



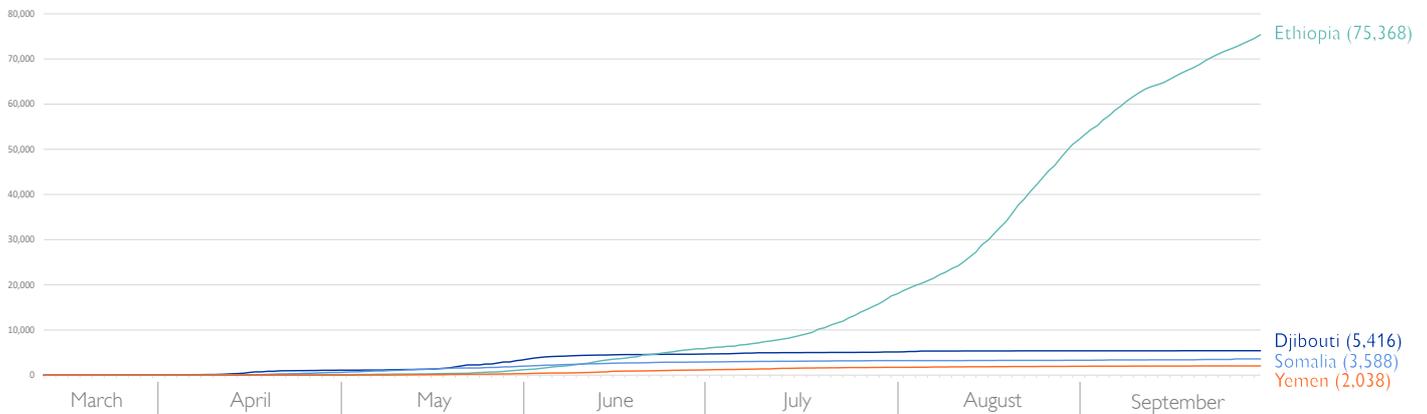
A displaced boy carries water from an IOM water point back to his shelter in a new site outside Marib city. Photo: © IOM / Olivia Headon

## BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 outbreak has restricted global mobility, whilst heightening the risk of exploitation of vulnerable populations. This report provides a snapshot of the **COVID-19 epidemiological situation** and **mobility restrictions**, and of the **current migration trends** along the Eastern Corridor migration route, in addition to an analysis of the impact that movement restrictions have had in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen. Moreover, it provides **information on the main protection concerns for migrants** and **assistance provided**, and **COVID-19 risk mitigation measures**. This report utilizes data collected through IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs), Migrant Response Centres (MRCs),<sup>1</sup> Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) data, as well as anecdotal information provided by IOM team members working in the region.

## KEY OBSERVATIONS

Incidence Trend of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases as of 30 September 2020



Source: Ministry of Health (MHC) Reports, World Health Organization (WHO)

<sup>1</sup> Migration Response Centres (MRCs) are situated along key migration routes, where they fill critical gaps by providing direct assistance, including food and temporary shelter, information and service referrals to migrants on the move. MRCs bring together key partners to facilitate the identification of migrants in vulnerable situations, and ensure that they receive appropriate, immediate and longer-term support. Seven MRCs are currently operational in the Horn of Africa: Obock (Djibouti), Hargeisa, Bossaso (Somalia), Semera, Metema, Dire Dawa and Tog-Wajaale (Ethiopia).

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## COVID-19 EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION

As of 30 September 2020, the number of COVID-19 cases along the Eastern Corridor stood at 86,410. **Ethiopia is still experiencing an exponential rise in community transmission with an average of 700+ cases reported daily during September, while Djibouti, Somalia and Yemen continue to experience a steady increase in new detected cases.** Ethiopia continued recording the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases at 75,368 (87.2% of total cases). Following Ethiopia is Djibouti with 5,416 confirmed cases (6.3% of total cases) and Somalia with 3,588 cases (4.1% of total cases), while Yemen cases amounted to 2,038 (2.4% of total cases). As of 30 September 2020, the number of COVID-19 related deaths along the Eastern Corridor stood at 1,946, majority of which were recorded in Ethiopia (1,198). Yemen holds the highest case fatality rate (CFR) at approximately 28.9%, compared to Djibouti (CFR 1.1%), Ethiopia (CFR 1.6%) and Somalia (CFR 2.8%). This is much higher than the global average CFR of 3.0% and is largely attributable to the challenges of accessing a health care system which has been decimated by years of war. As of 30 September 2020, Ethiopia held the highest number of active cases (42,966), followed by Somalia (543), Yemen (162) and Djibouti (11). **Due to Yemen's various challenges and limited testing capacity, COVID-19 figures appear relatively low and the disease keeps spreading undetected among the Yemeni population.**

## COVID-19 MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS

Djibouti's air, land and sea borders remained open with strict health guidelines in regard to travellers' screening at the various Points of Entry (PoEs). Since 17 July, health authorities recorded a 3.45% COVID-19 positivity rate and a 98% recovery rate among all incoming passengers. **The state of emergency was lifted in Ethiopia and on 23 September, the country reopened all air and land borders for tourism, however, Addis Ababa Bole International Airport is operating at much-reduced levels.** In Somalia, international and domestic flights continued to operate throughout September, while all sea ports remained operational and land border crossings are now beginning to open. In Yemen, three of the five international airports were opened to facilitate the return of stranded Yemenis and humanitarian staff abroad. Overall, two of these three airports (Aden and Seiyun), in addition to 15 sea border points and three land border points, were partially open for movement, while inter-governorate public movement tracking continued at 10 internal transit points, especially in Taizz and Al-Bayda. **The closure of Sana'a airport was announced on 6 September due to the shortage of fuel allocated for airport, however, it temporarily reopened for humanitarian flights on 28 September.**

