

mixed migration research series
explaining people on the move

Young and on the Move

Children and youth in mixed migration flows
within and from the Horn of Africa



Save the Children



RMMS

Regional
Mixed Migration
Secretariat



10

Study

September 2016

Young and on the Move: children and youth in mixed migration flows within and from the Horn of Africa

This is the tenth of a series of studies - explaining people on the move - focusing on different aspects of mixed migration associated with the Horn of Africa and Yemen region.

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The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS)

Formed in 2011 and based in Nairobi, the overall objective of the RMMS is to support agencies, institutions and fora in the Horn of Africa and Yemen sub-region to improve the management of protection and assistance to people in mixed migration flows in the Horn of Africa and across the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea in Yemen. The co-founders and Steering Committee members for the RMMS include UNHCR, IOM, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), INTERSOS, the EU delegation to Kenya and IGAD. The RMMS is a regional hub aiming to provide information and data management, analysis and research, support to policy development and dialogue, and support and coordination. It acts as an independent agency, hosted by the DRC, to stimulate forward thinking and policy development in relation to mixed migration. Its overarching focus and emphasis is on human rights, protection and assistance.

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Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children in need, with programs in 120 countries. Save the Children aims to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their

lives by improving their health, education, and economic opportunities. In times of acute crisis, Save the Children mobilizes rapid assistance to help children recover from the effects of war, conflict and natural disasters.

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List of acronyms

AU	African Union
BID	Best Interests Determination
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EU	European Union
ECOWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KI	Key Informant
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
MHUB	Mixed Migration Hub
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	(UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RMMS	Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UASC	Unaccompanied or separated children
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WHO	World Health Organization
WRC	Women’s Refugee Commission
4mi	(RMMS) Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative

“Look at them leaving in droves, the children of the land, just look at them leaving in droves. Those with nothing are crossing borders. Those with strength are crossing borders. Those with ambitions are crossing borders. Those with loss are crossing borders. Those in pain are crossing borders. Moving, running, emigrating, going, deserting, walking, quitting, flying, fleeing – to all over, to countries near and far, to countries unheard of, to countries whose names they cannot pronounce. They are leaving in droves.”

NoViolet Bulawayo (2013). We need new names, 2013, page 145.

Glossary

Adolescent

Persons aged 10 to 19 years.¹

Asylum seekers

Persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.²

Best Interests Determination ('BID')

Describes the formal process with strict procedural safeguards designed to determine the child's best interests for particularly important decisions affecting the child. It should facilitate adequate child participation without discrimination, involve decision-makers with relevant areas of expertise, and balance all relevant factors in order to assess the best option.³

Children

Persons under the age of 18 years.⁴

Child labour

Work undertaken by children under the legal minimum working ages. The term 'child labour' is often described as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity.⁵

Children on the Move

Those children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement, while it may open up opportunities, might also place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence.⁶

Forcibly displaced

Refers to refugees, asylum seekers and IDPS.

Horn of Africa

For the purposes of this report, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan are included within the Horn of Africa.

Internally Displaced Persons ('IDPs')

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized

1 UNICEF, 2011.

2 IOM, 2004.

3 UNHCR, 2008.

4 Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

5 CPWG, 2012.

6 Inter-Agency Working Group on Children on the Move, 2010.

violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.⁷

Irregular migration

Movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration.⁸

Mixed flows

Complex population movements including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other migrants⁹ (also 'mixed migration').

Population of Concern (to UNHCR)

Populations monitored and statistics collected by UNHCR, which includes refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, stateless and 'others of concern' (those to whom UNHCR has provided assistance or protection services).

Refugee

A person, who "owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".¹⁰

Separated children

Children separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.¹¹

Smuggling

The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.¹² Smuggling, contrary to trafficking does not require an element of exploitation, coercion, or violation of human rights.

Stateless person

A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law.¹³

Trafficking of persons

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position

7 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998).

8 IOM, 2004.

9 Ibid.

10 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951).

11 ICRC et al, 2004.

12 UN Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000, art. 3(a).

13 UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954), art 1.

of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.¹⁴

Unaccompanied minors

Persons under the age of majority who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who by law or custom is responsible for them. Unaccompanied minors present special challenges for border control officials, because detention and other practices used with undocumented adult aliens may not be appropriate for minors.¹⁵ (Also 'unaccompanied children').

Youth

Persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.¹⁶

14 UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Organized Crime, 2000, art. 3(a).

15 IOM, 2004.

16 UNDESA, undated.

Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of this study is to provide an updated overview of children and youth as specific (albeit non-homogenous) groups in mixed migration flows within, through and from the Horn of Africa. The report does not purport to be exhaustive, but rather to act as a preliminary study which identifies some of the key trends, characteristics, issues and response mechanisms available, in order to contribute to future programme design and to identify areas that would benefit from further enquiry and attention.

The specific patterns of children and youth movements within the broader patterns of mixed migration are – to a large extent – unknown. The ‘categories’ of children and youth on the move are not mutually exclusive, nor fixed. A multiplicity of factors drive the movements of children and youth, and their profiles and needs differ, depending on their age, sex, nationality, ethnicity, religion, their accompanied status, the specifics of their family situation and other variables. In many cases children and youth on the move are undocumented and utilise irregular channels of migration. They may stay in urban non-camp settings and they may not remain for long periods in one place. In such situations, information disaggregated by age and other characteristics is rarely available. Moreover, the needs of mobile youth above the age of 18 are frequently grouped into broader categories of adults, which fails to recognise the specificity of this transitional period. **The invisibility of numbers and profiles of children and youth** within overall migration and displacement numbers often transfers to a lack of specific attention to children and youth in mixed migration policies and programs.

Although data is highly fragmented for children and youth on the move in the Horn of Africa, the numbers that are available suggest that the numbers of children overall, and of those travelling independently of adult family members, is on the increase. In line with global trends, mixed migration in the Horn of Africa has increased in volume and this, coupled with the characteristic youth bulge in many of the Horn of Africa countries, translates into an increase in absolute numbers of children and youth involved in migration. **Almost half of the international migrants in the Horn of Africa are under the age of 20, and children are usually the majority within forcibly displaced populations in the region.**

Situations of conflict and insecurity, persecution, poverty, natural disaster, resource scarcity and environmental degradation in the countries or communities of origin compel families and sometimes children and youth alone, to flee to a safer place or to seek a better, more prosperous life. In most of the countries of the Horn of Africa, **children represent 50 to 60 per cent of the forcibly displaced populations.** Of these, some **90,000 children are recorded as unaccompanied or separated** across and within Horn of Africa countries - a figure that can be expected to under-represent the true size of this group.

Children and youth attempting to reach countries outside the region, particularly in Europe, are increasingly making the trip alone. During the first five months of 2016, 7,009 unaccompanied children arrived in Italy by sea journey from Africa. **This was more than double the number of unaccompanied children who arrived using the Central Mediterranean route** during the same period in 2015.

Eritreans continue in 2016 to comprise the largest group utilising the Central Mediterranean route from Libya to Europe, and in 2015 they also comprised the largest group of unaccompanied children arriving through this route. Based on child asylum seeker numbers in Europe for 2015, Eritreans also represent the largest group of unaccompanied child asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa, followed by Somalis. Together they comprised 10 per cent (around 9,000 unaccompanied children) of the total unaccompanied child asylum seekers in the EU last year. At least 7 per cent of all recorded arrivals in Europe in 2015 were from the Horn of Africa (some 70,000 persons arrived from Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan, out of more than 1 million), indicating a relatively large number of unaccompanied child asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa.

The number of people taking the eastward route from the Horn of Africa through Yemen and beyond has remained relatively stable in recent years, with the percentage of unaccompanied children estimated to be around 20 per cent, or some 18,000 children (including around 14,000 Ethiopian children) per year who cross the Red Sea or Gulf of Aden to Yemen. Based on these estimates, there continues to be **relatively more children (and more unaccompanied children) from the Horn of Africa taking this eastern route than the western/northern route** towards Europe. The nationalities of these children are primarily Ethiopian, with some Somali. Despite the lack of sex-disaggregated data for children on the westward and eastward routes, it is reported that **significantly more boys than girls** are arriving in Italy and in Yemen.

Economic motivation is a powerful push and pull factor for both children and youth to migrate, sometimes for short or seasonal work (often younger children) or as a longer term future prospect (older children, youth). Gender inequality and discrimination also drives girls and women to leave in order to avoid forced marriages and to seek better educational and employment opportunities. For children, **child protection issues frequently act as a 'push' factor in independent child migration**. Children who migrate alone (whether domestically or cross-border to neighbouring countries) have often left a home characterised by a lack of carer and sometimes by violence, abuse or neglect. In some cases, a relatively short migration to urban centres within the country or across nearby borders may be followed by secondary movement to bigger cities or further countries once children accumulate financial and social resources.

Migrating to join family in other countries (particularly Europe) was one of the most powerful 'pull' factors for children highlighted in the study. Younger children (under the age of 13 years) who have migrated and encounter difficult conditions in transit also frequently express a wish to return home to their family, unless family reunification was a primary reason for their original movement. Following family was also a pull factor for youth, however **aspirational motivations of a better, more prosperous life emerged as the primary attraction for youth**, often influenced by 'success stories' of migration shared through friends, family and diaspora.

The protection afforded to children and youth on the move through normative frameworks for human rights is relatively comprehensive in most of the Horn of Africa countries, and can provide a solid basis for advocacy on enforcement and system strengthening. Legal protection of the specific rights of migrant workers is however very weak in the region, and **none of**

the countries in the Horn of Africa have signed the Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

Several countries have also made reservations to the rights of refugees to education and employment.

Programmatic response for children and youth on the move requires a **closely coordinated, multi-partnered approach which links and reinforces protective mechanisms across the various stages of the movement.** This is highly challenging and emergent projects often deal with one particular group (e.g. refugees in a camp setting), or in one location or phase of movement. The establishment of dedicated coordination mechanisms (such as the Mixed Migration Taskforce in Djibouti) and the integration of mixed migration into existing mechanisms such as Protection or Child Protection Working Groups can facilitate this coordination. Partnerships between government, NGOs and civil society are key in supporting a systemic approach to protecting children and youth on the move. Finally, the importance of **listening to female and male children and youth from different groups and in different parts of the Horn of Africa** is vital in ensuring their views are incorporated into programmatic development in a way that supports rather than hinders their opportunities and well-being.

This report presents a number of key recommendations for organisations aiming to protect children and youth on the move within and from the Horn of Africa, including the need for comprehensive strategies that consider both the vulnerabilities and threats that impact these groups. Among these recommendations, supporting the development of sex and age disaggregated data in migration and displacement monitoring, and supporting further research addressing youth as a specific target group within mixed migration could help greatly to identify patterns, and design more efficient programmes. The report also highlights the importance of strengthened coordination and partnerships to connect responses to mixed migration between areas of origin, transit and destination, and to link humanitarian and development programming to reduce and mitigate the risks of unsafe migration.

1 Introduction

1.1 Objectives and Methodology

Considerable literature exists concerning the scope and nature of human migration originating from and occurring through the Horn of Africa, including the circumstances of migrants and refugees, routes taken, the drivers of migration, and general numerical trends. Much less has been documented about the numbers, trends, risks and needs of children and youth on the move in the Horn of Africa region. Sex and age disaggregated data which allows for analysis of the specific issues concerning girls and boys, young women and men, of varying migration status, is scanty.

The study is based on a rapid desk review carried out by an independent consultant in June 2016, supplemented by field research involving consultations with children, youth and key informants (KIs) from communities, government and organisations in Ethiopia and Djibouti. Additional KIs were conducted by another external consultant in Sudan.¹⁷ The locations included in the consultations aimed to provide a perspective of different migratory contexts within the Horn of Africa, including cross-border and internal migration, rural and urban settings, and camp and non-camp contexts. Interviews of children and youth and KIs were conducted by the consultant in Ethiopia (Amhara region) and by DRC Ethiopia staff (Tigray region). KI interviews (KIs) with government, local and international NGOs, inter-governmental organisations and community representatives were carried out by the lead consultant in Djibouti and by another external consultant in Sudan.

17 The short timeframe for the study limited the locations and groups that could be included in the field research and, as such, the consultation do not purport to represent the multiple groups which comprise 'children and youth on the move' in the Horn of Africa.

Table 1: Consultations conducted

Country	Location	Children and youth consultation	KI Interviews
Ethiopia	Amhara Region (Bahir Dar and Gondar)	FGDs with 15 boys (aged 10 – 15 years) and 7 girls (13 to 15 years). All children had undertaken unaccompanied domestic migration.	3
	Tigray Region (Hitsats refugee camp)	Individual interviews with 5 unaccompanied children (3 boys, 2 girls, up to 14 years) and 5 women (below 23 years of age)	1
Djibouti	Djibouti-ville	Review of more than 50 interview notes (IOM / Caritas) with unaccompanied children and youth (aged 10 to 20 years)	2
Sudan	Khartoum	Desk review and KIs with Humanitarian Frontline Workers	4
	Darfur		1
	Elfasher		1
	Kordofan		1
	Central Darfur host communities and refugee camps		2

A Steering Committee, comprising representatives from the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS), Save the Children, and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) provided oversight to the overall design and implementation of the study.

The section on programmatic response and recommendations focuses on promising practices by front-line organisations and agencies and the potential actions that they can take, in consultation and close cooperation with governments, civil society and communities, to improve their programmatic response. The conditions, policy and institutional frameworks affecting children and youth migrants in countries of destination outside the Horn of Africa, such as Europe, are largely outside the scope of this report but are well documented in literature.¹⁸

¹⁸ See, for example, PICUM, 2015; ENOC, 2016.

1.2 Children and Youth on the Move: Invisible Numbers

A review of the literature on migration reveals the lack of attention to children and youth in numbers and analysis. Older youth above the age of 18 (i.e. 18 to 24 years) are generally included in the overall 'adult' category of 18 to 59 years within displacement statistics. While children below the age of 18 years (which includes 'youth' aged 15 to 17) are more often counted separately from adults, the specific period of adolescence (10 to 19 years) is also generally missing and often no distinction is made between girls and boys, or between children migrating with families and those travelling independently. The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants has highlighted that there is a general absence of a child rights perspective in national laws and policies and a lack of accurate statistical information on the number of children involved in the international migration process.¹⁹ Age-disaggregated data is only available for 31 per cent (or 17 million people) of the total number (54.96 million) of refugees, IDPs and other persons of concern to UNHCR, as of 2014. The highest coverage of child disaggregated data is available for refugees with information broken down by age groups (below 18 years) for almost 9.0 million (or 62 per cent) out of the total 14.4 million refugees globally, 56 per cent of the refugee returnees, 55 per cent of others of concern, 41 per cent of asylum-seekers, and 40 per cent of returned IDPs. Significant gaps however remain in the availability of age-disaggregated data within stateless persons and IDP groups globally: just 1 per cent of data on stateless persons provides an age breakdown and only 18 per cent of IDPs.²⁰

Information on 'international migrant stock' provides a breakdown of age and sex groups (including 10 to 14, 15 to 19 and 20 to 25 years), however these figures are generally based on census data and are therefore suspected to significantly undercount irregular migrants. Migrant stock figures moreover do not include internally displaced (non-foreigners), nor provide a picture of the conditions or characteristics of the movements behind the numbers.

What we know about children and youth in mixed migration is therefore – at best – a partial and fragmented picture and an unknown number of children and youth on the move continue to be invisible to official immigration and displacement statistics. Below are some quick facts on children and youth on the move – globally as well as in and from the Horn of Africa, based on available data.

The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants has highlighted that there is a general absence of a child rights perspective in national laws and policies.

What we know about children and youth in mixed migration is – at best – a partial and fragmented picture.

¹⁹ Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, 2009, paragraphs 24, 20.

²⁰ UNHCR, 2014, p. 64.

International migrant stock:

1. Globally, as of 2015, 244 million people were international migrants, of which 15 per cent (around 37 million) were aged below 20 years.²¹ This is an increase in absolute numbers (an increase of 2 million) but the same percentage as two years earlier.
2. Africa, in 2015, hosted the highest proportion of young persons among all international migrants at 34 per cent.²² In the Horn of Africa the proportion of young persons is even higher, with 48 per cent of international migrants aged 0 – 19 years, or 1.76 million (out of 3.64 million).²³
3. The median age of migrants in Africa in 2015 was 29 years, the youngest of any region (the global median was 39 years).²⁴ This was one year below the median age of 30 years in 2013. The median age of international migrants in Horn of Africa countries was younger at 24 years.²⁵

Table 2: International migrants in the Horn of Africa countries

International Migration 2015				
	International migrants	0-19 years (%)	0-19 years (in absolute numbers)	Median age
Djibouti	112,400	34.3	38,553	27
Eritrea	15,900	21.9	3,482	30
Ethiopia	1,072,900	47.5	509,628	22
Kenya	1,084,400	50	542,200	22
Somalia	25,300	45.6	11,537	26
South Sudan	824,100	48.9	402,985	24
Sudan	503,500	49.2	247,722	20
TOTAL	3,638,500	48 %	1,756,10	

Female migrants outnumber male migrants in a number of age groups in the Horn of Africa.

Source: UNDESA, 2015a.

21 UNDESA, 2015.

22 Ibid.

23 Author's calculations, using international migration stock data available for Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan from UNDESA, 2015.

24 UNDESA, 2015.

25 Author's calculation, using international migration stock data available for Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan from UNDESA, 2015.

4. Female migrants outnumber male migrants in a number of age groups in the Horn of Africa. In Kenya, females constitute 50 per cent or slightly more among age groups from 10 years up to 24 years; in Somalia there are more females than males for all age groups from 4 years up to 24 years; in South Sudan girls from 0 to 9 years represent more than 52 per cent of migrants; in Djibouti 53 per cent of 14 to 19 year olds and 54 per cent of 20 to 24 year olds are female; and in Ethiopia 54 per cent of 5 to 9 year old migrants are girls.²⁶

Forcibly displaced:

5. The percentage of children among forcibly displaced is considerably higher than the percentage amongst international migrant stock. In 2015, 51 per cent of refugees globally were estimated to be children under 18 years, the same percentage as in 2014.²⁷
6. In the Horn of Africa, as of 2015, just over 8 million people were refugees or IDPs. The percentage of children amongst the forcibly displaced in the Horn of Africa countries ranged from 44 to 61 per cent.²⁸
7. The number of children seeking asylum in European Union (EU) member states more than doubled between 2014 (144,550 children, or 26 per cent of the total) and 2015 (at 363,890 children or 29 per cent of the total).²⁹
8. In 2015, the number of unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) seeking asylum in the EU on an individual basis had reached levels unprecedented since at least 2006, reaching 98,400 claims in 2015 compared to 34,300 in 2014.³⁰ The proportion of UASCs among all asylum applications has also increased from just over 2 per cent in 2013 to nearly 5 per cent in 2015.³¹ Between 2014 and 2015, the number of UASCs seeking asylum in the EU almost quadrupled, surging from 23,150 to 88,300. A substantial majority of children were boys (91 per cent), over half were aged 16 to 17 (57 per cent), while those aged 14 to 15 accounted for 29 per cent and those aged less than 14 for 13 per cent.³²
9. Unaccompanied children from Eritrea comprised 6 per cent (5,455) of all unaccompanied child asylum seekers in the EU in 2015, and Somalis 4 per cent (3,560).³³ This amounts to 9,015 unaccompanied child asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa or just over 10 per cent of all unaccompanied child asylum seekers in the EU.

