



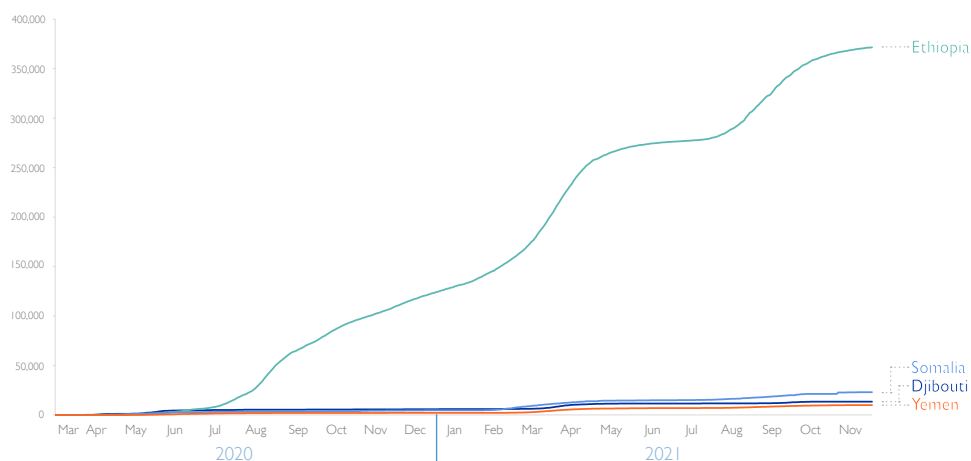
A migrant attending an outreach session at the MRC in Bossaso. © IOM 2021 / Claudia Rosel

## 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), Migration 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.

## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UPDATE AND RESPONSE TO THE OUTBREAK

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



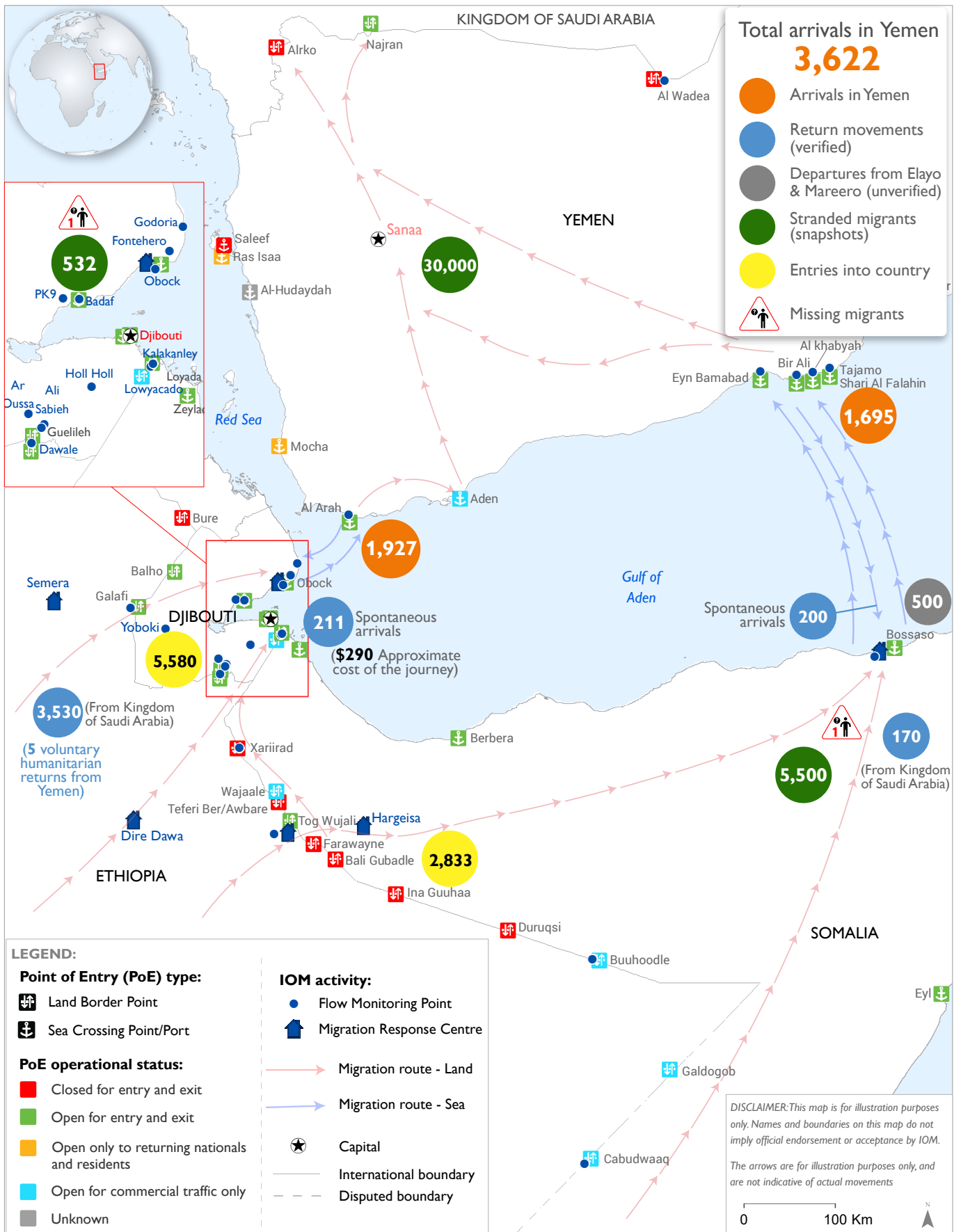
	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Somalia	Yemen
Confirmed cases	13,504	371,536	23,016	10,004
Deaths	186	6,755	1,327	1,950
Recoveries	13,293	349,037	12,046	-
Active cases	25	15,744	9,643	-

