

HIGHLIGHTS

Between 17 September and 30 December 2024, 6,264 migratory movements were observed at DTM Kenya's four Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) in and around Nairobi: Eastleigh, Kangemi, the Roysambu-Thika road and Athi River.

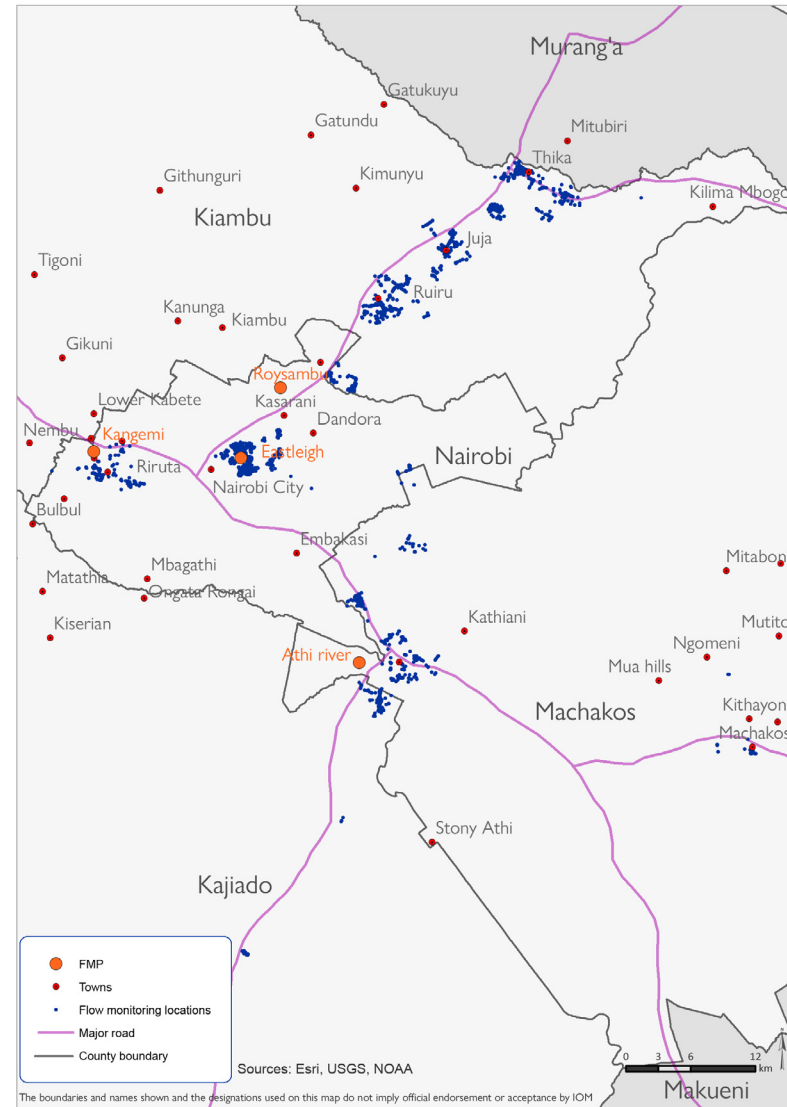
The migrants were primarily youth. **Nearly half (49%) of all interviewed migrants were in the 18–29 age group, with 44 per cent of all female migrants and 53 per cent of all male migrants between 18 and 29 years old.** Among younger age groups, around a fifth of females (21%) and just over one in ten males (13%) were between 5 to 17 years of age. A smaller proportion—roughly one in ten females (12%) and one in twenty males (5%)—were children aged 0–4 years. **Taken together, it is noteworthy and important for protection-focused interventions, that 18 per cent of all male, and 33 per cent of all female migrants, were children.** Among the migrants interviewed, children under five (44%) represented the largest 'vulnerable' group, followed by individuals with chronic physical health conditions (25%).

Respondents were asked a series of protection-related questions to enquire whether they entered Nairobi by choice or were at risk for trafficking or smuggling. Although Flow Monitoring (FM) data cannot definitively determine a victim of trafficking, it is notable and concerning that **nearly one-third of respondents (31%) reported working or engaging in activities without receiving the expected payment, indicating labour trafficking.** Additionally, 20 per cent reported receiving false information from their employers about the nature or location of their work and **10 per cent reported being made to work or perform activities against their will.** Referrals for support were given to all respondents who indicated a need or desire for additional resources.

In this round of data collection, most of the migrants were nationals of Burundi (2,281 individuals), Uganda (801) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (800). In contrast to the previous round (August to September 2024) most migrants were nationals of Burundi or Ethiopia. The increased population from the Democratic Republic of the Congo reflects the recent conflict in that nation and underscores Kenya as a common regional destination for those pursuing peace and searching for livelihoods opportunities. Furthermore, when asked about the main drivers of migration respondents cited "economic reasons" (63%) followed by "conflict" (31%) as the main reasons for movement. Economic opportunities and conflict-driven displacement continue to shape migrant flows in Kenya.

