



**MMC East Africa
& Yemen**

QUARTER 1 2020



Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa & Yemen

This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the East Africa and Yemen region (EAY). The core countries of focus for this region are Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Somalia, DR Congo, South Sudan and Yemen. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to any of the countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

The Mixed Migration Centre is a global network consisting of seven regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. For more information on the MMC, the QMMUs from other regions and contact details of regional MMC teams, visit mixedmigration.org and follow us at [@Mixed_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

MMC's understanding of mixed migration

"Mixed migration" refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people in mixed flows have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Those in mixed migration flows travel along similar routes, using similar means of travel - often travelling irregularly, and wholly, or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

Front cover photo credit:

Michael Kirby Smith (2013)

Ethiopian migrants outside the Migrant Response Centre in Haradh, Yemen, May 2013.

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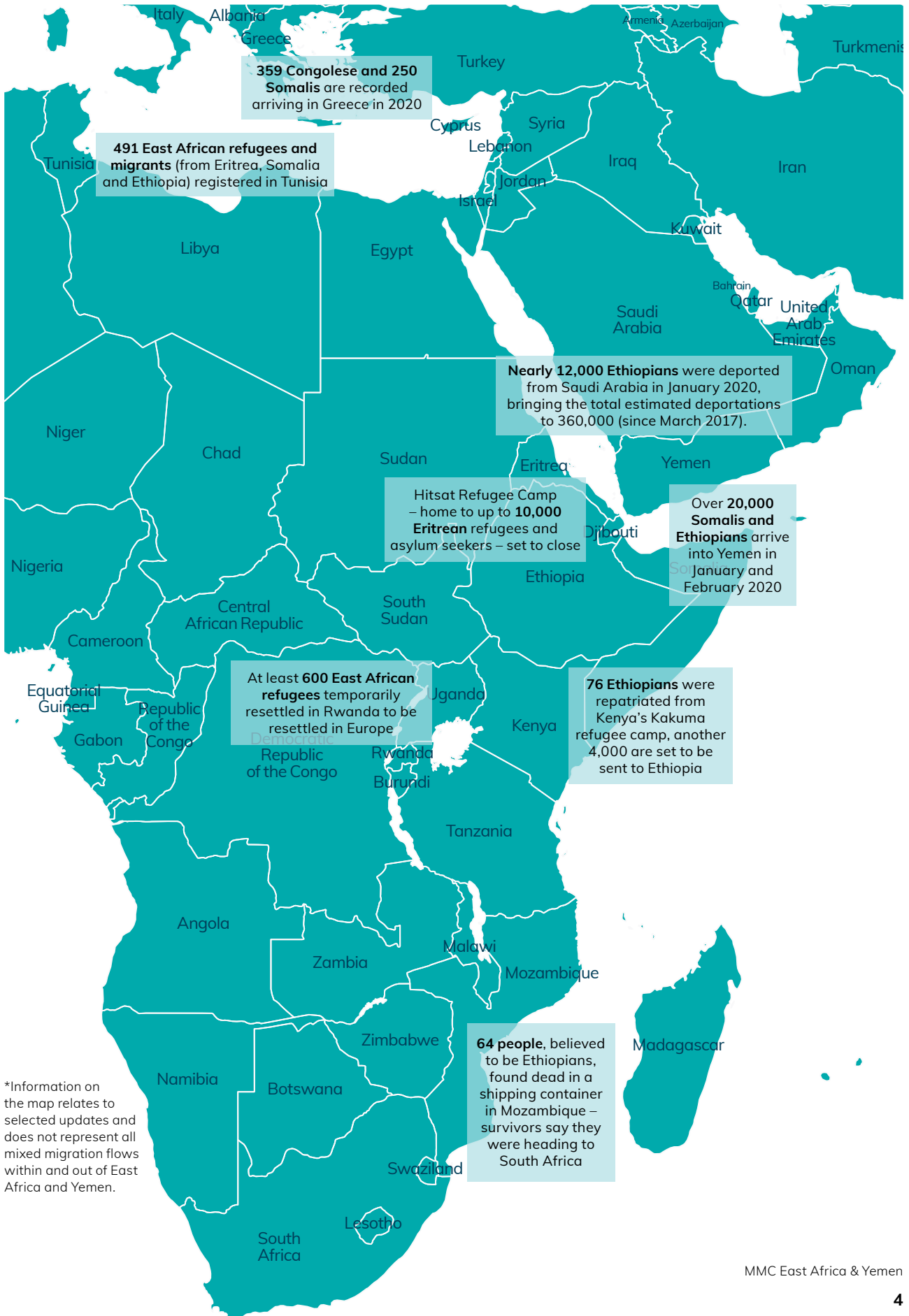
Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa & Yemen