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

## CONTACT

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## COVID-19 Epidemiological Situation

As of 30 November 2021, the number of COVID-19 cases along the Eastern Corridor stood at 418,060. Ethiopia continued recording the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases (89% of total cases). The country, of almost 115 million people, distributed over 7.8 million vaccine doses obtained through the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative by the end of November. Following Ethiopia are Somalia (6% of total cases) and Djibouti (3% of total cases), while Yemen cases represented 2% of the total cases. Since early October 2021, IOM in Djibouti has been working with the Ministry of Health to support vaccination activities, including for migrants at the Obock MRC. The ministry aims to vaccinate 25% of the population (above 18 years old) by the end of 2021. As of 30 November 2021, the number of COVID-19 related deaths along the Eastern Corridor stood at 10,218, the majority of which were recorded in Ethiopia (66% of total deaths). Yemen holds the highest case fatality rate (CFR) at approximately 19.5%, compared to Djibouti (CFR 1.4%), Ethiopia (CFR 1.8%) and Somalia (CFR 5.8%). This is much higher than the global average CFR of 2.0% and is largely attributable to the challenges of accessing a health care system which has been decimated by years of war.

## COVID-19 Mobility Restrictions

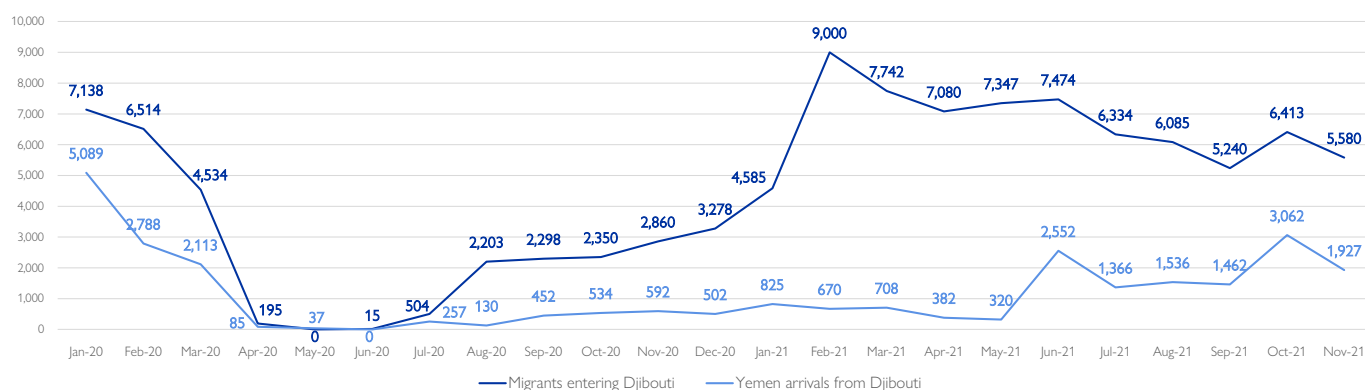
Mobility restrictions remain largely unchanged in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia as of the end of November 2021. Nearly a year and a half after the reopening of the country's air, land and sea borders in July 2020, the Djiboutian health authorities recorded a 2.26% COVID-19 positivity rate and a 100% recovery rate among all incoming passengers screened at the various Points of Entry (PoEs). The Government of Yemen has eased restrictions related to COVID-19 which has seen an increase in the number of migrants transiting through Yemen in the last quarter of 2021.

