

# REGIONAL MIGRANT RESPONSE PLAN (MRP)

for the Horn of Africa to Yemen  
and Southern Africa

Annual Appeal 2025



**MRP**

Regional Migrant Response Plan

for the Horn of Africa to  
Yemen and Southern Africa

Migrants on a boat in Lahj, Yemen.  
© Associated Press/Nariman El-Mofty







Obock region, Djibouti. Members of the host community take water from IOM tanks. They can walk up to 3 hours to get there. The livestock will take water from wells dug in the ground whose high salinity makes it almost undrinkable for humans. © IOM 2021/Alexander Bee

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Nazimu Keder, farmer, 35 years old tried once in the past to migrate to Saudi Arabia but could not make it all the way and returned to Ethiopia.  
Setema Wereda, Jimma Zone. © IOM 2021/Yonas Tadesse

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Migrant Response Plan (MRP) for the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Southern Africa is a comprehensive, inter-agency, and inter-regional framework that unites 45 organizations to deliver urgent humanitarian and protection support, enhance access to essential services, and implement medium- to long-term measures addressing the drivers of migration for both migrants and host communities in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen. The MRP follows a multi-year framework, combining long-term responses to irregular migration, with life-saving interventions to address immediate needs. As such, this document comprises the MRP 2025 annual appeal and is a part of the MRP Four-Year-Framework (2025-2028), which precedes this document.

The MRP complements government initiatives and is coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The MRP consolidates the efforts of 45 partners, including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), United Nations (UN) agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), think tanks, and academic institutions, ensuring a foundation for accountable, inclusive, and adaptive responses to large-scale and complex migration challenges. The MRP is a platform for collaboration among partners, key stakeholders, and financial institutions to address migration drivers and vulnerabilities along the Eastern and Southern Routes. It provides a coherent, route-based strategy to align humanitarian and development programming addressing migrants' needs and advancing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN). This integrated approach complements and reinforces the efforts of national and regional governments and local partners. The MRP's overarching goal is to save lives, address vulnerabilities comprehensively and promote socioeconomic resilience for migrants and local communities in origin, transit, and destination areas. It leverages partners multisectoral and complementary expertise to balance life-saving humanitarian assistance with long-term resilience-building and sustainable solutions.

Migration in the Horn of Africa (HoA) continues to be driven by insecurity, conflict, environmental degradation, poverty and socioeconomic challenges, extreme climatic conditions, public health crises, and traditional seasonal factors. In 2025, the MRP anticipates significant impacts from climate change and environmental degradation, including La Niña, to exacerbate irregular migration. Moreover, the ongoing conflict in Northern Ethiopia will continue to prevent return movements of migrants stranded in transit countries. As the majority of Eastern Route migrants intend to return to northern regions of Ethiopia, such as Amhara and Oromia, return movements are anticipated to be heavily impacted. Addressing these challenges requires cross-regional cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure coordinated services and solutions across the migration corridor.

In 2025, 1.39 million people are projected to need humanitarian assistance along the Eastern and Southern Routes, with MRP partners targeting 991,295 individuals, including migrants and host community members. To meet these needs across Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen, MRP partners require \$81 million.

## CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The HoA is a major migration hub, with thousands of migrants – many in irregular situations – departing, transiting, or returning along the Eastern and Southern Routes each year. Primarily driven by economic hardship, persistent poverty, scarce job opportunities and limited access to essential services, these migration flows expose people to significant risks.

**The Eastern Route is the busiest and most dangerous migration route** with nearly half of the more than half a million movements tracked in the region by August 2024 traversing the route. Eastern Route migrants primarily originate from Ethiopia, with a minority from Somalia, and transit through Djibouti, Somalia, and Yemen across the Gulf of Aden to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States. As of August 2024, over 150,000 migrants have departed Ethiopia via this route. While men represent the majority, women and children constitute 31 per cent, with 25 per cent of children traveling alone.<sup>1</sup> Djibouti remains the main transit country, with over 134,000 entries as of August 2024, compared to nearly 15,000 entering Somalia.<sup>2</sup> In Yemen, recorded migrant arrivals have significantly declined, with approximately 13,000 documented between January and August 2024.<sup>3</sup> In Yemen, recorded migrant arrivals have notably significantly declined, with only about approximately 13,000 recorded documented between January and August 2024.<sup>4</sup> This sharp decrease is primarily attributed to an anti-irregular migration campaign in the Bab-al-Mandab region that has forced migrants to use alternative routes, suggesting actual arrivals may be far higher than reported. Migration along the Eastern Route is bidirectional, with both outward movements and returns. By August 2024, almost 8,500 migrants had

spontaneously returned from Yemen to Djibouti and Somalia. Additionally, non-voluntary returns from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have resulted in over 84,000 migrants being sent back to Ethiopia and Somalia. Tragically, 2024 has also seen a devastating increase in migrant fatalities along the Gulf of Aden, with 48 deaths and 75 reported missing in October 2024 alone<sup>5</sup> – making it the deadliest year on this route since tracking began in 2014.

**Migrants also use the Southern Route for migration, most of which is irregular, with most of them originating from Ethiopia and, to a lesser extent, Somalia.** This route traverses Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania before branching out into various potential routes through other Southern African countries, including Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. Movements along the Southern Route have remained stable across years, with an average of 60,000 migrants moving along the route each year between 2020 to 2022.<sup>6</sup> Between January and October 2024, almost 11,000 migrants were recorded departing Ethiopia along the Southern Route, averaging 1,100 migrant departures each month.<sup>7</sup> However, this is likely an underestimation due to limited monitoring capacities as well as the numerous routes utilized by migrants in the Southern Route.

Key factors contributing to migrant departures along the Southern Route include economic challenges, environmental instability, and political tensions, particularly in Ethiopia. With an agrarian economy where approximately 95 per cent of the population relies on agriculture and subsistence farming,<sup>8</sup> Ethiopia's economy is highly vulnerable to environmental shifts. Despite rapid economic growth over the past decade, the country has struggled to modernize and generate quality jobs for its

1 Migration along the Eastern Corridor – Report 53 – as of 31 July 2024, IOM [PDF], 30 August 2024.

2 Migration along the Eastern Corridor – Report 54 – as of 31 August 2024 [PDF], IOM, 30 September 2024.

3 Ibid.

4 Migration along the Eastern Corridor – Report 42 – as of 31 August 2023 – IOM [PDF], 3 October 2023.

5 45 Dead and 111 Missing in Tragic Incident off Djibouti Coast – IOM [Web], 2 October 2024.

6 A Region on the Move – East and Horn of Africa – IOM [Web], 31 December 2022.

7 Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard – DTM Ethiopia [Web], January – October 2024.

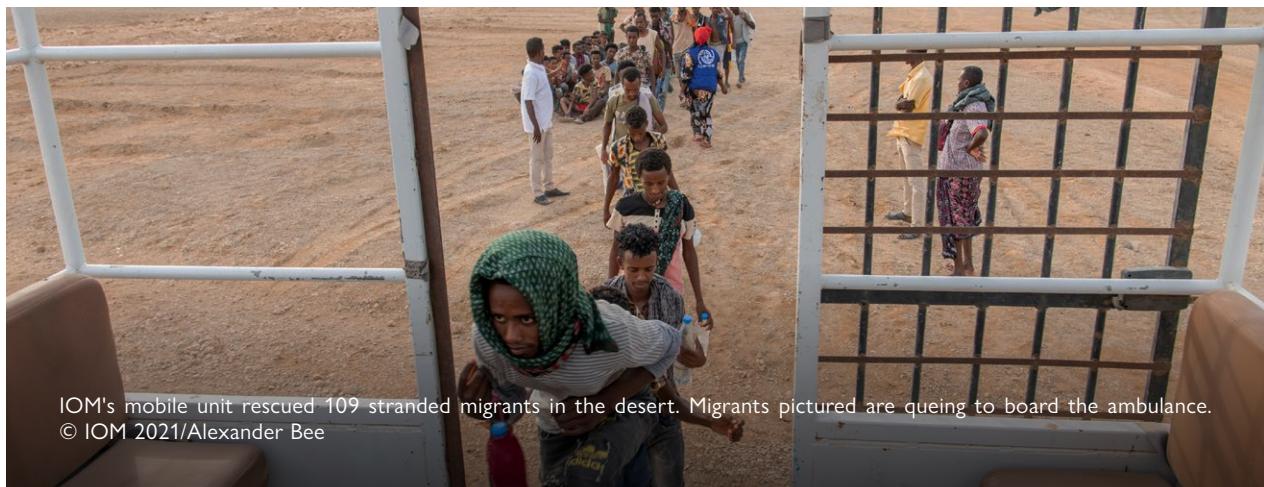
8 Ethiopia – Key drought developments to watch in Afar, SNNP, Somali, and southern and eastern Oromia regions – ACAPS [PDF], 18 April 2023.

expanding youth population.<sup>9</sup> In regions like Amhara, Oromia, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP), widespread economic difficulties drive many to seek better opportunities abroad. Political complexities also contribute to migration, as Ethiopia faces ongoing challenges in balancing power and resources among diverse ethnic groups. This has heightened perceptions of inequality and fuelled conflict, particularly in Oromia and Amhara, compounding long-standing grievances and driving both migration and internal displacement. Drivers of migration among Somali migrants mirror the above mentioned for Ethiopia. However, these drivers are further pronounced by longstanding conflict, political instability, and generalized violence.

Migrants along the Eastern Route face gruelling conditions and limited access to essential goods and services, including food, water and medical care. These harsh journeys often lead to exploitation by smugglers and traffickers, and many migrants face detention by authorities. Data from migrant response centres in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Somalia reveal that over 57 per cent of registered migrants urgently need basic services,<sup>10</sup> highlighting critical gaps in humanitarian assistance across the region. Furthermore, a recent study in Somalia<sup>11</sup> found that a staggering 93 per cent of migrants in Bossaso

required immediate support, underscoring their precarious situation. Protection risks are equally severe, with over a third of migrants passing through response centres reporting incidents of physical violence or psychological abuse. Alarming data<sup>12</sup> shows that 84 per cent of women and 82 per cent of men endured physical violence during their journey.

The Southern Route also carries significant risks. Migrants on the Southern route experience various vulnerabilities including difficulty with access to basic needs and services, such as food, water, shelter, and health services. Furthermore, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants originating from the HoA moving into Southern Africa are increasingly associated with organized crime and more violent and exploitative measures against migrants. Migrants face discrimination, stigmatization, forced labour, injuries, illnesses, slavery, sexual exploitation, kidnappings and deaths in some cases.<sup>13</sup> In Kenya, migrants frequently report being exposed to robbery (54 per cent), bribery and extortion (52 per cent) and risk of detention (56 per cent).<sup>14</sup> While in the United Republic of Tanzania, although migrants have historically faced detention, a 2024 policy change has allowed returns through brokers, inadvertently fostering informal broker networks that may further increase protection risks for migrants.



<sup>9</sup> As of 2021, youth unemployment reached 23 per cent in urban areas and 12 per cent in rural areas [PDF]. Additionally, over 60 per cent of Ethiopians live in poverty, with 40 per cent facing severe poverty, earning less than \$1.90 per day [PDF].

<sup>10</sup> IOM Migration Response Centres [Web].

<sup>11</sup> Mixed Movements in Somalia: Dangerous locations, smuggling dynamics and access to information and assistance – UNHCR/MMC, 26 September 2024 [PDF].

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Pilot Study on the Southern Migration Route and Access to Protection Services – IOM [Web], 2024.

<sup>14</sup> Southbound: Mixed migration routes, experiences and risks along the journey to South Africa, [PDF] – MMC, 3 May 2023

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>4Mi</b>	Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative
<b>AAIA</b>	Aden Abdulle International Airport
<b>ADRA</b>	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to Affected Populations
<b>ATD</b>	Alternatives to Detention
<b>AVR</b>	Assisted Voluntary Return
<b>AVRR</b>	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
<b>BIP</b>	Best Interest Procedures
<b>COOPI</b>	Cooperazione Internazionale
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CWG</b>	Communications Working Group
<b>CT</b>	Counter-Trafficking
<b>DRC</b>	Danish Refugee Council
<b>DTM</b>	Displacement Tracking Matrix
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>FTS</b>	Financial Tracking System
<b>FTR</b>	Family Tracing and Reunification
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>GCM</b>	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team
<b>HDPN</b>	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
<b>HoA</b>	Horn of Africa
<b>HPC</b>	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>ICCG</b>	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization

<b>IMWG</b>	Information Management Working Group
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IRARA</b>	International Return and Reintegration Assistance
<b>IRC</b>	International Rescue Committee
<b>ISCM</b>	Inter-State Consultation Mechanism on Migration
<b>KDMECC</b>	Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change
<b>MHPSS</b>	Mental Health & Psychosocial Support
<b>MMC</b>	Mixed Migration Centre
<b>MMP</b>	Missing Migrants Project
<b>MMTF</b>	Mixed Migration Task Force
<b>MoWSA</b>	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
<b>MPWG</b>	Migrant Protection Working Group
<b>MRC</b>	Migration Response Centre
<b>MRP</b>	Migrant Response Plan
<b>MSF</b>	Médecins Sans Frontières
<b>NCM</b>	National Coordination Mechanism
<b>NDF</b>	National Development Framework
<b>NFI</b>	Non-Food Item
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NPC</b>	National Partnership Coalition
<b>NRC</b>	Norwegian Refugee Council
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>PFA</b>	Psychological First Aid
<b>PiN</b>	People in Need
<b>PoE</b>	Point of Entry
<b>PSEA</b>	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>RCC</b>	Regional Coordination Committee
<b>RCPN</b>	Regional Child Protection Network
<b>RD</b>	Regional Director

<b>REC</b>	Regional Economic Community
<b>RMFM</b>	Regional Ministerial Forum on Migration
<b>RMMS</b>	Refugee and Migrant Multisector
<b>SADC</b>	Southern Africa Development Community
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMHA</b>	Somali Mental Health Association
<b>SNNP</b>	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>TWG</b>	Technical Working Group
<b>UASC</b>	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
<b>UHC</b>	Universal Health Coverage
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNNM</b>	United Nations Network on Migration
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNSDCF</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
<b>VHR</b>	Voluntary Humanitarian Return
<b>VoT</b>	Victim of Trafficking
<b>WAAPO</b>	Women's Action Advocacy Progress Organization
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



In Adogolo, migrants gather for a prayer while waiting for pickups to take them to the boats Adogolo, Djibouti. Migrants gathered on the heights of Obock by smugglers wait to be transported to the sea where they will take the boat to Yemen. In turn, men stand up to lead prayers for a calm sea. © IOM 2020/Alexander Bee



An Ethiopian migrant spent 2 years in Saudi Arabia but was deported because he did not have papers. When he came back to Ethiopia, he used the money he saved to open his own Wofcho Bet, milling business. © IOM 2021/Yonas Tadesse

# RESPONSE PRIORITIES

The MRP comprises a comprehensive strategy involving both humanitarian and development initiatives to address the needs of migrants and host communities along the Eastern and Southern Routes. Simultaneously, it seeks to address the root causes of migration, aligning with local priorities and reinforcing community capacities. Employing a multi-annual and inter-agency approach, the MRP is structured to ensure the cohesive and sustainable delivery of humanitarian, protection, and long-term development interventions, prioritizing the most vulnerable populations. More specifically, the MRP is led by a four-year framework with annual appeals. The MRP 2025-2028 framework, which precedes this document, identifies the long-term direction of the MRP and the MRP 2025 focused on the key needs of migrants and host communities for the year of 2025.

In 2025, the MRP will prioritize the following themes related to the response, which were identified through a consultative process with member states and partners.

## PROTECTION

### Priority needs

Irregular migration along the Eastern and Southern routes remains fraught with protection risks and severe vulnerabilities, often marked by grave human rights violations. The movement of migrants along

these routes is largely facilitated by smugglers and traffickers who place migrants at significant risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse, frequently leading to tragic outcomes. Reports of sexual violence against migrant women and girls are common, occurring along migration routes, in detention facilities, workplaces, and informal settlements, often resulting in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Migrants are frequently held captive, tortured for ransom, and subjected to life-threatening injuries.<sup>15</sup> The criminalization of migration along these routes further exacerbates their plight, with reports of arbitrary arrests and detention of migrants,<sup>16</sup> including children, for immigration-related offenses. Injuries from explosive ordnance and landmines in conflict-affected areas also pose significant threats. Child protection concerns, particularly for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), are prevalent, as thousands of migrant children remain stranded in transit or destination countries, often living on the streets or in unsafe care arrangements, increasing their vulnerabilities.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, migrants are frequently scapegoated as contributors to insecurity and economic decline, fostering xenophobia and discrimination. This hostility manifests in targeted violence, destruction of property, and denial of access to basic services.<sup>18</sup>

Protection services for migrants and returnees in vulnerable situations, including victims of violence, exploitation, and abuse, remain inadequate. Where such services exist, they are often fragmented,

<sup>15</sup> Mixed Movements in Somalia: Dangerous locations, smuggling dynamics and access to information and assistance – 4Mi Infographic – Mixed Migration Centre [PDF], September 2024.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> IOM calls for increased support for growing numbers of stranded migrants in Yemen – IOM [Web], 6 May 2024.

<sup>18</sup> How growing hostility in South Africa impacts South-South migration – The New Humanitarian [Web], 9 April 2024.

inconsistent, and fail to meet quality standards.<sup>19</sup> The lack of continuity in protection services across borders significantly affects outcomes for migrants, as access to services often depends on their location. Return migration along these routes occurs voluntarily and involuntarily, with the latter often lacking necessary safeguards, exposing migrants to further risks. Returning migrants are often stigmatized by the communities they return to, impacting their ability to successfully reintegrate, and perpetuating a cycle of re-migration. Similarly, the inability of some returnees to continue to their intended destinations due to conflict or other factors such as insufficient resources heightens their vulnerabilities and increases the likelihood of irregular re-migration. Sustainable reintegration remains a significant challenge, further compounded by limited options for productive livelihoods in their countries of origin.

### Response strategy

In 2025, MRP partners will prioritize promoting and safeguarding the rights of migrants, host communities, and other vulnerable populations by addressing protection risks and supporting governments to adopt rights-based approaches to migration management. Efforts will focus on preventive, responsive, and remedial actions through interventions that include conducting research and data collection to improve understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants and returnees. Direct and tailored assistance will be provided, including referrals to service providers. At the same time, capacity development initiatives will equip stakeholders with the skills and knowledge to enhance the quality and delivery of protection services.

MRP partners will advocate for migrants' rights, highlighting critical needs and gaps, and work closely with governments and other stakeholders to foster dialogue, collaboration, and shared learnings on protection themes. They will support the development, dissemination, and implementation of legislation, policies, and standards that address key protection issues.

Protection interventions will focus on various thematic areas such as child protection, gender-based violence (GBV), counter-trafficking (CT), alternatives

to detention (ATD), access to justice, legal identity and documentation, mine action, housing, land, and property rights, the provision of medical assistance (including clinical management of rape), safe shelter, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), family tracing and reunification (FTR), voluntary return and reintegration, and consular protection.

At border points, dedicated protection units will be established to assist vulnerable migrants, including women, children, and victims of trafficking. These units will provide immediate support, referrals to appropriate services, and information on safe pathways for migration. At the country level, MRP partners will strengthen protection coordination through existing forums, while regional collaboration will be facilitated via the Migrant Protection Working Group (MPWG). Engagement with regional bodies like IGAD and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) will further protection objectives. Additionally, MRP partners will collaborate with regional networks, such as the Regional Child Protection Network (RCPN) and the Regional GBV Working Group, to advance protection priorities across the Eastern and Southern Routes.

## IMMIGRATION AND BORDER GOVERNANCE

### Priority needs

The HoA faces unique challenges in migration governance, with porous borders, irregular migration, and transnational crimes such as human trafficking and smuggling posing significant threats to regional stability. In this context, protecting vulnerable migrants must be a key priority. Addressing these issues requires targeted strategies to enhance border security, protect vulnerable populations, and foster regional cooperation. Border security is critical to preventing unauthorized crossings, disrupting criminal networks, and ensuring safe migration pathways. Migration and its associated processes have become heavily monetized, requiring migrants and their families to pay fees to be smuggled along migration routes, into exacerbating risks to migrants' safety and well-being. Robust border surveillance and mechanisms to

<sup>19</sup> Mixed Movements in Somalia: Dangerous locations, smuggling dynamics and access to information and assistance – 4Mi Infographic – Mixed Migration Centre [PDF], September 2024.

ensure safe and orderly migration can help mitigate these threats, while addressing smuggling and trafficking groups effectively will safeguard national security and uphold human rights. A standardized, whole-of-government, real-time data management system is also essential for tracking and monitoring cross-border migration flows across countries.

Furthermore, mechanisms should be implemented at ports of entry and border crossings to identify and support groups at heightened risk, including women, children, and victims of trafficking. By mainstreaming protection into border management practices, member states can reduce migrant exploitation and provide pathways to safety and recovery for those most in need. Initiatives that involve communities in cross-border policing and awareness programmes can build trust and collaboration, strengthening efforts to manage migration effectively. These activities should align with regional integration goals championed by the regional economic communities (RECs), ensuring long-term sustainability and collective ownership of migration governance efforts. A cooperative, regionally aligned approach will also contribute to more stability, social cohesion, and economic growth across the region.



Young migrants received at the IOM Migration Response Centre in Obock, Djibouti, participating in 16 Days of Activism sensitization sessions. © IOM 2024/Eva Sibanda

## Response strategy

In 2025, MRP partners will continue to advance efforts in promoting effective border governance and management structures for member states, aiming to improve the migration experience for individuals while enhancing member states' capacity in migration management. To achieve this, MRP partners will prioritize integrating advanced technologies to strengthen border surveillance and enable swift responses to security threats and humanitarian border management crises. These efforts aim to address challenges arising from political turmoil, conflicts or disasters that lead to large-scale border crossings and strain governmental response capacities. This includes introducing biometric systems, data analytics, and monitoring tools to detect unauthorized activities and enhance operational efficiency. Key efforts will also include establishing a Regional Migration Information System, a secure and integrated data-sharing platform that enables real-time tracking of migrant information across the region. This system will support evidence-based policymaking, operational coordination, and effective responses to changing migration dynamics. Complementing this, comprehensive training programmes will be conducted for border officials, incorporating workshops and e-learning modules that cover immigration law, human rights, anti-trafficking measures, and the use of digital tools. These programmes aim to build capacity and ensure professional, rights-based approaches in border management practices.

