MORE SUPPORT VITAL FOR 970,000 DISPLACED PEOPLE IN ETHIOPIA’S GEDEO AND WEST GUJI ZONE

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IOM DIRECTOR GENERAL MEETS WITH ETHIOPIAN PRIME MINISTER, CHAIRPERSON OF AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

ADDIS ABABA - ETHIOPIA
31 OCTOBER 2018

The Director General of the UN Migration Agency (IOM), H.E. António Vitorino, met with the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, and with H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa on 27 and 28 October 2018, respectively.

In his meeting with H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed at the National Palace, the IOM Director General congratulated the Prime Minister on his robust reform agenda, for making peace with Eritrea and advancing women’s leadership in politics. Ethiopia’s newly constituted cabinet comprises 50 per cent women and stands out as the only country on the continent with a female president following the recent appointment of H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde on 25 October 2018.

For his part, Prime Minister Dr. Ahmed expressed appreciation for the contribution of IOM in Ethiopia in response to the recent spate of displacements in the south-west of the country, and in enhancing capacities for effective migration management.

The IOM Mission

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As the leading international organization for migration, IOM acts with partners in the international community to:

- Assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management
- Advance understanding of migration issues
- Encourage social and economic development
The IOM Director General subsequently met with the African Union Commission Chairperson, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, at the African Union headquarters, along with commissioners Amira El Fadil Mohammed and Minata Cessouma Samate. The meeting covered a broad range of areas of ongoing cooperation between the AUC and IOM, discussed potential additional areas for partnership going forward, and went on to underline the importance of AU leadership on African migration challenges.

In connection to this symposium, Sweden would like to announce that it will finance an initial phase of three years JLMP project with a total of USD 9 million,” said Torbjorn Pettersson, the Swedish Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti. “In addition, Sweden is

Maureen Achieng (l), IOM Ethiopia Chief of Mission and Representative to AUC, IGAD & UNECA with Sweden’s ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti, Torbjörn Pettersson. Photo: IOM
In October, IOM, provided peer education and life skills training to 138 participants, including coordinators of 20 youth centers, 20 schools and officials of the Bureau of Youth and Sport, and Bureau of Education. The training aimed to interrogate the root causes of irregular migration from the areas surrounding the youth centers.

IOM has a unique approach to tackling irregular migration of young people out of Ethiopia. The approach focuses on holding behavioral change conversations with young people at youth centers. Through these engagements, young people are provided with information regarding migration, including the dangers of irregular migration and available channels for regular migration.

The seven youth centers targeted with peer education and life skills trainings are located in towns that are prone to irregular migration, according to an assessment which was conducted by IOM. They are Alamata, Mekelle, Shire, Adigrat, Axum, Maichew and Adwa. IOM has carried out similar peer education and life skills trainings in Oromia, Amhara and Somali Regional States. Plans are underway to launch the same trainings in the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples’ Regional State (SNNPR). That notwithstanding, challenges in working with youth centers persist.

Despite the presence of thousands of youth centers in Ethiopia, a dearth of regular recreational activities and informational materials impede regular and systematic engagement of young people.

In appreciation of IOM’s engagement with young people through youth centers, Frehiwot Feleke, a 23-year old youth coordinator said, “The training we receive here is vital, and there are many young people like me from universities attending this youth center. The use of such creative approaches, including theatre and informational material to bring awareness about the dangers of irregular migration are very effective.”

He added, “My colleagues and I are living examples of the positive impact of this type of engagement.”

Aragaw Kasaye, a 28-year-old returnee who set up a barbershop in Alamata, agrees with Frehiwot. “At first I thought there were no options here in Alamata. I sold my
barbershop equipment and cow to launch an irregular migration journey through Bossaso to Yemen and crossed over to Saudi Arabia.”

Kasaye witnessed the death of four Ethiopians on a congested boat as they tried to get to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabi (KSA). He spent ETB 31,000 (approximately USD 1,125) to get to KSA but was deported three months later. Kasaye left Ethiopia for KSA with the hope of getting a job in the construction sector but ended up herding goats on meager salary, a job he had despised back home.