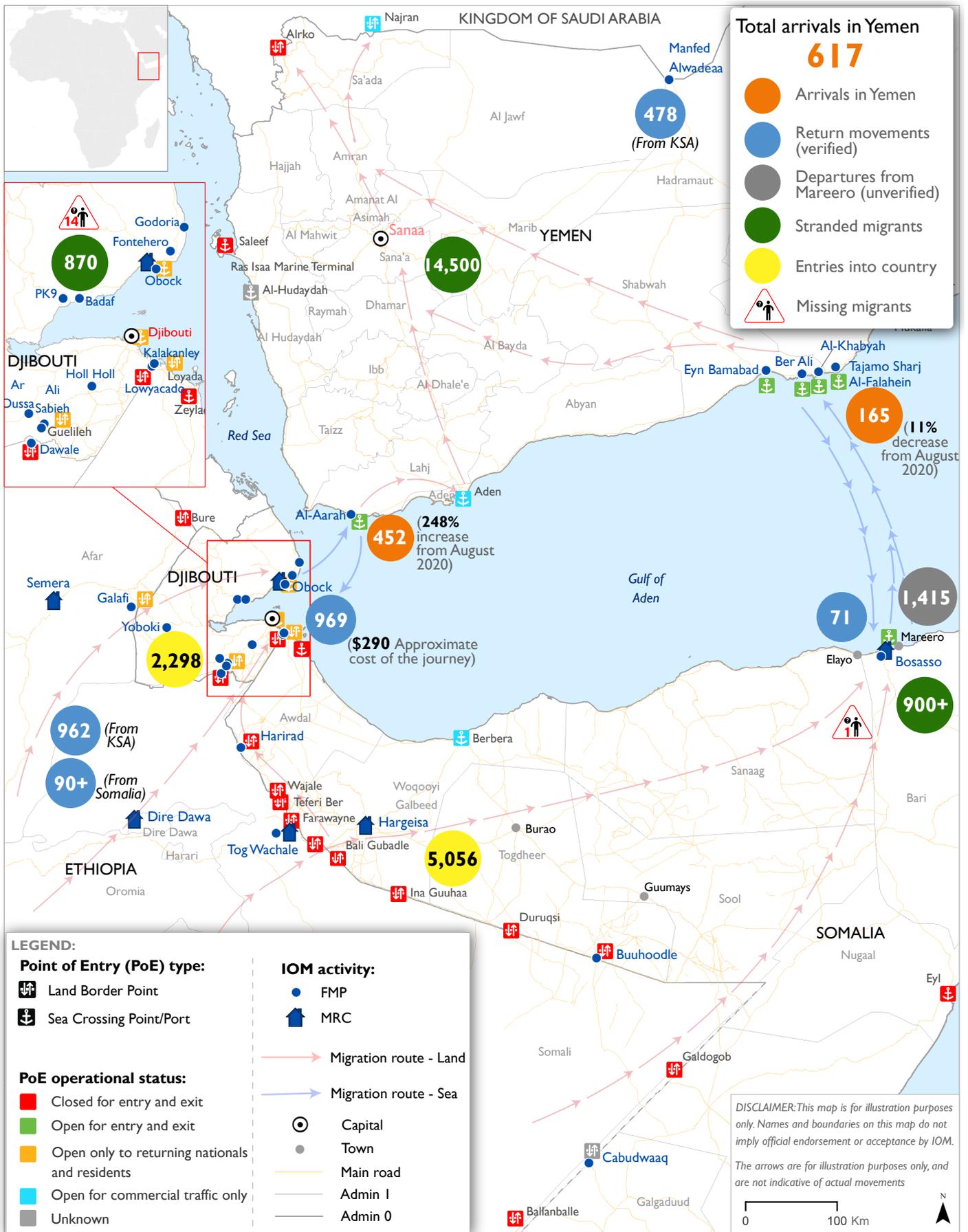
## COVID-19 IMPACT ON MIGRANT FLOWS

**Overall migrants' arrivals to Yemen from the Horn of Africa increased by 95% between August (316) and September (617) as restrictions on mobility eased, however this represents a decrease of over 69% in relation to overall arrival trends between January and September of 2019 (107,781 arrivals in 2019 and 33,122 arrivals in 2020).** 73% of the arrivals during September 2020 came from Djibouti while 27% originated from Somalia. Meanwhile, spontaneous return movements of Ethiopians from Yemen to Djibouti continued to be observed with over 3,120 returns since May of 2020, 969 of which occurred in September. Please see Map 1 on the following page for an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on migrant flows along the Eastern Corridor.

## MIGRANT PROTECTION CONCERNS

**By the end of September 2020, it is estimated that over 14,500 migrants were stranded in Yemen, 1,201 in Djibouti and over 900 in Somalia.** Their situation is now normalizing with the opening of borders. With the instrumentalization of COVID-19 mitigation measures, migrants in Yemen continue to face the threat of arrest, detention and forced transfers by authorities: over 4,100 migrants have been forcibly transferred from the northern to the southern governorates since March 2020. Spontaneous returnees from Yemen to Djibouti continue reporting extreme violence experienced in Yemen not only at the hands of smugglers, armed groups and government authorities, but also from other Ethiopian migrants of different ethnic groups. **In addition to the abuse and exploitation experienced in Yemen, in September alone, 6 migrants were reported to have died of dehydration in Djibouti, and another 8 drowned off the coast of Obock, abandoned by smugglers in the desert or at sea.**