Mainstreaming protection into border operations will help reduce protection violations and ensure that vulnerable individuals are treated with dignity and care. Examples of protection mainstreaming in border operations can include screening for vulnerable migrants in need of tailored protection assistance or advocating for alternatives to detention for migrants. Public awareness campaigns and community dialogues will further foster understanding and support for migration policies, emphasizing migrants' rights and the benefits of orderly migration. These initiatives aim to cultivate a cooperative environment for migration governance while addressing misconceptions and fostering cross-border collaboration. Through the collective implementation of these strategies, MRP partners will contribute to a more secure and humane migration landscape in the HoA. By leveraging

technology, enhancing capacity, and fostering regional cooperation, these efforts will enable member states to address irregular migration challenges, support vulnerable populations, and promote safer, more efficient mobility across borders.

## INTER-STATE DIALOGUES

### Priority needs

MRP partners recognize the importance of enhancing -regional and inter-state dialogue and cooperation to improve the management of migration along the Eastern and Southern Routes. Migrants face numerous challenges that require targeted interventions to address the underlying causes of irregular migration, protect their rights, and provide opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. In response, the MRP will prioritize inter-state dialogues, convening member states along both routes, to discuss and coordinate on national and regional approaches to migration management.

One critical need for collective, regional efforts addressing the adverse drivers of migration, such as insecurity, lack of economic opportunities, and environmental degradation, while supporting the sustainable reintegration of returnees into their communities. Sustainable solutions can only be built on a mutual understanding of these drivers, underscoring the importance of robust data analysis to inform policy planning and strengthen the resilience of populations in areas prone to irregular migration. Enhancing state capacity in immigration and border governance is another key priority. Member states must work collaboratively to reduce irregular migration by improving coordination, cooperation, and integrated border governance. These efforts help to ensure that migration is managed safely and effectively while minimizing risks for migrants.

Furthermore, protection remains central to addressing migrants' needs at all stages of their journeys and upon return to their countries of origin. Migrants, regardless of their status, require robust legislative and policy frameworks that prioritize their safety and dignity, strengthening the overall protection environment and ensuring access to assistance when needed. Facilitating legal pathways for migration is also essential to promoting safe and regular mobility.

Cooperation on ethical recruitment practices and the development of labour agreements can pave the way for orderly and humane labour migration, benefiting both migrants and host countries.

### Response strategy

To addressing the challenges of irregular migration and improving the management of migration, MRP partners will promote Regional Dialogues to address the priority needs outlined above. The dialogues will serve as a platform for exchanging views and experiences and advance understanding of the opportunities and challenges identified by Eastern Route and Southern Route countries in their effort to manage migration along these routes. Discussions will focus on the current state of play with a focus on policy and practice while identifying good practices, opportunities, challenges, lessons learned, and areas for interstate cooperation leading up to the development of a roadmap that participating states will progressively implement to manage migration along both routes effectively. Given the multi-faceted nature of the dialogue, a whole-of-government approach will be encouraged, along with the participation of relevant stakeholders.

## HEALTH

### Priority needs

The migratory dynamics along the Eastern and Southern routes exposes people on the move to significant health risks and heightened vulnerability to illness, often leading to increased morbidity and mortality. Migrants frequently endure inadequate access to essential goods and services such as food, water, and shelter, which severely impact their physical and mental well-being. These challenges are exacerbated by ongoing humanitarian crises that strain regional health systems, reducing the capacity of member states to provide adequate health services. Migration journeys also expose individuals to various health risks, including hazardous travel conditions, psychosocial stress and physical abuse. Vulnerable irregular migrants face particularly compromised health outcomes compared to others. In October 2024, two-thirds of people registered at the migration response centre (MRC) in Bossaso,

Somalia reported having health problems.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, in three separate incidents in October 2024, four migrants lost their lives due to inadequate access to healthcare. In addition, according to IOM's Missing Migrants Project (MMP) estimates 36 migrant deaths attributed to sickness/lack of access to adequate healthcare in all of 2024.<sup>21</sup>

### Response strategy

In 2025, MRP partners will focus on addressing the multifaceted health needs of migrants and host communities along key migration routes by integrating emergency preparedness, resilience building, and advocacy efforts. Recognizing the vulnerabilities of migrants in crises, MRP partners will enhance their capacity to respond to disasters, disease outbreaks, and migration-related emergencies. This will involve pre-positioning essential health supplies, conducting emergency health assessments, and deploying mobile health teams to deliver primary healthcare services, including vaccinations and maternal care. Building resilience among migrants and host communities will be another key focus area, with MRP partners working to expand access to community-based health services, such as Sexual and Reproductive Health/Rights (SRHR), child health, and nutrition.

To ensure sustainable health solutions, MRP partners will advocate for integrating migrant health needs into national health systems through Universal Health Coverage (UHC) frameworks. Partnerships with ministries of health will enable the development of migrant-sensitive policies and the expansion of health infrastructure at point of entries (PoEs), including disease surveillance and referral systems. Training programmes for frontline health workers will incorporate cross-cultural competencies to address the specific health needs of migrant populations effectively. Strengthened data collection systems, including integrated health information platforms, will provide real-time insights into migrant health indicators and inform evidence-based programming. Cross-border disease surveillance will be conducted with partners, utilizing digital tools for improved data analysis and reporting to strengthen health outcomes.

Cross-border initiatives involving governments, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, local organizations, and regional organizations will bridge gaps in migrant assistance and ensure culturally sensitive service delivery.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

### Priority needs

The provision of MHPSS is a pivotal component in assisting migrants and host communities. Individuals originating from and returning to the HoA region, as well as those traversing the Eastern and Southern Routes, face a spectrum of challenges, including severe physical exhaustion, physical abuse, violence, sexual abuse, sexual violence, labour exploitation, racism, and discrimination.

Despite limited data on migrants' experiences on the Southern route, a recent report<sup>22</sup> underscores instances of deception by smugglers, exploitation, ill-treatment, and fatalities or the witnessing of fellow migrants' deaths. For example, 2024 has seen an increase in deadly shipwrecks off the coast of Djibouti, which have been devastating for the migrants involved and for front-line workers managing the response. These adverse encounters can directly influence mental health, overall well-being, and the broader societal fabric. Furthermore, these experiences play a pivotal role in determining individuals' ability to engage effectively on social and economic fronts within society and significantly influence the pace and outcome of the reintegration process. Resources to prevent, identify and treat mental health problems are scarce across the HoA region, with approximately one psychiatrist for every one million people.<sup>23</sup> Structural barriers limit even the general population's access to mental health services. A lack of MHPSS services, poor quality of services and cost of services play a significant role in access to MHPSS services among returnees to Somalia and Ethiopia. As such, MHPSS will be a key priority for the MRP in 2025.

20 Migration Along the Eastern Route – Report 56 – as of 31 October 2024 – IOM Regional Data Hub [PDF], 30 November 2024.

21 Missing Migrants Project [Web].

22 IOM, Migrating in Search of the Southern Dream: The Experiences of Ethiopian migrants moving along the Southern Route [PDF], May 2022.

23 Mental health a human right, but only 1 psychiatrist per 1,000,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa – UNICEF/WHO - ReliefWeb [Web], 10 October 2023.

## Response strategy

In 2025, MRP partners will facilitate access to quality, multi-layered MHPSS services for migrants, including returning migrants and host community members that align with a spectrum of MHPSS needs. Interventions will address the individual and the community levels, the person, their immediate social network, and the overall recovery environment. This can include community and family-level interventions such as socio-cultural activities and peer support; focused support delivered by non-specialists such as counselling; and access to specialized services for those with complex mental health needs. These interventions will be delivered through direct service provision as well as advocacy, technical assistance and capacity strengthening to government officials, frontline actors, and partners.

In 2025, the MHPSS response will undertake on a community-based approach, focusing on restoring and strengthening local support and collective structures that promote recovery and resilience. As such, partners will work to tackle stigmatization, marginalization, and isolation issues that can exacerbate suffering for migrants and their families. In addition to being more sustainable, a community-based approach can address some of the major social drivers of migration and re-migration. Front-line workers providing life-saving assistance will be trained in basic emotional support skills and Psychological First Aid (PFA), with an additional and important focus on their self-care. Particular attention will be paid to those responding to shipwrecks, to equip them with essential skills to manage others and their own reactions.

Fundamental MHPSS principles and approaches will also be integrated into other areas of service provision, reintegration assistance, and community stabilization initiatives provided by MRP partners, including economic and employment initiatives. Incorporating elements of MHPSS into economic activities leads to better and more sustained outcomes in both areas, which can have spillover effects on community-level well-being. This integration will be achieved through SOPs developing, curricula, guidelines and other capacity-building initiatives. In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 – Universal

Mental Health Care and Psychosocial Support that leaves no one behind - MRP partners will contribute to policy development and systems strengthening activities that align with national priorities and enhance migrants' and host communities' access to MHPSS services. MRP partners will engage in MHPSS-informed policy creation, including identifying, monitoring, and creating evidence-based evidence for migration governance issues that create psychological harm and lobby for change.

## MIGRATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

### Priority needs

MRP partners recognize the importance of ensuring that irregular migration, in the context of climate change and environmental degradation, is averted, minimized, and addressed. Drivers of irregular migration, such as economic factors, continue to be intensified by climate change in countries of origin.

According to research conducted by IOM in June 2023,<sup>24</sup> providing various scenarios on Eastern Route migration by 2030, climate change will increasingly force individuals in countries of origin to irregularly migrate. In particular, by 2030, the research anticipates the impacts of climate change to become more intense and frequent without adequate mitigation measures impacting access to critical resources (such as water and food) as well as livelihoods. Climate-related disruptions to livelihoods will be most extreme in economies dependent on agriculture such as those in Ethiopia and Somalia. By 2030, without adaptive capacities and climate change mitigation measures, the Horn of Africa is projected to become increasingly uninhabitable, driving greater incentives for affected populations to irregularly migrate. Communities reliant on climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture and nomadic livelihoods, are expected to face heightened vulnerabilities. However, the capacity of individuals to migrate will depend on two critical factors: the availability of resources to support migration journeys and access to regular or irregular migration pathways.

In 2025, key priorities include providing in-situ adaptation options, resilience-building opportunities for communities who choose to stay, and support

for climate-affected communities on the move. Migration should continue to be leveraged as an adaptation strategy through continued engagement on regular pathways. Furthermore, migrants, returnees, and host communities to be supported by climate-sensitive employment.

### Response strategy

In 2025, MRP partners will continue to support the implementation of the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change (KDMCCE) commitments at the national and regional levels.<sup>25</sup> This involves continued advocacy, awareness raising, and socialization at all levels (national, regional, and continental) on the nexus of climate change and mobility and the comprehensive response required. In particular, MRP partners will mainstream mobility considerations in disaster and climate change policies and integrate climate change aspects into ongoing community initiatives for migrants, returnees, and host communities. This includes activities to improve migrant health in contexts of climate change, labour migration in support of climate change adaptation, regular migration pathways for the climate vulnerable, and anticipatory action to reduce conflicts over natural resources. At the country-level, MRP partners will provide direct assistance to migrants and host communities affected by climate change or climate-related hazards. This includes community initiatives that foster stabilization and resilience against environmental degradation and climate change in hot spots of transit, outward migration, and return. Regional thematic specialists will support MRP partners at the country level with technical guidance and tools tailored to each operating context.

## RESPONDING TO MIGRANT DEATHS AND DISAPPEARANCES

### Priority needs

Between January and October 2024, MRP partners documented the deaths of 538 migrants on the Eastern Route, though many more cases likely remain unrecorded. In response, MRP-funded workshops held in 2024 on missing migrants in the region, which included national consultations in Ethiopia, Djibouti, and the United Republic of Tanzania, highlighted the many risks migrants face in transit across Eastern and Southern Africa and beyond, as well as the challenges of documenting the many cases in remote, under-resourced routes on land and at sea. Through these consultations, first responders to migrant deaths and disappearances across the region highlighted the following needs. There is a critical need for better documentation of reports from potential eyewitnesses of deaths, including accounts from migrants themselves. Additionally, enhanced capacities are required for key stakeholders, particularly national governments and relevant organizations, to improve data collection and management processes related to cases of migrant deaths and disappearances. Furthermore, technical support is necessary along migration routes to trace and identify individuals who remain unidentified.

### Response strategy

Building on the positive collaboration between MRP and the MMP,<sup>26</sup> Efforts to improve the documentation of deaths and disappearances in the Eastern and Southern routes will continue. To improve data collection from migrants, it is essential to integrate data collection modules from the MMP into key flow monitoring points across the region.

- 25 The landmark KDMCCE was established in July 2022 by the states in the East and HoA region, with a continental expansion (KDMCCE-AFRICA) in September 2023 during the first Africa Climate Summit held in Kenya. The KDMCCE unifies calls for action by governments and stakeholders to address the different dimensions of climate-related mobility, identifying potential challenges or opportunities. Additionally, the KDMCCE commitments cut across social inclusion and human livelihoods, finance and investment, policy and regulatory activities, and climate mitigation and adaptation.
- 26 MMP hosts the only existing open-access database of records of deaths during migration on the global level, which informs the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 10.7.3 on the “[n]umber of people who died or disappeared in the process of migration towards an international destination.” Missing Migrants Project is also a concerted effort towards informing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) Objective 8, which commits signatory states to “save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants.”

Collaboration and capacity-building among actors working on missing migrants will be enhanced by expanding the network of stakeholders, sharing good regional practices, and organizing targeted workshops to strengthen data collection and management capacities at the national level. Additionally, the MRP 2025 has planned for a regional-level meeting with technical actors focused on tracing and identifying missing migrants, addressing challenges related to transnational information management and exchange, and prioritizing key routes within the HoA region. This activity will speak to the MRP framework's second Strategic Objective, which aims to provide quality, timely and inclusive protection assistance and services to migrants and host communities, as well as Specific Objective 2.1 to improve access for migrants with specific needs to specialized services to support survivors of human rights violations.

## ENHANCING THE EVIDENCE BASE

### Priority needs

Recent trends and evidence gaps along the Eastern and Southern Routes underscore the continued need for data and analysis to understand the migratory dynamics in complex and evolving environments and inform more robust and targeted humanitarian response and migration management strategies. In particular, areas requiring further research include new arrival points for migrant in Yemen. A noticeable decrease in arrivals to Yemen has been observed despite exits from Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Somalia continuing to increase.

Furthermore, MRP partners will prioritize research and understanding of the impacts of conflict in Northern Ethiopia on primary drivers of irregular migration, mainly economic conditions, as well as alternatives to return to areas of origin in conflict for returning migrants. Considering involuntary returns

from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia surpassed all returns in 2023, with an overwhelming majority returning to conflict-prone areas in Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray. Lastly, the Southern Route remains heavily understudied beyond exits from Ethiopia towards South Africa. MRP partners will prioritize enhancing the evidence base related to irregular migration along the Southern Route to lay the foundation for eventual inclusion of other Southern Route countries beyond Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. Overall, systematic data collection on the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants and returnees remains limited, leading to underreporting and insufficient understanding of the scale and diversity of the challenges that migrants face.

### Response strategy

Regarding better monitoring the shifting migratory routes along the Eastern Route, particularly towards Yemen, will be a priority in 2025, through more operational presence and flexible data collection operations. Along the Southern Route, a scale-up of operations along the entire route, will be prioritized to document better migratory patterns in countries of origin, transit, and destination. In 2025, MRP partners will also increase the evidence base on protection needs, concerns, and gaps along the Eastern and Southern routes through enhanced protection assessments, monitoring, studies and research, ensuring evidence is linked to action and programming. Data collection will utilize MRP partner tools, such as the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), including an optimized route-based Flow Monitoring methodology which will increase representativity and strategic coverage along the migratory routes. In addition, MRP partners will benefit from data sourced from the Mixed Migration Centre's 4Mi<sup>27</sup> data collection system, which utilizes a unique network of enumerators situated along various points of migration routes.

27 Mixed Migration Centre 4Mi [Web].

## DEFINITION OF POPULATION GROUPS

The following population groups have been included in the MRP and defined for this plan as set out below:



**Departing migrants:** Migrants that are departing their home countries. Within the framework of this MRP, this includes primarily Ethiopian and Somali migrants who have started or are expected to begin their journey but are still within their country of origin.



**Transiting migrants:** Migrants who have begun their journey, left their countries of origin, and are in transit in another country before reaching their intended destination or returning to their country of origin. This also includes migrants in detention and stranded migrants who cannot continue their journey.<sup>28</sup>



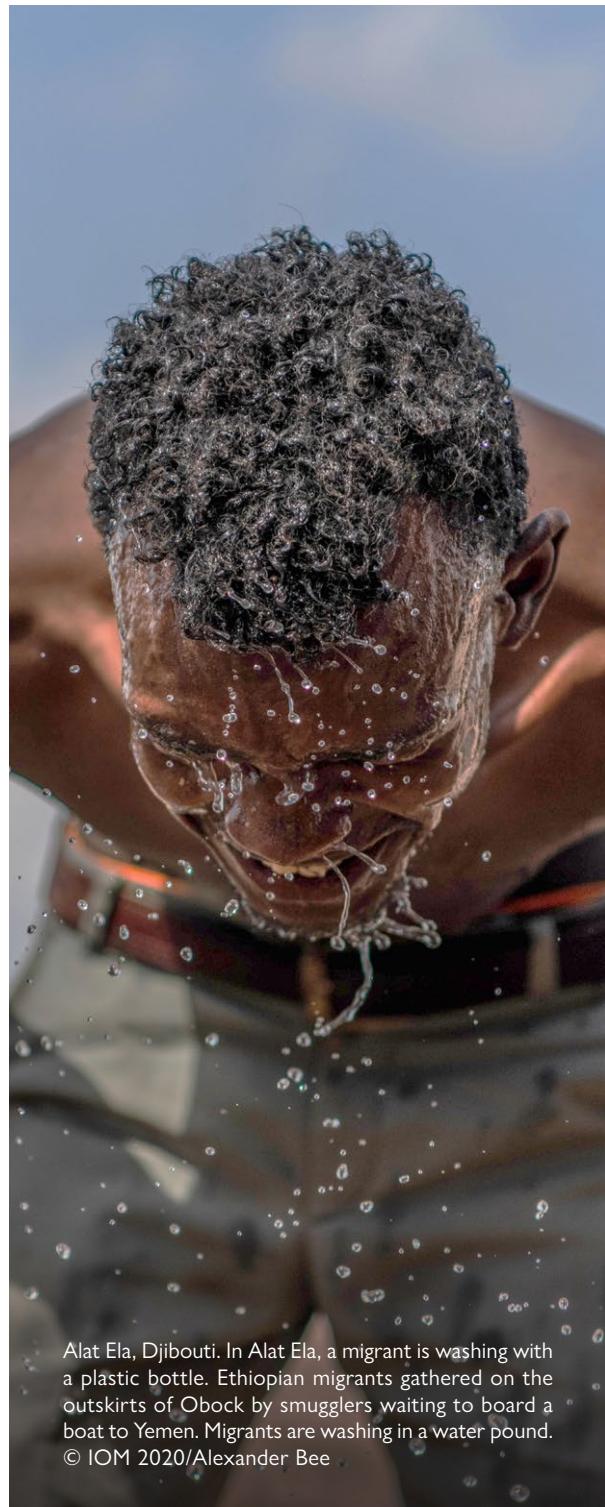
**Returnee migrants:** Individuals that have returned to their countries of origin, either spontaneously, voluntarily, or non-voluntarily.<sup>29</sup>



**Migrants at destination:** Migrants who have decided to settle in a country along the migration route (Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, or Yemen).



**Affected host communities:** Members from the communities where migrants live or return to in areas of origin, transit, and destination in need of access to assistance along the Eastern Route in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Somalia and along the Southern Route in Kenya.<sup>30</sup>



Alat Ela, Djibouti. In Alat Ela, a migrant is washing with a plastic bottle. Ethiopian migrants gathered on the outskirts of Obock by smugglers waiting to board a boat to Yemen. Migrants are washing in a water pound. © IOM 2020/Alexander Bee

28 Under this Plan, transiting migrants are in-need and targeted in Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen.

29 Returnees in Somalia (from Yemen) included in the MRP overlap with beneficiaries identified in the HRP. This plan does not include Ethiopian returnees from Sudan.

30 The host community members in Yemen are covered under the Yemen HRP and are not under the MRP.

# MRP RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

## MRP OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall MRP objective is to establish a more efficient response to address the humanitarian and protection needs, risks, and vulnerabilities of migrants and host communities and contribute to community stabilization and resilience in the HoA, Southern Africa, and Yemen. The MRP promotes comprehensive, quality, timely, and inclusive humanitarian, protection, and migration management responses across the Eastern and

Southern Routes through a dynamic, comprehensive, and effective framework for coordination, capacity enhancement, analysis, and resource mobilization that recognizes, responds to, and addresses the regional dimensions of migration linking the HoA, Southern Africa, and Yemen. To achieve the overall objective, in response to the identified needs and in line with national priorities, the following objectives underpin the MRP interventions:

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.

## PLANNING AND RESPONSE FOR 2025

**1,387,701**  
People in Need

 191,410	Departing Migrants
 308,655	Transiting Migrants
 53,264	Migrants at Destination
 175,479	Returnees
 658,893	Host Community



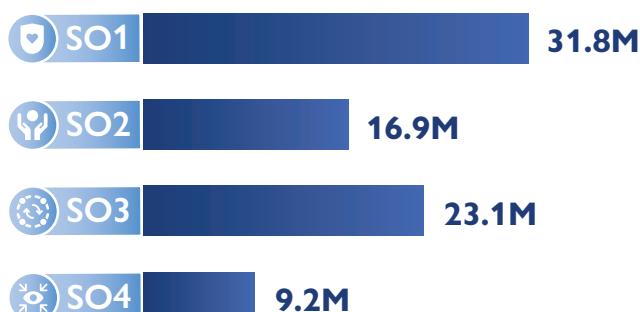
**991,295**  
People Targeted

 16,489 (9%)	Departing Migrants
 246,397 (80%)	Transiting Migrants
 44,920 (84%)	Migrants at Destination
 132,320 (75%)	Returnees
 551,169 (84%)	Host Community

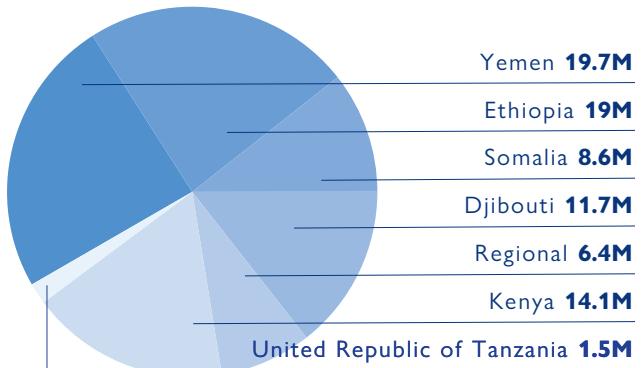
### FUNDING REQUIREMENT BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

 **USD 81 Million**

#### FUNDING BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



#### FUNDING REQUIREMENT BY COUNTRY



### MRP 2025 APPEALING PARTNERS



## 2025 RESPONSE PLAN OVERVIEW

### PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

In 2025, the Eastern Route is anticipated to remain the busiest migration route stemming from the HoA, with most migrants departing from Ethiopia and Somalia to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States via Djibouti, Somalia, and Yemen. Migration along the Southern Route will also continue from origin countries, including Somalia and Ethiopia, aiming to reach South Africa via Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, and other Southern African countries.