The majority of movements were inbound migrants who reported that they intended to stay in Nairobi (944 individuals) or in nearby Counties (Machakos 1,325 individuals, Kiambu 966 individuals and Kajiado 688 individuals). The desire to stay in Nairobi or nearby Counties and not transit through Kenya is a more recent phenomenon. Previously, Nairobi was viewed as part of the irregular Southern Route of migration, whereby individuals would pass through Kenya, most often to pursue work in South Africa. Smaller numbers intended to travel to places like Uganda, Canada, and Australia. Athi River and Eastleigh FMPs received the largest volumes of migrants suggesting their centrality in managing movements, while Kangemi FMP had smaller flows.

Figure 1: Data collection locations



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM
Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only, the boundaries and names shown and the destinations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration



4 Flow monitoring points (FMPs)



6,264

Cumulative migrant movements observed

DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

63% Economic reasons

31% Conflict

3% Family reasons

Figure 2 : Migrant demographics

Figure 2.1: Gender

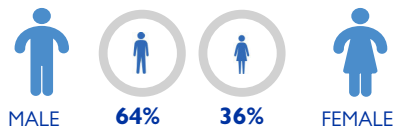


Figure 2.2: Age group*

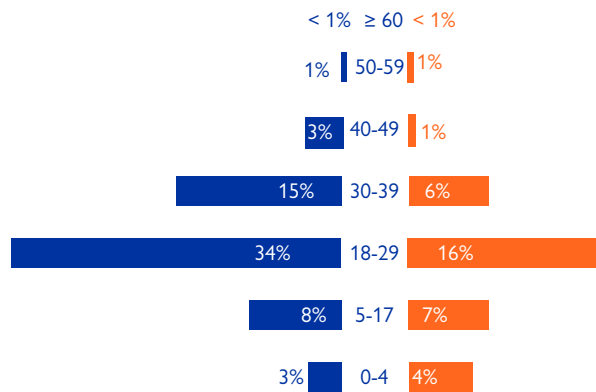


Figure 3: Migrant population observed at Kenya FMPs during 2024



Figure 4: Vulnerabilities

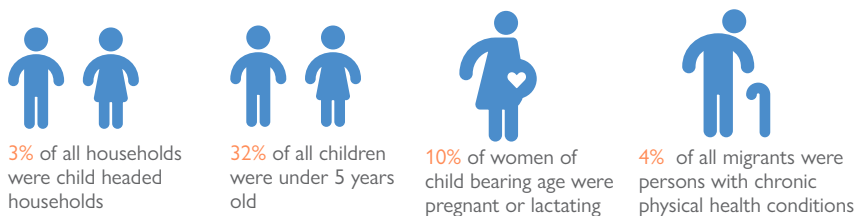
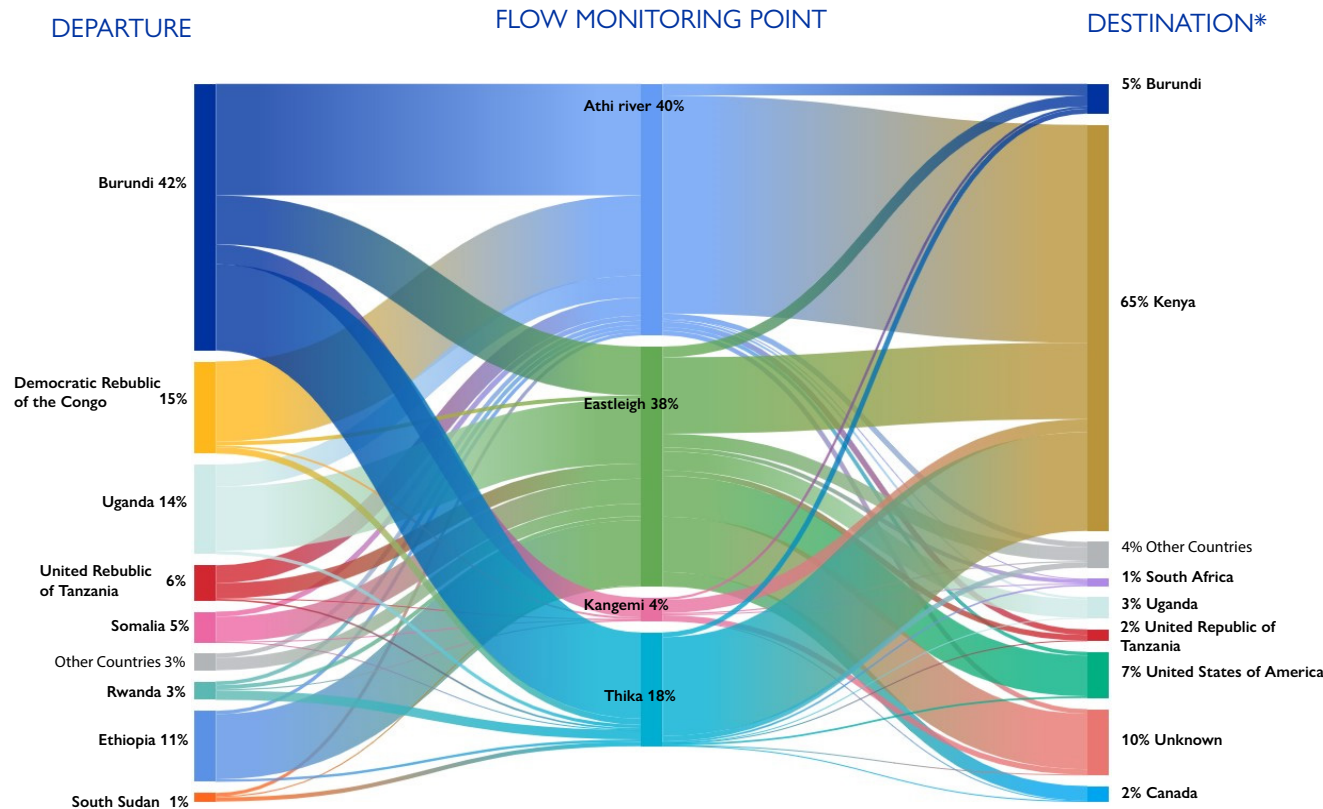
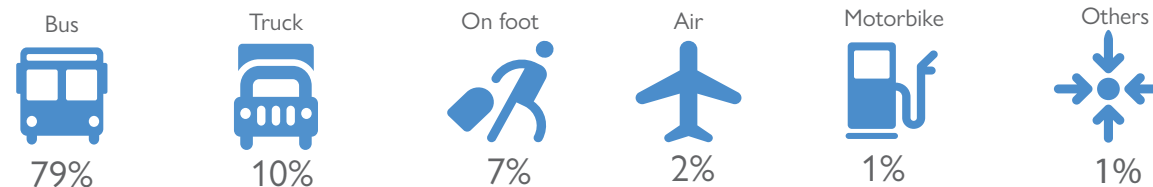