He found it ironic that he had to work as a goat herder after such a perilous journey to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With the help of a microfinance institution, Kasaye was able to open a barber shop in Ethiopia—and is now able to provide for his family. Currently, he serves as one of the peer educators raising awareness about irregular migration through IOM-supported activities at the youth center in Alamata.

Through this youth center-based approach to engaging young people, IOM has brought together various partners working on issues of irregular migration in Ethiopia. Accordingly, Catholic Church managed Bruh Tesfa Youth Development Center has shared its experience with the participants.

Hagos Lemlem, a youth coordinator for the Regional Children and Youth Bureau, says that, “In addition to the material and skills support IOM has provided networking options for us with other partners such as the Catholic Church managed Bruh Tesfa Youth Development Center, which is invaluable to us.”

The project entitled “Enhancing Migration Management in Ethiopia and Promoting Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Ethiopians” is funded by Danish Embassy and implemented by IOM in collaboration with Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth.

“At first I thought there were no options here in Alamata. I sold my barbershop equipment and cow to launch an irregular migration journey through Bossaso to Yemen and crossed over to Saudi Arabia.”
On 28 September 2018 IOM successfully secured the release and return of 67 Ethiopian irregular migrants who were detained in Tanzanian prisons.

All 67 irregular migrants were escorted from different prisons in Tanzania to Dar es Salaam by IOM staff who assisted with the issuance of travel documents and other preparations for their return. During their trip from Dar es Salaam to Addis Ababa, the migrants were accompanied by delegates from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Immigration Department, as well as staff from IOM Ethiopia.

Prior to their departure and in line with IOM’s voluntary return procedures, all 67 migrants underwent fit-to-travel medical examinations. They were provided with non-food items including clothes and toiletries and received departure assistance at the Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salaam.

Upon their arrival at Addis Ababa, they were received by the IOM Ethiopia team, which provided post-arrival support in the form of psychosocial and medical assistance as well as an orientation session.

IOM Tanzania Chief of Mission Dr. Qasim Sufi expressed his appreciation for the collaboration between the Governments of Tanzania and Ethiopia, and for the IOM staff efforts in securing the release of all 67 irregular migrants who had been detained for several months in various prisons throughout Tanzania. He further thanked the representative of the newly opened Ethiopian Embassy in Tanzania for facilitating the issuance of travel documents for the returning migrants and applauded the presence of an Ethiopian embassy in Tanzania that will speed up the process of migrant returns back to Ethiopia.

Gerald Kihinga, acting Commissioner General of Immigration, thanked IOM for the continuous support that it provides to the Government of Tanzania to manage migration in the country. He further added that more collaboration and coordination between the Governments of Tanzania and Ethiopia is needed to address the increasing number of Ethiopian migrants irregularly entering Tanzania.

The return of the 67 migrants was made possible with generous financial support from the project Improving Protection of Migrants, Horn/Gulf of Aden/Yemen, Phase VIII. The project is funded by the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and managed by IOM Ethiopia.

Heba Abdel Latif, the IOM Coordinator for the project, was delighted to see that the IOM joint-country efforts had a successful outcome. She further added that the returnees will receive personalized reintegration assistance in Ethiopia based on their identified vulnerabilities, which will facilitate their long-term reintegration into their communities of return.

The Horn/Gulf of Aden/Yemen: Improving Protection of Migrants, Phase VIII project aims to enhance the management of mixed migration flows in the Horn of Africa and Yemen by supporting governments and protecting the rights of migrants.

The project also focuses on ensuring that vulnerable migrants benefit from improved protection, assistance at Migration Response Centres and protection services, aligned to international standards and provision of direct assistance (this includes assisted voluntary returns, non-food items, and medical supplies to assist vulnerable migrants).
Dilla - Since April 2018, some 970,000 people have fled their homes due to fighting between communities along the border of Gedeo and West Guji zones. Many of them were displaced in June alone. To respond to the displacement crisis in the two zones, IOM launched an appeal for USD 22,200,000 on 24 July.