In 2015, 51 per cent of refugees globally were estimated to be children under 18 years.

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26 UNDESA, 2015.

27 UNHCR, 2016g, p.4; UNHCR, 2014, p. 11.

28 Author's calculations based on UNHCR, 2016g.

29 ENOC, 2016, p. 8.

30 UNHCR, 2016g, p. 44.

31 Ibid, p. 44.

32 Eurostat, 2016.

33 Ibid.

2 Children and Youth on the Move in the Horn of Africa

the northern/
western route

Mixed migration within the Horn of Africa and out of the region is highly dynamic, responding to conflict and instability, political and social factors, climatic and environmental pressures, as well as national and international immigration and refugee policies.³⁴ The mixed migration population includes refugees, internally displaced persons ('IDPs'), asylum seekers, migrants seeking better economic, educational or social opportunities, as well as trafficked people.³⁵

The three main axes of movement from the Horn of Africa considered in this section are the 'western/northern route' towards Libya or Egypt and onwards (for some) to Italy and other European countries; the eastern route towards Yemen and onwards to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, and the 'southern route' to Kenya and onwards to southern Africa. Displacement and migration within national borders ('internal migration') and within the Horn of Africa are also considered. As already highlighted, the lack of age (and sex) disaggregated data creates significant challenges in estimating the proportion of children and youth (female and male) within the migratory populations both within the Horn of Africa and leaving the region.

There is no 'one journey' nor 'one group' of children or youth. The motivations and the aspirations of children and youth on the move may change over the course of their journey, adapting or reacting to emerging situations and to new opportunities or additional information related to potential destinations. A child or youth may change migration 'status' en route. For example, she or he may start their journey as a domestic migrant, cross a border and become an irregular international migrant, change countries and apply for documentation as an asylum seeker and finally become a recognised refugee. Another child following the same route, but leaving slightly different circumstances or having different information available to them, may establish themselves in the same final destination as an irregular migrant.

The lack of age (and sex) disaggregated data creates significant challenges in estimating the proportion of children and youth (female and male) within the migratory populations both within the Horn of Africa and leaving the region.

34 An illustrative example is Ethiopia where IOM estimate that in 2016 for internal displacement alone, 821,400 people will be displaced across Ethiopia of which 286,400 from drought, 425,000 from flooding and 110,000 from communal conflict, Carter and Rohwerder, 2016, p. 21.

35 The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) describes mixed migration as consisting of complex population movements including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and other migrants (IOM, 2004, p. 42). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) describes it as people travelling in an irregular manner along similar routes, using similar means of travel, but for different reasons (UNHCR, 2011b, p. 8).

2.1 The Northern/Western Route

The western route commences in Eritrea, Ethiopia, or Somalia, passes through Sudan and, for some, either ends in Libya or continues towards Europe by crossing the Mediterranean (referred to by the European border agency Frontex as the “Central Mediterranean” route). Those taking the Central Mediterranean route arrive in Italy or (for extremely small numbers) Malta. Horn of Africa countries do not register as significant countries of origin amongst the eastern Mediterranean arrivals into Greece (which outnumbered arrivals into Italy by about 7:1 for 2015, although as of 2016 this ratio had changed to around 3:1 due to restrictive/return policies from Greece and European agreements with Turkey), although Somalis reportedly accounted for one per cent of all those taking the Eastern Mediterranean Route up to the end of October 2015 (6,000 Somalis in absolute numbers).³⁶ Frontline organisations observe that migrants arriving in Italy, including Eritreans and Somalis, rarely remain there but move on quickly to northern Europe.³⁷

In recent years the popularity of the western route amongst migrants, asylum seekers and refugees has significantly increased, although data is still largely limited to those who reach (and are registered in) Europe. In 2015, an estimated 154,000 migrants entered Europe via the Central Mediterranean route – an increase of nearly 400 per cent over the previous year, and more than 1,000 per cent compared to 2012.³⁸

Most of the migrants using the Central Mediterranean route in 2015 came from the Horn of Africa. By far the largest contingent of migrants at 27 per cent (39,162) is from the sub-region’s second smallest country: Eritrea. Significant numbers also took this route from Somalia (12,433 or 8 per cent) and Sudan (over 9,000 or 6 per cent).³⁹ As such, three Horn of Africa countries numbered approximately 41 per cent (around 60,500) of the total arrivals via this route in 2015. As a proportion of all arrivals via the Mediterranean into Europe, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan account for 7 per cent of the total number of arrivals in 2015 (more than 1 million), or some 70,000.

Eritreans have again comprised the largest group of arrivals through the Central Mediterranean route in the first five months of 2016.

Eritreans have again comprised the largest group of arrivals through the Central Mediterranean route in the first five months of 2016, although the relative percentage of Horn of Africa countries fell as migration and displacement from West Africa surged. Eritrean arrivals numbered 6,076 out of a total of 47,851 (13 per cent); Somalia comes in fourth place (3,450 or 7 per cent) and Sudan in seventh place (2,653 or 5.5 per cent).⁴⁰ These three Horn of Africa countries so far represent more than 25 per cent (12,179) of the total arrivals for the first five months of 2016.

36 Sahan Foundation and IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP), 2016, p. 13.

37 Save the Children and IOM, 2015, p. 8.

38 Sahan Foundation and IGAD Security Sector Program (ISSP), 2016, p. 5.

39 RMMS, 2015b, p. 6.

40 IOM, 2016a.

As the overall migration through the Central Mediterranean route is increasing, so too is the relative proportion of children. As of the end of May 2016, the percentage of child arrivals amongst the arrivals in Italy rose from 11 per cent (16,478 children) in 2015 to 16 per cent (7,567 children).⁴¹ Data of arrivals into Italy is not disaggregated by sex, but it is commonly reported by organisations that boys significantly outnumber girls. It is also believed that many more children who arrive in Italy do not admit to being under 18 for fear the authorities will place them in a centre for unaccompanied migrant children, preventing them from travelling onwards to northern Europe where they may foresee better opportunities for employment or better chances for asylum claims, or to join family or community members. In 2014, the number of children who have gone missing from the government-run shelters in Italy was estimated at 3,707 children.⁴² In 2015, it was estimated that 5,000 refugee children vanished without trace after arriving in Italy and registering with the authorities.⁴³

In addition to the relative increase of children among this group is the high prevalence of unaccompanied minors on this route. As early as 2013, field research indicated that the number of unaccompanied children was increasing, at the same time as the average age was decreasing (from 16 or 17 year olds to 14 or 15 year olds).⁴⁴ The number of unaccompanied child arrivals more than doubled in the first five months of 2016 as compared with the same period in 2015, according to IOM. Between January and May 2015, 4,566 minors had arrived in Italy by sea, of which some 3,058 (60 per cent) were unaccompanied. Between January and May 2016, 7,567 children had arrived and of these 7,009 children - almost 93 per cent - were unaccompanied.⁴⁵ Based on 2015 figures (as of end of October), the largest group of unaccompanied children (29 per cent) were from Eritrea, followed by Syria, Egypt, and then Somalia (at 9 per cent).⁴⁶

According to the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC), the number of unaccompanied girls and children with disabilities is rising, although numbers are unavailable.⁴⁷ This lack of reliable information on the number of unaccompanied children arriving in Europe and disaggregated information on sex and age has been raised as a concern by ENOC.⁴⁸

Youth make up a large proportion of the Somalis embarking on irregular migration from Somaliland and Puntland towards Europe. A study on *tahriib* (irregular migration) from Puntland and Somaliland, found that of the 194 individuals reported to have undertaken *tahriib*, approximately 90

As the overall migration through the Central Mediterranean route is increasing, so too is the relative proportion of children.

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41 Based on excel data posted on UNHCR, 2016c. Arrivals into Greece also saw an increase in the relative number of children in the same period: from 29 per cent in 2015 to 38 per cent up to May 2016. The age-disaggregated data for Greece and Italy arrivals is updated to 30/05/2016, presumably explaining the difference between the overall children percentage of 32 per cent on the UNHCR website, and the aggregated Greece (29 per cent) and Italy (16 per cent) figures.

42 IRIN, 2016c.

43 Townsend, 2016.

44 Altai Consulting, 2013, p. 83.

45 IOM, 2016a.

46 IOM and UNICEF, 2015.

47 ENOC, 2016, p. 10.

48 Ibid, p. 10.

The number of children seeking asylum in Europe increased sharply in 2015.

percent of them were 25 years old or younger when they left home, with 60 percent 20 years or younger, 45 percent aged 18-20 years old and 15 percent younger than 18 years old. The youngest person to embark on *tahriib* found by this study was a 14 year-old boy from Hargeysa.⁴⁹

The number of children seeking asylum in Europe increased sharply in 2015. Although this surge is primarily attributed to the arrivals in Greece (which, as noted, do not include significant numbers from the Horn of Africa), the numbers of unaccompanied child asylum seekers from Eritrea and Somalia has also increased. In 2014, Eritreans were the second largest group globally of UASC requesting asylum and third place in 2015, while Somalis were in fourth place in 2014 and fifth place in 2015.⁵⁰

Although the absolute numbers of Eritrean and Somali UASC asylum seekers increased from 7,800 to 11,400 from 2014 to 2015, their percentages of the total number of UASC asylum seekers (which increased from 34,300 to 98,400 during the same period) fell from 23 per cent to 11 per cent, mainly due to the strong increase in the number of Syrian asylum applications. In 2015, of the UASC claims registered in the EU (global figures for 2015 are not yet available), Eritrea comprised 6 per cent (5,455) of all unaccompanied child asylum seekers in the EU, and Somalis 4 per cent (3,560).⁵¹

Table 3: Child asylum seeker applications from Eritrea and Somalia

Country	2014 global asylum claims		2015 global asylum claims		2015 asylum claims in the EU (Eurostat figures)	
	Number	per cent of total UASC	Number	per cent of total UASC	Number	%
Eritrea	4,800	14%	7,300	7%	5,455	6%
Somalia	3,000	9%	4,100	4%	3,560	4%
Total	7,800	23%	11,400	11%	9,015	10%

Source: UNHCR and Eurostat figures.

Outside of Europe, only Kenya had more than 1,000 unaccompanied or separated children lodging applications, with 2,300 (a similar level to 2014); most of these came from children from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan.⁵²

In part because of the high risks and hardships involved (outlined below in section 4), comparatively few families take the Central Mediterranean route, with adult men making up almost 73 per cent of the arrivals in the first five months of 2016. The number of women is relatively low (5,486),

49 Nimo-ilhan Ali, forthcoming.

50 UNHCR, 2014, p. 44 and p. 55.

51 Eurostat, 2016.

52 UNHCR, 2016g, p. 44.

amounting to just 11 per cent of the total arrivals in the same period.⁵³ In contrast, the proportion of women amongst the migrants who reach Libya may be higher. Research in Libya in 2013 found that amongst asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa, close to half of the Ethiopian and Eritrean asylum seekers were women, while the majority of Somali asylum seekers were male. The report also cited IOM Libya figures for 2010 showing that 35.5 per cent of migrants in Libya were female.⁵⁴ A UNICEF study conducted in the first half of 2016 of unaccompanied children who had recently arrived in France, found that a number of Ethiopian women had taken many years to reach France, including years of work in Libya.⁵⁵ It is estimated that the numbers arriving in Europe through the Central Mediterranean route will increase during the summer of 2016 and that some 235,000 refugees and migrants are waiting in Libya.⁵⁶

While Libya is still the main departure point for the majority of migrants (accounting for 85-90 per cent of departures in 2015), 2016 has also seen an increase in numbers of migrants sailing to Europe from Egypt, including Egyptians, Somalis, Sudanese and Eritreans.⁵⁷ While Egypt used to be a primary route to Israel, via the Sinai desert, such movements have almost dried up following restrictive measures by Israel in 2012-2013.⁵⁸ According to some testimonies gathered by IOM, some of the migrants coming from East Africa are now using Egypt for onward movement to Europe in order to avoid Libya, which is considered currently too dangerous with reports of transporters dumping clients in the desert, rape of women by Libyan militia and transporters, detention and torture, and executions of Christians by the so-called 'Islamic State'.⁵⁹ More than 1,900 irregular Eritrean migrants reportedly arrived in Italy from Egypt between January and mid-April 2016, more than double the 655 arrivals recorded in the same period in 2015.⁶⁰ An increase in the number of unaccompanied minors – particularly Eritreans and Ethiopians – arriving to and transiting through Egypt was reported in 2015, with particular concerns for these cases as they were lacking basic support, including shelter.⁶¹

A key finding of a 2015 study on migrants moving from East to North Africa (Eritrea to Ethiopia, Ethiopia to Sudan, Eritrea to Sudan, routes across Sudan, routes into and out of Egypt and Sudan into Libya) found that most people crossing these borders do not have the intention or the capacity of making it all the way to Libya and the Mediterranean. Many of the migrants, asylum seekers and refugees stated that they had no plans to reach Europe, they only wanted to reach the first place of safety in neighbouring countries, or a country where they expected to have access to better living conditions and work opportunities.⁶²

An increase in the number of unaccompanied minors – particularly Eritreans and Ethiopians – arriving to and transiting through Egypt was reported in 2015, with particular concerns for these cases as they were lacking basic support, including shelter.

53 Author's calculation based on data posted on UNHCR, 2016g.

54 Altai Consulting, 2013, p. 84 – 85.

55 UNICEF, 2016d, p. 41.

56 Ibid, p. 2.

57 IRIN, 2016a.

58 Only 140 migrants and asylum seekers have reportedly entered Israel in 2015, which is, however, more than those entering in 2013 and 2014 combined. RMMS, 2015b, p. 4.

59 IRIN, 2016a.

60 Ibid.

61 MHUB, 2015, p. 39.

62 Ibid, p. 7, 27.

2.2 The Eastern Route

The availability of data suggests that the Eastern route (into Yemen to Saudi Arabia and beyond) continues to be the most popular route for migration from the Horn of Africa. In 2015, an estimated 92,446 persons arrived in Yemen (89 per cent Ethiopian, 11 per cent Somali).⁶³ In the four years from 2011 to 2014 a similar average of approximately 93,000 Ethiopian and Somali migrants have taken this route (a total of 367,000). In comparison, the Eritreans, Somalis and Sudanese who arrived in Europe in 2015 through the central Mediterranean route in Europe, as outlined above, numbered just over 60,000. How many more have travelled westward and remained in Libya or Egypt, however, is unknown, and may push the relative number taking the westward route higher.

While the numbers of children and youth amongst those who take the Eastern route is not known, reports have estimated that 20 per cent of the 91,000 migrants travelling to Yemen in 2014 were unaccompanied children.⁶⁴ UNICEF reported in 2014 that about 20 per cent of the 71,907 Ethiopians, who landed in Yemen were unaccompanied and separated children, mostly boys.⁶⁵ This would place the number of unaccompanied children taking the eastward external route at around 18,000, which suggests that significantly more children travelling alone from the Horn of Africa take the eastward route, comparing to those on the westward route. The eastern route through Yemen has traditionally been to the Gulf countries. In 2013 and 2014, Saudi Arabia expelled 170,000 Ethiopian migrants (together with hundreds of thousands from other nationalities) from the country back to Ethiopia, including many young girls.⁶⁶ In spite of this, and the escalation of the conflict in Yemen from early 2015, the numbers of migrants from the Horn of Africa using the eastward route have continued unabated. Only briefly (four months) did new arrival figures to Yemen decrease, while the overall arrivals for 2015 still showed a slight increase compared to 2014 (91,592).⁶⁷ In the first 6 months of 2016, at least 35,453 persons arrived in Yemen from the Horn of Africa, a 338 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2015.⁶⁸

Yemen is reported to be a transit and destination country for women and children, primarily from the Horn of Africa, for sex trafficking and forced labour.⁶⁹ Ethiopian and (to a fewer extent) Somali women and children may travel voluntarily to Yemen with the hope of working in other Gulf countries, but are vulnerable to being abandoned in Yemen and exploited. In addition to those who travel on to Yemen, there are child migrants and refugees who travel eastwards but stop in Djibouti. While the numbers of migrants inside Djibouti (112,000 according to UNDESA figures for 2015) is relatively small in comparison with other Horn of Africa countries, unaccompanied child migrants are highly visible, living on the streets. The Caritas Centre in Djibouti-ville currently supports around 130 such children, mostly from Ethiopia, and the vast majority of the younger children do not indicate an

Significantly more children travelling alone from the Horn of Africa take the eastward route, comparing to those on the westward route.

63 RMMS, 2015b.

64 US Department of State, 2015, p. 365.

65 UNICEF, 2015b.

66 RMMS, 2014c.

67 RMMS, 2015b; p. 3; RMMS, 2016d.

68 RMMS, 2016f.

69 US Department of State, 2015, p. 365.

interest in migrating on to Yemen or Saudi Arabia.⁷⁰ Some older children and youth who intended to travel to Yemen have become stranded in Djibouti without money and means to continue.

2.3 The Southern Route

There is relatively little information available on migration via the southern route from the Horn of Africa (down the Eastern Corridor via Kenya towards South Africa), and even less about children and youth. Conservative estimates place the number of undocumented migrants from other African countries in South Africa anywhere between three and six million people.⁷¹ Statistics from South Africa's Department of Home Affairs showed an overall increase in the number of migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Somalia from 2009-2011, but did not reflect the number of migrants who remain in transit countries en route.⁷² In 2009, IOM estimated that between 17,000 and 20,000 male refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa – overwhelmingly from Ethiopia and Somalia – try to reach South Africa each year.⁷³ Anecdotal information and scattered quantitative data (such as estimates on the number of Ethiopians entering Kenya on a daily basis or the number of migrants transiting through Malawi per month) suggest these numbers are still the same, but reliable updated figures are not available.⁷⁴

In an IOM study of migration to Southern Africa it was found that the migrating population from Ethiopia and Somalia is mainly made up of young men between the ages of 18 and 35. There is also evidence suggesting that unaccompanied minors are undertaking the journey to Southern Africa.⁷⁵ In June 2016, 15 unaccompanied Ethiopian children (together with 24 adults) were intercepted and detained by Zambian authorities for illegal entry. IOM assisted the children with return to Ethiopia and family tracing and reunification, and reported that the migrants had been promised well-paid jobs in South Africa and were beaten en route.⁷⁶

Tough measures are regularly taken in an effort to control the flow of Ethiopians in and through Kenya and there have been multiple reports in 2015 and 2016 of the arrest and detention of large groups of Ethiopians.⁷⁷ In April 2016, more than 40 Ethiopians, believed to be on their way to find work in South Africa, were picked up from two houses in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and charged with being in the country illegally. Migration and refugee protection has increasingly become conflated with security concerns in Kenya as a result of a string of high-profile attacks by the Somali jihadist group al-Shabab.⁷⁸

70 KI interviews and review of interview / case notes, Djibouti, 24 June 2016.

71 RMMS, 2015b.

72 IOM, 2013, p 7, citing South African government figures.

73 IRIN, 2016 b, citing IOM, (2009), *In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity* Assessment of the irregular movement of men from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa.