## DJIBOUTI SITUATION

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

- Migrant movements into Djibouti increased in November 2021, with 5,580 entries observed from Djibouti's western borders, which is a 13% decrease compared to October 2021. This brings the total entries into the country in 2021 to 104,769. All migrants entering Djibouti were Ethiopian nationals. Around 84% of migrants were adults (75% men, 9% women) and 16% were children (14% boys, 2% girls).<sup>2</sup>
- Most entries into Djibouti were of migrants originating in the Oromia region of Ethiopia (65%), followed by Amhara (23%), while only 7% were from Tigray. Overall, 46% of the arrivals in Djibouti in 2021 originated in Oromia, 12% in Amhara and 7% in Tigray. Arrivals from Tigray remained in the single digits throughout 2021 with the exception of April-June 2021 when around 25% entries were from Tigray. During 2020, a similar spike was seen during the first two months as well as the last two months of the year.
- With 1,927 new migrant arrivals in November, a total of 14,810 migrants arrived in 2021 from Djibouti to Yemen. All migrants arrivals were captured at Al-Aarah FMP in Lahj governorate in Yemen. Around 94% of the migrants tracked were adults (78% men, 16% women) and 6% were children (4% boys, 2% girls). Unlike the previous month, no unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs) were tracked upon entry from Djibouti (down from 9 UMCs tracked in October).

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



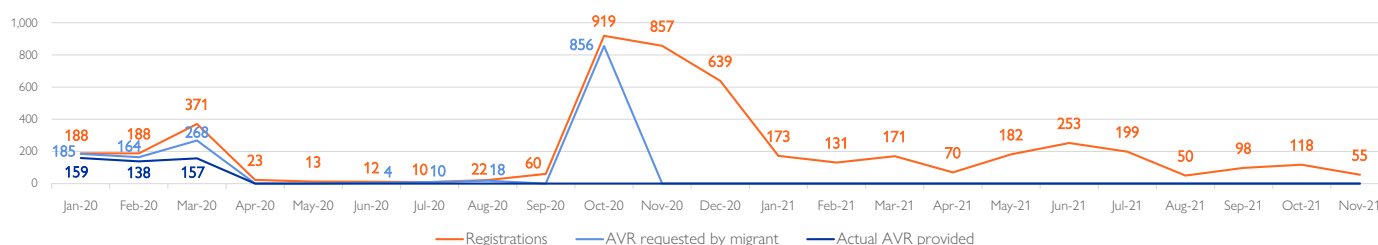
- Spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Djibouti continued in November with the return of 211 Ethiopian migrants (down from 261 returns reported in October); the majority of the returns were men. Since May 2020, IOM tracked 16,463 spontaneous returns of Ethiopian migrants, 10,369 of which were in 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The sex and age disaggregated data of entering migrants is an estimation because of the data collection methodology.

## Migrant Protection and Assistance

- One 24-year-old male Ethiopian migrant lost his life in Guehere in a car accident during the month of November 2021. He was originally from the Oromia region and was returning from Yemen.
- As of 30 November 2021, 532 migrants (423 male, 109 female) on their way to the Arabian Peninsula were stranded in Djibouti and had gathered in seven spontaneous sites located along the migration route; most migrants were stranded in the Obock region.
- 55 new migrants were registered at the Obock MRC in November (36 male, 19 female). This represents less than half the migrant registrations recorded in October (118). Following the declaration of a state of emergency over the current Northern Ethiopia crisis on 2 November 2021, IOM's AVR programme got suspended as Ethiopia is unable to receive migrants due to ongoing insecurity. Because of this suspension, the MRC in Obock has not been registering many new migrants but is still supporting those vulnerable migrants who come to the centre.
- Together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and government counterparts, IOM is supporting migrants who wish to seek asylum in Djibouti by facilitating referrals. Ethiopian migrants seeking asylum are registered in the Holl-Holl refugee camp in the Ali-Sabieh region, which is managed by UNHCR and ONARS (Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés). In November 2021, 121 Ethiopian migrants, including 18 from the Tigray region, were referred to ONARS to facilitate their asylum process. As the crisis in Ethiopia intensifies, it is expected that increasing numbers of Ethiopians fleeing the conflict will transit through Djibouti, requiring tailored protection assistance, including assistance to seek asylum.