“Leaving with what little they could carry and typically losing these possessions on their journey to safety, the displaced communities in Gedeo and West Guji are in great need of humanitarian support to help them get through Ethiopia’s cold and rainy season,”

William Lacy Swing, former IOM Director General.

Since June, IOM has been scaling up its response in Gedeo and West Guji. However, urgent funding is required to continue to provide life-saving assistance. The IOM appeal outlines funding requirements for the next six months in line with the Government’s West Guji-Gedeo response plan.

“The international community must rally for the people and Government of Ethiopia. Some partners have already begun to do so, and we thank them, but the current funding levels for a sudden onset crisis of this scale – nearly one million people displaced such a short period of time – are nowhere
There are currently more than 2.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia, compared with an estimated 291,000 in July 2012. Drought, floods, ethnic/clan tensions and conflicts over resources and borders continue to be the key drivers of internal displacement. Conflict accounts for 70 per cent of all displacement cases. Ethiopia’s Somali Regional State, which borders Somalia to the north, east and south, accounts for the largest number of IDPs.

Acknowledging the growing numbers of IDPs, the government of Somali Regional State requested the technical support of the international community in 2014, leading to the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Durable Solutions Working Group. Co-chaired by the Somali Regional State’s Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau and the IOM, the Working Group has made some progress – in a challenging policy environment – in addressing both the humanitarian and development needs of IDPs.

Responses to internal displacement in Ethiopia have been largely focused on life-saving humanitarian action. Although humanitarian responses play a vital role in providing a safety net for those in need, it is equally crucial to ensure a smooth transition to development-oriented assistance. Ethiopia’s lack of a comprehensive dedicated framework to guide responses to internal displacement has hampered such a transition. Currently, the only relevant policy is the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) policy of 2013 and related Strategic Programme and Investment Framework.

While the DRM objectives are to reduce risks associated with disasters and to protect those at risk in such circumstances, they do not specifically address either emergency or development assistance needs of IDPs. While the Government of Ethiopia is a signatory to the AU Convention for

**ADDRESSING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN ETHIOPIA**

Among various new initiatives in Ethiopia to address both the short- and long-term needs of IDPs, the Durable Solutions Working Group is making some progress, despite the challenging context.
the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention), it is yet to ratify it. The government argues that existing domestic legal and policy frameworks provide adequate guidance for addressing internal displacement.

The recurrent pattern of natural hazards and disasters related to human activity in Ethiopia means that donors tend to shift their attention quickly from one crisis to another.

Moreover, the government tends to attribute all crises to natural hazards – as such attribution is less likely to damage the country’s reputation in terms of making progress in development. This has impeded the necessary momentum for reform. As a result, the vulnerabilities, losses and traumatic experiences of IDPs, as well as the systemic and structural problems and longer-term impacts on host communities and environments, are quickly forgotten.

There have been some positive steps forward. Prompted – in part, at least – by the scale of displacement attributed to recurrent disasters and by the engagement of a wider range of humanitarian and development actors, Ethiopia has introduced some new institutional mechanisms to help meet IDPs’ immediate and longer-term needs for both humanitarian and development assistance. These include an IDP Advisory Group (comprising the UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, the UN Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs, IOM, the UN Refugee Agency, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council). There is also a national steering committee (under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister) to support over a million people displaced due to conflict between Somali and Oromia Regional States.

With the support of the international community, the Ethiopian government is also implementing the New Way of Working approach. It emerged from the World Humanitarian Summit, and is defined as “working over multiple years, based on the comparative advantage of a diverse range of actors, including those outside the UN system, towards collective outcomes.”

A NEW REGIONAL APPROACH

In October 2017, Ethiopia’s Somali Regional State developed and endorsed a regional durable solutions strategy, the first of its kind for both the Somali Regional State and in Ethiopia. The strategy adopts the definition of an IDP proposed by the Guiding Principles on Internal
Displacement while recognizing the specific challenges that exist in Ethiopia regarding such a definition, particularly in relation to pastoralists.