The effects of climate change, including the onset of La Niña, will result in extreme weather conditions. Heavy rains are anticipated in certain areas, including central and southern Somalia,<sup>31</sup> resulting in flooding exacerbated by drought-impacted lands. Below-average rainfall is forecasted in the eastern HoA. The greatest impacts are expected in central and southern Somalia, southern Ethiopia, and the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya, in the last quarter of 2024 and into the first quarter of 2025.<sup>32</sup> Worsened climate conditions may result in increased outward migration and certainly increase the vulnerabilities of migrants in transit. With a higher number of migrants exiting from Ethiopia, it is expected that the number of transiting migrants through Djibouti and Somalia will also remain high. In addition, conflict in Northern Ethiopia, in Oromia and Amhara will likely impact outward migration as well as prevent returnee migrants from successfully reintegrating.

MRP partners have identified the following planning assumptions as the basis for the MRP response in 2025:

- In 2025, the migration routes will not change, and migrants will continue to use the Eastern Route on their way to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- While the Eastern Route remains the largest migration route, the Southern route is also important – E.g. stranded migrants along the Southern route are increasingly seeking assistance from humanitarian partners.
- The main departing country will be Ethiopia, with a minority coming from Somalia, and the main transit countries will continue to be Somalia, Djibouti, Yemen (eastern), Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania,
- The number of stranded Ethiopian migrants in transit countries is expected to increase, leading to a rise in returns to Ethiopia in 2025, driven by broker-facilitated returns in Tanzania and forced returns from Djibouti and Somalia.

Additionally, MRP partners concur with the need to better understand and regularly monitor:

- Climate events, including La Niña, are anticipated to impact rainfall throughout the region and fuel the cycle of drought and flooding.
- The ongoing conflict in Northern Ethiopia
- The emerging broker market in the United Republic of Tanzania that facilitates the release and return of migrants in detention due to recent policy changes, which has resulted in a considerable reduction in the number of migrants in detention. The broker market is unregulated and likely to lead to exploitation of migrants as well as their families.
- New arrival points in Yemen following the start of the campaign against migration in the Lahj governorate have shifted arrivals to lesser known and more challenging to monitor locations.

<sup>31</sup> Preparedness planning needed for potential drought in the Eastern Horn of Africa during the October -December Rainy Season – IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre [Web], August 2024

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

## POPULATION IN NEED AND TARGET POPULATION 2025

In 2025, MRP partners project that 1,387,701 people (728,808 migrants and 658,893 host community members) will be in need of lifesaving and protection assistance,<sup>33</sup> reintegration assistance, and development-focused initiatives addressing the drivers of migration.

### The 2025 (People in Need) PiN includes the following:

- **191,410** migrants departing from countries of origin;
- **308,655** transiting migrants;
- **53,264** migrants at destination;
- **175,479** returnees;
- **658,893** host community members.

Given the multi-dimensional aspects of migration flows, migrants may belong to more than one population group as they move along their migration journey towards their country of destination (or return). Therefore, to avoid double counting migrants, overlaps between each of the population categories are considered and not included in the total PiN calculation. Additionally, the PiN calculation was coordinated with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the country and regional levels to ensure complementarity with country-level Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs).

**In 2025, MRP partners seek to meet the humanitarian and protection needs** of 991,295 persons (including 440,126 migrants and 551,169 host community members), **as set out below:**

- **16,489** departing migrants;
- **246,397** transiting migrants;
- **44,920** migrants in destination;
- **132,320** returnees;
- **551,169** host community members.



Tseganesh, a returnee from Somalia, at IOM's Migrant Response Centre in Tog-Wajalle, Ethiopia. © IOM 2023/  
Rahel Negussie

<sup>33</sup> The 2025 response will incorporate both humanitarian and development modalities. Development modalities will include community stabilization and reintegration interventions.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

The MRP brings together 50 partners, including humanitarian and development actors, at strategic and operational levels to ensure a coherent and predictable response to the targeted populations along the Eastern and Southern Routes. The MRP is integrated into relevant networks such as the Regional Ministerial Forum on Migration.<sup>34</sup> (RMFM), the RCPN, and the GBV Working Group for East and Southern Africa. MRP partners coordinate annually and whenever needed to assess the situation and conditions of the target populations, agree on shared priorities, and develop synergistic and comprehensive responses to needs. Coordination, informed policymaking, joint advocacy, and resource mobilization are crucial to comprehensively responding to complex inter-regional migration dynamics. The MRP aligns with the Global Compact on Safe Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) by calling for a whole-of-government approach to migration. The MRP furthers the GCM by supporting governments along the Eastern and Southern routes to accomplish their commitments towards safe,

orderly, and regular migration. Partners, including government and non-governmental actors, civil society, affected communities, the private sector, research/academia, and the international community, work towards collective outcomes.

**Furthermore, the MRP coordination provides the following dividends for the response:**

1. Supports service delivery by providing a platform for agreement on the complementariness amongst partners and eliminating duplication.
2. Promotes localization efforts to support local and national actors, including through capacity building to enhance the response's sustainability.
3. Promotes effective information sharing, monitoring, analysis, and reporting on the implementation and key achievements of the MRP.
4. Enhances joint advocacy to address identified concerns on behalf of partners and the affected populations.
5. Facilitates the implementation of the relevant pillars of the IGAD Regional Migration Policy Frameworks at the national levels.

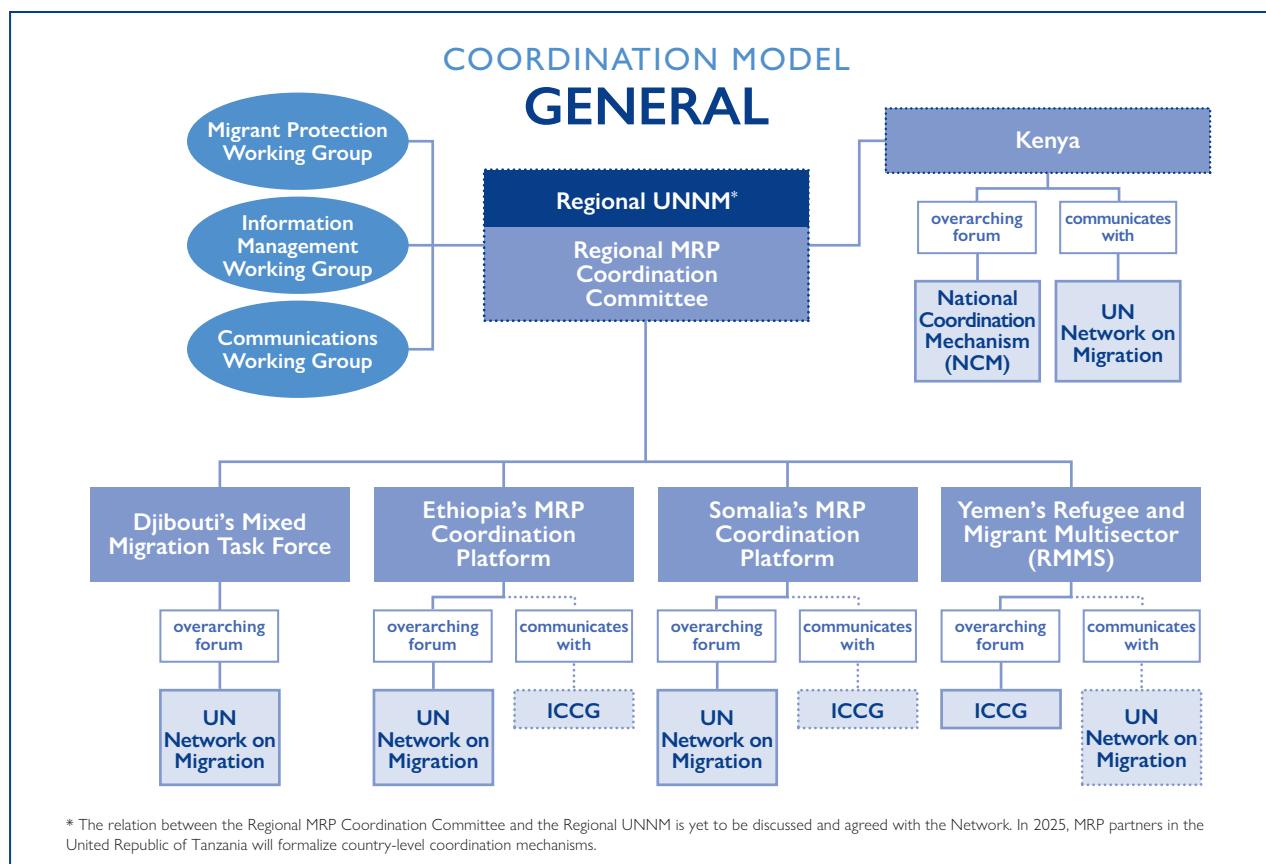


<sup>34</sup> The Regional Ministerial Forum on Migration for East and Horn of Africa is an Inter-State Consultation Mechanism on Migration (ISCM) bringing together 11 States from the East and Horn of Africa Region to jointly address labour migration policies, foster labour mobility and protect the fundamental human, labour, and social rights of migrant workers migrating within the continent and from Africa to the European Union, Gulf Cooperation Countries' Member States, and other countries.

## REGIONAL LEVEL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The MRP Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) comprises 15 partners, including IGAD, UN agencies, and INGOs.<sup>35</sup> In addition, donors, the private sector, and academia are encouraged to participate in the regional coordination processes. The RCC is set up at two levels of coordination. The first is for MRP partners' Regional Directors (RDs), who set

the broader strategic direction. While the second is the technical level RCC, which supports the RDs in operationalizing and promoting shared responsibilities towards the collective outcomes of the MRP Strategic Framework. The RCC technical forum operates through a light, results-oriented coordination platform, which fosters accountability and clarity to the MRP's strategic objectives. It supports the implementation of the MRP objectives at the regional and country levels.



The MRP partners established technical working groups (TWGs) at the regional level **to elaborate on specialized tasks and thematic priorities through the Information Management, Migrant Protection, and Communications Working Groups**. In 2025,

these regional technical working groups will form sub-working groups dedicated to either the Eastern or Southern Route and report to the overall regional technical working group.

<sup>35</sup> The partners include the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), IGAD, International Rescue Committee (IRC), IOM, Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), OCHA, Save the Children, World Health Organization (WHO), and World Food Programme (WFP). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are observer partners to the MRP.

## Information management working group

The Information Management Working Group (IMWG), chaired by IOM and MMC, supports the RCC through a coordinated information management approach to support the MRP programming cycle and facilitate collective advocacy and policy influence. In particular, the IMWG enhances institutional engagement between the MRP partners and promotes learning and knowledge of operational realities. Through the IMWG, MRP partners at the regional level develop an agreed-upon methodology to analyse migrants' needs along the MRP's coverage region, including estimating the affected populations and PiN. Following the estimation and validation of the PiN, MRP partners develop activities aligned to the MRP 2025 framework indicators responding to the PiN, which is used to form the MRP 2025 beneficiary targets and funding appeal. Furthermore, the IMWG provides strategic guidance on the MRP Information Management Strategy, including strengthening the capacities of MRP partners on harmonized data collection methods, data standards, analysis, and reporting. The IMWG also serves as a platform to align the MRP timeframes with the Humanitarian Programme Cycles (HPC) and develop frameworks in all relevant countries, leading to a harmonized representation of the MRP within relevant global and regional planning mechanisms.

## Migrant protection working group

The MPWG,<sup>36</sup> co-chaired by IOM and DRC, was established at the regional level to provide overall strategic guidance and direction to the MRP partners at the regional and country levels to enhance protection standards and ensure coherent and coordinated actions in response to the protection needs, risks, and vulnerabilities of migrants and host communities along the Eastern and the Southern Routes. The MPWG liaises with MRP countries through relevant existing coordination mechanisms established at the country levels. The strategic priorities of the MPWG will support the implementation of protection priorities in the MRP 2025 framework, including increased evidence base, direct assistance, capacity building, support efforts in law and policy development and standard setting, advocacy, and convening of relevant stakeholders to address various protection concerns. The MPWG

will coordinate with existing regional coordination mechanisms and regional economic communities to advance protection responses for migrants along the Eastern and Southern routes.

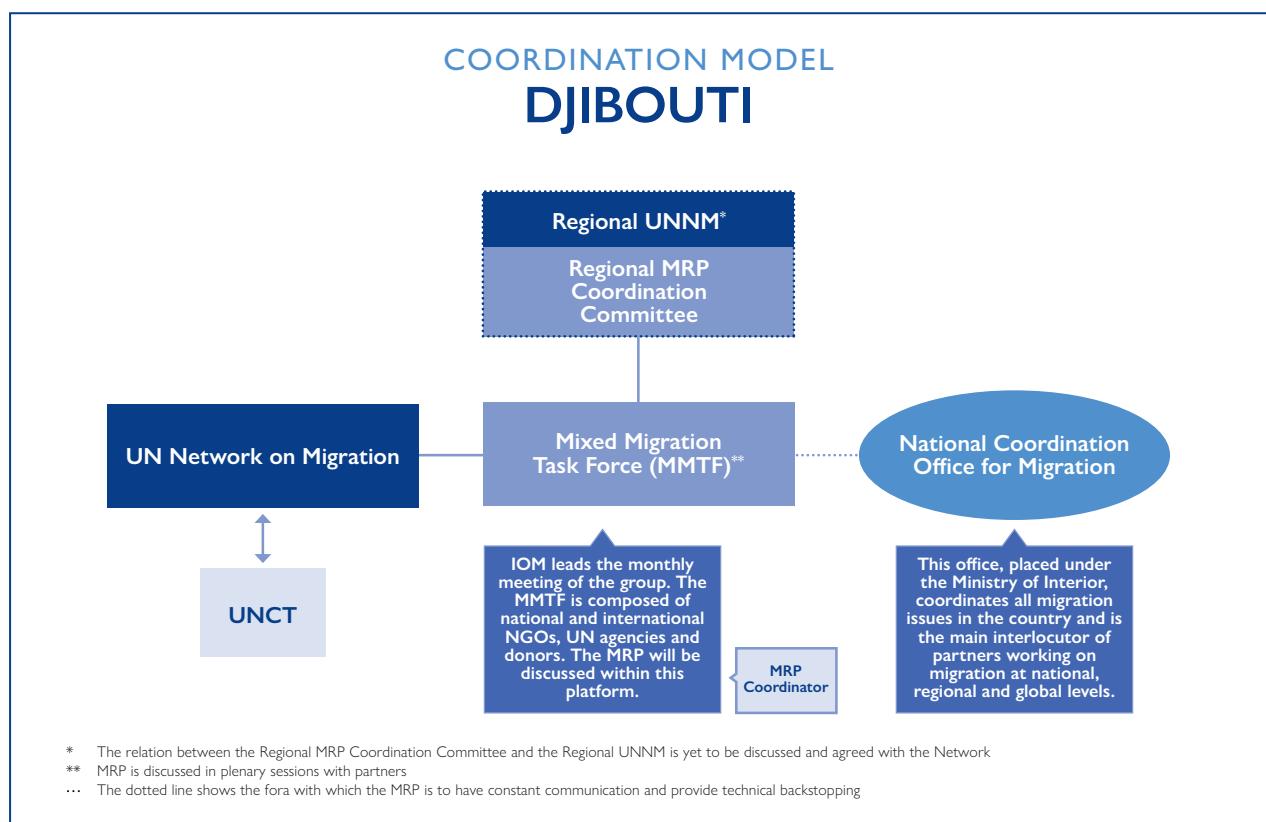


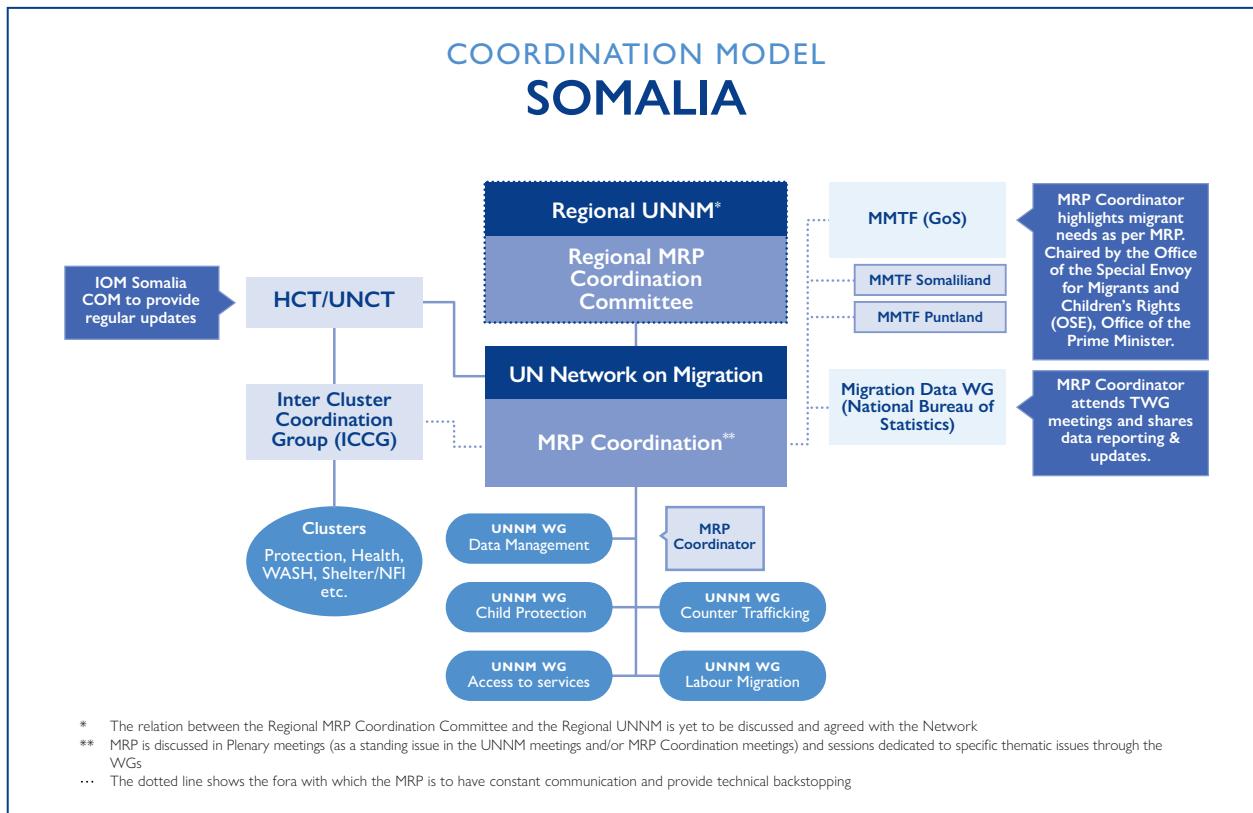
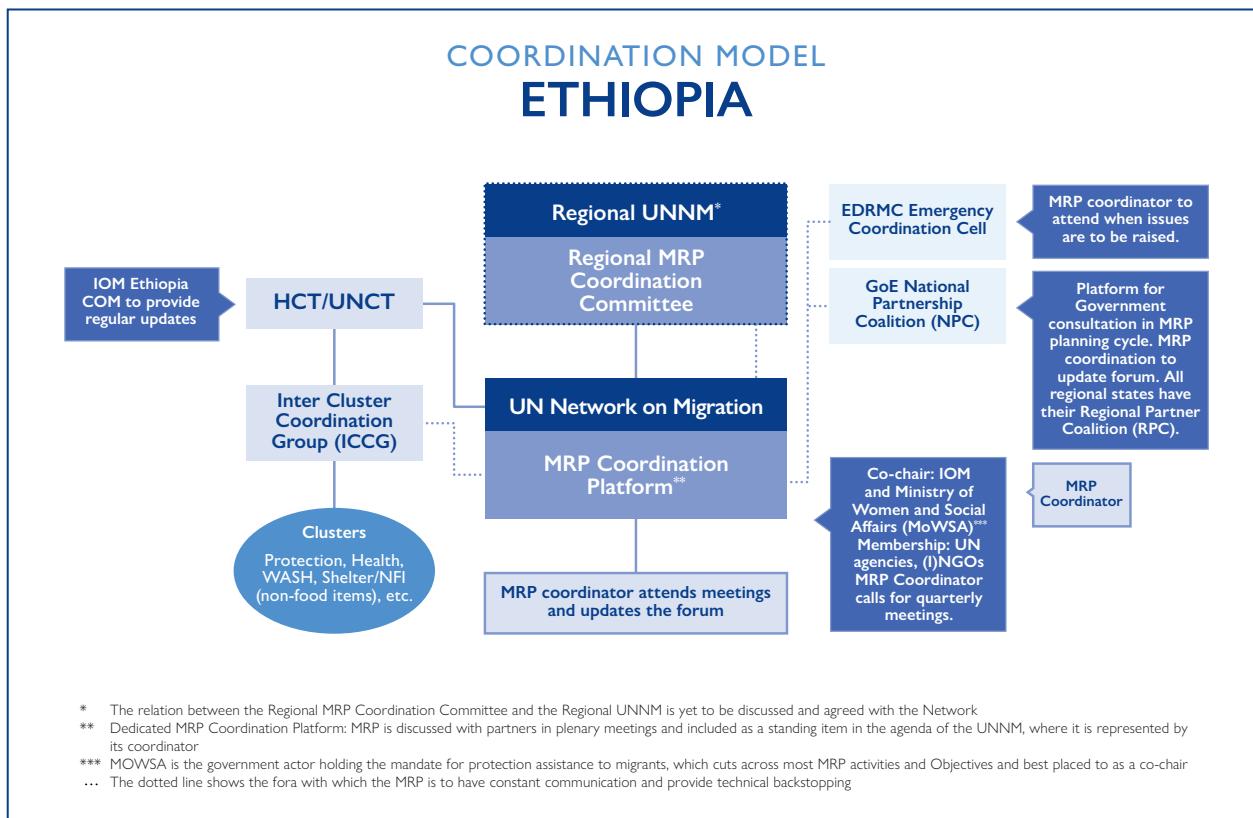
## Communications working group

