



Returnee migrants are registered, profiled and screened for vulnerabilities upon arrival. Photo: IOM/2022

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

With several hundred thousand migration movements tracked entering and leaving Ethiopia in 2022, the country faces one of the most complex human mobility environments in the world, with a range of social, economic, political, and climatic factors resulting in migration and displacement within and outside its borders. Ethiopians mainly migrate towards the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the east, South Africa to the south, or Europe to the north. The Eastern route, which is covered under the MRP, is one of the busiest and most dangerous migratory routes in the world where migrants face extreme protection risks. A significant portion of migrants become stranded on the way, and those who make it to their final destination are likely to be detained and deported due to their irregular immigration status. On average, nearly 10,000 Ethiopian migrants return to Ethiopia each month. Most require some form of post-arrival assistance – at a minimum, support to return to home communities, and in many cases, specialized medical, psychological, psychiatric, or other forms of assistance. High numbers of unaccompanied migrant children travel the route and require child protection services upon return.

The primary drivers of migration are, in most cases, economic. Natural and man-made disasters such as conflict, drought,

and environmental degradation are also important factors in migrants' decisions to move. In this context, it is essential to provide migrants with viable options to irregular migration through socioeconomic interventions in home communities, including livelihood and psychosocial support.

A total of 76,440 migrants were reported exiting Ethiopia showing an increase by 22% from January to March 2023. Main drivers of migration were economic reasons, conflict, and lack of access to services. Due to the improved security situation in the northern parts of the country, higher volumes of migrants have been observed in March 2023 (2,764). This was the highest ever recorded with a 42% increase since the beginning of the year and most were travelling through Galafi (70%) towards Saudi Arabia.

The Government of Ethiopia announced in late March 2023 that returns from Saudi Arabia will be suspended as of early April. It is unclear if and when returns will resume. Meanwhile, 1,839 migrants (93% male and 7% female) were returned from Aden in Yemen to Ethiopia through VHR<sup>1</sup>, mainly to the Oromia region. A total of 1,969 people sought assistance at Migration Response Centres (MRCs) in Ethiopia since January 2023<sup>2</sup> and over half (57%) of children were unaccompanied.



**4,184**

returnee migrants  
received life-saving  
assistance from MRP  
partners



**10,800**

received protection,  
family reunification and  
officials received capacity  
strengthening



**2,138**

assisted with sustainable  
reintegration and  
community stabilization

<sup>1</sup> Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme provided which supports migrants in various situations of vulnerability who wish to return home.

<sup>2</sup> Eastern Corridor Report (July 2022) | IOM Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa.