The strategy was spearheaded by the Durable Solutions Working Group (DSWG) and is aligned with international principles and frameworks including the Guiding Principles, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs and the Kampala Convention, and the relevant national tools. Even though it is regional in scope, this is the first framework developed and endorsed in Ethiopia that specifically targets internal displacement. It has stimulated the interest of other Ethiopian regions (including Afar, Gambella and Oromia) in embracing a comprehensive approach to addressing internal displacement, which has in turn attracted the attention of policymakers at the national level. Ethiopia’s first national consultation, held in late 2017, prompted tentative steps towards developing a national IDP policy, leading to the recovery needs of IDPs being reflected in the country’s national humanitarian planning process for the first time.

Notwithstanding the progress made so far, challenges remain. One such challenge is bringing everyone on board to implement the strategy since it requires the concerted effort of all stakeholders under the leadership of the government.

In addition, there is need to pay attention to the reality of the limited resources and inadequate technical capacity of regional implementers. Addressing the first may require agencies participating in the DSWG to develop a collective strategy.

IOM has been providing capacity building on durable solutions. In 2017, IOM held a two-day training for 73 regional government officials (working in justice, microfinance, health, etc.) in Gambella, Somali Regional State and Afar. The training covered topics such as early recovery and the various international/African/Ethiopian frameworks on internal displacement.

There remains a dearth of analysis to inform policy development. Hence, functions of the existing information management system on internal displacement such as IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) should be as a body of evidence that can support progress towards solutions and future policy decisions.

A few years ago, there were no data on IDPs (reflecting the government’s sensitivities on the subject). Systematic data collection and displacement mapping by IOM started at the lowest administrative level. However, as more actors began to use the data to inform their planning, the information management system was gradually expanded to cover the whole country. Today, all cluster leads in Ethiopia rely on DTM for their sectoral planning. The federal government endorsed the tool in 2017.

Crucially, there is need to hold dialogue to de-sensitize and de-politicize discussions and processes around internal displacement. The evolving national-level engagement on internal displacement in general and durable solutions in particular can be attributed to the work done in Regional States such as Somali and Gambella that had suffered massive and recurrent displacements.

Behigu Habte bhabte@iom.int
Emergency and Post-Crisis Programme Officer

Yun Jin Kweon ykweon@iom.int Peacebuilding Officer

UN Migration Agency (IOM) www.iom.int

1. According to the IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix. The increase in numbers is partly due to improved data collection methodologies, more comprehensive coverage and wider range of actors accessing IDPs in previously hard-to-reach areas. It should be noted that IDP statistics remain contested in Ethiopia.

https://displacement.iom.int/node/3929;
https://displacement.iom.int/node/4012

2. www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/5358

3. bit.ly/SRS-durable-solutions-strategy
IOM HELPS ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS, SOMALI REFUGEES RETURN HOME FROM WAR-TORN YEMEN

YEMEN - 08 AUGUST 2018

IOM continues to help migrants, including refugees, stranded in Yemen return home, with its latest voluntary humanitarian return support taking place in August 2018. The first movement left Hudaydah with 132 Ethiopian migrants while the second left Aden with 116 Somali refugees.

The conflict in Yemen, now in its third year, has taken a toll on both Yemenis and migrants. For migrants, the escalation of violence in Hudaydah in June meant being stranded in Yemen longer. This is because IOM’s Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programming at the city’s port was temporarily stopped. An improvement in the security situation saw movements from Hudaydah resume in mid-July.

IOM escorted the 132 Ethiopian migrants – 96 men, 19 women and 17 unaccompanied children—from Sana’a to Hudaydah city, where they spent the night. They then voluntarily left for Ethiopia via Djibouti the following day.

Nearly 100,000 Yemenis have been displaced by the political instability and violence in Hudaydah. To support the displaced community, IOM is providing food and medical assistance daily to some 500 and 200 people, respectively.

“Despite the difficult environment in Hudaydah, IOM has been assisting migrants and the internally displaced population,” said Sarat Dash, IOM Chief of Mission in Yemen.