74 RMMS, 2016g.

75 IOM, 2013, p 7.

76 IOM, 2016b.

77 See, for example, RMMS, 2015b; RMMS, 2016a.

78 IRIN, 2016b.

2.4 Displacement and Movement within the Horn of Africa

The high numbers of people displaced within the Horn of Africa suggest that there is much greater movement within the region than through the external migration routes outlined above. As of June 2016, Ethiopia and Kenya continued to host the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers in the region, totalling 743,190 and 562,357 respectively.⁷⁹ It is estimated since 2014 that 5,000 people have been leaving Eritrea each month, mainly to neighbouring Ethiopia and Sudan, and the number of Eritreans arriving in Ethiopian refugee camps showed a record high during 2015 (34,451 in the eight months up to end of August 2015).⁸⁰ The ongoing crisis in South Sudan in 2014 to 2015 saw increasing numbers of refugees crossing into neighbouring Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan as well as more than 2 million more internally displaced in South Sudan. Somalis account for the highest number of refugees in the region - in Kenya (396,693), Ethiopia (251,987) and Djibouti (12,674) – in addition to more than 1.1 million internally displaced Somalis.⁸¹

There is also a new trend of immigration into the Horn of Africa from Yemen due to the conflict in Yemen.⁸² Since the start of the conflict, Yemenis, as well as returning Somalis and other nationalities from the Horn of Africa, have been arriving in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan (where governments have all granted prima facie refugee status to Yemenis).⁸³ As of 30 June 2016, a total of 87,417 persons (including 30 percent Yemeni nationals and 36 percent Somali nationals) had sought refuge in neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa.⁸⁴

UNHCR figures for 2015 show that the total 'population of concern' in the Horn of Africa amounts to over 8 million people, including over 6.1 million IDPs and approximately 1.9 million refugees.⁸⁵ The table below shows the numbers of refugees, IDPs, the total persons of concern, and the percentage of children (for refugees and for the overall population of concern).⁸⁶

79 UNHCR, 2016h; UNHCR, 2016j.

80 UN Human Rights Council, 2015; Sahan, 2016, pp. 9 – 10.

81 UNHCR, 2016h; UNHCR, 2016j; UNHCR, 2016f. Kenya and Ethiopia figures are as of June 30th, 2016. Djibouti figures are as of March 2016.

82 UN News Service, 2015.

83 UNHCR, 2015a.

84 <http://data.unhcr.org/yemen/regional.php>.

85 UNHCR, 2016g.

86 Extracted from UNHCR 2016f, annexes 1, 13 and 14. Age-disaggregated data is available only for a percentage of refugees, IDPs and others and therefore the percentages may not be representative of the total population.

Table 4: Child Refugees and IDPs in the Horn of Africa in 2015

Country	Refugees	Refugees < 18 years	IDPs	Total Population of Concern	Total < 18 years	Total children within population of concern (approximate)
Djibouti	19,365	46%	-	22,006	44%	9,682
Eritrea	2,549	57%	-	2,557	57%	1,457
Ethiopia	736,086	58%	-	739,156	58%	428,710
Kenya	553,912	57%	-	615,112	56%	344,463
Somalia	8,081	48%	1,133,000	1,188,631	58%	689,406
South Sudan	263,013	61%	1,790,427	2,054,441	61%	1,253,209
Sudan	309,639	53%	3,218,234	3,735,966	52%	1,942,702
TOTAL	1,892,645		6,141,661	8,357,869		4,669,629

Sources: UNHCR and IDMC. Total population of concern includes refugees and those in 'refugee-like' situation, asylum seekers, IDPs and those in 'IDP-like' situation, stateless, returned refugees and IDPs, and others of concern. Total children within population of concern (last column) is based on the author's own calculation, applying the % of under 18 year-olds to the total persons of concern. As the % figure provided by UNHCR is a rounded number, the calculation of absolute numbers is approximate only.

The proportion of children amongst the total population of concern is highest in South Sudan (61 per cent), followed by Ethiopia and Somalia (58 per cent) while only 44 per cent of the displaced populations in Djibouti are under 18. Sudan hosts the largest number of displaced children in absolute numbers with more than 1.9 million children amongst the total population of concern.

The availability of disaggregation by area of origin and at particular time periods and locations and by non-accompanied/separated status can provide more valuable information for programmatic focus. Especially when these data show that amongst certain displaced populations within the Horn of Africa, children make up a particularly high percentage or a notably high number, or when the data show there is an increasing trend of separated and unaccompanied children among certain displaced populations or in specific countries. For example:

1. The total refugee and asylum seeker population in Ethiopia, as of March 2016, is 735,165, of which 49.7 per cent are women and girls, and 56.7 per cent are children. The number of unaccompanied minors and separated children is 38,995.⁸⁷

The proportion of children amongst the total population of concern is highest in South Sudan (61 per cent), followed by Ethiopia and Somalia (58 per cent).

87 UNHCR, 2016e.

The number of Eritrean unaccompanied children arriving in Shire, northern Ethiopia, is almost double the figure of last year.

Women and children represent 83 per cent of the South Sudanese refugees in Sudan.

Aggregating the recorded groups of separated and unaccompanied children in different countries yields a total of some 90,000 separated and unaccompanied children amongst the displaced populations (refugees and IDPs) within the Horn of Africa.

2. The number of Eritrean unaccompanied children arriving in Shire, northern Ethiopia, is almost double the figure of last year. A total of 3,790 unaccompanied and separated children (including 537 girls) have passed through the Reception Centre up to June 16, 2016.⁸⁸
3. Women and children make up the large majority of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia (more than 90 per cent).⁸⁹
4. In Sudan, while children represent 52 per cent of all displaced or others of concern, OCHA has reported that children represent about 60 per cent of the 1.6 million people IDPs living in camps, and even more amongst newly displaced communities.⁹⁰ Women and children represent 83 per cent of the South Sudanese refugees in Sudan.⁹¹
5. Since 2010, more than 4,000 unaccompanied minors have been received at the refugee reception centre in Sudan. More than 95 per cent of these children are Eritreans.⁹²
6. Over 34,000 separated or unaccompanied children have been registered amongst South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda, representing 10 per cent of the total number of refugee children in some of the countries of asylum.⁹³
7. There are 11,990 separated children and 2,341 unaccompanied children registered in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp.⁹⁴

Aggregating the recorded groups of separated and unaccompanied children in different countries yields a total of some 90,000 separated and unaccompanied children amongst the displaced populations (refugees and IDPs) within the Horn of Africa. Given the difficulties of data collection, this can reasonably be expected to be under-reported.

2.5 Domestic migration and links with cross-border movement

KIs interviewed in Ethiopia for this study repeatedly emphasised the link between domestic migration and cross-border migration in a child's migratory journey. They had observed children tended to 'start small', undertaking a relatively short first trip from their home to a larger urban centre (within the same country) where they may have familial links, the opportunity to earn some money, gain confidence, and make contacts or gather information about onward destinations and routes. The next stop

88 KI Interview, 24 June 2016.

89 Carter & Rohwerder, 2016, citing ACAPS 2015 figures.

90 OCHA, 2015, p. 7. Note that OCHA revised the number of IDPs in its 2016 Humanitarian Overview from 3.1 million (as per 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview) to 2.2 million 'IDPs in need'.

91 OCHA, 2015, p. 10.

92 KI interview, Khartoum.

93 UNHCR (undated, covering 2015-2017).

94 UNHCR, 2016b.

may be an urban centre in a neighbouring country (for example, to earn money), or a stop compelled by lack of money or means to continue, strict border controls or restrictive policies (including detention) in the country of transit.

Where children live close to an international border, and have transport and possibly cultural or familial links across the border, the first migration step may be a cross-border one. This was the case for Eritrean unaccompanied children crossing into Ethiopia, and for many Ethiopian unaccompanied children crossing into Djibouti from regions of Ethiopia close to the border.

These children are generally from rural areas and may then find themselves living on the street in urban centres such as Djibouti-ville where the chances of finding work are higher. Migrant children in Djibouti may also practice ‘circular migration’.

Box 1 Domestic migration of unaccompanied children in Ethiopia

Police statistics collected in Amhara region, Ethiopia, show that the number of unaccompanied domestic children on the move who were tracked by police over three years was around 4,190 (52 per cent boys). KIs acknowledged that such tracking cannot detect all child migrants and the actual figure is unknown. Those who were identified while still relatively close to their home are recorded by the Police Child and Gender Unit under the category of ‘prevention’ (92 per cent of cases), while those who had travelled longer distances across internal regional borders, often from Oromia or Tigray regions, are recorded under ‘response’ (requiring coordination with authorities from other regions for family reunification). Girls comprise a larger percentage (57 per cent) of this group travelling longer distances, a trend which was also highlighted by the Police. The Police noted that those who have travelled from other regions may have travelled to Amhara region as a first stop (for example, to work in Bahir Dar city), and then move on to Sudan. In comparison, they felt those originating from Amhara would be far more likely to be migrating within Amhara rather than going to Sudan (some 100 km away from Bahir Dar). The trend over three years shows a significant reduction, which KIs suggested could be attributed to the major campaign to clamp down on illegal brokers during that period. Brokers reportedly target children for internal, rural-urban migration to cities such as Bahir Dar and Addis Ababa.

domestic migration and links with cross-border movement

“I did not even know that I was going to a different country when I followed my friend to Djibouti.”

Ethiopian boy in Djibouti.

“Life here in Djibouti-ville is very hard, and so children return to their village for a kind of ‘holiday’ before migrating once more to Djibouti to earn more money.”

Key informant in Djibouti.

Table 5: Police statistics from Police Child and Gender Unit, Amhara Region⁹⁵

		July 2012 – June 2013			July 2013 – June 2014			July 2014 – June 2015		
		Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Child migration	Prevention	864	1002	1866	667	686	1353	282	360	642
	Response	93	56	149	62	61	123	31	26	57
	Total	957	1058	2015	729	747	1476	313	386	699

Studies in Ethiopia suggest that rural-urban migration rates are relatively low compared to other African countries, but are increasing, in particular for young people.

The significance of ‘Transit Cities’ is explored in IOM’s 2015 Migration Report. In Africa, some cities serve as staging posts for internal migrants to become international migrants and these transit hubs can become places of long-term stay if options for moving on are closed down.⁹⁶ A number of KIs in Sudan noted that Khartoum acted as an important transit stop for movement of Ethiopians and Somali older children (mostly above 15 years) and youth as the economic situation is stronger than in neighbouring countries.

By the late 2030s, Africa is set to become a continent with more people living in urban than rural areas.⁹⁷ Studies in Ethiopia suggest that rural-urban migration rates are relatively low compared to other African countries, but are increasing, in particular for young people. This is often the first step towards international migration, as urban migrants usually experience welfare improvement, which may give them the means and aspirations to migrate. For people from very poor areas this can sometimes be a multi-step process as they first move to smaller cities to earn enough to go to, for example, Addis Ababa, and then save money to leave Ethiopia.⁹⁸

“They are coming with an initial idea of using Sudan as transit route however in some cases if they find opportunities here in Sudan they will settle here. At times they proceed and continue with their journey whilst in some cases they stay here forever.”

Although rural-urban mobility does not in itself lead to vulnerability, migrants often face legal, cultural and social barriers and obstacles to accessing formal housing, employment, education, health and other social services in urban settings with population pressures on public systems. These barriers may force them to live in conditions of exclusion, segregation and vulnerability. Vulnerability can be particularly acute for specific migrant groups, such as migrant women, who are more likely to work in low-paid, irregular, and potentially exploitive jobs, often in the informal sector.⁹⁹

Key informant, Khartoum.

⁹⁵ Data collected during KI interview, Bahir Dar, 26 June 2016.

⁹⁶ IOM, 2015a, p. 47.

⁹⁷ Save the Children, 2015.

⁹⁸ Atnafu et al, 2014.

⁹⁹ IOM, 2015a, p. 79.

3 Drivers and motivations to move

As they are for adults, the drivers and motivations for children and youth to move are frequently multiple and interrelated. The range of political, economic, environmental and social factors present in the Horn of Africa that compel or encourage adults and family heads to move have a direct impact on children who migrate together with their families, and many of the general factors driving adults' decisions to move can also influence children and youth from the same communities who travel independently.

Across the countries included in the study, three factors emerged as particularly important for children who move without family, often working in combination with each other (and influenced by other variables such as the child or youth's age and sex). They act largely as a 'push' for children to leave home.

1. Child's personal or family situation;
2. 'Influencers' in children's lives: people with whom children interact who provide information, influence or support for children to leave home;
3. Gender-related child protection concerns (for girls).

Interestingly, the same drivers emerged prominently for domestic Ethiopian unaccompanied child migrants, as well as cross-border unaccompanied Ethiopian child migrants.

The study did not directly consult with youth regarding the drivers and influences that affect them, and as such the findings in relation to this group are drawn from literature review and the opinion of KIs. Further research into the specific push and pull factors that influence youths' decisions regarding migration would therefore be useful. In general, the factors influencing youth movement tended to be more outward looking, highlighting economic 'pull' factors and aspirations for a better future. A survey of young people in Somalia, for example, found that a high level of optimism by young people has the potential to encourage them to stay in the country, but if expectations are not fulfilled can also trigger them to leave.¹⁰⁰ Based on the response of KIs for this study, older youth appeared to have better access to information about their destination (although it could be deceptively positive), in comparison with children.

A high level of optimism by young people has the potential to encourage them to stay in the country, but if expectations are not fulfilled can also trigger them to leave.

3.1 Personal and Family Situation

Economic factors – employment and education

Macro-levels factors which have a bearing on a child's personal or family situation, such as conflict or natural disaster, opportunities for education, employment, and the systems that support access to services and fulfilment of rights – whether in countries of origin, transit or destination - affect

100 Altai Consulting, 2016.

children, youth, and the people who may influence them or make decisions on their behalf. The migration of children with their parents may be considered as a family investment, by realizing opportunities of better education and employment, which is the main route to the future success of the second generation. Children travelling alone from Eritrea into Ethiopia – some as young as five years of age - are frequently sent by their families in the belief that they will find a better life, despite the risks.¹⁰¹

According to UNICEF, the household level is the key site where choices and decisions about migration for work or other purposes are shaped and framed, including children's.¹⁰² All KIs in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan pointed to poverty, the economic hardships experienced within the family, and difficulties in providing for children's basic needs and education as primary factors in child migration. Government officials and donor agencies operating in Somaliland and Puntland consistently cite that youth unemployment is a key driver for irregular migration of young Somalis towards Europe.¹⁰³ A 2015 IOM study in Somaliland and Puntland, also found that 'better job opportunities' is the main migration motivator of youth intending to migrate. The second most popular reason is 'to study'. This is not unrelated, as studying abroad is viewed as a path to better or different job opportunities. The researchers in this study also noted that unemployment is not only caused by a lack of jobs, but also by a lack of jobs desirable for Somaliland and Puntland's youth.¹⁰⁴

This was further confirmed by a study on Somali youth in South Central zone, which found that the typical aspiring migrant in South Central Somalia, is a man or a woman usually under 25 who lives in Mogadishu. He or she is single, with an intermediary level of education. Notably, students, and not the unemployed, constituted the group to most readily express their interest in migrating. Economic factors are the main reasons for youth to migrate, with most youth mentioning the prospect of "finding a better job" as a primary motivation to leave, followed by the motivation to simply "find a job". This confirms again that unemployment is not always the main factor of departure, but that many aspiring migrants are simply motivated by better prospects and higher and more regular revenues than what they have now or can aspire to in Somalia. The second most widespread push factor for Somali youth in South Central is insecurity, and this constitutes a specificity of Somalia compared to other sub-Saharan countries at peace.¹⁰⁵ In rural settings, land ownership is under pressure from increasing family sizes, and is a recognised socio-economic driver of rural-urban migration for young people in Ethiopia.¹⁰⁶

The opportunities offered by the informal labour market is a strong pull factor for children. Almost every Ethiopian migrant boy interviewed in Ethiopia and Djibouti explained their movement as primarily motivated by the wish to earn some money. Generally the boys had heard there were opportunities for work – such as sand mining, cattle herding and seasonal work in Ethiopia, or working in restaurants in Djibouti - through friends or peers. Most of

All KIs in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Sudan pointed to poverty, the economic hardships experienced within the family, and difficulties in providing for children's basic needs and education as primary factors in child migration.

"The family's single land plot is divided and re-divided amongst new family members, and can no longer sustain the needs of all children. Alternatives must be found and this is often migration."

Key informant in Amhara region of Ethiopia.

101 KI, Ethiopia, interviewed 24 June 2016.

102 Thatun and Heissler, 2013, in Dottridge, 2013.

103 Nimo-ilhan Ali, forthcoming.

104 IOM, 2015b, p. 33-34.

105 Altai Consulting, 2016.

106 Atnafu, 2014.

the boys in the FGDs in Ethiopia had been attending school prior to leaving home (in contrast with the girls in the FGDs who had all had their schooling discontinued) and expected to resume their schooling after a few months once they had some money.

Some girls interviewed also referred to the possibility of finding domestic work, but in Ethiopia this was often cited as a means to pay for the continuation of their education; access to education being the primary motivation. For older girls (who are able to secure forged documents showing their age as 18 years) or young women above 18 years in Ethiopia, the availability of regular channels of migration for domestic work in countries such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States is a powerful pull factor as a longer-term employment option. However, in response to human rights violations against Ethiopian migrants in the Middle East and Gulf states, the government imposed a temporary ban on overseas labour recruitment between October 2013 and mid-2015. While a new legislation – the Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 909/2015 – has now been introduced with the aim of safeguarding the fundamental rights and dignity of workers, this has restricted the availability of legal labour migration channels, especially for Ethiopian women, to the Gulf States for almost two years.¹⁰⁷

Household circumstances

Evidence shows that the interlinked dimensions of household composition, birth order and sibling composition affect children's migration, and households. Child migrants may be disproportionately those lacking one or both parents.¹⁰⁸ Interviews by IOM and Caritas of unaccompanied child migrants in Djibouti-ville point to a link between a child's household situation (in particular the relationship with parents or carers) and their decision to migrate.¹⁰⁹ Almost all child migrants in Djibouti referred to one (occasionally both) parents being deceased, the separation and/or remarriage of a parent, abuse and/or violence by a parent, and/or domestic disputes within the household as a driver for migration. Other research of children travelling alone (within Southern Africa, and children from the Horn of Africa in Libya), has similarly shown death of a caregiver amongst the primary drivers for migration, as well as violence at home, negative relationships and parental divorce.¹¹⁰

Leaving without informing their families

Many unaccompanied children leaving difficult personal and family situations do not discuss their plans with parents before leaving. In a study of Eritrean unaccompanied children, none reportedly discussed their plans with anyone but close friends and family who may travel with them as they feared being reported to the local administration offices and prevented by their parents from travelling.¹¹¹ Eritrean unaccompanied children (under 14 years) interviewed for this study in Ethiopia similarly reported that none had consulted family or told them they would be leaving.

