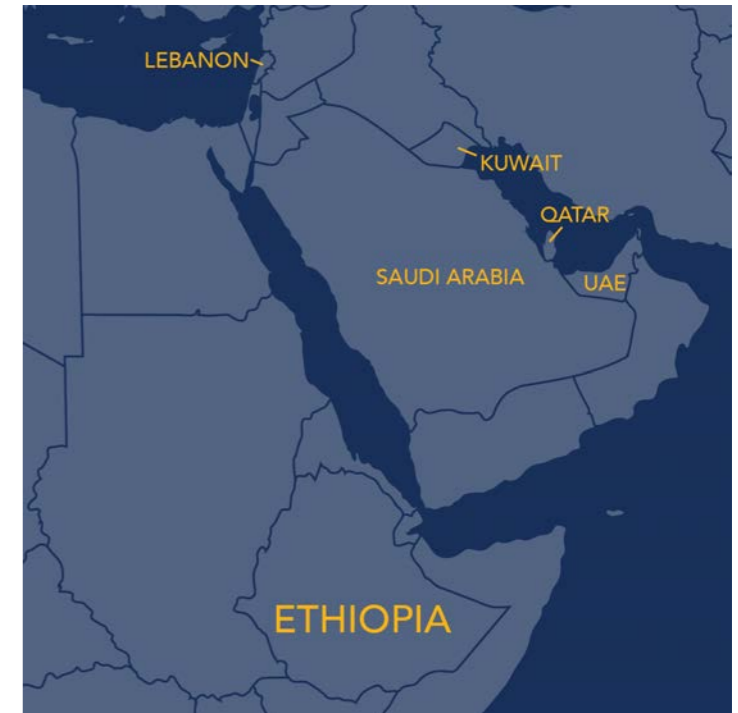
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

In 2021, there were at least 839,224 Ethiopian emigrants living abroad and another 589,110 returned migrants in Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup> Many migrants and returnees are women and girls who have left in search of work and who face high risks of abuse, exploitation and servitude abroad. Upon returning to Ethiopia, they also face barriers to reintegration and sustainable employment.<sup>2</sup> In 2015, the Freedom Fund established a hotspot in Ethiopia to reduce high-risk migration while enhancing the well-being of returnee survivors. As part of this effort, the Thrive program, piloted between 2021 and 2023, provided vocational training and employment opportunities to 240 returnee women. This initiative addresses the critical need to build sustainable employment pathways for survivors of trafficking and other vulnerable groups.



## Evaluation of the Thrive pilot

An assessment was undertaken in 2023-2024 to evaluate the pilot's impact on participant women's employment and reintegration, as well as feasibility and cost-effectiveness. The assessment included data from several sources:

- Program documents and monitoring reports.
- Individual participant interviews with 45 program participants and focus group discussions with 21 program participants.
- Quantitative survey with 61 program participants.
- Eight key informant interviews with local stakeholders, including women's economic empowerment experts, organisational staff, service providers, policymakers and employers.

The data were collected during the project implementation period, so not all participants had been placed in employment at that point. At the time of the publication of this report, the remaining participants had been placed into employment, representing a 94 percent continuation rate between enrolment and employment.

1 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. P. 405 & 423. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

2 Kedir, A., Williams, C. and Altinay, L. (2018). Services industries and the informal economy: an introduction, *The Service Industries Journal*, 38:11-12, 645-649

## Key findings



### Barriers to work

Stakeholders underscored the challenges that returnees face in finding and maintaining employment, including stigma, abuse, discrimination and suspicion from their families, particularly their husbands, communities and potential employers.<sup>3</sup> Despite these, participants reported that Thrive training and support provided them with critical work skills and the assessment found high levels of satisfaction with the program.



### Employment outcomes

Seventy-two percent of sampled participants were working at the time of the survey. They were working dramatically reduced hours compared with their previous jobs – an average of 49.0 hours per week, whereas they had been working 127.5 hours per week in previous jobs in the Middle East and 62.6 hours per week in previous jobs Ethiopia. Though this also corresponded with a decline in their wages, they earned an average of ETB 3,994 (USD 72) per month, somewhat more than most working women in urban Ethiopia, who earn an average of ETB 3,538 (USD 64) monthly. Participants report almost universally positive working conditions, much more so than in their previous jobs. However, 87 percent responded that they would prefer to work in a different sector, and 94 percent said that they preferred self-employment to wage employment. A small minority of Thrive participants noted a lack of respect for their jobs among both co-workers in better-respected positions and the community more broadly, and that this could create a negative work environment. Other challenges included depressed salaries, high transportation costs and difficulty working shift schedules.



### Reintegration outcomes

Other findings suggest that the Thrive program had a positive impact on participants' recovery from trauma and their sense of self-worth and self-efficacy, highlighting the program's effectiveness in supporting returnees' psychological well-being and social connections. Ninety-seven percent of participants reported that they had used what they learned through Thrive to recover from past trauma, and 93 percent said they had used what they learned to reduce feelings of shame, failure and anxiety. Similarly high proportions reported they could make decisions, maintain freedom and achieve their goals. Still, 59 percent of survey participants felt they were likely to migrate again, and 18 percent said they were likely to remigrate to the Middle East. Key informants stressed the necessity of social networks and positive social and economic conditions for returnees to feel settled in Ethiopia and avoid potentially risky remigration.



### Cost-benefit analysis

Using available data from the pilot period (2021 to 2023), the benefit-cost ratio of the pilot program is estimated to be between 1.45 to 1.60 after five years. This suggests that the benefits of the project will significantly outweigh the costs incurred over a five-year period, making it a promising social investment opportunity with the potential for healthy returns. In future stages of the Thrive project, as it grows and stabilises, there will be opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce delivery costs.

## Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

Results from the evaluation of the Thrive pilot indicate that the program was broadly successful and appears to have achieved its objectives of delivering vocational training and facilitating formal employment pathways for returnee women. Among the 240 female participants who enrolled into the program, 226 completed training and secured employment by the end of January 2024. Participants were generally pleased with their work conditions and achieved higher levels of self-worth, self-efficacy and trauma recovery, indicating the program's positive impact on psychological well-being and sense of community.

Results and reflections from the pilot period inform lessons learned and targeted recommendations to most effectively facilitate transitions to sustainable livelihoods and empower returnee women in Ethiopia. The recommendations are as follows:

- 1 Continue growing the Thrive program while maintaining a closed feedback loop with participants and employers as well as alignment with market conditions.
- 2 Engage employers to improve working conditions and foster a stronger sense of dignity among trainees and workers, in order to increase retention.
- 3 Conduct exploratory research on the household dynamics that could be leveraged to increase family support for returnees' participation in the Thrive program and to remain in employment.
- 4 Determine criteria for providing subsidies or financial supports after six months in work, based on vulnerabilities and/or gaps in income.
- 5 Offer longer apprenticeships and employer-attached vocational training at scale.
- 6 Share additional information with candidates prior to registration on what to expect from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) provider.
- 7 Explore opportunities in other job sectors beyond hospitality and food preparation.
- 8 Incorporate modules and support to respond to women's stated interest in entrepreneurship.
- 9 Facilitate peer networks and community-building among returnees.
- 10 Provide better understanding of and skills related to remigration outside of Ethiopia, including to Europe and other migrant-favoured regions.
- 11 Advocate with decision-makers to prioritise support for returnees.
- 12 Adopt a more intentional approach to addressing and transforming gender norms that affect program participants.
- 13 Carry out further research to quantify program impact and gaps with a larger sample of participants.

<sup>3</sup> Kedir, A. and Rodgers, P. (2018). Household survey evidence on domestic workers in Ethiopia, *The Service Industries Journal*, 38:11-12, 824-840.

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# BACKGROUND

## Context

Ethiopia has experienced extremely high levels of emigration to the Middle East, particularly among young women and girls seeking domestic work. In 2021, there were an estimated 839,224 emigrants living abroad, of whom 46 percent (n=388,494) were women,<sup>4</sup> and an additional 589,110 returned migrants in Ethiopia, of whom 62 percent (n=367,803) were women.<sup>5</sup> Most of these are young, married women with a primary school education.<sup>6</sup> The vast majority of women returnees (95 percent, n=350,992) reported that they had left Ethiopia in search of work.<sup>7</sup>

Among both men and women returnees in urban Ethiopia, most have returned from countries in western Asia including the Middle East region (82 percent of women returnees and 71 percent of men returnees; 78 percent overall) and Africa (11 percent of women returnees and 26 percent of men returnees; 17 percent overall). Notably, however, a greater share of returnees from western Asia and northern Africa are women, while men are more likely to have returned from eastern and southern Africa (see Figure 1).

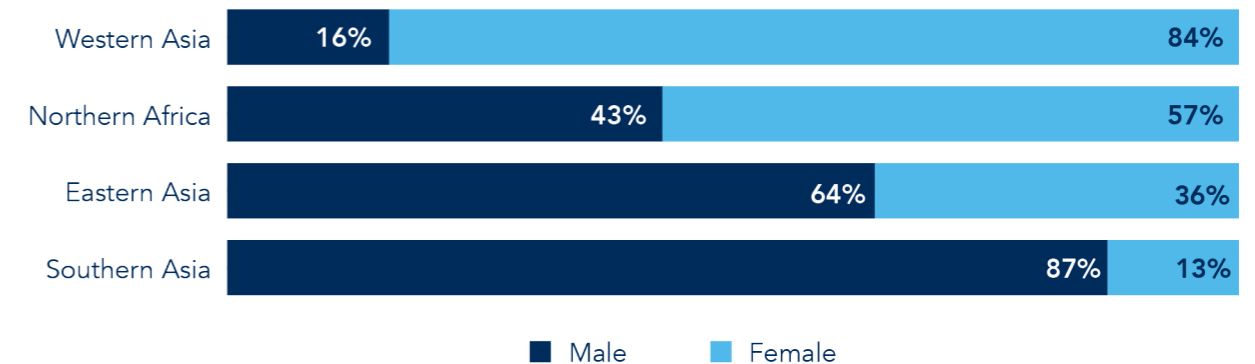


Figure 1: Share of returnees in urban Ethiopia by gender and former host region  
Data source: Labour Force and Migration Survey, 2021<sup>8</sup>

Extensive evidence highlights the ways in which these women, upon arrival in their host country, face risks of abuse, exploitation and servitude at the hands of their employers abroad.<sup>9,10</sup> For instance, previous research by the Freedom Fund has found that among Ethiopian returnees from Lebanon, over 97 percent had been exploited during their time as migrant domestic workers.<sup>11</sup> These experiences

4 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. P. 423. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

5 Ibid, p.405.

6 Ibid, p.406, 407, 409.

7 Ibid, p.416.

8 Ibid, p.411.

9 Shewamene, Z., Zimmerman, C., Hailu, E., et al. (2022). Migrant women's health and safety: Why do Ethiopian women choose irregular migration to the Middle East for domestic work? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(20). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192013085>.

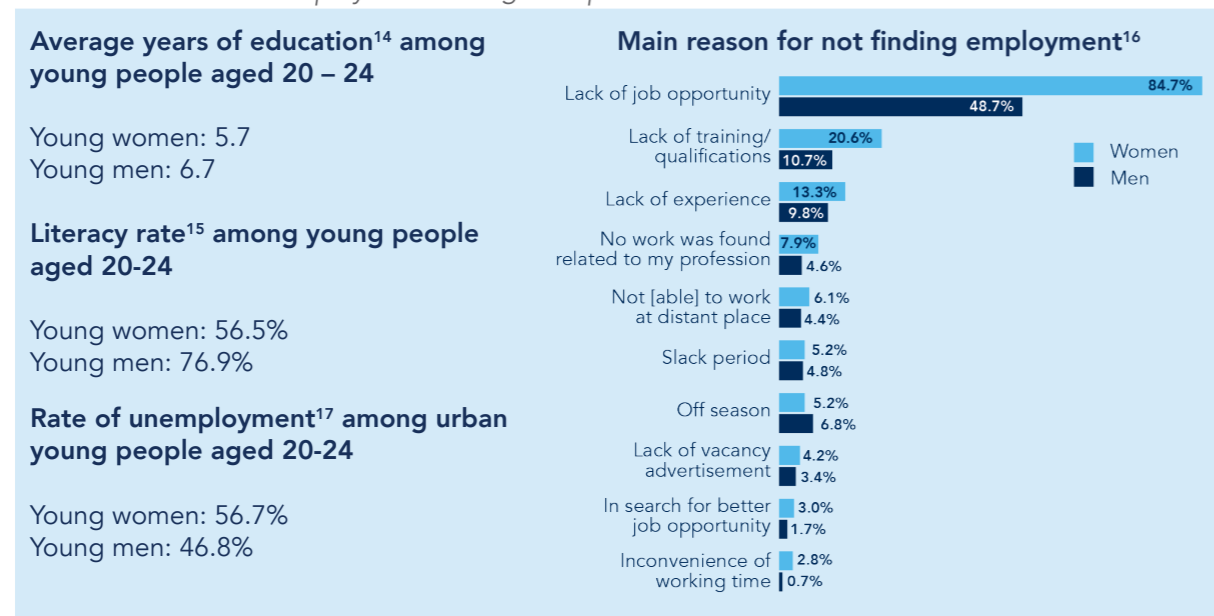
10 Busza, J., Teferra, S., Omer, S., et al. (2017). Learning from returnee Ethiopian migrant domestic workers: a qualitative assessment to reduce the risk of human trafficking. *Global Health* 13(71). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-017-0293-x>.

11 Busza, J., Shewamene, Z. and Zimmerman, C. (2022). Towards safer recruitment of Ethiopian women into domestic work abroad, p.41. Available at: [https://www.freedomfund.org/app/uploads/2024/03/MeneshachinQualitativeStudy\\_2022\\_05.pdf](https://www.freedomfund.org/app/uploads/2024/03/MeneshachinQualitativeStudy_2022_05.pdf).

have led to both physical and psychological harm. Additionally, if and when migrant women return to Ethiopia, they face several barriers to reintegration, including identifying and securing decent work, as well as health concerns and a lack of community support.<sup>12</sup> Returning migrants face discrimination and stigmatisation, which leaves them highly vulnerable to continued exploitation and repeated risky migration.

The challenges faced by women returnees in securing decent work are compounded by the broader state of the Ethiopian economy and structural barriers faced by women job seekers. Young women have, on average, one less year of schooling than young men and a literacy rate more than 20 percentage points lower than that of young men (see Box 1). As a result of these and other workforce barriers and discrimination, 57 percent of Ethiopian women are unemployed. Previous research<sup>13</sup> with survivors of modern slavery in Addis Ababa has also illustrated this impact, with limited market opportunities, escalating cost of living and lack of affordable healthcare cited as major factors that undermine survivors' economic stability.

Box 1: Education and employment among Ethiopian women and men



In 2015, the Freedom Fund established a hotspot in Addis Ababa and the Amhara region with the goal of improving livelihoods and reducing vulnerability of women and girls of being trafficked to the Middle East. Hotspot interventions seek to achieve both a reduction in high-risk migration and increased well-being for returnee survivors. This includes supporting returnees to find and retain decent work, engaging those at risk of unsafe migration and remigration with vocational training and awareness-raising around safe migration, and influencing local institutions and systems to meet the needs of returnees and potential migrants.

12 Nisrane, B., Morissens, A., Need, A. and Torenvlied, R. (2017). Economic reintegration of Ethiopian women returned from the Middle East. *International Migration*, 55(6). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12358>.

13 Brady & Nicholson (2022). Lived realities of sustained liberation for survivors of trafficking in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Available at: [https://www.freedomfund.org/app/uploads/2024/03/SustainedLiberationSurvivorsEthiopia\\_2022\\_07.pdf](https://www.freedomfund.org/app/uploads/2024/03/SustainedLiberationSurvivorsEthiopia_2022_07.pdf).

14 UNESCO (n.d.). Ethiopia Access and Completion. Paris, France: UNESCO. Available at: <https://www.education-inequalities.org/countries/ethiopia#dimension=%7B%22id%22%3A%22sex%22%2C%22filters%22%3A%5B%5D%7D>.

15 Central Statistical Agency (2017). Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2016. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Central Statistical Agency. Available at: <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR328/FR328.pdf>.

16 Ibid, p.101.

17 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. P. 101. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

## Thrive pilot

Between 2021 and 2023, the Freedom Fund, together with partners Hope Enterprise, Sister Yemisrach Training Institute and KASMA Charity Organization, implemented and piloted the Thrive program with funding from Walk Free, a part of the Minderoo Foundation. Thrive is a three-year initiative that delivers vocational training and employment matching for women returnee survivors in Ethiopia. The initiative was designed to meet a recognised need in existing anti-slavery programs to develop successful pathways to decent, long-term employment in the formal economy for survivors of trafficking and other vulnerable groups.

During the period of implementation, Hope Enterprise and Sister Yemisrach, two local service providers, designed and delivered vocational training to a total of 240 women returnees. The range of training and support services are summarised in Table 1:

Table 1: Thrive program components





<b>Engagement with employers and identification of suitable vacancies</b>	Service providers engaged with employers to identify suitable job vacancies and then match these to program participants. Before enrolling any participants, they ensured these vacancies met participant needs and minimum standards, assessed workplaces for safety and health compliance, and collaborated with employers on work preparation content, including necessary training and guidance on the nature and frequency of in-work support.
<b>Engagement with female returnee job seekers</b>	Program participants were enrolled in the Thrive program through referral agencies – particularly sub-city and woreda (district) labour and skill offices – and other support providers. Upon their enrolment in the pilot, each participant was assigned a case manager who collaborated closely with the participants to identify the support services they needed, developed personalised action plans and jointly assessed their progress towards achieving key milestones.
<b>Work preparation services and job placement</b>	Participants underwent vocational training delivered by the service providers, with the view of gaining the relevant skills as well as formal qualifications such as a “Certificate of Competence” which is typically required by employers. The nature of the training would depend on the participant’s desired job, which they decide upon with the guidance of their case manager.
<b>Job placement</b>	At the onset of their employment, each participant met with their service provider and employer to review job roles, terms, on-the-job training specifics, workplace health and safety conditions, and to provide contact details for addressing any concerns. All parties meet again one month into the job to assess progress and address any emerging issues. Participants also maintained contact with the service provider to identify and access any additional support they might need.
<b>On-the-job training and personal development</b>	A primary objective of Thrive was to extend support beyond the stage where employment programs typically end (at job entry) and find a way to continue with support services and well-defined training after job placement. Project participants continue to attend training or other supplementary development activities organised by the service provider. The continual development is pre-agreed between each participant and their employer and might include vocational training (aimed at supporting progression at work), psychosocial support, soft-skills development or attendance at peer support groups. To ensure that missing work would not place any financial strain on participants, as part of a “day release program” participants are paid an equivalent wage by the service provider.

