



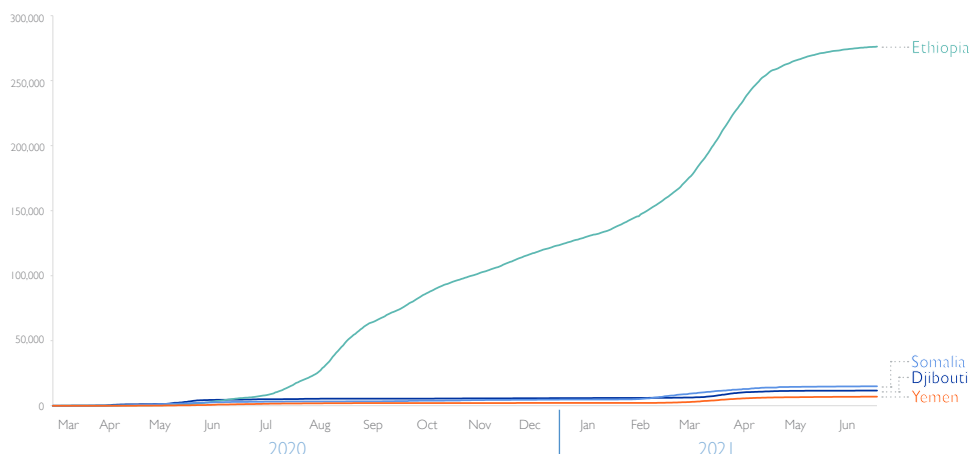
A group of migrants from the Massagara site volunteered to help bury migrants stranded on the beach. © IOM 2020/Alexander Bee

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),¹ Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) data, as well as anecdotal information provided by IOM team members working in the region.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE AND RESPONSE TO THE OUTBREAK

Incidence Trend of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases as of 30 June 2021



	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Somalia	Yemen
Confirmed cases	11,602	276,174	14,946	6,920
Deaths	155	4,320	775	1,361
Recoveries	11,445	260,372	7,246	-
Active cases	2	11,482	6,925	-

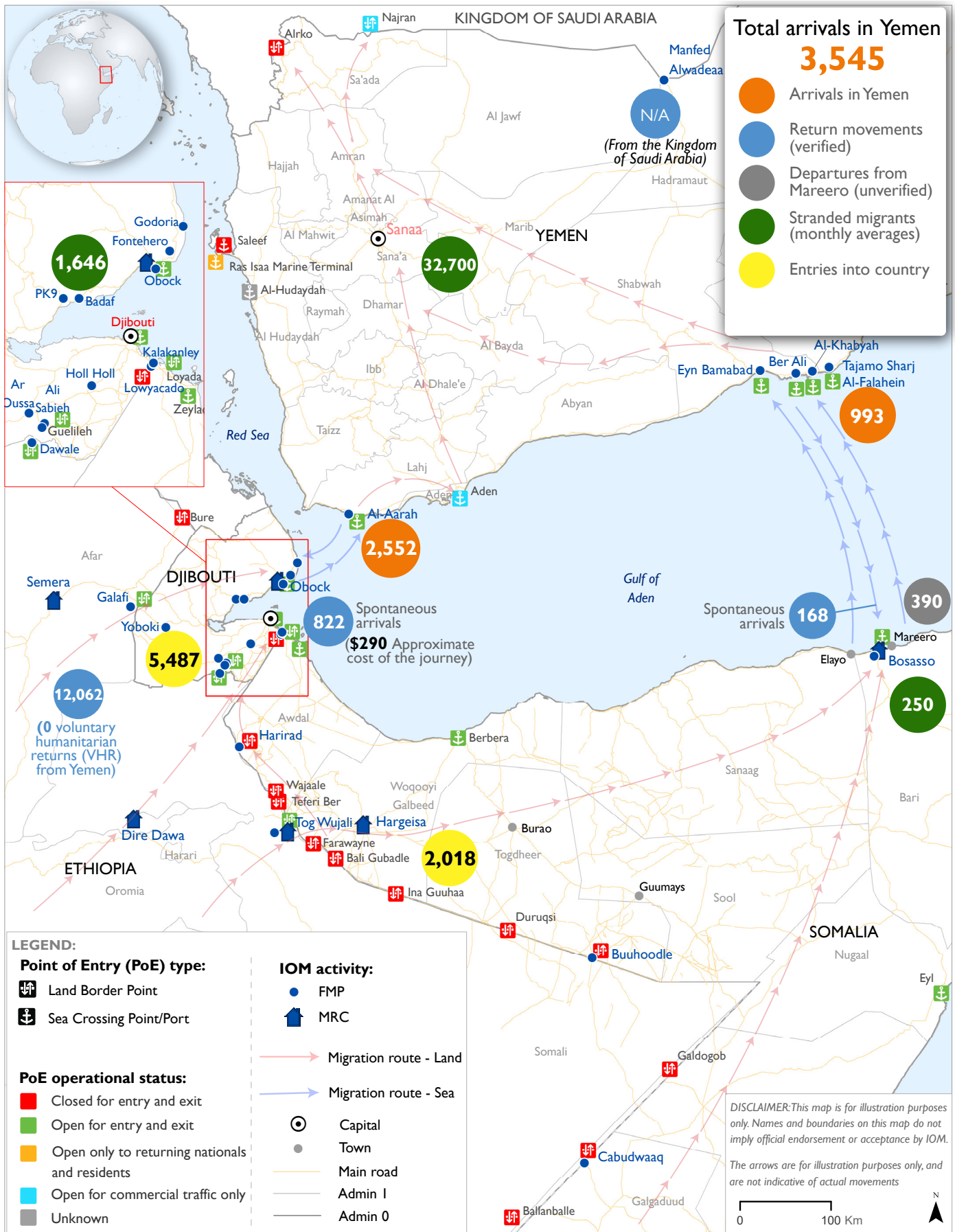
Source: IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) and Migrant Response Centres (MRCs).