"We do not expect to go for long. We can go during school breaks and earn some money that will also help for school expenses."

Young boy in Ethiopia.

Almost all child migrants in Djibouti referred to one (occasionally both) parents being deceased, the separation and/or remarriage of a parent, abuse and/or violence by a parent, and/or domestic disputes within the household as a driver for migration.

107 RMMS, 2016b.

108 Thatun and Heissler, 2013, in Dottridge, 2013, p. 103.

109 Review of approximately 50 interviews conducted by IOM and related case notes held by Caritas Djibouti.

110 Save the Children, 2015; Altai Consulting, 2013.

111 WRC, 2013.

"We don't talk to our families before we leave because they would not let us come on this journey."

Unaccompanied Eritrean refugee in Hitsats Refugee Camp, Tigray, Ethiopia.

"I was physically punished for leaving without telling them, but also for coming back."

Young Ethiopian boy in Amhara region, Ethiopia.

Tahriib of Somali youth is largely an individual affair where young people leave without informing their families.

Family reunification in the destination country is a powerful pull factor among migrating children, and for younger children in particular.

Amongst Ethiopian unaccompanied children in Djibouti, only a very small number reported having told their parents where they were going. During the FGD with Ethiopian boys who had left home without adults for nearby destinations within Ethiopia, only one third of the 15 boys (all aged between 10 and 15 years) indicated that they had told their parents they were leaving. Some boys thought their parents may stop them, but some also felt that their parents would not care due to their poor family relationships and/or parental expectation that they should in any case earn some money. The boys were tracked through community protection networks and police and were reunified within a day or two with their families. Almost all boys reported that they felt their families were angry or disappointed with them when they returned without having succeeded in finding work in other places, which points to an almost paradoxical attitude towards migration of their children, at least in the perception of the children: families might try to stop them from migrating, but are also thought to be angry or disappointed if they return without success. One 13 year old boy could not be reunified with his family at all due to the abusive family relationship at home and was living in his working place.

A study on youth migration from Somaliland and Puntland reported similar findings. Contrary to other forms of emigration from Somalia - where the emigration of a family member is an important livelihood and risk mitigating strategy involving a number of family members - *tahriib* of Somali youth is largely an individual affair where young people leave without informing their families. Of the 194 individuals who went on *tahriib*, 89 per cent had left without informing their families. According to this study, it is highly unlikely that families would allow their young sons or daughters to go on *tahriib*, given the nature of *tahriib* and the widely reported cases of abuses and fatalities occurring en route. Second, families would also disapprove of *tahriib* to avoid the huge financial costs that befalls the household once the individual leaves, which can lead to the stress-sale of assets to pay off ransom demands (see the next chapter). It is thus imperative for young people planning to leave to ensure other members of their families are not aware of their plans, especially since families often rush to intercept their sons and daughters before reaching Addis Ababa, once they become aware that a young family member has embarked on *tahriib*. The author further noted that not involving other members of the household in the decision making process is to a large extent made possible by the existence of a leave now—pay later policy that smugglers operate. This removes the need for young people planning to go on *tahriib* to reach out to their families to secure the significant amount of financial resources associated with international migration.¹¹²

Family reunification

Family reunification in the destination country is a powerful pull factor among migrating children, and for younger children in particular. In a study of Eritrean adolescent refugees in Ethiopia in 2013, approximately half of the 105 participants in this study claimed that their primary reason for flight was to join parents, siblings or relatives in the camps or the urban centres, or to be sponsored to join parents, siblings or relatives living abroad.¹¹³ KIs interviewed for this study who are working with Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and in Sudan similarly stressed that the motivation to join other family members in Europe or other destinations was one of the most

¹¹² Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

¹¹³ WRC, 2013.

powerful drivers for unaccompanied Eritrean children on the move. From the KIs conducted in Sudan, it was clear that most children and youth migrate to join their parents or family members who have already relocated to another country.

The wish to reunify with family in the country of origin is also a trend that emerges amongst children of younger age groups who find themselves in very difficult conditions in a country of transit. One study found that many unaccompanied Eritrean children (especially children under 13 years) expressed their desire to return home, however there was no mechanism for this between Ethiopia and Eritrea.¹¹⁴ Amongst unaccompanied migrant or refugee children (mostly Ethiopian, some Somali) interviewed by IOM in Djibouti, 60 per cent of all children expressed their wish to return home, with this percentage increasing amongst children under 13 years of age. The 20 per cent who wished to remain in Djibouti were generally the children with extremely difficult home situations, while the 10 per cent who wished to continue their journey and emigrate from Djibouti were often children with family members overseas. The remaining 10 per cent did not know what they wanted to do.¹¹⁵

A combination of drivers for Eritrean children

According to available data, Eritrea is the country of origin for one of the largest groups of UASC in the Horn of Africa. Its system of potentially indefinite national service is unique to the region, and – as a driver – very specific to that context. However, discrepancies were identified between Eritrean unaccompanied children of different age groups (living in both Ethiopia and Sudan): while children of any age flee from Eritrea for reasons of family reunification, sponsorship and economic burdens or religion, older adolescents and young adults were more likely to cite the perceived threat of forced conscription (which starts from the age of 18) and of limited future prospects within Eritrea.¹¹⁶ Eritrean unaccompanied refugee children (aged less than 14 years) in Ethiopia interviewed for this study reported that their main intention in leaving was to reach Europe and to be able to send money home to help support their family, while young women aged 18 to 23 reported a combination of fear of indefinite military service and economic scarcity.

Drivers for Ethiopian youth

In relation to youth, a DRC/RMMS survey in Ethiopia, in which the majority of respondents were 18 – 25 year olds, provides insightful results. Economic factors, a sense of responsibility and success of others rated most highly, and well above 'personal and family circumstances'. Some participants in the RMMS study made references to personal or family situation such as divorce or joining family members but this was a minority (and it was not specified if this was more prevalent amongst certain age groups). The link between limited economic opportunities and the youth bulge which is characteristic of Horn of Africa countries (in Kenya, over 60 per cent of the population is under 25 years of age, while in South Sudan and Somalia, 70 per cent of the

Amongst unaccompanied migrant or refugee children (mostly Ethiopian, some Somali) interviewed by IOM in Djibouti, 60 per cent of all children expressed their wish to return home, with this percentage increasing amongst children under 13 years of age.

114 WRC, 2013, UNHCR, 2014.

115 These percentages were provided by IOM based on 135 interviews with unaccompanied migrant children in Djibouti (mostly Ethiopian) between December 2015 and February 2016.

116 WRC, 2013.

population is under 30 years of age), is a major driver of migration of young people (a majority being male) to more economically prosperous regions of Europe, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf, and South Africa.¹¹⁷ This youth bulge' is characterised by a high proportion of (migration-prone) young adults within a population, which can also increase migration propensities, especially if these demographic trends are not matched by accelerated, high and sustainable growth of income and opportunities for the young.¹¹⁸

3.2 Influencers

Culture of migration

While children and youth travelling alone may be expected to exercise a greater degree of agency in their decision to move compared to children who migrate with their families, social and cultural pressures and expectations nonetheless strongly influence their decision to leave home. A 'culture of migration' was referred to by several KIs in Ethiopia whereby migration has become a wide-spread norm in certain areas, with the majority of community members having a positive perception of migration. This reflects very similar findings of RMMS research in Ethiopia (titled *Blinded by Hope*) which also found that many returnees and current migrants think that there is more information available about successful migrants at the community level than unsuccessful ones.¹¹⁹ Some districts of Ethiopia are reportedly renowned throughout the country for producing domestic migrants which, in turn, acts as a 'pull factor' for further migration from those areas.

Similarly, in Somalia, irregular migration by youth has gradually become part of the Somali youth culture. During research on irregular migration from Somaliland and Puntland, it was noted that young people often used the word 'we' to describe why young people undertake *tahriib*: "We have to go". "We have to go try our luck in life". "We can't wait forever". Young people see it as a collective response to the wide range of social and economic challenges they face growing up in the Somali regions, a way out, an exit strategy, to overcome a host of problems in a region with a turbulent history.¹²⁰

Parents expectations

During FGDs in Ethiopia, Ethiopian boys and girls who had returned (reunified by the government) from domestic migration emphasised their parents' expectations that they would migrate. Amongst boys, a pressure is felt to migrate domestically while they are still young (10 to 15 years), while girls reported that their families expected they would migrate (abroad) once they were 'older' (it was not clear if this was understood as above 18 years). Almost all the returned boys clearly indicated that they would migrate (domestically) again, while the girls were less definite about their future migration plans. In *Blinded by Hope*, potential migrants from Ethiopia most often mention their parents as having the most influence on their migration decision, followed by spouses and siblings. For current migrants, friends (both in Ethiopia and abroad) are most frequently mentioned as having

In Somalia, irregular migration by youth has gradually become part of the Somali youth culture.

"Potential employers in the city will even request brokers to bring a domestic worker specifically from Estie District (a district known in Amhara region for producing a high number of migrants),"

Key informant in Bahir Dar, Amhara, Ethiopia.

117 UNHCR and the World Bank Group, 2015, p 23.

118 RMMS, 2015a.

119 RMMS, 2014b, p. 21, 33.

120 Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

influenced the migration decision, followed by parents and brokers.¹²¹

Peer pressure

Interactions with peers can act as an 'trigger' in children's decisions to leave home. During FGDs in Ethiopia, young boys laughed while discussing their decision to leave with friends and fondly pointed out the other boys with whom they had set off from home. Amongst the group of 15 boys, all except three had travelled in groups of two or three friends. In Djibouti, the vast majority of Ethiopian migrant boys also described leaving Ethiopia at the instigation of and / or in the company of a male friend. One boy reported that he had not even known that he was going to Djibouti when he agreed to travel with his friend. In a study of Eritrean refugee children in Ethiopia, several of the children, particularly those below 13 years old, also expressed that they had not really thought too much about crossing the border; the majority live so close and those on the Ethiopian border had spent much time playing with Ethiopian children close to their homes.¹²²

Peer pressure was also frequently cited as a factor behind irregular migration from Somaliland and Puntland. For example, a mother noted that her son had left because "all his friends were leaving together so he had to follow them". It was found that incidences of large groups of Somali youth leaving together are not uncommon.¹²³

In contrast, unaccompanied girls in Ethiopia (13 to 15 years old) and in Djibouti (mixed ages under 18) were more likely to have left home alone, with the plan to travel to a destination where they had a family member or someone they knew. Once on the move, however, and in transit countries, girls were frequently described as grouping together with other unaccompanied girl migrants en route for better self-protection.¹²⁴

In Sudan, child migrants were generally described by KIs as accompanied by extended family or tribe members. The specific risks to unaccompanied girls on the move in Sudan was highlighted by most KIs. One KI described migrating/displaced boys as more likely to be in groups while girls are 'scattered amongst homes' (it was not clear if this was for domestic work or supported by host communities), and another KI described domestic work itself as a positive coping mechanism for unaccompanied girls.

Other intermediaries and brokers/smugglers

In addition to friends and families there are other intermediaries who may facilitate children and youth's movement. While some of these individuals are exploitative; others are not, and might even offer the child protection from exploitation and harm.¹²⁵ "L'accompagnement protecteur des enfants" (child's accompanying protector) is a relatively new concept which has been explored in the context of West Africa.¹²⁶ These protectors may include informal guardians who are entrusted with the child for reasons of

influencers

Interactions with peers can act as an 'trigger' in children's decisions to leave home.

"Girls step into large plastic bags to cover themselves from their waist down while sleeping, and then sleep very closely pressed together with the strongest girls at each end for protection."

Key informant in Djibouti, explaining how girls living on the street try to protect themselves from sexual abuse.

121 RMMS, 2014b, p 33. This study surveyed three groups: potential migrants still in Ethiopia; current migrants in Yemen; and returned migrants (returned to Ethiopia from Saudi Arabia).

122 Ibid, p 33.

123 Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

124 KI Interviews in Djibouti and Ethiopia, on 20 and 24 June 2016.

125 Save the Children, 2008.

126 African Movement of Working Children and Youths et al., 2011, pp. 53-55.

education and learning, vocational training or employment. Little is known, however, of this type of arrangement in the Horn of Africa context.

Brokers play a very important intermediary role in Ethiopia, and 'illegal brokers' are commonly associated with particular risks to children in mixed migration.

Brokers play a very important intermediary role in Ethiopia, and 'illegal brokers' are commonly associated with particular risks to children in mixed migration. One study found that brokers would approach girls newly arriving in Addis Ababa from rural areas and small towns and recruit them into sexual exploitation under the guise of offering help.¹²⁷ Ethiopian women and girls are also at risk of trafficking, linked to false promises of employment in the Middle East.¹²⁸ One KI in Sudan stated that children are not usually part of the people assisted by the "facilitator" but that single girls are at risk of being raped by facilitators.

The degree to which brokers or other facilitators can act as positive agents linking families, communities and employers with appropriate information and provide protective accompaniment has not been particularly explored. Other intermediaries may include transport operators (e.g. bus or truck drivers), employers, or older children or youth working in the same destination. In Ethiopia, the young women who return from Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries to their villages during holiday periods and 'take other girls' back with them serve as an intermediary, but it was not clear from KIs whether they actively supported the newly migrating girls' protection. IOM has noted that these intermediary actors can "represent a chain which is typical of community attitudes and standard behaviour that is able to accompany and protect children for the duration of their journey. Taking initiatives to influence the way this chain functions looks like an interesting way to improve matters, rather than stigmatizing those in the chain as accomplices or traffickers."¹²⁹

Research in Somaliland and Puntland, found it is highly likely that smugglers manipulate children into irregular migration.

Research in Somaliland and Puntland, found it is highly likely that smugglers manipulate children into irregular migration. There are reports of young people being locked up in houses across Hargeisa while smugglers look for more young people to add to the group (it is more profitable to smuggle a large group). Further, smugglers influence the decision to migrate by not requiring money up front, but instead establishing a 'leave now – pay later' policy. This allows young people to commence their journeys without paying, and they only have to pay once a certain transit point is reached. A 19 year-old Somali man from Hargeysa noted in this study, "I did not have any money but my friend had USD 150. This was more than enough to get us to Addis Ababa and go to the hotel to find a smuggler." When this point is reached, the young person is required to call home and ask his/her family to send money to the smuggler. In many cases, individuals are taken hostage until their families make the payment, after which they are allowed to proceed, which, as the researcher argues, in effect changes the structure of smuggling operations to human trafficking.¹³⁰

127 Carter & Rohwerder, 2016, citing Temin et al. 2013: 40, 58

128 US Department of State, 2015, p. 365.

129 IOM and ACP Observatory on Migration, 2013, p. 22.

130 Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

Diaspora influence and social media

Members of the diaspora - those who have already left the Horn of Africa and established themselves abroad - can also act as powerful intermediaries in terms of providing information and financial support for future waves of migration (sometimes referred to as 'chain migration'). The type of information provided by 'the diaspora' about life abroad was often described as unrealistic.

The influence of diaspora appears strongest for older children or youth, and during FGDs and KI interviews younger children indicated or were described as generally having no direct contact with community members who had migrated to cities or abroad.

The perceived ease of success of diaspora when they return home, together with the limited opportunities available to young people in the Somali region, has created a narrative of success for those who leave. Leaving Somaliland and returning when equipped with the right resources, such as a foreign education and passport, is a clear strategy for Somali youth to achieve upward social mobility.¹³¹

A 2016 RMMS briefing paper on the role of ICT and social media in migration flows to Europe, argued how social media also drive migration. The success stories of those who made it to Europe spread instantaneously on social media and might influence those deciding to migrate. Pictures shared on Facebook or through WhatsApp and Viber showcasing the lives of those who have 'made it' create further aspirations to migrate among those who are left behind. These images – which may include stereotypes or posed images of prosperity, comfort, wealth and opportunity – can have tremendous impacts on the final decision to migrate and the destination chosen especially amongst those for whom migration is already an option.¹³²

In the study on irregular migration from Somaliland and Puntland, the use of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp was also identified as a mechanism to facilitate peer pressure. The widespread availability of broadband internet in households, university campuses and the countless number of internet cafes around major towns means that virtual communication, for those that can pay, is relatively accessible across the Somali regions. Connectivity speeds have also been improving, especially in Somaliland where fibre optic broadband is now available. The widespread use of smartphones means young people are continuously connected with their peers outside the country. Exchanges on social media sites expose young Somalis who are still in the country to the lives of those who have left. Although it is widely known that images posted on social media sites are often not the reality of life in Europe, these images nonetheless provide powerful incentives for young people to leave.¹³³

131 Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

132 RMMS, 2016e.

133 Nimo-ilhan, Ali, forthcoming.

influencers

"Diaspora only send pictures of the 'good life'".

Key informant in Ethiopia.

Leaving Somaliland and returning when equipped with the right resources, such as a foreign education and passport, is a clear strategy for Somali youth to achieve upward social mobility.

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3.3 Gender

Gender discrimination and inequality have been recognised as specific factors influencing girls and young women to migrate.¹³⁴ Sudan ranked 135th in the world on the 2014 gender inequality index, and Ethiopia ranked 129th out of the 155 ranked countries (Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan were not ranked).¹³⁵ Gender-based violence against women and girls, including child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), are embedded in and justified by certain social norms and practices within the Horn of Africa region.¹³⁶

All of the girls in the FGD in Amhara region, Ethiopia, cited restrictions in access to education, for example due to child marriage, as the primary reasons for leaving home for domestic migration.

All of the girls in the FGD in Amhara region, Ethiopia, cited restrictions in access to education, for example due to child marriage, as the primary reasons for leaving home for domestic migration. KIs in Amhara also drew the link between high migration and high child marriage in their region. A report by ODI on the situation in Amhara similarly connects gender inequality, lack of education, child marriage and migration of girls.¹³⁷ The study points out that fewer girls than boys have been to school and the majority have not completed primary school; that girls were responsible for more domestic labour, more likely to be restricted in terms of physical mobility, to report being socially isolated, and more likely than boys to be living away from their parents. Reflecting their lack of access to assets and rural employment, girls with no education were found especially likely to migrate.¹³⁸ Another study in Ethiopia found that 25 per cent of girls interviewed in the slum areas of Addis Ababa migrated due to the threat of forced marriage.¹³⁹ A UNICEF study in 2016 of unaccompanied children who had travelled to France found that many young Ethiopian women were fleeing from arranged marriages, the economic crisis or the poverty that is usually the result of sometimes improper confiscation of land.¹⁴⁰

Women and girls feel a strong sense of responsibility to migrate to support their families.