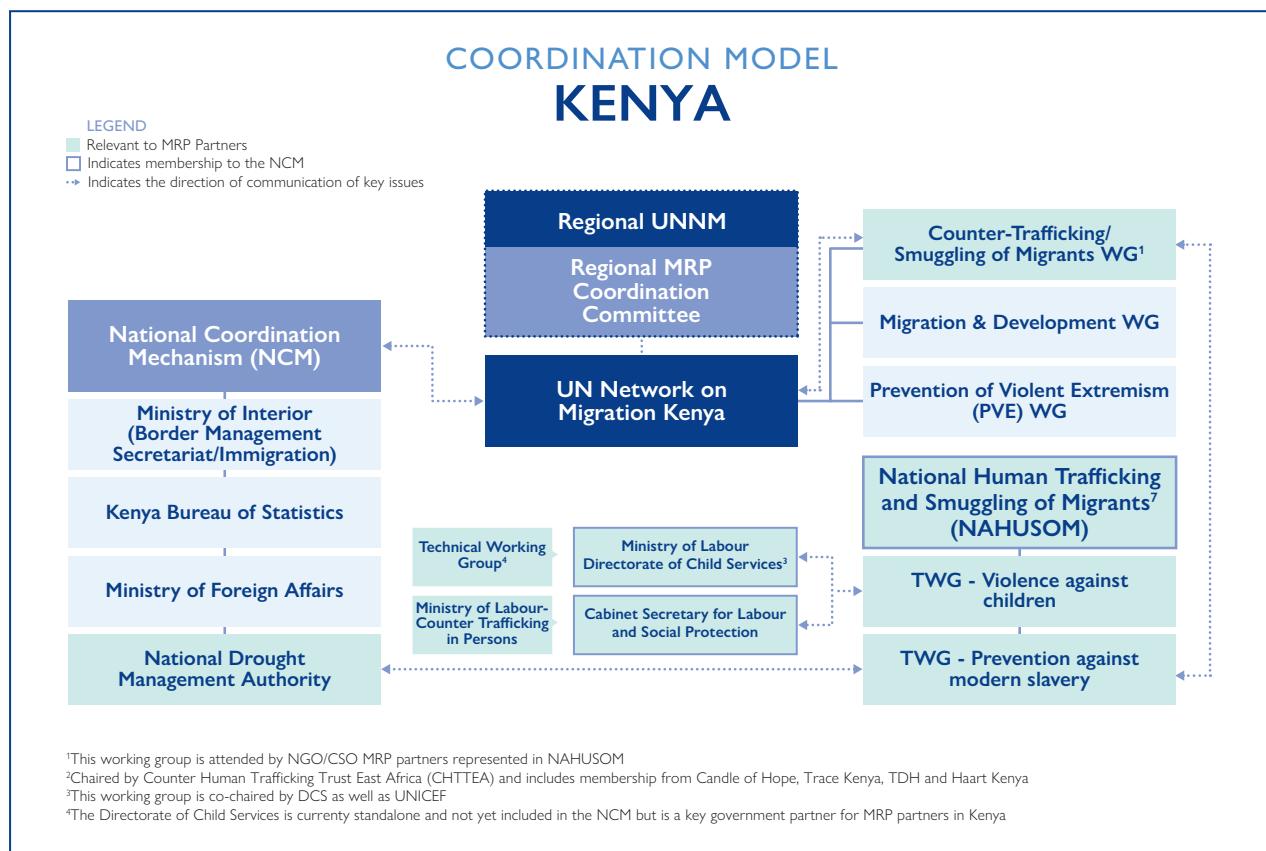
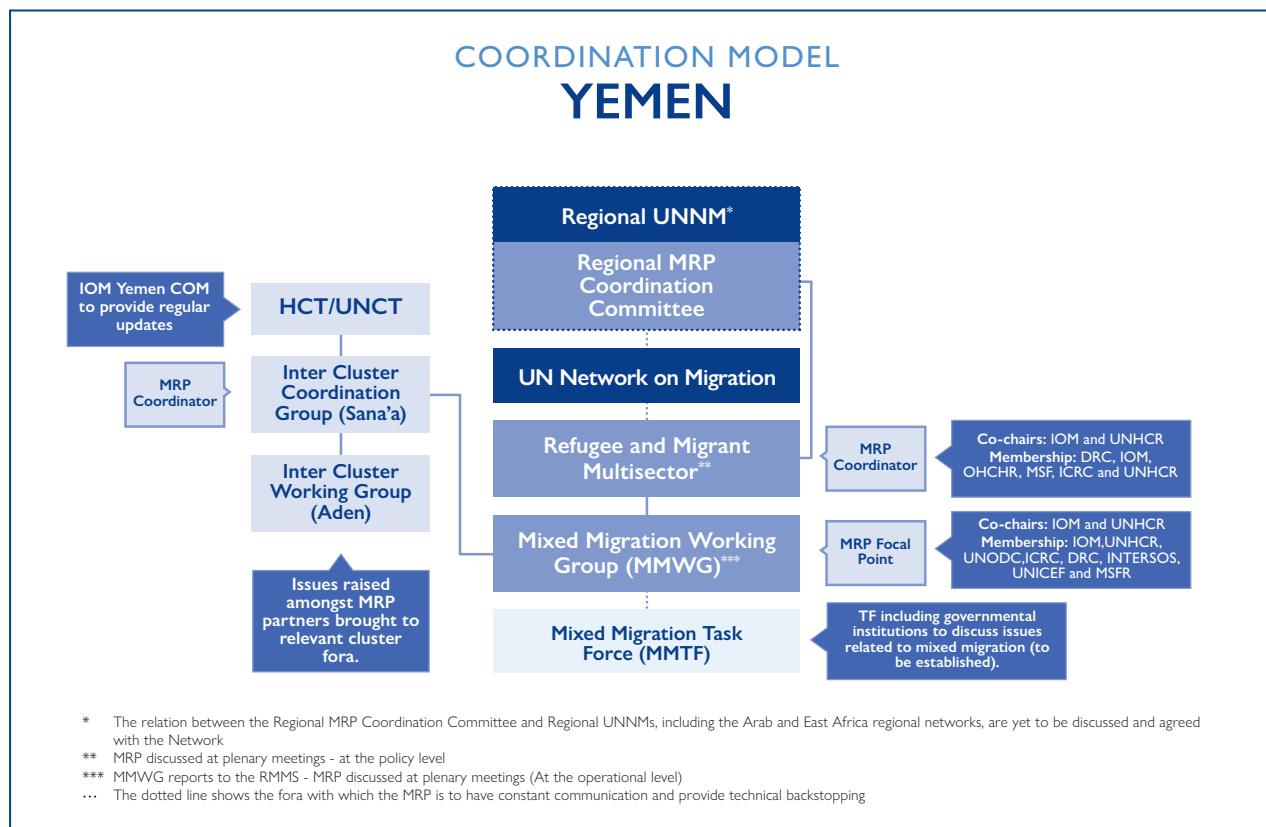
The Communications Working Group (CWG) aims to address and tackle underreporting of the conditions and challenges faced by migrants traveling along the Eastern and Southern Route, advocating for the rights of migrants and host community members, and fostering a collaborative response to the complexities of the route-based approach under the MRP framework. Activities of the CWG include joint story-telling and collective advocacy campaigns centred around key commemoration days such as International Migrants Day. The CWG also works to align the various competitive advantages as well as organizational priorities of each comprising member to overarching goals of the CWG and the MRP. For example, this includes a partner calendar indicating agreed-upon leads for social media engagement on various commemoration days, content guidelines, as well as unifying priorities across all members to be considered. The CWG is co-chaired by IOM, Save the Children, and UNICEF.

## COUNTRY LEVEL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

At the country level, the coordination mechanisms are not standardized, and the MRP mainly works within existing frameworks to reflect each country's humanitarian and development priorities. More generally, country coordination mechanisms are determined by the country context, specifically whether the country is undergoing a humanitarian emergency or not. The MRP normally coordinates with the UN Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) in humanitarian contexts and with the UN Country Team (UNCT) in a development context. Across all MRP countries, the MRP also coordinates with the UN Network on Migration (UNNM) at country-level, which reports to the Regional UNNM. In terms of coordination with the governments, coordination mechanisms vary from country to country depending on the context and political structure of various ministries within each member state. Please find the respective coordination models in each of the MRP's target countries below.







## LINKAGES WITH HUMANITARIAN AND OTHER FRAMEWORKS

The MRP is a multi-country response plan that seeks to promote effective regional responses to migrants while advocating for the inclusion of their needs into country-level discussions and planning. The MRP ensures complementarity and coherence with existing strategic frameworks, including National Development Frameworks (NDF), UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks<sup>37</sup> (UNSDCF), and HRPs. The MRP seeks to harmonize priorities, budgets, and targets in countries where such planning already occurs. **The HoA and Yemen have the following HRP:**

- Ethiopia's Humanitarian Response Plan
- Somalia's Humanitarian Response Plan
- Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan

MRP partners will continue to advocate for including migrants' needs into the HRP for the relevant target countries. To avoid double-counting, the MRP 2025 targets that overlap with country HRP are also disclosed.

Moreover, the MRP 2025 is anchored in the MRP Four-Year-Framework (2025-2028) which adopts a strategic approach by integrating humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding elements under the HDPN. While the MRP 2025 appeal, as published in the GHO, mainly outlines costed, country-specific interventions targeting immediate to medium-term needs, the MRP Four-Year-Framework (2025-2028) identifies long-term development strategies to bridge humanitarian responses with sustainable development objectives. By linking humanitarian activities with broader development goals, the MRP seeks to create synergies that address the root causes of migration, enhance resilience, and foster stability across the region. This strategic evolution underscores the MRP's commitment to delivering tailored, actionable solutions that adapt to both emerging challenges and long-term priorities.



More than 24 migrants went missing and are believed dead following a shipwreck off the coast of Djibouti. The tragic incident occurred on Thursday night, 17 August, in Godoria, near the coastal town of Obock, northeast Djibouti. Every year, more than 200,000 migrants make the perilous journey from Djibouti's coast across the Gulf of Aden where the vessel ran into trouble. © IOM 2023/Andi Pratiwi

<sup>37</sup> Various MRP countries have signed UNSDCFs including Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti



Dikhil, Djibouti. Beneficiaries of livelihood activities in the Dikhil region gathered for a project evaluation. © IOM 2020/Alexander Bee



# REGIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR 2025

In 2025, MRP partners propose the following regional activities to address the needs of the identified target population. The regional activities respond to Eastern and Southern route countries' priorities and will be implemented in collaboration with relevant stakeholders at the country and regional levels. MRP regional activities will focus on Strategic Objective 2, Strategic Objective 3, and Strategic Objective 4, while activities under Strategic Objective 1 will be implemented directly at the national level due to their life-saving nature, as outlined in the country chapters.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2



**Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Support IGAD in the development of standard operating procedures regarding the protection of children on the move for IGAD member states, which will culminate in a launch event and implementation of the SOPs at the national level through the development of a National Plan of Action in respective member states;
- Support the development of a comprehensive, transnational database for the search and identification of dead/missing migrants;
- Enhance the capacity of government officials, frontline actors, partners, and other relevant stakeholders on GBV prevention and response, child protection, C in persons, MHPSS responses

along migration routes, and referral and response to migrants;

- Strengthen child protection case management and response for migrants;
- Develop awareness-raising materials for communication with communities on the risks of human trafficking.
- Provide support for the strengthening of cross-border and national referral mechanism standard operating procedures (SOPs) and response for migrants and other people on the move;
- Strengthen advocacy papers on protection issues along the routes;
- Conduct Participatory Protection Assessments to identify protection risks, needs, and vulnerabilities along the route.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3



**Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- Support countries in effectively addressing the adverse drivers of migration through migration mainstreaming in regional, national, and local planning processes. Efforts will focus on facilitating safe, orderly, and regular migration by strengthening existing legal and policy frameworks on migration, with the aim of maximizing the beneficial impact of migration.
- Facilitate regional workshops, training, and dialogue for government stakeholders to strengthen migration

governance in alignment with global, continental, and regional frameworks.

- Conduct systematic monitoring of border-crossing points and detention centres along the Eastern and Southern Routes.
- Support the development of a regional voluntary return and reintegration framework.
- Convene TWGs of the RMFM to promote regional common approaches and social dialogue in formulating and implementing evidence-based, human rights, and gender-sensitive harmonized labour migration policies.
- Strengthen regional coordination for cross-border health, focusing on improving surveillance, response, and quality health data sharing for outbreak-prone diseases through capacity-building activities at PoEs that emphasize communicable disease outbreak management, including preparedness, prevention, and response planning.
- Promote mechanisms to enhance immunization uptake for vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and polio while fostering seamless health coordination, collaboration, and information exchange between Ministries of Health across borders.
- Scale up community sensitization and awareness efforts to address priority public health threats at cross-border sites and strengthen a multisectoral partnership and coordination approach towards establishing migrant-inclusive policies, legal frameworks, and strategic health governance to ensure better prevention and control of disease outbreaks at the regional level.



#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4**

#### **Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

- Enhance multi-country and routes-based data collection and analysis to better understand migrant experiences, decision-making, drivers, aspirations, and protection risks of those on the move for policy formulation and programme design;

- Implement data collection on mixed migration (4Mi) at priority border-crossing points between Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and the Gulf of Aden;
- Strengthen data sharing between MRP partners to capture systemic data on onward movements along the Eastern and the Southern routes;
- Strengthen cross-border collaboration and conduct interstate dialogue to address the challenges of irregular migration and enhance migration management along the Eastern and the Southern routes;
- Strengthen the coordination among MRP partners by supporting regular meetings, joint field visits, collaborative monitoring, and inter-agency capacity-building initiatives to provide overall strategic direction to the MRP partners on relevant thematic areas for a coherent and coordinated approach to planning and operationalizing the shared strategic objectives through the established regional coordination mechanisms;
- Conduct quantitative and qualitative research on migrants along the Southern Route in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, focusing on vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors, to understand the protection risks along the route;
- Develop an incident tracking tool for dead or missing migrants in remote areas along the key migration routes, which aims to increase partners' awareness of the migration context, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), Protection, and CT to ensure operational responses include missing migrants;
- Conduct research to enhance understanding of opportunities for regular pathways for migration; the impact of the Sudan conflict on migratory dynamics across neighbouring countries, climate-migration-security nexus as a driver for mobility trends, and its impact on the region; network migration dynamics, and labour migration;
- Conduct interstate dialogue to address the challenges of irregular migration and enhance migration management.

## RESPONSE MONITORING

MRP partners are committed to systematically and transparently reporting on the activities proposed for 2025. The aim of monitoring activities is to ensure that regular updates on the implementation status of the Plan are available to governments, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders involved in the route-based response along the Eastern and Southern Routes. The funding status of the MRP is monitored through regular reporting through the Financial Tracking System (FTS) of UN-OCHA.

To facilitate this exercise, during the planning stage of the MRP, all appealing partners presented the details of their planned activities for 2025, linking each activity to specific MRP Result Monitoring Framework indicators. The MRP Result Monitoring Framework mirrors the MRP Strategic Objectives and Specific Objectives for 2025, and it will be used to measure the implementation progress of each activity throughout the year via Kobo.

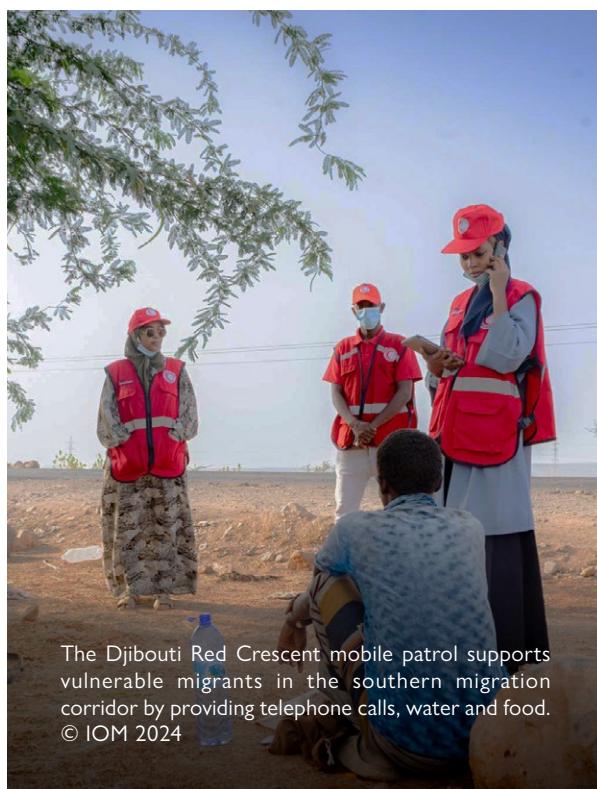
MRP partners are responsible for evaluating their interventions' relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency, in line with the MRP strategic objectives. MRP partners must report on indicators disaggregating by sex, age, and beneficiary type (migrant, host community, etc.). When applicable, achievements will be disaggregated by country, location, partner. The MRP Result Monitoring Framework is revised yearly through a consultative process among MRP partners, and additional monitoring indicators may be added on an exceptional basis following consultations with the MRP Coordination Unit. However, adjustments to the MRP framework are usually facilitated during the MRP planning process.

To align the MRP with the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, the MRP results framework has been designed to facilitate data collection at the outcome level in line with the SDG results framework. Through this alignment, the MRP will support governments' efforts to integrate SDGs into their national development plans and strategies, thus strengthening the HDPN.

The MRP Result Monitoring Framework is crucial to track how the objectives and targets of the MRP are being achieved. The data on the services offered and the beneficiaries achieved allow MRP partners at regional and country levels to measure their implementation progress against their targets

while representing a transparency and accountability tool. This also allows MRP partners to coordinate their interventions better, thus avoiding duplication of efforts and filling existing assistance gaps. Each appealing organization is responsible for reporting on its funding activities quarterly, which will be used to publish quarterly reports published through the MRP website. The quarterly reports summarize the achievements of MRP partners at the regional and national level under the four MRP Strategic Objectives, along with a situation overview and projections.

Monitoring will inform advocacy efforts and programmatic adjustments during the current MRP cycle and will contribute to strategic and operational decision-making for the following one. Annual assessments will be conducted to measure the impact of activities at the regional and country levels, thus contributing to MRP accountability and knowledge management efforts. All activities will adhere to the do-no-harm principle, and non-discriminatory and needs-based approaches will be applied, prioritizing the safety and dignity of migrants and host communities. MRP partners are also committed to mainstream Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) in their response. Into 2024, efforts will be made to foster target populations' empowerment and involvement in monitoring and evaluating MRP actions.





Alat Ela, Djibouti. A group of migrants is sharing a plate of rice for lunch in Fnatahero. © IOM 2020/Alexander Bee

## Country Chapters

# DJIBOUTI

**198,154**  
PiN

**122,000**  
People Targeted



	<b>0</b>	Departing Migrants
	<b>86,150</b>	Transiting Migrants
	<b>12,300</b>	Migrants at Destination
	<b>0</b>	Returnees
	<b>23,550</b>	Host Community

TOTAL FUNDING  
REQUIRED



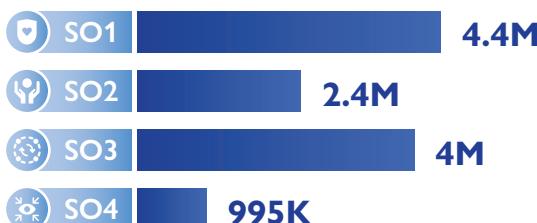
**USD 11.7M**

MRP APPEALING  
PARTNERS



**3**

### FUNDING BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



### Context

Djibouti's strategic position along the Eastern Route has made it a primary transit and destination point for migration flows from the HoA. By October 2024, an estimated 184,720 migrants from Ethiopia had entered Djibouti through irregular channels, marking a substantial increase of 82 per cent compared to the same period in 2023, which saw 101,585 incoming movements.<sup>38</sup> The main places of origin of these migrants were the Tigray (39 per cent), Amhara (36 per cent) and Oromia (18 per cent) regions of Ethiopia.<sup>39</sup> Ethiopian migrants often enter the country without the necessary documents via Djibouti's south-eastern entry points, in the Arta, Dikhil or Ali-Sabieh regions, or via the west-northern entry points of Galafi and Balho, located in the Dikhil and Tadjourah regions respectively, and sometimes via Djibouti's south-eastern entry points, in the Arta, Dikhil or Ali-Sabieh regions. From these points, migrants make their way through inhospitable desert terrain toward the coastal areas of Obock and Tadjourah. For most migrants, economic hardship continues to be the primary driving factor, with 88 per cent citing the prospect of finding better living conditions and employment opportunities as their main reason for migrating.<sup>40</sup> It is important to recognise that these economic challenges, which stem from loss of livelihoods and unemployment, are often underpinned by more complex issues, including conflict and environmental factors. A smaller proportion, around 12 per cent, report fleeing due to conflict, violence, or persecution.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> IOM Djibouti DTM, Migration Flows Trends Dashboard, October 2024. [Djibouti – Migration Trends Dashboard \(October 2024\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \[Web\]](#) (iom.int).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – [Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54 \[PDF\]](#), September 2024.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

Notably, conflict-driven movements of migrants transiting through Obock departing from Amhara increased by 96 per cent between July (288) and August 2024 (564).<sup>42</sup> The vast majority of migrants intend to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.<sup>43</sup> Movement patterns in Djibouti are commonly shaped by unpredictable weather conditions, as migrants often traverse Djibouti's arid landscapes under extreme temperatures – roughly a quarter (24 per cent) on foot as 2024 figures indicate.<sup>44</sup> Migrants embarking on the journey from Djibouti to Yemen by boat face life-threatening conditions, oftentimes at the mercy of smugglers. According to available data, 2024 was the deadliest year for migrants crossing the sea between HoA and Yemen,<sup>45</sup> with more than 48 migrants losing their lives in a tragic incident off Khor Angar in northwest Djibouti in October 2024 alone.<sup>46</sup> Heightened security measures and coast guard patrols further affect movement patterns, influencing migrants to take less-monitored, and often more dangerous routes to reach or come back from Yemen. For example, movements tracked in Obock towards the Arabian Peninsula decreased by 30 per cent between July and August 2024 mainly due to changes in migratory routes as a result of reinforced patrols along the coasts – at the same time, not all arrival points could be covered by partners' monitoring exercises due to operational constraints.<sup>47</sup> The migrant flow through Djibouti comprises a diverse group. A sample in August 2024 indicated 25 per cent of migrants were female and 69 per cent male, while children made up 6 per cent of the total, out of which 35 per cent were unaccompanied minors who are especially vulnerable.<sup>48</sup> MRP partner observation suggests that while host communities in Djibouti offer support to migrants, their limited resources are increasingly strained. Recurrent droughts and income losses have reduced available support, while the number of migrants in need grows.