MAP 1 | COVID-19 IMPACT ON MIGRATION ALONG THE EASTERN CORRIDOR (SEPTEMBER 2020)



## MIGRANT ASSISTANCE (MRC/AVR)

IOM continues to provide basic life-saving assistance and psychosocial support at the MRCs. IOM Djibouti is currently assisting 64 vulnerable migrants at the MRC in Obock, as AVR assistance is still severely limited. **COVID-19 risk sensitization is ongoing among stranded migrants and IOM is providing search and rescue operations along the coast of Obock.** In Somalia, 155 new migrants were assisted at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa, while 533 migrants continue awaiting for AVR as the service is still severely restricted due to COVID-19 measures imposed by the Government of Ethiopia.<sup>2</sup> **In Yemen, movement restrictions, the deterioration of migrants' living conditions and the increased danger migrants are facing due to a variety of factors are leaving many with no other option than seeking to return home.** In this scenario, the resumption of VHR assistance is a priority to address life-threatening conditions migrants are living in Yemen. While there are headways in the negotiations between IOM and the Government of Ethiopia to resume the returns of migrants with Ethiopia from Aden (south), in the north, little progress has been seen as negotiations are still pending with De Facto Authorities (DFA).

## MIGRANT RETURNS

**Returns from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards Ethiopia (962) and Yemen (478)<sup>3</sup> resumed in September.** Returns to Ethiopia decreased by over 65%, between March and April 2020, falling from 8,963 to 2,757. In May, after a one-month suspension, 387 migrants were returned to Addis Ababa in June, but no other return had been carried out since then until September. Returns from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Yemen had also been put on hold until September, although there was a brief resumption in activity during July when 363 returnees were tracked in Manfed Alwadeeya. Overall, the returns of Yemeni nationals from Saudi Arabia since January 2020 has amounted to 13,895, almost one-third of the returns recorded in the same period in 2019 (38,706); this is in addition to 259 Yemeni returnees travelling from Djibouti to Yemen in June and an additional seven travelling from Somalia to Yemen in July. **Similarly, returns to Somalia from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continued, with a total of 729 returnees reported as of September 2020 to have flown back to Mogadishu and referred for assistance to IOM.**

## QUARANTINE MEASURES

During the month of September, the Government of Djibouti's quarantine site in Ali Sabieh run by ONARS (National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims) admitted 467 new migrants. Meanwhile, the quarantine period for all persons entering Ethiopia was maintained to seven days as established in June. Since returnee movements to Addis Ababa remained limited, the government closed one of the seven quarantine centres designated for returnees and converted a second centre to serve as a treatment facility.



DTM Flow Monitoring activity in Dhobley. Photo: © IOM Somalia 2020

<sup>2</sup> The number of migrants awaiting AVR assistance is an estimate based on the number of unattended requests received. However, as the service has been suspended for over six months due to COVID-19 restrictions and stranded migrants have spontaneously returned to Ethiopia, the precise number of migrants awaiting AVR would be available only by conducting a new registration.

<sup>3</sup> Note that these are Yemeni returnees.

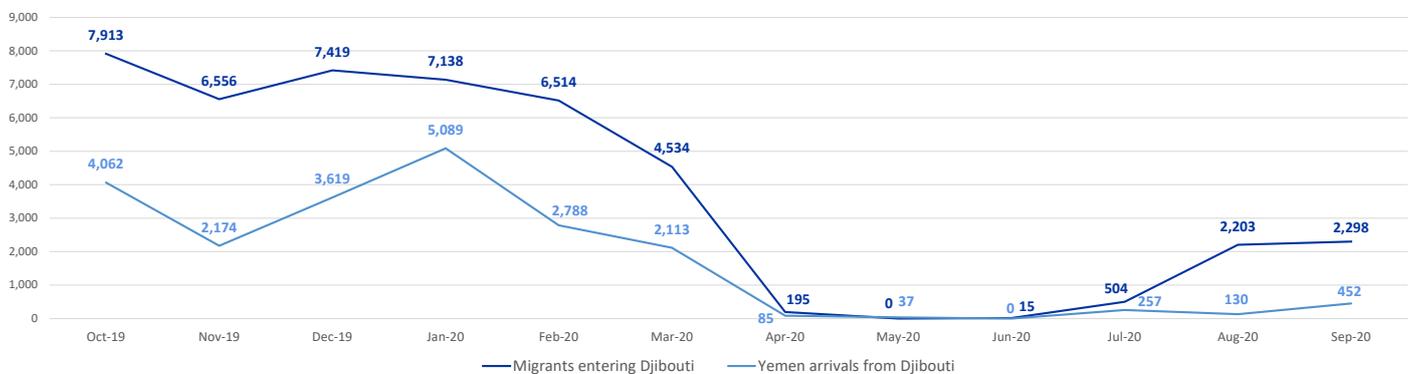
## DJIBOUTI SITUATION

As of 30 September, Djibouti recorded a total of 5,416 confirmed individuals, 61 deaths and 5,344 recoveries. In September, the country recorded an 89% decrease in the number of new COVID-19 positive cases (29 in September, compared to 261 in August). Since 17 July, Djibouti's air, land and sea borders have remained open under strict health protocols for travellers issued by the Ministry of Health. As the country eased its COVID-19 related restrictions and slowly reopened for tourism, land and air transport services resumed and all the passengers arriving at Ambouli International Airport and land borders were tested. In September, however, the Ministry of Health reminded to observe barrier measures and limit the regrouping of people in public places.