# EVALUATION OF THE THRIVE PILOT

## Objectives and research questions





The evaluation was designed to assess Thrive’s impact on participants’ employment and re-integration, as well as to measure the model’s scalability and cost effectiveness. It sought to do this by blending insights from program participants themselves with reflections from the Freedom Fund team and service providers and external experts. The evaluation sought to develop lessons learned and recommendations for scale-up and expansion opportunities.

The primary research questions to be addressed through this evaluation are:

-  Has the Thrive program met its objective of successful, sustained employment for participating women survivors?
-  Beyond employment, what secondary effects, expected or unexpected, have emerged?
-  How can the unexpected beneficiaries and outcomes be quantified to factor into a cost analysis of the program?
-  Based on lessons learned, what special considerations are necessary when contemplating a scale-up of the model?

## Methodology

The assessment included:

-  A review of program documents and monitoring reports provided by the partners.
-  Individual interviews with 45 program participants and focus group discussions (FGDs) with 21 program participants (Round 1).
-  A quantitative survey completed by 61 program participants (Round 2).
-  Eight key informant interviews (KIs) with local stakeholders.

### Participant interviews and focus group discussions with program participants (Round 1)

Forty-five program participants from five returned migrant cohorts completed individual feedback questionnaires (September to November 2023; see Annex 3), which were administered in-person by Azadi, a survivor-led support organisation, through trained research assistants. In addition, 21 program participants joined three structured FGDs, also conducted by Azadi. All participants provided informed consent before beginning their interview or FGD. Feedback forms and FGD responses were organised and categorised in Excel to identify common themes and concepts across the experiences and recommendations provided by participants.

### Quantitative surveys with program participants (Round 2)

Of 240 returnee women who took part in the pilot, 50 were initially contacted for participation in a telephone interview. The field survey (see Annex 4) was developed through a collaborative process between the evaluation lead, Prof. Abbi M. Kedir, and the Freedom Fund. Both the consent form and the detailed data collection instruments were originally prepared in English but later translated into Amharic for the fieldwork. Data were collected in December 2023 and January 2024, during times that were convenient for and preferred by participants. Although the data collection team faced challenges connecting with some participants, ultimately 61 program participants completed the survey. Data were imported into and analysed using Stata MP 18 (College Station, TX) to generate descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations.

### Key informant interviews

Eight KIs were conducted both in-person and via telephone. These interviews took place in January and February 2024 based on a guide that was prepared and delivered in English (see Annex 6.3). KI participants included women’s economic empowerment and labour market experts from academia and international organisations, staff of related organisations, service providers, policymakers and employers. Responses were organised and analysed in Excel to identify common themes and identify illustrative quotes.

# RESULTS

## Socio-economic characteristics

Demographic data of the 61 women who completed the household survey are presented in the tables below. Most participants were under 35 years old which was somewhat older than the average urban returned women migrants (see Table 2). Most Thrive participants had not completed secondary school, which is in line with national data, but Thrive participants were more likely than the average urban returned migrant woman to have completed any schooling – just 2 percent of the sample, compared with 13 percent nationally, had completed no schooling. The majority of Thrive participants believed they had grown up less well off than other people in their hometowns.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics, participant survey (N=61)

	Thrive program sample n (%)	All women returned migrants, urban <sup>18</sup> %
<b>Age (median: 32; inter-quartile range (IQR): 29-35)</b>		
25-29 years	17 (28%)	38% <sup>19</sup>
30-34 years	24 (39%)	22%
35-39 years	17 (28%)	13%
40-44 years	3 (5%)	4%
<b>Highest education level completed</b>		
None	1 (2%)	13% <sup>20</sup>
Some primary	16 (27%)	49% <sup>21</sup>
Completed primary	13 (22%)	
Some secondary	14 (23%)	30%
Completed secondary	12 (20%)	
Any vocational training	3 (5%)	no data
Any tertiary	2 (3%)	7%
<b>Birthplace</b>		
Urban	26 (43%)	no data
Rural	35 (57%)	no data
<b>Natal family's money and resource access compared with other families in place of origin</b>		
Less	48 (79%)	no data
About the same	11 (18%)	no data
More	2 (3%)	no data

<sup>18</sup> Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. p. 406 & 407. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>

<sup>19</sup> N= 228,037

<sup>20</sup> N= 228,000

<sup>21</sup> The Labour Force and Migration Survey does not distinguish between respondents with "some primary" and "completed primary"; likewise secondary.

Nearly 60 percent were currently married and one-quarter had never been married, which is in line with national rates among urban returned migrant women. The majority were mothers with at least one child and most lived in households of four or more people (Table 3).

Table 3: Household information, participant survey (N=61)

	Thrive program sample n (%)	Urban women returned migrants, national <sup>22</sup>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	36 (59%)	61% <sup>23</sup>
Never married	15 (25%)	23%
Divorced/separated	8 (13%)	14%
Widowed	1 (2%)	2%
No response	1 (2%)	-
<b>Any children</b>		
Yes	50 (82%)	no data
No	11 (18%)	no data
<b>Household size</b>		
2 people	12 (20%)	no data
3 people	13 (21%)	no data
4 people	24 (39%)	no data
5 people	6 (10%)	no data
6+ people	6 (10%)	no data

Average household monthly income at the time of interview was ETB 6,565 (USD 119<sup>24</sup>) per month, ranging from ETB 1,600 (USD 29) to ETB 19,000 (USD 344) (see Table 4). Women without children reported higher household incomes (p=0.085).

Participants had migrated to 11 countries in the Middle East region, with diverse economic and social conditions. The most common host country was Lebanon (36 percent), followed by United Arab Emirates (UAE; 34 percent) and Saudi Arabia (25 percent; see Figure 2). The data reveal the complexity of the returned migrants' experiences, including that 30 percent (n=18) had work experience in multiple countries.

<sup>22</sup> Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. p.409. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

<sup>23</sup> N=226,423; "Married" includes "cohabitating."

<sup>24</sup> Here and throughout this report, the exchange rate of USD 0.018 per ETB 1 is used, based on average exchange rate between February 1, 2023, and February 1, 2024.

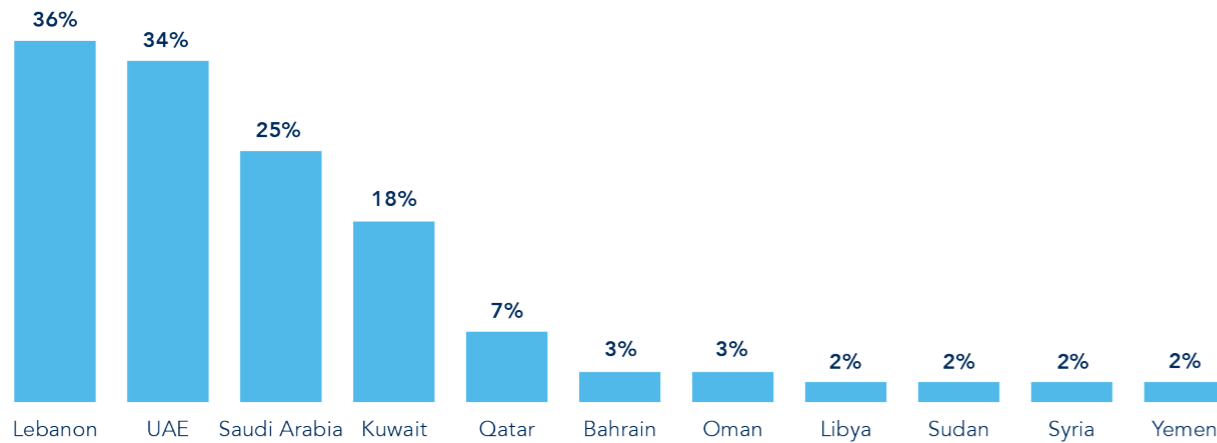


Figure 2: Previous migration destination(s), survey participants (N=61)

Table 4: Household monthly income, participant survey (n=59)

	Mean	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
All participants (n=59)	ETB 6,566 (USD 119)	ETB 4,000 (USD 72)	ETB 6,000 (USD 109)	ETB 8,900 (USD 161)
Women with children (n=49)	ETB 6,492 (USD 118)	ETB 4,000 (USD 72)	ETB 6,000 (USD 109)	ETB 7,800 (USD 141)
Women without children (n=10)	ETB 6,925 (USD 125)	ETB 3,000 (USD 54)	ETB 7,924 (USD 144)	ETB 9,000 (USD 163)

Demographic data related to migration are presented in Table 5. Most participants had migrated abroad at least twice. They had spent an average of six years working abroad, but this ranged widely, from one year to 26 years. Nearly one-fifth had spent at least ten years working abroad. Twenty-eight percent reported that they had family members who were either currently working in the Middle East or had previously done so. The majority of participants reported that their most recent previous job (before beginning the Thrive program) was in the Middle East, but 20 percent (n=9) had worked in a job in Ethiopia between most recently returning from the Middle East and participation in Thrive.

Table 5: Migration demographics, participant survey (N=61)

	Total (N=61)	Migrated once (n=20)	Migrated more than once (n=41)
<b>Total years abroad*</b>			
< 3 years	15%	45%	0%
3 to <6 years	41%	50%	37%
6 to <10 years	26%	5%	37%
10 years +	18%	0%	27%
<b>Family working/worked abroad</b>			
Yes	28%	15%	34%
No	72%	85%	66%
<b>Location of most recent job</b>			
Middle East	85%	95%	80%
Ethiopia	15%	5%	20%

\*p<0.001

## Barriers to work

Returned migrants in Ethiopia, particularly women, face extensive challenges finding employment. Lack of education and formal training collides with a lack of opportunity, whether perceived or real, to prevent women from securing sustainable, formal work. This is compounded by stigma and discrimination that returned migrants face, as well as by any physical, psychological and social impacts of the exploitation they faced while abroad.

Key informants described the significant challenges faced by returned migrants, particularly those who had faced exploitation while working abroad. These stakeholders described multiple layers of stigma against women returnees. Interviews reveal that returnees are at once expected to be able to support themselves and their families, regarded as having “failed” if they return to Ethiopia without wealth, and treated with suspicion by their employers. Family members who benefitted from remittances income while the women were in the Middle East are often unable to save a portion of these remittances for the returnees to use when they relocate back home. Stigma from their communities can drive women out of employment, particularly in the formal sector, and can also reinforce unwanted or high-risk remigration.

**They have a lot of family issues and also social stigma stemming from returning without assets or secured economic future.**  
Policymaker, KII

**Society expects these women to bring millions of Ethiopia birr and other assets. So when they return without those, they are considered as failures and the stigma attached to that can be too much to handle.**  
Women’s economic empowerment expert, KII

**Social stigma is everywhere. They might not last in their job if they are confronted by suspicious employers that do not treat them equally like other women.**  
Service provider, KII

Women’s access to formal employment and job opportunities is also limited by household roles and gender norms. In some cases, husbands can act as gatekeepers of their wives’ access to income-generating opportunities. In addition, there is an embedded stigma in the social psyche that discourages women from working in the hospitality sector, particularly in hotels, as it is sometimes associated with immorality and various degrees of sex work.<sup>25</sup> This creates conflict within a household as husbands tend to use the “command-and-control” approach typical of patriarchal societies. This is a severe impediment for those who seek to work in the hospitality industry.

**Another big problem is from home. Husbands are not willing for the women to work in a hotel.**  
Service provider, KII

## Experience with program

### Satisfaction with the program

Overall, the 45 participants who completed individual interviews described a positive experience with all key components of the Thrive program (see Figure 3). Participants were highly satisfied with the

25 Moufakkir, O. (2023). Occupational stigma in line-level hotel jobs in sub-Saharan Africa: A youth perspective. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 54, 246-254.



support provided by trainers and case managers. They also felt they benefited from the support system and peer network they found in the program.

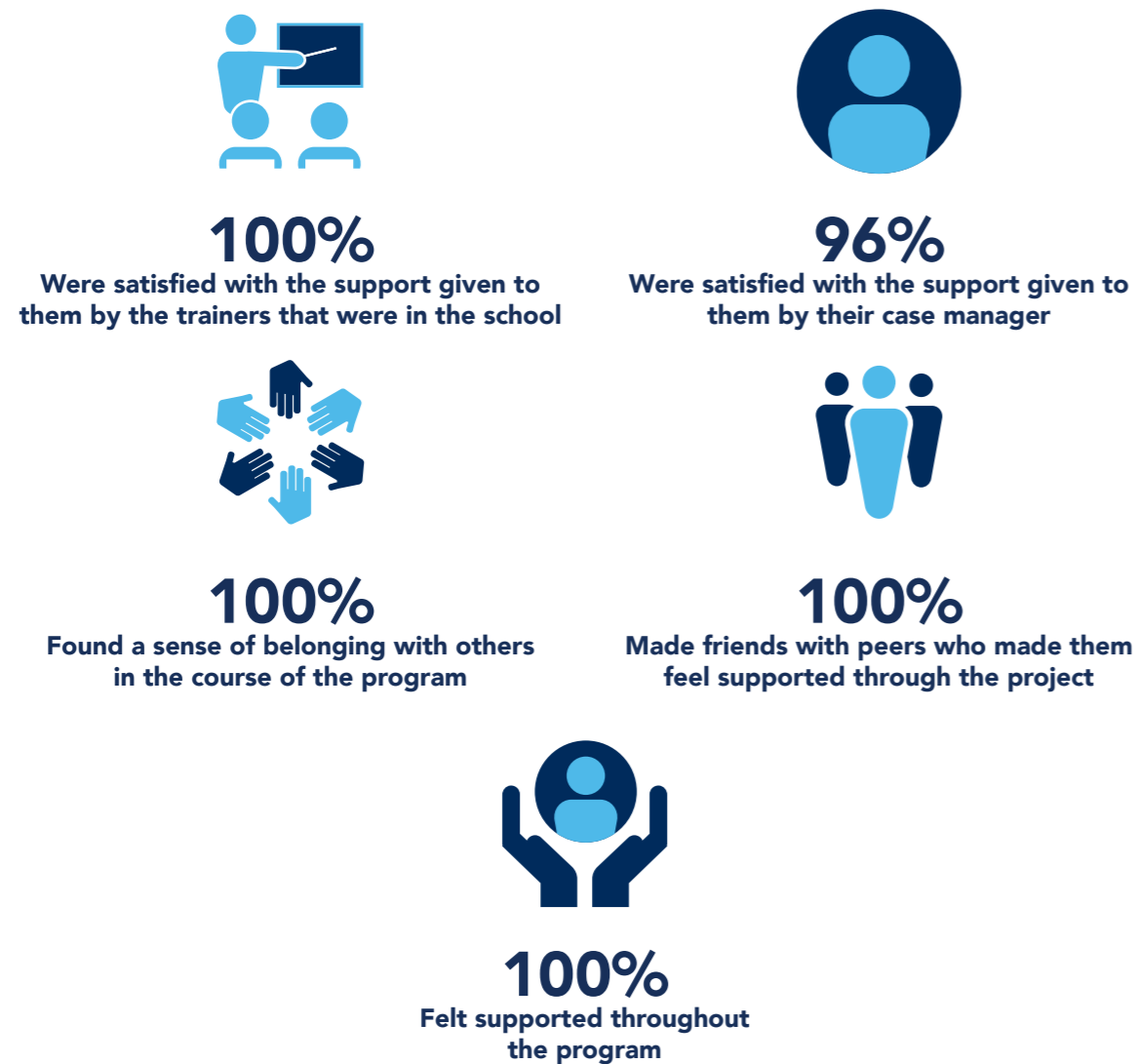


Figure 3: Participant experience, participant individual interviews (N=45)

*I appreciate the opportunity to freely express my ideas and opinions. I have learned to respect all types of work and value the contributions of others. Overall, my experience has been positive and I have gained valuable skills and knowledge.*  
Participant, individual interview

*One significant aspect of my experience in the Thrive pilot program was the opportunity to reconnect and spend time with my fellow returnees.*  
Participant, individual interview

### Critical skills, services and enablers

Participants who completed feedback interviews (N=45) noted key skills and competencies they developed through the program, which they described as being crucial for their success in the program. There was little variation and nearly all participants reported that they received training on all domains.

The least-received skills trainings were English (80 percent) and health (85 percent), while nearly all reported having completed training on hospitality and financial literacy. Likewise, nearly all participants reported that they utilised the childcare support (95 percent of women with children) and transportation service (98 percent) during their participation in Thrive.

*The fact that the institution allows me to bring my child along on days when they have time off has been instrumental in successfully completing my training.*  
Participant, individual interview

### Challenges

Few participants noted major challenges with participating in the program. A small minority noted difficulty finding childcare, the high cost of transportation and a lack of financial support. Others, particularly those being trained in food service, noted that the facility lacked critical equipment and supplies, although this was also a small minority of respondents.

*The facility did not have all the necessary equipment. It lacked updated kitchen equipment and an adequate supply of inputs or raw materials.*  
Participant, individual interview

### Employment outcomes

At the time the participant survey was completed, 72 percent (n=44) of participants were employed (Table 6). Of these, 36 percent had been in their job for three months or less, and another 34 percent had been in their job for between four and six months.

Table 6: Current employment status, survey participants (N=61)

	n	%
Still searching for post-apprenticeship employment*	17	28%
<b>Length of time in current job (n=44)</b>		
3 months or less	16	36%
4-6 months	15	34%
7-11 months	10	23%
12 months or more	3	7%

\*As of 31 January 2024 (after data collection was complete), all program participants were placed in a post-apprenticeship position.

### Hours and days worked

Asked to compare working hours and days in their current job (in Ethiopia) with those of their previous job (in the Middle East or in Ethiopia), participants reported working far fewer hours per week: an average of 48.8 hours per week, compared with 127.5 hours in previous jobs in the Middle East, and 62.6 hours in previous jobs in Ethiopia (Table 7). This represents an improvement in both hours per day and days per week. No women whose previous jobs were in the Middle East reported that they had worked

fewer than 12 hours per day, and all worked seven days per week. In participants' current jobs, they worked an average of eight hours per day (n=59), representing a decline of, on average, 8.6 hours per day. They also worked an average of six days per week, though 15 percent of them continued to work seven days per week.

Table 7: Working hours per week, survey participants

	Mean	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
<b>Current job (n=42*)</b>	48.8	48	48	48
<b>Previous job, Middle East (n=52)</b>	127.5	119	126	140
<b>Previous job, Ethiopia (n=9)</b>	62.6	54	60	78
<b>Change in hours per week (n=42)</b>	71.7	63	73.3	88

\*Limited to respondents who had been placed in a post-apprenticeship job at the time of survey; two participants did not respond.