Irregular migration in Djibouti continues to be bi-directional, with a considerable flow of returns from Yemen. Cumulatively, Djibouti has registered 8,158 returns from Yemen between January and August 2024, as migrants who initially aimed for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or other Gulf destinations face heightened challenges in completing their journey and opt to return. The majority of these returnees in August 2024 were male (94 per cent), with only 6 per cent female, reflecting a trend consistent with previous years' return flows.<sup>49</sup> As of August 2024, Djibouti hosts 963 stranded migrants, most of whom are living in informal sites without access to essential services. The majority are men (75 per cent), while women account for 25 per cent of the stranded population. Dikhil hosts the highest proportion, with 68 per cent of these individuals, followed by Ali-Sabieh with 14 per cent, and both Tadjourah and Obock with 9 per cent each.<sup>50</sup> These migrants face considerable hardships due to limited resources and the lack of stable shelter, which exacerbates their vulnerability as they await assistance or opportunities to continue their journey. The presence of stranded migrants exacerbates tensions with the host community, especially over limited availability of natural resources. While Djibouti remains mostly a transit country, it is important to highlight that many international migrants from Ethiopia, Somalia and other parts of the HoA have decided to settle down in the country. However, their irregular status hinders their access to solutions for their long-term integration and contribution to the country economy. Environmental factors are increasingly affecting Djibouti population, especially in urban areas. Key informants have highlighted that mobility between rural and urban areas is becoming very common, with individuals looking for access to services and resources, as well as employment opportunities.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> IOM Djibouti DTM, Migration Flows Trends Dashboard, August 2024. [Djibouti – Migration Trends Dashboard \(August 2024\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](#) [PDF].

<sup>45</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – [Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54](#) [PDF], September 2024.

<sup>46</sup> BBC, [Dozens Dead, 61 Missing as Two Boats Sink Off Djibouti](#) [Web], 2024.

<sup>47</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – [Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54](#) [PDF], September 2024.

<sup>48</sup> IOM Djibouti DTM, Migration Flows Trends Dashboard, August 2024. [Djibouti – Migration Trends Dashboard \(August 2024\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\)](#) [PDF].

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

In 2025, the MRP outlook for migration through Djibouti remains complex. With ongoing conflicts, and economic instability and adverse effects of climate change in Yemen and the HoA, migration pressures are likely to persist. Reinforced security measures, strengthened border patrols, and changing migratory routes reflect the evolving dynamics of migration in the region. The worsening impacts of global warming, affecting also the capacity of the host community to assist transiting migrants, are expected to heighten protection risks for migrants. Additionally, the limited number of regular pathways and increasing controls may lead to more fatalities going forward.

## Identified Needs

Considering the multiple vulnerabilities faced by migrants and host communities in Djibouti, MRP partners estimate that 198,154 people will require humanitarian and development assistance in 2025 in the country. Migrants crossing Djibouti along the Eastern Route endure gruelling conditions as they move through remote desert landscapes, facing severe heat exacerbated by the escalating impacts of climate change. Djibouti's susceptibility to rising temperatures has intensified seasonal heat waves, with summer highs reaching over 50°C in recent years.<sup>51</sup> These extreme temperatures, combined with scarce access to essentials like water, food, shelter, and medical support, create perilous conditions that heighten the risk of severe health crises.<sup>52</sup> For many migrants, these conditions are life-threatening, leading to critical vulnerabilities and, in numerous cases, fatal outcomes. While in Djibouti, migrants face ongoing challenges in securing stable livelihoods, due to limited employment opportunities and the irregularity of their status in the country. Many remain in urban centres with limited resources, facing restricted access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, and medical care.<sup>53</sup> This lack of access often results in prolonged periods of economic instability, heightening their vulnerability to health risks and other forms of hardship. In these conditions, migrants may become stranded, unable to continue their journey or secure sufficient support services.<sup>54</sup> Migrants traveling the Eastern Route face significant risks, both on land and during sea crossings.



Obock, Djibouti. Portrait of a migrant. © IOM 2021/  
Alexander Bee

<sup>51</sup> World Bank, Djibouti Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment, April 2024. Climate and Health Vulnerability Assessment [PDF].

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> IOM, Migrating Along the Eastern Route: Trends and Needs Within the Migration Context in Southern Djibouti (November 2022) [Web], 2023.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

On October 1, 2024, a tragic incident occurred off Djibouti's northern coast in the Red Sea. Over 300 migrants, primarily Ethiopian nationals attempting to return from Yemen, were reportedly forced by smugglers to leave their boats and swim to shore. This led to the drowning of at least 48 individuals, with dozens of others still missing. This incident is part of a broader pattern of fatalities on this route; in 2024 alone, at least 337 migrant deaths by drowning have been recorded as of October 2024.<sup>55</sup> However, this annual total is likely far higher due to many deaths and disappearances going unreported or unverified.

Among 724 migrants surveyed in August 2024, 72 per cent reported encountering significant hardships during their journey.<sup>56</sup> Lack of access to food and water was the most commonly cited issue, affecting 41 per cent of migrants surveyed, while financial difficulties impacted 29 per cent.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, 27 per cent of respondents reported lacking shelter, and 13 per cent mentioned limited access to information, underscoring the critical need for basic support and guidance as migrants navigate challenging conditions.<sup>58</sup> As of November 2024, food and water support accounted for 19 per cent of assistance requests from migrants at response centres, reflecting the high demand for basic sustenance. Emergency aid, including shelter and non-food items (NFIs), and 19 per cent of needs, indicating a pressing demand for resources to meet immediate living requirements. Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) support was needed by 16 per cent of migrants, showing the demand for structured return options. Health needs were also significant; 11 per cent of migrants sought medical assistance, while another 11 per cent requested psychosocial support, suggesting mental and physical strain from arduous travel. Transportation assistance, required by 8 per cent of migrants, highlights logistical challenges as they seek to continue their journeys or reach essential services.

The migrant population in Djibouti continues to face significant protection and mental health challenges. Vulnerable groups, such as UASC, child-headed households, and the elderly, are of particular concern

for MRP partners. Local authorities have noted a growing difficulty for women and girls in securing safe shelter at night, leaving them highly exposed to protection risks.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the harsh conditions migrants endure in Yemen severely impact their mental health, yet the limited availability of specialized mental health services in Djibouti restraints the ability to address these needs effectively.

## Targets and Planned Response

The 2025 Plan is designed to support a total of 122,000 individuals in Djibouti, encompassing 86,150 transiting migrants, 12,300 migrants who have reached their destinations, and 23,550 members of the host communities. Recognizing the harsh conditions faced by migrants traversing Djibouti's challenging landscapes, the plan prioritizes the provision of essential services including food, water, non-food items (NFIs), water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, shelter, and medical care. To meet these needs, the plan will enhance the capacity of transit centres and deploy mobile patrols, particularly in regions such as Dikhil and Ali Sabieh. These centres will facilitate critical life-saving operations, including search and rescue missions and the distribution of necessary supplies. In addition, established migrant centres in Djibouti City, Obock, and Tadjourah will continue to provide ongoing food distribution, primary healthcare, and emergency shelter to both migrants and vulnerable members of the host communities. Planned infrastructure improvements and the introduction of new services, particularly in WASH, will bolster the ability of these centres to deliver comprehensive support.

Protection services will be a cornerstone of the 2025 Plan, with MRP partners offering specialized support in areas such as child protection, gender-based violence (GBV), and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Upgrades to MRP sub-offices in Dikhil and Ali Sabieh will expand access to these vital protection services. Collaboration with local CSOs will further enhance temporary shelter solutions,

<sup>55</sup> European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), [Emergency Response Coordination Centre \[Web\]](#), October 2024.

<sup>56</sup> IOM Djibouti DTM, [Djibouti – Migration Trends Dashboard \(August 2024\) | Displacement Tracking Matrix \(iom.int\) \[Web\]](#). August 2024.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> IOM, [Migrating Along the Eastern Route: Trends and Needs Within the Migration Context in Southern Djibouti November 2022 \[Web\]](#), IOM Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa, 2023.

especially for women, children, and other vulnerable groups. To ensure effective response mechanisms, local authorities and frontline responders will receive targeted training and resources to strengthen their capabilities in search and rescue operations and protection responses. Addressing the growing vulnerabilities of host communities is also a key focus of the plan. Community-based initiatives will be implemented to enhance resilience and ensure fair access to natural resources, thereby reducing potential social tensions between migrants and local populations.

In 2025, the plan will also provide AVR support for stranded migrants and those returning from Yemen. Public awareness campaigns will be conducted to inform migrants about available services and to provide a clearer understanding of migration pathways. Additionally, the plan will support the Government of Djibouti in developing migration policies, establishing regular migration channels within the region, and fostering regional cooperation with neighbouring Ethiopia and Somalia to ensure coordinated service provision across borders.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

#### Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.

- Provide lifesaving assistance to migrants through support desks, transit centres, MRCs, and mobile patrols in Obock, Tadjourah, Djibouti, Dikhil, and Ali Sabieh regions.
- Provide food and NFIs to migrants and host communities through MRCs in Obock, Tadjourah, Djibouti, Dikhil, and Ali Sabieh regions.
- Assist migrants with WASH services and infrastructure at MRCs in Obock, Tadjourah, and Djibouti and in collaboration with local CSOs in Arta, Dikhil and Ali Sabieh regions.
- Assist migrants with safe and dignified accommodation assistance through MRCs in Obock, Tadjourah, Djibouti, and in collaboration with local CSOs in Arta, Dikhil and Ali Sabieh regions.

- Provide primary health care assistance to migrants and refer them to secondary health services through MRCs and mobile patrols in Obock, Tadjourah, Djibouti, Arta, Dikhil, and Ali Sabieh regions.
- Train government and border management officials on life-saving assistance and search and rescue operations to strengthen response capacities, including local CSOs.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

**Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Raise awareness among migrants on the risks of irregular migration and the extreme weather conditions in Djibouti, including practical guidance and safety information.
- Provide MHPSS and specialized child protection services to migrant children through MRCs in Obock, Djibouti, and Tadjourah, as well as Sub-Offices in Dikhil and Ali Sabieh.
- Provide protection and tailored services to migrants, including victims of human rights violations, through IOM centres in Obock, Djibouti, Tadjourah, and Sub-Offices in Dikhil and Ali Sabieh.
- Identify and refer unaccompanied and separated children to specialized services and ensure protection mechanisms are in place.
- Provide legal support to migrants in cases of human rights violations.
- Strengthen the capacities of CSOs for community-based support and train government officials, frontline actors, and partners in C, child protection, and MHPSS.
- Enhance national referral mechanisms for vulnerable migrants through updated mapping, awareness-raising, and targeted training for officials and first responders.

- Conduct regular protection monitoring visits and vulnerability assessments in Djibouti to address emerging protection needs and coordinate responses.
- Provide training for stakeholders on managing migrant deaths and disappearances, including identification processes and dead body management, and raise host community awareness on the benefits of regular migration and migrant rights using innovative communication tools.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3



#### Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.

- Promote community initiatives that foster stabilization and resilience against environmental degradation and climate change through sustainable livelihoods and improved access to quality basic social services, including health.
- Organize awareness-raising programs to reduce tensions between migrants and local communities and promote peaceful coexistence through CSOs.
- Support migrants with AVRR.
- Provide key government entities with equipment and infrastructure to enhance migration management.
- Support the government of Djibouti in establishing a regularization system for domestic migrant workers in Djibouti.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4



#### Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.

- Support the Government of Djibouti in implementing the budgeted roadmap of the national strategy's five-year action plan.
- Engage partners and authorities to implement and coordinate the National Strategy on Migration.

- Ensure that migrant disappearances in Djibouti are properly documented.
- Work with government authorities to develop and publish a National Strategy on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change.
- Produce comprehensive studies and collaborate on a National Labour Migration Strategy to inform government policies.
- Enhance monitoring of migrant flows and strengthen Flow Monitoring Points to inform policy and programming.
- Enhance collection and dissemination of qualitative and quantitative data and information on environmental mobility across the country.
- Strengthen the system for collecting and analysing migration data within the National Coordination Office for Migration.
- Strengthen cross-border health coordination initiatives in collaboration with national and regional authorities.
- Support regional and bilateral government dialogue on migration governance and child protection.
- Conduct assessments at border points to understand challenges faced by officials and enhance support.

### Djibouti Partners

1. IOM
2. UNICEF
3. WFP
4. Caritas
5. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



Country Chapters

# ETHIOPIA

**549,474**  
PiN

**259,426**  
People Targeted



 15,004
Departing Migrants
 0
Transiting Migrants
 0
Migrants at Destination
 120,270
Returnees
 124,152
Host Community

TOTAL FUNDING  
REQUIRED

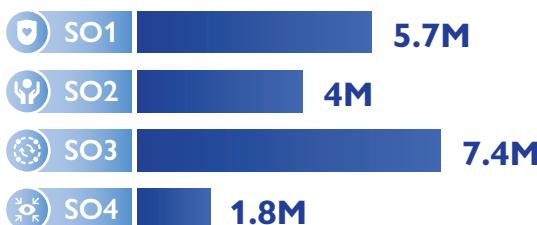
 **USD 19M**

MRP APPEALING  
PARTNERS



8

FUNDING BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



## Context

Ethiopia continues to be a major country of origin for migration along the Eastern and Southern Routes.<sup>60</sup> Between January and August 2024, over 150,685 Ethiopian migrants had left the country.<sup>61</sup> In August 2024 alone, 25,961 outward movements were documented, with Ethiopian nationals comprising 93.5 per cent of these flows.<sup>62</sup> Of these, 52.2 per cent were destined for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 16 per cent for Kenya, 9.3 per cent for Djibouti, 5.5 per cent for Sudan, 4.9 per cent for South Africa, 4.3 per cent for Somalia and 3.4 per cent for Yemen.<sup>63</sup> MRP partner figures indicate that the majority of migrants were men (69 per cent), but there has been a noticeable increase in the number of women and children on the move. In 2024, women accounted for 25 per cent, boys 4 per cent, and girls 2 per cent.<sup>64</sup> The number of children departing Ethiopia rose by 40 per cent between July and August, with a 50 per cent increase among girls specifically.<sup>65</sup> This surge reflects the severe socio-economic conditions that drive families to make difficult decisions regarding migration. The top driving factors for cross border movements through the flow monitoring points in Ethiopia were economic reasons, conflict, and return.<sup>66</sup> The regions with the largest outgoing migration as of August 2024 were Amhara (38 per cent), Tigray (33 per cent) and Oromia (23 per cent).<sup>67</sup> In Amhara, escalating

60 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard Ethiopia [Web], August 2024.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route [PDF], Report 54, September 2024.

65 Ibid.

66 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard Ethiopia [Web], August 2024.

67 IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route [PDF], Report 54, September 2024.

conflict and violence have further compounded migration pressures, leading to increased vulnerability, worsened livelihoods, and a lack of access to services. The post-war economic environment in Tigray has led to a growing number of youth looking to leave the region. Conflicts in parts of Oromia has further contributed to migration, alongside environmental stressors like drought which also influence migration in and out of Ethiopia, contributing to significant outflows and interacting with regional migration trends.<sup>68,69</sup> Climate change in Ethiopia has intensified environmental challenges such as prolonged droughts, unpredictable rainfall, and land degradation, which severely disrupt agricultural livelihoods. As a result, many rural communities are compelled to migrate to urban areas or neighbouring countries in search of food security, employment, and better living conditions. This climate-induced migration places additional strain on urban infrastructure and resources, while also increasing social tensions and vulnerability among displaced populations.

Since 2017, 653,855 migrants have been forcefully returned to Ethiopia. The humanitarian impact of these non-voluntary returns is dire, as most migrants return with little or no resources and often with mental and physical trauma suffered during their migration journey. MRP partners are supporting return and reintegration efforts, yet only a small fraction have received socioeconomic reintegration assistance. Return movements in 2024 have been substantial, with over 86,550 Ethiopian returnees documented by August 2024; this includes 80,758 forcibly returned from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in August alone.<sup>70</sup> These significant return flows place additional pressure on Ethiopia's capacity to provide humanitarian and reintegration assistance.<sup>71</sup> Returnees often face significant reintegration challenges, such as limited economic opportunities as well as trauma and stigma from their migration experiences.

Looking ahead to 2025, MRP partners foresee that outflows of Ethiopian migrants along the Eastern Route will continue at similar trends. This may

result in a growing number of stranded migrants along the routes, notably in Yemen. Economic challenges in Tigray will continue to serve as drivers of migration, while persisting tensions in Amhara and parts of Oromia regions will likely lead to increased vulnerability, worsened livelihoods, and lack of access to services. Such circumstances may result in further irregular migration, also hindering sustainable return and reintegration to those regions. Lastly, there is an anticipated increase in migrants leaving their communities in search of livelihood opportunities, food, and water as a direct impact of the drought, which is expected to continue.

## Identified Needs

MRP partners estimate that 549,474 migrants and members of the host communities will need humanitarian, transitional and development assistance in Ethiopia in 2025. In 2024, the migration landscape along the Eastern Route through Ethiopia continued to pose life-threatening challenges for migrants, and oftentimes strained the capacities of host communities. The journey subjected individuals to extreme temperatures, inadequate shelter, and shortages of food and clean water, as well as severe human rights violations along the way and in transitory countries. Data from Ethiopia's MRCs as of November 2024 highlighted significant service needs at major transit hubs including Dewele, Dire Dawa, Metema, Moyale, and Togochale, which collectively supported thousands of migrants passing through these routes. Assistance from remote points of entry to home communities was the most frequently provided service at 17.1 per cent (14,945 instances). Food and water services were similarly crucial, accounting for 16.3 per cent (14,201 instances), while emergency assistance encompassing shelter and NFIs represented 15.4 per cent (13,447 instances). Psychosocial support comprised 13.1 per cent (11,391 instances), reflecting the pressing mental health needs among migrants.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, the vulnerability of specific groups was starkly evident, with children comprising a considerable portion of the migrant population –

<sup>68</sup> Quarterly Mixed Migration Update, Eastern and Southern Africa, Q3 [Web], October 2024.

<sup>69</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route [PDF], Report 54, September 2024.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> OHCHR, Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ethiopia [Web], June 2024.

<sup>72</sup> Migrant Response Centre Dashboard, Data as of November 7, 2024. MRC Dashboard - Power BI [Web].

45 per cent of all migrants were identified as accompanied children, while unaccompanied children made up 14 per cent. 12 per cent of the population consisted of pregnant or lactating women, and 4 per cent were elderly.<sup>73</sup> Protection from human trafficking is paramount, with extensive human trafficking networks stretching between Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya.<sup>74</sup> The corresponding needs are well-documented, with 49 per cent of migrants citing a lack of basic services and 39 per cent reporting physical or psychological abuse.<sup>75</sup> Detention or imprisonment was experienced by 10 per cent of the migrant population, further underscoring the significant protection risks along the route.<sup>76</sup>

Ethiopian migrants face overlapping risks, including violence, limited access to services, and exploitation.<sup>77,78</sup> Movements along the Eastern Route – which include transit through Yemen to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – are especially hazardous due to risks of detention, shipwrecks, severe abuses, and the possibility of migrants becoming stranded, notably in Yemen.<sup>79</sup> The Southern Route, where Ethiopians cross into Kenya through Moyale or informal crossing points, remains active due to economic challenges and food insecurity.<sup>80</sup> Although recent statistics on the Southern Route are limited, observations suggest that a significant number of migrants along this route are Ethiopians, with indications that the number of women may be increasing. Areas in Southern Ethiopia notably the Hadiya and Kembata districts and Oromia are hotspots for Southern Route migration.<sup>81</sup> Protection risks are significant for both Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian migrants. Reports highlight instances of violence and exploitation by



Women engage in weaving as part of mental health and psychosocial support at the IOM Migration Response Centre in Obock, Djibouti. © IOM 2024/Eva Sibanda

human smugglers and traffickers, including detention and torture for ransom in Yemen, with ransoms of up to 3,000 Saudi Riyals per person.<sup>82,83</sup>

Finally, migrant returnees from both the Eastern and Southern Routes face heightened vulnerabilities and require comprehensive support. Upon return to Ethiopia, these individuals encounter the same drivers that initially compelled them to migrate and are often further burdened by debt or various forms of stigma, such as returning as single mothers, coming back empty-handed, dealing with substance addictions, or facing mental health issues.<sup>84</sup> Large-scale returns without effective reintegration frameworks are likely to result in negative stigma, social marginalization, and potential re-migration, especially when returns are not voluntary. The economic, social, and psychosocial challenges faced by returnees may ultimately lead them to migrate again. In fact, Ethiopian returnees are highly vulnerable, and many lack the socioeconomic and psychological resources needed to successfully

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Migrant Response Centre Dashboard, Data as of November 7, 2024. [MRC Dashboard - Power BI \[Web\]](#).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route [\[PDF\]](#), Report 54, September 2024.

<sup>78</sup> OHCHR, [Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ethiopia \[PDF\]](#), June 2024.

<sup>79</sup> [Quarterly Mixed Migration Update, Eastern and Southern Africa, Q3 \[Web\]](#), October 2024.

<sup>80</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard Ethiopia [\[PDF\]](#), August 2024.

<sup>81</sup> Ethiopia also serves as a transit country for non-Ethiopian migrants travelling South, including those from Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea. The ongoing conflict in Sudan has driven refugees into Ethiopia, particularly affecting regions such as Amhara and underscoring the interconnected nature of regional migration. Migrants from these neighbouring countries often use Ethiopia as a passage to reach destinations in the Middle East or Southern Africa, adding complexity to migration flows. Within Ethiopia, conflict-affected areas like Amhara and Oromia present additional threats to migrants and displaced populations, who face risks such as arbitrary detention and limited access to resources.

<sup>82</sup> [Quarterly Mixed Migration Update, Eastern and Southern Africa, Q3 \[Web\]](#), October 2024.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> IOM, [Migrating in Search of the Southern Dream: The Experiences of Ethiopian migrants moving along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#). May 2022.

return and reintegrate into their communities of origin. Given these significant risks, both departing and returning migrants on the Southern Route require urgent humanitarian assistance. Essential support services include the provision of food and NFIs, WASH services, shelter, medical care, as well as mental health and psychosocial support. Additionally, comprehensive protection services are necessary to safeguard migrants from ongoing threats and to ensure their safety and dignity throughout their migration journey.

