

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis aims to examine the perceived influence of Ethiopians abroad on home country development and recent political transformation, while confronting the views of Ethiopians staying abroad (referred to as diasporas) with the comparable groups of those residing in Ethiopia. In addition, it also explores the transnational links and migration and integration experiences of Ethiopians living abroad and migration intentions of the subsample of respondents residing in Ethiopia. The research draws on a web-based questionnaire survey among 137 respondents. The respondents were identified purposely through the author's social networks, with the sample constructed to consist of two subgroups in terms of respondents from Ethiopia staying abroad in western countries (N = 75) and those residing in Ethiopia (N = 62). The research showed that despite general willingness, there is relatively low participation of diaspora in official activities contributing to economic development in Ethiopia, though the majority of respondents provide financial as well as in-kind and social remittance to their families. It identified the high perceived influence of diaspora on the recent political transformation as well as ongoing ethnic mobilisations (including ethnic tensions in Ethiopia). Among other findings, the research also indicated that the diaspora respondents feel well integrated in the host countries, keep transnational links with their home countries (though their intensity decreases with the time spent in host country), and tend to identify themselves based on their both national (Ethiopian) and ethnic identity.

*Keywords: Ethiopia, development, diaspora, migration, remittances, transnationalism*