Quarter 1 - 2020

Key Updates

- **First wave of Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers repatriated from Kenya:** In February 2020, 76 Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers from [Kakuma refugee camp](#) were repatriated to Ethiopia as part of a Kenyan government directive. They are the first of an estimated 4,000 refugees and asylum seekers to be repatriated from both Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps in the coming months.
- **Mixed migration flows to Yemen:** Over [20,725](#) refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa were recorded entering Yemen in January and February 2020, an increase from the [17,527](#) recorded in November and December 2019. March 2020 figures are not final yet, but expected to see a significant drop in arrivals.
- **East African refugees from Libya to be resettled:** At least [600 refugees](#) from East Africa who were temporarily resettled in Rwanda are to be resettled in Europe. Currently, 39 refugees have been [resettled](#) to Sweden and Canada with more expected in the coming months.
- **Stranded Ethiopians returned home from Tanzania:** [463 Ethiopians](#) returned back home as part of a joint initiative between the two governments, IOM and the EU. More returns expected in the coming months. Tanzania remains a key transit country for Ethiopians heading south towards South Africa.
- **64 Ethiopians found dead in a shipping container in Mozambique:** 64 people, all Ethiopian men, bound for South Africa were [found dead in a shipping container](#) when the truck transporting them was checked in Mozambique.

Regional Overview*



Mixed Migration Regional Updates

In March 2020, Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia and other East African countries reported their first cases of the COVID-19 virus. As a response to this global pandemic, governments across the region implemented strict travel restrictions and widespread border closures starting in March. While these measures are intended to limit the spread of COVID-19 throughout the region and hopefully will protect the populations in East Africa, many of the measures adopted by governments also exacerbate ongoing crises. These restrictions can also trap people in the locations and situations that they are currently in, unable to move towards their destinations or return to their countries of origin.

People in mixed migration flows have felt the impact of these strong security measures. Border closures throughout the region, including for the countries of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, and increased [surveillance](#) activities to combat the COVID-19 pandemic have made movement nearly impossible for people across East Africa. In particular, national isolation policies and border closures effectively prevent asylum seekers, refugees and migrants from crossing borders when trying to escape dangerous situations.

In addition to being a significant origin for people in mixed migration flows, East Africa¹ is host to 11,200,000 [internally displaced](#) people (IDPs) and 3,400,000 [refugees](#) facing a number of protection, health and legal challenges, as well as difficulties meeting basic needs. Many rely on life-saving humanitarian assistance and their pre-existing humanitarian needs resulting from conflict, instability and climate change will likely be exacerbated by the spread of COVID-19 and its socioeconomic impact. Border closures and a reduction in movement have also seen a pause to [resettlement programmes](#), including the [voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees](#) from Kenya, with a direct impact on the achievement of durable solutions for people in protracted displacement situations.

The impact of COVID-19 will not only be seen in terms of public health risks and limitations on movement in and out of countries in the region, but also the long-term consequences of the economic impact of the virus will need to be considered and examined in the coming months. A recently published [World Bank projection](#) on the economic impact of the shutdowns and border closures as a result of COVID-19 lays out a stark reality for the months and year ahead, for example it projects that economies across Sub-Saharan Africa could shrink by 5.1% in 2020 and that between 2.6-7% of agricultural production could be effected, which could spark a food-security crisis in the region. The shock of a recession or food insecurity could result in displacement, increases in irregular migration, as well as xenophobia in the region. At the time of publishing, the situation is still unfolding and the impact of the COVID-19 yet to be fully understood.

1 Including Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Mixed migration within East Africa

Hitsats refugee camp in Ethiopia allegedly closed down

Hitsats refugee camp, located in Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray, has allegedly been [closed down](#) by the government due to what the government is terming as budget constraints. The camp, opened in 2013, is home to many [Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers](#) estimated to be more than 10,000 as at 2020. This move has been met with [criticism](#) from humanitarian actors working in Ethiopia who claim that the budget was approved and allocated to the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and that this could potentially be a political move in the Ethiopia-Eritrea relations.

Ethiopia is [home](#) to 171,876 Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers and this latest move further fuels uncertainty among the Eritrean refugee population who [often face](#) high unemployment rates and lack of [opportunities](#) in Ethiopia.