Women's current working hours were still higher than national averages but much more in line with national, urban and local (Addis Ababa) averages. In 2021, employed women between the ages of 25 and 49 worked an average of 28.1 hours per week nationally (N=8,263,710) and 36.7 hours per week in urban areas (N=1,982,696).<sup>26</sup> Employed women and girls over the age of ten in Addis Ababa worked 45.1 hours per week (N=664,880).<sup>27</sup> Thus, it appears that Thrive has helped place participants in jobs that are aligned with the local workforce, at least in terms of hours per week.

### Wages and earnings

Average monthly earnings had decreased compared with participants' previous jobs, from an average of ETB 5,561 (USD 101) for previous jobs in the Middle East (n=52) and ETB 5,083 (USD 92) for those in Ethiopia (n=6) to ETB 3,994 (USD 72; n=44) in their current job (Table 8). Current wages did not differ significantly by age, birthplace, or tenure in the job. However, this decline should be interpreted with caution. It is difficult to compare the wages of current and previous jobs, as the economic and wage structures between host Middle Eastern countries and Ethiopia are very different. In addition, as depicted in Table 7 above, the number of hours that the participants worked abroad were excessive and may indicate women were working for multiple households or in multiple jobs. It may be more important to note that current earnings were more in line with – and in fact higher than – average national and urban wages. In 2021, women earned an average of ETB 3,361 (USD 61; N=1,882,550) nationally and ETB 3,538 (USD 64; N=1,501,447) in urban areas (see Table 9).<sup>28</sup>

Table 8: Monthly earnings, survey participants

	Mean	25 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> percentile
<b>Current job (n=44)</b>	ETB 3,994 (USD 72)	ETB 2,750 (USD 50)	ETB 4,000 (USD 72)	ETB 5,000 (USD 91)
<b>Previous job, Middle East (n=52)</b>	ETB 5,561 (USD 100)	ETB 3,000 (USD 54)	ETB 3,900 (USD 71)	ETB 6,000 (USD 109)
<b>Previous job, Ethiopia (n=6)</b>	ETB 5,083 (USD 92)	ETB 5,000 (USD 91)	ETB 5,000 (USD 91)	ETB 6,000 (USD 109)

26 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey, p.189-192. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveyLib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

27 Ibid, p.198.

28 Ibid, p.221-226.

Table 9: Proportion of currently employed participants earning above basic need threshold (n=44)

	n	%
<b>Monthly earning is above the threshold to cover basic needs for:<sup>29</sup></b>		
Average Ethiopian household with 2 earners (ETB 2,639 / USD 48 per month)	33	75%
Average Addis Ababa household with 2 earners (ETB 3,282 / USD 59 per month)	29	66%

It is also noteworthy that participants who were currently working (23 percent) noted that their reported wages in their current job were inclusive of tips and services charges, suggesting that wages may vary significantly from day to day and week to week. Since most participants had been in their new jobs for four months or less at the time of interview, median tips as reported may not reflect the true median over a longer time period. Reliance on tips as a substantial proportion of overall wages can have an outsized negative impact on vulnerability to inflation, which has been rampant in Ethiopia in recent years.

It may also be sensible to judge whether existing wages are sufficient to cover the basic needs of participants and their family. While 40 percent of participants responded that their previous wages were sufficient to cover their needs (including 35 percent of those whose last job was in the Middle East and two-thirds of those whose last job was in Ethiopia), only 7 percent said the same of their current wage. Sixty-four percent reported that their current wage was "far below what is needed" (Figure 4).<sup>30</sup> This response did not vary by household size or whether the participant had children.

While a vast majority of participants noted that they were not earning enough in their new formal sector jobs, the fact that they gained access to these jobs is a noteworthy achievement. Considering that all of the returnees were unemployed when they enrolled in the program, and that formal sector jobs are rare and generally inaccessible to many of the returnees without external support such as that provided by Thrive, this progress is significant.

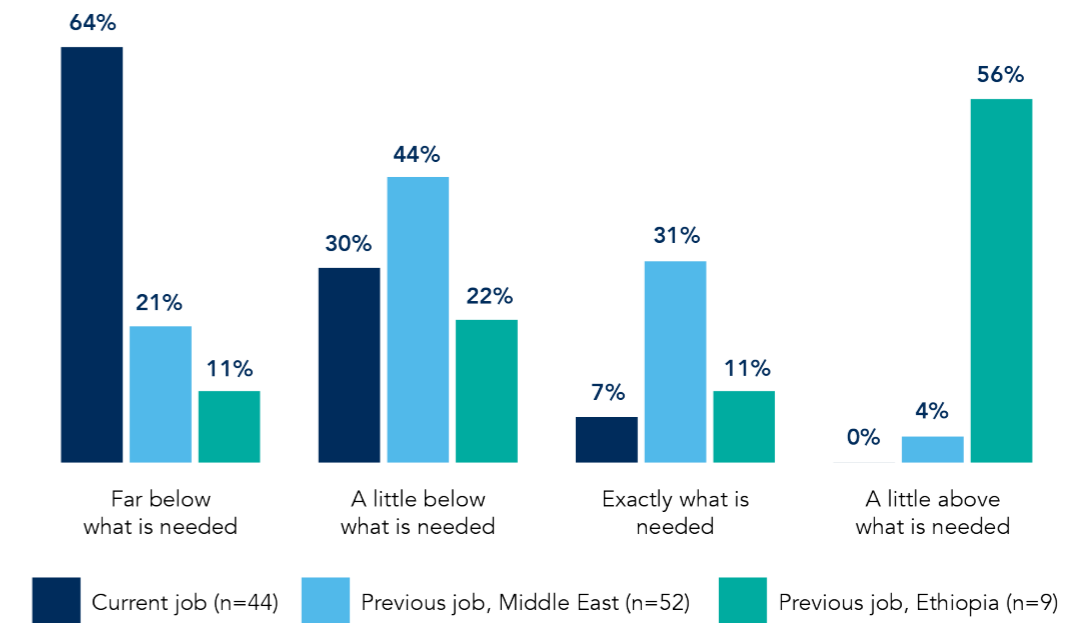


Figure 4: How do your earnings compare to your needs?

29 The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that, nationally in Ethiopia, the monthly cost of needs is ETB 5,278 (USD 96) for a family of 5 and with 2 income earners, but also notes that key costs are higher in Addis Ababa compared with elsewhere; for instance, average monthly rent is ETB 2,080 (USD 38) in Addis Ababa, compared with ETB 794 (USD 14) nationally. See: ILO. (2021). Estimating the needs of workers and their families in Ethiopia. Geneva. (p. 41; p. 27). Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms\\_826322.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_826322.pdf).

30 On average, participants who reported that their current wage was "exactly what was needed" (n=3) earned ETB 5,000 (USD 91) per month. Participants who reported their previous wage was "exactly what was needed" (n=17) earned ETB 5,582 (USD 101) per month.

It is a standard practice in the assessed industries (hospitality and food preparation) for new hires to be given a significant raise after three months of employment, and not all respondents had completed this trial period at the time of interview. Figure 5 shows the distribution of earnings reported by participants who were in employment. Note that the reported wages are somewhat higher than women's average earnings in urban Ethiopia (ETB 3,538; USD 64)<sup>31</sup> and above the threshold (ETB 3,282; USD 59) deemed as necessary by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to cover the cost of living in Addis Ababa.<sup>32</sup>

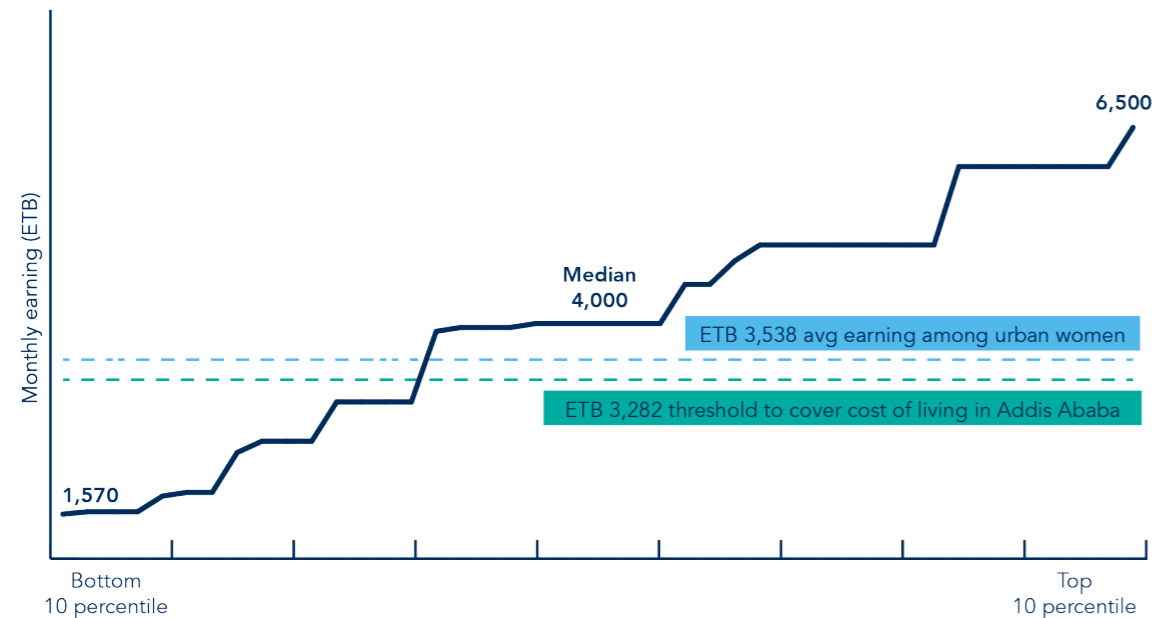


Figure 5: Distribution of monthly earnings among participants in work (n=44)

Several stakeholders who participated in key informant interviews noted that earnings in general are quite low in the Ethiopian labour market and this, coupled with high inflation, is a significant challenge for women returnees engaged in the service sector. Moreover, one service provider shared that women returnees lack the ability to advocate for themselves or negotiate higher earnings.

**The returnees cannot negotiate their salary. That is not possible in Ethiopia in the current labour market landscape.**  
Service provider, KII

While these findings certainly merit further research, we urge caution in interpreting changes in earnings for a number of reasons. Critically, hours and days worked per week have dramatically decreased and, as a result women's average estimated hourly pay (estimated monthly wages divided by estimated hours per month), has not meaningfully changed. Women may also have shifted from working for multiple clients in their previous jobs to working only one job. In addition, for many participants, their current employment situations are entirely different from those of their previous jobs – where they faced exploitation and mistreatment – and earnings data paint a remarkably incomplete picture. There is little or no opportunity for career progression as a domestic worker, whereas jobs in the formal sector in Ethiopia may include such opportunities, such as promotion to a supervisory role. Further, while participants' ability to meet their expenditure needs appears to have decreased, we do not currently have data on how those needs have changed – for instance, whether returnees are now providing for more family members and dependents than they were while living abroad. Expenditure data and other indicators of economic security may tell a more comprehensive story.

31 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. p.221-226. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveylib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

32 ILO estimates that, nationally in Ethiopia, the monthly cost of needs is ETB 5,278 (USD 96) for a family of 5 and with 2 income earners, but also notes that key costs are higher in Addis Ababa compared with elsewhere; for instance, average monthly rent is ETB 2,080 (USD 38) in Addis Ababa, compared with ETB 794 (USD 14) nationally. See: ILO. (2021). Estimating the needs of workers and their families in Ethiopia. Geneva. (p. 41; p. 27). Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms\\_826322.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_826322.pdf).

### Type of work contract

The nature of job contracts is critical to evaluate whether the program is likely to achieve its overall objective of secure and sustainable employment for the participants. Figure 6 reveals the distribution of contract types. Nearly half of currently employed participants received a written contract with a fixed duration, while 11 percent received a written contract with no fixed duration. Another 11 percent were on a probationary contract and 30 percent had no contract.

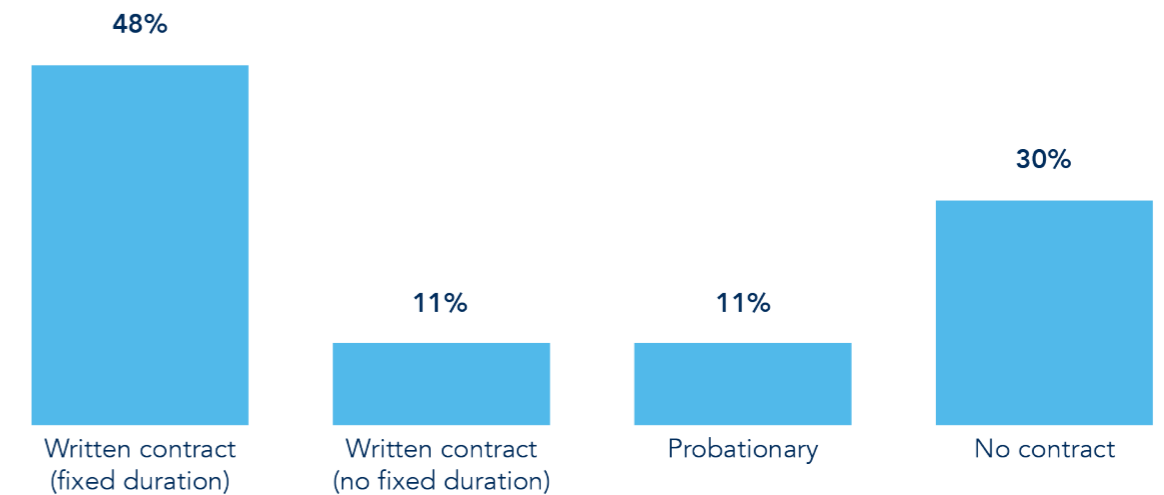


Figure 6: Type of work contract, participant survey (n=44)

### Work conditions

Participants reported positive changes in their feelings about their current jobs, compared with their previous jobs (Figure 7). Particularly stark is the shift in participants' sense of control over their work conditions. While nearly half reported that they did not feel in control in their previous job, 98 percent felt in control of their current working conditions. Likewise, 37 percent did not feel respected in their previous jobs, while 100 percent reported feeling respected in their current workplaces. Eighty-four percent felt that their current role would lead to more opportunities, compared with 65 percent who felt this way about their previous role.

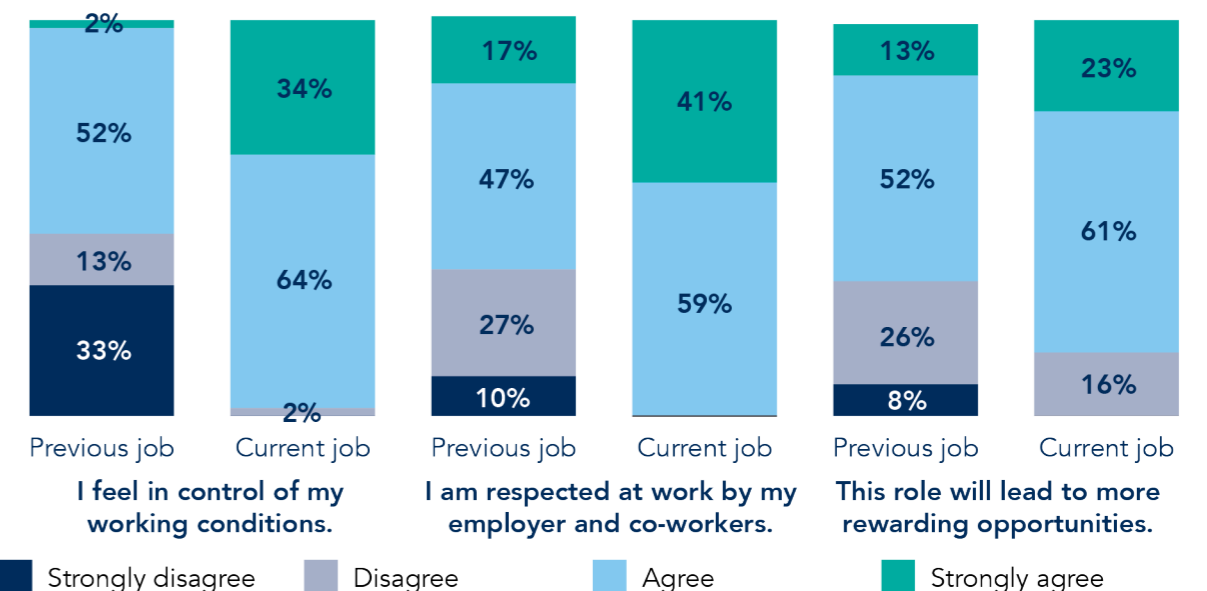


Figure 7: Working conditions, participant survey (Previous job: N=61; Current (post-apprenticeship) job: n=44)

There were a few significant differences between groups in perceived work conditions. Younger participants (those under 34) were more likely to “strongly agree” that they felt in control of their working conditions (p=0.058). Participants who would prefer to be working in a different sector were less likely to “strongly agree” that they felt in control of their working conditions (p=0.070) and that the role would lead to more rewarding opportunities (p=0.086).

These findings are mirrored elsewhere, including in the individual participant interviews and other monitoring data. Virtually all participants who completed interviews described positive work environments and comfortable workloads at their current jobs (Figure 8). Moreover, they expressed that respect for and from their co-workers and their supervisors were key aspects they valued about their jobs.