“IOM is distributing food and water and providing medical assistance. Meals are being provided at IOM’s Migrants Response Point and in four schools in Al Marawa. We are also providing food baskets and materials to build shelters to displaced people not lucky enough to be hosted in a school,” said Dash.

On 5 August, IOM, in coordination with UNHCR, assisted 116 Somalis refugees return home from Aden. The group comprised of 48 men, 29 women, 19 boys and 20 girls. This group was assisted through the Assisted Spontaneous Return programme (ASR) for Somali refugees in Yemen. The programme is implemented in close collaboration with the Yemeni Authority, Somali National Commission for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (NCRI) and the Somali Consulate.

IOM has assisted 615 stranded migrants return home from Yemen on IOM’s voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) programme since the beginning of 2018. Similarly, 1,321 refugees have been assisted to leave Aden under the Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) programme in the same period.
In August, IOM awarded 12 Best Performing Community Conversation (CC) Facilitators and kebeles in Ethiopia. The award ceremony was held in Adama. During the ceremony, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) officials and Regional administrators highlighted the effectiveness of the CC program while the CC facilitators highlighted their achievements.

In recent years, IOM, in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia, has been implementing CC activities at the grassroots level in many parts of Ethiopia to combat and prevent irregular migration.

The CC approach has contributed to IOM’s messaging on the positive aspects of regular migration and the dangers and associated consequences of irregular migration. Using this approach, IOM’s Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) program has strengthened both the government and stakeholders’ efforts to prevent irregular migration.

The Community Conversation program has been effective in reaching out to communities within a short period of time, including remote and rural areas. The program has also been commended for its all-inclusive approach as it involves religious leaders, elderly and local administrative personnel figures and migrants.

In addition to raising awareness on the risks and dangers of irregular migration and enabling migrants to make informed decisions, several regional and local administrators stated that the program has empowered communities to assist law enforcement officials to crack down on human traffickers and smugglers.

“Such community-based initiatives are effective in our effort [at] combatting [and solving] the challenges of irregular migration through encouraging shared responsibility at the grassroots level,” said Ambassador Misganu Arga, State Minister for MOLSA during the ceremony.

“This should continue to reach out to more districts,” he added.

“IOM highly commends the efforts by the Government of Ethiopia in combatting trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, as manifested in the whole-of-government approach and community mobilization effort which resulted in reaching out to communities and increased prosecution measures on perpetrators,” said Jian ZHAO, Deputy Chief of Mission for IOM Ethiopia.

He added that, “IOM supports the Government of Ethiopia’s effort in this regard and will continue making best efforts to implement CC activities in more districts and communities.”

In addition to the 12 best performing CC facilitators, four Woredas and Zones and the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs for the Southern Nation and Nationalities People Region (SNNPR) were awarded computers and certificates of recognition for effectively implementing the CC program.

The award ceremony was supported by a project funded by the Government of Netherlands, as part of a community conversation project.
The migrants will receive reintegration assistance once they have reached their final destinations, following a vulnerability assessment. Photo credit: IOM Somalia

HARGEISA - 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

Sixty-Three Ethiopian migrants who were assisted to return home from Somaliland on 13 September 2018. The migrants had been stranded at sea for six days when their boat engine failed. They left Hargeisa in several groups after receiving medical attention, food, shelter, clothing and counselling support from IOM office in Hargeisa. One of the migrants was aged 15.

The group had departed from Djibouti, heading for Saudi Arabia via Yemen in early July. Two of the migrants died from hunger and thirst after supplies ran out when the boat went adrift.

The migrants caught the attention of a merchant ship, which rescued them with support from the Berbera Regional Government in Somaliland and the Somaliland Coast Guard.

Response and assistance to the migrants was also supported by the Somaliland National Displacement and Refugee Agency, Hargeisa Migrant Response Center, Somaliland Immigration and Border Control, and the Somaliland Ministry of Health and Development. The Ethiopian consulate in Somaliland provided consular services to the migrants.