It is unclear when the closure would take effect, but it could increase movement of Eritrean refugees to other parts of Ethiopia and could have an impact on onward movements of Eritreans from Ethiopia. However, Ethiopia's recent [announcement of a state of emergency](#) due to the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of its borders as a COVID-19 response will significantly restrict movement and impact the lives of the estimated [758,199](#) refugees and asylum seekers living in Ethiopia (including 338,250 South Sudanese, 198,670 Somalis, 171,876 Eritreans, 42,119 Sudanese, and 1,386 Yemenis).

EU support to Eritrea criticized

A [New York Times article](#) published in January 2020 criticising a European Union (EU) funded project in Eritrea highlights the problems that the bloc face in their efforts to [engage with countries](#) of high migration and at key points along migration routes to Europe. Around 22 million USD has been allocated by the EU to the government of Eritrea for the building of a road. However, the road is reportedly being built using forced conscripts and without monitoring systems in place to provide oversight. The criticism of the project is the latest attention to EU [support to initiatives seen to stem migration](#) to Europe.

The attention also highlights the ongoing human rights conditions which force thousands of Eritreans to [flee every](#) year. Men and women from 18 to 40 years old are required by law to undertake [national service](#) in Eritrea for 18 months, including military training and an initial 12 months' deployment either in military service or in other government entities including farms, construction sites, mines and ministries. However, it is widely [reported](#) that this 18 months service is often [indefinite](#) and characterized by [forced conscription](#) and [abusive situations](#). According to unpublished 4Mi data collection with Eritreans, up to 95 % of Eritreans report that they flee due lack of rights in Eritrea. Of these, 84 % cite in particular the fear of conscription/forced labour as a top driver. Despite initial optimism about the opening of the border between [Eritrea and Ethiopia](#) and indications of [improvement of the situation in Eritrea](#), as of March 2020, borders with Ethiopia remain [closed](#) and national service in place.

Ethiopian refugees return home from Kenyan camp

In February, [76 Ethiopians](#) were among the first group of refugees to be repatriated from Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp to Ethiopia as part of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme. Upon arrival in Ethiopia, returnees are provided with a reintegration package which includes cash and transportation allowances. More than half of the Ethiopian refugees who voluntarily returned are [women and girls](#), some of whom were born and raised in Kakuma, many of which originated from the Somali region in Ethiopia.

UNHCR estimates that more than 4,000 Ethiopian refugees from both Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps are expected to return in the coming months. Kakuma refugee camp in northern Kenya hosts 28,560 registered Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers (and over [150,000](#) South Sudanese, Somali, Congolese and other [refugees and asylum seekers](#)). [Dadaab refugee camp](#) is host to 217,197 registered refugees and asylum, mostly Somalis and some Ethiopians.

Kenyan authorities fight human trafficking

Human trafficking is a growing concern for many countries in East Africa, and is the focus of high level [dialogues](#) and [policy](#) discussions. Kenya was identified in the US Trafficking in Persons Report [2019](#) as a source, destination and transit country for human trafficking and throughout [2018 and](#) 2019 Kenyan authorities [increased](#) efforts to crack down on human traffickers through investigations and prosecution of traffickers. Efforts continued this quarter. In February 2020, 11 Kenyans between 23-30 years old were rescued in Nairobi's Eastleigh neighbourhood by local authorities. The women were allegedly being recruited for [unspecified jobs in the Middle East](#). Further, in March, Kenyan [media reported that authorities](#) also found 29 Kenyan women in Nairobi reportedly destined for the Middle East but abandoned by a trafficking syndicate.

In particular, concerns about trafficking of children has been documented in recent reports, including from the [Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative](#) and a [2018 report](#) from the International Child Protection Conference revealed that child sexual abuse cases have been increasing at an alarming rate in Kenya. In March 2020, the [British government](#) supported Kenyan government efforts to fight human trafficking by constructing an anti-human trafficking child protection unit in Mombasa, and trained key Kenyan authorities involved in anti-trafficking activities.

Crack down on irregular migration continues in Kenya

In an ongoing pattern [cycle](#) of arrest and detention, this quarter Kenyan authorities continued to clampdown on irregular migration and undocumented people in the country. In January, police arrested a group of 6 Somali [that were on their way from Dadaab in Garissa County to Nairobi for not carrying valid identification documents](#). In January, more than 50 people were arrested at a college in Nairobi after police raided the institution and arrested students who were largely [Somali and Ugandan nationals, who did not have proper identification](#). According to police reports, the majority had falsified Kenyan documents such as birth certificates and national identity cards. In another incident in February, 10 Chinese nationals were arrested in Athi River county on the outskirts of Nairobi for lacking valid travel documents. According to report, they were [working without proper authorisation](#) and instead working under a visitor's visa. They were later released on bond.