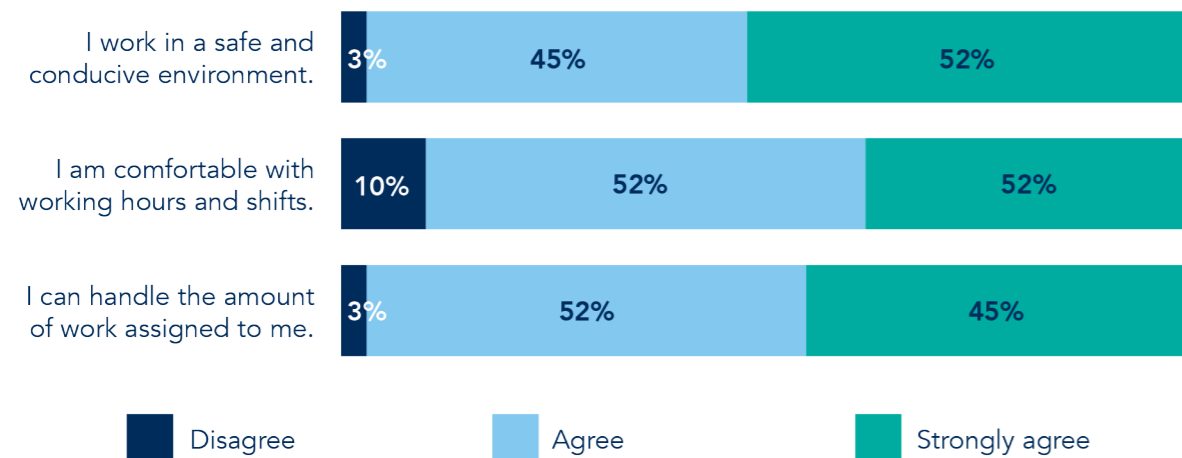


Figure 8: Current working conditions, participant individual interviews (n=43)

One case study shared by KASMA highlights both a participant’s efforts to advocate for herself and her colleagues, leading to job advancement, and her supervisor’s willingness to recognise and compensate additional efforts:

*As time went on, my immediate supervisor started assigning additional tasks that extended beyond the regular working hours. I willingly took on these extra tasks without any hesitation. After working for a month, I decided to respectfully approach my supervisor and express that I deserved extra compensation for the additional work. Thankfully, he understood and accepted my request. Consequently, I not only received extra payment for my efforts, but I also took the initiative to advocate for my colleagues to be compensated for their extra efforts as well.*  
Participant story, shared in KASMA Charity Organization Thrive Progress Report, November 2023

The feedback provided in individual interviews further revealed that, in general, participants felt valued by their employers, supervisors and colleagues, and were generally comfortable in their workplaces.

*Building friendships with [my colleagues] has been a valuable experience that has created a positive and supportive work environment.*  
Participant, individual interview

However, some participants felt that their co-workers and others in the community did not respect their job or the work they did, and that this could create a negative work environment and lead to lower self-esteem. Other challenges participants noted included depressed salaries, high transportation costs and difficulty working shift schedules.

*One thing that I don’t like about my workplace is the prevailing negative outlook in certain situations. It can be disheartening and affect the overall morale and motivation of the team.*  
Participant, individual interview

*One thing that I don’t particularly like about my workplace is working shifts. It can be challenging to adjust to different work schedules, and it can disrupt my personal life and routines.*  
Participant, individual interview

One service provider also shared that transportation to and from work can be difficult for women, particularly if they work later shifts.

*The hotel provides drivers who are in charge of the bus service to drop the women after a long shift, often at night. Bus drivers don’t drop the women in front of their house. They refuse to drive on side gravel roads and drop the women in dangerous spots. Drivers care more about the tyres of their cars than the lives of the women they are entrusted to drop.*  
Service provider, KII

### Job skills

Nearly 90 percent of survey respondents (n=55) felt that their skills and job placement were well-matched, while the participant feedback forms indicated that participants felt well-prepared for their job placement (Figure 9). Both the formal training and the apprenticeship were widely believed to have been helpful. Most participants felt that they had gained the skills necessary to succeed in formal employment. The only critiques mentioned by some participants were that the apprenticeship had not prepared them for the specific employer they went on to work for – noting that some processes and systems differ between workplaces – and that the length of the apprenticeship was insufficient.



Figure 9: Job preparedness, participant individual interviews (N=45)

*The combination of theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience during the apprenticeship prepared me well to engage with employers in the real world.*  
Participant, individual interview

*The course and training equipped me well for my apprenticeship. Additionally, our teachers taught us how to effectively address challenges we may encounter in our future work.*  
Participant, individual interview

**The employer who offered me a job opportunity reviewed my apprenticeship documents and decided to hire me based on the skills and experience I gained during the apprenticeship. This indicates that my apprenticeship provided me with the necessary preparation for employment.**  
Participant, individual interview

**While I had the opportunity to observe and practice various aspects of the training during my apprenticeship, the duration was relatively short, and I couldn't experience all aspects fully.**  
Participant, individual interview

One employer who participated in a key informant interview noted that they were impressed by the women who participated in this program and believed that it had imparted the skills needed to succeed in the industry.

**I believe they got adequate training. In my view these returnee migrant women are the best of the lot we get as housekeeping staff. They really can survive and thrive in this in the hospitality industry.**  
Employer, KII

**The returnees who got training are lucky and they have a better employment prospect compared to other women with similar educational and socio-economic conditions.**  
Service provider, KII

### Aspirations and future work preferences

Despite feeling well-prepared, most participants did not feel that their current jobs were aligned with their longer-term preferences. Eighty-seven percent of those who completed the survey reporting that they would prefer a different sector, with top preferences including food service, clothing and cosmetics, driving and laundry (Figure 10). Several individuals expressed that they would like to be in a different role with their current employer.

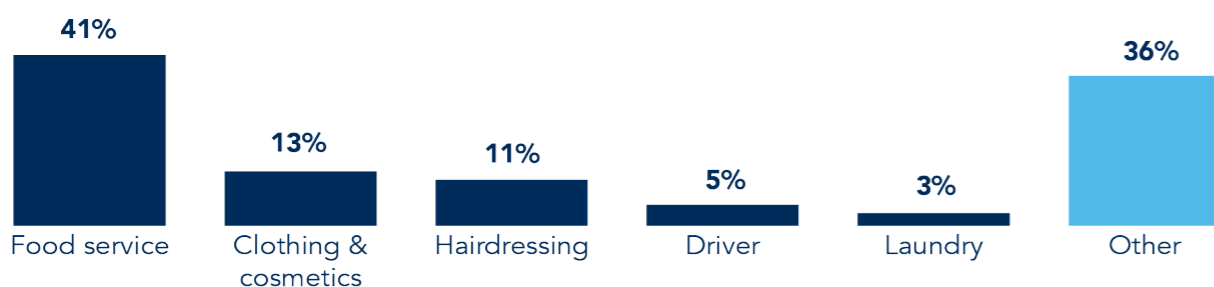


Figure 10: Preferred sectors, participant survey (N=61)

There is little evidence to suggest that these preferred industries would be more sustainable or lucrative than participants' current jobs – in urban Ethiopia, women make, on average ETB 2,141 (USD 39) per month in "other service jobs,"<sup>33</sup> well below the average salaries reported by Thrive participants. However, most of them noted that their preferences were driven not by perceived higher salaries but by interest and prior experience in the field. Of the 45 participants who completed the feedback form, more than half expressed that they chose the new profession they did because of their interest in or passion for the field (Figure 11). Another 18 percent chose a field that they believed would offer them job opportunities, while another 13 percent said that the field they chose was the only option.

33 Ethiopia Statistics Service (2021). Statistical report on the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey. p.224-226. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/surveylib/index.php/catalog/7982/related-materials>.

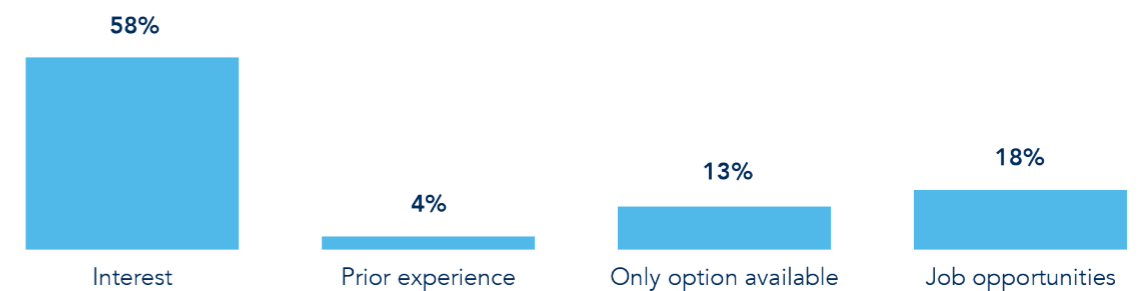


Figure 11: Reasons for selecting professional field, participant individual interviews (N=45)

Ninety-three percent of survey participants expressed that they would prefer to be self-employed. Key reasons included perceived higher earnings from self-employment, more flexibility (particularly to balance childcare needs), opportunities for business growth and personal development, and a reduced work burden. Evidence suggests that entrepreneurship and micro- and small- enterprises can be important drivers of both opportunity for individuals, particularly women and youth, and of national economic growth.<sup>34</sup> However, they are also high-risk endeavours that face often insurmountable challenges, including access to finance and inputs including land, and low levels of entrepreneurs' business, management and technical skills.<sup>35,36</sup> Interestingly, women who had previously been self-employed were less likely to report that they preferred self-employment than those who had not previously been self-employed (p=0.044; see Figure 12), indicating that women without prior experience with entrepreneurship may not have a complete or realistic understanding of the related challenges.

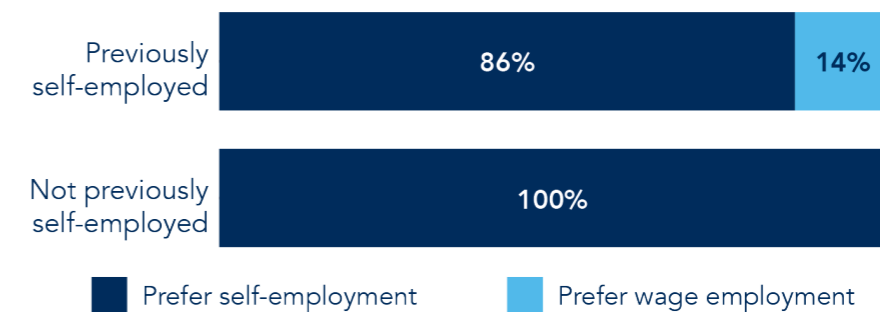


Figure 12: Self-employment preferences and experience, participant survey (N=61)

Most key informants also agreed that entrepreneurship could be a beneficial path for returnees, but a few also warned of associated risks. They noted the importance of group ownership, cohesion and peer support if women choose this route.

**Our women are industrious and hard working. With the right support... they can equally be successful entrepreneurs.**  
Organisation staff, KII

**I think autonomy is important for women. They should be able to have a flexible life (for example, running their own kiosks or enterprise). Hence, the training can also be how they can make the most of their lives by starting a small business.**  
Gender expert, KII

34 Teka, B.M. (2022). Determinants of the sustainability and growth of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in Ethiopia: literature review. J Innov Entrep 11(58). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-022-00261-0>.

35 Ibid.

36 Fufa, F. G. (2015). Determinants of micro and small enterprises growth in Ethiopia: the case of Nekemte Town of Oromia Region, Ethiopia. European Journal of Business and Management 7(13).

**Entrepreneurship is worth considering. However, I want to note that the failure rates are high. So it is risky always to push them to self-employment... From experience, I feel group ownership improves business survival rate and also increases accountability.**  
 Organisation staff, KII

**Other skills training should include to teach them to be entrepreneurial and we should ring the financial sector to support their start-ups. Women organised into a group with a good business idea can be transformational.**  
 Service provider, KII

At least in some cases, participants' interest in self-employment appears to be tied to their desire to continue to grow within the hospitality sector. Several program participants expressed aspirations to build more skills and continue to advance and they suggested that the program be expanded to include higher levels of training.

**I believe that additional training in hotel management, specifically in the area of catering, would greatly diverse professions and opportunities.**  
 Participant informational interview

**The trainings were excellent. However, it would be even better if they were offered at a professional level, such as providing certificates that reflect the level of our professional skills rather than just simple certificates.**  
 Participant informational interview

Some stakeholders who participated in key informant interviews also stressed that ongoing opportunities for growth and skills development, particularly if this was intentionally aligned with returnees' preferences, abilities and interests, were critical for continued engagement in safe and decent employment.

**If we give them skills that are useful from employment it is like a long-term investment. Only when they see the value of what they have is long-lasting that we see them encouraged to settle and integrate to society.**  
 Service provider, KII

## Reintegration outcomes

### Recovery, self-worth and sense of community

Survey participants overall reported high levels of trauma recovery, self-worth and sense of community. There did not appear to be significant differences by age or birthplace. Almost all participants reported that they had used lessons from the Thrive program to overcome past trauma and reduce negative feelings (Figure 13).

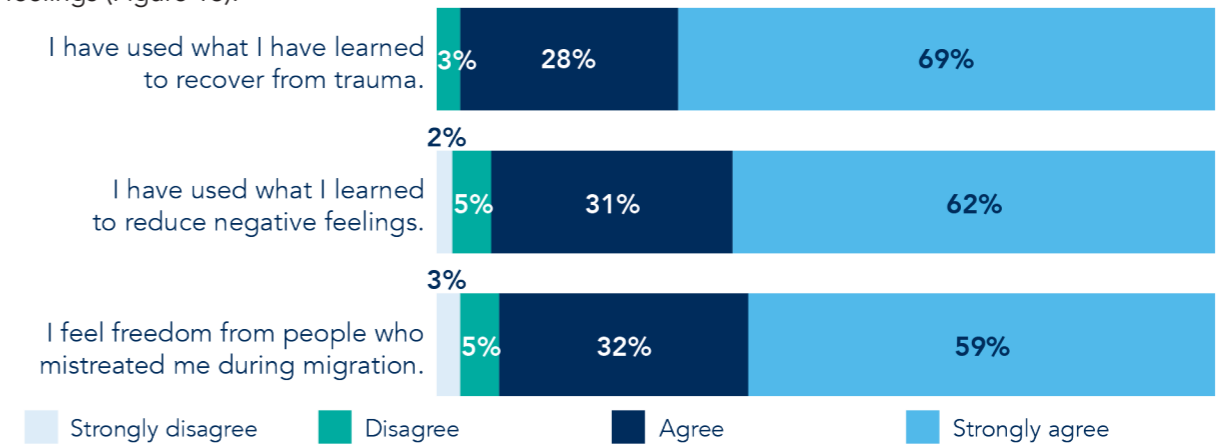


Figure 13: Participants' perception of recovery, participant survey (n=59)

Participants also reported high scores related to self-worth and self-efficacy indicators, particularly those involving decision-making (Figure 14).

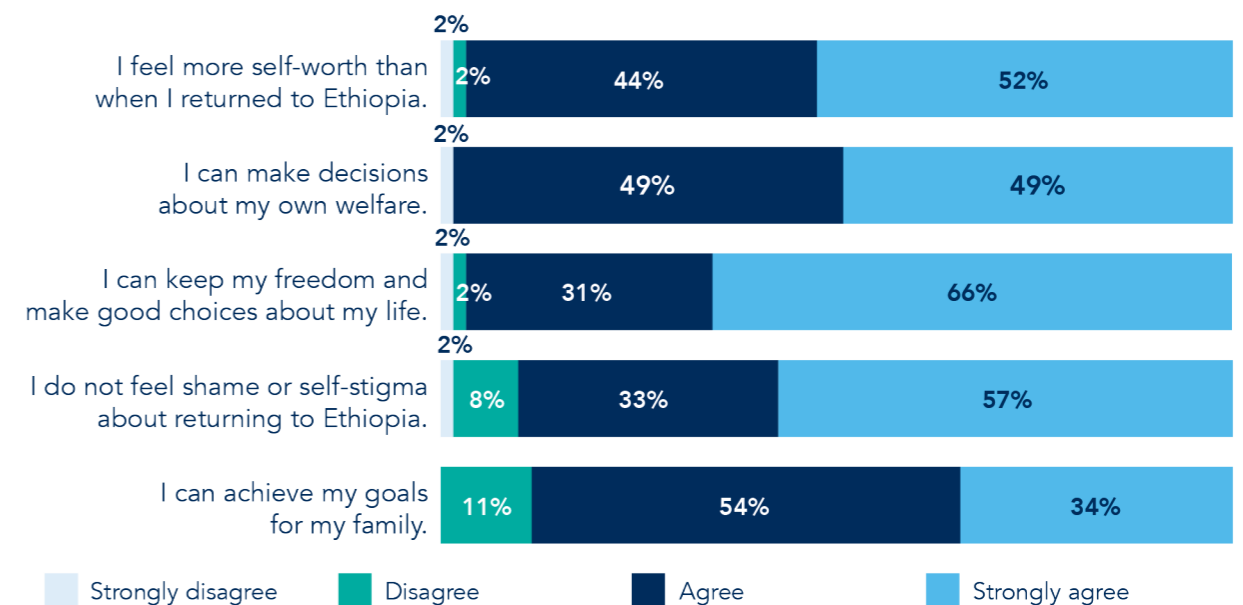


Figure 14: Participants' self-worth, participant survey (n=59)

**Through the program, I was able to develop a strong sense of self-confidence and improve my decision-making skills, which has had a positive impact on both my personal and professional life.**

Participant, individual interview

**Physical and spiritual change is evident in women. They are getting better but initially their physical and mental state has been a challenge.**  
Service provider, KII

Finally, participants expressed high levels of community engagement, particularly in comparison with other women their age (Figure 15). Even so, 16 percent of women did not feel settled and 13 percent did not feel that they had people to emotionally support them.

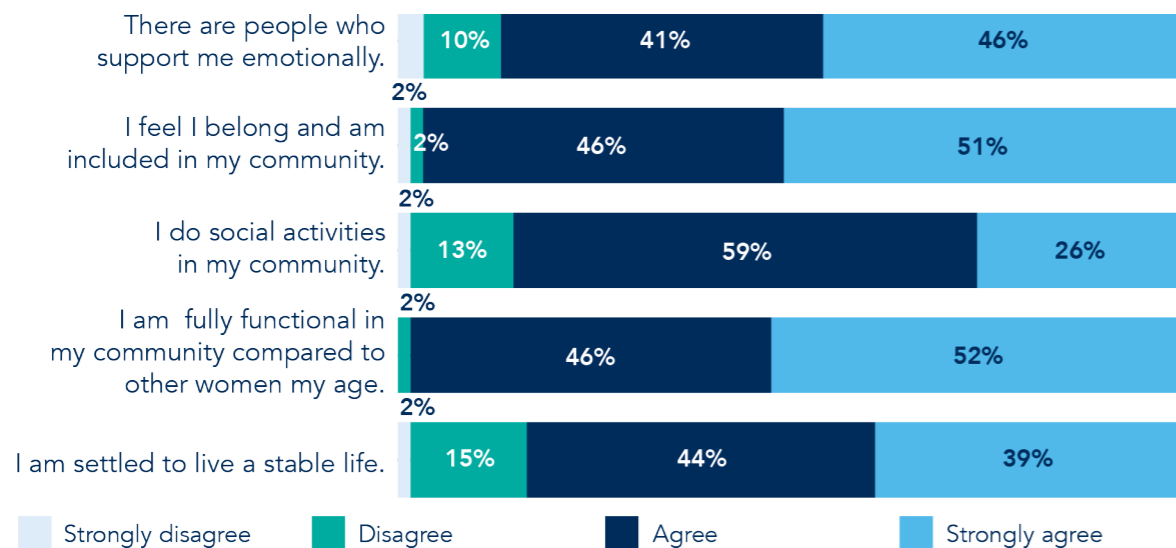


Figure 15: Sense of community, participant survey (N=61)

### Remigration

Bearing in mind that all participants had migrated to at least one of 11 countries in the Middle East region, 16 percent of women expressed they were likely or very likely to return to a country where they had previously worked abroad (Figure 16). Far more, 57 percent, said that they would be likely or very likely to migrate outside of the Middle East. A total of 59 percent felt they were likely or very likely to migrate again somewhere outside of Ethiopia. There was no difference in likelihood to remigrate by age, birthplace, or previous host country, but women with children were somewhat more likely than women without children to migrate to a Middle East country ( $p=0.086$ ) and to anywhere in the world ( $p=0.092$ ).