¹ 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. Eight MRCs are currently operational in the Horn of Africa: Obock (Djibouti), Hargeisa, Bossaso (Somalia), Semera, Metema, Dire Dawa, Togochale and Moyale (Ethiopia).

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COVID-19 Epidemiological Situation

As of 30 June 2021, the number of COVID-19 cases along the Eastern Corridor stood at 309,642. Ethiopia continued recording the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases (89% of total cases). The country distributed over 2 million vaccine doses out of the 2.2 million doses obtained through the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative by the end of June. Following Ethiopia are Somalia (5% of total cases) and Djibouti (4% of total cases), while Yemen cases represented 2% of the total cases. As of 30 June 2021, the number of COVID-19 related deaths along the Eastern Corridor stood at 6,611, the majority of which were recorded in Ethiopia (65% of total deaths). Yemen holds the highest case fatality rate (CFR) at approximately 19.7%, compared to Djibouti (CFR 1.3%), Ethiopia (CFR 1.6%) and Somalia (CFR 5.2%). This is much higher than the global average CFR of 2.2% and is largely attributable to the challenges of accessing a health care system which has been decimated by years of war. On 30 June, Yemen's Ministry of Public Health and Population inaugurated the second phase of the COVID-19 immunization campaign by administering a second dose of vaccine to health workers, the elderly and people with chronic diseases, in 48 districts across 13 governorates.