Policy discussions

Senior Official's Meeting of Khartoum Process

The [Senior Official's meeting of the Khartoum Process](#) took place on 6 March in the Hague, Netherlands. The Khartoum Process is a platform to foster political cooperation between the countries impacted by the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe. Delegates at the March meeting agreed to develop a way forward for the finalisation of the Joint Valetta Action, while also taking stock of work and progress under the Eritrean Chairmanship and paving the way for the incoming Chair (the Netherlands). During the meeting, MMC facilitated a scenario building exercise with delegates, taking them through a process of strategic future analysis on mixed migration trends, routes and conditions of migrants.

Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD region validated

On 26 February 2020, Ministers of State met in Khartoum, Sudan to endorse [the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in the IGAD region](#). The next steps will involve the adoption of the Protocol by Member States as well as the endorsement of the implementation roadmap by the IGAD Council of Ministers. Once established, the Protocol will mirror other existing Protocols on free movement in the region such as that of the [East African Community](#) (EAC).

Membership of these Regional Economic Communities is complex within the region, with Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan holding IGAD membership alone; Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania holding only EAC membership; and Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda being Member States of both regional blocs. This overlapping membership presents a particular challenge around coordination and implementation of these frameworks. Free movement of persons and goods, which was endorsed by the EAC in 2010, is yet to be fully realised, and may foretell a similar journey for the IGAD region, [where migration debates are often heavily securitised](#) due to the fragile security situation of its countries.

Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia discuss closer cooperation

In January 2020, Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki, Somali President Mohamed Farmajo and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed convened in Asmara to discuss how the three countries could deepen diplomatic and socioeconomic ties, address human trafficking and issues affecting security. The leaders adopted a [Joint Plan of Action for 2020](#) which sets out measures to consolidate peace, stability, and development. The Eritrean Information Minister further reiterated the need to prioritize human and material mobility. The move builds on a [tripartite agreement](#) signed in 2018 to foster cooperation and promote regional peace and security.

East African countries meet to discuss protection of overseas workers

Labour and Social Protection Ministers and other high-level government officials from across East Africa met in Kenya [in January](#) 2020 to agree on a regional cooperation agreement towards protection of migrant worker rights, and labour trafficking towards the Gulf. Leaders from Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania agreed to cooperate on providing of diplomatic and consular assistance for migrant workers,

from the East and Horn of Africa this week signed a regional cooperation agreement that is an important step in that direction, making it harder for human traffickers to exploit young people looking for work in Gulf states.

The Eastern route from the Horn of Africa to Yemen

Arrivals to Yemen remained high but drop expected

In January and February 2020, [20,725](#) migrant and refugee arrivals from the Horn of Africa were recorded in Yemen. This is an increase over the [17,527 recorded](#) in November and December 2019. There is also an increasing number of refugees and migrants leaving from departure points along Somalia's Puntland coast. In February 2020, [71% of arrivals](#) into Yemen were departing from Somalia (sites around Bossaso) and 29% were departing from departure points along Djibouti's coast. This is a change compared to [February 2019](#), when just less than 50% of departures were leaving from Somalia, and just over 50% departed from Djibouti (largely sites around the coastal town of Obock).

Comprehensive figures for arrivals into Yemen for March 2020 were not available at the time of publishing, although unpublished reports from partners suggest that arrivals into Yemen fell markedly in March, when Yemen closed its maritime borders and imposed more security measures in relation with the restrictions on movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Unpublished reports from partners on the ground in Djibouti, Somalia and Yemen report decreased maritime movement of migrants and refugees and a strong securitization of borders and coastlines in all countries as well as strict border closers in Ethiopia. In addition, initial IOM [reports](#) highlight the significant drop in movement in Djibouti and arrivals into Yemen in March (when the COVID-19 restrictions largely came into place in East Africa). Initial reports from an IOM Data Tracking Matrix (DTM) at one monitoring point in Manfath Al-Wadeeah in Yemen shows a drop of over 50% in arrivals in Yemen from Obock, Djibouti from 777 arrivals in the first week of March to 362 arrivals in the third week of March. For example, 11,222 movements were observed at flow [monitoring points in Djibouti](#). This number is half of the number of movements recorded in February (22,461).²

With these COVID-19 related changes in mind, it is also important to note that migrant and refugee arrivals into Yemen from East Africa typically spike around the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. In 2019, arrivals around Ramadan peaked at an all-time high of [18,904 in May 2019](#). In 2018, Ramadan coincided with high

2 The intended final destinations were the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (85%), Djibouti (11%) and Ethiopia (4%).

arrivals for [May and June](#) (over 10,000 arrived in Yemen each month). With the start of Ramadan at the end of April 2020, there is speculation that arrivals could increase as security restrictions are anticipated to ease.