Migration to cities presents a powerful 'pull' for young women through increased economic independence and capacity to challenge rigid gender norms while familial pressures simultaneously (and somewhat paradoxically) work as a 'push'.¹⁴¹ An RMMS report on Ethiopian migrants to/from Yemen and Saudi Arabia found that women and girls feel a strong sense of responsibility to migrate to support their families, and that a high level of Ethiopian female migrants were represented in legal labour migration.¹⁴² The reasons for child migrants from Eritrea leaving their country were also found to differ, to a limited extent, between boys and girls, with more girls expressing some concern about sexual exploitation both in the home, with regard to early or forced marriage, and more often while completing military training.¹⁴³

134 Abramovich, Cernadas and Morlechetti, 2011.

135 Gender inequality index 2014: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

136 SIHA, 2011.

137 ODI, 2014. p 7.

138 ODI, 2014.

139 Van de Glind and Kou, 2013, p. 32, in Dottridge, 2013.

140 UNICEF, 2016d, p. 40.

141 IOM, 2015a.

142 RMMS, 2014b, p. 24.

143 WRC, 2013.

A survey amongst Somali refugees in Kenya in 2014 indicated that lack of security, shelter, employment and access to education were reasons not to return.¹⁴⁴ It can be reasonably assumed in a country of pronounced gender inequality (Somalia ranked fourth last on the Gender Inequality Index in 2012), that such issues would particularly impact women and girls. In addition, Gender Based Violence, early marriage and FGM are considered common in Somalia, and Somali patriarchal culture and the application of law (particularly sharia and xeer) lead to gender discrimination and denial of women's rights to justice, including land and inheritance entitlements.¹⁴⁵ Somali youth, especially young women, face particular difficulties in securing employment opportunities and UNDP estimates that over 60 per cent of youth have intentions to leave the country in search of better employment prospects, in line with other findings on the migration drivers for Somali youth as discussed above.¹⁴⁶

144 Avis and Herbert, 2016, p. 19.

145 Ibid, p. 7, 14.

146 Ibid, p. 9.

4 Protection Risks

The protection risks faced by children and youth on the move are multiple. They are determined by the threats that children and youth encounter (including smugglers, traffickers, authorities, other migrants, family members, local communities, environmental factors) and compounded by vulnerabilities (such as their sex, separated/unaccompanied status, lack of documentation, membership of a particular nationality/religion/ethnicity, disabilities).

The further children travel away from their place of origin, the higher the likelihood of risk as their exposure to threats multiply (with longer time and travel routes) and their resources (such as contact networks, language skills, level of information and awareness about the area, and funds) are depleted. Protection risks are often interlinked, with exposure to one risk (e.g. family separation, lack of access to services) contributing to other risks (e.g. hazardous labour, exploitation).

Children, by virtue of their level of physical and emotional development and social status, are recognised as especially vulnerable to protection risks. These needs and vulnerabilities do not simply disappear on the day that children turn 18 years of age, and many of the same protection threats that affect children can also affect youth (e.g. death and sickness from environmental conditions, physical and sexual violence, financial extortion). The factors that compound children's vulnerability – in particular, travelling alone and without financial or other support – similarly contribute to young people's vulnerability to risks. In some conflict-affected contexts in Sudan, KIs identified youth as particularly at risk as they were expected to defend communities against attacks.

4.1 Unaccompanied Minors and Family Separation

Separation from family may be a decision taken by children and/or their family before they leave home, or it may occur anywhere en route or even on arrival in the country of destination. Conditions of insecurity, chaotic movements across borders, (as witnessed in 2015 at internal borders of Europe and during Mediterranean Sea crossings), or detention can generate family separation.¹⁴⁷ As noted earlier, family separation may act as a driver in children's decision to undertake irregular migration to seek reunification with a family member who has migrated earlier, especially in the absence of available, legal reunification processes. A lack of appropriate procedures and legal framework, and recent restrictions to the possibilities of family reunification, are expected to force more children to take the dangerous irregular routes to enter the EU with the help of smugglers.¹⁴⁸

Conditions of insecurity, chaotic movements across borders, (as witnessed in 2015 at internal borders of Europe and during Mediterranean Sea crossings), or detention can generate family separation.

147 ENOC, 2016, documents numerous instances of family separation amongst arrivals in Greece.

148 Ibid, p. 11.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has noted, in general, that “unaccompanied and separated children [outside their country of origin] face greater risks of, inter alia, sexual exploitation and abuse, military recruitment, child labour (including for their foster families) and detention. They are often discriminated against and denied access to food, shelter, housing, health services and education. Unaccompanied and separated girls are at particular risk of gender-based violence, including domestic violence.”¹⁴⁹

UNHCR has identified unaccompanied adolescents, separated or lost children, and stranded children – children who do not have the financial means, contacts or support networks to find the money or resources they need to pursue their journey – as among the most vulnerable groups on the move in Europe. They are at high risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation (especially unaccompanied girls), violence, sexual abuse and exploitative conditions along the route.¹⁵⁰ Many unaccompanied children do not want to be registered or identified as unaccompanied or separated children (or even as children) for fear of being prevented from continuing the journey, mistrust in the authorities or due to the long wait for cases to be processed.¹⁵¹ If they are identified, many are taken by the national authorities, placed in child protection systems (sometimes in locked facilities) and could be forced to participate in family reunification schemes, either to another destination country or back to the country of origin.¹⁵²

Missing children

Interpol estimates one in nine unaccompanied refugee and migrant children is unaccounted for or missing, but the figures are believed to be far higher. In Slovenia, for example, more than 80 per cent of unaccompanied children went missing from reception centres, while in Sweden up to 10 children are reported missing each week. In early 2016, 4,700 unaccompanied children were recorded as missing in Germany.¹⁵³ UNICEF reported, “Unaccompanied children are falling between the cracks. Many simply run away from reception centres to join their extended families while they wait, or because they have not had a full hearing to determine their best interests or have not had their rights explained to them”.¹⁵⁴ In April 2016 it was reported that one third of the 420 unaccompanied minors in the Calais camp in France [which reportedly includes Eritrean children with relatives in the United Kingdom] had gone missing since the French authorities demolished a section of the camp in March 2016. In January 2016, Europol warned that 10,000 vulnerable children had vanished after arriving in Europe over the past two years.¹⁵⁵

149 CRC Committee, 2005, paragraph 3.

150 UNICEF, 2016a.

151 Ibid; ENOC, 2016, p. 14.

152 ENOC, 2016.

153 UNICEF, 2016b.

154 Ibid.

155 The Guardian, 2016.

Box 2 The 10,000 Missing Children

Europol's announcement that 10,000 children went missing after arrival in Europe made headlines across the world, especially because of the explicit links that were made by several media between the fact that thousands of young migrants had vanished after registering with EU state authorities and the alleged intervention of a 'sophisticated pan-European criminal infrastructure' that is 'targeting minors for sex abuse and slavery'. However, experts argued that while this is a risk, the main cause of such disappearance has little to do with pan-European criminal infrastructures and more with the disjuncture between how state authorities treat unaccompanied minors and how minors imagine and envisage their migration project. First of all, some young migrants, as a result of their inability to fulfil their migration aspirations, disengage from the state system meant to assist and support them and find themselves on their own. Second, the count of the 'missing' is less straightforward than assumed. What constitutes a missing case even differs between local authorities within countries (for example in the UK), let alone between countries. Third, it is likely that some of those 'missing' in Italy may reappear in another EU state but they are still counted as disappeared in quarterly data. Research in Italy showed that double counting even occurs within countries.¹⁵⁶ Finally, there are allegations that numbers of child refugees in centres in Southern Italy have been inflated, to allow officials to pocket higher contributions from the government. Firms looking after refugees in these centres receive around USD 70 for a child (and half of that for adults).¹⁵⁷ While the disappearance of so many children is a major concern, the confusion around these statistics again shows how the lack of reliable and consistent data complicates an appropriate response.

Protection concerns in refugee camps and transit countries

Various protection concerns facing UASC have been reported in transit countries and refugee camps within the Horn of Africa. Eritrean UASC living in camps in Ethiopia and Sudan reported threats of kidnapping and forced abductions in Sudan, refoulement, and forced conscription by an Eritrean opposition movement in northern Ethiopia. In 2014, there were reports that traffickers take people from the Ethiopian camps to the refugee camps in Sudan. It was reported that children aged 13-14 were being enticed without paying anything and their respective families are extorted when they arrive in Sudan.¹⁵⁸ Other protection concerns included the tense relationship between the UASC and the rest of the refugee community due to the segregated nature of the care set-up in both camps and the perception that the UASC unfairly receive more services and care than other children in the camps.¹⁵⁹

unaccompanied minors and family separation

Eritrean UASC living in camps in Ethiopia and Sudan reported threats of kidnapping and forced abductions in Sudan, refoulement, and forced conscription by an Eritrean opposition movement in northern Ethiopia.

156 Sigona and Allopp, 2016.

157 Townsend, 2016.

158 RMMs, 2014d, p. 18.

159 WRC, 2013.

The CRC Committee prescribes that in the case of a separated or unaccompanied child outside her or his country of origin, a competent guardian should be appointed as expeditiously as possible in order to safeguard the child's best interests and until the child reaches majority or leaves the territory.¹⁶⁰ However there are often challenges in the countries of origin, transit and destination regarding a lack of legal frameworks or policy governing the situation of UASC, leading to the absence of effective systems for the determination of the best interests of the children before and after return.¹⁶¹

The issue of UASC who have crossed a border necessitates a very close international coordination for family tracing, best interests determination and reunification. In Europe, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) brings together 149 member organizations and over 150 individual members and provides support and assistance to undocumented migrants in 38 countries. The Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP) is a European NGO network focusing on the protection of unaccompanied and separated migrant children in Europe.¹⁶² There are no equivalent organisations operational in the Horn of Africa.

4.2 Fatalities, Physical Abuse and Sexual Violence

Migrant deaths

IOM's 2014 and 2016 Fatal Journeys reports document fatalities and extreme abuse faced by irregular migrants globally, including in the Horn of Africa, and the difficulties of collecting information on migrant deaths.¹⁶³ Under IOM's Missing Migrants Project, 80 migrant deaths were recorded in the Horn of Africa as of 28 July 2016, compared to 108 deaths in 2015 (almost all on the sea crossing to Yemen).¹⁶⁴ Most of the deaths are of unidentified persons, and age and sex-disaggregated data is often not available. The actual number of deaths is suspected to be much higher. The RMMS' Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4mi), recorded at least 1,245 migrants deaths on overland routes crossings Libya, Sudan and Egypt between 2014 and 2016.¹⁶⁵ Given the relatively small number of monitors, the estimate of 1,245 migrant deaths in Libya, Sudan and Egypt is likely to be underestimate. The number of children among these deaths is unknown.

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160 CRC Committee, 2009.

161 Fonseca, Hardy and Adam, 2013.

162 More information about SCEP is available at www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/index.html.

163 IOM, 2014; IOM, 2016c.

164 <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/latest-global-figures>.

165 RMMS, 2016c; The RMMS 4mi project is an innovative approach to collect and analyse data on mixed migration flows, out of the Horn of Africa. Through a network of 30 locally-recruited monitors in strategic migration hubs in Northern, Eastern, and Southern Africa the 4mi project tracks Eritrean, Ethiopian, Djiboutian and Somali people on the move. <http://4mi.regionalmms.org>.

In the Mediterranean, 3,034 deaths had been recorded as of 27 July 2016, compared with 1,917 in the first seven months of 2015.¹⁶⁶ The North Africa-Italy route is reported to be 'dramatically' more dangerous than through Turkey and Greece and accounts for the vast majority of deaths in the Mediterranean. UNHCR suggests that the odds of dying on the central Mediterranean route are as high as one in 23.¹⁶⁷ Although the sex, age and country of origin for many of the dead is not known, it is believed that 26 per cent of the deaths during the first quarter of 2016 (80 people) were from the Horn of Africa.¹⁶⁸ While IOM has noted that the data on the Central Mediterranean is too poor to put a figure on child deaths, UNICEF has estimated that nearly 700 children (23 per cent of the total deaths) are believed to have died crossing the Mediterranean Sea.¹⁶⁹ UNICEF also believes that many of the deaths in May 2016 have been unaccompanied children.¹⁷⁰

Abuse by smugglers and traffickers

People smugglers are used on all of the routes through and out of the Horn of Africa, and are consistently linked with instances of extreme abuse and maltreatment of migrants, including children, and youth. Unaccompanied children and adolescents, including Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali and Sudanese children have been identified as particular targets for trafficking and smuggling groups and criminal networks.¹⁷¹ Several Ethiopian older children and youths who paid smugglers ('dalals') to migrate to Saudi Arabia have faced ill-treatment at the hands of the dalal and found themselves left in Djibouti without money to continue further.¹⁷² Data from the 4mi project, shows that the majority of instances of sexual abuse are committed by smugglers, brokers or traffickers.¹⁷³

Sometimes the smugglers may become traffickers (trafficking as a specific risk is further detailed below). Brokers and 'facilitators' (who are often reported to be nationals of the countries of origin) may act as intermediary agents to take charge of a specific group of migrants in and from the country of origin. Unscrupulous brokers may either exacerbate the risk of unsafe migration, where deliberately false and misleading information is provided (such instances were frequently described by KIs in Ethiopia), or may mitigate certain risks. A method developed by facilitators for migrants to Southern Africa by which the facilitator makes periodic cash instalments to the smuggler on behalf of the migrant in order to reduce the possibility of extortion may have reduced one risk but reportedly had potentially negative consequences by leaving migrants with less money for the trip and rendering them more vulnerable.¹⁷⁴

fatalities, physical abuse and sexual violence

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"Those walking for long distances without water and food would die."

Eritrean refugee in Hitsats Refugee Camp, in Tigray, Ethiopia.

166 <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/> ; UNICEF, 2016d, quoting IOM figures.

167 UNHCR, 2016d.

168 Based on IOM figures: <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/>.

169 IOM, 2016c, p. 8; UNICEF calculated its figure by applying 20 per cent - the percentage of children relevant to the entire population - to the number of deaths: IOM and UNICEF, 2015.

170 UNICEF, 2016a.

171 UNICEF, 2015a, citing Global Migration Group, 2014.

172 Interview notes, Caritas/IOM, Djibouti.

173 <http://4mi.regionalmms.org/4mi.html>, accessed on 29 July 2016.

174 IOM, 2013.

Christians in Libya reportedly face particular ill treatment on the basis of their religion. Some migrants interviewed in a study for UNHCR, said that they were advised by their employer not to disclose their Christian faiths to ensure their safety. Others said that smugglers (as well as criminals and armed groups) harassed them whenever it was known that they were Christians.¹⁷⁵ In Sudan too, several KIs noted that Christians and non-Muslims of different nationalities are particularly vulnerable to hostage taking by smugglers and hostility by host communities.

Sexual and gender-based violence

Sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls on the move by smugglers, officials, and other travelling companions, are reported on the western route, as well as along the southern route.¹⁷⁶ Sexual abuse by smugglers and gangs of migrant girls and women in transit eastwards through Djibouti has also been reported, as well as during the sea voyage to Yemen and on arrival in Yemen.¹⁷⁷ Unaccompanied migrant girls sleeping on the street and beaches of Djibouti-ville are also at risk of sexual violence by passers-by.¹⁷⁸

Many agencies, including the Office for the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), Amnesty International, UNHCR and UNICEF have reported during 2016 on sexual violence, including rape, in Libya.¹⁷⁹ Two gang rapes of migrant women were recorded in November 2015, purportedly by armed groups and the police. Migrants interviewed by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) also reported witnessing women awaiting departure to Europe being taken away at night for the presumed purpose of sexual abuse by smugglers in “connection houses” in western Libya.¹⁸⁰ Italian social workers claim that both girls and boys are sexually assaulted and forced into prostitution while in Libya, and that some of the girls were pregnant when they arrived in Italy, having been raped.¹⁸¹

Displaced women and girls in Somalia are particularly at risk of sexual violence, comprising 74 per cent of the victims recorded in Somalia in 2015 and 81 per cent in 2014.¹⁸² Somali girls in refugee camps also continue to face interruptions to their schooling, early pregnancy, early marriage, sexual exploitation and rape, inadequate physical and legal protection, and underpaid, exploitative and abusive work.¹⁸³ Somali girls reported that they do not access sexual and reproductive health services in the refugee camps due to fear of discrimination from adult providers and social stigma and there were reports that many girls trade sex to meet basic needs. In South Sudan and Sudan, displaced women and children have also been subjected to rape and sexual violence by militia and security forces.¹⁸⁴

175 Altai Consulting, 2013.

176 IOM, 2013. See also Horwood, 2015, p.45 reporting that six per cent of the Somalis interviewed in a 2009 IOM study said someone in their group had experienced sexual abuse.

177 Horwood, 2015, p. 31.

178 KI interviews, 24 June 2016, Djibouti-ville. See also RMMS, 2015c.

179 OHCHR, 2016; UNHCR, 2016d; UNICEF, 2016a.

180 OHCHR, 2016.

181 UNICEF, 2016a.

182 UN Secretary-General, 2016, p. 27.

183 WRC, 2012, p. 7.

184 UN Secretary-General, 2016, p. 29, 31.

Sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls on the move by smugglers, officials, and other travelling companions, are reported on the western route as well as along the southern route.

In South Sudan, incidents of sexual violence against IDP women and children who were entering and leaving sites for the protection of civilians has spread fear amongst this population, causing them to restrict their movements, impeding critical livelihood activities and resulted in some exchanging sex with male IDPs to obtain basic supplies¹⁸⁵ In Sudan, KIs noted that teenage girls (IDPs and refugees) and unaccompanied girls on the move are particularly at risk of rape and sexual violence. In Sudan, there have also been reports of Ethiopian migrant women taken to Sudan on the pretext that they will work there as domestic workers but then forced into sex work when they arrive.¹⁸⁶

In Europe, UNHCR has collected credible reports of abuse and sexual violence against women and children in locations where people on the move gather, including at reception sites, parks, roadsides and train and bus stations. Testimonies have included incidences of children engaging in 'survival sex' with smugglers to continue their journey.¹⁸⁷ UNICEF's report, "Neither Safe nor Sound" documents testimonies of young Ethiopian and Eritrean women who have survived or witnessed rape, sexual violence and forced prostitution en route and in France.¹⁸⁸

The RMMS '4mi' project tracks and maps incidents of physical and sexual abuse witnessed or experienced by migrants in the Horn of Africa and neighbouring countries. While they are not disaggregated by age, they provide an up to date picture of the risks along migratory routes in the Horn of Africa. The 4mi identifies mild physical abuse, degrading or verbal abuse and denial of food or water as the three main forms of physical abuse. The highest incidence of sexual abuse is mapped on the Sudan/Egypt border and across the border inside Egypt. Rape is – by far – the main form of sexual abuse, with 'smugglers, traffickers or brokers' identified as the main perpetrators of sexual abuse.¹⁸⁹ In several of the KIs conducted in Sudan, it was highlighted that girls, especially teenage girls from both IDP and refugee groups are at increased risk of GBV, including economic violence, as a result of not having access to financial resources, property, healthcare, education, and work opportunities.

fatalities, physical abuse and sexual violence

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185 UN Secretary-General, 2016, p. 29.

186 Altai Consulting, 2013.

187 UNHCR, 2015b.

188 UNICEF, 2016d, pp. 40 – 44.

189 <http://4mi.regionalmms.org>, accessed on 23 June 2016.