Speaking before her return to Ethiopia, Samhar, a 22-year-old migrant, said she was shaken by the experience.

“I was just waiting for death. I am happy to be alive now and my family is happy that I am alive. Now, I just want to go back to Ethiopia.”

Somaliland is both a destination and a country of origin for migrants. Migration flows in the Horn of Africa region are generally high, as people, many of them youth, attempt to flee poverty and unemployment in search of better economic and job opportunities.

Still, it was unusual for a boat from Djibouti headed to Yemen to find its way to Somaliland, as Jessamy Garver-Affeldt, Head of the IOM Sub-Office in Hargeisa explained.

“These migrants took a new route, and when they drifted off course they ended up in the middle of the Gulf of Aden – a desperate place for a small boat without provisions.”

“We are very happy that they were rescued, and we were able to support them through our Assisted Voluntary Return service. We know that our colleagues at IOM Ethiopia will receive them at Bole airport in Addis Ababa and see to it that they return safely to their families.”

The migrants all chose to return to Ethiopia where they will receive reintegration assistance once they have reached their final destinations, following a vulnerability assessment.

“Once we help migrants return, we work to ensure that they achieve economic self-sufficiency and that they are psychologically and socially stable,” said Julia Hartlieb, IOM Senior Regional Programme Coordinator in the Horn of Africa.
Effective implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), due to be adopted in Morocco in December 2018, will reduce the risks that some migrants face during their journeys. It will also bolster the developmental impact of migration.

The GCM aims to ensure that the Mediterranean migration situation of 2015 — characterized by increased irregular migration flows, deaths and gross human rights violations — is not repeated. The Compact urges United Nations member states to address migration concerns comprehensively, and to do more to ensure respect and protection of migrants’ rights regardless of their migration status, while also taking the security and prosperity concerns of countries across the migration spectrum into consideration.

Maureen Achieng is Chief of Mission for the UN Migration Agency (IOM) in Ethiopia, and representative to the African Union, IGAD and UNECA. She recently shared her views on the GCM at a regional conference on human rights in migration governance held late October in Nairobi.

The event was organized by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with support from the Better Migration Management (BMM) program, a regional, multi-year and multi-partner programme co-funded by the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

“The GCM is the product of an unprecedented review of evidence migration and offers us the much-needed data to build our common understanding of its realities and to rebut the myths, which run the risk of informing current migration response,” Achieng said in her remarks.

She noted that migration is increasingly viewed as a problem, rather than the force for good that it historically has been. This in part is due to a dangerous and often unfounded linkage between migration, insecurity at the national level and threats to public health. The perception of migration as a threat to the cultural identity of host communities, the fear that the presence of migrants will make host communities lose out economically, and an exaggerated sense of the burden migrants’ put on national resources or budgets further compound the problem. These prejudices result in the scapegoating of migrants, especially at times of heightened political tension.

However, Achieng reminded conference attendees that the overwhelming majority of migrants tend to be law-abiding residents of their host societies, contributing in ways both small and large to the economic, social and cultural life of their communities.

Depending on one’s perspective, migration means many different things all at once,” she added. “For some it has to be stopped given it brings with it too many costs and hazards — a migration crisis of sorts — yet for others, it brings a lot of benefits for society at large, if well managed.”

The negative perception of migration is also influenced by information gaps between actual migration flows and the public’s perception, either in terms of how many migrants there are or their reasons for moving. While data on irregular migration tends to be elusive and escapes official statistics, there can sometimes be wilful misinformation intended to mobilize hostility against migrants and migration with a view to stopping more migration or to removing migrants from host societies. Yet, migration is a source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in the globalized world.

“Migration contributes to positive development outcomes and...
to realizing the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially when it is properly managed,” added Achieng. Estimates for 2017 reveal that international migrant remittance inflows to developing countries represented 76 per cent (about USD 450 billion) of the total global remittances (USD 596 billion). This amount far surpasses total official development assistance to developing countries.