### Targets and Planned Response

In alignment with the Government of Ethiopia's priorities and plans, the 2025 response will focus on delivering lifesaving assistance, customized protection services, and reintegration efforts for 259,426 beneficiaries along the Eastern and Southern Routes. Efforts will prioritize reducing dependence on irregular migration through community-based awareness campaigns, promoting safe and regular migration pathways, and addressing structural, institutional, and individual needs. Key interventions include the provision of food, NFIs, WASH services, shelter, medical care, MHPSS, and multipurpose cash assistance for vulnerable migrants and returnees, particularly those in deteriorated states or non-voluntarily repatriated. The protection response will emphasize support for children, youth, survivors of GBV and trafficking, and integration of MHPSS into case management. Capacity-building initiatives for government and partners will focus on protection, GBV, and CT measures, enhancing the efficiency of government mechanisms such as the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and National Case Management Framework. Economic empowerment and reintegration will remain central, with livelihood programs, cash assistance, and training aimed at sustainably reintegrating returnees and strengthening community resilience in migration hotspots. Activities will also address drivers of irregular migration, including economic pressures and environmental challenges, while enhancing regular migration pathways. Cross-border collaboration with Djibouti and Somalia will strengthen service delivery, migration management, and humanitarian responses, while the integration of MRP activities under Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 into the national HRP ensures alignment with broader humanitarian frameworks.

The 2025 priorities focus on activities that contribute to the HDPN. These initiatives are designed to create a robust framework for managing migration and supporting both migrants and host communities. The planned response will be coordinated through the MRP coordination platform, co-chaired by IOM and the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA). This collaborative approach ensures that all efforts are harmonized and aligned with national priorities and humanitarian and development needs. Main activities include enhancing support for Government-led technical working groups and referral platforms to promote well-managed return migration and ownership of reintegration interventions. This may involve rolling out the NRM along the Eastern and Southern migration route by strengthening regional national councils on migration and relevant decentralized bureaus, such as those focused on labour and skills, health, and social affairs. These efforts aim to improve assistance to vulnerable migrants. Additional measures include strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs to enrol returnees, alongside fostering entrepreneurship through small grants and mentoring.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1



#### Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.

- Provide lifesaving assistance to vulnerable migrants through the provision of essential services, including food and nutrition services, NFIs (including hygiene items, basic shelter kits, temporary shelter, accommodation and home rent support, primary and secondary healthcare, counselling, MHPSS, and multi-purpose cash assistance, among other services).
- Implement WASH interventions at border crossing points and in host communities suffering from poor access to clean water and hygiene and sanitation to facilitate access to safe water points.
- Provide technical assistance to Government officials to improve the capacity to identify and refer stranded migrants along the Eastern and Southern routes for appropriate lifesaving assistance.

- Train border officials operating in Amhara, Oromia, Afar, Somali, Gambella, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions on health systems strengthening and protection mainstreaming.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

**Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Strengthen and equip temporary shelter facilities for migrants with specific protection needs.
- Conduct vulnerability assessments and provide specialized protection assistance for migrants in vulnerable situations through direct assistance and referrals.
- Train government officials, front line actors and partners in child protection including case management and best interest procedure (BIP) and critical aspects of MHPSS.
- Provide comprehensive case management services, including family tracing and reunification support, mental health and psychological support, and referrals to alternative care for UASC. Strengthen youth empowerment centres with comprehensive and inclusive services for youth, including peer dialogue, socialization, and awareness activities.
- Enhance and strengthen collaboration with non-governmental organizations on ensuring safe and dignified returns, as well as supporting family tracing and reunification efforts
- Improve access for migrants, returnees, and community members with specific needs to medical assistance and mental health and psychosocial support.
- Provide Community Conversation Facilitators training targeting communities of origin to strengthen protection measures and empower

community members in addressing the drivers of irregular migration.

- Conduct Peer Education training targeting schools in irregular migration vulnerable communities in Oromia, Tigray and Central Ethiopia.
- Launch, promote, and disseminate National Communications Strategy on Prevention of Irregular Migration and Promotion Overseas Employment under the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs.
- Map existing protection services and address protection gaps by developing the capacity of key stakeholders in contact with migrants, returnees and vulnerable children and youth on community-based protection, child protection, prevention, mitigation, and response to GBV and climate resilience for improved protection assistance.
- Work with the government on the development and reinforcement of SOPs for service coordination, modalities of assistance and referral mechanisms.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

**Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- Support vulnerable migrants with AVR and provide onward transportation assistance to returnees willing to return to their communities of origin.
- Strengthen and improve transport assistance to ensure safe, and efficient onward transportation of returnees, including UASC, to their communities of origin, supporting smooth reintegration and reunification processes.
- Strengthen returnees and host community members' resilience through community based and individual sustainable reintegration assistance and develop specific packages for female returnees and vulnerable women to promote their economic empowerment.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Interventions will look at the economic dimension of reintegration (vocational and business skills training, seed capital and livelihood interventions), but also at the social and psychosocial aspects of return.

- Create access to livelihood, life skills and vocational trainings and education opportunities to vulnerable young returnees or at risk of undertaking irregular migration paths.
- Establish and strengthen public-private partnerships to implement livelihood activities.
- Strengthen the capacity of government institutions on return, reintegration, and community stabilization.
- Strengthening border entry points through coordination with neighbouring countries, such as implementing referral systems for migrants in vulnerable situations via agreed-upon protocols, can enhance coordination and effectiveness.
- Promote awareness initiatives including outreach activities through schools/teachers and community dialogue between host community members and migrants on the risks of irregular migration, trafficking, smuggling, child protection and GBV.
- Provide community based MHPSS support, safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse for returnees and potential migrants.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4



**Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

- Monitor migration flows to collect information on the volume and basic characteristics of the population in transit to gain a better understanding of intra and inter regional migration patterns and trends.
- Conduct a needs assessment along the routes to provide MRP partners with evidence base for planning, advocacy, and response during the following MRP cycle and organize regular MRP coordination and planning meetings;
- Conduct border assessments and facilitate a Child protection visit to assess the protection situation of Ethiopian migrant children and strengthen cross-border services and referral mechanisms and contribute to inter-state dialogues on migration management.

- Develop a multi-agency training strategy and curriculum covering migration policy, consular services, reintegration, border management, overseas employment, anti-trafficking, and anti-smuggling.

#### Ethiopia Partners

1. Action Against Hunger
2. Agar Ethiopia Charitable Society
3. Bethany Christian Services Global
4. Beza Posterity Development Organization
5. Brightstar Relief and Development Association
6. CARE International in Ethiopia
7. Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI)
8. DRC
9. Development for Peace Organisation
10. Ethiopian Catholic Church Social and Development Commission
11. Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Service Commission
12. Ethiopian Red Cross Society
13. Good Samaritan Association
14. ICRC (observer)
15. International Labour Organization (ILO)
16. IOM
17. Mary Joy Development Association
18. NRC
19. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
20. Positive Action for Development
21. Save the Children International
22. UN-Habitat/UNEP
23. UNHCR
24. UNICEF
25. UNWOMEN
26. WHO

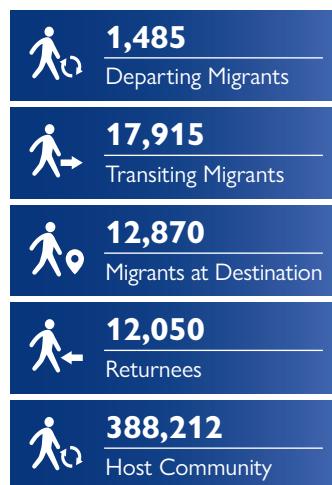
## Country Chapters

# SOMALIA



**459,321**  
PiN

**432,532**  
People Targeted



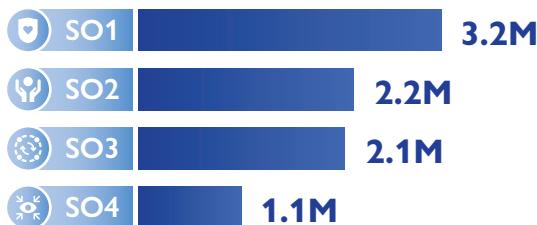
TOTAL FUNDING  
REQUIRED

**USD 8.6M**

MRP APPEALING  
PARTNERS

**7**

### FUNDING BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



### Context

Since the collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991, the country has remained mired in complex, protracted conflict, with widespread displacement driven by political instability, recurring disasters, and economic hardship. Throughout 2024, Somalia continues to experience non-voluntary returns, remains a country of origin, and a critical transit hub for migrants, primarily Ethiopians, attempting to reach the Gulf States through Yemen. In August 2024, DTM recorded a total of 23,314 migration movements in Somalia, with 74 per cent being outgoing movements along the Eastern and Southern Routes, aimed primarily at destinations such as Ethiopia (66 per cent), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (24 per cent), Kenya (7 per cent), and Djibouti (3 per cent).<sup>86</sup> Incoming flows to Somalia which constituted 26 per cent of all movements recorded, originated mainly from Ethiopia (55 per cent).<sup>87</sup> Somalia's significance as a transit hub has been affected by intensified maritime patrols along the Djiboutian coast and increased costs associated with smuggling, which have diverted more migrants to Somali ports. As a result, Bossaso in Puntland has become a major departure point to Yemen. Departures from Somalia represented the majority (79 per cent) of all arrivals in Yemen in September 2024, surpassing departures from Djibouti (21 per cent).<sup>88</sup> The reduction in arrivals from Djibouti is attributed to increased coastal security measures and rising costs for boat passage, which have made the Djibouti-Yemen route less accessible. This shift underscores Somalia's evolving importance in regional migration, even as the route presents significant risks.

<sup>86</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Somalia Cross Border Movements [PDF], August 2024.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Yemen Flow Monitoring [Web], October 2024.

In 2024, over 68 per cent of migrants transiting through Somalia relied on buses, while 25 per cent travelled in trucks or taxis, and 7 per cent moved by foot or used donkeys.<sup>89</sup> These limited and often dangerous transportation options expose migrants to heightened risks of exploitation, detention, and discrimination. Ethiopian nationals, who make up the majority of the Eastern Route's traffic, are particularly vulnerable. These individuals face long, arduous journeys through Somalia with minimal access to services or protection, a situation that is exacerbated by the presence of smuggling networks in transit areas. There have been reports of migrants escaping smuggler-operated camps on the outskirts of Burao in Togheer region of Somalia, where they are detained until ransoms are paid. According to the Ethiopian Community Centre in Burao, six migrants were released after paying 20,000 birr each (about USD 177) to the smugglers.<sup>90</sup> In August 2024, reports noted the presence of 7,147 migrants stranded in various Somali transit points, unable to continue their journeys due to lack of resources or adequate assistance.<sup>91</sup> Somalia's role as a receiving country for non-voluntary returns is equally prominent. Annually, close to 20,000 Somali migrants are forcibly returned to the country from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a process largely facilitated via Aden Abdulle International Airport (AAIA) in Mogadishu. Many of these returnees arrive without basic necessities or means to support themselves, underscoring the strains on local infrastructure and resources, while adding pressure on Somali authorities and humanitarian actors to address vulnerabilities associated with deportations and meet immediate post-arrival needs.

## Identified Needs

For 2025, MRP partners identified 459,321 migrants and host communities in need, comprising 4,007 departing migrants, 12,528 returning migrants, 19,564 transiting migrants, 14,224 migrants at destination, and 408,998 host community members.

As of November 2024, data collected from MRCs in Hargeisa and Bossaso highlight the immediate

humanitarian needs of migrants who sought support in these centres across Somalia.<sup>92</sup> It is important to note that these figures represent only a subset of the broader migrant population, focusing on those who accessed assistance through MRCs and indicating larger trends in migrant needs within the country. In Hargeisa, 26.3 per cent required NFIs, showing a strong demand for basic supplies. Hygiene kits were also critical, needed by 24.3 per cent, while medical assistance was similarly high, with 25.8 per cent seeking healthcare for injuries, illnesses, or other conditions. Food and water were essential for 11.7 per cent, and 10 per cent needed psycho-social support, highlighting the mental health challenges faced by migrants. Smaller groups expressed needs for further counselling, and support for voluntary return and reintegration, together representing less than 2 per cent of total needs in Hargeisa. In Bossaso, medical assistance was cited as the most pressing need with 68.5 per cent, reflecting a high demand in this area. NFIs were the second largest need, requested by 28.5 per cent. Protection needs, including support for unaccompanied minors and trafficking victims, were cited by 1 per cent, while 0.8 per cent expressed interest in voluntary return and reintegration, reflecting a modest demand for return assistance.<sup>93</sup>

As of November 2024, data from MRCs in Hargeisa and Bossaso indicate that the most commonly reported hardship among migrants was a widespread lack of basic services, affecting 100 per cent of those passing through the centres. This universal shortage underscores the challenging conditions faced by migrants in Somalia, where access to essentials such as food, water, shelter, sanitation, and healthcare remains severely limited. The data also reveals significant vulnerabilities within the migrant population, highlighting the complex needs of different demographic groups. Among the migrants, 43 per cent were accompanied children. Health issues were another prominent vulnerability, with 39 per cent of migrants reporting medical problems that compromised their safety and well-being during transit. Unaccompanied migrant children comprised

<sup>89</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) – Somalia Cross Border Movements [PDF], August 2024.

<sup>90</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54 [PDF], September 2024.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Migrant Response Centre Dashboard, Data as of November 11, 2024. MRC Dashboard - Power BI [Web].

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

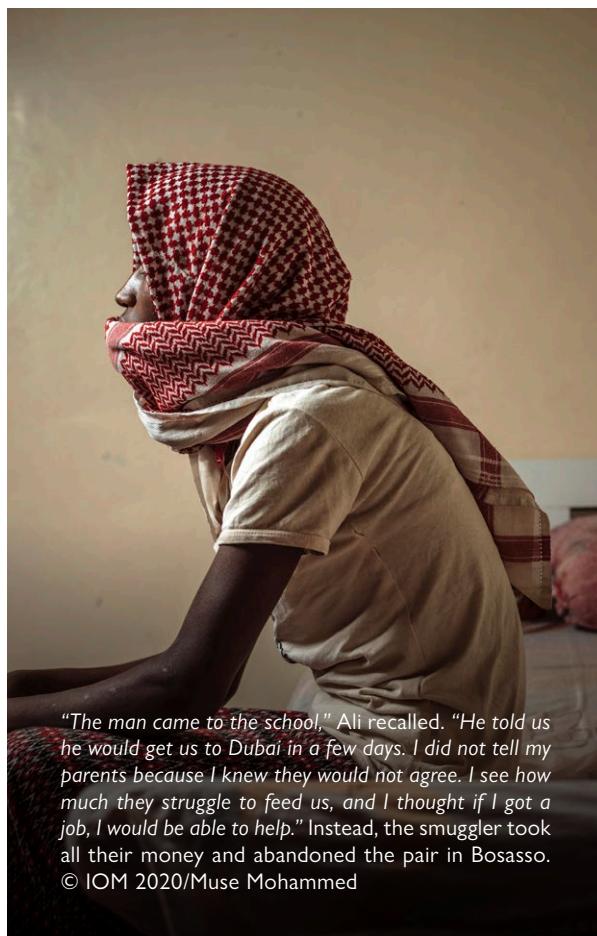
17 per cent of the caseload, a group at heightened risk of exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Elderly migrants represented 1 per cent of the total, but their vulnerability is nonetheless acute due to physical limitations and increased health risks associated with aging.<sup>94</sup>

For 2025, MRP partners project that migrants transiting in Somalia and host communities alike will continue to face challenges from political instability, conflict, and climate shocks. Weak governance, land disputes, economic considerations, and the search of better livelihoods form part of the drivers moving younger generations to migrate within Somalia and beyond. Limited access to healthcare and WASH services, exacerbated by seasonal floods contaminating water sources, will most likely elevate health risks, with waterborne diseases like cholera becoming more prevalent.<sup>95</sup> Food insecurity will likely remain an issue due to agricultural disruptions, high prices, and market access issues, pushing malnutrition rates higher, especially among young children. Recurrent and protracted climate related hazards are leading to more rural communities moving while educational access for displaced youth will remain limited, perpetuating socio-economic instability, while heightened insecurity will continue to restrict humanitarian aid and increase protection risks, including GBV. Finally, migrants and host communities alike will require opportunities for economic growth and self-sufficiency, reducing dependency on aid, and facilitating social cohesion within communities.

## Targets and Planned Response

In 2025, MRP partners aim to address the humanitarian and development needs of migrants in transit (17,915), at destination (12,870), returning (12,050), and departing (1,485), as well as 388,212 members of Somali host communities along the Eastern Route, reaching a total of 432,532 individuals. These target groups urgently require life-saving humanitarian aid and protection support in particular, along with efforts for community stabilization and reintegration that strengthen their resilience and reduce the likelihood of re-migration. Migrants entering Somalia through Awdal and Woqooyi Galbeed regions often cover long distances on foot, facing immediate needs

for essentials such as water, food, primary healthcare, temporary shelter, NFIs, and basic WASH services. Additionally, returning migrants, particularly those who have been detained for extended periods, will need critical life-saving support and onward transportation. Host communities, especially in areas affected by drought and flooding, will also benefit from assistance to migrants, helping them manage the impact of disasters and enhancing their resilience. Beyond humanitarian assistance, migrants and returnees along this corridor require customized protection services. Enhancing the capacity of government officials, frontline workers, and partners is crucial to better address migrant needs related to child protection, GBV, and CT efforts. Additionally, providing stranded vulnerable migrants and those affected by conflict during their journey with safe and dignified options for voluntary return, along with individual and community reintegration support, will facilitate a smoother return process.



94 Migrant Response Centre Dashboard, Data as of November 11, 2024. [MRC Dashboard - Power BI \[Web\]](#).

95 OCHA, [Somalia Situation Report \[Web\]](#), 2024.

Implementing community stabilization and climate adaptation initiatives are essential to strengthen social cohesion, promote coexistence, and ensure equal economic opportunities, especially in areas experiencing tensions or prone to drought and flooding. Support will also be extended to labour migration and ethical recruitment initiatives endorsed by the Government of Somalia. MRP partners plan to establish and/or reinforce cross-border mechanisms to enhance labour mobility in the region. Lastly, data collection and flow monitoring will be integral to the MRP's response strategy in 2025.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

### Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.

- Provide lifesaving food, NFIs, temporary shelter, and water assistance to vulnerable migrants in host communities and in the MRCs and transit centres.
- Procure medical supplies to address primary healthcare needs of migrants assisted in MRCs and provision of secondary care to migrants in need of specialized medical assistance.
- Provide multipurpose cash assistance to vulnerable migrants with identified protection risks residing with host communities, particularly vulnerable women, and girls.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

### Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.

- Facilitate access to services through protection information dissemination, through service mapping, community-based awareness campaigns and referral pathways.

- Support existing community-based coordination structures promoting protection of returnees, migrants, and host communities.
- Promote cross-border dialogues and community awareness raising of protection risks among community committees, youth groups, traditional leaders, and women forums.
- Provide minimum standards of care to survivors of GBV and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and offer immediate medical attention, specialized care for FGM survivors, trauma-informed counselling, legal assistance, and security measures to ensure survivor safety.
- Establish dedicated complaint channels to enable individuals to report concerns or grievances and strengthen existing procedures and referral pathways for handling Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) cases.
- Ensure primary and secondary referrals for migrants and host communities in need of MHPSS, including girls, boys, and children with disabilities. Develop individualized case management plans and provide a range of interventions such as community based MHPSS, counselling, group therapy, and psycho-education.
- Support FTR of UASC and prevent family separation.
- Train professionals on survivor-centred consultation services at local hospitals and coordinate support and referrals with other hospital departments and external services.
- Train immigration partners, government officials, and frontline respondents on GBV, child protection, counter-trafficking, and smuggling of migrants.
- Implement capacity building initiatives on Integrated Border Management and rehabilitate border management infrastructures.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

**Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- In coordination with national and local authorities, offer AVR to vulnerable Ethiopian migrants stranded in Somalia.
- Provide returning migrants with onward transportation and multipurpose cash assistance to facilitate their reintegration in the communities of origin.
- Support the newly established MRC for migrant workers in Mogadishu and conduct trainings on labour migration management for government and social partners at federal level and organize capacity-building activities for female migrant workers.
- Support consular offices on the screening and nationality verification of migrants registered for AVR followed by issuance of travel documents in transit locations in Somalia.
- Support the Government of Somalia in developing and implementing return and reintegration frameworks and referral service mechanisms for returning migrant workers and their families.
- Implement and strengthen ethical recruitment systems and procedures.
- Enhance governance for adaptation to climate change by restoring a large irrigation scheme in the Middle Shabelle region of Hirshabelle State and other return areas.
- Contribute to stability and peace by creating conditions for restoring trust among communities and towards local leadership providing a bridge to longer-term development interventions.
- Enhance resolution of security and justice problems in target locations, while leveraging learning, social and political influence to catalyse programmatic, policy and systemic change.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

**Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

- Develop an action plan to enhance the capacity of trade unions to protect the rights of migrant workers inside and outside Somalia.
- Monitor the flow of migrants across borders between Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia.
- Support the MMTF and the RMFM, which brings together 11 States from East and HoA Region to jointly address labour migration policies and foster labour mobility.

#### Somalia Partners

1. DRC
2. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
3. ICRC (observer status)
4. International Labour Organization (ILO)
5. MSF
6. NRC
7. Save the Children International
8. UNFPA
9. UNHCR
10. UNICEF
11. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
12. UNODC
13. UNWOMEN
14. Actionaid International
15. Oxfam International
16. Somali Mental Health Association (SMHA)
17. Women's Action Advocacy Progress Organization (WAAPO)



# Country Chapters

# YEMEN

**132,329**  
PiN

**132,329**  
People Targeted



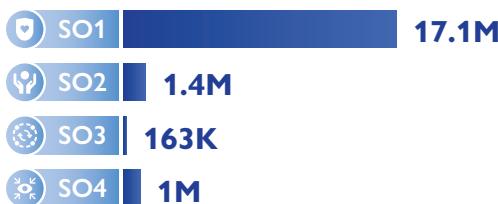
TOTAL FUNDING  
REQUIRED

**USD 19.7M**

MRP APPEALING  
PARTNERS

**3**

FUNDING BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



## Context

Migration to and from Yemen is influenced by a combination of economic, political, and social factors. Yemen serves as a critical transit and destination point along the Eastern Route, which connects the HoA to the Arabian Peninsula. Despite its ongoing humanitarian crisis, Yemen continues to attract migrants seeking opportunities in wealthier Gulf States. Most migrants entering Yemen intend to proceed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with 85 per cent reporting it as their final destination, according to data recorded between July and September 2024.<sup>96</sup> According to the same survey, other intended destinations were Oman (7 per cent) and Yemen (7 per cent).<sup>97</sup> Within Yemen, migrants frequently transit through Shabwah and Ta'iz governorates, both key entry points. In October 2024, Yemen recorded 6,364 non-Yemeni migrant arrivals, a significant 136 per cent increase from the previous month. This rise was partly due to enhanced monitoring on Yemen's western coast, particularly in Ta'iz governorate.<sup>98</sup> Among these arrivals, 97 per cent were Ethiopian nationals, and 79 per cent travelled via Djibouti, while 21 per cent arrived from Somalia.<sup>99</sup> The majority of these migrants originated from rural areas in Ethiopia, driven by economic hardship, with others escaping political instability.<sup>100</sup> Migrants entering Yemen are predominantly young men. According to the Flow Monitoring Survey, 93 per cent of migrants from over 3,323 recorded cases between July and September 2024 were male, out of which 72 per cent were aged between 18 and 25.<sup>101</sup> Most reported

<sup>96</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen Flow Monitoring Survey, Quarterly Survey, July-September 2024 [Web].

