



Returning migrants are provided with shelter, food, non-food items, health and psychosocial assistance at Migration Response Centres (MRCs) among other types of assistance. Photo: IOM 2023 /Rahel Negussie

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Ethiopia faces an extremely complex human mobility dynamics, with a range of social, economic, political, and climatic factors resulting in migration and displacement within and outside its borders. Every year, several hundred thousand Ethiopians leave the country to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and other countries in the Gulf and the Middle East, South Africa to the south, or Europe to the north. Many migrants become stranded along the way and those who make it to their destination are often detained and deported, sometimes despite their regular migration status. In the past seven years, nearly 10,000 Ethiopian migrants were involuntary returned to Ethiopia each month, and most of them returned empty-handed, traumatized, or in need of emergency post-arrival assistance, including onward transportation, medical, psychosocial and psychiatric support, and in need of both basic personal items and reunification with family. Beyond lifesaving assistance, this vulnerable population requires social, psychosocial, and economic support in their home communities to give them durable solutions and viable alternatives to irregular migration.

During the month of September 2023, economic reasons remained the leading driver of movement at 78%, followed by climate and environment (8%), while the remaining 7% were moving for several reasons including conflict, violence and persecution. Since the start of the year, a total of 231,518 migrants were reported to have exited Ethiopia by the end of September 2023, showing a threefold increase compared to the first quarter of the year. The main drivers of migration continue

to be economic reasons, climate and environmental degradation, and conflict.

Forced returns from the KSA were suspended from April 3 throughout the reporting period. 3,743 migrants (3,504 male, and 239) were returned from Aden, Sana'a and Marib in Yemen to Ethiopia through VHR¹. Some 24,210 migrants sought assistance at MRCs in Ethiopia from January to September 2023², 43% being women and children.

Since the onset of the violence in Sudan on April 15, 2023, over 69,000 people have arrived in Ethiopia through multiple border crossing points across the Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, and Gambella Regions. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has scaled up presence at border crossing points and its Migration Response Centre (MRC) in Metema is providing multi-sectoral assistance to arriving people, including health, water and sanitation, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), onward transportation, and specialized protection assistance.

During the reporting period, Sudanese nationals continued to enter Ethiopia representing 37% of all entries. Ethiopian nationals returning home accounted for 45% of arrivals, with the rest being 76 other nationalities fleeing the crisis. As of 11 May 2023, IOM operationalized Kurmuk, situated on the Sudanese border in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, as an official flow monitoring point (FMP) to systematically record the influx of arrivals fleeing the conflict in Sudan.



30,664

returning migrants
received life-saving
assistance from MRP
partners



2,137

received protection,
family reunification and
officials received capacity
strengthening



5,043

assisted with sustainable
reintegration and
community stabilization

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

² Eastern Corridor Report (Sep 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.

