

## **The Socio-political Dynamics of Brokers of New Migrant Labor in Shashemene, Ethiopia**

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The change in scale and functions of urban towns in Africa is accompanied by internally evolving institutional transformations. In this paper we will address brokerage and recruitment of migrant labour in the town of Shashemene, Ethiopia. Brokerage in migrant labour is a relatively lucrative economic activity in the town and the competition among the brokers to attract migrants that arrive in the town in search of job is intensive. Claims over the brokerage system involve processes of negotiations, grouping, cooperation and conflicts when defining boundaries concerning who should have the rights to conduct brokerage of migrant-labour.

This paper addresses the conditions and processes that are shaping brokerage system and the changes being introduced in the actual contact systems in terms of ensuring security of employees and employers, enforcement of terms of agreement, reporting of underage to the local authorities, registry of migrants, and income and tax declaration to the town administration. The analysis is based on data in the form of life trajectories of new arrivals in Shashemene, and of some of the active brokers, as well as information about the contesting broker cooperatives and extensive background information about the town and its livelihood structure.