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

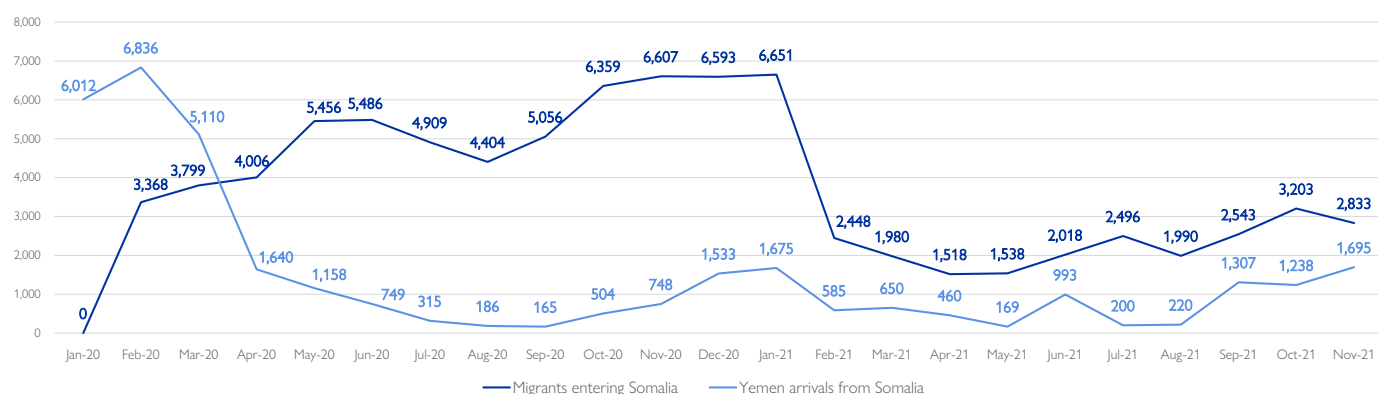


## SOMALIA SITUATION

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

- Migrant entries into Somalia decreased by 12% between October (3,203) and November (2,833). Almost all migrants were Ethiopian nationals, although 40 movements of other nationalities were also tracked including 23 Eritreans, seven Egyptians, four Ugandans and three Yemeni nationals (likely headed to Yemen).
- Entries of Ethiopian migrants into Somalia primarily originated in the Somali region of Ethiopia, with over 76% in November 2021 (86% in 2021), while only 12% originated in Oromia (9% in 2021). Around 3% of migrants entering Somalia were from Tigray (1% in 2021).

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



Note: Figure for migrants' entries into Somalia for January 2020 is '0' because of the temporary closure of Flow Monitoring Points in Somalia.