Steady deportation for Ethiopians from Saudi Arabia

As of the end of February 2020, IOM [reported](#) that an estimated 360,000 Ethiopians had been deported from Saudi Arabia, following a [March 2017 crackdown on undocumented migrants](#) by Saudi authorities. In January 2020, around 10,000 people were recorded arriving in Ethiopia, [consistent](#) with figures recorded in previous months (an average 10,000 Ethiopians are deported from Saudi Arabia each month). Figures for March 2020 were not yet available at the time of publishing, however partners have reported that though deportations to Ethiopia have been temporarily affected by travel and flight restrictions in place to for COVID-19, during the quarter the deportations continued at fairly consistent numbers. Decisions had not yet been made about the possibility of suspension of deportations, though discussions were ongoing.

The [situation](#) for many of these returnees remains dire. Of those who are returned, 92% [reportedly](#) do so involuntarily and many suffer from severe physical and mental health challenges from experiences along their migration journeys, detention in Saudi Arabia, and deportation. According to MSF reports, up to 95% of returnees report witnessing or experiencing violence or abuse during their journey to Saudi Arabia. A new report from the Danish Institute of International Studies and the Danish Red Cross, '[No Place for Me Here](#)', explores the challenges and trauma many men face during their mixed migration journeys and their return to Ethiopia.

The Northern route towards North Africa & Europe

Arrivals to Europe from the Horn of Africa via with the 'Northern Route' have significantly reduced over the last few years (over 31,000 people from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia reached Europe in 2016, and less than 500 from the Horn of Africa reached in 2019). In the first quarter of 2020, less than 250 people from the Horn of Africa (172 Somalis, 56 Eritreans, and 5 Ethiopians) and 359 Congolese were reported arriving [into Europe](#). Though the arrivals figures for Europe remain low, East Africans continue to [travel north](#), there are concerns that people from the Horn of Africa remain trapped in Libya in increasingly [dangerous situations](#).

As of the end of March, there were 48,626 persons of concern [registered with UNHCR](#) in Libya. East Africans comprise a sizable population, with 5,702 Eritreans, 2,530 Somalis, 1,108 Ethiopian, and 239 South Sudanese³. Restrictions on movement in Libya due to the COVID19 response have put limitations on UNHCR's access to refugees and [asylum seekers](#). However, the numbers of registered refugees and asylum seekers is only a portion of the total number of East Africans believed to be in Libya. IOM also reported that over 15,445 Somali, 8,663 Eritrean and 8,352 Ethiopians were part of 654,081 'migrants' present in Libya in [December 2019](#).

3 51 Yemenis are also registered with UNHCR in Libya.

Congolese and Somalis arrivals in Greece

There has been an increasing number of African refugees and migrants arriving in Greece along what's known as the '[Eastern Mediterranean Route](#)'. In the first 2 months of 2020, Greece had the highest reported migrant and refugee [arrivals in Europe](#), with 9,620 arrivals (sea and land). Of these 359 people were from DRC - the third largest group of arrivals and the [highest caseload of African migrants and refugees](#). Conflict and humanitarian crisis in DRC have left up to 5 million [internally displaced](#) and continued [instability](#) drive Congolese to leave the country in search of security and opportunities. The majority of arrivals from DRC were women (42%), [men make up 33%, and children 25% \(boys 11% and girls 14%, and unaccompanied and separated children make up 8% of the overall caseload in the Aegean islands\)](#). Congolese are the only group of migrants and refugees in Greece reported to have more female than male.

In addition, a growing number of Somali refugees and migrants (250 people) arrived in [Greece in the first quarter of 2020](#). High unemployment rates and [insecurity](#) are major drivers for Somalis to [join](#) mixed migration flows. The main entry [point for Somalis](#) are the Greek island of Chios and other islands in the Dodecanese, and Somali men were the majority of arrivals (53%), with 32% women and 15% children (boys 13% and girls 2%). [Unaccompanied and separated children from Somalia are also roughly 7% of the unaccompanied and separated child caseload that arrived in Greece in February 2020 alone](#).

[Interviews](#) with some of the more than 450 people, including Somalis and Congolese, on a naval vessel that was detained in March show that refugees and migrants were not being allowed to seek asylum and that food and proper sanitation was inadequate.