Figure 5: Departure and destination flows by flow monitoring point



The countries classified as “Other Countries” for departure included Eritrea, Sudan, the United States of America, Nigeria, Congo, South Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Canada, and Kenya. The countries categorized as “Other Countries” for destination included the United Arab Emirates, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ethiopia, Somalia, Qatar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Germany, Mozambique, Zambia, Sweden, Iraq, Belgium, Norway, Italy, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Finland, and France. These countries have been grouped together due to their relatively lesser movement counts compared to other countries.

Figure 6: Means of transport*



*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Figure 7: Time spent in place of most recent departure*

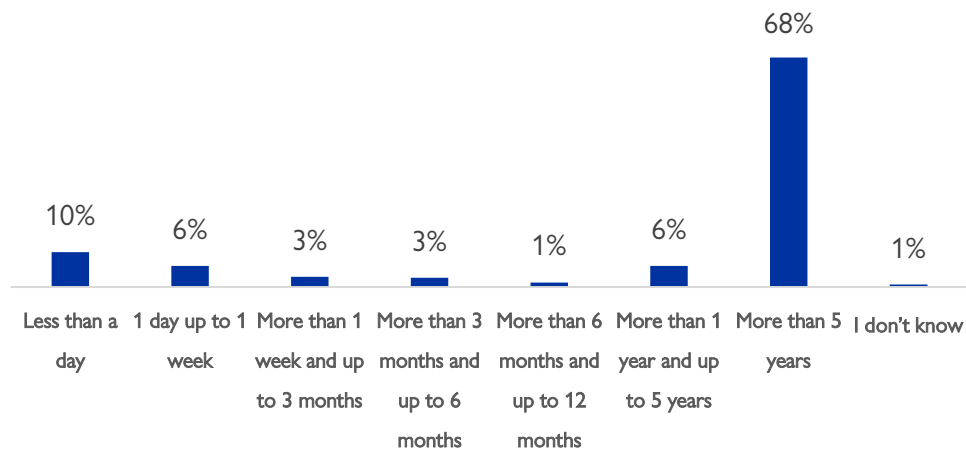
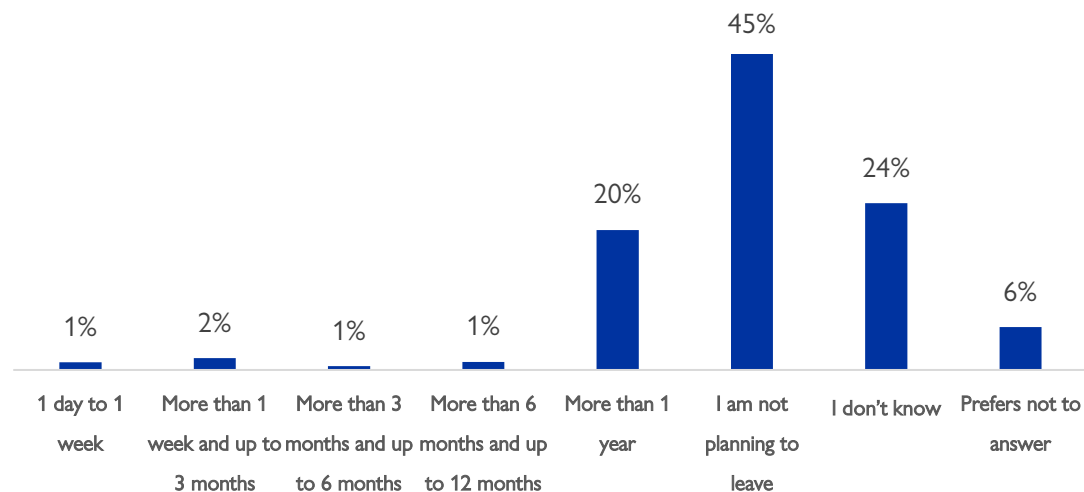
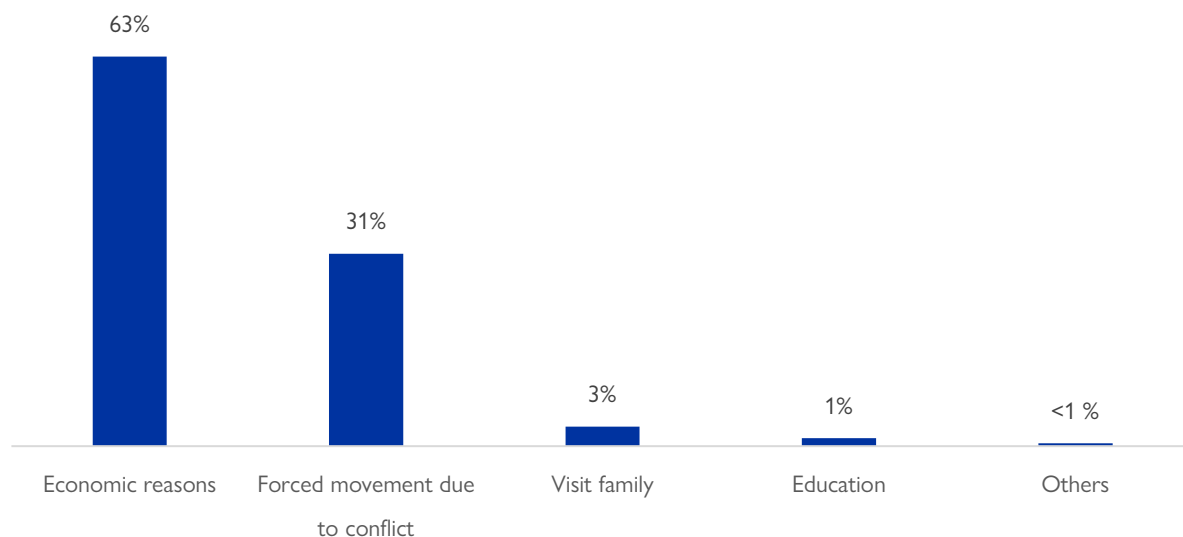


Figure 9: Intended duration of stay*



*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Figure 8: Migration drivers*



*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Most migrants arrived in Nairobi from a location where they had lived for more than five years and, increasingly, fewer migrants reported an intention to leave Kenya than in previous flow monitoring reports.

Economic reasons were the most common driver of migration, particularly for individuals departing from Burundi (2,298 cases), Uganda (816), United Republic of Tanzania (302) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (221), underscoring the importance of financial pressures in these regions.

