

Rural to urban migration in Ethiopia: the case of female household servants in Addis Abeba. Mitarbeiter: Volker Gottowik, gemeinsam mit Abiot Shiferaw, Dawit Josef und Melake Mihret. Finanzierung: Projektzuschuss im Rahmen der „Förderung kleiner Projekte zur Frauen- und Genderforschung“ seitens der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main

There is great awareness in the Ethiopian society about female genital mutilation, forced and early marriage, abduction and rape. These practices became the topic of numerous anthropological studies and the target of countless NGOs. Even the Ethiopian Government banned them as “harmful traditional practices”. Despite the existing awareness about the miserable situation of the female population in many parts of the country, there is only little knowledge about those women and girls, who resist these practices and escape to urban centres. This research project deals with young women and girls who migrated to Addis Ababa to start a new life away from their parents, husband and sometimes even their children. The focus is on those women and girls who try to make a living by working as household servants in the Ethiopian capital. As a matter of fact, a considerable number of these women and girls escaped violence in their village only to become a victim of violence in town. Due to these problems, Addis Ababa for many of them is only a stopover on their way to Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Qatar and other countries in the Golf region.

This joint research project of Abiot Shiferaw, Dawit Josef, Melake Mihret (three young Ethiopian scholars, who graduated from Addis Ababa University) and Volker Gottowik tries to answer the following questions: What are the reasons that cause young women and girls from rural areas in Ethiopia to migrate to Addis Ababa? What are the challenges they are confronted with in their new urban environment? How do they manage to survive in the city, and what are their perspectives in life?