East African refugees and asylum seekers slow in Tunisia

UNHCR reports that the [total number of registered refugees and asylum seekers](#) from East Africa in Tunisia at the end of February 2020 was 491 (248 Eritreans, 192 Somalis and 51 Ethiopians). This shows little change from the total at [the end of 2019](#) (484 East Africans), and most of these people were registered at the first six months of 2019.

Overall, the total number of registered refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia was 2,048, which has been steadily increasing since 2015 when 79 refugees and asylum seekers were registered. However, at end of February 2020 there were already 1,000 newly registered refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia, nearly half of the [entire 2019 caseload](#). Tunisia has been seen as an emerging route for East African refugees and migrants (as well as other nationalities) since the [deteriorating security situation in Libya and serious abuse towards migrants and refugees](#). However, there is a strong indication that refugees and migrants in Tunisia intend to migrate onwards. A recent 4Mi snapshot shows that 92% of 1,061 refugees and migrants interviewed in Tunisia cited that they [had not reached their final destination](#) and only 2% of respondents felt that Tunisia was their final destination.

Ongoing migrant abuses and xenophobia in Egypt

[New reports](#) point to the ongoing nature of abuses against sub-Saharan and East African migrant and refugee populations in Egypt, including racist slurs, sexual abuse and xenophobia. Reports of [abuse](#) of East Africans in Egypt [are common](#), however [new reports show](#) that women face a great risk of sexual abuse, with many fearing that reporting to local authorities could negatively affect their registration and documentation process. At the end of [February 2020](#), Egypt was host to 256,632 refugees and asylum seekers, including those from East Africa including South Sudan (19,382), Eritrea (18,615), Ethiopia (16,278), and Somalia (6,752).

Refugees previously evacuated from Libya to be resettled in Europe

During the first quarter of 2020, plans were set in place to resettle more than 600 East African refugees previously evacuated from Libya to Norway and Sweden. This provides a long term solution for some of the hundreds of East African refugees who were temporarily resettled in 2019 [from Libya to an Emergency Transit Mechanism \(ETM\) center in Rwanda](#). The Gashora ETM center was set up outside of Kigali to provide [urgent or emergency protection to refugees and](#) currently hosts over 300 [Somali, Sudanese and Eritrean refugees](#). In January 2020, Norway announced that it would accept [600 people](#) from the facility. In February 2020, 27 refugees that were also located in the Gashora ETM were [resettled to Sweden](#) (an additional 12 people were resettled to Sweden and Canada in 2019).

The ETM system is supposed to establish temporary safe spaces in Rwanda, while long-term solutions (including repatriation and resettlement) are identified. However, the pace of resettlement has been slow, and critics point to the example of Niger where a [similar resettlement](#) scheme (of refugees from Libya in 2018 and 2019) [suffered problems and delays](#) halted due to non-implementation of the initial agreement by European countries to take in refugees.

The Southern route towards South Africa

64 Ethiopians found dead in Mozambique

In March 2020, [64 people reported to be Ethiopian migrants were found dead](#) inside a sealed shipping container when their truck was pulled over in Mozambique. Fortunately, 14 Ethiopians were also found alive in the container and were rescued when Mozambique authorities stopped the truck. None of the people possessed valid travel documents, and the survivors noted they were headed to South Africa. The container was discovered at a checkpoint in Tete, Mozambique, some 1,500 kms north of South Africa.

Up to 13,000 Ethiopians are estimated to travel along the '[Southern Route](#)' every year (mainly with South Africa as the primary destination), though this route is dangerous and increasingly securitized, making it difficult for migrants and refugees to move safely along this route.

Ethiopians trapped in Tanzania return home

As part of an agreement between the Ethiopian and Tanzanian government through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa (the EU-IOM Joint Initiative), [463 Ethiopians](#) returned back to Ethiopia via a direct flight from Dar es Salaam to Addis Ababa in February 2020. This is the first group of nearly 1400 Ethiopians that will receive assistance returning home, some of whom were subject to periods of extended detention in Tanzania. The returns process of Ethiopians with the [EU-IOM Joint Initiative](#) in Tanzania has been going on since 2018.

South Africa reduces refugee rights amid ongoing xenophobia

On 1 January 2020, a raft of amendments to the South African Refugees Act came into force, which will impact the landscape for refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Key among these changes, which have come [under criticism](#), include limiting the right of refugees and asylum seekers to participate in any political activity related to their country of origin while in South Africa, restricting access to work, and removing the right to education and healthcare, among others.