COVID-19 Mobility Restrictions

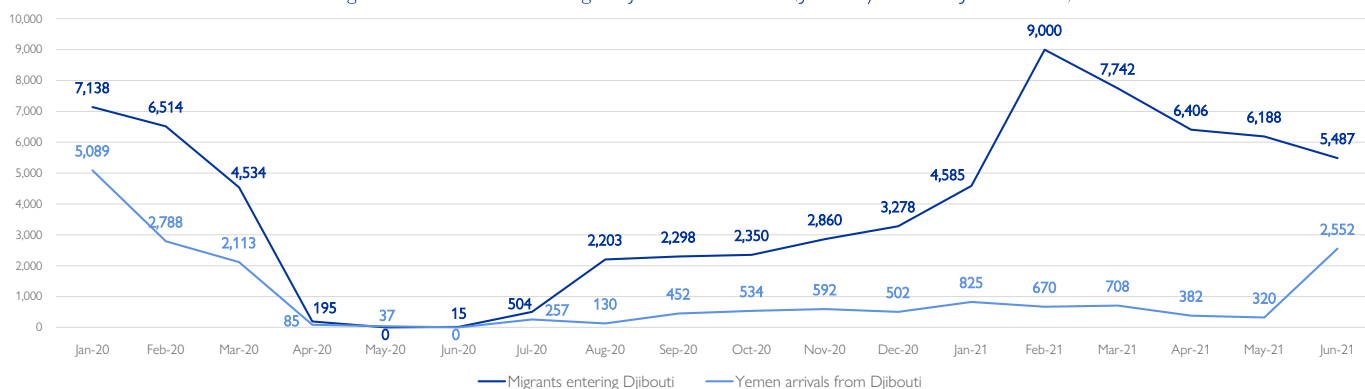
Between the reopening of the country's air, land and sea borders on 17 July 2020 and the end of June 2021, the Djiboutian health authorities recorded a 3.94% COVID-19 positivity rate and a 99.90% recovery rate among all incoming passengers screened at the various Points of Entry (PoEs). On 21 June, Djibouti made COVID-19 vaccination mandatory for all Djiboutian nationals and residents over the age of 25 before any international travel. Travellers must either show a certificate verifying that they received at least one dose of vaccine or document any permanent or temporary vaccine contraindications. At the same time, authorities in Ethiopia updated the current entry, exit and transit requirements on 7 June. Due to a reported increase in forged health documents, travellers must now produce a digital COVID-19 test as any paper certificate will no longer be valid after 1 July. Moreover, Ethiopia's Department for Immigration temporarily suspended the provision of e-visa and visa on arrival for all passengers on 18 June. The suspension of flights between Somalia and Kenya was lifted on 10 June 2021. In Yemen, mobility restrictions as well as health screenings at internal transit points have remained lifted. Al Wadeeah land border point is still open, allowing Yemenis holding a negative polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test in addition to a COVID-19 vaccination certificate to enter Saudi Arabia. Yemenis returning from Oman continue to use Al Shahin land border point, provided that they hold a negative PCR test.

DJIBOUTI SITUATION

Migrant Flows Observed Through Djibouti and at Yemen Points of Entry

- Migrant movements into the country reduced for the fourth consecutive month, with 5,487 entries observed in June 2021 from Djibouti's western borders, which is 11% lower than the entries observed in May, though continue to be higher than what was observed during the earlier months of the pandemic (only 15 entries were tracked in Djibouti in June 2020). The entries include over 66% adult males, around 27% adult females, and 6% children, all male (which is the same as last month). Contrary to the previous two months, but in keeping with the historical trends, no Somali nationals were observed at FMPs entering Djibouti.
- 2,552 migrant arrivals from Djibouti were tracked in Yemen, most near Al-Aarah FMP in Lahj governorate; the increase in migrant arrivals is due to expanded access granted to IOM Yemen by the government. However, 320 migrants were also tracked at a new FMP near Al Batin which was established at an unofficial crossing; all of these migrants were Ethiopian nationals. A majority of the migrants tracked were men (88%), 2% were boys, 9% were women, and 1% were girls. Unlike previous months, three unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs) and one person with disability were also tracked upon entry from Djibouti.

Migrant Movements through Djibouti to Yemen (January 2020 - June 2021)