Figure 1: Incidents of sexual abuse recorded through 4mi



Source: <http://4mi.regionalmms.org>. Accessed 29 July 2016.

4.3 Detention

The CRC Committee states that “unaccompanied or separated children should not, as a general rule, be detained,” and “detention cannot be justified solely on... their migratory or residence status, or lack thereof.” The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants has affirmed that it is never in the best interests of children to be detained. Children should not be detained based on their migratory status or irregular entry to the country. In relation to those aged 18 and above, states must adhere to UN standards on conditions of detention.

Reports of child migrants from the Horn of Africa detained within migration control measures have been recorded in a range of countries. In Kenya, Tanzania, Yemen, Israel and Saudi Arabia, children are sometimes detained with their parents, and sometimes detained alone.

The detention of adolescents, with or without family members, is extremely detrimental to the immediate and long-term physical and mental health and well-being of children, and impacts on their ability to fully exercise other rights such as education and health and family unity.¹⁹⁰ Although information is limited, reports of child migrants from the Horn of Africa detained within migration control measures have been recorded in a range of countries. In Kenya, Tanzania, Yemen, Israel and Saudi Arabia, children are sometimes detained with their parents, and sometimes detained alone.¹⁹¹ According to RMMS, most countries in the Horn of Africa, with the exception of Eritrea, allow some degree of detention monitoring, but none of the countries in the region have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, which allows for the establishment of a system of regular visits undertaken by independent international and national bodies to state-run detention facilities.¹⁹²

190 Global Migration Group. 2014, Chapter 2, pp. 17 – 21; RMMS 2015c; IOM, 2013.

191 RMMS, 2015c, p. 34.

192 Ibid.

Testimonies regarding the ill-treatment and physical and sexual abuse of migrants in detention in Libya, including unaccompanied children and young men and women, are well-documented.¹⁹³ Young Eritrean and Somali men were amongst the detainees who described beatings; being put in a box; burned with hot water; sleeping in the open in extreme weather conditions; lack of food, water, and medical care; forced labour; financial extortion and witnessing detained refugees or migrants shot or beaten to death.¹⁹⁴ Christians are reportedly at an increased risk of ill-treatment.¹⁹⁵ Refugees and migrants intercepted while attempting the journey across the Mediterranean are routinely returned to one of the country's 30 immigration detention centres in Libya.¹⁹⁶ The centres are run by the Department to Combat Irregular Migration but in practice many are reported to be under the control of armed groups. The criminalisation of irregular entry, exit and stay and the lack of asylum system in Libya allows for the indefinite detention of foreign nationals for the purpose of deportation and those detained often stay in centres for months without access to families and lawyers.¹⁹⁷ According to UNHCR and IOM, as of 4 May 2015, there were at least 3,245 migrants detained in facilities in western Libya alone, including 329 women and 34 children.¹⁹⁸

Reports of 'appalling conditions' for children detained in Djibouti have been reported, including being detained with adults, overcrowding, irregular and meagre meals and the absence of sanitary services.¹⁹⁹ Migrant children are regularly rounded up and imprisoned by the law enforcement officials who patrol the centre of Djibouti city, and are subjected to deportation back to the Ethiopia border.²⁰⁰

Detention is also an issue in Egypt, where there is a reported tendency on the part of Egyptian authorities to detain underage migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers – both unaccompanied minors and those who travel with their families – regardless of the legal provisions available in the law to prevent such practices.²⁰¹ Between April and July 2016, it is estimated Egyptian border guards stopped over 5,000 migrants, many of whom are now detained along the Mediterranean and in Cairo.²⁰²

In Sudan, authorities have launched a crackdown on Eritrean migrants - arresting those living in the capital, Khartoum, and intercepting hundreds travelling north towards Libya. There are reports that 900 Eritreans were rounded up in Khartoum in a single day in May 2016 and that a further 400 arrested en route to Libya have been deported to Eritrea, although there is no record of the number of children or youth. Sudan

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193 Amnesty International, 2016b.

194 Ibid.

195 Ibid.

196 Libyan authorities have apprehended some 3,500 migrants trying to take boats to Europe just in the last week off May: IRIN, 2016d.

197 Amnesty International, 2016b.

198 OHCHR, 2016.

199 RMMS, 2015c, pp. 47 – 48.

200 RMMS, 2015c; KI interviews, 21 June 2016, Djibouti.

201 MHUB, 2015.

202 RMMS, 2016h.

has a prior record of deporting Eritreans without allowing them access to asylum procedures, a practice that UNHCR has condemned in the past as amounting to *refoulement*.²⁰³

In the vast majority of European countries there is the legal possibility to place children in immigration detention.²⁰⁴ In some countries, this can only be done on the grounds of age dispute, and in others, families with children and unaccompanied children may also be detained at the border upon irregular entry. As the age assessment procedure is assessed as not sufficiently developed in most European countries, there is a general risk that children are treated as adults, including placement in detention when this would not have been permitted if they were deemed to be a minor. It is also quite common that children who are not granted international protection are placed in detention prior to departure. Children are usually detained for a few hours to a few days, however in certain countries this can be up to 60 days or more.²⁰⁵

4.4 Trafficking

Precise numbers of trafficked persons in the Horn of Africa region are unknown, however UNHCR estimates indicate that 25,000–30,000 people were victims of trafficking in the region between 2009 and 2013.²⁰⁶ UNHCR reports that approximately 95 per cent of trafficking victims in the region are Eritreans, while the rest are mainly Ethiopians, Somalis or Sudanese, with slightly more men than women.²⁰⁷ The journey of female migrants and unaccompanied children travelling through the Horn of Africa is particularly hazardous. Thousands have disappeared, presumably abducted for purposes of exploitation.²⁰⁸ In many cases, female migrants making their way to Italy ultimately become victims of sex trafficking, being forced into prostitution to pay their smugglers-turned-traffickers.²⁰⁹

The notorious kidnapping and trafficking cases (mainly of Eritreans) recorded in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula between 2011 and 2013 appear to have diminished as on-going fighting between militants and Egyptian government forces have significantly disrupted trafficking activities. Nevertheless, data from RMMS' 4mi project indicates that kidnappings are still a regular occurrence along the migration routes through Sudan, Egypt and Libya.²¹⁰

Research on irregular migration of Somali youth from Puntland and Somaliland, indicates that many young Somali are held for ransom during their migration through Sudan and Libya, with demands on families back in Somaliland and Puntland to raise funds to rescue them. The researchers concluded that the likelihood of a migrant being kidnapped and held for ransom is so common as to be almost a norm on this journey: 85 percent

Data from RMMS' 4mi project indicates that kidnappings are still a regular occurrence along the migration routes through Sudan, Egypt and Libya.

203 IRIN, 2016e.

204 ENOC, 2016, p 39.

205 Ibid.

206 UNHCR, undated-a.

207 Ibid.

208 UN Human Rights Council, 2016. See also RMMS, 2014a.

209 The Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, 2014, p 16.

210 RMMS, 2015b.

of those who undertook *tahriib* had been held for ransom at least once during their journey and almost 60 per cent were held more than once. For families left behind, ransom demands have placed significant burdens, as they are often forced to come up with large amounts of money in a short amount of time. On average families reported spending USD 7,661 on *tahriib* mostly for ransom payments to have their sons or daughters released.²¹¹

According to the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report 2015, Ethiopia is a source and to a lesser extent, destination and transit country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Many young Ethiopians who migrate to the Middle East and Gulf states in search of employment opportunities are vulnerable to trafficking both during their journeys and upon reaching destination countries. The same report categorises Kenya as a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children for the purpose of forced labour and sex trafficking. IOM's Kenya Migration Profile 2015 also cites Kenya as a major regional hub for trafficking in persons. The State department, however, noted increased efforts by the Kenyan government to protect child trafficking victims including investigating, rescuing, counselling and referrals.²¹²

In Europe, sexual exploitation is reported to be the most common form of trafficking and girls are particularly vulnerable to falling victim to traffickers. According to several sources there has been an increase in trafficking following the mass influx of migrants and refugees into Europe over the summer and autumn of 2015. Children arriving in Europe accompanied by family also fall prey to traffickers – sometimes the adults claiming guardianship of the child do not have a family link, but are in fact the trafficker. Sometimes children are being trafficked by an extended family member they are travelling with. Children who are separated from their family en route are at a greater risk of falling victim to traffickers.²¹³ UNICEF documented cases of young Ethiopian and Eritrean women being sexually exploited by traffickers who promise passage to the UK.²¹⁴

4.5 Child labour

As with sexual abuse, child labour can act as a cause and a consequence of child migration. Unaccompanied children who migrate, whether internally or internationally, are reported to be especially vulnerable to exploitation, coercion, deception and violence, particularly if they are under the minimum age of employment, cross a border illegally and do not speak the language of their destination.²¹⁵

Some child migrants, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa, use a “pay-as-you-go” system, often stopping to work for a few days, weeks or months along the way to pay the smugglers. These migrants are more likely to

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211 Nimo-ilhan Ali, forthcoming.

212 US Department of State, 2015.

213 ENOC (2015), pp 14-15.

214 UNICEF, 2016d, p. 80.

215 ILO, undated.

become stranded and exposed to abuse. 216 Ethiopian women interviewed in France in 2016 reported having left Ethiopia as young teenagers and not reaching France until they were adults as they had to work for years to pay for their trip.²¹⁷

The interlinkage of migration and child labour is, for some of the countries in the Horn of Africa, a cultural norm. In Ethiopia, boys aged 10 to 15 years who migrated to find work in other parts of Ethiopia stressed that their families expected them to return with money, even if they had not told their families where they were going.

"To cross the border they are taken by the people who do that job. If they no longer have money they can take jobs and work hard labour jobs to get money to continue with the journey"

Key informant in Khartoum.

Multiple KIs in Sudan stressed that children and youth on the move are at high risk of exploitative work, particularly low salaries (half of what nationals would be paid) and forced labour. Other restrictions may include restricting children's access to schooling or family visits.

One 12 year-old boy migrant in Ethiopia noted that his employer would not allow him to attend school, but could not return home because the abusive situation at home was even worse. A KI from the Ethiopian police noted that the incidents of exploitation of child migrants were 'countless', but many went unreported as unaccompanied migrant children had few support networks.

Some unaccompanied children have had to work under near slave-like conditions for many months during the travel in order to pay for their journey.

In Djibouti, migrant children living on the street have reported being regularly picked up by the police and made to perform unpaid work for them, such as cleaning. Unaccompanied children in Djibouti frequently end up doing irregular and very poorly paid work such as washing dishes in restaurants and cleaning shoes.²¹⁸ The involvement of child migrants in prostitution, including as a way to pay debts to smugglers, has been reported in some countries of transit such as Libya and Sudan. ILO Convention No. 182 defines the worst forms of child labour, to which no child should be exposed, as including forms of slavery, debt bondage, involvement in prostitution, and hazardous work. Young Ethiopian, Eritrean and Kurdish women refugees interviewed in France in 2016 have identified practices involving the exchange of sexual services in order to pay for their journey and be granted access to certain areas in a form of coercion that UNICEF has categorised as resembling debt bondage, and some unaccompanied children have had to work under near slave-like conditions for many months during the travel in order to pay for their journey.²¹⁹

A KI in Sudan noted that migrant children can be forced to do difficult work or drug smuggling, and that children – especially Ethiopian and Eritrean – are involved in prostitution. Children travelling alone in Darfur and Elfashur (Sudan) were identified by KIs to be vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups.

ILO Convention No. 138 commits States to abolishing child labour and raising progressively the minimum age for admission to employment, stating that the minimum age for employment should "not be less than

216 UNICEF, 2016a.

217 UNICEF, 2016d, p. 41.

218 KI interviews, Djibouti, 21 June 2016.

219 UNICEF, 2016d, p. 11, 9.

15 years” and that all children should be protected from hazardous work (work “likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young people”). All of the provisions of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families apply equally to child migrant workers, even though the Convention does not explicitly refer to the situation of children who migrate on their own for work. A review of the labour laws in the Horn of Africa is outside the scope of this study, however the importance of strengthening legal provisions to protect children from exploitative work was emphasised by a number of KIs as a key aspect of protecting children within mixed migration flows.

access to education and health

4.6 Access to Education and Health

The rights of all children to a standard of living adequate for her or his physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, and to education, health and adequate housing and other services is protected by the CRC. Additionally, the Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, states that: “each child of a migrant worker shall have access to education on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State concerned. Access to public pre-school educational institutions or schools shall not be refused or limited by reason of the irregular situation with respect to stay or employment of either parent or by reason of the irregularity of the child’s stay in the State of employment” (article 30). The *UN Refugee Convention* and *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* similarly protect the right to education.

Despite this legal framework, access to basic services is not generally designed to take account of children or youth on the move. Lack of fixed residence, documentation, and local language, and fear that their irregular status will be reported can all inhibit the chances of these groups accessing education, health or other services. Fears that their irregular situation will be reported can deter children, as can xenophobic and racist attitudes towards migration.²²⁰ Children without identity documents in Djibouti, for example, have no access to public services like education, and even in refugee camps the education curriculum may follow a curriculum that is different from the country of origin and that of the host country.²²¹

A study of health in migration found that young migrants have particular vulnerabilities in relation to their exposure to health risks.²²² As they transition to adulthood, threats to young peoples’ health shift from infectious disease (that could easily be prevented or treated through vaccinations, improved hygiene, and access to antibiotics), to illnesses and injuries that are grounded in their behaviours. Unsafe sexual and reproductive health behaviours in youth, (such as early sexual debut and low rates of condom and contraceptive use) can result in high rates of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and HIV. Young people who are displaced from their homes and communities may suddenly experience a lack of social support from family, friends, and mentors, as well as increased exposure to violence, coercion and new sources of pressure. These factors can affect

Access to basic services is not generally designed to take account of children or youth on the move. Lack of fixed residence, documentation, and local language, and fear that their irregular status will be reported can all inhibit the chances of these groups accessing education, health or other services.

Young migrants have particular vulnerabilities in relation to their exposure to health risks.

220 Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, 2009.

221 KI interview, Djibouti, 21 June 2016.

222 IOM, 2013.

The journey to Europe across the sea in ill-equipped boats has been found to be detrimental to children's health, especially for babies and small children.

their ability to practice safe sexual and reproductive health behaviours, and create risky situations that may lead to unhealthy and potentially fatal choices. Migrants' health vulnerability is of special concern in urban settings, due to conditions in which many migrants travel, live and work and inequalities in access to health care between migrant and non-migrant populations in many urban locations.²²³

The journey to Europe across the sea in ill-equipped boats has been found to be detrimental to children's health, especially for babies and small children.²²⁴ In European countries, the limitations on access to health services (particularly once children turn 18), particularly psychological health services, have been highlighted as a concern.²²⁵

4.7 Psychosocial distress

The psychosocial impact on children fleeing situations of protracted armed conflict (for example, in Yemen) and discrimination against immigrant children has been widely documented.²²⁶ The psychosocial vulnerabilities of children, or youth, who have been part of a 'voluntary' migration is less studied, including the impact of separation from families and friends and the risk of exploitation, abuse, xenophobia or sexual and gender-based violence in countries of transit and destination. Frustration at the conditions while in transit (or in the country of destination) can contribute to psychosocial distress. A psychiatrist with MSF has reportedly seen an increase in trauma, aggression and erratic and violent behaviour among recent arrivals in France and estimates that at least one in 10 teenagers self-harm, while UNICEF has reported that some unaccompanied refugee children in France have requested hospitalisation following instances of mental breakdown and aggressive and violent episodes (directed towards themselves or other young people).²²⁷

A KI working with Eritrean unaccompanied children arriving in Ethiopia reported that children often suffered psychological distress from the trip, including running from security guards, being shot at, seeing people being injured, and separation from friends.

Research has shown that keeping children with parents or caregivers during emergencies usually provides children with the emotional support they need, and reduces the negative impact of the events and the risk of developing severe reactions of distress. If it is the case that the caregiver is anxious and distressed for long periods of time the child's emotional well-being may deteriorate rapidly.²²⁸ Where children travel without parents or a regular caregiver it can also be expected that he or she will be more vulnerable to psychosocial distress. A KI working with Eritrean unaccompanied children arriving in Ethiopia reported that children often suffered psychological distress from the trip, including running from security guards, being shot at, seeing people being injured, and separation from friends. Amongst the Eritrean refugees interviewed, all the young women and more than half the children reported their fear during the trip of being caught by Eritrean soldiers.

223 IOM, 2015a.

224 ENOC, 2015; UNHCR, 2016g.

225 ENOC, 2015, pp 19 – 26.

226 Child Protection Working Group Yemen, 2015; Spears Brown, 2015.

227 The Guardian, 2016; UNICEF, 2016d, p.8.

228 Forced Migration Online, 2016.

The high rates of abuse suffered at home amongst children who have left home alone, as reported by children in Djibouti and Ethiopia, in addition to the possibility of exploitation and other child protection risks while on the route, underlines the necessity of psychosocial support services at all points along their migratory route.

4.8 Birth registration

Birth registration has a dual function, both legal and statistical. The recording of a birth is usually accompanied by the issuance of a birth certificate, which may help to prove age, name, parents (including their marital status), nationality, and country of birth, all of which are essential for obtaining a passport and other identification documents. Birth registration provides a means of establishing age and authenticating family links, and, as a result, providing protection to children. It can contribute to addressing multiple child protection issues such as child labour, child marriage, detention and juvenile justice, human trafficking, and child prostitution, and can facilitate access to education, voting rights, and nationality (either of the country where the child was born or of the country of his/her parents), which in turn can prevent statelessness.

The registration practice in some countries of origin in the Horn of Africa is already very low, such as in Somalia (3 per cent), Ethiopia (7 per cent) and South Sudan (35 per cent).²²⁹ Irregular migrants who do not possess valid identity documents can be denied the right in law to register their children in the host country, or will not register their children in practice because of fears of being detected by the authorities and deported as a result.²³⁰ Even when children do have documentation, they may not travel with it, contributing to protection risks.²³¹

“Once caught by the soldiers, your destiny will be prison and death.”

Young Eritrean woman in Hitsats Refugee Camp, in Tigray, Ethiopia.

229 UNHCR, 2014, p. 72.

230 OHCHR, 2010.

231 Save the Children, 2015.

5 Legal and Institutional Frameworks

A range of international, regional, and domestic laws, policies, and institutions govern the situation and protection of children and youth affected by the migratory process. States that are parties to international human rights treaties are obligated to protect the rights of all non-nationals, including children and youth, as long as they remain in their territory and regardless of their status.

5.1 International legislation

Some of the key legal instruments relevant to children and youth on the move include the following:

1. *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) ('CRC') applies to all children. Articles particularly relevant to migrant children include: family reunification (article 10); combating the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad (article 11); protection from economic exploitation and hazardous work (article 32); protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (article 34); and prevention of the abduction of, sale of or traffic in children (article 35). *Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict* (2000) and *Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography* may also be relevant in the country of origin or en route.