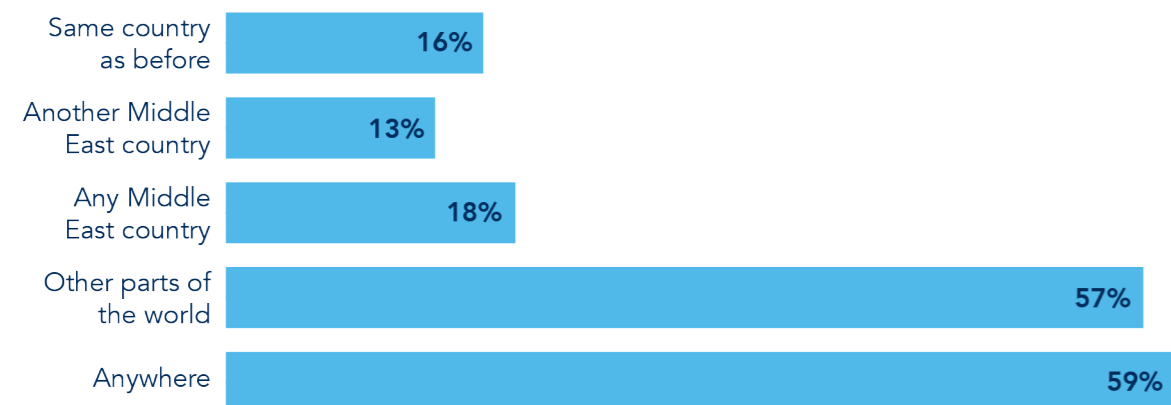


Figure 16: Proportion of returned migrants likely to remigrate, participant survey (N=61)

Remigration intentions are complex. They can be dependent on a host of factors, including age, current family circumstance, the reception from family and friends upon return, and prior migration experience. One core variable useful to understand any new migration and remigration intention is the work

experience in various destination countries. However, African governments, including the Ethiopian government, are promoting women's migration to the Middle East, including "safe" migration to Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain, despite the reports of Thrive participants and other returnees.

Interestingly, participants with higher current incomes were more likely than those with lower incomes to report they were likely to migrate anywhere in the world ( $p=0.067$ ; see Figure 17), but otherwise there was no difference in likelihood to migrate to the Middle East. On the other hand, women who strongly agreed that their current role would lead to more rewarding opportunities felt they were less likely to migrate to the Middle East ( $p=0.021$ ) but not less likely to engage in any migration. These may indicate that respondents with higher incomes perceived greater opportunities in migrating to other parts of the world, but additional research is needed to more fully understand those patterns.

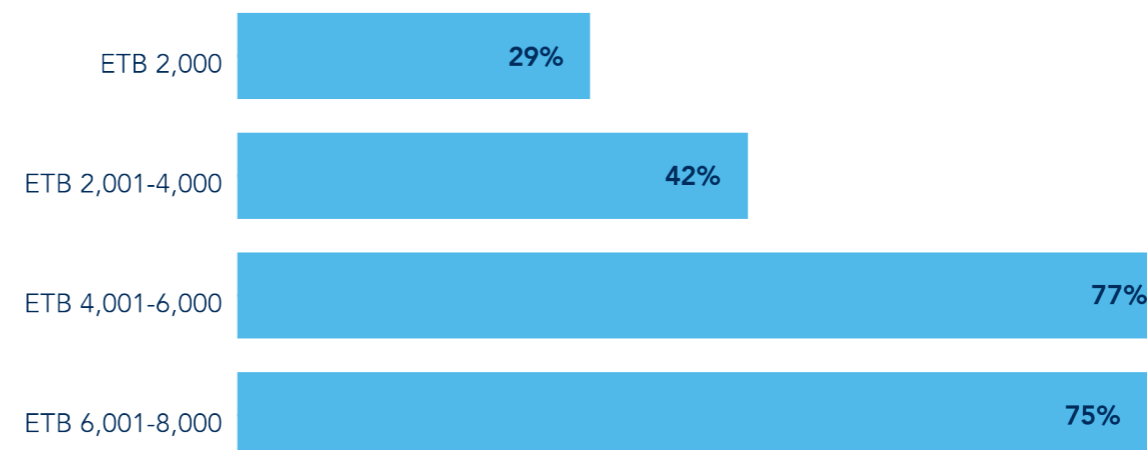


Figure 17: Proportion of returned migrants likely to migrate anywhere in the world, by current monthly wage, participant survey (n=44)




Image credit: Angelov - stock.adobe.com


Some service providers noted in key informant interviews that they believed participants to be at risk of unsafe remigration. Reintegration and positive social and economic conditions were thought to be essential for returnees to feel settled in Ethiopia and avoid potentially risky remigration.


**If their social, personal and economic conditions don't improve in Ethiopia they might migrate. That is my worry. Already, two-thirds told me that they have a plan to go back.**  
Service provider, KII


### Unexpected learnings


Several unexpected learnings were reported over the course of the program and within the present evaluation:

 The selection of the hospitality sector as one with readily available jobs did not sufficiently consider the social implications of women's labour in this sector (namely, that it is culturally associated with sex work and generally not considered a dignified form of labour for women).

 While childcare services were not initially planned for the program, participants reported that these services were a core need for their ability to continue their training and to secure job placements.

 Participants' husbands held more power than anticipated over whether women could participate or be pressured into dropping out of the program. However, this phenomenon was strongly mitigated by the use of close case management where the case managers developed working relationships with husbands or other male heads of household to promote women's ability to stay in Thrive.

 The impact of participants' limited prior formal education (even among the majority who had completed primary school) influenced their ability to be successful in their post-apprenticeship jobs, as literacy and numeracy cannot be assumed just because a participant had a primary school certificate. There was also an outsized importance placed on formal education by employers and hiring managers, even where these skills were not directly important relative to the skills provided by the TVET programs.

 Thanks to cross-sector engagement among more than 80 employers, particularly in the big hotel industry, the Thrive pilot contributed to making strides in advocating for a minimum wage (which Ethiopia does not have), enhancing workplace safety, improving working conditions and addressing social stigmas in the workplace.


 The program led to the establishment of the National Thrive Together Platform, which was not part of the original design. Stakeholders such as service providers, employers, ministerial offices, Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and others came together to create this platform to facilitate government adoption of the program's model.

Image credit: IMAGO/Xinhua





## COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS (CBA)

For a pilot project such as Thrive, CBA is a useful method for assessing the performance of social welfare programs and particularly how they allocate resources. The process of calculating it includes various forms of project inputs and outcomes, resulting in a simple set of financial metrics. A positive net present value (NPV) signals that the social outcomes generated by a project exceed the initial investment made, thereby creating additional social value beyond its costs. A negative NPV suggests that the project may not be financially viable or sustainable in its current form.

### Scope of costs and benefits included:

The analysis of the Thrive program presents costs exactly as they occurred historically and includes benefits as directly reported by stakeholders and Thrive program participants. It does not adjust these figures based on “what could have been improved” or “what future costs and benefits might look like.”

The CBA encompasses the tangible costs and benefits only for the 240 women who commenced training between 2022 and 2023. Based on monitoring data provided by Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise, among the women who were enrolled: 93 percent would go on to start on-the-job training, 80 percent would remain in employment for at least three months, and 68 percent would remain in employment for at least six months.

The analysis focuses on the direct costs that are critical to the day-to-day delivery of the Thrive program in providing services to the women participants. Costs associated with initial program setup, managing donor relationships and reporting, and advocacy to gain local government support have been excluded.

The analysis concentrates on the direct costs and direct benefits only, as reported to the evaluation team. Although numerous indirect and intangible costs and benefits exist — such as improved autonomy and well-being of the female participants — these have not been quantified within this calculation. Instead, these are discussed in Annex 4, where further details on the methodology and scope of this CBA are presented.



Image credit: Luisa Puccini/shutterstock.com

### Key assumptions made

Assumptions used	Source/comments
<b>Discount rate (p.a.) = 5.0%</b>	There is ongoing debate about the discount rate that should be used for CBA for social impact projects in developing countries, and several years of research has not settled on a clear answer. Often the rates vary between 5% to 10%, with the higher figure often used by the World Bank and other organisations involved in CBA of public projects. However, educational/vocational programs such as Thrive generate benefits that accrue over extended periods and have significant social impact, which justifies a lower discount rate. Accordingly, a 5% rate has been applied here to account for the short-term costs versus the long-term social benefits of improving human capital and well-being, and follows the same rate used by Bowser et al. (2023) <sup>37</sup> for a health program in Ethiopia.
<b>Wage growth (p.a.) = 5.0%</b>	Conservatively assume this to be same as discount rate, so no “real increase” to wages year on year.
<b>Average monthly earning during first 3 months = USD 71.91</b>	From survey of participants (N=61), wages plus tips (where applicable) averaging ETB 3,994 per month.
<b>Average monthly earning month 4 and thereafter = USD 90.95</b>	From monitoring data from Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise. Among those who reported a salary increase, the average increase was ETB 2,116 per month. However, for the CBA we have conservatively assumed that this is applicable only to half of the women who have reached 4 months of employment.
<b>Value of transport provided by employer = USD 8.70 per month</b>	Estimated at USD 15 per month; however, it is applicable only to the 58% of participants who end up working in hotels. Transportation cost based on an average cost of various modes of public and private transportation (taxi, bus, minibus). We consider the fact that women are more likely to use private than public transport, which makes transport a relatively expensive option. <sup>38</sup> The transport service provided by their employers does not involve waiting time, which is a significant help as most Addis dwellers suffer from long waiting time before getting a chance to have a taxi, bus or minibus trip.
<b>Value of meal provided by employer = USD 30 per month</b>	This estimate is applicable to women working in hotels, restaurants and other industries. It is based on average cost of a meal if the woman had to procure her own from a local vendor, and conservatively assumes an average of six meals covered by the employer per week (one meal per working day).
<b>Drop out after completing 6 months of work, after 12 months, and after 24 months = 15.3%</b>	Assumption based on monitoring data from Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise.

37 Bowser, D., Kleinau, E., Berchtold, G., Kapaon, D., and Kasa, L. (2023). Return on investments in the Health Extension Program in Ethiopia. PloS one, 18(11), e0291958.

38 Arbutova, A. T. Getahun, A. Malik, and M. Karra (2023). Gendered differences in mobility and the demand for transport in Ethiopia, Global Development Policy Center, Boston University and IGC. Available at: <https://www.bu.edu/gdp/2023/11/27/gendered-differences-in-mobility-and-the-demand-for-transport-in-ethiopia/>.

## Calculating the direct costs and direct benefits of Thrive

The costs associated with Thrive fall into four categories, as shown in Table 10: (1) fees for service delivery, (2) technical assistance to support the service providers, (3) Freedom Fund staff involved in the day-to-day delivery of Thrive and (4) evaluation costs (including for producing this report). The benefits of Thrive are derived primarily from two sources as listed in Table 11, (5) new forms of earnings (wages + tips where applicable) by women participants who continue their employment after accounting for drop-offs along the way, and (6) the non-monetary benefits offered by employers. As many of the women were unemployed when they enrolled into the program, we have not accounted for the opportunity cost of them entering other forms of employment.

Table 10: Direct costs of the Thrive pilot

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>(1) Service delivery</b>	<b>\$32,225</b>	<b>\$258,241</b>	<b>\$21,411</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Sister Yemisrach (SY), total fees					
Price per participant achieving milestone	\$15,469	\$130,735	\$10,389		
Number of women newly enrolled, with action plan developed (# of women)	45	76			
Number of women starting in-work training (# of women)		115			
Number of women in employment for 3 months/13 weeks (# of women)		102			
Number of women in employment for 6 months/26 weeks (# of women)		53	34		
Hope Enterprise (HE), total fees					
Number of women newly enrolled, with action plan developed (# of women)	45	76			
Number of women starting in-work training (# of women)		113			
Number of women in employment for 3 months/13 weeks (# of women)		74	20		
Number of women in employment for 6 months/26 weeks (# of women)		62	17		
<b>(2) Technical assistance to SY and HE</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Azadi		\$20,000			
Survivor Alliance	\$3,000				
<b>(3) FF staff involved in day-to-day delivery of Thrive</b>	<b>\$21,574</b>	<b>\$47,967</b>	<b>\$13,197</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Program officer (salary +14% tax contribution by employer)	£19,590	\$39,888	\$10,149		
Finance assistant (salary +14% tax contribution by employer)	\$1,984	\$8,079	\$3,048		
<b>(4) Evaluation services</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$29,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Azadi		\$6,500			
KASMA		\$18,000			
Prof. Abbi Kedir & Emily Schaub		\$11,000	\$15,000		
<b>Costs, excluding (4) Evaluation services (before discount, in USD)</b>	<b>\$56,798</b>	<b>\$326,208</b>	<b>\$34,607</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Costs, excluding (4) Evaluation services (after discount, in USD)</b>	<b>\$56,798</b>	<b>\$310,674</b>	<b>\$31,390</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Costs, including (4) Evaluation services (before discount, in USD)</b>	<b>\$56,798</b>	<b>\$355,208</b>	<b>\$49,607</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Costs, including (4) Evaluation services (after discount, in USD)</b>	<b>\$56,798</b>	<b>\$338,294</b>	<b>\$44,995</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

Table 11: Direct benefits of the Thrive pilot

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>(5) New form of earnings</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$72,543</b>	<b>\$136,821</b>	<b>£157,936</b>	<b>£140,626</b>
Number of graduates earning in month 1-3 (assumes mid-year start)	0	176	20		
Number of graduates earning in month 4-6	0	114	51	0	0
Number of graduates earning in month 7 & beyond	0	0	97	125	106
<b>(6) Non-monetary benefits from work</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$35,349</b>	<b>\$58,752</b>	<b>\$67,200</b>	<b>\$59,835</b>
Transportation provided by employer	\$0	\$7,947	\$13,208	\$15,107	\$13,451
Meals provided by employer	\$0	\$27,402	\$45,544	\$52,093	\$46,384
<b>(7) Improved well-being of women returnees</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
% of participants who reported improved working conditions (% of participants)		65.6%			
% of participants who reported feeling more respected at work (% of participants)		49.2%			
				Note we did not include these in the benefit calculation	
<b>Benefits (before discount)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$107,892</b>	<b>\$195,573</b>	<b>\$225,136</b>	<b>\$200,461</b>
<b>Benefits (after discount)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$102,754</b>	<b>\$177,391</b>	<b>\$194,481</b>	<b>\$164,920</b>

## Summary CBA results

We present two scenarios of the CBA results, depending on whether or not the reader would consider the evaluation services and their associated costs as critical to the delivery of the Thrive program and its onward impact.

Table 12: Scenario 1, **excluding** the cost of (4) evaluation services

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Cumulative costs, <b>excluding</b> (4) Evaluation services (after discount)	\$56,798	\$367,473	\$398,863	\$398,863	\$398,863
Cumulative benefits (after discount)	\$0	\$102,754	\$280,145	\$474,628	\$639,546
Net present value (NPV) <b>excluding</b> (4) Evaluation services, in USD	-\$56,798	-\$264,719	-\$118,718	\$75,763	\$240,683
Benefit-cost ratio (BCR), <b>excluding</b> (4) Evaluation services	0.00	0.28	0.70	1.19	1.60
Cost recovery by the end of...	Year 4				

The total cost over five years for supporting the 240 women (at time of enrolment) is USD 398,863 against a total benefit of USD 634,546, representing an NPV of USD 240,683 and a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 1.60 over five years (see Table 12). This means that for every USD 1 invested, the project is generating USD 1.60 of benefits in return. Cost recovery is achieved by the end of Year 4.

Table 13: Scenario 1, **including** the cost of (4) evaluation services

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Cumulative costs, <b>including</b> (4) Evaluation services (after discount)	\$56,798	\$395,092	\$440,087	\$440,087	\$440,087
Cumulative benefits (after discount)	\$0	\$102,754	\$280,145	\$474,626	\$639,546
Net present value (NPV), <b>including</b> (4) Evaluation services, in USD	-\$56,798	\$292,338	\$159,942	\$34,539	\$199,459
Benefit-cost ratio (BCR), <b>including</b> (4) Evaluation services	0.00	0.26	0.64	1.08	1.45
Cost recovery by the end of...	Year 4				

The total cost over five years for supporting the 240 women (at time of enrolment) is USD 440,087 against a total benefit of USD 634,546, representing an NPV of USD 199,459 and a BCR of 1.45 over five years (see Table 13). This means that for every USD 1 invested, the project is generating USD 1.45 of benefits in return. Cost recovery is achieved by the end of Year 4.

## Interpretation of CBA results

Overall, a BCR of 1.45 to 1.60 suggests that the benefits of the Thrive project significantly outweigh the costs incurred over a five-year period, making it a promising social investment opportunity with the potential for healthy returns.

In future stages of the project, as it grows and stabilises, there will be opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce delivery costs. The evaluator has identified certain costs, such as the amounts paid for technical assistance and data collection, that can be cut down substantially, especially as the curriculum and tools are already developed and field tested. In addition, the project's positive outcomes could be amplified. One main way to do this is by refocusing some of the activities carried out by service providers, such as Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise, to more effectively tackle the challenges faced by women participating in the program. An example of this would be to work more closely with the families of the female participants, ensuring they understand and support the women's new employment opportunities.

When making future decisions regarding the Thrive program, it is crucial to consider additional financial aspects such as risks, uncertainties and the impact of the time value of money, which might be affected by inflation and other economic factors. A detailed risk analysis would offer a fuller assessment of the project's financial soundness.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results from the Thrive assessment indicate that the program was broadly successful and appears to have achieved its objectives of delivering vocational training to facilitate a pathway to formal work for returnee women. Participants responded that they generally felt prepared for work in the sector they chose and that they have been able to perform their work successfully. The majority of participants whose perspectives are included in this assessment are engaged in full-time work and monitoring data show that nearly all (94 percent) female participants who enrol into the program go on to complete training and secure full-time work.