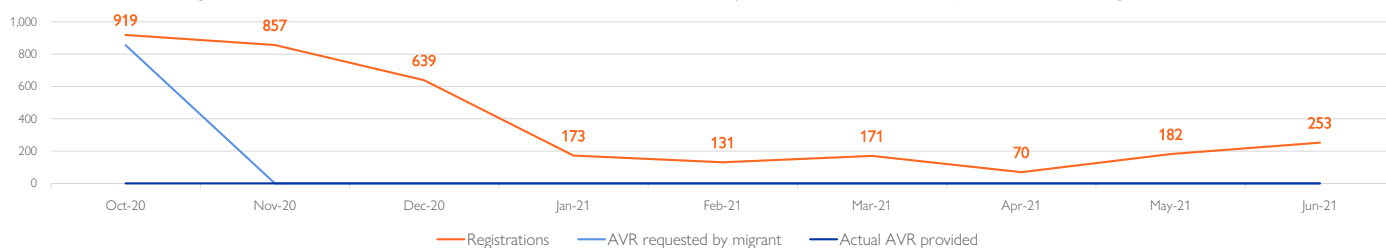


- Spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Djibouti continued in June 2021 with a total of 822 Ethiopian migrants, which is a decrease from the 900 returns reported in May 2021. A vast majority of the returns were men (99%), returning from Yemen to the coast of Obock; a 9% decrease compared to May 2021. Since May 2020, IOM tracked a total of 14,423 spontaneous returns of Ethiopian migrants.

Migrant Protection and Assistance

- Two male migrants lost their lives near Djibouti in June; one migrant passed away of natural causes at the medical centre in Obock (Centre Médico-Hospitalier, CMH), and the other migrant died of dehydration in the Holl-Holl region.
- As of 17 June 2021, 1,646 migrants on their way to the Arabian Peninsula were stranded in Djibouti and had gathered in 11 spontaneous sites located along the migration route; most migrants were stranded in the Dikhil region. Immediate needs included water, food, hygiene kits and non-food items (NFIs).
- 253 new migrants were registered at the Obock MRC in June 2021, which is a 39% increase from the previous month when the MRC reopened admission to all migrants and not just the most vulnerable cases.
- During this month, a group of 166 migrants were returned to Ethiopia as part of IOM’s AVR programme.

Registrations at the MRC in Obock and AVR Services Requested and Provided (October 2020 - June 2021)

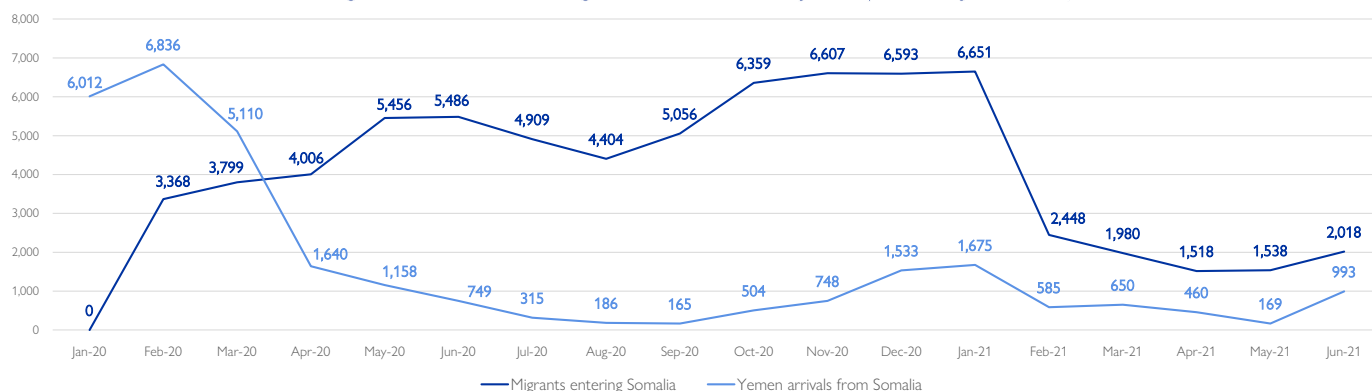


SOMALIA SITUATION

Migrant Flows Observed Through Somalia and at Yemen Points of Entry

- Migrant arrivals to Yemen from Somalia stood at 993 in June 2021; an almost five-time increase from the 169 arrivals recorded in May 2021. In line with traditional trends, the majority of the migrants tracked upon arrival in Yemen from Somalia were Ethiopian migrants (60%) with the remaining being Somali nationals (40%). Most arrivals were adult males (59%), while 14% were adult females (down from 33% in May), and 27% were children (up from 2% in May). Unlike reports from previous months, no UMCs were tracked during this month.
- Unverified reports received by IOM stated that there was a 56% decrease in migrant departures from Mareero, a small town 15 km east of Bossaso, compared to May, with only 390 migrants boarding boats to Yemen. Following an Al-Shabaab attack against the Bossaso prison in March 2021, the Puntland police has established security bases near Mareero.
- Migrant entries into Somalia increased by 31% between May (1,538) and June (2,018). Almost 97% were Ethiopians, while 15 were Kenyan nationals and 46 were Yemeni nationals; the latter were intending to return to Yemen from Somalia.
- Similar to what observed in Djibouti, spontaneous movements from Yemen to Somalia are occurring, and 168 movements were tracked upon arrival in Bossaso in June, consisting of 48% males and 52% females. The majority of movements were returning Somalis, and some Yemeni nationals were also tracked.