In its General Comment No. 6 on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, the *Committee on the Rights of the Child* stated: "the enjoyment of rights stipulated in the Convention is not limited to children who are nationals of a State Party and must therefore, if not explicitly stated otherwise in the Convention, also be available to all children - including asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children - irrespective of their nationality, immigration status or statelessness." General Comment 6 provides comprehensive guidance on the protection, care and proper treatment of UASC based on the CRC's legal framework, with particular reference to the principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child and the right of the child to express his or her views freely.²³² It sets out specific protection measures including: prioritised identification; prompt registration; initial assessment; identity documentation; family tracing; appointment of a guardian or adviser; care and accommodation arrangements; access to education, health and other rights; non-*refoulement*; access to asylum procedures; family reunification; and durable solutions. Finally, the Comment draws particular attention to the need for comprehensive data on UASC, including age, sex, country of origin and nationality, ethnic group; numbers of arrivals, refusals asylum requests and returns; and services provided.

The enjoyment of rights stipulated in the Convention is not limited to children who are nationals of a State Party and must therefore, if not explicitly stated otherwise in the Convention, also be available to all children - including asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children.

232 CRC Committee, 2005.

All children within a State, including those with an undocumented status, have a right to receive education and access to adequate food and affordable health care.

2. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (1979) ('CEDAW') applies to all women, including migrant women and girls left behind. Migrant women as well as country nationals should have equal access to employment, fair and equitable remuneration and benefits. Other particularly relevant provisions of CEDAW for women migrants include: elimination of the idea of stereotyped roles for men and women (article 5); suppression of all forms of women traffic and of exploitation or prostitution of women (article 6); equality of women's rights to acquire, change or retain nationality (article 9); equality of women's rights in relation to education (article 10), employment (article 11) and health (article 12); and recognition of the rights of women in rural areas (article 14).
3. *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (2000), which supplements the *Convention against Transnational Crime*, aims to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, with particular attention to women and children, and also to protect and assist the victims of such trafficking, with full respect for their human rights.
4. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) ('ICESCR') has a number of provisions that are specifically applicable to migrant children and families. The *Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* has stated that "[t]he ground of nationality should not bar access to Covenant rights, e.g. all children within a State, including those with an undocumented status, have a right to receive education and access to adequate food and affordable health care. The Covenant rights apply to everyone including non-nationals, such as refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, migrant workers and victims of international trafficking, regardless of legal status and documentation."²³³
5. *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966) ('ICCPR') and the *Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (1987) ('CAT') addresses issues such as deportation and detention procedures, torture or other cruel treatment, right to a fair trial, right to an effective remedy, family life and family reunification.
6. *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (1990) ('CMW') directly addresses the rights of migrant workers and their families in both regular and irregular situations during the entire migration process: departure, transit, destination and return, and provides comprehensive guidance on ensuring the rights of migrant children. The concluding observations of the *Committee on Migrant Workers* provide a framework for improving the enforcement of the Convention and, subsequently, the protection of migrants' rights, including children and adolescents.

²³³ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2009, paragraph 30.

7. *International Labour Organization* (ILO) has adopted three legally-binding instruments that are relevant for the protection of migrant workers: the *Convention concerning Migration for Employment* (Revised 1949) (No. 97), which applies only to migrants who have legally entered the country; the *Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions)* (No. 143), part 1 of which provides for the rights of irregular migrants and their family members and requests States to take measures against clandestine movements and illegal employment of migrant workers; as well as the *2011 Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers* (No. 189).
8. *ILO Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour* (1999). The term “the worst forms of child labour” comprises: all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, or for the production of pornography; the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities; and work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.
9. *UN Refugee Convention* (1951) and *Protocol* (1967): regulates the treatment of refugees in the country of refuge, and includes provisions on employment, education, housing, labour legislation and social security and the right to freedom of movement.
10. Regional human rights instruments include: *1969 OAU (Organization of African Unity) Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* (‘1969 OAU Convention’), which expanded the *UN Refugee Convention* refugee definition but makes no specific mention of children, age or sex.
11. International and regional legal instruments dealing with the rights of internally displaced persons (‘IDPs’), including: *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (the Guiding Principles); *the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons* (ICGLR IDP Protocol, 2006); *the ICGLR Protocol on the Property Rights of Returning Persons* (the ICGLR Property Protocol, 2006); and *the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability, and Development in the Great Lakes Region (the Great Lakes Pact)*, and the *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention, 2009)*.

As shown in the table below, the ratification of key international human rights instruments is relatively comprehensive across the Horn of Africa.²³⁴ There are however some notable gaps, particularly in relation to the protection of the rights of migrant workers, with no country in the regional

234 Based on OHCHR Status of ratification Interactive Dashboard <http://indicators.ohchr.org/> and ILO Ratification by convention: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12001:0::NO>. Accessed on 2 July 2016.

having ratified as yet the *Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Family*. In relation to refugee rights, only Djibouti and Somalia have ratified the *UN Refugee Convention* without reservation.

Table 6 Ratification of selected international instruments

Legal instruments	Djibouti	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan
Rights of the Child (CRC) (and Optional Protocols I and II)	Yes (and yes)	Yes (and yes)	Yes (and yes)	Yes (and yes OPI, signed OPII)	Yes (and OPI signed)	Yes (no)	Yes (and yes)
Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Covenant on Civil & Political Rights (ICCPR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Convention Against Torture (CAT)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Signed
Refugee Convention & Protocol	Yes	No	Yes, with reservation re employment	Yes, with reservation re education	Yes	No	Yes, with reservation re movement
OAU Refugee Convention	Yes	Signed	Yes	Yes	Signed	No	No
Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers & Members of Family	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
ILO Conventions (No 97, 143, 189) regarding migrant rights	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

'Yes' signifies accession or ratification of the treaty, both of which signify the State's agreement to be legally bound by the treaty; or succession whereby one State is replaced by another and makes a notification of succession and is thereby considered a party to the treaty.

5.2 National laws and policies

In addition to international law obligations, national laws and policies can provide important protection to children and youth on the move. All Horn of Africa countries, except Eritrea, have refugee-specific domestic laws which regulate the asylum and refugee status determination process and setting up national refugee agencies, and some countries have domestic refugee laws with provisions protecting refugees' property rights (Kenya, Sudan), provision of services (Ethiopia, South Sudan) and rights to work

(Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya) and freedom of movement (Ethiopia, Kenya).²³⁵ Only Kenya and Sudan have a comprehensive legal and policy framework dealing with internal displacement: Sudan has a *National Policy on Internal Displacement (2009)* while Kenya has passed the *Prevention, Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons and Affected Communities Act 2012*, both of which contain provisions related to property, freedom of movement, livelihoods and provision of services for IDPs. A number of Horn of Africa countries including Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenya have domestic laws to combat human trafficking.²³⁶ The degree to which domestic migration laws and policies in the Horn of Africa incorporate a child-, youth- and gender-sensitive approach, as well as the attention to migrants in national development and child and youth related policies and programming, are areas for further study.

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5.3 International processes, initiatives and mechanisms

A number of international processes, initiatives and mechanisms to enhance cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination and promoting channels for legal migration have been instituted.²³⁷

The AU-EU Khartoum Processes, launched in 2014, has particular relevance to the Horn of Africa. In the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference of the Khartoum Process, the participating countries highlighted “the importance of the regional dimension in tackling the challenges posed by the mixed migratory flows of irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers between countries of origin, transit and destination between Horn of Africa and Europe” and agreed to develop cooperation at the bilateral and regional level to tackle irregular migration and criminal networks. This can include initiatives in the area of information-sharing, focused training and capacity

235 UNHCR and the World Bank Group, 2015, citing Somalia: Presidential Decree No. 25 of 1984 on Determination of Refugee Status; Kenya: Refugee Act 2006, Sudan: Regulation of Asylum Act of 1974, pp 24-25.

236 UNHCR and the World Bank Group, 2015, citing Djibouti’s Act No. 210/AN/07/5ème on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2007), Eritrean Transitional Criminal Code, Ethiopia: Criminal code Article 596 (Enslavement), article 597 (Trafficking in Women and Children), article 635 (Traffic in Women and Minors), article 636 (Aggravation to the Crime). Kenya: The Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act 2010 , The Victim Protection Act 2014

237 See also the 2001 Berne Initiative; the 2000 Hague Process on Refugee and Migration (for details, see www.thehagueprocess.org); the 2006 Euro-African Migration and Development Process, also known as the ‘Rabat Process’ (for details, see www.dialogueafricaandmd.net/web/the-rabat-process); the Global Migration Group, established by the United Nations Secretary-General in early 2006, which builds on the 2003 Geneva Migration Group and the Global Forum on Migration and Development established following the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in September 2006.

building, technical assistance and the exchange of best practices.²³⁸ The degree to which the Khartoum process has paid full attention to the specific needs of children and youth on the move would merit additional study and potential advocacy. While children do not feature in the Ministerial Declaration launching the Khartoum Process, it is not clear to what extent there will be a focus on children in specific projects under the Khartoum Process. Concerns have been expressed by some organisations regarding financial support via these processes to governments who violate human rights.²³⁹

The EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF), which was launched at the 2015 Valetta Summit (in response to the European 'migration crisis') includes the support of basic services for refugees and displaced persons as one of the main priorities. The Valetta Summit Action Plan includes several references to children:

- Under pillar 4, *Provide protection, support and/or assistance to stranded/vulnerable migrants, refugees and victims of trafficking*: Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, notably women and children, and;
- Support regional initiatives on children at risk, in order to ensure comprehensive and sustainable child protection to prevent and to respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.
- Under pillar 1, *Development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement*: Support resilience, in particular to the benefit of the most vulnerable, in particular women and children, and communities hosting protracted refugee populations, including through rural development, food and nutrition security, health, education and social protection.
- Under pillar 5, *return, readmission and reintegration*: Pay special attention to unaccompanied minors taking into account the principle of the best interest of the child. Child protection systems in countries of origin and transit should be supported so as to offer a safe environment for vulnerable children including unaccompanied minors upon their return.²⁴⁰

One of the specific projects that will be launched under the EUTF and fully aligned with the Khartoum Process is the Better Migration Management (BMM) project, to be implemented by GIZ.²⁴¹ The draft log frame of the BMM also includes several references to children:

- Under specific objective 3: To improve the identification, assistance and protection for victims of Trafficking and vulnerable migrants, especially women and children, in the Horn of Africa.
- Under results: Mapping of available government and non-governmental services (protection and assistance) for referral of victims of trafficking (VoT), children and vulnerable.

238 Declaration of the Ministerial Conference of the Khartoum Process, Rome, 28th November 2014: <http://italia2014.eu/media/3785/declaration-of-the-ministerial-conference-of-the-khartoum-process.pdf>

239 Human Rights Watch, 2016.

240 Valetta Summit Action Plan, 11-12 November 2015.

241 European Commission, 2015b.

- Under activities, with regard to establishing safe houses: Establish security measures in the safe house according to human rights standards, including gender and age relevant consideration (women/ men/ children).²⁴²

It remains to be seen, and could be subject to further study at a later stage, if and how the focus on children in the EUTF and the BMM initiatives will be translated into actual projects.

At the regional level, a range of policy-setting and decision-making institutions deal with the situation of refugees and IDPs in the Horn of Africa. These include the African Union (AU) Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees, and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa; the Department of Political Affairs' Division of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees, and Displaced Persons (HARDP); and the unit within the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) which is responsible for humanitarian and social issues. In relation to migration more broadly, IGAD has established a Regional Consultative Process (IGAD-RCP) on migration, in accordance with relevant AU decisions, with a core function of promoting the common position of the IGAD member states and the African Union as provided in the Migration Policy Framework.²⁴³

At the national level in the Horn of Africa, most of the institutions dealing with refugee issues are housed in ministries dealing with security issues, a reflection of the predominant view in the region that the two issues are interlinked. In Djibouti, the Ministry of the Interior is the main government institution in charge of refugee protection. The national refugee agency is the *Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés* (ONARS). In Ethiopia, the *Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs* (ARRA) is part of the *Security, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority* (SIRA). In Kenya, the Department of Refugee Affairs – which was disbanded in May 2016 as part of Kenya's announcement to close the Dadaab refugee camp – was part of the Ministry of the Interior and Coordination of National Government, which is responsible for internal security. The emphasis on approaching refugee issues through a security lens, rather than a human rights or protection perspective, was raised as a potential concern by some KIs and highlights the importance of clear coordination mechanisms with other key institutions to ensure the protection of children and youth on the move.

Some countries, such as Ethiopia and Sudan, have established specific committees or coordination structures to combat trafficking. Ethiopia's National Council membership includes national intelligence, foreign affairs, labour, women and children, police, justice and the Ethiopian Youth Federation; and is sub-divided into four working groups (protection, victim assistance, legislation and prosecution, and research, monitoring and evaluation). The Sudanese National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (Sudan) comprises representatives of the National Intelligence and Security Services, the Ministry of Interior and Police, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁴⁴

242 Log frame BMM, 2016, unpublished draft.

243 See UNHCR and the World Bank Group, 2015, p. 25.

244 Sahan, 2016, pp 32 – 35.

international processes, initiatives and mechanisms

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Challenges of coordination for children and youth on the move were highlighted by a number of KIs in the study, including weak linkages between humanitarian and development sectors and funding streams. Where humanitarian coordination mechanisms exist in the Horn of Africa, protection and rights issues concerning child IDPs and – sometimes – refugees are generally included, often through the Child Protection Sub Cluster and Education Cluster. Issues concerning youth are likely to be integrated into broader protection discussions.

6 Programmatic Responses

6.1 Introduction

The multiplicity of drivers, characteristics and protection risks related to child and youth migration within, through and from various parts of the Horn of Africa calls for a complex, multi-levelled and geographically diverse programmatic response involving multiple actors. Many actors may be present in only one location or at one stage of the migratory journey, or be mandated to work with specific categories of people on the move, or lack experience in working with individual protection cases or making best interests assessments.²⁴⁵ These challenges are compounded by the frequent 'invisibility' of children and youth on the move, and the current lack of data disaggregated by sex, age, unaccompanied status, and other variables that impact on individual and collective protection needs.

This chapter focuses on the role that front-line humanitarian workers can play, in coordination with and as a complement to, the actions of other stakeholders at various levels (including national level poverty reduction strategies, education and employment schemes, child and social protection systems, environmental and climate change programmes, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts). The challenges of devising programmes that can provide protection and care at each stage of the migration journey are well recognised, particularly in contexts where local protection systems are weak or non-existent.

The importance of effective coordination mechanisms between areas of origin, transit and destination, both within and between countries, and partnerships between government, local NGOs, international organisations, and civil society, as well as between development and humanitarian actors, was therefore identified in this study as a key cross-cutting issue. In addition, listening and responding to the views of children and youth, of different ages, sex, ethnicity, nationality and migration status in the design of policies and programs is a key element.²⁴⁶

Both UNHCR and UNICEF have proposed actions to help protect children on the move. UNHCR has proposed nine core activities along 'child migration routes':²⁴⁷

1. Surveillance and collaboration in the place of origin, by the community, in connection with local authorities and child protection actors.
2. Warning system to report and take action regarding situations of trafficking or other types of abuse.

245 Terre des Hommes has highlighted this 'disconnect' between the NGOs working in the places of origin and those working at the places children choose as destinations and has pledged, through the Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) to invest in this direction. Terre des Hommes (2015).

246 See also UNICEF, 2014.

247 UNHCR, 2011a.

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3. Interception of a child *en route*, if it is necessary to guarantee his or her security; and prosecution of traffickers and other persons who have violated the rights of children.
4. Identification and registration of the child, and proper documentation provided.
5. Best interest determination to determine how to best address the child's immediate and long term needs should start as soon as possible after the child's identification.²⁴⁸
6. Temporary care, with the appointment of a guardian as soon as the child is identified, and ensuring the child receives adequate care.
7. Family tracing and reunification, with tracing to be conducted at the earliest stage possible and possibilities for reunification to be determined following a risk assessment (especially in the case of refugee and trafficked children), taking into account the child's opinion and his or her best interests.
8. Reintegration support, individually tailored to a child's needs, wishes and circumstances; the child's best interests should determine whether this reintegration takes place in the community of origin or elsewhere.
9. Monitoring and follow up, to ensure sustainability, the situation of the child and advancement of his or her reintegration project, should be monitored closely in collaboration with the child's family, teachers and community.

UNICEF's seven point plan for refugee and migrant children similarly highlights protection against trafficking and exploitation, detention and *refoulement*, and the importance of access to services such as health and education, keeping unaccompanied or separated children safe, respecting the best interests of the child, and establishing safe and sustainable legal global pathways for migration.²⁴⁹

A regional, inter-agency initiative for West and Central Africa – the Child Mobility Platform – has carried out research and facilitated dialogue on child protection vis-à-vis mobility and underlines the need to base programme interventions on a clear understanding of social norms and motivations for moving.²⁵⁰ The Platform has formulated six joint positions which guide its work which emphasise protection, reduced vulnerability and personal development of children; community-based mechanisms for the accompaniment and protection of children; harmonisation between local social norms, national laws and international standards; and effective participation of children and child/youth organisations.

248 The term 'best interests' broadly describes the wellbeing of a child. As each case is unique, a general definition of what is in the best interests of the child cannot be given. Key elements of a best interest determination process: Starts at identification and lasts until a durable solution has been identified Determines priorities and chronology of protection measures Consists in a comprehensive and individualized assessment Respects age and gender considerations Takes into account the views of the child Involves an interdisciplinary panel Looks at longer-term and durable solutions: UNHCR, 2011a, pp 78 – 79.

249 UNICEF, 2016a.

250 The Platform includes Enda Tiers-Monde, ILO, IOM, MAEJT (Mouvement Africain des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs), Plan International, Save the Children Sweden, Terre des Hommes and UNICEF.

In contrast with children and child protection, there is an absence of organisations specifically focused on youth and a relative lack of research, programmatic documentation and guidance for youth on the move. In 2013 UNICEF launched an online consultation on Youth Migration, Equity, Inequalities and the Post-2015 Development Agenda to engage young people, policy-makers, academics and other stakeholders to discuss the impacts of migration on young migrants and on countries of origin and destination. Six priority areas were highlighted for policy recommendations: access to social protection services in countries of destination; strengthening of social safety nets to ensure school attendance, health care, and other basic services; stepping up efforts to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination; active participation in policy processes; providing skills training and education, including in labour rights, for young migrants in countries of origin, in order to enable them to find employment in countries of destination; and including environmental change-induced migration in the post-2015 development agenda, national climate change adaptation plans, and crisis management plans. Some of the activities recommended for mobile children, such as monitoring as well as interception and prosecution related to trafficking or violence can equally be applied to youth, however the specific forms of frontline programme support required for those aged 18 who are on the move requires further research.

In contrast with children and child protection, there is an absence of organisations specifically focused on youth and a relative lack of research, programmatic documentation and guidance for youth on the move.

6.2 Protecting children and youth before departure

Migration can positively impact on children and youth, including by removing them from unsafe situations, or by enhancing their access to educational or employment opportunities. Situations of domestic violence or abuse, or parental separation or death, were frequently cited as push factors by boys in the Ethiopia FGDs and unaccompanied children in Djibouti. Sometimes migration itself acts as a protective mechanism for a child or youth. However there may also be opportunities for strengthening the protective environment which would enable a child or youth to remain at home and prevent unnecessary, unsafe migration.