Moreover, many of the participants feel they have control over their work conditions, are respected in their jobs and are optimistic about future opportunities. This speaks volumes, as it represents a stark improvement from their previous jobs. Women who feel positively about their work environments may be more likely to avoid risky migration in the future and more likely to be retained in formal employment. Likewise, women who completed the program reported relatively high levels of self-worth and self-efficacy, and nearly all responded that the program has helped them to recover from past trauma and has reduced negative feelings they had. In interviews, participants described the sense of community they developed through the program and the system of support that exists within the peer network of other returnees.

Results and reflections from this pilot inform lessons learned and recommendations to most effectively facilitate transitions to sustainable livelihoods and empower returnee women in Ethiopia.

- 1 Continue growing the Thrive program while maintaining a closed feedback loop with participants and employers and alignment with market conditions.** Virtually all key informants, as well as most participants, expressed a desire to see the Thrive model replicated and expanded for a larger population of returnees in Ethiopia. There was broad recognition of the program's potential to reach and impact a much wider group of women.

*I would like to express my desire for the Thrive pilot program to continue. I have personally benefited from this project and I believe it has the potential to positively impact other returnees as well. It would be wonderful if more individuals could benefit from the support and opportunities provided by the Thrive pilot program.*

Participant, individual interview

- 2 Engage employers to improve working conditions and foster a stronger sense of dignity among trainees and workers, in order to increase retention.** Participants and key informants alike shared clear explanations of why the forms of work available through Thrive are not always preferable, particularly work in the hospitality industry. Some of the onus for increasing the perceived dignity of these forms of work can be shifted to employers, especially the four- and five-star hotels, which have demonstrated a desire to promote women's employment in the formal sector. Commitments could include determining a shared minimum wage for newly-hired workers in the positions filled by Thrive graduates (even if a minimum wage is not required by law), minimum benefits and a transparent minimum number of new hires per year. Given participants' reluctance to train for, or stay in, the available jobs, the Thrive program should also work with employers to increase the sense of dignity associated with the work, such as displaying or otherwise celebrating training certificates, offering clear pathways for advancement to higher-wage work and increasing transparency around tipping and service charges to shift the overall industry standards towards better worker protection.

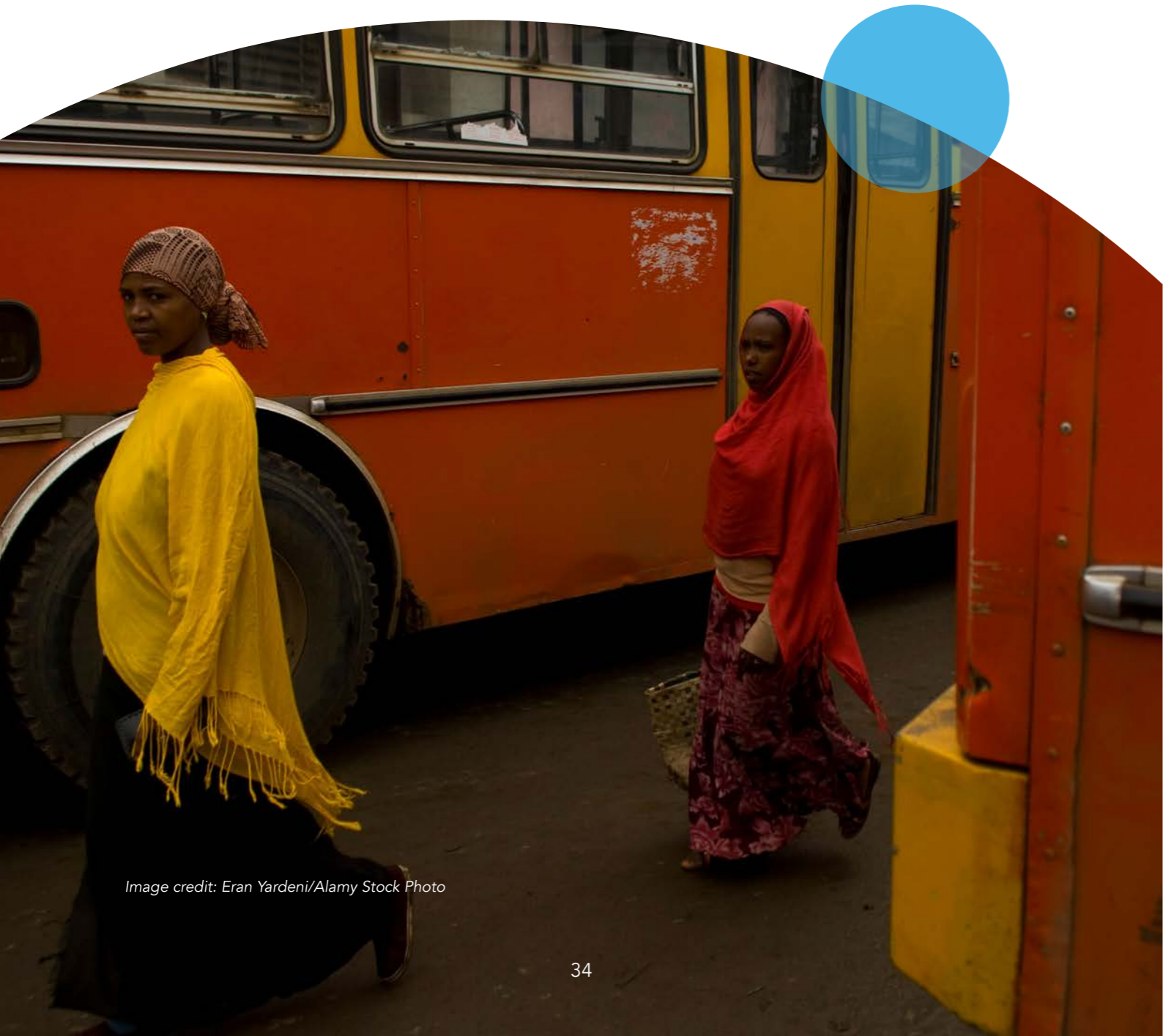


Image credit: Eran Yardeni/Alamy Stock Photo

**3 Conduct exploratory research on the household dynamics that could be leveraged to increase family support for returnees' participation in the Thrive program and to remain in employment.** A key finding that carried more weight than expected was that participants' enrolment and retention in Thrive depended strongly on the case workers' engagement with husbands or other decision-makers in the participant's household. Since wages were lower than anticipated for participants with permanent positions, this may reduce enthusiasm on the part of household decision-makers over time to allow the Thrive graduates to remain in employment, even if longer-term wage growth is anticipated. Therefore, a thoughtful exploration of what negatively – or positively – influences a household decision-maker's enthusiasm for participation could dramatically strengthen long-term program retention.

**4 Determine criteria for providing subsidies or financial supports after six months in work, based on vulnerabilities and/or gaps in income.** Rather than applying all of the supports equally across participants regardless of length of time in work, a more cost-effective strategy would likely be to look at each case separately after they have completed six months of work and use set criteria to determine which services will be provided and for how long. Evidence from the assessment also suggests that long, repeated engagement is preferred by both participants and stakeholders.

**5 Offer longer apprenticeships and employer-attached vocational training at scale.** Some participants noted that the training, particularly the one-month hands-on apprenticeship portion of the program, was insufficient to provide the work skills and job preparation needed for successful transitions to work. Likewise, a training program with a longer period of engagement may be viewed more favourably by potential employers. The amount of additional time needed can be negotiated in the next phase of the program.

*I do not feel that the course and training adequately prepared me to engage with employers. The duration of the apprenticeship, which was only 30 days, was insufficient in my opinion.*

Participant, individual interview

*Upon graduation, it would be beneficial if the certificate provided to us was not labelled as a short training program. This could potentially impact how employers perceive the certification.*

Participant, individual interview

*We need a curriculum which is carefully designed that can be delivered at their own pace. A quick and dirty crash course is not suitable for the returnees.*

Policy maker, KII

**6 Share additional information with candidates prior to registration on what to expect from the TVET provider.** Some participants indicated they had unrealistic expectations of what the role of the TVET service provider was in their professionalisation, such as by requesting more advanced trainings beyond the scope of the Thrive program. Participants who were dissatisfied with their selected course, particularly hospitality, could have been better served if they were given more information on the course available and provided with an outside referral (for example, to an NGO providing entrepreneurship training or an intensive English course) at the time of intake, which would reduce any pressure to enrol in Thrive as their best or only option. Participants may also have benefited from more information on how salary structures typically work in their selected field.

*The trainings were excellent. However, it would be even better if they were offered at a professional level... that reflect the level of our professional skills rather than just simple certificates.*

Participant, individual interview

*One area that can be improved in the delivery of supplementary or additional services is the English language proficiency. Enhancing our communication literacy skills in English would be beneficial, as it would further empower us in our interactions and opportunities for advancement.*

Participant, individual interview

**7 Explore opportunities in other job sectors beyond hospitality and food preparation.** It is worth exploring what other sectors of employment may be open to engagement through Thrive or a similar program. Many of those who received training in the hotels track expressed a higher preference for other jobs, which could lead to undue attrition over time. Several participants who completed individual interviews suggested that the program could be expanded to include trainings appropriate for other sectors as well. Considering the volume of potential Thrive participants, mid- and long-term plans for sector trainings should be enacted to avoid oversaturating the selected industries with a constant supply of candidates. It will also be important to add a training module on other desirable sectors and participants' competitiveness for jobs in those sectors from a sustainability perspective.

*I hope the institution offers a variety of training options, such as garment making and handcrafting, to cater to different interests and skills.*

Participant, individual interview

**8 Incorporate modules and support to respond to women's stated interest in entrepreneurship.** The vast majority of participants expressed preferences for self-employment and entrepreneurship, which they saw as more lucrative, less burdensome and allowing for more flexibility. Key stakeholders also discussed the ways in which entrepreneurship can be a successful path for women returnees, but several did note that there are risks associated. Implementers may consider incorporating entrepreneurship modules into the Thrive curriculum but must also weigh the barriers and risks associated with entrepreneurship in the relevant labour market to ensure that participants are making an informed choice. Therefore, supplementary training could take a nuanced view of entrepreneurship, especially solo ventures, and highlight the risks and true likelihood of profitability versus wage work. Providing external referrals to potential enrollees who wish for entrepreneurial training will also reduce the mismatch between preference for entrepreneurship and placement in wage work.

**9 Facilitate peer networks and community-building among returnees.** The network of returnees who participate in a program like Thrive can continue to be a source of strength and sustained engagement for survivors of human trafficking who are strongly in need of a community. Participants mentioned how much they valued the chance to interact with other women returnees. It seems likely that such support systems will continue to benefit returnee women's psychological and economic well-being. Future engagement should continue to facilitate these relationships and create space for them to flourish.

*[Thrive] provided a platform for me to connect with and share my thoughts and experiences with other individuals who were in similar situations as returnees from abroad. This... helped me feel understood and supported throughout the program.*

Participant, individual interview

**10 Provide better understanding of and skills related to remigration outside of Ethiopia, including to Europe and other migrant-favoured regions.** It is notable that more than half of participants responded that they were likely or very likely to migrate again, particularly to a new part of the world. This, coupled with the fact that most participants would prefer to work in a different sector, suggests that there may be a need for Thrive implementers to help participants understand what opportunities are available to them both within and outside of the country. This is especially pertinent for the labour markets of other regions where they may be less familiar with the realities of successful emigration or employment in a new host country. Helping participants identify opportunities that do exist for them may be an important way to both temper frustration and avoid unsafe or irregular remigration.

**11 Advocate with decision-makers to prioritise support for returnees.** Many key informants indicated that the situation for returnees is not currently a priority for Ethiopian decision-makers and suggested that there is a low level of understanding among them of the challenges faced by returnee women. Evidence-based advocacy may be a useful tool to build awareness and support for Thrive and similar programs.

*I have access to ministers and the offices they run. To me they are oblivious to most challenges of these and other women in Ethiopia. However, when you cite a figure which is astronomically high, it sort of wakes them up.*  
Service provider, KI

**12 Adopt a more intentional approach to addressing and transforming gender norms that affect program participants.** Thrive would benefit from assessing and challenging the gender norms that affect women returnees in Ethiopia, particularly as they pertain to employment and to women's engagement in this and similar programs. Norms dictate what roles women may play within and outside of the household, and what jobs they are allowed to do, while also determining their primary responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work. This may limit women's ability to engage in formal employment with set hours and locations, and resort to self-employment instead. In addition, travelling to and from work can be dangerous for women, particularly at night, if transportation is not provided or is unreliable.

**13 Carry out further research to quantify program impact and gaps.** Though the results of the pilot are promising, there is a need for a longer-term evaluation on a larger number of participants<sup>39</sup> to undertake a meaningful quantitative impact assessment of the program.<sup>40</sup> A robust evaluation could include program participants who have remained in the program, participants who have dropped out mid-way through it, as well as non-participants, to track and compare their employment, income and well-being over time.<sup>41</sup> At the time of this assessment, most participants had been in their jobs for less than six months, making it impossible to comment on the sustainability of Thrive's employment pathway longer term. Future studies should also look to include comparison data to truly quantify the program's impact on participants' satisfaction with work conditions, earnings and extent of reintegration.

39 Kluge, J., Puerto, S., Robalino, D., Romero, J. M., Rother, F., Stöterau, J., Weidenkaff, F. and Witte, M. (2019). Do youth employment programs improve labor market outcomes? A quantitative review. *World Development*, 114, 237–53.

40 Alfonsi et al. (2020) Tackling Youth Unemployment: Evidence from a labour market experiment in Uganda, *Econometrica*, Vol.88, No.6(November),2369– 2414.

41 Hirshleifer, S., McKenzie, D., Almeida, R. and Ridao-Cano, C. (2016). The impact of vocational training for the unemployed: experimental evidence from Turkey. *Economic Journal*, 127, 2115–46.

Image: Launch event for the Thrive project. Credit: Genaye Eshetu/The Freedom Fund



## Annex 1: Employer feedback for graduates (abridged)

This summary combines quantitative and qualitative observations across both training sites. There were no noteworthy differences based on where the graduate(s) had trained.

### Strengths:

- **Strong foundation:** Employers acknowledged graduates possess a solid foundation of professional skills and knowledge. Employers highlighted their proficiency, work ethic, professionalism and ability to manage time and prioritise tasks, and that they demonstrated the ability to learn swiftly and adapt to new work environments.
- **High employer satisfaction:** Over three-fourths of employers expressed high satisfaction with graduates. Employers reported that Thrive helps them meet their needs of finding qualified candidates.
- **Valuable soft skills:** Employers recognised graduates' communication, collaboration, teamwork and problem-solving abilities. They felt the program equips graduates to work effectively with colleagues and contribute to a positive work environment.
- **Program effectiveness:** Employers overwhelmingly agreed that the program equips graduates for success. Qualitative data reinforces this, as the majority of the interviewees acknowledged the program's effectiveness in preparing graduates. The apprenticeship component and practical training were consistently highlighted as highly valuable aspects of the program.
- **Positive employer attitude:** Employers viewed graduates as well-prepared, competent and valuable assets. Social impact was seen as positive, with employers acknowledging the program's role in empowering women and reducing exploitation.

### Areas for improvement:

- **Consistent soft skill application:** While employers recognised essential soft skills, ensuring consistent application in the workplace could be improved.
- **Targeted soft skill training:** Consider incorporating training on problem-solving, labour laws and work attitude. Employers also recommended strengthening professional work ethic, time management and self-confidence.
- **Industry-specific knowledge:** Employers suggested enhancing knowledge in areas such as labour laws, industry-specific work attitude and English language proficiency.

## Annex 2: Methodology guidelines for the cost-benefit analysis of the pilot

### Rationale

The Freedom Fund's Thrive pilot program in Ethiopia heralds the evolving funding landscape for employment projects and active labour market programs. The program can offer important lessons and experiences, particularly as more public, private and third sector (NGO) organisations become part of this landscape, as there will be a higher demand for a standard language and metrics to make decisions on investments made on employment programs. Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is one of the many standard metrics that are used by program funders to assess the value of their investment and inform future funding decisions.

For small projects like Thrive, CBA is a better method than cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) and cost-utility analysis (CUA). Practitioners should be extremely careful in using CEA and CUA for evaluation because they can lead to sub-optimal choices. In small project appraisal, a positive net benefit calculation is indicative of the presence of social welfare and an optimal allocation (i.e. pareto efficient)

and it is reasonable to use CBA.

This document provides details outlining a CBA of the pilot program. CBA assumes a discount rate that essentially says that future impacts (usually benefits) are worth less than present impacts (usually costs). We provide a succinct CBA methodology outlining the potential cost of the scheme as well as success measures that can be used to better understand the impact of the scheme in the future. Such an exercise is useful to gauge the return/benefit/effectiveness of any investment made in training of returning women if a large-scale scheme is designed (i.e. value-for-money).

### Methodological milestones

The following steps will be followed to outline the methodology of the C-B analysis for the Thrive pilot program.

**Step 1:** Identifying all participating stakeholders is critical in documenting an exhaustive list of costs and benefits. All Thrive participants included in this CBA were female returnees, living in Addis Ababa, not in employment at the time of their enrolment in the program, and had commenced their enrolment in either 2022 or 2023. Based on monitoring data provided by Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise, the table below summaries the number of participants who reached each of the four milestones:

	Based on monitoring data provided by SY and HE			Forecasted
	(A) Cohort that started in 2022, with enough time in program to reach 6 months of employment	(B) Cohort that started in 2023, with enough time in program to reach 6 months of employment	(C) Cohort that started in 2023, but not enough time in program to reach 6 months of employment	For (C), the forecasted number of women who will reach the milestone(s) in 2024
<b>Sister Yemisrach (SY)</b>				
Number of women newly enrolled, # with action plan developed	45	25	50	-
Number of women starting in-work training	41	25	48	-
Number of women in employment for 3 months (defined as 13 weeks)	36	22	43	-
Number of women in employment for 6 months (defined as 26 weeks)	32	18	2	34
<b>Hope Enterprise (HE)</b>				
Number of women newly enrolled, # with action plan developed	45	49	26	-
Number of women starting in-work training	43	44	25	-
Number of women in employment for 3 months (defined as 13 weeks)	43	30	-	20
Number of women in employment for 6 months (defined as 26 weeks)	43	18	-	17

In total, 240 women enrolled in the Thrive program during 2022 and 2023. Out of this group, 164 participants have been in the program long enough to reach six months of employment. Among these 164 women: 153 (93 percent) have started in-work training; 131 (80 percent) have remained in employment for at least 3 months; and 111 (68 percent), have remained in employment for at least six months.