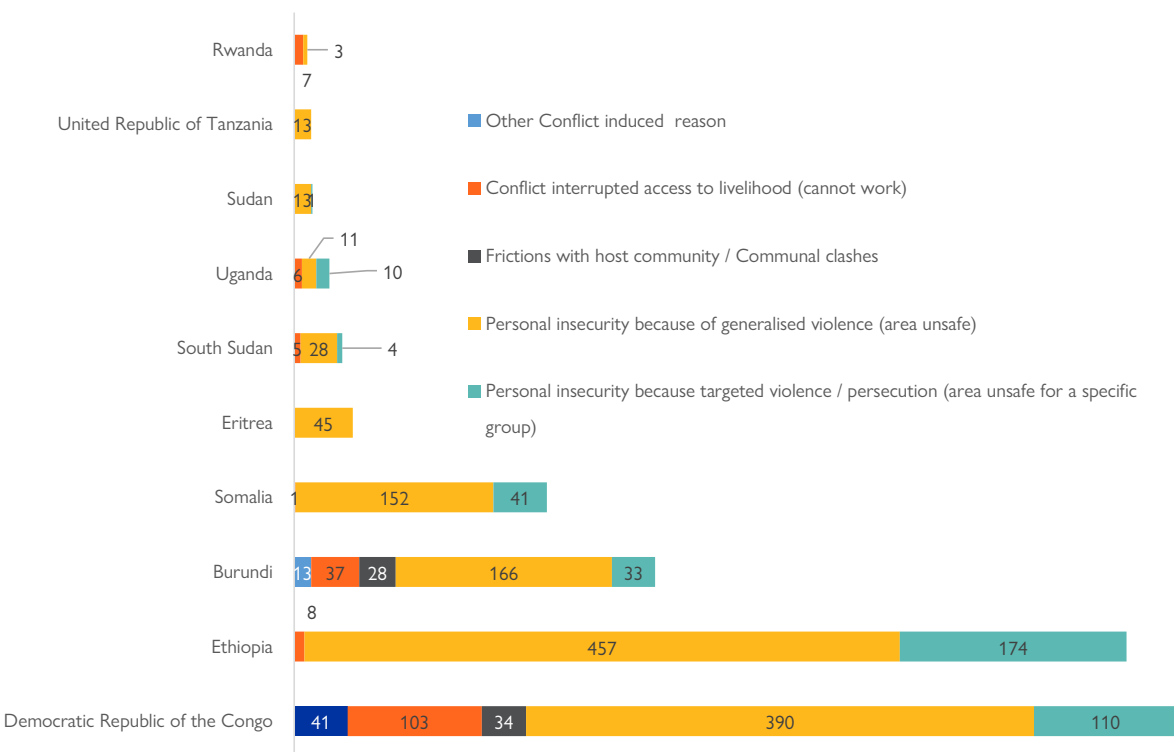
Forced movement due to conflict was the second-most prominent factor, particularly as a driver among migrants from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (678 cases), followed by migrants from the Ethiopia (639), Burundi (277) and Somalia (194).

Family reasons, while less prevalent, still affected 200 individuals overall, primarily from Burundi (54), Somalia (32) and Tanzania (27). **Education** served as a modest driver, particularly among migrants from South Sudan (26 cases) and Somalia (26).

Forced movement due to natural hazards were the main drivers among a few cases from Burundi (4), Uganda (4) and Tanzania (2). The least significant drivers included **food insecurity** all from Somalia (10), **travel to collect aid** (7), and **buying goods for personal consumption** (2), each reported in fewer than 10 individuals across all countries.

PROTECTION

Figure 10: Underlying drivers of conflict-induced movement



Generalized violence was the most commonly reported driver of conflict-induced migration (1,293 individuals).

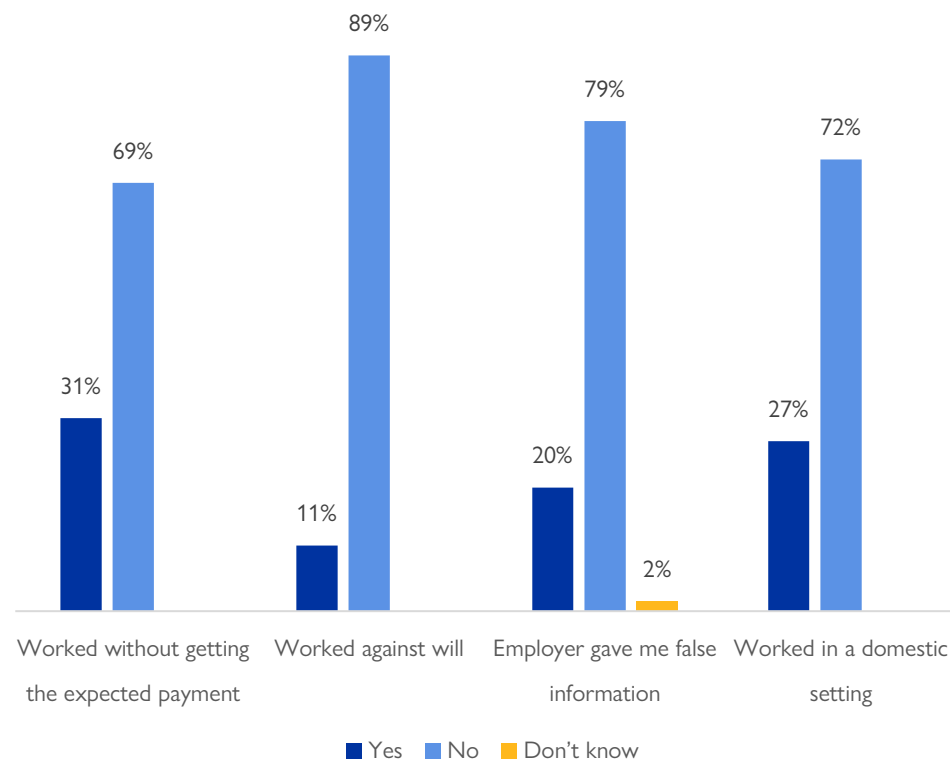
Ethiopian migrants, migrants from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and those from Somalia most often reported generalized violence or targeted violence as the driver of their movement.