### Migrant Flows Observed Through Djibouti and at Yemen Points of Entry

- In September, migrant movements into Djibouti increased for the third consecutive month with 2,298 migrants, all Ethiopian, tracked along Djibouti's western borders at various FMPs; this is an increase of 4% from the 2,203 migrant entries observed in August, and is attributed to the official re-opening of borders in Djibouti on 17 July;
- 452 arrivals from Djibouti were tracked in Yemen near Al-Aarah FMP in Lahj governorate, all of whom were Ethiopian nationals. A majority of the migrants were adult men (397) and only 55 were women; between 34 to 125 migrants arrived on each of the three boats that came ashore between 1 and 28 September;

*Migrant Movements through Djibouti to Yemen (October 2019 - September 2020)*



- Spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Djibouti had started in May 2020 with overall 3,120 migrants accounted for, of which 969 (including 226 women) only in September. Migrants arrive on the coasts of Obock between Moulhoulle and Ras Bir mainly, including Godoria, Guehere and Khor Angar.

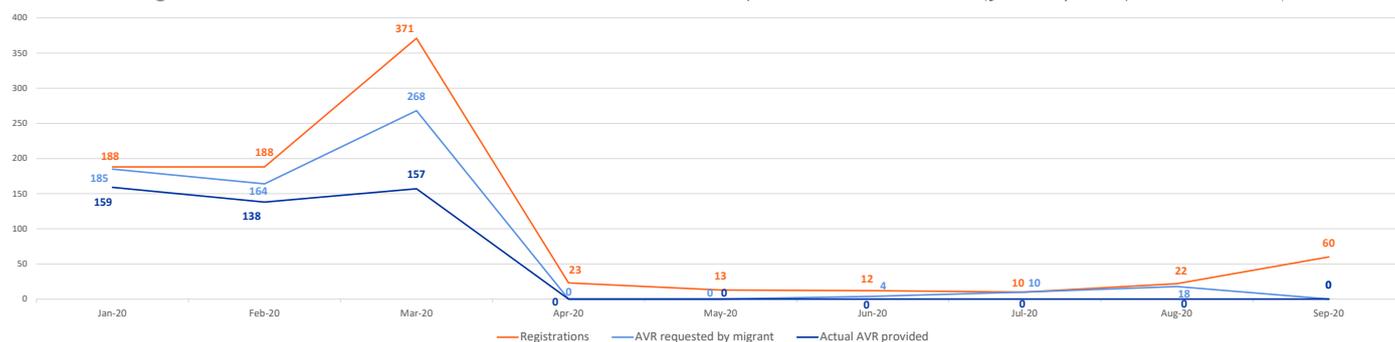
### Migrant Protection Concerns

- Migrants returning from Yemen to Djibouti continue to report experiences of violence, deprivation and abuse. Most return because they are unable to proceed into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to border closures and strict controls, and are given the option by smugglers to be taken back to Ethiopia. Allegedly the cost of the journey from Yemen to Djibouti is around 10,000 ETB (around 294 USD) but smugglers only drop off migrants on the coast and leave them to walk up to over 50 km in the desert at temperatures which can reach 45 degrees Celsius which is deadly for many;
- The migrants who have returned in September from Yemen also reported having been abused and having endured great hardship at the hands not only of smugglers and authorities or armed groups in Yemen, but also at the hands of other migrants from different ethnic groups. Once in Djibouti, the returnees are hosted at the government-managed Masagara site for first assistance and later transferred to the quarantine site. Here, conflict among migrants is not infrequent, especially when there is an unbalance in the representation of different ethnicities;
- Both the closure of the Djibouti-Ethiopia border and the stricter border controls in Yemen have left many migrants stranded in the country. As of 30 September, 1,201 migrants on their way to the Arab Peninsula were stranded in Djibouti and had gathered in 19 spontaneous sites located along the migration route. All stranded migrants were Ethiopian nationals and most of them were men (86%). Immediate needs included water, food, hygiene kits and non-food items (NFIs);
- When asked about COVID-19 awareness, a little over 73% of all migrants tracked through Djibouti reported to be aware of the COVID-19 outbreak and this represents a decrease from the 83% in August that reported to be aware of the outbreak.

### Migrant Assistance (MRC/AVR)

- The MRC in Obock was assisting, as of 30 September, 64 vulnerable migrants who have been stranded for several months. A total of 60 new migrants were admitted to the centre in September. Similar to previous trends, the prolonged suspension of AVR assistance and long waiting times prompted some of the migrants to leave the MRC;
- In the context of COVID-19 prevention, the admission of new migrants at the MRC in Obock was reduced to admission only of the most vulnerable cases, namely women, children, and sick migrants. Additionally, 6 unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs) have been hosted by CARITAS since May, and their return is being planned in close coordination with IOM Ethiopia and the Embassy of Ethiopia in Djibouti;
- While 18 requests for AVR were recorded at the MRC in August, no new AVR requests were received in September;
- With the increased number of spontaneous arrivals from Yemen and the many casualties witnessed in the past two months due to reckless practices of smugglers and the difficulties in which migrants have to walk to reach Obock town, the MRC has set up search and rescue activities between Obock City and Khor Angar. An ambulance with medical staff assists migrants en route, providing medical care and water to those in distress.