## REGIONAL MIGRANT RESPONSE PLAN

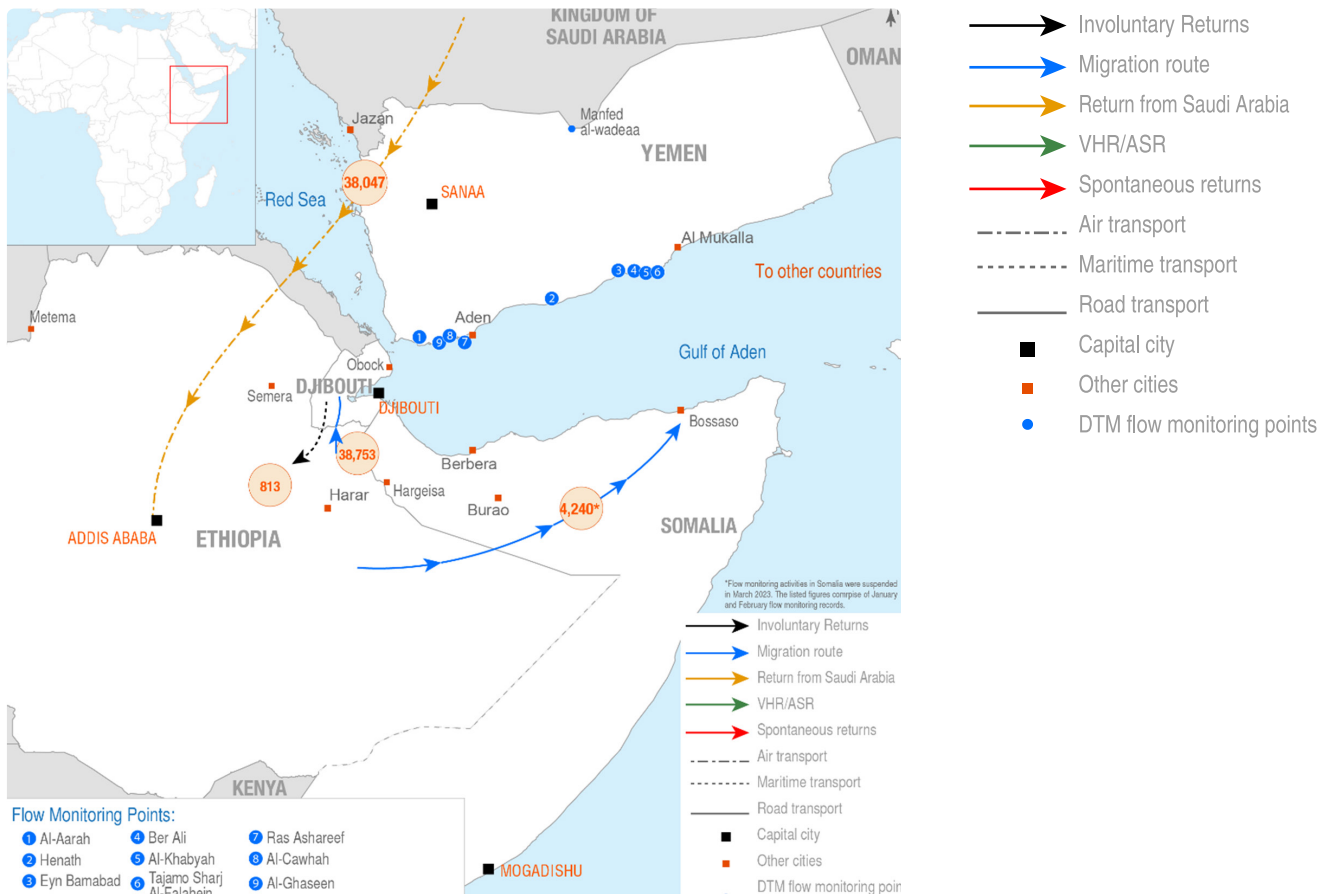
The Regional Migrant Response Plan (MRP) for the Horn of Africa and Yemen 2021 – 2024 is a migrant focused inter-agency framework to respond to humanitarian and protection needs, risks, and vulnerabilities of migrants from the Horn of Africa, specifically Somalia and Ethiopia, moving towards Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through Djibouti and Yemen.

There are 34 MRP partners in Ethiopia, coordinating through a platform dedicated for the MRP, with inter-linkage to other existing coordination mechanisms such as the UN Network on Migration in Ethiopia, and The National Emergency Coordination Center and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). The MRP partners are working closely with the Government of Ethiopia, migrants, aid partners, and key stakeholders to support migrants and their home communities.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

-  Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.
-  Provide quality, timely and inclusive protection assistance and services to migrants and host communities.
-  Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.
-  Build evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance the humanitarian response and migration management, throughout the migration route.