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Displacement Tracking Matrix, IOM Yemen, [Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard in October 2024](#) [Web].

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

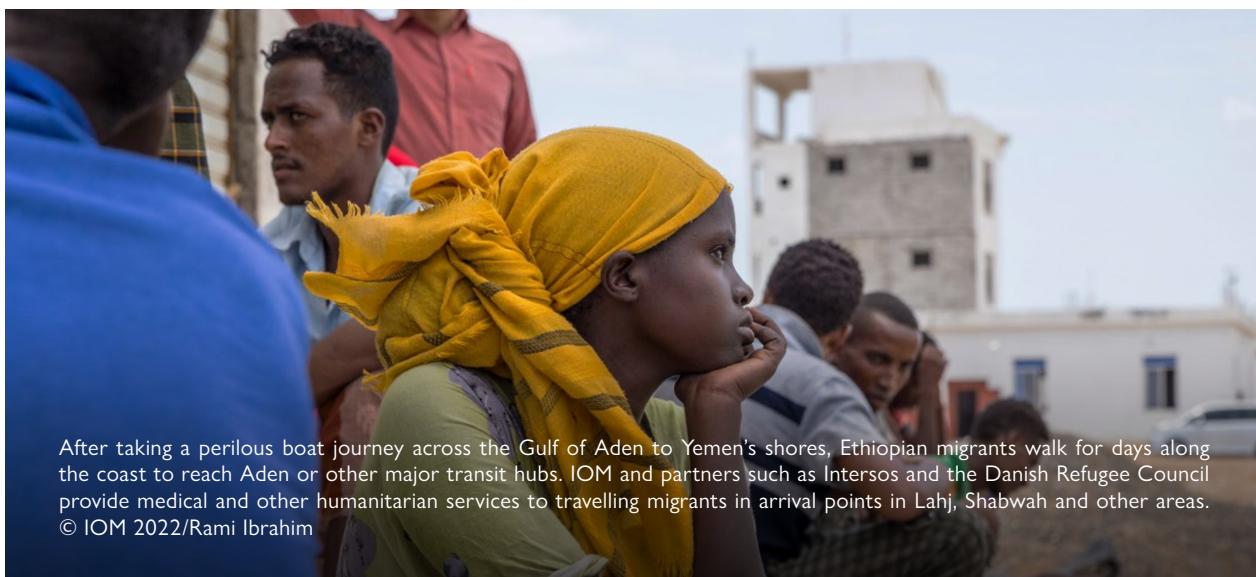
<sup>100</sup> IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen [Flow Monitoring Survey, Quarterly Survey, July-September 2024](#) [Web].

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

limited formal education, with 59 per cent having completed primary school or less.<sup>102</sup> Amongst this sample, economic motivations dominate migration drivers, with 96 per cent citing the search for job opportunities as the primary reason for migrating.<sup>103</sup>

Migration in Yemen also features non-voluntary returns. In October 2024, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia forcibly deported thousands of Yemeni nationals and other irregular migrants, including many Ethiopians. Yemeni returnees are mostly male (96 per cent), with most lacking formal travel documents. These non-voluntary returns are often accompanied by

harsh detention conditions in transit countries. Ethiopian migrants were equally non-voluntary returns in the region, with 2024 having surpassed last year's figures.<sup>104</sup> Notably, no migrants were recorded arriving in Lahj during October 2024. This is likely due to measures taken by the government to combat smuggling since August 2023.<sup>105</sup> Smugglers have redirected the maritime routes towards Dhubab, in Ta'iz Governorate.<sup>106</sup> MRP partners noted a sharp increase in arrivals in November 2024 recording 18,035 migrants arriving in Dhubab, Taiz (16,403) and Shabwa (1,632).<sup>107</sup>



The already challenging journey along the Eastern Route is compounded by Yemen's harsh environmental and security conditions, creating a landscape fraught with numerous obstacles and dangers for migrants. The arid deserts that span much of the region are characterized by relentless heat during the day, plummeting temperatures at night, and a lack of access to water or shade, making them particularly unforgiving for those attempting to traverse them. In August 2024, heavy rains and flooding severely disrupted migration

routes in northern Yemen. Migrants traveling through valleys were caught in the floods, leading to an unconfirmed number of casualties.<sup>108</sup> MRP partners estimate that approximately 30,000 migrants are stranded in Yemen.<sup>109</sup> Extreme weather conditions, including sandstorms and seasonal variations in temperature, add another layer of difficulty, exposing migrants to dehydration, heatstroke, and other health complications. In addition to these environmental hardships, the security conditions along migration

102 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen Flow Monitoring Survey, Quarterly Survey, July-September 2024 [Web].

103 Ibid.

104 IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54 [PDF], September 2024.

105 Displacement Tracking Matrix, IOM Yemen, Flow Monitoring Registry Dashboard in October 2024 [Web].

106 IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54 [PDF], September 2024.

107 DTM Flow monitoring report, November 2024 (to be published by 15 Dec).

108 IOM Regional Data Hub (RDH) – Migration Along the Eastern Route, Report 54 [PDF], September 2024.

109 Ibid.

routes pose significant threats. Active conflict zones frequently intersect with these paths, exposing migrants to the dangers of violence, crossfire, and encounters with armed groups. The presence of landmines in certain areas adds a further dimension of risk, as migrants often travel through poorly mapped or unmarked territories. Migrants also often take perilous journeys to and from Yemen using fishing boats. These journeys have also led to several tragic incidents, with the latest one in October 2024, when two boats leaving Yemen capsized resulting in at least 45 causalities. Finally, the general instability of the region exacerbates the unpredictability of their journey, as routes may be disrupted or controlled by various actors, including militias and traffickers, further intensifying the hazards they face.<sup>110</sup>

## Identified Needs

The prolonged conflict in Yemen has caused a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions, deeply affecting both Yemeni nationals and migrants. The economic collapse, exacerbated by ongoing instability, has significantly constrained public services and left millions in urgent need of humanitarian aid.<sup>111</sup> The broader humanitarian crisis is marked by widespread malnutrition and disease outbreaks.<sup>112</sup> Yemen's fragile healthcare infrastructure is overwhelmed, struggling to address the needs of both local and migrant populations. Additionally, disease outbreaks such as cholera, compounded by flooding and damaged infrastructure, have left many without access to clean water or sanitation, further heightening health risks.<sup>113</sup> Among the hardest-hit populations are migrants, whose irregular status limits their access to essential goods and services, including food, healthcare, and potable water, especially in remote regions. Local authorities, overwhelmed by the demands of a dire economic and humanitarian situation, are largely unable to meet these needs, leaving both migrants and Yemenis vulnerable.<sup>114</sup> Migrants in Yemen face extraordinary risks, including physical harm, exploitation, and forced labour. Smuggling networks and traffickers take advantage of the governance vacuum created by the conflict, subjecting migrants

to severe abuse, including arbitrary detention and extortion. Many migrants are held in smuggling hubs, often under appalling conditions, in locations such as Ma'rib, Ta'iz, Shabwah, Abyan and Sa'dah governorates. These smuggling centres are notorious for violence, including GBV, particularly targeting women and girls, who face heightened risks of abuse and trafficking during transit. The dangers extend to Yemen's northern border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where migrants attempting to cross face life-threatening violence, resulting in casualties among Ethiopian migrants, including women and children, who reportedly face grave risks of violence. Meanwhile, migrants in Yemen are subject to arbitrary detention and extortion. Children are among the most vulnerable groups, facing exclusion from education and increased risks of exploitation and child labour due to the lack of documentation.

In light of the above, MRP partners estimate that 132,329 migrants are in need of assistance. Key needs of migrants in Yemen include life-saving humanitarian assistance, with an emphasis on Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR). Migrants in Yemen also require food, water, NFIs, as well as medical care to recover from their journeys across the Gulf of Aden and while in the country. The large caseload of stranded migrants and migrants in transit in Yemen also compounds the urgency to strengthen the protection environment, including specialized protection services and referral pathways for survivors of GBV and trafficking in persons.

## Targets and Planned Response

MRP efforts in the country will concentrate on delivering life-saving humanitarian aid, customized protection services, and strengthening access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization, aligning with the framework's first, second, and third strategic objectives. Additionally, Strategic Objective 4 will enhance coordination among humanitarian partners. Given the dysfunctional public sector and the access barriers faced by migrants, providing essential humanitarian assistance is crucial

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> OCHA, [Yemen Humanitarian Update: Issue 7 \[PDF\]](#), November 2024.

<sup>112</sup> OCHA, [Yemen Humanitarian Update: Issue 7 \[PDF\]](#), November 2024.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

for their support. Migrants in Yemen will receive basic services such as food, water, NFIs, and both primary and secondary medical care to help them recover from their journeys across the Gulf of Aden. Furthermore, VHR will remain an option for stranded migrants wishing to return to the HoA.

The rapidly evolving situation in Yemen, mainly due to the ongoing conflict, necessitates continuous protection monitoring and vulnerability assessments to adapt to changing protection needs. Most importantly, women and children – particularly unaccompanied and separated minors – remain the most vulnerable and will be prioritized in the response. Migrants exposed to human trafficking, human rights abuses, GBV, and other protection violations by smugglers and traffickers in Yemen will require comprehensive protection assistance. Those who have experienced traumatic events will also need MHPSS. Access to official documentation and awareness campaigns about safe routes, legal rights, and available services will be vital for migrants. Lastly, partnerships and coordination among humanitarian actors will be strengthened through the RMMS cluster to support evidence-based advocacy and programming in Yemen.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

**Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.**

- Provide humanitarian assistance to migrants along major migratory routes, including at Migrant Response Points/Centre. This includes providing food, NFIs and medical first aid.
- Provide direct health support to migrants needing primary health care, including emergency first aid and emergency medical transportation and ensure referrals to specialized secondary health services.
- Support mobile medical teams, primary health care centres and other health facilities.
- Assist beneficiaries with emergency WASH services.
- Train coast/border guards/border management officials of the Immigration and Passport National Authority and other first responders in search and rescue operations and on the provision of lifesaving assistance.

- Strengthen the health system by training border officials on international health regulations.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

**Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Provide case management and crisis counselling for migrants and members of host communities who have experienced, or are at heightened risk of being exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. While all types of protection cases will be addressed, partners will pay specific attention to VoT. Cash-based intervention is considered as part of case management/crisis counselling. Safe referrals will be made to specialized service providers as necessary.
- Enhance provision of shelter services for individuals who have experienced protection incidents including GBV and trafficking in persons, and unaccompanied migrant children.
- Offer PFA to migrants gathered in key concentration points and refer migrants for further care, when needed;
- Conduct awareness raising sessions for migrants and host communities on various topics, including safety and security, rights and local laws, trafficking and smuggling, safe migration and VHR, referrals to medical facilities and health risks including cholera, mine risk education, local customs and asylum registration.
- Organize legal awareness sessions for migrants in Abyan, Aden, Shabwah on their legal rights in Yemen, the risks they may encounter, and strategies to mitigate them.
- Strengthen MHPSS services for migrants through community-based MHPSS activities done via community-based committees, referrals for specialized MHPSS services, and training of government officials, front line actors and partners.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

**Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- Provide transportation assistance and pre-departure counselling to migrants wishing to return, ensuring their safe and dignified return to their home countries.
- Offer tailored reintegration support to returnees, including cash-based assistance, vocational training, and livelihood opportunities to facilitate sustainable reintegration into their communities.
- Implement community stabilization initiatives that enhance access to basic social services such as healthcare and education and promote sustainable livelihoods in areas affected by migration.
- Train government officials and stakeholders on migration management and migrant rights, and upgrade institutional infrastructure to improve migration processes and support reintegration efforts.
- Establish cross-border referral mechanisms with countries of return for assistance to vulnerable returning migrants.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

**Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

- Conduct protection monitoring in the framework of the RMMS to support evidence-based advocacy and programming. Migration trends analysis reports will be issued quarterly to shed light on migration patterns in Yemen, including drivers, protection risks, vulnerabilities, and needs.
- Coordinate MRP partners' efforts to provide a coordinated response to vulnerable migrants in need.

- Set up a communication and coordination network with local leaders in Abyan, Aden, Shabwah, Lahj and Taiz to identify and report migrant cases, and to gather information on routes, movement patterns as well as migrant collection points.
- Organize workshops for governorate and district authorities and security officials to provide a baseline understanding of mixed migration, protection principles, and prospects for future engagement in assisting migrants.
- Engage with influential community members, including local community leaders, teachers, mosque imams, security checkpoint workers, police stations, and fishermen to foster their awareness of migrants' legal rights, challenges and available support services migrants should be referred to.

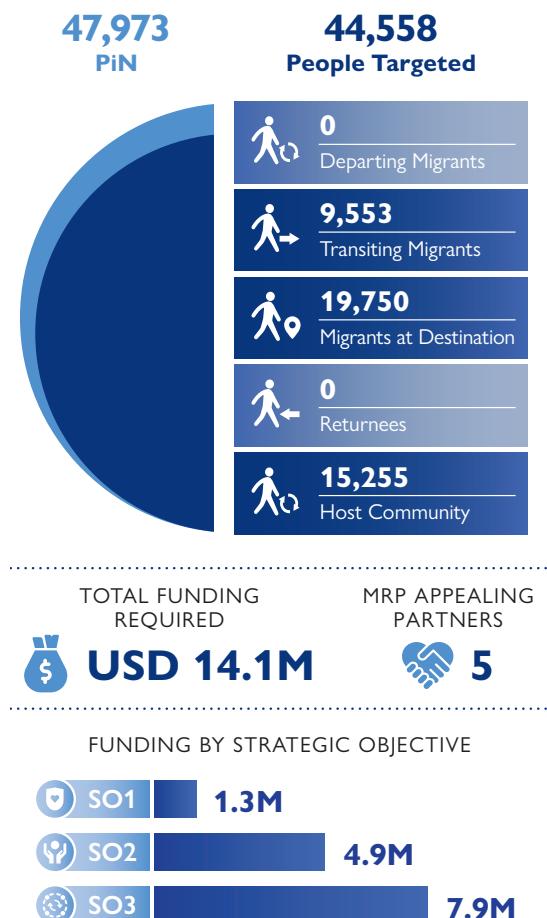
### Yemen Partners

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1. IOM
2. DRC
3. INTERSOS
4. Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)

# Country Chapters

# KENYA



## Context

Kenya's strategic location and stable economy make it both a destination and a key transit hub along the Southern Route for migrants from the HoA, primarily Ethiopia (85 per cent) and Somalia (15 per cent).<sup>115</sup> While data may not be exhaustive, existing information indicates a rising number of migrants entering Kenya in recent years. Anecdotal reports suggest that the recent surge in migrants transiting the Southern Route may be linked to environmental degradation – particularly droughts in their home countries that adversely affect rural livelihoods. Although most migrants along the Southern Route are men, qualitative studies show a possible increase in the number of women and girls. For example, key informants have reported an influx of Ethiopian women aiming to find employment in Kenya.<sup>116</sup> According to flow monitoring by an MRP partner, nearly 20,000 migrants crossed through the Moyale border in 2021-2022, and key informants estimate that between 200 and 300 migrants have been crossing nightly in 2023.<sup>117</sup>

While some entries at Moyale occur via the official border point, many migrants choose to cross through porous and unmonitored areas nearby to evade immigration authorities. Despite a bilateral agreement allowing unrestricted movement between Ethiopia and Kenya, most Ethiopian migrants travel irregularly because they lack the necessary documentation for regular entry, transit, and residence in Kenya. Furthermore, even those possessing identity and travel documents often face rigorous questioning by immigration officials about the purpose of their

<sup>115</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, *The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route* [PDF], April 2023.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

journey. As a result, the majority of migrants depend on smuggling networks to navigate the Southern Route.<sup>118</sup>

The migration dynamics around Moyale have significantly influenced the local economy on both the Ethiopian and Kenyan sides of the border, leading to the rise of an informal industry providing transportation, food, and lodging. It is estimated that about 60 per cent of the town's income comes from illicit trade, notably migrant smuggling.<sup>119</sup> In recent years, increased border patrols and control measures have progressively led to the diversification of migration routes.<sup>120</sup> Various forms of transportation are employed during the journey. While some migrants opt to walk certain segments to avoid detection, most of the journey involves vehicles like trucks, minibuses, cars, and pickups, which are often switched along the way.<sup>7</sup> From Moyale, several factors influence route selection, including security conditions, ethnic ties, contacts along the route, and the availability of safe houses. Particularly, the smuggler's ethnicity plays a crucial role in route choice and affects journey outcomes, such as access to safe houses and interactions with law enforcement authorities. Sharing the same ethnicity with law enforcement officials allows smugglers to communicate in the same language or reference familial or community connections, thereby gaining trust and increased leniency.

For example, the route passing through Marsabit to Isiolo – often favoured for its infrastructure and paved roads – is primarily used by non-Somali-speaking smugglers, while the route that goes through Wajir, mostly consisting of rough gravel roads, is mainly utilized by smugglers of Somali ethnicity. From Isiolo, migrants proceed towards Nairobi either via Meru and Embu or along the Nanyuki-Nyeri highway. For those traveling via Wajir, the path leads through Garissa and Mwingi towards Thika. Somali migrants, on their part, enter Kenya through overland routes via Mandera or Liboi, then head to Dadaab and Garissa. These movements are closely

tied to family and ethnic networks, which play a pivotal role in facilitating mobility along the Southern Route by providing logistical support to migrants en route. Indeed, many have social connections in north-eastern Kenya or near the Dadaab refugee camps, where they may spend a few days before continuing their journey either toward Nairobi or to Kenya's southern border via Malindi and Mombasa.<sup>121</sup> Nairobi serves as a crucial transit hub along the Southern Route, where smuggling networks arrange onward travel towards the United Republic of Tanzania with the help of new intermediaries. Migrants in transit typically find accommodation in the Eastleigh neighbourhood and its outskirts. This area hosts substantial Ethiopian and Somali diaspora communities and serves as an effective hiding place for migrants until smugglers group them for the next leg of their journey.<sup>122</sup>

Migrants use four distinct land routes to reach the Kenyan-Tanzanian border. The primary route leads towards the southern coast, where smugglers utilize both land and coastal paths to reach the porous border crossings into the United Republic of Tanzania near Lunga Lunga or by boat. A second route goes through Athi River towards unmonitored entry points near the Namanga border crossing, while a third heads toward Oloitokitok in the Kilimanjaro area. Lastly, an alternative route takes migrants through the Taita-Taveta border crossing points. Here, migrants face increased risks as they are guided through the Tsavo National Park until they reach designated connection points. Additionally, maritime routes across the Indian Ocean between Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania are used to bypass mainland checkpoints.<sup>123</sup>

## Identified Needs

Migrants traveling the Southern Route through Kenya predominantly rely on smuggling networks, making them particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and various protection risks. These risks include

<sup>118</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, *The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route* [PDF], April 2023.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Mixed Migration Center, *Southbound: Mixed Migration Routes, Experiences and Risks along the Journey to South Africa* [Web], Southbound | Mixed Migration Centre, May 2023.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

trafficking, torture, physical assault, forced labour, psychological and emotional abuse, and sexual violence. Migrant children are especially susceptible to abduction, kidnapping, and forced labour.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, due to heightened controls by state authorities at border points and key transit hubs, migrants may be abandoned by their smugglers when law enforcement presence intensifies, leaving them with no means to continue their journey. Migrants frequently report exposure to robbery (54 per cent), bribery and extortion (52 per cent), and risk of detention (56 per cent) while in Kenya.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, during their journey, migrants face numerous risks to their health, including physical hardship and exhaustion. Unsafe transportation practices along Kenya's segment of the Southern Route exposes migrants to significant hazards and, in some cases, life-threatening situations. This includes the use of dangerous maritime routes between Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania in unsafe boats and shipping containers, involving extended journeys in airless fuel tankers and overloaded vehicles. Several incidents of migrants drowning at sea or suffocating within containers have been reported along both land and maritime routes. Additionally, migrants evading checkpoints on foot may spend nights exposed to the elements in forests, national parks, and other areas inhabited by dangerous wildlife.<sup>126</sup>

While in transit, migrants are accommodated in overcrowded safe houses, holding centres, and makeshift shelters where water and sanitation facilities are often lacking. Similarly, they are exposed to overcrowded and unsanitary conditions in cases of administrative detention. As a result, migrants live in unhygienic environments, making them vulnerable to communicable diseases. Although research on migrants in Kenya remains limited, field observations have enabled MRP partners to identify the most pressing needs of those on the move. Basic necessities include access to food and NFIs, as well as safe and adequate shelter both at their destination and during transit. Throughout their journey, migrants frequently experience trauma and stress due to the hardships they face, including violence, loss of

loved ones, and uncertainty about their future. They are therefore in urgent need of tailored protection assistance, including MHPSS. Unethical recruitment practices also contribute to increasing migrants' vulnerability, further exposing them to abuse and exploitation. Based on the above, MRP partners estimate that at least 47,973 migrants in transit and at their destination will require assistance in 2025.

## Targets and Planned Response

Migrants in Kenya have critical needs that must be addressed in 2025. MRP partners aim at reaching 44,558 beneficiaries, including both migrants at destination (19,750) and in transit (9,553) as well as the host community (15,255).