Note that in this CBA, we have not priced in the opportunity cost, defined as what the participants could have earned if they had not entered into the Thrive program. This is because all of the women were unemployed at the time of enrolment and had not been successful in securing work in Addis Ababa, which is the reason why we have assumed the opportunity cost to be “0” for this analysis.

**Step 2:** Direct cost of the pilot scheme A, which include:

- Fees paid to service providers (Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise) for their work to recruit, train, place and support the women to remain in employment, as well as for outreach and support to host employers. The fees included in the CBA are based on the “price per unit” that are payable to the service provider for each participant who reaches pre-agreed milestones.
- Fees paid to technical assistance providers for their work supporting the service providers to adapt existing activities, or to design new ones, to better suit the needs of female returnees.
- Salary cost of two Freedom Fund staff who are closely linked to the ongoing delivery of the Thrive program, especially to manage the performance of and payments to the two service providers.
- Fees paid to consultants for evaluation services, including:
  - Fees to Azadi and KASMA for an initial round of qualitative data-gathering with Thrive participants.
  - Fees to the team that produced this evaluation report, including additional quantitative and qualitative data collection to address data gaps.

**Step 3:** Direct benefits of the pilot scheme, which include:

- Earnings by Thrive participants, from the new form of employment – average wages per person multiplied by the number of women employed.
- Non-monetary benefits offered by employers, namely transportation and meals provided for their workers.

Note that we have deliberately excluded indirect/intangible costs and indirect/intangible benefits from this CBA in order to maintain the reliability of the results. However, the intangible costs and benefits are discussed in later sections.

### Present value and net present value computation

We compute the Present Value (PV) of costs and benefits by dividing the future cash flows by 1+the social discount rate to the power of the number of periods (i.e. 1, 2 & 3).

$$PV = FV \frac{1}{(1 + r)^n}$$

Where FV=future value; r=the social discount rate and n=periods. The formula to calculate Net Present Value (NPV) is quite straightforward and is given as

$$NPV = Total PV of Benefits - Total PV of Costs$$

We make a decision on the project’s feasibility based on the NPV and/or return on investment (ROI), which is also known as the benefit-cost ratio (BCR). We can compute ROI/BCR as

$$BCR = \frac{Total PV of Benefits}{Total PV of costs}$$

If ROI/BCR is 5.0, every \$1 invested generates \$5 of social benefits. The key challenge is converting non-financial benefits into financial benefits that can be quantified. One needs to identify the relevant externalities and their magnitude, assign monetary values to them using market prices, shadow prices

or non-market valuation techniques, which come with their advantages as well as disadvantages. The three key valuation methods for social benefits are *stated preference approach*, *revealed preference approach* and *life satisfaction approach*. Their application requires quantitative modelling on a large sample size. Therefore, the Thrive program is not suitable for relying on such approaches to convert non-financial benefits to financial ones, except using the qualitative information and any other round of data as much as possible to make sensible evaluation statements.

The ROI/BCR is a measure that translates the complexity of the Thrive program in into simple monetary values in a consistent manner. Arriving at an ROI requires translating into dollars the investment made in the program and the benefits it delivered. Note that CBA provides little information about how resources were used to contribute to a particular outcome (e.g. employment of returnee women). This is why we might need to frame a CBA as part of a logic model or story of change.

This type of analysis should include outcomes for which the market does not provide a satisfactory measure of economic value. This means capturing “soft outcomes” (e.g. increase in empowerment, self-esteem, confidence, etc.) using estimates from secondary research (e.g. some of the responses from the qualitative data on the 45 individuals) or conducting longitudinal studies. In practice, however, the measures or proxies for the soft outcomes are seldom included due to lack of resources or time. Instead, soft outcomes are usually captured using interviews, focus groups or observations. This allows for a narrative of the impact of the program on participants’ lives, which can powerfully complement the outcomes that can be captured quantitatively.

### Intangible costs not included in the CBA

Because they are in wage employment, participants have foregone earning a living from self-employment or as an entrepreneur. This is what we can classify as the opportunity cost of their jobs in the formal sector. Understanding opportunity cost helps individuals and businesses make informed decisions by weighing the value of the next best alternative that is forgone when a choice is made. Due to the high levels of start-up failure (that is, for those who might have opted for entrepreneurship) and unemployment among women in Ethiopia, as well as the low level of reserve wage in the economy, there is very little or nothing that the survivors face as an opportunity cost because they are locked in wage employment.

### Intangible benefits not included in the CBA

Vocational and technical training programs aimed at reintegrating returning migrant women into the labour market can yield numerous intangible benefits. Because the project has a significant social impact, the most relevant component of the evaluation should seriously consider comparing intangible costs against intangible benefits.

**The project outcome (i.e. employment) leads to improved quality of life, better livelihoods, and reduction in unemployment and remigration.** These benefits are not always quantifiable in monetary terms. But they contribute significantly to social welfare, gender equality and community resilience. The survivors benefit primarily from empowerment and self-efficacy. The training from Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise equipped the participants with skills and knowledge that in turn boosted their self-confidence and sense of agency, as strongly evidenced in the participant interviews, focus groups and surveys, as well the key informant interview outcomes from their employers, who expressed a high level of confidence that they will succeed in their careers. Accordingly, we should not limit consideration of the longer term benefits of the program to money and wages the participants are projected to earn. The vocational training and the subsequent jobs they manage to keep for three months, six months and beyond are critical for social integration and community cohesion. Additionally, the training and the skills they manage to get from Sister Yemisrach and Hope Enterprise provide the platforms for survivors to reconnect with their respective communities in Ethiopia, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing the stigma associated with returning without any assets.

**The project can help survivors address psychological traumas (e.g. hopelessness) resulting from their working conditions in the Middle East.** Financial independence via wage employment can play an important role in improving their mental health and well-being, while the training and the prospect of securing stable, decent employment can help alleviate feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression.

**Increased awareness of legal rights, labour laws and access to legal resources will help women returning to Ethiopia navigate challenges and protect themselves from future exploitation.** Ideally, the integrated nature of the training and the counselling support that participants obtained will also benefit wider society through an increased awareness of legal rights of Ethiopian workers, both migrants and returnees.

**The project will contribute to better outcomes for survivors' children in Ethiopia.** The primary reason for the women to leave Ethiopia is poverty. For those who have children, having a stable job improves family stability and child welfare by reducing financial stress and promoting better outcomes for children in terms of education, health and well-being.

**The peer support in the training program and from other survivor organisations (such as Azadi of Kenya) help to strengthen social networks and support systems.** These can help the returnees build professional and social networks and establish relationships that offer support, mentorship and opportunities for collaboration. A key concern regarding African society is the lack of economic independence of women, and increasing this will help shift societal norms and thereby reduce violence and discrimination against them. In the long run, those returning women who lead stable lives will be a source of success stories featuring women who managed to overcome extreme challenges (e.g. the abuse and exploitation they endured in the Middle East) to achieve economic independence. This can serve as powerful inspiration for younger generations, particularly girls, highlighting the value of education, resilience and self-determination.

In summation, these intangible benefits highlight the multi-dimensional impacts a training and labour market reintegration program such as Thrive can have for returning migrant Ethiopia women, not just on the survivors directly involved but also on their families, communities and society at large. By addressing both the economic and social dimensions of reintegration, such programs can contribute to building more inclusive, equitable and resilient communities.

### Annex 3: Participant individual feedback form

Project Participants Feedback Tool			
No	Question	Response	Skip
<b>A. Recruitment and enrolment</b>			
A1	When did you return back home?	1. Less than a year ago 2. More than a year ago 3. Others (Mention)	
A2	How did you find out about the project?	1. Walk-ins 2. Referrals by other institutions/ individuals 3. Social media 4. Through friends 5. Other...	
A3	When were you recruited into the program?		
A4	Which vocational training school did you go to?		
A5	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement		
i	I was properly informed on the objective of the program and all the activities I will have to participate in, including on-the-job training.	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
A6	Are there any challenges that you experienced during recruitment of this pilot program?	1. .... 2. ....	
A7	Is there any other support that you could have been given to make your experience much better during the recruitment of this pilot program?	1. .... 2. ....	
<b>B. Training</b>			
B1	Which vocational training did you choose to pursue?		
B2	Why did you choose the course above?	1. .... 2. ....	

Project Participants Feedback Tool			
No	Question	Response	Skip
b)	Is there a course that you would have liked to pursue that was not available? If yes please indicate which course	1. ....	
B3	Did you receive adequate support while choosing the course that you chose?	1. Yes 2. No	
B4	If YES, how?		
B5	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
B6	Did you struggle with language during the trainings	1. Yes 2. No	
B7	If YES, how was this challenge addressed?	1. .... 2. ....	
B8	Did the facility have all the equipment that you needed?	1. Yes 2. No	
B9	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
B10	Were you satisfied with the support given to you by the trainers that were in the school?	1. Yes 2. No	
B11	If YES, how?		
B12	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
B13	Did you feel like you could complain in case anything went wrong?	1. Yes 2. No	
B14	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
B15	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
B16	If you were to complain, who would be the person you would complain to?	1. .... 2. ....	
B17	Were you given adequate information on who to reach out to in case you experienced any challenges?	1. Yes 2. No	
B18	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
B19	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
<b>C. Supplementary/additional services</b>			
C1	Apart from the course what additional support/training did you receive?	1. Leadership trainings 2. Life skills trainings (including financial literacy training) 3. Psychosocial support 4. Soft-skills development 5. Participation in peer support groups 6. Day care 7. Others (specify)	
C2	Were these supplementary or additional services useful to you?	1. Yes 2. No	
C3	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
C4	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
C5	Do you think that these services contributed significantly to your ability to stay in the course?	1. .... 2. ....	
C6	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
C7	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	



Project Participants Feedback Tool			
No	Question	Response	Skip
C8	What needs to be improved on how the supplementary or additional services are delivered?	1. .... 2. ....	
C9	Were you satisfied with the support given to you by your case manager?	1. Yes 2. No	
C10	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
C11	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
C12	What other support do you feel should have been given to you by the case manager?	1. .... 2. ....	
C13	Did you find a sense of belonging with others in the course of the program and beyond e.g. did you make friends during this program?	1. Yes 2. No	
C14	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
C15	What needs to be improved on how the supplementary or additional services are delivered?	1. .... 2. ....	
C16	Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		
I	I was satisfied with the supplementary or additional support services given to me in this project	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
II	I am satisfied with the career path that I chose	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
<b>D Apprenticeship/internship</b>			
D1	Do you feel like the course and training gave you enough support to engage with employers?	1. Yes 2. No	
D2	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
D3	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
D4	Did you go through an interview?	1. Yes (If yes, skip to D5) 2. No	
D5	If you went through an interview, did you feel like you were prepared for it?	1. Yes 2. No	
D6	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
D7	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
D8	Is there any additional support you think you needed and was not offered to support your engagement with employers and the interview process?	1. .... 2. .... 3. .... 4. ....	
D9	Were you able to apply the skills that you learned in your course during the apprenticeship?	1. Yes 2. No	
D10	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
D11	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
D12	Did you receive adequate feedback about your performance during internship?	1. Yes 2. No	
D13	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
D14	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	

Project Participants Feedback Tool			
No	Question	Response	Skip
<b>E. Employment</b>			
E1	What was the type of contract you received for the job placement?	1. Permanent employment contract 2. Part-time employment contract 3. Casual employment contract 4. Others (specify)	
E2	Did your apprenticeship adequately prepare you to be employed?	1. Yes (If yes, skip to E3) 2. No (If no, skip to E4)	
E3	If YES, how?		
E4	If NO, how best could you have been prepared for employment during your apprenticeship?	1. .... 2. ....	
E5	Is there a significant difference in experience from your apprenticeship and employment?	1. Yes 2. No	
E6	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
E7	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
E8	What is the salary that you received?		
E9	Was the salary that you received enough to cover your basic needs (food, rent, transport)?	1. Yes 2. No	
E10	If YES, how?	1. .... 2. ....	
E11	If NO, why?		
E12	Do you feel like you can freely complain to your supervisor at work if something goes wrong?	1. Yes 2. No	
E13	If NO, why?	1. .... 2. ....	
E14	Are there any additional skills or training that you need to help you do your job more effectively?		
E15.	Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?		
i	I work in a safe and conducive environment that allows me to do my work efficiently?	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
ii	I am comfortable with working hours and shifts provided by my current job	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
iii	I am able to handle the amount of work assigned to me by my supervisors without any difficulties	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
E15	What are some of the things that you like about your workplace		
E16	What are some of the things that you DON'T like about your workplace?		
E17	What are some of the things that need to be improved to make your workplace more comfortable for you?		
<b>General feedback and perceptions</b>			
I	The trainings were relevant and practical for the career path that I chose.	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
II	I felt supported throughout the program	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
III	I have adequate skills required to do and retain my job	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	

Project Participants Feedback Tool			
No	Question	Response	Skip
IV	Going through this project significantly impacted my sense of confidence in myself	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
V	I made friends with peers who make me feel supported through this project	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
VI	I am more optimistic about my future as a result of participating in this project	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
VII	Participation in this program has helped to boost my confidence in standing against stigma of being a returnee or survivor	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly agree	
VIII	Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in the Thrive Pilot?		

## Annex 4: Questionnaire for participant survey

### Section 1. Socio-Economic Characteristics ክፍል 1. የማህበረሰብ እና ኢኮኖሚ ባህሪያት

	CODING ONLY ኮድ ማድረግያ ብቻ	
What is your age? ዕድሜዎ ስንት ነው?	__ __	NA
What is your marital status? የጋብቻ ሁኔታዎ ምንድነው? 1. Never married ፈጽሞ ያልገባ 2. Married ባለትዳር 3. Living together ከፍቅረኛ ጋር አብሮ የሚኖር 4. Divorced/separated የተፋታ/የተለያየ 5. Widowed ባል የሞተባት/ ሚስት የሞተባት	__ __	NA
Before joining the training program at [Hope Enterprise / Sister Yemisrach], what was your level of education? Include year of completion of education የሆኑ ኢንተርፕራይዝ/ሲስትር የምስራችን የስልጠና ፕሮግራም ለመቀላቀል በፊት የትምህርት ደረጃዎ ምን ነበር? ትምህርት ያጠናቀቁበትን ዓመት ያካትቱ 1. No education ያልተማረ 2. Some primary የተወሰነ እንደኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት የተማረ 3. Completed primary (8th grade at the primary level) የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ያጠናቀቀ (የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ አስከፊ 8ኛ ክፍል) 4. Some secondary የተወሰነ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት የተማረ 5. Completed secondary ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ያጠናቀቀ 6. Technical and vocational qualification የቴክኒክ እና የሙያ ብቃት ያለው/ያላት 7. Vocational training not completed የሙያ ትምህርት ያላጠናቀቀ 8. University or college diploma የኒቨርሲቲ ወይም ኮሌጅ ዲፕሎማ ያለው/ያላት 9. University diploma not completed የኒቨርሲቲ ዲፕሎማ ያላጠናቀቀ 10. Tertiary or university degree የሶስተኛ ደረጃ ወይም የኒቨርሲቲ ዲግሪ ያለው/ያላት 11. University degree not completed; የኒቨርሲቲ ዲግሪ ያላጠናቀቀ 12. Other, Specify ሌላ, ይግለጹ	Level ደረጃ:  __ __   Year of completion የትምህርት ዓመት:  __ __ __	NA
What is the level of education of your mother? [Note: use the choices given under Q1.3] የአናትህ/ሽ የትምህርት ደረጃ ምን ያህል ነው? [ማስታወሻ: በQ1.3 ስር የተሰጡትን ምርጫዎች ይጠቀሙ]	__ __	NA
What is the level of education of your father? [Note: use the choices given under Q1.3] የአባትህ/ሽ የትምህርት ደረጃ ምን ያህል ነው? [ማስታወሻ: በQ1.3 ስር የተሰጡትን ምርጫዎች ይጠቀሙ]	__ __	NA
What is your birth place? የትውልድ ቦታዎ የት ነው? 1. Urban ከተማ 2. Rural ገጠር	__ __	NA

Do you have children? ልጆች አሉሽ?	Yes   No     አዎ   የለም	NA
If yes, what are the age of your children? አዎ ከሆነ፣ የልጆችዎ ዕድሜ ስንት ነው? Child 1 age የ1ኛ ልጅ ዕድሜ:  __ __  Child 4 age:  __ __  Child 7 age:  __ __  Child 2 age:  __ __  Child 5 age:  __ __  Child 8 age:  __ __  Child 3 age:  __ __  Child 6 age:  __ __  Child 9 age:  __ __		
How many living siblings do you have? ስንት በህይወት ያሉ አህትና ወንድም አሉሽ?	__ __	NA
What is your household size? That is, the people who you currently live with? የቤተሰብዎ ብዛት ስንት ነው? ማለትም፣ አሁን አብረውሽ የሚኖሩ ሰዎች?	__ __	NA
What is the combined monthly income of your household, that is, between the people who you currently live with? [State the amount in Ethiopian birr] የቤተሰብዎ ወርሃዊ ገቢ ምን ያህል ነው? ማለትም በአሁኑ ጊዜ አብረውት በሚኖሩት ሰዎች ጨምሮ? [መጠኑን በኢትዮጵያ ብር ይግለጹ]	__ __	NA
Compared to other families in your home community where you grew up, does your family have more, less, or the same amount of money, goods, and resources? ባለሽብት ማህበረሰብ ውስጥ ካሉ ሌሎች ቤተሰቦች ጋር ሲነጻጸር፣ ቤተሰብሽ የበለጠ ፣ ያነሰ ወይም ተመሳሳይ መጠን ያለው ገንዘብ፣ ቁሳቁስ እና ሀብቶች አሏቸው? 1- Less ያነሰ 2- About the same ተመሳሳይ 3 - More የበለጠ	__ __	NA
Has anyone in your family ever lived in the Middle East, now or in the past? በቤተሰባችሁ ውስጥ በመካከለኛው ምስራቅ (አረብ አገር) አሁን ወይም ቀደም ብሎ የኖረ ሰው አለ?	Yes   No     አዎ   የለም	NA
Has anyone in your family ever had formal employment in hospitality sector, now or in the past? በቤተሰባችሁ ውስጥ በአንግዳ መስተግዳ ዘርፍ፣ አሁን ወይም ከዚህ በፊት መደበኛ ሥራ ሠርቶ ያወቃል?	Yes   No     አዎ   የለም	NA

### Section 2. Employment and Migration

What is your age? ዕድሜዎ ስንት ነው?	Yes   No     አዎ   የለም	NA
If yes, why: መልስዎ አዎ ከሆነ ለምን?		
Did you ever have an entrepreneurial (self-employment) business before your current wage employment? አሁን ካለሽበት የደመወዝ ቅጥር በፊት የቤተሰብ (የራስ ስራ) ንግድ ኖሮሽ ያወቃል?	Yes   No     አዎ   የለም	NA
If yes, was it your own business where you were the boss, or was someone else in your family the boss? መልስዎ አዎ ከሆነ፣ እርስዎ አለቃ የነበሩበት ርግልዎ ንግድ ነበር ወይንስ ሌላ የቤተሰብ አባል አለቃ ነበር I'm the boss እኔ አለቃ ነበርኩ Someone outside my family was the boss ከቤተሰብ ውጭ የሆነ ሰው አለቃ ነበር Other, specify: ሌላ ፣ግለጽ	__ __	NA
Would you mind telling me a bit more about your current/most recent job? Are you currently still doing this job? ስለአሁኑ/የቅርብ ጊዜ ስራሽ ተጨማሪ ማብራሪያ ልትሰጩኝ ትችላለሽ? በአሁኑ ጊዜ ይህን ሥራ እየሰራሽ ነው?	Year አመት:  __ __ __ __  Month ወር:  __ __	NA
If no, when did you stop? አየሰራሽ ካልሆነ መቼ ስራውን አቆምሽ?	Year አመት:  __ __ __ __  Month ወር:  __ __	NA
When did you start this job? ይህን ስራ መቼ ነው የጀመርሽው?	Year አመት:  __ __ __ __  Month ወር:  __ __	NA
Typically, how many days a week do you work? በሳምንት ስንት ቀናት ትሰራ ነበር?	__  days ቀናት	NA
Typically, how many hours a day do you work? በቀን ስንት ሰዓት ትሰራ ነበር?	__ __  hours ሰዓት	NA



**Section 3. Training completed**  
**ክፍል 3. ስልጠና ተጠናቀቀ**

[Note: The focus here is mainly about training receive from Hope Enterprise and Sister Yemisrach under the Thrive program. To have a good idea of the heterogeneous human capital accumulated by the women, it is also important to ask other training received outside the program. This is distinctly and explicitly worded for clarity in the relevant section of the questionnaire below.]