Migration flows along the Eastern Route. IOM 2023



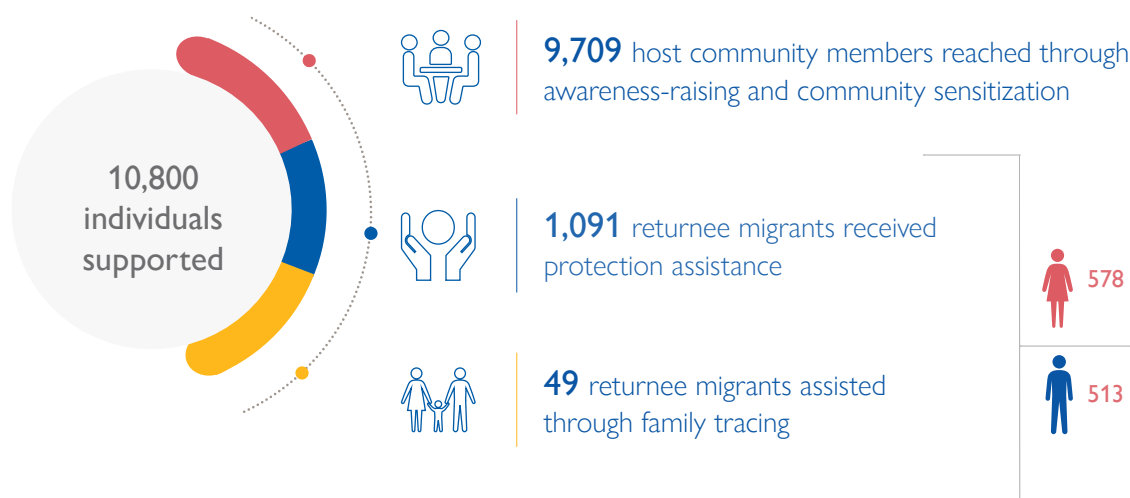
## Strategic Objective 1 **1** Life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants

Through the Migration Response Centres, health clinics, mobile teams, way stations, and child protection desks, MRP partners provided life-saving assistance to migrant returnees and host community members.



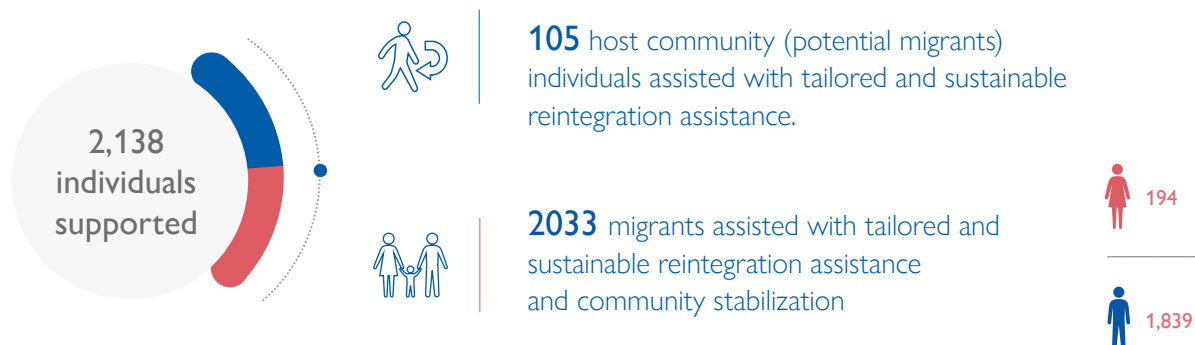
## Strategic Objective 2 **2** Quality, timely and inclusive protection assistance

MRP partners reached migrant returnees and host communities with specialized protection assistance, including legal aid counselling, and mental health and psychosocial support, awareness-raising and community sensitization activities on topics like impacts of unsafe and irregular migration, basic child rights, and service referrals.



## Strategic Objective 3 **3** Return, sustainable reintegration and community stabilization support

MRP partners facilitated access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization through onward transportation, and tailored individual and community-based reintegration assistance.





## COMMUNITY STABILIZATION HIGHLIGHTS

MRP partner Bethany Christian Services Global (BCS-G) in Ethiopia is implementing a community reintegration project targeting returnee and potential migrants in SNNPR region, Gibe woreda of Hadiya. The project is contributing to enhance sustainable livelihoods for 120 returnee and potential migrants through skills provision and environmental conservation and livelihood opportunities such as honey production.