Achieng regrets that the spotlight remains largely on migration across oceans rather than across land borders, noting that most international African migration is actually intra-African migration. This means it takes place across land borders rather than across oceans. She added that as long as economic disparities within and between countries continue to exist, people will continue to move from where there are fewer opportunities to where there are more opportunities.

“As the UN Migration Agency, we remain convinced that migration is a reality of life that has to be managed,” Achieng concluded.

IOM, ZOA Distribute Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items Assistance to Displaced Families in Lare Woreda, Gambella Region

GAMBELLA - ETHIOPIA
13 AUGUST 2018

More than 200 families displaced by conflict in Pilual Kebele of Lare Woreda, Gambella Region received emergency shelter kits and non-food items from IOM. The distribution was done in collaboration with IOM’s implementing partner agency ZOA and the Gambella Regional State Disaster Preparedness and Food Security Agency (DPFSA).

The kits contained 16 items including plastic sheeting, rope, mosquito nets, blankets, sleeping mats, water containers and kitchen sets.

This distribution was the first joint intervention carried out between IOM and ZOA following recent signing of an implementing partnership agreement for refugee and IDP programming in the Gambella Region of Ethiopia.

Fighting between warring factions over the control of Pagak town in South Sudan impacted border communities in the Lare Woreda of Gambella Region in Ethiopia as factions fought for control of Pagak town during the past months.

"Armed men invaded and began to burn down houses in our village," said one recipient. “We were in a hurry and not able to bring our belongings with us. All we were thinking about was to save our lives. We were worried because we have no food for our children or shelter and household utensils.”

Some of the displaced families sought refuge with relatives. The more than 200 families had to shelter under trees.

The donation will save families from the exceptionally heavy rains season this year.

The ES/NFI distribution was made possible with funding from ECHO. Through this funding support, IOM has been able to assist over 10,000 households with ES/NFI across Somali, Oromia, Afar and Gambella Regions of Ethiopia since April 2017.
IGAD HOLDS ITS LAST NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

BISHOFTU- ETHIOPIA
03 SEPTEMBER 2018

On 3 September, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) held a National Consultation Workshop towards the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance held in Bishoftu by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The opening session was attended officially opened by Hirut Woldemariam, the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. It was attended by, among others, the Director of IGAD Health and Social Development Division, Fathia Alwan, the Director General for Neighbouring Countries and IGAD Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Ambassador Mohamoud Mohamed Dirir. Also in attendance was Maureen Achieng, IOM Ethiopia Chief of Mission, and George Okutho, the Director of the International Labour Organization in Ethiopia.

This four-day workshop was meant to get inputs from national stakeholders and experts on benefits and barriers to free movement of persons and transhumance (the seasonal movement of livestock). It also aimed at deriving national recommendations towards the Provisions of the Protocol and developing a road map for the negotiation and adoption of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region.

This National Consultative Workshop, - the last before the start of the regional level negotiations - brought together experts on migration and related themes as well as all national stakeholders from each of the Ministries and Authorities of Government, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, Private Sector and Media to contribute to effective migration governance.

Hirut Woldemariam noted that Ethiopia was an origin, transit and host country in the area of migration and movement of persons. She implored national participants and IGAD experts to come to a “shared understanding on the subject matter” towards “a more concrete cooperation” between IGAD Member States.

“There should be a mechanism by which the IGAD region can best manage such complex migration flows”, she said.

The Minister also highlighted that it was “necessary to assure the free movement of persons as the integral part of the IGAD Migration Policy Framework and as a major objective under the Regional Economic Integration in the IGAD Region”.

Fathia Alwan recalled that the IGAD Secretariat mandate was “to facilitate its Member States to develop a common understanding of benefits and barriers of this Regime of Free Movement of Persons in the Region”. She added that, from global experience, Free Movement of Persons Regime had a “high potential to provide livelihood options” to citizens.

Representatives from the IOM and the ILO also expressed their support for the initiative.

IGAD has received a grant from the European Union Emergency Trust Fund to facilitate the establishment of a free movement regime within the IGAD region. This is in a bid to promote the regularization of the high volume of informal movement that currently takes place, and increase the opportunities for legal mobility.