Registrations at the MRC in Obock and AVR Services Requested and Provided (January - September 2020)



### Quarantine Measures

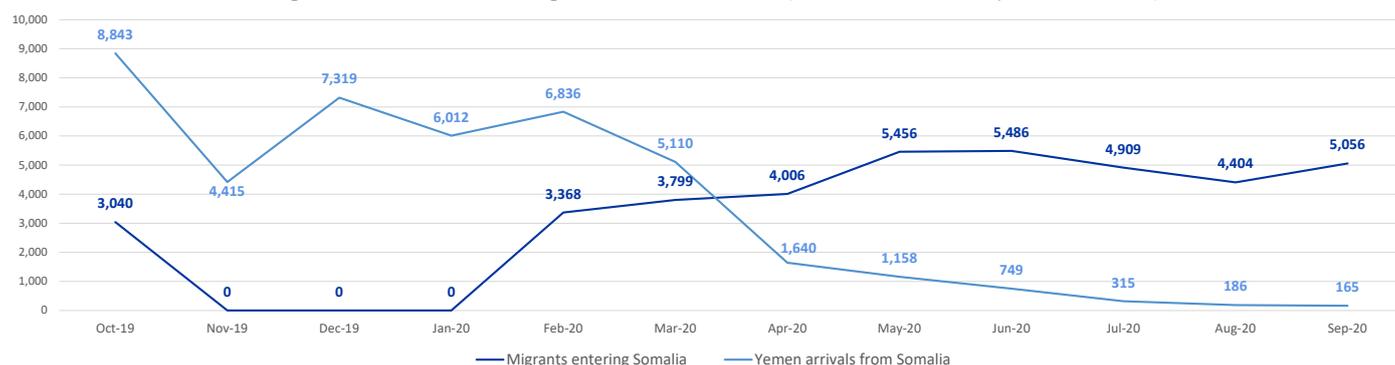
- During the month of September, the Government of Djibouti’s quarantine site in Ali Sabieh run by ONARS (National Office for Assistance to Refugees and Disaster Victims) admitted 467 new migrants. Of these, 410 were men (88%) and 57 were women (12%).

## SOMALIA SITUATION

As of 30 September, Somalia reported 3,588 confirmed positive COVID-19 individuals, 99 deaths and 2,946 recoveries. In Somalia, contrary to what was reported in the previous month, the rate of new COVID-19 infections increased by 184% in September when a total of 278 new infections were confirmed compared to 98 which were confirmed in August. International air travel resumed on 3 August after four months of disruptions, facilitating the movement of aid workers and delivery of supplies, while domestic flights continued to operate, apart from Abudwak airport which is still closed for maintenance work. All sea ports in Somalia continued to remain operational, while land border crossings are now beginning to open.

### Migrant Flows Observed Through Somalia and at Yemen Points of Entry

Migrant Movements through Somalia to Yemen (October 2019 - September 2020)



Note: Flows of migrants from the Somali Boreh region from November 2019 to January 2020 are '0' because of the temporary closure of the 7 following Points of Entry.

- Yemen arrivals from Somalia stood at 165 in August, an 11% decrease from the 186 arrivals recorded in August, most likely due to continuing unfavorable weather conditions during the later summer months; similar to previous months, the largest proportion of these migrants were Ethiopian (79%), with the remainder being Somali (21%) nationals. As in August, the majority of the migrants arriving in Yemen from Somalia were adult males (68%), while 16% were adult females, and 15% were children, of which 84 per cent (21) were UMCs;
- FM data showed a marked increase in migrant entries into Somalia with 5,056 movements observed in September versus 4,404 movements tracked in August; almost all of the migrants were Ethiopian nationals (99.2%). 36 Yemeni nationals were also tracked intending to return to Yemen from Somalia;
- Similar to what was observed in August, a significant number of Ethiopians travelled through Djibouti to Somalia (500), which is a substantial increase from the 394 recorded in August. These movements make up 10% of all migrants tracked entering Somalia;
- Similar to Djibouti, spontaneous return movements from Yemen are currently ongoing, with an overall 465 migrants returning since May, of which 90 (including 46 women) only in September. Migrants arrived on the coasts of Bossaso and Berbera;
- Unverified reports received by IOM stated that 1,415 migrants departed by boat to Yemen from Mareero, a small town 15 km east of Bossaso. These departures represent an increase of almost thirteen-fold as compared to September when 110 departures were reported;
- Spontaneous returns from Somalia to Ethiopia through Wajaale continued with around 20 migrants returning weekly.

## Migrant Protection Concerns

- IOM estimates that around 400 migrants continue to be stranded in and around Bossaso, with few options available to continue their journey or to return home;
- On 22 September, 27 Ethiopian migrants had a car accident in Togdheer region as their vehicle turned over on the road in Aynaba, a town between Burao and Lasanaand. One of them died and 10 others were injured and hospitalized in Burao Hospital;<sup>4</sup>
- The Ethiopian border with Somaliland at Wajaale town remains closed from Ethiopia's side, yet irregular migrants continue entering Somaliland via two main routes. The first route goes through the east of Somaliland, and migrants usually pass through Hargeisa, Berbera and Burao with the main aim of reaching Puntland. The second route cuts across the west side, through Borama, Hariirad and Lowyado. Migrants on this route often aim to reach Obock via Djibouti and then continue to Yemen.<sup>5</sup>

## Migrant Assistance (MRC/AVR)

### Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- On 23 September, 112 migrants reached Berbera port town in Somaliland; the number includes 71 Yemeni, 14 Ethiopians and 26 Somalis. Other arrivals were registered on 20 September, but in lower scale with only 6 Yemenis reaching via a small boat. Migrants were referred to the Berbera reception centre for provision of food, medical assistance and Onwards Transportation Assistance (OTA) to reach Hargeisa;
- In September, 73 refugees and returnees arrived in Puntland from Yemen, respectively on 3 September (40) and on 23 September (33). Assistance in Puntland is usually provided at the reception facility run by UNHCR;
- Somaliland Immigration Officials in Wajaale confirmed that refugees from Syria continue to attempt the crossing into Somaliland; however, lacking valid visas, they are often rejected entry and engage in begging in the border town of Wajaale.