Migrant Movements through Somalia to Yemen (January 2020 - June 2021)

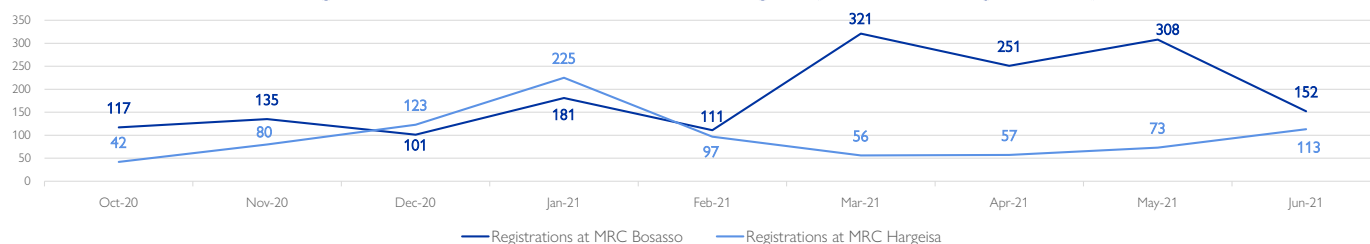


Note: Figures for migrant arrivals from Somalia for January 2021 over 10 days represent the temporary closure of Gedi Monitoring Point in Somalia. Small changes were made to represent arrivals for 11 days from March 2021 due to data recovery.

Migrant Protection and Assistance

- IOM estimates that around 250 migrants continue to be stranded in and around Bossaso (205) and Hargeisa (45), with few options available to continue their journey or return home; this number includes an estimated 35 UMCs (30 male, and 5 female) stranded around Bossaso.
- A shooting incident involving local gangs took place near Boocame town in Somaliland's Sool region. Sadly, one male Ethiopian migrant passed away while two other male migrants were injured and taken to Garowe for medical assistance. The assailant has been captured and handed over to the police.
- A total of 265 migrants were registered at the Bossaso (152) and Hargeisa (113) MRCs; a 30% decrease from May. Despite this decrease in registrations, the arrivals of migrants on trucks around Bossaso at reception points near Laaska and Marmarsan have increased throughout June.
- A total of 18 AVR requests were received at the MRC in Hargeisa in June. During this month, 114 AVR movements took place from Hargeisa (73) and Bossaso (41).

Registrations at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa (October 2020 - June 2021)