South Africa is host to more than [260,000](#) refugees and asylum seekers, largely made up of East Africans from Somalia, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Once lauded for having one of the most progressive systems of refugee protection in the world, South Africa's [generosity has waned over time](#), shifting to focus more on securitisation, deterrence, and setting up barriers to asylum access. The new amendments for example, require asylum seekers to register at Refugee Reception Offices (RRO) within five days of arrival in the country, and enable the Director-General of Home Affairs to direct asylum seekers to report to a particular RRO (3 of the RROs were closed to new asylum applicants between 2010 and 2012). The amended Act grants the Minister of Home Affairs powers to order the removal of a single or category of refugees or asylum seekers on the grounds of national security, which some say will lead to [immigration becoming defined as a national security threat](#).

The changes take place against the backdrop of continuing tensions in South Africa. According to media reports, hundreds of refugees and migrants were [evicted](#) from the streets of Cape Town after they had demanded to be relocated to other countries following the [2019 xenophobic attacks](#). Refugees and migrants in South Africa have in the past complained of physical and sexual abuse as well as [inefficient asylum processes](#) that leaves them more vulnerable.

South Africa steps up stronger border control with Zimbabwe

Following the arrest of 1,944 undocumented migrants along the border between South Africa and Zimbabwe in [December 2019](#), the South African government announced in March 2020 that it will be building a 40km fence along its border with Zimbabwe to [stem irregular migration](#) as well as control the spread of the Coronavirus epidemic. The fence will be erected at the Beitbridge port of entry which serves as a common border point between the two countries. South Africa and Zimbabwe are both Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the erection of this border wall points to a [prioritisation of securitised approaches](#) to border management governance in the region.

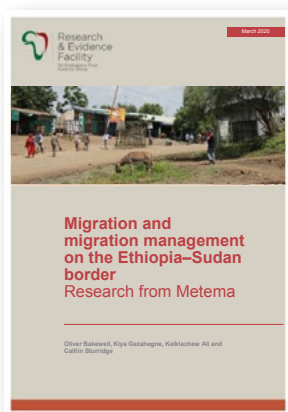
Highlighted New Research and Reports



[Weak links: Challenging the climate & migration paradigm in the Horn of Africa & Yemen](#)

Mixed Migration Centre | February 2020

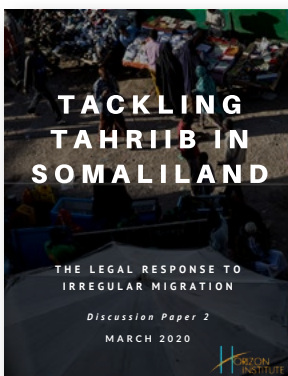
This briefing paper provides an overview of the climate situation and environmental stressors in the Horn of Africa as well as risks, vulnerabilities and implications for mixed migration. It argues that there is scant evidence that the impacts of conflict, mass displacement and harsh environments in the region cause intercontinental or inter-regional mixed migration due to the fact that climate change and environmental stressors cannot easily be disaggregated from the wide range of factors affecting populations.



[Migration and migration management on the Ethiopia-Sudan border: Research from Metema](#)

Research and Evidence Facility | March 2020

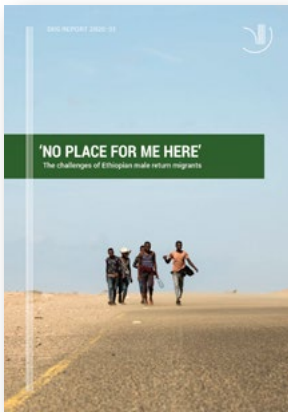
This report focusing specifically on Metema looks at actors, journeys, routes as well as the impact and role of migration in the area, migration initiatives, and gaps in perception and action. The report is informed by the need to create a better understanding of the different forms of migration in order to maximise the effectiveness of any intervention and Metema with its high levels of migration make it an interesting case study to assess this.



[Tackling Tahriib in Somaliland: The legal response to irregular migration](#)

Horizon Institute | March 2020

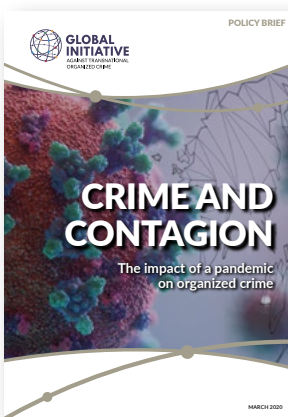
This report documents how the Somaliland government is responding to irregular migration.