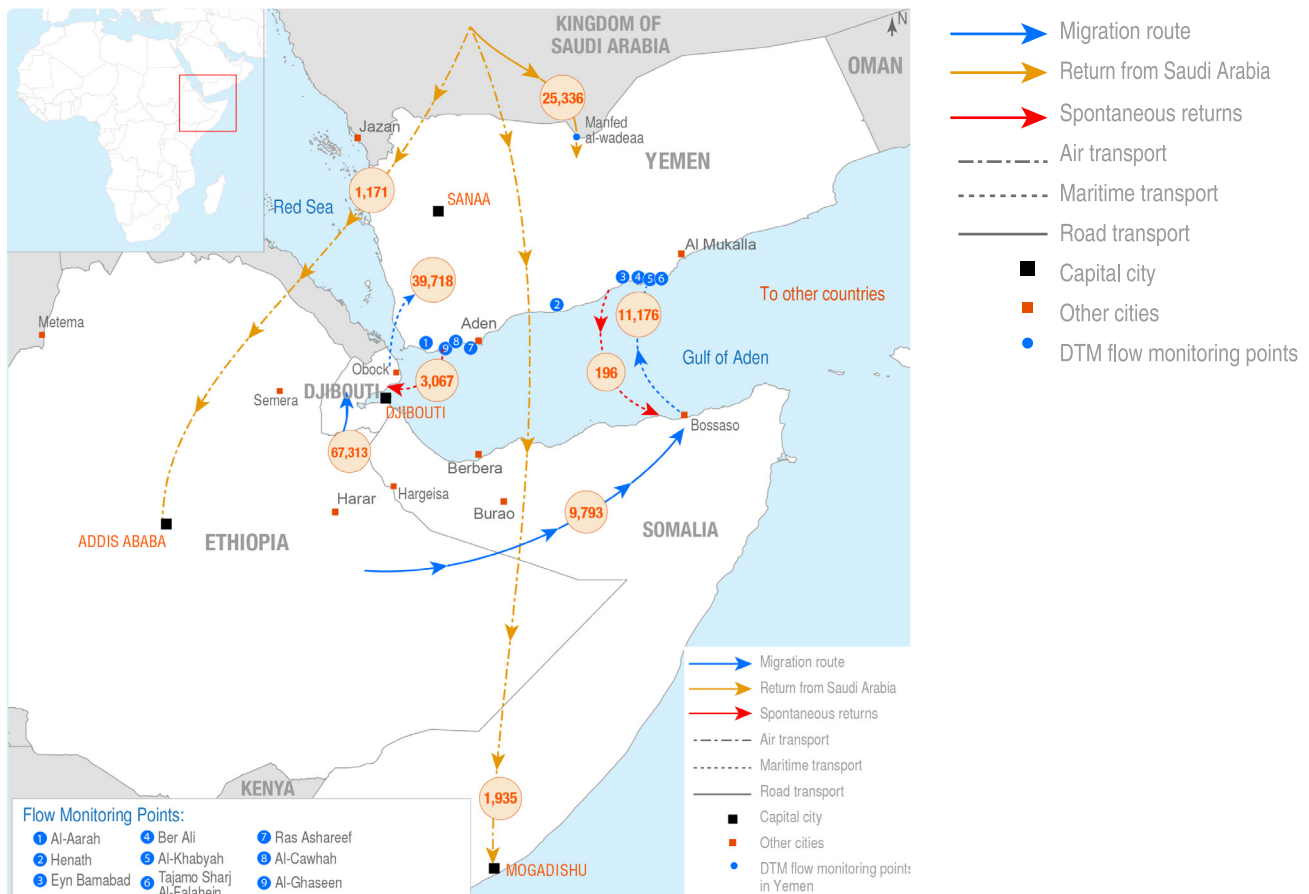
There are 34 MRP partners in Ethiopia, coordinating through a platform dedicated for the MRP, with inter-linkage to other