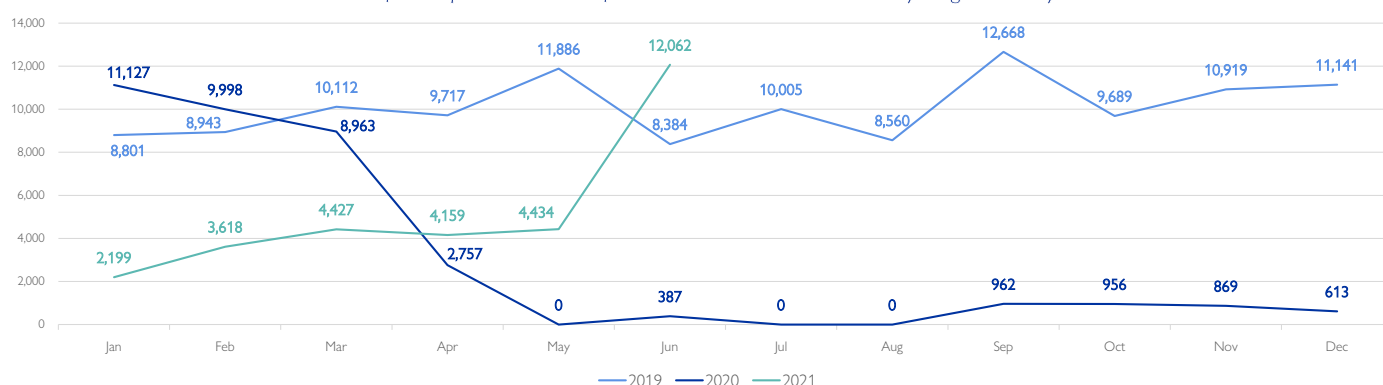


ETHIOPIA SITUATION

Migrant Flows, and Protection and Detention Concerns

- The returns of Ethiopian nationals from Saudi Arabia to Addis Ababa almost tripled between May (4,434) and June (12,062). When compared to last year, return figures from June 2021 are more than 30 times higher than the 387 returns recorded in June 2020.
- On 24 June, the Government of Ethiopia announced that 40,000 Ethiopian migrants detained in Saudi Arabia would be returned to Ethiopia in the span of two weeks. These returns commenced on 26 June.
- Tigrayan returnees continue to arrive in significant numbers from Saudi Arabia, roughly 35% of all arrivals. On 28 June, the forces of the Tigray regional government captured the regional capital Mekelle, and the Ethiopian National Defense Force withdrew from most of the regional state. Access to Tigray Regional State is severely limited, if not completely blocked, meaning that the hundreds of Tigrayan migrants returned from Saudi Arabia are stranded in Addis Ababa for indefinite periods. The Government of Ethiopia, IOM and partners are offering temporary accommodation and in-kind assistance to Tigrayans who remain in Addis Ababa or other accessible areas of the country, but the high numbers of returnees compromise all actors' ability to offer this assistance to scale.

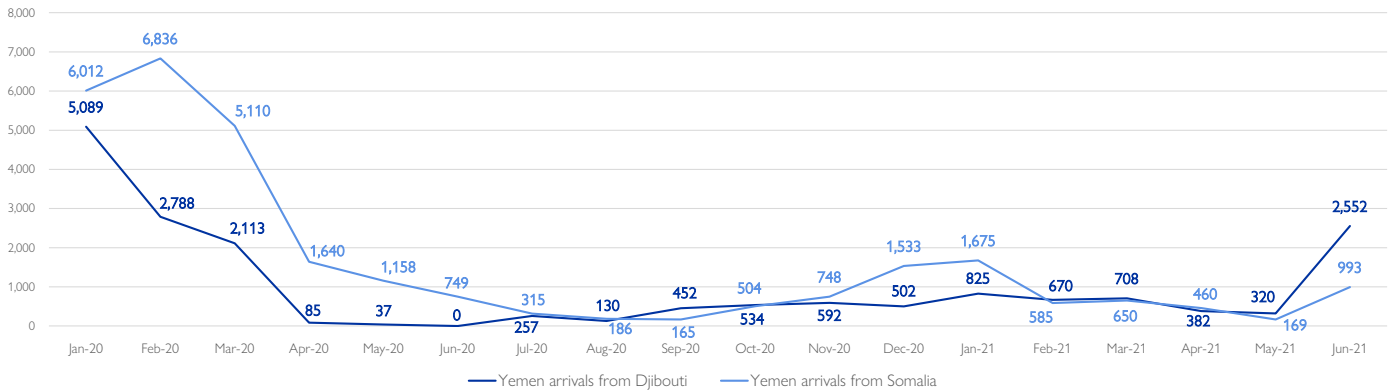
Returns of Ethiopian Nationals from Saudi Arabia Electronically Registered by IOM