### Bossaso

- Migrant registrations remained fairly stable between August (106) and September (101). This is similar to the trend seen in the summer of 2019, when smugglers slowed down the departures in the summer months due to the windy season which leads to unfavorable conditions at sea, but picked up again later in the year;
- No AVR requests were received in September, and AVR assistance remained suspended with an overall backlog of 312 stranded migrants among which are 22 UMCs. The movement scheduled for the return of these migrants have been suspended due to health issues and will be re-scheduled for October. IOM and partners continue providing shelter and basic services to vulnerable migrants;
- The MRC in Bossaso and the Ethiopian Community Centre (ECC) conducted three COVID-19 awareness sessions (risks, signs, symptoms and modes of transmission) reaching out to 115 individuals, including 111 Ethiopian migrants and 4 members of the host communities.

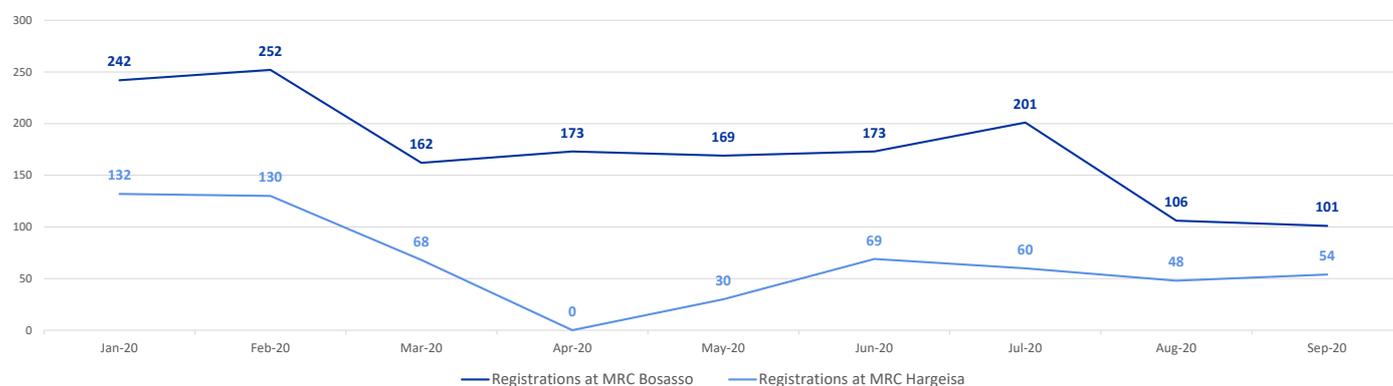
<sup>4</sup> Case reported by the Ethiopian Community Centre (ECC) and the National Displacement and Refugee Agency (NDRA) representative in Burao.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Somaliland Immigration Officer.

## Hargeisa

- A total of 54 new migrant registrations were carried out by the MRC in Hargeisa in September and 22 new AVR requests were recorded, adding to a backlog of 200 requests, but no return assistance could be provided;
- The MRC conducted COVID-19 awareness raising sessions inside the MRC compound and at the ECC, reaching 40 Ethiopian migrants, and provided protection materials to the migrants.

Registrations at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa (January - September 2020)



## Migrant Returns to Somalia

- According to the Immigration and Naturalization Directorate of Somalia (IND), 729 individuals were returned from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Mogadishu as of September 2020.<sup>6</sup>

## Quarantine Measures

- There are currently 14 functional isolation facilities in Somalia, accounting for a total of 368 ready isolation beds by the end of September.

## ETHIOPIA SITUATION

As of 30 September, the Government of Ethiopia recorded the highest number of COVID-19 cases among the countries on the Eastern Corridor, with a total of 75,368 confirmed individuals, 1,198 deaths and 31,204 recoveries. The month of September saw a slight decrease in new COVID-19 cases which fell by 33% as compared to August (23,237 new cases in September, and 34,601 new cases in August). Sustained community transmission within Ethiopia is still ongoing, increasing pressure on quarantine, isolation and treatment facilities and the health system in general. The state of emergency which lasted until September, placing restrictions on public transportation, gatherings of more than four persons, and restrictions on carrying capacity and movements of public transportation has been lifted in Ethiopia. In addition, the country reopened all air and land borders for tourism on 23 September. However, Addis Ababa Bole International Airport is operating at much-reduced levels.

## Migrant Flows, and Protection Concerns

- In September, unlike what was reported in previous months, returns of Ethiopian nationals resumed from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Addis Ababa with 962 Ethiopians returning as part of a government-to-government agreement between Ethiopia and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Returns commenced on 10 September 2020 at the rate of one flight per week. This is the first time returns have taken place since June, when 387 nationals were returned. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia returned migrants in March (8,963) and April (2,757) despite COVID-19 risks, though no returns happened in May. In comparison, September 2019 saw the return of 12,668 migrants, while the cumulative returns between January and September decreased by 62% (34,194 in 2020 and 89,076 in 2019). Returns across land borders also continued;
- The flow of migrants has shown an increase mainly due to the relaxation of restrictions previously placed by the government to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The lifting of the state of emergency is now allowing migrants to easily move from one place to another.

<sup>6</sup> The actual number might be higher, as this number refers only to cases that were referred to IOM for further assistance.