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

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

Migration flows along the Eastern Route. IOM 2023



Strategic Objective 1

Life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants

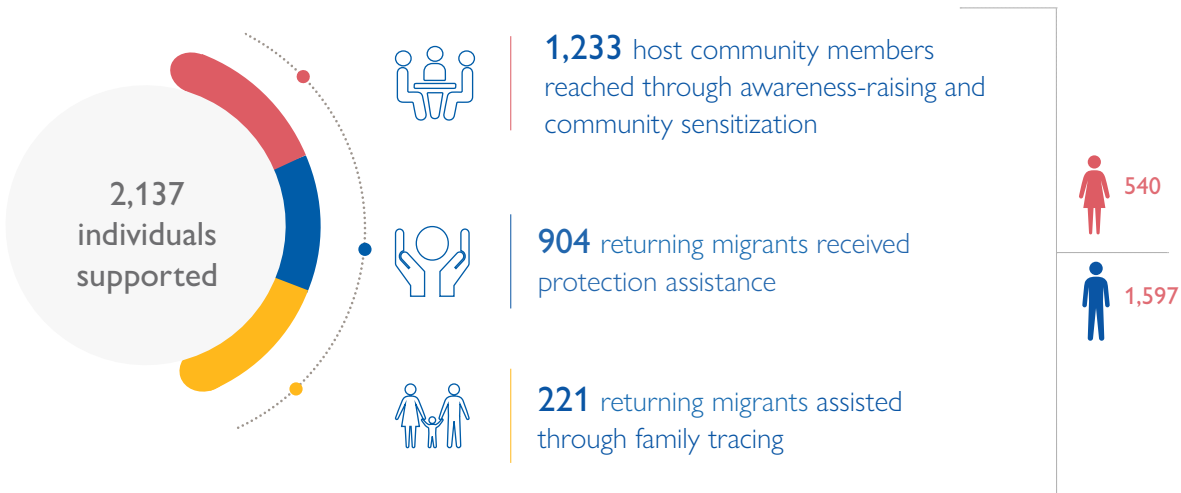
Through the Migration Response Centres, health clinics, mobile teams, way stations, and child protection desks, MRP partners provided life-saving assistance to migrant returnees and host community members.



Strategic Objective 2

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 regular migration pathways, dangers of unsafe and irregular migration, basic child rights, and service referrals.



Strategic Objective 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

IOM entered into partnership with Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (JUCAVM) to implement a community reintegration initiative, aiming to provide diversified livelihoods and employment opportunities for returning and potential migrants in the Jimma Zone of Oromia region across three selected woredas/districts: Sokoru, Omo-Nada, and Setema. The project aims to directly benefit 350 individuals while indirectly impacting 16,000 beneficiaries through various businesses, including vegetable and fruit production, chicken hatchery and animal feed production. Funding for this initiative

comes from COMPASS (Cooperation on Migration and Partnerships to Achieve Sustainable Solutions), a programme supported by the Netherlands Ministry of Trade and Development Cooperation. This six-month reintegration project commenced in July 2023, with total funding amounting to USD 83,999. Upon successful implementation, the intervention will contribute to enhancing absorptive capacities and improved livelihood options for vulnerable returnees, potential migrants, and host communities, thereby fostering community stabilization and peacebuilding.



Vegetable and grafted avocado production project run by five cooperatives in Jimma Zone, Setema District. Photo: IOM/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](#).

The first inter-state dialogue on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) within the East and Horn of Africa (EHOA) region was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 7-9 June 2023. As GCM Champion countries, Ethiopia and Kenya jointly convened this dialogue, bringing together high-level officials responsible for migration/GCM implementation from countries that have established a UN migration country Network, namely Djibouti, Rwanda, Somalia, and Uganda. The event also welcomed representatives from key organizations such as the African Union Commission (AUC), East African Community (EAC), Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the UN Migration Network.

The primary objective of the dialogue was to facilitate the exchange of best practices in GCM implementation, fostering the sharing of experiences on the development of national GCM Implementation Plans including identifying trends and emerging priorities related to cross-border migration issues, and discuss the groundwork for the 2024 GCM Regional Reviews.

On 24-25 August 2023, MRP partners in Ethiopia, including government bodies, local and INGOs, and UN agencies assembled to enhance coordination and operational effectiveness

of the MRP 2023 at the national level. With 21 participants (10 females, 11 males) the meeting focused on establishing a joint work plan, initiating collaborative resource mobilization efforts and devising cross-border programming strategies. The gathering also laid the groundwork for shaping 2024 MRP.



MRP Partners Coordination Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo: IOM/2023

On 19 September 2023, MRP partners in Ethiopia including governmental bodies, local NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies convened for a half-day planning workshop. The session aimed to deliberate on the objectives, data, contextual changes, and other issues shaping the direction of 2024 MRP.