First honey produced by the BCS-G community based reintegration project. Photo: BSG 2023

### Strategic Objective **4** Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination

During the reporting period, monthly flow monitoring reports were produced by [IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#) and by Mixed Migration Centre's (MMC) [quarterly reports](#).

Supported by IOM, the National Partnership Coalition's (NPC) secretariat seated at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) organized a one-day consultation meeting aimed towards establishing a national forum for migration for better coordination to help improve the overall migration governance, migrant protection and reintegration in Ethiopia. The meeting was held on 11 April 2023 in Addis Ababa, and attended by 47 participants (38 male, 9 female) and gathered stakeholders with diverse area of responsibilities including International and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working on migration. Similar meeting was held among the Regional Partnership Coalitions and NGOS on 14 February 2023 in Bishoftu town.



NPC meeting on establishment of national forum in Addis Ababa, February 2023. Photo: IOM



From March 6–7, 2023 Save the Children International organized a two-day consultative workshop on cross-border migration management focusing on the vulnerabilities of unaccompanied and separated migrant children and youth in Metema, West-Gondar. The workshop was attended by 79 key government and non-government representatives (12 female, 67 male) including IOM, UNHCR, GIZ, IGAD, and MSD and government personnel at the federal and regional level, including the National Partnership Coordination Office for Migration, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, the Immigration Commission, the Refugee Return Services, the Federal Police, and the Peace Minister. In the workshop, national and regional migration overviews, challenges, experiences on cross-border migration management and dynamics, and migration study findings were presented and discussed. As a result, Ethiopia-Sudan cross-border migration task force has been established.



The two-day consultative workshop organized by Save the Children. Photo: IOM/2023

On 30 March 2023, IOM's Regional Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Specialist provided a refresher training for 16 participants (10 female, 6 male) from key Governmental Institutions and NGOs partners providing MHPSS to migrants and internally displaced persons. The training touched upon key concepts and service quality standards for MHPSS provision and creating a roadmap for future collaboration.



Session of the training held in IOM Ethiopia office, Addis Ababa. Photo: IOM/2023



## RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Following the validation of Ethiopia's National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for the protection of Victims of human Trafficking (VoTs) and other migrants in vulnerable situations, a series of sensitization workshops were conducted by the National Partnership Coalition (NPC) together with IOM. The workshop aimed to cascade and familiarize relevant regional government officials and civil society stakeholders on the legal frameworks related to migrant protection and assistance and the National Referral Mechanism of Ethiopia. The session was held in Bishoftu in two rounds during the month of January and February, engaging a total of 63 participants (50 male, 13 female).



Discussion on the Ethiopian legal frameworks related to migrant protection, 28 February 2023. Photo: Ministry of Justice

## STORIES



### Yemen to Ethiopia – Taking Life Back, One Step at a Time

Sana'a/Addis Ababa – The thought of the possibility to move abroad for work presented a life-changing opportunity for 23-year-old Haji\*. With that opportunity, he would finally be able to support his family but would have to go on a dangerous journey facilitated by smugglers.

[Read the Story](#)



### Father Rescues 12-Year-Old Son from Traffickers in Yemen

Addis Ababa – When a smuggler promised 12-year-old Kalifa Rashid a well-paying job as a camel herder abroad, he left his hometown in Jimma in the Oromia Region of Southwestern Ethiopia to traverse a path frequented by migrants traveling to Gulf countries.

"I had noticed over time that some of my classmates were disappearing from school. When I asked where they went, I was told they had left for the Gulf States to find work," he recalls, recounting how he left home.

[Read the Story](#)

## PUBLICATIONS



## PREVIOUS MRP REPORTS

- [MRP Report Quarter 1 & 2](#)
- [MRP Report Quarter 3](#)
- [MRP Report Quarter 4](#)

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- [Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen 2022](#)
- [Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen 2023](#)

## MRP PARTNERS AND DONORS



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