Targeted violence or persecution was reported by 376 individuals.

167 respondents reported that conflict disrupted their access to livelihoods, most of whom were respondents from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (103 respondents), Burundi (37 respondents) and Ethiopia (8 respondents).

Figure 11: Reported Labour

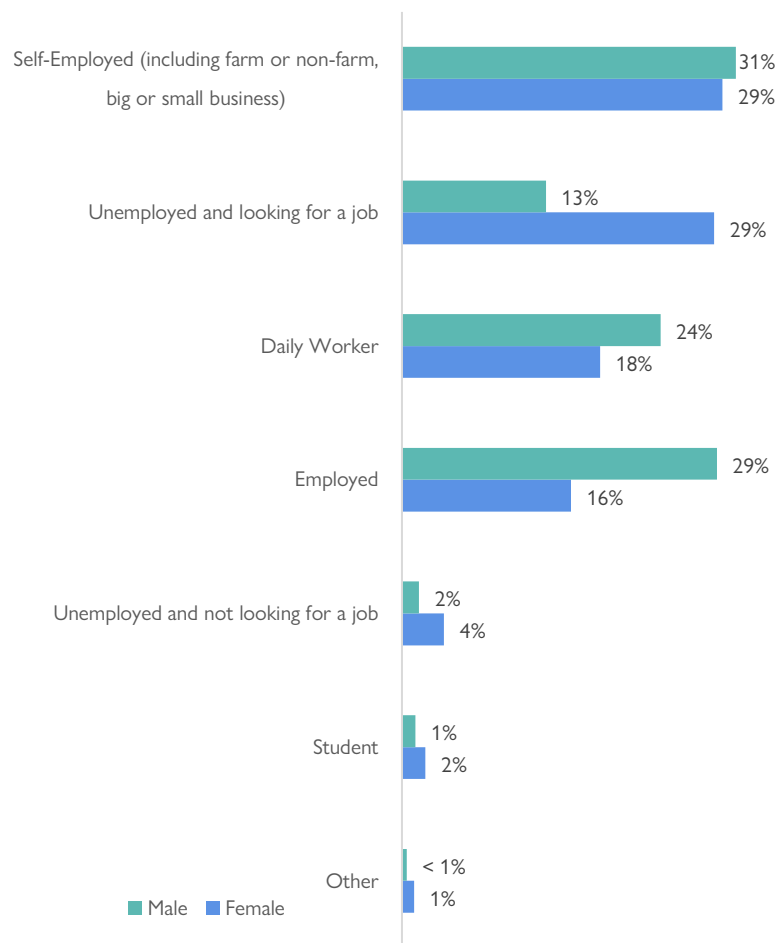


31% of migrants reported working or engaging in other activities without receiving the expected payment

20% reported receiving false information from their employers about the nature or location of their work

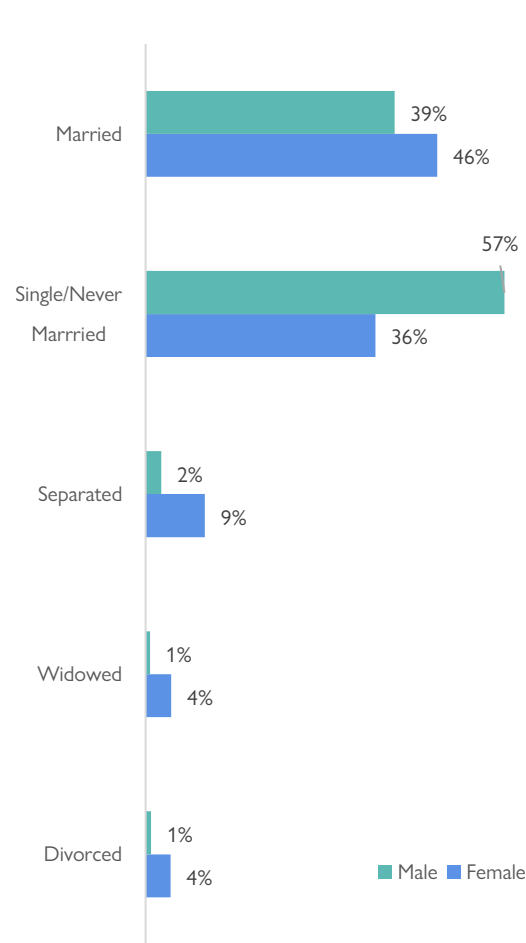
11% reported being forced to perform work or activities against their will