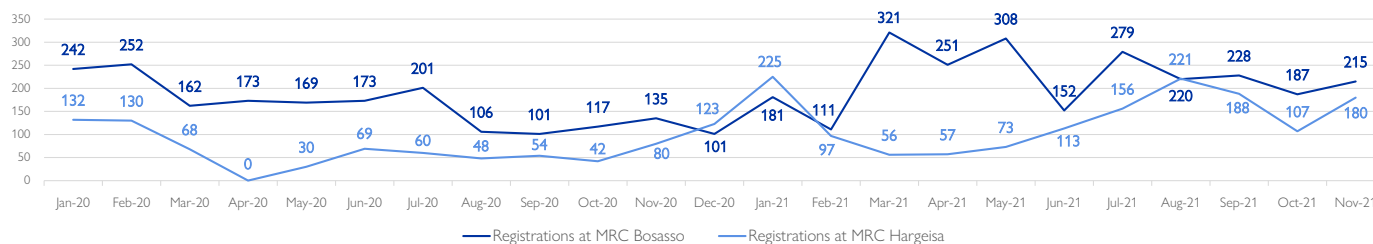


- Migrant arrivals to Yemen from Somalia stood at 1,695 in November, which represents a 37% increase compared to October (1,238) and brings the total arrivals from Somalia in 2021 to 9,192, proportionally less numerous than arrivals to Yemen from Djibouti. Similar to what was observed in the past, a majority of the migrants tracked upon arrival in Yemen from Somalia were Ethiopian nationals (82%) and 18% were Somali nationals. However, unlike last month, 1% of arrivals from Somalia were Syrian nationals; the arrivals from Somalia were tracked through the FMPs on the southern coast of Yemen, along the Gulf of Aden. Around 88% of arrivals were adults (63% men, 25% women) and 12% were children (9% boys, 4% girls). This is the fourth consecutive month that no UMCs from Somalia were tracked.
- According to unverified reports received by IOM, the departures to Yemen from Mareero, a small town 15 km east of Bossaso, as well as Elayo, around 36 km from Bossaso, remained at 500 in November (same as October). These reports also stated that Elayo has become a hotspot for migrants as its location is far away from security surveillance. Since the Al-Shabaab attack against the Bossaso prison in March 2021, the Puntland police has established security bases near Mareero which has made it difficult for smugglers to operate there.
- Like in Djibouti, spontaneous return movements from Yemen to Somalia continued with 200 movements (80% male, 20% female) tracked upon arrival in Somaliland (81) and Puntland (119) in November (down from 233 in October). All movements were returning Somali nationals. This brings the total returns from Yemen to Somalia since May 2020 to 3,514, of which 2,516 (72%) occurred in 2021.

## Migrant Protection and Assistance

- IOM estimates that around 5,500 migrants continue to be stranded in and around Bossaso (2,500), Borama (1,500), Hargeisa (1,000) and Burao (500), with few options available to continue their journey or return home. This drastic increase in the number of stranded migrants comes as a direct result of the unfolding situation in Ethiopia in recent months. As the crisis intensified and continued to spill over to other regions in the country, increasing numbers of Ethiopians have been fleeing conflict and growing insecurity and have crossed into neighbouring Somaliland on a daily basis. The new migrant arrivals are mainly women, children and young men from the historical northern Wollo province which overlays parts of present day Afar, Amhara and Tigray regions.
- Migrant registrations at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa continued to increase as well with 395 registrations in November (215 and 180, respectively), representing a 34% increase from October. A total of 111 migrants came from Amhara (95), Tigray (13) and Afar (3).
- While no AVR movements took place during this month, 138 AVR requests were received at the MRCs in Bossaso (69) and Hargeisa (69).
- On 7 November 2021, one 35-year-old male migrant was killed by another migrant in Burao. The deceased was buried by the Ethiopian Community Center (ECC) while the assailant was arrested.
- A total of 170 Somali migrants, including 35 children, were returned to Mogadishu from Saudi Arabia in November.

Registrations at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa (January 2020 - November 2021)