Returns of Ethiopian Nationals from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Electronically Registered by IOM in 2019 and 2020

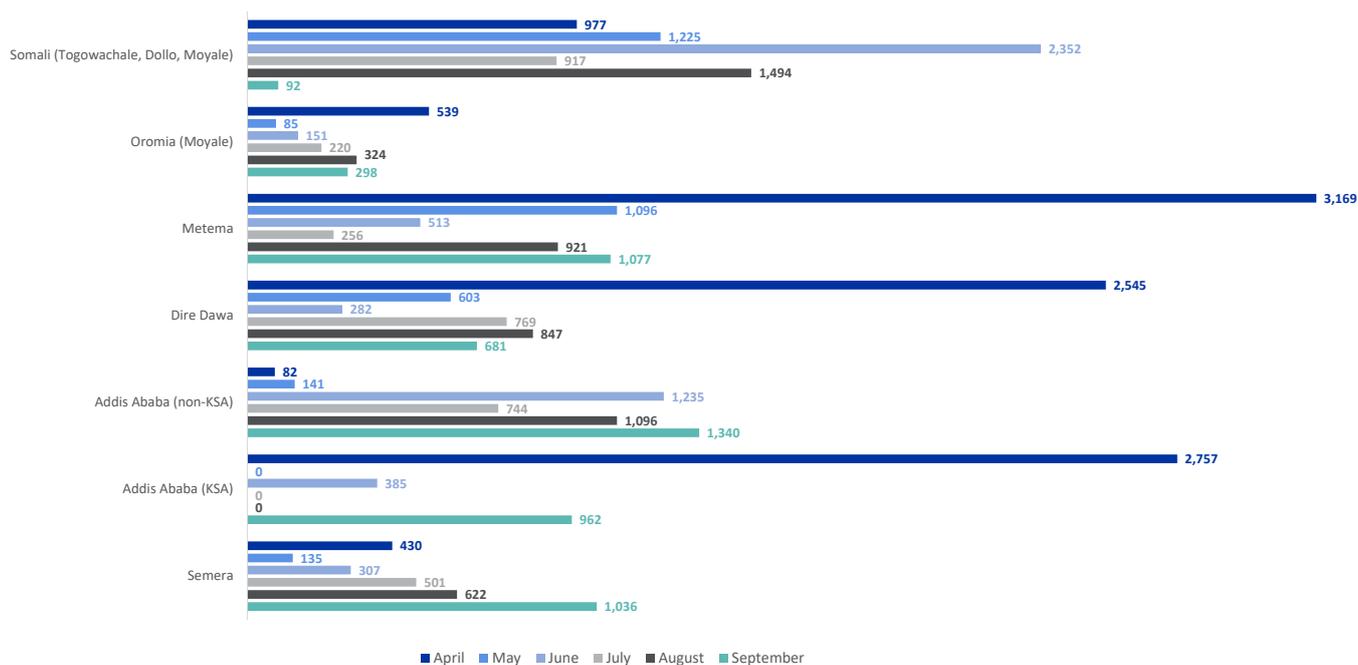


### Migrant Assistance (MRC/AVR)

- Since the adoption of travel restrictions by the Government of Ethiopia last 23 March 2020, IOM’s AVR operations have been significantly reduced. As such, in September, the Government of Ethiopia, with assistance provided by IOM, facilitated the return of some of the 1,340 Ethiopian nationals returning mainly from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1,003, though 962 were part of the mass return operation, while the remainder were regular returnees), Qatar (117), Lebanon (68), United Arab Emirates (50), and Egypt (41);
- IOM also supported returnees upon arrival at several PoEs, including Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, and quarantine centres designated for returnees in the capital and in regional states (namely Afar, Amhara, Oromia, Somali, Dire Dawa). OTA was provided to 281 returnees from different countries;
- During the month, IOM provided lifesaving assistance to a total of 1,337 migrants at Semera and Tog-wajaale MRCs (898 males, 439 female); among them, 192 (39 males, 153 female) were UMCs. Services included, food and water upon arrival, psychosocial support, awareness raising, COVID-19 risk sensitization as well as distribution of NFI kits. Of the total number of migrants assisted, 93% were registered in Semera while the remained (7%) were assisted in Tog-wajaale;
- IOM Ethiopia strongly advocates for the inclusion of stranded Ethiopian migrants in the national, multi-stakeholder COVID-19 response plans of host and transit countries – in terms of humanitarian responses, socioeconomic and psychosocial support, as well as legal assistance to migrant workers.

### Quarantine Measures

Returnees Accommodated in Quarantine Centres (April - September 2020)



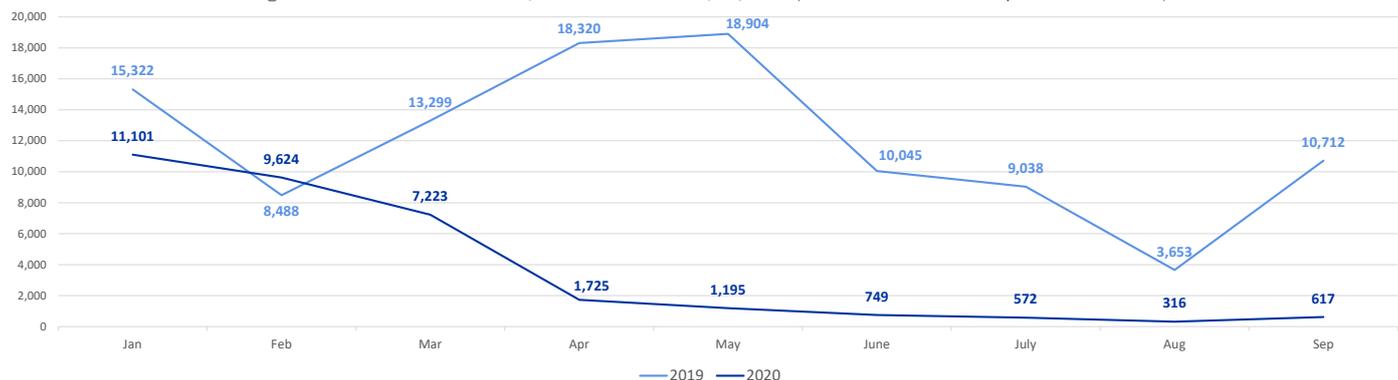
- The measure reducing the quarantine period for all persons entering Ethiopia from 14 days to seven days was maintained through September. The policy for the Government of Ethiopia is to require negative test results from all returnees that are part of mass movements as well as the return of vulnerable migrants assisted by the government and/or IOM. There is also an option to quarantine returnees who may have a heightened risk of contagion after test samples have been collected. With the state of emergency ending in September, governmental health officials are expected to provide guidelines/directives on the COVID-19 response.
- Since returnee movements to Addis Ababa remained limited, the government closed one of the seven quarantine centres designated for returnees and converted a second centre to serve as a treatment facility. Overall, IOM reported that in September a total of 5,486 returning migrants were quarantined in different facilities across the country, including from Djibouti (376), Somalia (92) and Yemen (1337). This marks a 3% increase compared to August.