[ማስታወሻ: ይህ ክፍል በዋናነት ትኩረት ያደረገው በትራይቭ ፕሮግራም ስር ከተሰፋ አንተርፕራይዝ እና ሲስተር የምስራች የሚሰጠውን ስልጠና በተመለከተ ነው። በሌሎች የተከማቸ የተለያዩ የሰው ልጅ ሀብትን በደንብ ለመረዳት ከፕሮግራሙ ውጪ የተቀበሉትን ሌሎች ስልጠናዎች መጠየቅም አስፈላጊ ነው። ይህም ከዚህ በታች ባለው መጠይቅ ውስጥ በሚመለከተው ክፍል በግልፅ እና በቀጥታ ተቀምጧል።]

What is length of the training you took from [Hope Enterprise and/or Sister Yemisrach]? ከተሰፋ አንተርፕራይዝ እና/ወይም ከሲስተር የምስራች የወሰዱት ስልጠና ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ነው?	I __   __   hours per day ሰዓታት በቀን I __   days per week ቀናት በሰዎንት I __   months ወራት	NA																						
What types of support did you receive from [Hope Enterprise and/or Sister Yemisrach]? ከተሰፋ አንተርፕራይዝ እና/ወይም ከሲስተር የምስራች ምን ዓይነት ድጋፍ አግኝተዋል?	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Have received? [select all that applies]</th> <th>Found most useful? [do not prompt, mark if mentioned]</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Skills to work in the hospitality/hotel sector በመስተንግዶ/በሆቴል ዘርፍ የመስራት ችሎታ</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>English language የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Financial literacy skills (saving, credit, etc የፋይናንስ አውቀት (ቁጠባ፣ ብድር፣ ወዘተ)</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apprenticeship and cooperative training የየስራ ልምምድ እና የትብብር ስልጠና</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health education የጤና ትምህርት</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Passing Certificate of Competency (CoC የብቃት ማረጋገጫ የምስክር ወረቀት</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Day care support for my children ለልጆቼ የቀን እንክብካቤ/ጥበቃ ድጋፍ</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transportation assistance የመጓጓዣ አርዳታ</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Counselling ማማከር</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other services not listed above, specify: ሌሎች ከላይ ያልተዘረዘሩ አገልግሎቶች፣ ይግለጹ፡-</td> <td>I Yes   No   I __  </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Have received? [select all that applies]	Found most useful? [do not prompt, mark if mentioned]	Skills to work in the hospitality/hotel sector በመስተንግዶ/በሆቴል ዘርፍ የመስራት ችሎታ	I Yes   No   I __	English language የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ	I Yes   No   I __	Financial literacy skills (saving, credit, etc የፋይናንስ አውቀት (ቁጠባ፣ ብድር፣ ወዘተ)	I Yes   No   I __	Apprenticeship and cooperative training የየስራ ልምምድ እና የትብብር ስልጠና	I Yes   No   I __	Health education የጤና ትምህርት	I Yes   No   I __	Passing Certificate of Competency (CoC የብቃት ማረጋገጫ የምስክር ወረቀት	I Yes   No   I __	Day care support for my children ለልጆቼ የቀን እንክብካቤ/ጥበቃ ድጋፍ	I Yes   No   I __	Transportation assistance የመጓጓዣ አርዳታ	I Yes   No   I __	Counselling ማማከር	I Yes   No   I __	Other services not listed above, specify: ሌሎች ከላይ ያልተዘረዘሩ አገልግሎቶች፣ ይግለጹ፡-	I Yes   No   I __	DO NOT SKIP አይዘለሉት
Have received? [select all that applies]	Found most useful? [do not prompt, mark if mentioned]																							
Skills to work in the hospitality/hotel sector በመስተንግዶ/በሆቴል ዘርፍ የመስራት ችሎታ	I Yes   No   I __																							
English language የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ	I Yes   No   I __																							
Financial literacy skills (saving, credit, etc የፋይናንስ አውቀት (ቁጠባ፣ ብድር፣ ወዘተ)	I Yes   No   I __																							
Apprenticeship and cooperative training የየስራ ልምምድ እና የትብብር ስልጠና	I Yes   No   I __																							
Health education የጤና ትምህርት	I Yes   No   I __																							
Passing Certificate of Competency (CoC የብቃት ማረጋገጫ የምስክር ወረቀት	I Yes   No   I __																							
Day care support for my children ለልጆቼ የቀን እንክብካቤ/ጥበቃ ድጋፍ	I Yes   No   I __																							
Transportation assistance የመጓጓዣ አርዳታ	I Yes   No   I __																							
Counselling ማማከር	I Yes   No   I __																							
Other services not listed above, specify: ሌሎች ከላይ ያልተዘረዘሩ አገልግሎቶች፣ ይግለጹ፡-	I Yes   No   I __																							
Prior to joining the Thrive project, have you participated in other job skills training? የትራይቭን ፕሮጀክት ከመቀላቀል በፊት፣ በሌሎች የስራ ክህሎት ስልጠናዎች ተሳትፏል?	I Yes   No   I __     አዎ   የሰም	NA																						
If yes, give details: መልስዎ አዎ ከሆነ፣ ይዘርዘሩ																								
To what extent do you agree or disagree that your skills and current employment are well matched? ችሎታዎ እና አሁን ያሉት ሥራዎ በጥሩ ሁኔታ የተጣጣሙ ናቸው። በሚለው ምን ያህል ይስማማሉ ወይም አይስማሙም?	I __	NA																						
1- Strongly disagree በጣም አልስማማም 2- Disagree አልስማማም 3- Agree አስማማለሁ 4- Strongly agree በጣም አስማማለሁ																								
Would you prefer to work in another sector of employment? በሌላ የስራ ዘርፍ መስራት ይመርጣሉ?	I Yes   No   NA	NA																						
If yes, what other work would you prefer? Specify: መልስዎ አዎ ከሆነ፣ ሌላ ምን ሥራ ይመርጣሉ? ይግለጹ																								

**Section 4. Reintegration outcomes**  
**ክፍል 4. የመልስ ማቋቋም ውጤቶች**

Thinking about the time since you have completed your TVET course, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? የቴክኒክና ሙያ ትምህርት ሥልጠና ኮርስዎን ከጨረሱ በኋላ ስላለው ጊዜ በማሰብ በሚከተሉት መግለጫዎች ምን ያህል ይስማማሉ ወይም አይስማሙም?	1- Strongly disagree በጣም አልስማማም	2- Disagree አልስማማም	3- Agree አስማማለሁ	4- Strongly agree በጣም አስማማለሁ		
"I have used the information I learned from the course to recover from past trauma" ከኮርሱ የተማርኩት መረጃን ካለፈው ጉዳይ ለማግኘት ተጠቅሜታለሁ።					I __	NA
"I have used the information I learned from the course to reduce negative feelings like shame, loss, failure, stress, or anxiety" ከኮርሱ የተማርኩት መረጃን እንደ አፍረት፣ የውድቀት ስሜት፣ ጭንቀት እና መረበሽ ያሉ አሉታዊ ስሜቶችን ለመቀነስ ተጠቅሜታለሁ።					I __	NA
"I feel more self-worth than I did when I returned to Ethiopia" ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ስመለስ ከነበረኝ በላይ ለራሴ ያለኝ ግምት አሁን ጨምሯል።					I __	NA
Thinking about your life nowadays, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? በአሁኑ ሰዓት ያሉትን ህይወት በማሰብ፣ በሚከተሉት መግለጫዎች ምን ያህል ይስማማሉ ወይም አይስማሙም [Note: use answer options above Q4.1] [ማስታወሻ: በ Q4.1 ያሉ የመልስ አማራጮችን ይጠቀሙ]						
"Nowadays, I have the ability to make decisions about my own welfare" በአሁኑ ጊዜ ስለ ራሴ ደህንነት ውሳኔ የማድረግ ችሎታ አለኝ					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I usually feel a sense of freedom from the people who mistreated me during my migration" በአሁኑ ጊዜ በስደት ጊዜ ግፍ ከፈጸሙብኝ ሰዎች ነጻ የመውጣት ስሜት ይሰማኛል።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I usually feel confident that I can keep my freedom and make good choices about my life for the future" በአሁኑ ጊዜ ነፃነቴን እንደምጠብቅና ለወደፊት እይወቴ ጥሩ ምርጫ ማድረግ እንደምችል በራሴ አተማመናለሁ።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I often feel shame or self-stigma about returning to Ethiopia" በአሁኑ ጊዜ ወደ ኢትዮጵያ በመመለስ ብዙ ጊዜ አፍረት ወይም ራሴን የማጥላት ስሜት ይሰማኛል።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, there are people in my life who support me emotionally" በአሁኑ ጊዜ በእይወቴ ውስጥ በሞራል የሚደግፉ ሰዎች አሉ።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I feel that I belong and am included in my current community since I returned to Ethiopia" በአሁኑ ጊዜ ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ከተመለስኩበት ጊዜ ጀምሮ ተገቢ ቦታ እንዳለሁና አሁን ባለሁበት ማህበረሰብ አካል እንደሆንኩ ይሰማኛል።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I do social activities in my current community, just for fun" በአሁኑ ጊዜ፣ አሁን ባለሁበት ማህበረሰብ ውስጥ ለመዝናኛት ስል ማህበራዊ ግንኙነቶችን አደርጋለሁ።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I can achieve my goals for my family, such as making decisions, getting married, or having children" በአሁኑ ጊዜ፣ ስለሌተሰብ ያሉኝን ግቦች ለምሳሌ ውሳኔ ማድረግ፣ ማግባት ወይም ልጆች መውለድን ማሳካት እችላለሁ።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I am now fully functional in my community compared to other women my age" በአሁኑ ጊዜ፣ በኔ ዕድሜ ካሉት ሌሎች ሴቶች ጋር ሲወዳደር አኔ በማህበረሰቤ ውስጥ ሙሉ በሙሉ ጠቃሚ ነኝ።					I __	NA
"Nowadays, I am settled to live a stable life" በአሁኑ ጊዜ የተረጋጋ ኑሮ ለመኖር ብቁ ነኝ					I __	NA
<b>7 EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION in employment after participating in the Thrive program ቅጥር እና ካሳ: የስራ ቅጥር በትራይቭ ፕሮግራም ውስጥ ከተሳተፋ በኋላ</b>						
<b>Characteristics of those who are currently working በአሁኑ ጊዜ ስራ የሚሰሩ ሰዎች ባህሪዎች</b>						

Name/anonymous code ስም/ስም-አልባ ኮድ	Sex ጾታ	Age (yrs) ዕድሜ (ዓመት)	Status ደረጃ	How long were you working ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ሰሩ	Contract ውል	Payment ክፍያ	Total working hours ጠቅላላ የሥራ ሰዓት	Wages & Salaries የሰላት ክፍያ እና የወር ደምዘ
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								

**Sex codes የጾታ ኮዶች**

- Male ወንድ
- Female ሴት

**Status codes የደረጃ ኮዶች**

- Boss/employer አለቃ / ቀጣሪ
- Own-account worker የግል ሂሳብ ሠራተኛ
- Wage earner በሰላት ተከፋይ
- Paid apprentice ተከፋይ
- Non-paid apprentice ደመወዝተኛ ያልሆነ ለማጅ
- Unpaid family worker ደመወዝተኛ ያልሆነ የቤተሰብ ሰራተኛ
- Partner አጋር

**How long employed የሰሩበት ጊዜ**

- 1 month ወር
- 2 months 2 ወራት
- 3 months 3 ወራት
- 4 months 4 ወራት
- 5 months 5 ወራት
- 6 months 6 ወራት
- More than 6 months ከ6 ወራት በላይ

**Contract codes የውል ኮዶች**

- Operator አገልግሎት
- Written contract without fixed duration ያለ ቋሚ ጊዜ የጽሑፍ ውል
- Written contract with fixed duration (how long is the contract?) የተወሰነ ጊዜ ያለው የጽሑፍ ውል (ከጎንጎራቱ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ነው?)
- Verbal agreement የቃል ስምምነት
- On trial/probation የሙከራ ግዜ ላይ
- No contract ውል የሌለው

**Payment codes የክፍያ ኮዶች**

- Fixed monthly/weekly salary ቋሚ ወርሃዊ/ሳምንታዊ ደመወዝ
- Daily or per hour of work በቀን ወይም በሰዓት ሥራ
- Per job/task basis በየሰራ/በተግባር መጥን መሰረት
- Commission ኮሚሽን
- In kind payment የሌሎች አዙር ክፍያ
- No payment ምንም ክፍያ የሌለው

NOTE: Include other characteristics, depending on policy concerns, such as relationship to owner/operator, educational attainment, training, how they were recruited, occupation, etc  
 ማሳሰቢያ: የፖሊሲ ስጋቶችን መሰረት በማድረግ ሌሎች ባህሪያትን ያካትቱ ለምሳሌ ከባለቤቱ/ከአገልግሎት ጋር ያለው ግንኙነት፣ የትምህርት ስኬት፣ ስልጠና፣ እንዴት እንደተቀጠሩ፣ ስራ፣ ወዘተ።

### Annex 5: Key informant interview guide

- Qualitative insights will be collected from the following key informants;**
- Policy makers in Ministry of Women & Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Skills
  - Ethiopia gender experts working in similar projects and women empowerment initiatives (NGO and international organisation type work insights)

- Female academics who are working as labour market experts esp. focusing on women and youth
- Employment
- Service providers (SPs)
- Employers or potential employers

#### I. Introduction

- Introducing myself and the Thrive project.
- Explaining the purpose of the interview
- How the data/informant's insights will be used.
- Reassure respondents about the confidentiality of their information and insights.
- Interview will be conducted with a neutral and respectful tone;
- I will be flexible and adaptive. Given the busy nature of the respondent's and their high level position
- in government, interviews should be conducted in the way and the place/venue they prefer. I am happy to follow their lead.
- I will ask permission to detailed notes the interview. I have not plan of recording it.
- Thanking all for their willingness, time and participation.

N.B. The informants are very busy people. Therefore, the set of questions below are limited but will capture the core issues of the evaluation project in the form of open-ended questions.

#### II. Opening Questions

- Can you tell me your role? (this can be someone working in SP, employing organisation, academic institution, policy making body (e.g. ministry of Labour and Skills; Ministry of Women and Social Affairs)
- What is your experience of in the area of women employment? Any experience in relation to migrant women and their labour market integration in Ethiopia? Highlight any particular work/research/decision making experience either in Addis Ababa and/or elsewhere

#### III. Specific and key Focus Areas

N.B. Due to the diversity of the key informants not all questions are posed to all respondents. For instance, policy related questions are tailored to decision-makers but other respondents can reflect on them if they wish to

- Do you have any experience about the employment of returnee migrant women from the Middle East
- What are the biggest challenges you see facing these returning women in securing employment?
- What are the most important factors that are critical in securing employment for them in Ethiopia (with a focus in Addis Ababa) (e.g. vocational and skill based training...etc)
- Do you think there are service provider institutions that can provide sufficient and labour market relevant skills to returnee migrant women?
- What are the training related challenges faced by the returning women?
- What are the key skills that they need to success in the current Ethiopian labour market scene?
- What other challenges do they face? (e.g. stigma...etc)

- What are the potential quality issues you observed in the SPs?
- Do you think they get enough policy support for them to succeed in the Ethiopian labour market?
- What are the outstanding policy challenges? How can they be addressed for better integration and labour market success of the return migrant women?
- Are we doing enough to integrate returnee women?
- Do they get decent jobs? (e.g. in terms of salaries, employment rights, ...etc)
- Is combining vocational and skills training with targeted employer attachment the best route to help returnee women to be integrated in the labour market?
- Some returnee migrants expressed their interest to be entrepreneurial than being attached with an employer. Do you think the future support should consider directing them both to waged employment as well self-employment or entrepreneurship instead of focusing only on the former?

In all of the above, I will ask clarifications and if they informant raise issues that I have not covered above, I will probe them to go deeper. There are always insights that as a researcher we fail to anticipate. Hence, I will be keenly looking for additional insights that we have not thought of before. Based on my knowledge of Ethiopia, I will attempt to challenge assumptions, norms, temporal, spatial specificities...etc to encourage the key informant to provide context specific and nuance perspectives on the issue.

#### **V. Closing Questions**

- Do you have any additional thoughts or insights you would like to share?
- Reiterate how we are using the data and explain any potential follow ups.
- Once again, thank them and conclude.

# VISION

Our vision is a world free of slavery.

# MISSION

Our mission is to mobilise the knowledge, capital and will needed to end slavery.

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