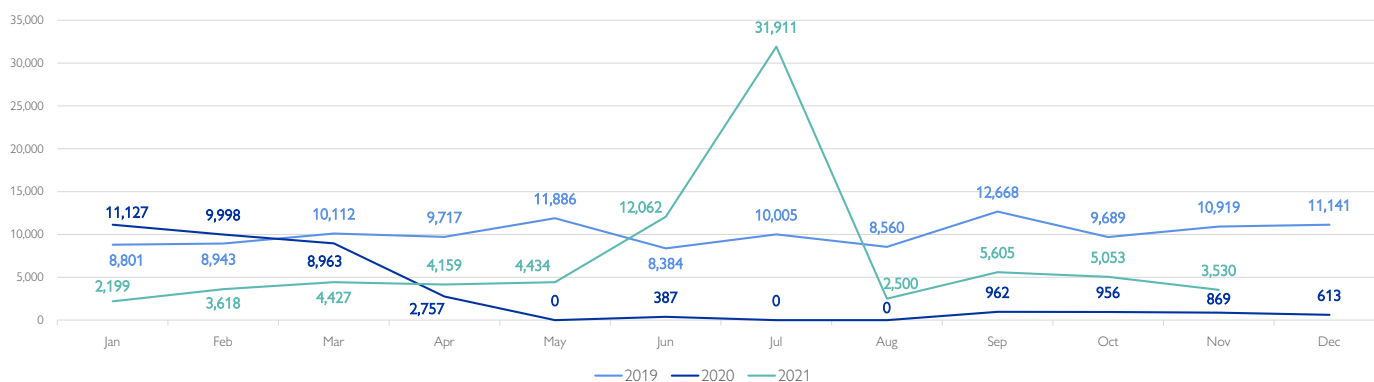
## ETHIOPIA SITUATION

### Migrant Flows, and Protection and Detention Concerns

- Returns of Ethiopian nationals from Saudi Arabia continued with 3,530 returns in November, bringing the total of returns in 2021 to 79,498. These returns were temporarily put on hold in late November, with the last flights arriving in Addis Ababa on 19 November 2021.
- Returnees from the currently conflict-affected regions in Ethiopia continue to arrive in great numbers from Saudi Arabia, including 1,259 from Amhara (36% of all November arrivals), 813 from Tigray (23%) and 39 from Afar (1%). The vast majority were male (64% versus 36% female), and a total of 303 returnees were children under the age of five years old.

- The Government of Ethiopia has arranged dedicated shelter sites in Addis Ababa to accommodate Tigrayan returnees who have no family members to rely on for a possible extended period of time, while those with relatives in Addis Ababa are encouraged to reunite with their family members. Some of the most vulnerable returnees are hosted in shelters run by IOM and other organizations.
- With the conflict spreading to new parts of Amhara, Afar and Oromia, the safety and accessibility of migrants' home communities/final destinations is becoming a concern for an increasing number of returnees. This has implications for the response in Addis Ababa as well as in terms of temporary accommodation and direct assistance to stranded migrants.
- A total of 91 migrants, including 35 UMCs, were registered at MRCs bordering Djibouti and Somalia in November, namely in Togochale (36), Dire Dawa (34) and Semera (21). Migrants mainly departed from the Oromia region (80%). No migrants from the Tigray region were registered by MRCs in Ethiopia during this month.
- Between 2019 and November 2021, there has been an increase in migrants registered at MRCs across the region who reported 'armed conflict' as their main reason for movement. While armed conflict represented 5% or less of all reasons reported by migrants in 2019 and 2020, this same reason accounted for roughly 10% of all reasons over the past four months.

Returns of Ethiopian Nationals from Saudi Arabia Electronically Registered by IOM



- Around 508 Ethiopian migrants travelled from Ethiopia to Kenya in November, of which 43% originated in Oromia, 36% in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's (SNNP) region, while only 1% were from Tigray. All of these were tracked through the Moyale FMP which has been reactivated during the last quarter of 2020. Most of the migrants tracked through this FMP were travelling for economic reasons (80%, down from 85% in October), while 12% were forcibly moved due to conflict (up from 8% in October). As for the 23 migrant entries into Sudan from Ethiopia in November, most were from Tigray (22%), while 30% were from Amhara. All of these were tracked through the Metema FMP.

## YEMEN SITUATION

### Migrant Flows Observed in Yemen

- 24,002 migrant arrivals from the Horn of Africa were tracked on the shores of Yemen in 2021, of which 3,622 arrivals were recorded in November; this is a 16% decrease from October.
- In November, migrants travelled from Djibouti (53%) or from Somalia (47%); the arrivals from Somalia increased by 37% while the arrivals from Djibouti decreased by 37%.<sup>3</sup> About 91% of all arrivals were Ethiopian nationals, 8% were Somali nationals and 1% were Syrian nationals.
- Around 91% of migrants were adults (71% men, 20% women) and 9% were children (up from 7% in October). No UMCs were tracked in November.