Figure 12: Employment status by sex of respondent*



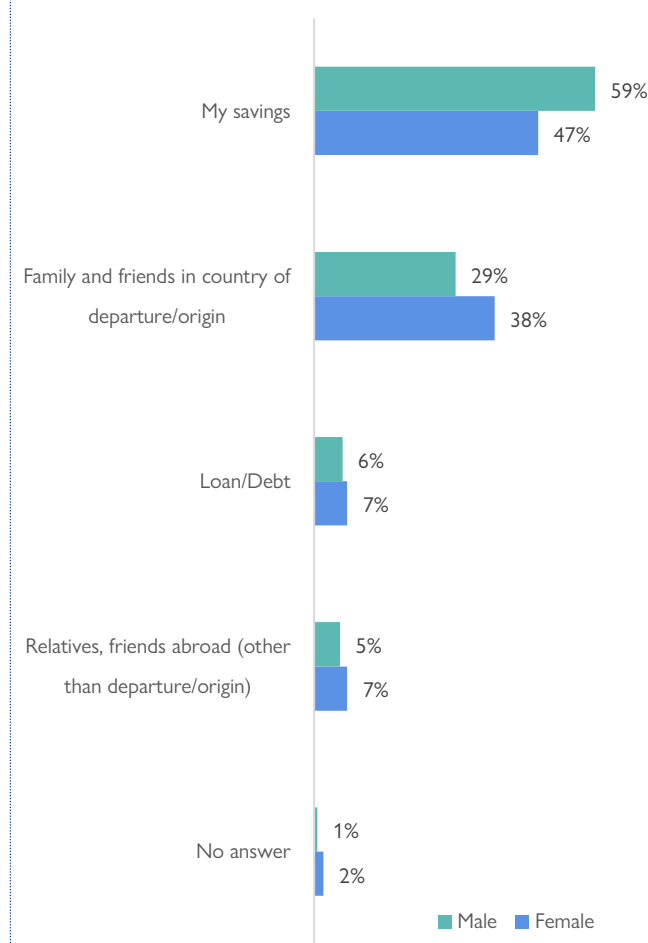
*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Figure 13: Marital status, by sex of respondent*



*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

Figure 14: Who funded the migrant's travel by sex of respondent



A majority (55%) relied on their personal savings, indicating that self-funding is the most common migration financing method. Nearly a third (32%) depended on family and friends in their country of origin, reflecting the important role of local social support networks and indicating that the choice to migrate was not taken alone.

Self-employment was the most common economic activity reported (30%). Many migrants run their own food stalls, sell socks, or engage in small-scale farming to earn a living. Formal employment was reported by 25 per cent, with migrants working under employers in roles like hawking coffee and mandazis or assisting in small workshops. Daily workers represented 22 per cent, highlighting a large informal labour force, where migrants are hired for manual labor or short-term tasks, such as vending peanuts or working as construction assistants. Students and apprentices represented a small portion, indicating that the migrant population is least involved in education or skill training.

Half of (50%) of respondents were single or never married, aligning with the large proportion of youth migrating independently in search of opportunities. Divorces and widowhood each accounted for a 2 per cent, representing smaller and possibly more vulnerable groups, who may rely on informal networks or self-employment to sustain themselves.