The response will focus on life-saving humanitarian assistance, tailored protection assistance and access to return and community stabilization. Building evidence on Southern Route migration trends and needs and reinforcing existing partnerships among response actors will be equally needed to consolidate the route-based response in Kenya along the Southern Route. Southern Route migrants in Kenya will require essential provisions such as shelter, food, water, NFIs, dignity kits and medical care to support their recovery from the perilous journeys. Tailored protection assistance for migrants will be of utmost importance. Migrants exposed to the grave risks of human trafficking and other protection violations by smugglers and traffickers in Kenya will require comprehensive protection support. Migrants who have undergone traumatic experiences will need access to MHPSS. Special attention must be given to the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, including UASC, making them a priority in the response efforts. Providing formal documentation is essential to access services in the county and to bolster employment opportunities. Disseminating information about safe routes and available services is also key. Training of government officials, frontline actors, and relevant partners will also be paramount to strengthen the protection environment. AVRR will be a key component of the MRP response in Kenya, along with efforts

<sup>124</sup> Mixed Migration Center, *Southbound: Mixed Migration Routes, Experiences and Risks along the Journey to South Africa* [Web], Southbound | Mixed Migration Centre, May 2023.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Mixed Migration Center, *Southbound: Mixed Migration Routes, Experiences and Risks along the Journey to South Africa* [Web], Southbound | Mixed Migration Centre, May 2023.

for the regularization of stay. Particular emphasis will be given to private sector engagement on safe migration, notably through the promotion of ethical recruitment practices. Lastly, quantitative, and qualitative analysis of migration movements in Kenya will allow for a better understanding of Southern Route patterns, including on the profile of migrants, intended destination, risks and vulnerabilities.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1**

#### **Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.**

- In collaboration with government entities, provide safe and adequate shelter to migrants both in transit and at destinations in Kenya, ensuring dignified temporary living conditions and longer-term housing solutions.
- Provide food and NFIs, including fresh cooked and ready-to-eat meals, packed nutrition supplements, clothing, shelter items, and WASH items like dignity kits to migrants along the Southern Route.
- Support migrants in distress to access primary health services through direct assistance, comprehensive community health and wellness outreach initiatives, and partnerships with primary health service providers for screenings, vaccinations, and referrals to secondary healthcare services.
- Facilitate access to WASH services, including the distribution of water at reception points, construction of sanitary infrastructure, provision of essential WASH items, and organization of hygiene education sessions.
- Support the establishment of government-led centres or points for migrants on the move to register for assistance, where services will include referrals, needs screening, legal counselling, and information dissemination on safe migration, among others.
- Provide multipurpose cash assistance to stranded and rescued migrants to meet their basic needs, including food, shelter, education, and healthcare, supporting their financial stability while in Kenya.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2**

#### **Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Provide specialized protection services to VoTs and vulnerable migrants at risk, promoting multi-stakeholder joint interventions and collaborative efforts to offer comprehensive support for victims of human rights violations.
- Offer MHPSS, including counselling, management of post-traumatic stress disorders, and support for the recovery process, enabling access to MHPSS for VoTs and other migrants in vulnerable situations, including those in transit along the Southern Route and returnees. MHPSS support will include PFA, counselling, and trauma care.
- Empower local actors – local officials, first-line responders, and CSOs – by training them on better identifying the special needs of vulnerable migrants and raising awareness of referral mechanisms to ensure their rights and protection.
- Provide structural support to government-run shelters to enhance the protection of VoTs and other migrants with protection needs.
- Strengthen legal aid by supporting migrants throughout their legal journeys, conducting outreach and education activities to raise awareness among migrant communities about available legal aid services, and establishing Legal Aid Clinics for Rights and Justice offering migrant legal consultation, document assistance, referrals, and advocacy.

- Conduct regular protection monitoring visits and vulnerability assessments to identify protection issues and trends, supporting informed decision-making.
- Strengthen community-based protection for vulnerable migrants and returnees, including children and other at-risk groups, and promote migrant and host community awareness campaigns on the risks of irregular migration and existing protection mechanisms by developing clear, concise, and culturally appropriate messages. Collaborations with community leaders, influencers, and local organizations will be established to amplify the campaigns' reach.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

**Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- Enhance border and migration management processes by establishing systems that are effective at both maintaining security and upholding the dignity and human rights of migrants.
- Support the AVRR of Southern Route migrants to their countries of origin, including unaccompanied and separated children and other vulnerable groups.
- Promote private sector engagement on safe migration by engaging recruitment agencies and CSOs to promote protection and ethical recruitment practices.
- Support community-driven regularization efforts by organizing information sessions and workshops to educate migrants about the legal requirements and steps involved in the process, empowering them to make informed decisions to regularize their stay.
- Facilitate the use of electronic applications for visas and work permits among migrants, streamlining regularization processes and enhancing access to legal pathways.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

**Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

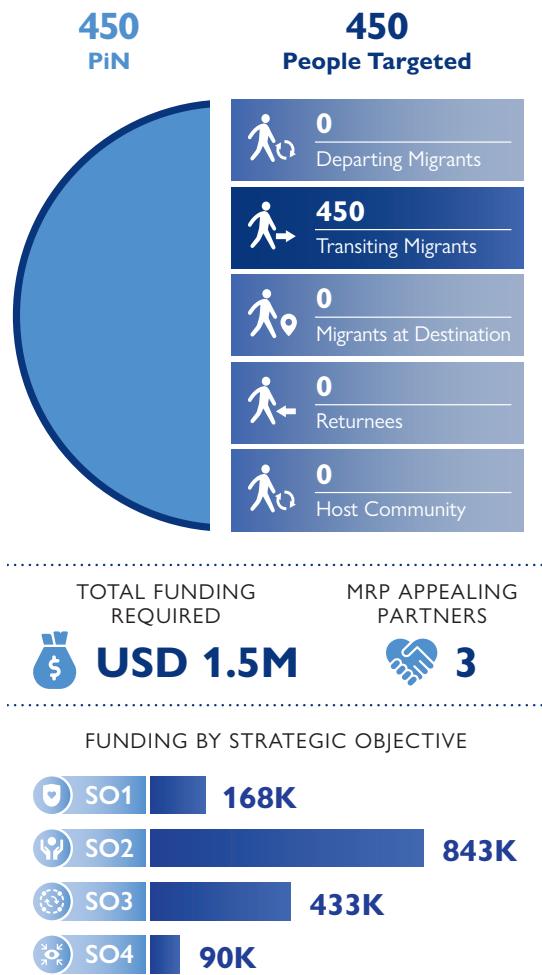
- Conduct flow monitoring and needs assessment surveys to better understand Southern Route migration patterns through Kenya and related vulnerabilities and needs.
- Coordinate MRP partners' efforts at the national and county levels to promote regular exchange of information and provide a coordinated response to the needs of migrants and their host communities.
- Carry out a study on Southern Route migration in Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Taita Taveta, and Tana River coastal counties to analyse the demographics of those on the move and evaluate the effectiveness of local policies in improving the well-being, protection, and integration of migrants.
- Document and analyse cases of migrant deaths and disappearances, establishing mechanisms to record incidents and inform prevention strategies and policy development.
- Raise awareness on safe migration practices by publishing advocacy materials aimed at promoting informed and responsible migration, informing potential migrants about their rights, responsibilities, and how to migrate safely and regularly.

### Kenya Partners

1. **Candle of Hope**
2. **Centre for Domestic Training and Development**
3. **Counter Human Trafficking Trust, East Africa**
4. **IOM**
5. **International Return and Reintegration Assistance (IRARA)**
6. **Salvation Army**
7. **Trace Kenya**

## Country Chapters

# UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



## Context

The United Republic of Tanzania continues to serve as a key transit country along the Southern Route, frequently used by migrants from the East and HoA traveling towards South Africa. While no definitive estimates exist on the number of migrants passing through the United Republic of Tanzania, irregular crossings via unofficial borders facilitated by smugglers remain common. This is underscored by the large numbers of migrants detained in the United Republic of Tanzania. While 2024 figures are currently unavailable, the 2023 numbers provide a glimpse into the scale. For instance, the Tanzanian Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence, and National Service Standing Committee reported that 7,493 irregular migrants were in detention<sup>127</sup> as of February 2023, with the majority believed to be those navigating the Southern Route. By mid-2023, it was estimated that approximately 3,000 Ethiopian migrants were held in detention. The Tanzanian government has been active in pushing its own repatriation efforts, encouraging detained migrants to contact family members in their home countries to fund their return.<sup>128</sup> In many cases, immigration offences are pardoned as an act of goodwill, provided the migrants are supported in returning to their home countries.<sup>129</sup>

Migrants traversing the Southern Route into the United Republic of Tanzania from Kenya utilize several pathways to continue their southward journey. Those entering via Namanga or Oloitokitok proceed to Arusha, then onward to either the Tunduma border in Mbeya along Zambia's frontier or the Kasumulu

127 The Chanzo Initiative 7 February 2023 [Web].

128 Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen, Migrants Needs Overview 2024 Eastern & Southern Route [Web]. December 2023.

129 IOM, Migrating in Search of the Southern Dream: The Experiences of Ethiopian migrants moving along the Southern Route [Web]. May 2022.

border in Kyela near Malawi. Migrants taking the coastal route, entering through Lunga Lunga-Horo Horo, travel toward the Bagamoyo region near Saadani National Park, where further transport is arranged to Mbeya (near the Zambian border) or Kyela (near the Malawian border). Some also exit the United Republic of Tanzania into Mozambique.<sup>130</sup> These journeys are facilitated by smuggling networks and various modes of transport. Migrants may use boda-bodas (motorbikes), hide in haulage trucks or fuel tankers, or travel by boat when land routes face stricter controls. Maritime routes often involve small boats navigating the islands off Tanga's coast.<sup>131</sup>

## Identified Needs

Migrants traveling through the United Republic of Tanzania via the Southern Route face numerous vulnerabilities and threats, largely tied to the irregular nature of their journeys. In 2023, a survey conducted by an MRP partner revealed that approximately 68 per cent of migrants had experienced severe violence or abuse from smugglers. These abuses included torture, physical assault, psychological and emotional mistreatment, and sexual violence.<sup>132</sup> Additionally, 3 per cent of migrants, including children, reported abduction or forced labour as a means of settling additional smuggling fees. Many migrants remain unaware of the total cost of their journey, as they are frequently handed off to intermediaries who demand unexpected additional payments.<sup>133</sup> Another study involving Ethiopian migrants transiting the United Republic of Tanzania found that less than 30 per cent of participants had prior knowledge of incidents involving other migrants. Moreover, few reported receiving information on the risks of irregular migration, policies in transit or destination countries, or personal accounts of failed migration

attempts.<sup>134</sup> Heft and extortion by smugglers were also reported, with 9 per cent of migrants indicating incidents where violence was used to seize belongings.<sup>135</sup> Corruption in border regions and at checkpoints appears to be widespread,<sup>136</sup> with around 20 per cent of surveyed migrants admitted to paying bribes to avoid arrest, often needing to do so repeatedly throughout their journey.<sup>137</sup>



<sup>130</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, [The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), April 2023.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, [The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), April 2023.

<sup>134</sup> IOM, [Migrating in Search of the southern Dream: The Experiences of Ethiopian migrants moving along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), May 2022.

<sup>135</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, [The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), April 2023.

<sup>136</sup> Mixed Migration Center, [Southbound: Mixed Migration Routes, Experiences and Risks along the Journey to South Africa \[Web\]](#), Southbound | Mixed Migration Centre, May 2023.

<sup>137</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, [The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), April 2023.

The dangers do not end with financial exploitation. Many migrants, including minors, are intercepted and detained under the United Republic of Tanzania's Immigration Act for irregular entry.<sup>138</sup> Detained migrants often remain stranded in detention facilities under harsh conditions, without access to legal pathways for regularization or the means to return to their home countries. Life-threatening circumstances frequently arise for those traveling through the United Republic of Tanzania, as migrants recount seeing fellow travellers perish from abandonment, starvation, dehydration, or injuries sustained in transport accidents. Unsafe conditions, such as suffocation in overcrowded vehicles or drowning during maritime crossings, are common.<sup>139</sup>

Access to basic necessities is another critical challenge. A notable 98 per cent of migrants surveyed in the United Republic of Tanzania reported insufficient access to food, water, and essential supplies during their journey. The absence of shelter, coupled with poor hygiene and sanitation, exacerbates health risks, leading to a higher prevalence of diseases among migrants in transit.<sup>140</sup> The psychological toll is equally severe; the constant fear of apprehension and the possibility of spending extended periods – often two years or more – in detention adds immense stress to an already harrowing journey.<sup>141</sup> The stigma of a failed migration attempt and the associated financial losses also weigh heavily on migrants. To avoid the social shame tied to unsuccessful migration, about one-third of migrants surveyed stated that they had not informed their families of their intentions to migrate. This underscores the cultural and emotional burden that accompanies irregular migration.

Repatriation efforts are oftentimes facilitated through an informal broker system with brokers liaising between a migrant's family for payment and the required government authorities to facilitate the release and return of the migrant in detention. As such, the informal and unregulated nature of this mechanism may lead to protection vulnerabilities of migrants and their families, which warrants further monitoring and potential response in 2025.

## Targets and Planned Response

In 2025, MRP partners aim to assist 450 migrants traveling along the Southern Route and those in detention. Considering the current situation, migrants passing through and those detained in the United Republic of Tanzania urgently need life-saving support. This encompasses medical care, specialized protection services, and AVR assistance, acknowledging the challenging protection environment and the arduous journeys from their home countries. Protection efforts will focus on the most vulnerable groups, including VoTs, individuals who have suffered human rights abuses, and survivors of GBV. Equally, the response will focus on mitigating protection risks associated with the informal broker system by strengthening monitoring mechanisms, advocating for regulatory oversight, and promoting safe repatriation pathways. MRP partners will develop tailored responses for women and children, particularly UASC. AVR assistance will be crucial for the MRP in 2025, especially for detained migrants. Given the high number of migrants detained in the United Republic of Tanzania, AVR services will be vital in helping vulnerable individuals wishing to return to their countries of origin.

Additionally, initiatives to find ATD will be key in reducing the detention risks for migrants transiting through the country. The response strategies will include direct protection services and capacity-building initiatives for government officials, frontline workers, and other partners on child protection, GBV, and CT. Lastly, promoting regional dialogue among countries along the Southern Route will aid in better understanding migration patterns and in formulating a coordinated response.

<sup>138</sup> IOM Regional Data Hub for the East and Horn of Africa, [The Southern Dream: Exploring Migration Dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route \[PDF\]](#), April 2023.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

**Provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants and host communities.**

- Coordinate with the Tanzanian Immigration Services Department to identify centres with a high population of migrants and organize distributions of NFIs and food assistance, ensuring migrants have access to essential supplies.
- Support the provision of primary and secondary medical services to vulnerable migrants in transit and in detention centres, including medical screenings, vaccinations, and referrals to specialist healthcare services.
- Provide multipurpose cash assistance to returning migrants, enabling them to acquire basic goods and services upon arrival in their country of origin, including onward transportation assistance.
- Coordinate with the Tanzanian Immigration Services Department and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups to promote safe and dignified accommodation services for vulnerable migrants in dedicated shelters, notably UASC at risk of detention.
- Enhance the capacity of government officials and border guards by providing training on International Health Regulations and search and rescue operations, improving their ability to respond to emergencies and safeguard the well-being of cross-border migrants.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

**Provide quality, timely, accessible, and inclusive protection assistance, and specialized and tailored services to migrants, including returnees, and host communities in vulnerable situations.**

- Coordinate with the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups to train frontline workers on the identification and assistance of vulnerable migrants with specific needs, including VoT and UASC, and brief them on existing protection referral pathways.
- Collaborate with the Ethiopian Embassy and the Tanzanian Immigration Services Department to conduct regular protection monitoring visits and vulnerability assessments of migrants in detention centres to assess existing protection risks and ensure appropriate interventions.
- Organize community sensitization and early warning workshops with the Tanzanian Immigration Services Department in border regions, targeting local actors and community members on the dangers and risks associated with irregular migration, including trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.
- Train Police Gender and Children Desk personnel on protection and assistance to vulnerable migrants, with a focus on UASC and GBV prevention, mitigation, and response.
- Provide specialized MHPSS services to migrants in need, and train government officials, frontline actors, and partners on critical aspects of MHPSS, enhancing their capacity to support migrants experiencing trauma and stress.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

#### **Strengthen access to return, sustainable reintegration, and community stabilization.**

- Conduct capacity-building trainings for policymakers on International Migration Law, focusing on the protection of migrants' rights, international legal and policy frameworks, and regional labour agreements, including ethical recruitment practices.
- Provide infrastructural and technical support to the Border Management Control Unit of the Tanzanian Immigration Services Department, supporting the establishment of mobile border patrols to enhance border security and combat transnational crimes like smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.
- Facilitate the AVR of vulnerable migrants to their countries of origin, providing comprehensive support throughout the return process.
- Assist migrants with the regularization of their stay by offering legal aid counselling and assistance, helping them navigate immigration processes and obtain necessary documentation.
- Support community initiatives that foster stabilization and resilience, improving access to quality basic social services, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and enhancing resilience against environmental degradation and climate change in hotspots of transit, outward migration, and return.



### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

#### **Building evidence, partnerships, and coordination to enhance humanitarian response and migration management throughout the migration route.**

- Conduct data collection and analysis on Southern Route migration through the United Republic of Tanzania, including flow monitoring registries and surveys, to better understand migration trends, migrant vulnerabilities, migrant profiles, intended destinations, and preferred transit routes.

- Produce strategies, advocacy documents, research, and studies to inform policy and program development, enhancing the effectiveness of interventions along the migration route.
- Facilitate cross-border coordination initiatives and mechanisms, strengthening partnerships with regional and sub-regional representatives to improve migration management and humanitarian response.
- Organize MRP meetings and support collaboration among partners, ensuring regular exchange of information and coordinated efforts in addressing migration challenges.
- Document and address cases of migrant deaths or disappearances, providing support to affected families, including psychosocial assistance and family tracing services.

#### **United Republic of Tanzania Partners**

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1. UNICEF
2. IOM
3. Save the Children



# EXPANDING THE SOUTHERN ROUTE

MRP partners in 2025 will remain focused on the needs of vulnerable migrants and host communities traveling along the Eastern and Southern Route through Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen. In 2024, MRP partners formally included the Southern Route in the MRP, starting with Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania as key transit countries. Into 2025, MRP partners will monitor more comprehensively the situation of migrants from the HoA region transiting through other countries along the Southern Route, including Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, to lay the foundation for potential full inclusion in future iterations of the plan.

Migrants traveling along the Southern Route endure severe physical hardships, often pushing the limits of human endurance.<sup>142</sup> Walking forms a significant part of most land journeys, often for days or even weeks across harsh and remote terrain without adequate food or water. Irregular migration along the Southern Route is facilitated by complex networks of smugglers and traffickers who often use aggressive tactics to evade authorities, endangering the lives of migrants.<sup>143</sup> Migrants face widespread exploitation and violence, including physical abuse, extortion, theft, deception, kidnapping, and ransom by smugglers and criminal networks. Overcrowding and poor shelter exacerbate exhaustion as migrants endure cramped conditions with little opportunity for proper rest. Numerous instances of migrant deaths and disappearances have been documented. In 2022, 27 Ethiopian migrants

were found dead in Chongwe Ngwerere, Zambia,<sup>144</sup> just two months after 30 Ethiopian migrants were discovered in a mass grave in Malawi.<sup>145</sup> Two years earlier, 64 Ethiopian men suffocated in a sealed shipping container in Mozambique.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, migrants traveling along the Southern Routes from the HoA often face prolonged detention in prisons across transit countries.<sup>147</sup> Detention conditions are harsh, with migrants kept in standard prisons, often with limited information about their status or prospects for release.

The lack of a robust protection environment, insufficient resources among humanitarian actors, and limited cooperation among member states in the region expose migrants to significant suffering, violence, and exploitation. Migrants along the Southern Route need life-saving assistance, alongside tailored protection mechanisms to address their needs and reduce their vulnerabilities. Additionally, tackling the root causes of irregular migration in origin areas, fostering inter-regional dialogues, enhancing cross-border cooperation, and building the capacity of governments are critical to ensuring sustainable solutions. In 2025, MRP partners will continue monitoring migration patterns, root causes, routes, and migrant stocks, along with protection risks, needs, and vulnerabilities of migrants and host communities in Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This effort aims to inform the potential future inclusion of these countries in the MRP framework.

142 Pilot Study on the Southern Migration Route and Access to Protection Services [Web] – IOM, 2024.

143 Ibid.

144 Ethiopia to investigate after 27 bodies discovered in Zambia – Al Jazeera [Web], 13 December 2022.

145 BBC, Malawi ex-leader's stepson held over mass graves of suspected migrants [Web], 23 November 2022.

146 The Guardian, Sixty-four Ethiopians found dead in truck in Mozambique [Web], 24 March 2020.

147 IOM RDH, The Southern Dream: Exploring migration dynamics from the Horn of Africa to South Africa along the Southern Route [PDF], April 2023.



"My family thought I was dead because I was missing for 5 years. It has been 1 year since I have been back from Zambia. My journey started by bus from Hossana to Moyale. To get from Kenya to Tanzania, sometimes we had to travel long distances at night by foot. I was arrested at a checkpoint along with 18 other people. The judge sentenced us to prison for 15 years, but I was released after 5. Life in prison was unbearable. They would beat us and ask us 'why did you come here?'. – Markos Ergogo, 24 years old, Misha Wereda. © IOM 2021/Yonas Tadesse

## ANNEXES

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS BY PARTNER AND COUNTRY								
Sum of funding requirements for the activity in USD	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	United Republic of Tanzania	Yemen	Regional	Total
Agar Ethiopia Charitable Society		\$1,239,000						\$1,239,000
Bright Star Relief and Development Association		\$1,078,546						\$1,078,546
Candle of Hope			\$800,000					\$800,000
CHTTEA			\$50,000					\$50,000
DRC				\$2,055,300		\$291,680		\$2,346,980
ECC		\$168,339						\$168,339
Good Samaritan Association		\$975,683						\$975,683
INTERSOS						\$3,328,500		\$3,328,500
IOM	\$11,341,000	\$14,763,260	\$7,787,000	\$5,484,000	\$800,000	\$16,084,614	\$4,300,000	\$60,559,874
MMC							\$150,000	\$150,000
NRC				\$50,000			\$500,000	\$550,000
OXFAM				\$100,000				\$100,000
Positive Action for Development		\$165,769						\$165,769
Salvation Army			\$4,317,077					\$4,317,077
SMHA				\$95,000				\$95,000
STC		\$151,558			\$294,550		\$1,335,973	\$1,782,081
UNDP	\$250,000							\$250,000
UNFPA							\$165,000	\$165,000
UNHCR				\$300,000				\$300,000
UNICEF		\$460,000		\$470,000	\$440,000			\$1,370,000
WFP	\$100,000							\$100,000
World Vision			\$1,100,000					\$1,100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,691,000</b>	<b>\$19,002,155</b>	<b>\$14,054,077</b>	<b>\$8,554,300</b>	<b>\$1,534,550</b>	<b>\$19,704,794</b>	<b>\$6,450,973</b>	<b>\$80,991,849</b>



Migrant returnee engaged in a reintegration project in Hargeisa, Somalia. © IOM Somalia 2022/Claudia Rosel

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