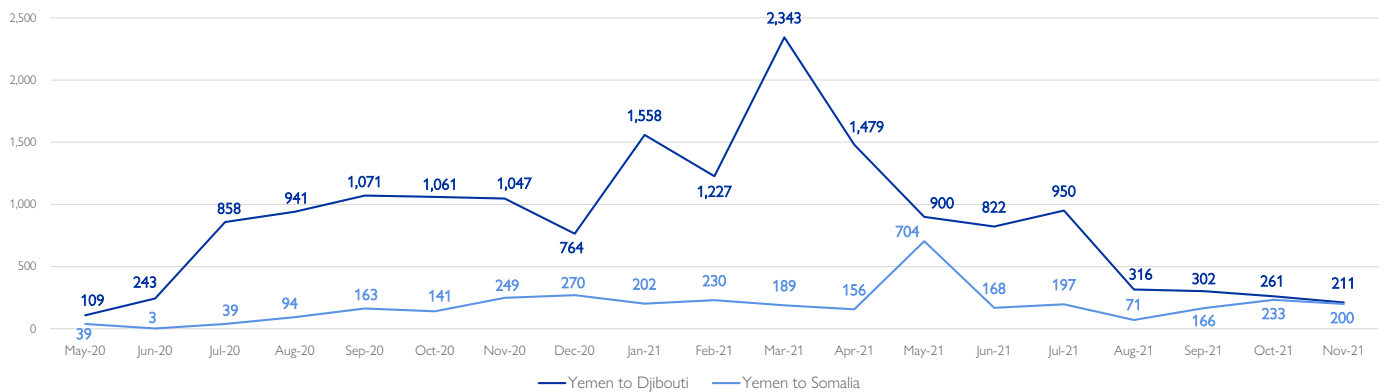
<sup>3</sup> Eight migrants were also tracked internally, travelling within Yemen.

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



- DTM Yemen continued tracking returning migrants from Saudi Arabia in November as access to the FMP at the Saudi Arabia-Yemen border remains possible. A total of 22,010 returns were tracked in 2021, of which 5,802 (26%) were tracked in November.
- Due to the difficulties faced by migrants upon arrival in Yemen, the challenges in moving onwards towards Saudi Arabia, as well as ongoing conflict and living conditions in Yemen, many migrants opt to return back to the Horn of Africa. Moreover, many migrants, particularly from the Oromia and Tigray regions, have been reluctant to return to Ethiopia due to the escalation of the Northern Ethiopia crisis. Since May 2020, 19,977 migrants have made this perilous return journey back to Djibouti (16,463) and to Somalia (3,514) including 12,885 returns in 2021.

Spontaneous Returns from Yemen (May 2020 - November 2021)