Fifteen participants (5 females, 10 males) engaged in discussions, providing validation for the draft of People in Need (PIN), secondary data analysis, and the logical framework for MRP 2024. The workshop took place at the IOM Ethiopia office in Addis Ababa.



MRP Partners validation meeting at IOM office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Photo: IOM/2023

Supported by IOM and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Ethiopia Government officials visited Djibouti as part of a cross-border initiative aimed at safeguarding vulnerable Ethiopian migrant children. This visit was held under the Better Migration Management (BMM) and the “Durable Solutions for the most vulnerable host populations, refugees and migrants living in Djibouti territory” programme, and followed an initial cross-border exchange held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May. Over four days, discussions between Ethiopian and Djiboutian government representatives, alongside relevant partners, focused on sustainable solutions for child migrants.

The dialogue emphasized establishing coordinated cross-border operations and systems for the safe repatriation and sustainable reintegration of migrant children. Throughout the visit, officials surveyed challenges faced by Ethiopian migrants and migrant children in Djibouti, assessing various border crossing points which experience irregular migrant flows. This initiative aims to bolster protection of migrant children in Djibouti and enhance the government’s capacity to address the specific needs of vulnerable migrants.

IOM Ethiopia conducted an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) involving three distinct government entities in Addis Ababa and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) regions. Additionally, the assessment covered nine NGOs located in Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and SNNP region. The assessment aimed to evaluate organizational strengths and challenges, formulate an action plan, and enhance overall performance through capacity strengthening initiatives. Specifically, the OCA aimed to assist the National Partnership Coalition (NPC) and regional Partnership Coalitions (RPCs) and NGOs in benchmarking organizational performance, creating a framework for prioritizing and implementing medium and long-term capacity enhancement strategies and fostering stronger relationships with beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders. This initiative was funded by the US Department of State, Denmark Embassy in Ethiopia and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).



Organizational Capacity Assessment meeting at Good Samaritan Association office, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo: IOM/2023



Organizational Capacity Assessment meeting held at Hope for Justice office, Addis Abbaa, Ethiopia. Photo: IOM/2023

From Khat Waste to Charcoal: Empowering Migrants and Host Community in Ethiopia



East Hararghe, Ethiopia – The lives of migrants who have returned to Ethiopia are being transformed, and many are being deterred from taking dangerous migration journeys, thanks to new project. Migrants are being taught how to transform waste from khat, a popular plant in the region, consumed by chewing, into charcoal. The charcoal is used as burning fuel for cooking and heating.

The process involves collecting and using the waste from khat, which people normally throw away and is then dumped in an identified locations. The team currently use manual burning machines to burn the sticks. The carbonized or burnt remains from burning the sticks are ground into a powder and sieved into a finer powder. That fine powder is then mixed with clay or cement into a sticky consistency. The wet mixture is then transferred into the molding machine which produces the charcoal bricks. After 2 days in good sun the briquettes are dry and ready for use and the charcoal is used for cooking.

[Read the Story](#)

Returning Home to Safety: Surviving Seven Days in the Hands of Smugglers



Tog-wachale, 21 August 2023 – “The promise sounded too good to be true, travelling from Ethiopia to Saudi Arabia for work, but I just went with it. They said it will only be for seven days. Now, seven days later, I have three bullet wounds in my body and am nowhere near where I intended,” narrates Halima*, a student from Arsi, Oromia Region of Ethiopia.

Like many Ethiopians searching for better work opportunities, Halima was lured to embark on a deadly journey from Ethiopia to the Gulf countries through Somalia, across Yemen, to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries through what is often referred to as the Eastern Migration Route. She had no idea about the insecurity and the conflict situations in the neighbouring countries making up this route.

*Halima's name was changed in this story due to sensitivities.

[Read the Story](#)

PUBLICATIONS



Click here to read

- Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen 2022
- Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen 2023

For more information on MRP, please visit - www.mrp-easternroute.com

MRP PARTNERS AND DONORS



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Co-funded by the European Union