[‘No Place for Me Here’: The challenges of Ethiopian male return migrants](#)

Danish Institute for International Studies | March 2020

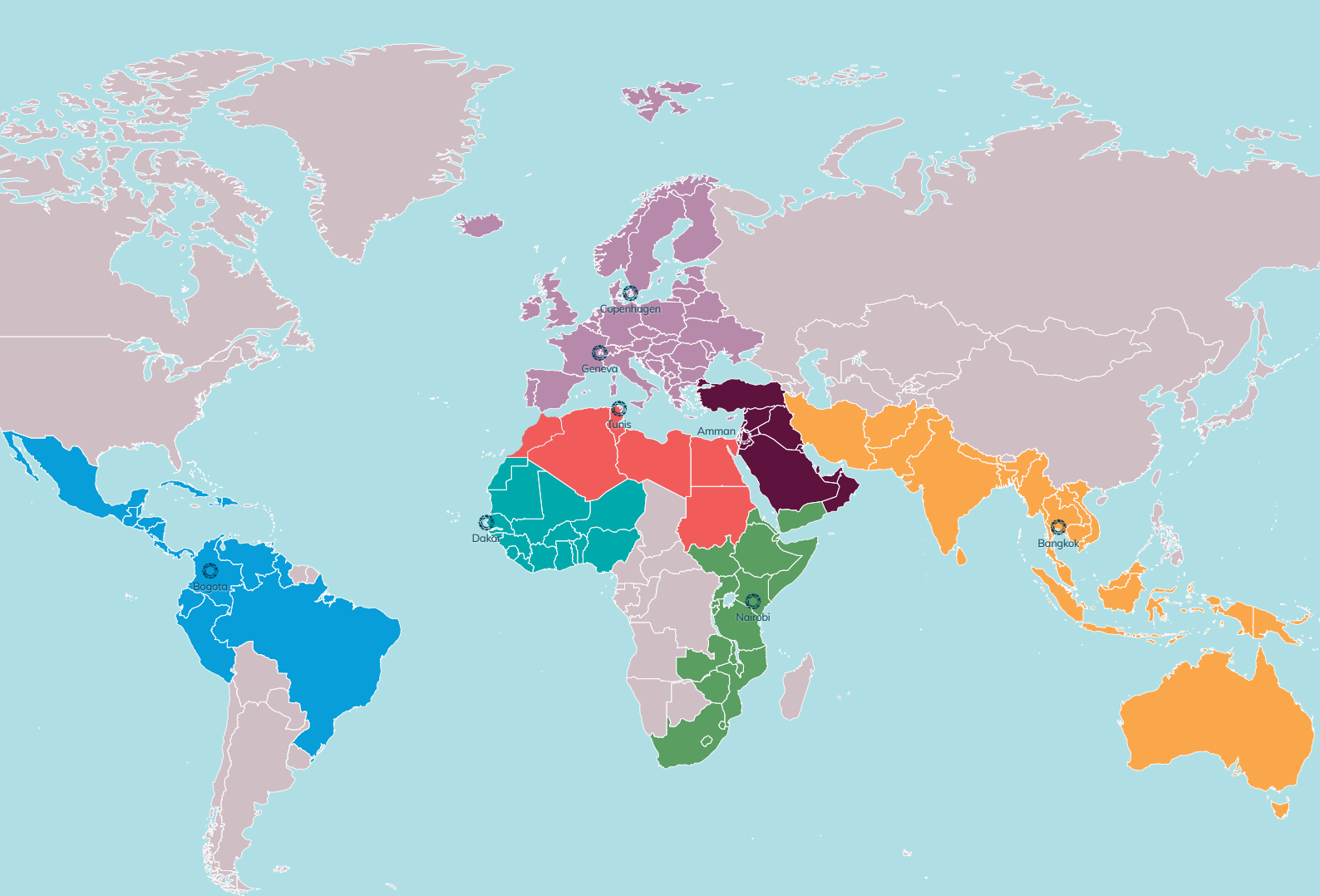
This report looks at conditions Ethiopian men face during their travels while also questioning the notion of reintegration amidst social stigma, economic hardship and traumas from migration journeys.



[Crime and Contagion: The Impact of a Pandemic on Organized Crime](#)

Global Initiative Against Organized Crime | March 2020

This brief is a result of information garnered from our networks and civil-society partners in the field, and draws from a comprehensive review of reporting on the impact of the coronavirus on criminal groups and illicit markets.



The MMC is a global network consisting of seven regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

The MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). Global and regional MMC teams are based in Amman, Copenhagen, Dakar, Geneva, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Bangkok.

For more information visit:

mixedmigration.org and follow us at [@Mixed_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