## YEMEN SITUATION

As of 30 September, the Yemeni authorities have reported 2,038 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 588 deaths and 1,288 recoveries across 11 governorates in Yemen. COVID-19 continues to be reported across Yemen, with the highest number of confirmed cases reported in Hadramaut, Taizz and Aden governorates. Three of the five international airports have been opened to facilitate the return of stranded Yemenis abroad and humanitarian staff. Of these three airports, two are also open to commercial flights (Aden and Seiyun), and all 15 sea border points and three land border points are partially open for movements. The 10 transit points in Taizz and in Al Bayda remain active to monitor public movements between southern and northern governorates.

### Migrant Flows Observed in Yemen

*Migrant Arrivals in Yemen from the Horn of Africa (October 2019 - September 2020)*



- Overall, 617 migrant arrivals to Yemen from the Horn of Africa were recorded in September, a 95% increase from 316 arrivals in August, but more significantly, a 94% decrease in relation to arrival during the same period in 2019 (10,712);
- Arrival to Yemen from Somalia decreased by 11% in September (165) as compared to August (186), while arrivals from Djibouti increased by 248%, from 130 in August to 452 in September;
- Contrary to August, when 59% of all migrants arriving in Yemen were travelling from Somalia, over 73% of arrivals in September were from Djibouti;
- Most migrant arrivals were Ethiopian nationals (93%), while the remainder were Somali nationals (7%); most of the latter were travelling from Somalia, but contrary to previous months, there were seven (7) Somalis also travelling through Djibouti;
- Overall, the majority of the migrants were adult males (85%), while 13% were adult females, and 4% were children, of which 84% (21) were UMCs.

### Migrant Protection and Detention Concerns

- 363 Yemeni nationals were returned by force to Yemen from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in September;
- It is estimated that the overall stranded migrant population in the country amounts to over 14,500 individuals and their situation has seen little improvement. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, movements along the main migration routes continue to be affected, resulting in far more migrants becoming stranded and trapped in areas without assistance, at risk of being injured or killed when caught into hostilities;

- The constant inflow of large numbers of migrants being arrested, detained and transferred through Sana'a migrant detention facility continues despite high-level advocacy with local authorities. The continued risk of COVID-19 outbreaks in the facility as well as other communicable diseases remains a huge source of concern as does the conditions migrants are living in;
- As of the end of September, 1,090 migrants were detained in this facility, living in extremely dire conditions and at high risk of disease transmission. Around 711 new arrivals were brought in from detention sites in Sa'ada and Al Jawf northern governorates in September, and over 1,129 were forcibly moved to the south, as part of the systematic forced transfers of migrants across frontlines to the southern territories. Additionally, thousands of migrants were reported to be stranded at the border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

### Migrant Assistance

- IOM and partners continue providing standard health and protection assistance through IOM migrant centres, supported clinics and mobile teams at main transit hubs, along migratory routes and at new arrival points along the southern coastline. As the operational space in the north remains restricted, most of the activities remain stalled.
- In Marib, IOM in coordination with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and partners on the ground, is providing mobile assistance through distribution of relief items, health referrals, cash assistance and counselling.
- In Aden, IOM is expanding assistance introducing food vouchers distribution and registering migrants for a cash for work opportunity scheduled to start in October, in collaboration with a local governmental organization (Hygiene Fund). This will be interim assistance provided to migrants as they await VHRs to Ethiopia.

### Quarantine Measures

- IOM and partners continue to advocate against discriminatory policies and human rights abuses against migrants, including detention and forced transfers, the establishment of quarantine centres to hold migrants, and the lack of inclusive solutions in the management of the COVID-19 crisis throughout the country. IOM also keeps advocating against quarantine centres for migrants and refugees only, as a measure to avail discriminatory policies of arrest, encampment, or detention.



Health worker in PPE at IOM constructed COVID-19 isolation and treatment centre in Marib, Yemen. Photo: © IOM / Hamzah Shaif

ANNEX 1 | 2020 MRC REGISTRATION DATA

MRCs	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	MRC Total
Bosasso	242	252	162	173	169	173	201	106	101	1,579
Metema	149	220	246	41	8	0	0	0	13	677
Tog-Wajaale	200	267	38	33	0	0	0	0	0	538
Dire Dawa	182	168	89	0	0	0	0	0	0	439
Hargeisa	132	130	68	0	30	69	60	48	54	591
Obock	188	188	371	23	13	12	10	22	60	887
Semera	56	92	235	0	0	0	0	0	0	383
Monthly Total	1,149	1,317	1,209	270	220	254	271	176	228	3,945

ANNEX 2 | STATUS OF POINTS OF ENTRY IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA REGION