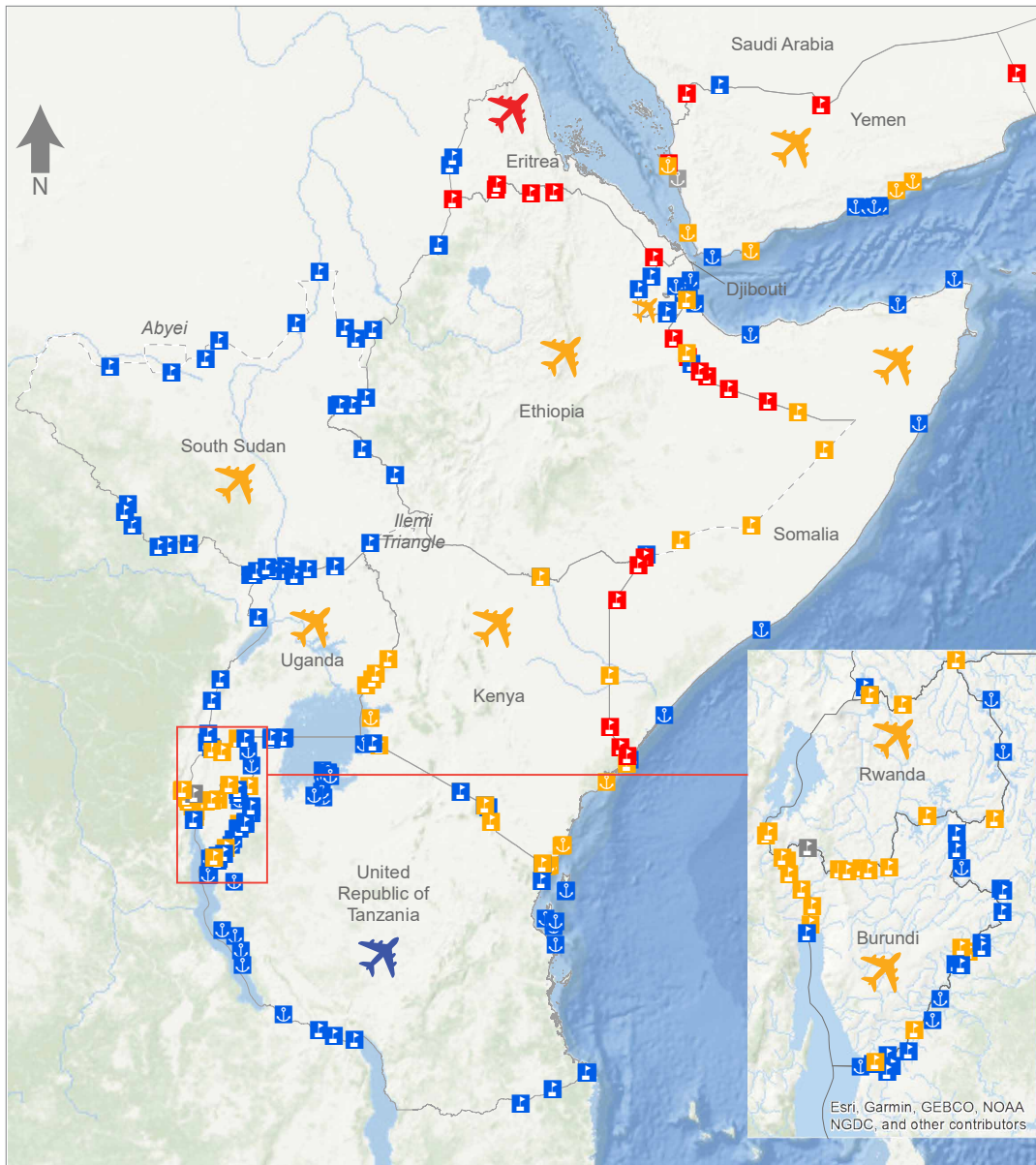
## Migrant Protection and Assistance

- IOM estimates that approximately 30,000 migrants are stranded or trapped within Yemen’s borders. Following the escalation of conflict in areas such as Marib, many migrants have remained stranded due to increased checkpoints and hostilities along the routes leading to Saudi Arabia. In addition, growing arrest campaigns in areas such as Al Jawf have also resulted in several stranded and detained migrants.
- Due to the escalated conflicts in Yemen, migrants continue to take alternative routes through Yemen leaving them susceptible to arbitrary arrests, physical injuries, loss of life and threats to life. Meanwhile, the smuggler networks have increasingly become adept at avoiding checkpoints hence leaving migrants at risk.
- Thousands of stranded migrants have approached IOM’s Aden Migrant Response Point (MRP) asking for return assistance to Ethiopia through VHR. VHR flights resumed in March 2021 after months of disruption. Due to the recent developments in the Ethiopia context, these flights have been temporarily suspended and VHR registration is currently pending the resumption of these flights, while plans for a third migrant verification and documentation mission by the Government of Ethiopia to Aden now depends on the outcome of the current situation in Ethiopia. Only five migrants were returned to Ethiopia in November (4 male, 1 female); these were the tail end of cases from the total verified caseload in August/September.
- There continues to be unconfirmed reports of forced transfers occurring from the Northern to Southern governorates in Yemen. Over the reporting period, approximately 2,400 migrants were forcibly transferred. The locations of where the migrants were taken remains unknown. Due to the lack of access to the Immigration, Passports and Naturalization Authority (IPNA) facilities since the March 2021 fire, IOM has not been able to monitor these transfers.

## ANNEX 1 | 2021 MRC REGISTRATION DATA

MRCs	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	MRC Total
Bossaso	181	111	321	251	308	152	279	220	228	187	215	2,453
Dire Dawa	0	0	0	0	6	14	1	8	119	123	34	305
Hargeisa	225	97	56	57	73	113	156	221	188	107	180	1,473
Metema	0	0	72	80	15	36	336	188	134	139	65	1,065
Moyale	-	-	187	230	44	59	51	314	50	71	258	1,264
Obock	173	131	171	70	182	253	199	50	98	118	55	1,500
Semera	0	0	71	33	34	213	112	12	32	21	21	549
Togochale	31	126	14	61	49	45	76	88	26	65	36	617
<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>1,210</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>9,226</b>

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



**Status of international flights\***

- Not Restrictive
- Partially Restrictive
- Totally Restrictive
- Not available
- Disputed Areas
- Countries East and Horn of Africa

**Status of other border points**

- Sea Border Point
- Land Border Point
- Closed for entry and exit
- Partial closure
- Open for entry and exit
- Unknown

\*Details of the travel restriction can be found on IATA website: <https://www.iata.org/>

SOURCE:  
International Air Transport Association (IATA)  
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

DATE: 30 November 2021

DISCLAIMER: These maps are for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.