Migration can positively impact on children and youth, including by removing them from unsafe situations, or by enhancing their access to educational or employment opportunities.

The experience of the seven girls who participated in the FGD in rural Ethiopia demonstrated that this is possible. All girls had left home due to immediate protection risks (child marriage) or non-fulfilment of rights (removal from school). The program *“Strengthening System for the Prevention and Response to Unsafe Child Migration”*, supported by Save the Children and implemented by the local government in the Amhara region of Ethiopia, identifies and reunifies girls and boys with their family, while also working with families to address the concern that had driven the girls from their homes. All seven girls agreed that their situation had improved following this intervention and they had been permitted to resume school and/or defer marriage. Although other factors influencing them to migrate were still in place (family encouragement to migrate later; community ‘culture’ of migration; limited higher education or employment opportunities) they did not plan to migrate again until they reached 18 years of age.

While this aspect of the program is case-based, it is complemented by broader community-based interventions such as economic strengthening of poor households, and strengthening girls’ access to secondary education. Other strategies could include facilitating household linkages with social

protection schemes and income generation, and working with families to strengthen positive parenting is another strategy. Livelihood, micro-credit and economic empowerment programmes for migrant and displaced families are supported by a range of organisations, and were cited by some of the KIs for this study as a good practice when combined with protection criteria in the selection of households (such as child headed households, single women headed households, or survivors of gender based violence). As several KIs pointed out, in order to make a discernible impact on the macro level drivers of migration, such programs must be at a massive scale and – generally – implemented by the government rather than humanitarian organisations.²⁵¹ Front-line organisations may therefore be best positioned to support governments to include the views and needs of children and youth in such programs or as a mean to mitigate the protection risks to children and youth who are already on the move.

There is a strong link between unaccompanied child migration and child protection issues at home.

The study has identified a strong link between unaccompanied child migration and child protection issues at home. Given this relationship and the associated risks of unaccompanied travel, an investment in child protection systems at the community and local level that identify and respond to such cases is important.

Prevention alone will not stop migration, and stopping migration is not necessarily the best approach. Given that children and youth will continue to move, for various reasons, it is essential that they make decisions about migration destinations, routes and means of travel based on as much reliable and up to date information as possible, and that they are prepared.

A study of rural to urban migration in Southern Africa asked children who had migrated for their recommendations for safe migration. The children prioritised access to essential information (about the journey and the destination) before the start of the journey, and provided very practical hints ranging from not travelling at night to how much money to have on hand, and who to trust.²⁵² This approach recognises that prevention alone will not stop migration, and that stopping migration is not necessarily the best approach. Given that children and youth will continue to move, for various reasons, it is essential that they make decisions about migration destinations, routes and means of travel based on as much reliable and up to date information as possible, and that they are prepared. Children and their families can also benefit from practical information about migrant rights, the living conditions at their place of destination, labour laws and regulations, how to access services, and basic financial management training.²⁵³ The RMMS study of Ethiopians (mostly above 18 years) migrating eastwards found that two-thirds of potential migrants said they would change their mind about using the irregular route if they received thorough and reliable information about protection issues, and that family and friends play a major role in spreading information about migration.²⁵⁴

Some of the preparatory steps can include obtaining and carrying identity documents, to carry a mobile phone to keep in contact with family and to allow emergency calls, to collect and carry contact numbers, and to try to travel with someone else who you know. In Save the Children's study, 86 per cent of child migrants recommended safety precautions for other children intending to make the journey indicated that children should never (63 per cent) or not really (22 per cent) travel alone due to safety concerns.²⁵⁵

251 See also Carter and Rohwerder, 2016, p. 18, noting experts' comments on the difficulties of making a dent in migratory flows.

252 Save the Children, 2015.

253 Save the Children, 2008.

254 RMMS, 2014b, p. 33.

255 Save the Children, 2015, p. 26.

6.3 Protecting children and youth while on the move

The migratory route of a child or youth traveling from the Horn of Africa may take them through multiple cities and borders and involve travel by foot, train, bus, air (for those with resources and documents) and seas. They may fairly quickly transit through a country, or stop for a longer time, perhaps with the intention to remain, before moving on to another destination due to various factors. Many of the program responses below for children and youth in transit countries may therefore also be considered relevant in destination countries. Longer term programmes for migrant children and youth who settle permanently in the country of destination or are born to migrant parents are not specifically explored below.

Collecting and utilizing specific data on children and youth on the move

Understanding the patterns and risks attached to child and youth mobility requires timely and disaggregated information, taking into account the areas of greatest risk and available protective resources for these specific groups. In this regard, monitoring systems such as the RMMS 4mi, have great potential to help identify particularly risky locations. Information on the degree to which migrants and potential migrants are able to access such information and technology would be highly valuable, as would exploring the possibility for utilising the data collected through smart on migratory routes to inform assistance projects targeted at migrants on the move. Mobile protection monitoring of popular transit areas is planned by DRC in Djibouti under a new project soon to start. Monitoring of perpetrators of violations is highly sensitive, but would additionally serve to help hold duty-bearers (both in countries of origin, transit and destination) accountable for violations of human rights of child and other migrants. Monitoring of migration-related human rights indicators in public laws, policies and programs, such as the degree to which migrant children and youth are accessing education, health and other services, can also (less sensitively) provide information on states compliance with relevant international human rights standards.²⁵⁶

Designing appropriate responses and mapping of services

Save the Children has developed and piloted a Mobility Assessment Tool (MAT) for children on the move with the objective of designing responses that are appropriate and effective for protecting children at all stages of their journeys, especially in transit – the stage where conventional protection systems are often weakest. The tool aims to collect evidence of the different protection issues and opportunities in each context to help identify key points of intervention that would be most effective for children in each situation.²⁵⁷ Piloting of the MAT in Thailand and South Africa found that, particularly during transit and when crossing borders, children's first point of contact are state actors (border officials, social workers, etc.) and in many cases, particularly where protection systems are weak and/or under-resourced, non-state actors (NGOs and community-based practitioners, often volunteers) are required to make decisions on their behalf but are

protecting children and youth while on the move

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²⁵⁶ KNOMAD, 2014.

²⁵⁷ Reale, 2013, p. 63.

often ill-equipped to decide on what actions to take for their protection. The MAT has not, to date, been used in the Horn of Africa.

Monitoring could be combined with a mapping of the location and accessibility of existing services and protective mechanisms available for children and youth on the move, including for survivors of sexual violence. In conflict-affected areas of Sudan, the importance of community-supported early warning systems and direction to safer areas was highlighted as a good practice.

Strengthening community-based protection

Strengthening of local and community-based child protection systems can improve the identification and appropriate response action for children at risk or subjected to exploitation, particularly in the absence or deterioration of child protection systems. KIs in Sudan cited Community-based Child Protection Networks supported by NGOs with the strong engagement of government and local communities as a promising practice in increasing the protection of children on the move, while also reinforcing peaceful co-existence between displaced and host communities. They can also fulfil a prevention and early alert role. Save the Children's "*Strengthening System for the Prevention and Response to Unsafe Child Migration*" project in Ethiopia has shown the potential for community-based committees in rural areas to very quickly identify unaccompanied children on the move. At the same time, care must be taken to ensure that tracking children's routes does not push them into looking for more 'invisible' routes to evade detection, potentially exposing them to even riskier travelling conditions.

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Support by intermediaries and peers

Further research into the intermediaries who can support children and youth during their travel would also support appropriately targeted interventions. For example, Save the Children's study in Southern Africa indicated that bus drivers could serve as helpful intermediaries for child migrants. A study in Western Africa has developed the concept of having "protective companions" in place along child mobility itineraries, adapted to the context, and reinforcing the role of families and communities.²⁵⁸

The potential for peer support to be included in monitoring, information and protective companion programmes could be further explored. As seen in FGDs and interviews of unaccompanied migrant boys, peers were identified as extremely influential in the decision to leave home as well as important companions while en route. The participation of children or youth (through appropriate mechanisms) in identifying others at risk of exploitation may facilitate the identification of 'hidden' children, particularly working children in dense, urban settings. A KI working with Eritrean unaccompanied children arriving in Ethiopia identified the 'peer to peer' approach as a particularly good practice to communicate information about the risks of migration and self-protection.

Provision of information

While the provision of information about the risks of migration has not in itself been proven to deter or reduce migration from the Horn of Africa, the importance of children and youth having access to information was

258 African Movement of Working Children and Youths (AMWCY), 2011.

uniformly emphasised by KIs.²⁵⁹ Migrant or drop-in centres located at key points along the route (such as IOM's Migration Resource Centres situated in Obock (Djibouti), Bossaso (Puntland) and Hargeisa (Somaliland); or UNICEF centres for children and family centres at 'hotspots' in Europe) can provide information, psycho-social support and other services, although not all migrants will access such points. 'Mobile' protection patrols are planned by DRC in Djibouti in order to expand the outreach of information services. The development of specific age-targeted and age-appropriate information for safer migration, particularly through children and youth themselves, requires more study.

Technology

A desk review of Save the Children project evaluations and reports in Southern African countries spanning the period 2007-2013 highlighted an evidence gap with regard to which interventions most effectively prevent children from unsafe migration or effectively mitigate risks, noting that one vital missing body of knowledge was an understanding of how some unaccompanied migrant children are making use of technology in facilitating their own journeys, and which strategies they themselves find most effective in promoting survival, resilience and safety.²⁶⁰ Although none of the younger children (10 – 15) who participated in the FGDs for this study had used mobile phones, the prevalence of phone and internet use amongst different age groups, particularly youth, requires further attention. Use of technological solutions to support the use of smart phones and information technology amongst refugees moving through Europe is already being explored.²⁶¹ It was noted by one KI that Eritrean child refugees in Ethiopia often had access to internet for the first time when they reached refugee camps, but this had a 'negative' effect by accessing diaspora sites that gave unrealistic information about life in countries of destination. Best interest determination

Best interest determination

Frequently governments lack the capacity and formal procedures to determine the best interests of the child, which requires 'a clear and comprehensive assessment of the child's identity, including her or his nationality, upbringing, ethnic, cultural and linguistic background, particular vulnerabilities and protection needs ... [and] ... should be carried out in a friendly and safe atmosphere by qualified professionals who are trained in age and gender-sensitive interviewing techniques.'²⁶² In 2010, Save the Children developed a *Best Interests Assessment Form* for the South African context, guiding the collection of information required from a child who has crossed international borders without appropriate care, at the identification and registration phase. The instrument is designed to enable social workers and other relevant authorities to decide on appropriate care arrangements in line with the best interests of the child and outlines six possible durable solutions for unaccompanied and separated children.²⁶³ IOM in Djibouti included capacity strengthening of government in best interests determination ('BID') processes and knowledge as one of their key

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259 MHUB, 2015; RMMS, 2014b.

260 Save the Children, 2015, p. 7.

261 See RMMS 2016e; UNICEF, 2016c.

262 Reale, 2013; CRC Committee, 2005, paragraph 20.

263 Save the Children, 2010.

objectives within a project for support to unaccompanied child migrants.²⁶⁴ In Ethiopia, key NGO and government informants acknowledged that the tracking and return of unaccompanied children to their homes was sometimes not in line with the best interests of the children, due to the lack of other options available.

Capacity building

Capacity building of police, immigration officials and border guards can also help protect children on the move, including how to identify children who are being trafficked or otherwise at risk for appropriate referral and response. DRC's regional project, "Strengthening the response capacity of national authorities in addressing the needs of migrants in Eastern Africa," to be implemented from 2016 in Djibouti (Obock), Puntland (Bossaso), Somaliland (Hargeisa) and possibly Ethiopia, includes trainings and peer-to-peer exchanges with European public experts in relation to combatting human smuggling and trafficking.²⁶⁵

Education, labour and documentation

Innovative and flexible approaches may be called for to facilitate mobile children and youth's access to education and other services. KIs in Sudan note that the increasing restrictions by the government on the establishment of refugee camps and gathering points are creating new challenges for humanitarian organisations in supporting services and that funding does not often extend to urban non-camp settings. KIs emphasised the importance of education services, even in temporary settings and for short periods, and including the provision of life skills and resilience building. In the area of health promotion and assistance to migrants, IOM focuses on 'spaces of vulnerabilities' such as migrant-populated urban areas; along transport corridors, at border crossing and ports; as well as along irregular migration routes.²⁶⁶

Special attention to the needs and protection of working children is also required, including reform and enforcement of labour legislation to protect children from hazardous work and to ensure reasonable hours of work, payment, and access to education and leisure time. Other measures to protect working children in countries of destination (which could also apply in countries of transit) include support to Trade Unions and organisations that support working children, advocacy for child workers' right to education, and the provision or encouragement of vocational learning and 'earn and learn' schools.²⁶⁷ KIs noted that specialised actors such as ILO are often not present in areas of origin or transit for high child migration and there was a need for greater linkage between child labour and mixed migration programming.

Registration and documentation support, including for children born in countries of transit and facilitation of asylum seekers, can help children and youth on the move to access certain services and may reduce exploitation of children.

264 KI interview, Djibouti, 24 June 2016.

265 Part of a larger France Expertise Project, "Addressing Mixed Migration in Eastern Africa", which partners with IOM, RMMS and DRC.

266 IOM, 2013-2014.

267 Save the Children, 2008.

6.4 Protecting children and youth during / after return

Some of the push and pull factors that apply to children and youth in their decision to leave home, may also become relevant in decisions to return home. The conditions in the country of transit or destination may offer few opportunities, limit rights, or be actively hostile to migrants or refugees. The country of origin may become idealised, as the country of destination once was, or children or youth may miss their family and friends.

In Djibouti, many of the unaccompanied Ethiopian children in Djibouti-ville have found their conditions of living untenable. Without the right to attend school or work, forced to sleep on the streets (those with enough money rent carton boxes to sleep in), and risking being picked up by police or – for girls - sexual abuse by strangers passing at night, the majority (60 per cent) of children interviewed by IOM in Djibouti have expressed their wish to return home. This may be influenced by the relative proximity to Ethiopia and the potential to return later to Djibouti if they wish (many of the children in Djibouti have migrated multiple times). Programmes of assisted voluntary return, supported by IOM, can help children (and other migrants in need of help, such as stranded youth and unsuccessful asylum seekers). The best interests determination required may be a slow process however, and there are significant challenges in cross-border collaboration for the safe return and reunification of migrant children.²⁶⁸

Some of the support that would be included in repatriation and reintegration packages may also look similar to programmes supporting countries of origin to prevent unsafe migration. An interesting area to consider further is the question of diaspora engagement in supporting refugees or migrants while in transit and upon return.²⁶⁹

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268 McEvoy, 2016.

269 UNHCR, 2016a.

7 Recommendations

Responding to the protection risks of migration within and from the Horn of Africa, while also recognising and harnessing its opportunities, presents challenges to programming. Protection risks affect children and youth from all countries in the region, and are compounded in some contexts by the lack of protective mechanisms or restrictions on rights in the country of origin, transit or destination. Protecting children and youth on the move requires comprehensive strategies that consider both the vulnerabilities and threats that impact these groups.

The following recommendations are therefore made for organisations working with children and youth on the move, including potential migrants and returnees:

Ensure children and youth on the move are visible in monitoring and programme data

1. Support the development and/or integration of sex and age disaggregated data in migration and displacement monitoring in order to understand and identify patterns, trends and impacts of movement, to help design programmes and to gauge the success of interventions, and to support evidence-based advocacy as appropriate.
2. Support national authorities with the integration of a child and youth migration perspective in monitoring of public services such as access to education and health and participation in national development programmes.

Strengthen coordination and partnerships:

3. Explore and strengthen partnerships to supplement a systemic approach and protection and care of children and youth across all phases of mobility that connects responses between areas of origin, transit and destination.
4. Strengthen links between humanitarian and development programming that can contribute to the reduction and mitigation of unsafe migration, including access to education and the elimination of gender discrimination – which may make girls and women more vulnerable to irregular migration and associated risks.

Support the link between child protection systems as a prevention and response to migration risks

5. Continuously build the child protection capacity of local and national partners, particularly in areas with a high volume of out-migration and at locations along the mobility itinerary.
6. Support the establishment and functioning of community-based protective mechanisms including on sensitisation, response, early warning, and monitoring of child protection issues related to migration and displacement.

Strengthen access to information and means of self-protection

7. Pilot and assess innovative models to enable children and youth to access updated, reliable information on risks of migration, how to mitigate risks, and how to obtain their rights and access services, including the use of peer-to-peer approaches and diaspora communities.
8. Integrate information and learning sessions on self-protection in migration settings, including through education in emergencies and child protection in emergencies programs.
9. Map services that are available to children and youth on the move, including for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Enhancing the realisation of rights and access to services for children and youth on the move

10. Innovate with flexible models of education and health that adapt to mobile children and youth, including in off-camp and urban settings.
11. Protect the rights of children on the move who work, including setting a minimum age for employment, protection from violence and exploitation, upholding the right to education, health and leisure.
12. Advocate for the ratification of the International Convention on the protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and for the upholding of international legal human rights obligations for all children, women and youth regardless of their migration status.
13. Ensure that children and youth on the move have access to birth certificates and other identity documentation.
14. Engage community in discussions on girls and women's rights and harmful social norms that may contribute to unsafe migration, and support mechanisms that ensure that decisions to migrate, or remain at home, take into consideration the views of girls and young women.

Strengthen national capacity to uphold the best interests of the child

15. Provide technical assistance to integrate best interests determination into all migration related processes, including deportation and family reunification.
16. Support training of immigration, police, social workers and other relevant officials and NGO partners in best interests assessments.

Address youth as a specific target group within mixed migration:

17. Support further research to understand the particular protection risks faced by female and male youths on the move, and pilot and monitor programmes that specifically address these risks.
18. Innovate with models that reach out to youth, including through the use of information technology where appropriate.

Improve knowledge management and advocacy

19. Undertake further study at the national level on the degree to which children and youth on the move are visible in all relevant national policies and programmes (such as child protection, child labour, development), and use the findings as a foundation for targeted advocacy.

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The specific patterns of children and youth movements within the broader patterns of mixed migration are to a large extent unknown. The invisibility of numbers and profiles of children and youth within overall migration and displacement numbers often transfers to a lack of specific attention to children and youth in mixed migration policies and programs, even though children represent up to 60 per cent of the forcibly displaced population in the Horn of Africa, and children and youth attempting to reach countries outside of the region, particularly in Europe, are increasingly make the trip alone.

Young and on the Move: Children and youth in mixed migration flows within and from the Horn of Africa, a joint publication by RMMS, Save the Children and DRC and the 10th report in the RMMS *Explaining People on the Move* series, provides an updated overview of children and youth as specific groups in mixed migration flows within, through and from the Horn of Africa.

By describing the major trends along the migration routes within and from the Horn of Africa region, the main drivers for children and youth migration, the specific protection risks facing children and youth, the legal and institutional frameworks and existing programmatic responses for children and youth in mixed migration flows, the study aims to contribute to future programme design.



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