Migrant Flows Observed in Yemen

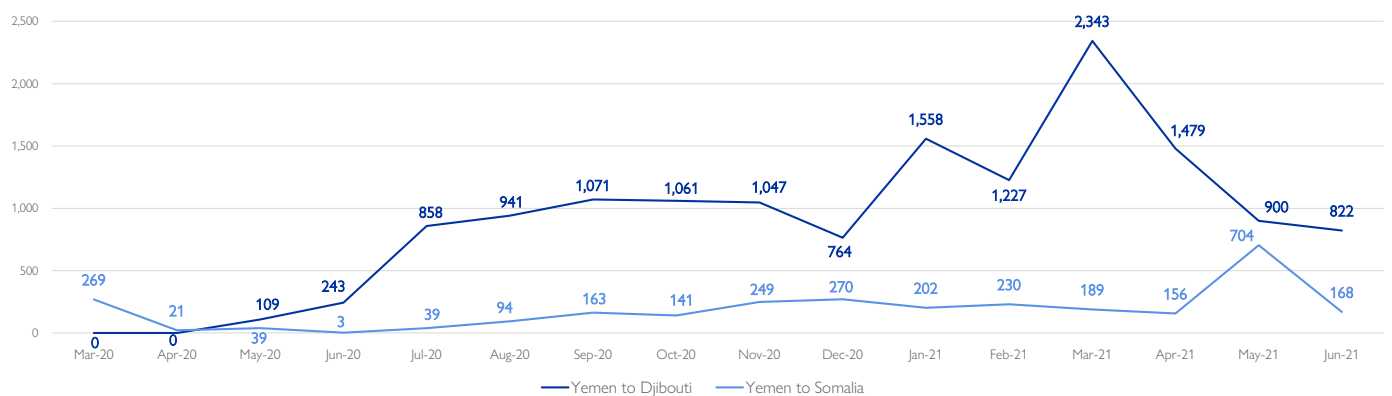
- Overall, 3,545 migrant arrivals to Yemen from the Horn of Africa were recorded in June 2021; a six-fold increase from May 2021, and a significant 373% increase compared to June 2020. This increase can be attributed to improved monitoring and access in the area.
- The majority of the migrants travelled from Djibouti (72%), with the remaining travelling from Somalia (28%); the arrivals from Somalia increased by 488% while the arrivals from Djibouti increased by 698%.
- Most migrant arrivals were Ethiopian nationals (89%), with the remainder being Somali nationals (11%).
- The majority of the migrants were adult males (80%), while 11% were adult females, and 9% were children (up from 4% in May). Three UMCs and one disabled person were tracked during this month.

Migrant Arrivals to Yemen from the Horn of Africa (January 2020 - June 2021)



- Due to the difficulties faced by migrants upon arrival in Yemen with their inability to move onwards towards Saudi Arabia, as well as the protection environment and living conditions in Yemen, many of them often opt to return back to the Horn of Africa. Since March 2020, a total of 17,360 migrants have made this perilous return journey back to Djibouti (14,423) and to Somalia (2,937), using the same network of smugglers utilized on the journey towards the Arabian Peninsula.
- DTM Yemen resumed tracking returning migrants from Saudi Arabia in June 2021 as access to the FMP at the Saudi Arabia-Yemen border was restored. During this month, 1,231 such returns were tracked. This is the first time since September of 2020 that any returns have been reported.

Spontaneous Returns from Yemen (March 2020 - June 2021)



Migrant Protection and Assistance

- Tragically, a boat capsized off the coast of Yemen near Ras al-Ara on 13 June. The vessel, which departed from Djibouti, transported nearly 200 migrants mainly from the Horn of Africa but also Yemeni nationals. At least 25 were found dead and up to 175 were missing after the incident.
- IOM estimates that approximately 32,000 migrants continue to be stranded in Yemen.
- Thousands of stranded migrants have approached IOM's Aden MRC asking for return assistance to Ethiopia through VHR. These VHR flights resumed in March after months of disruption, however, no migrants were returned to Ethiopia in June. Challenges remain due to delays in the process of verification of nationality.

ANNEX 1 | 2021 MRC REGISTRATION DATA

MRCs	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	MRC Total
Bossaso	181	111	321	251	308	152	1,324
Dire Dawa	0	0	0	0	6	14	20
Hargeisa	225	97	56	57	73	113	621
Metema	0	0	72	80	15	36	203
Moyale	-	-	187	230	44	59	520
Obock	173	131	171	70	182	253	980
Semera	0	0	71	33	34	213	351
Togochale	31	126	14	61	49	45	326
Monthly Total	610	465	892	782	711	885	4,345

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