Figure 15: Highest level of education obtained, by sex

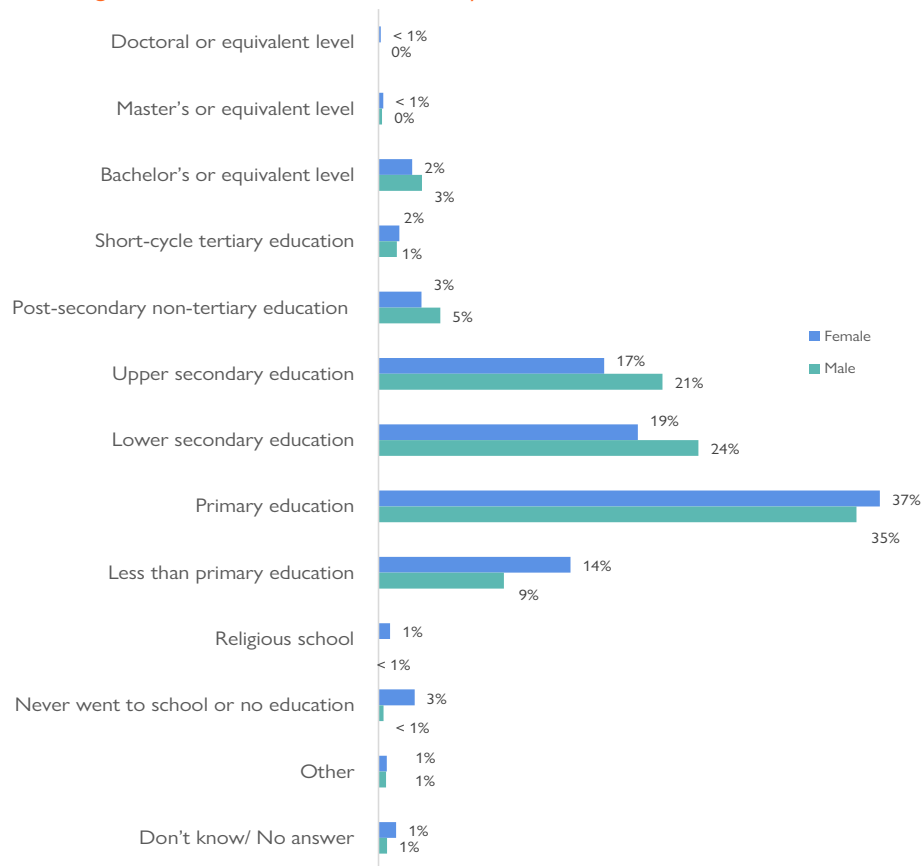


Figure 17: Main attractor to migration destination, by sex

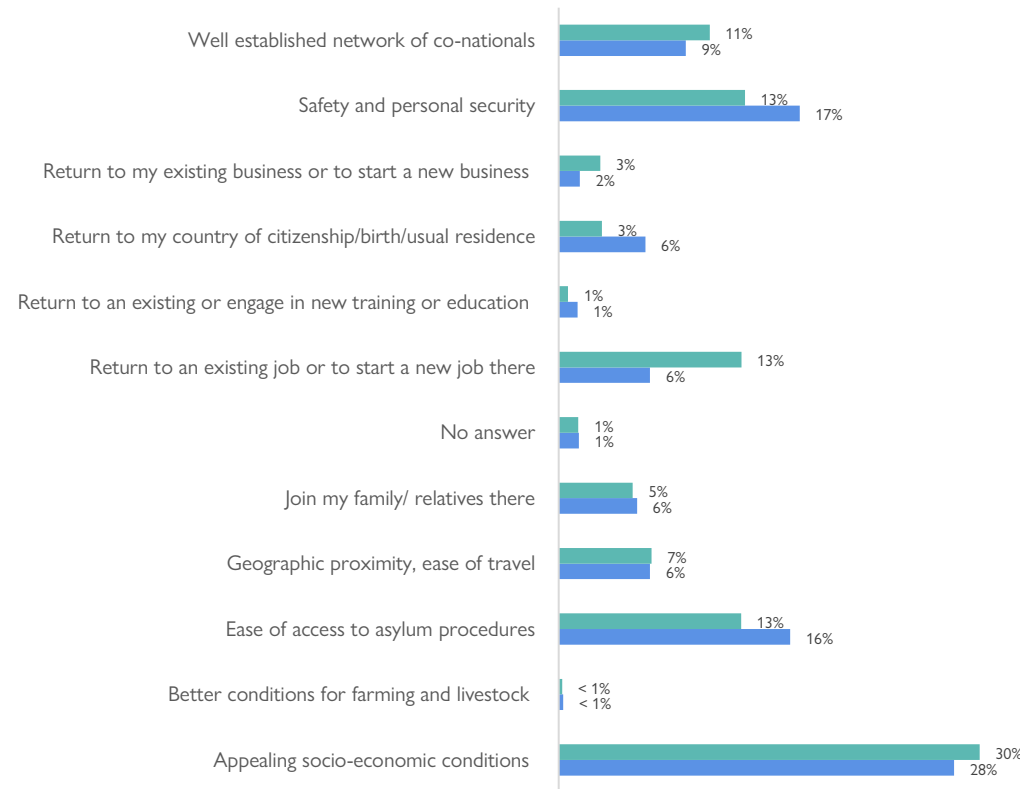
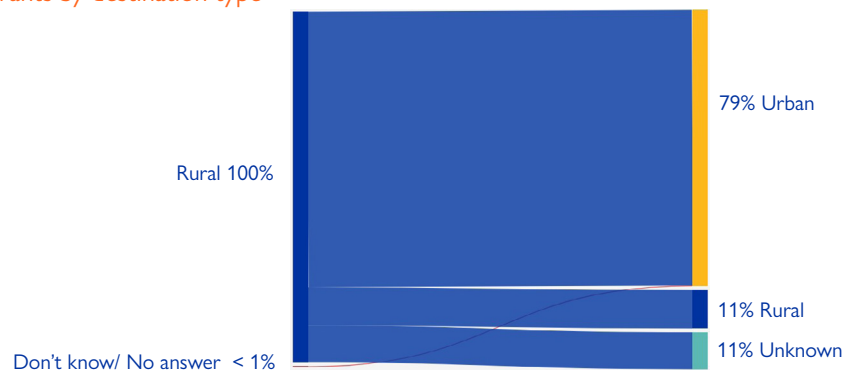


Figure 16: Number of migrants by destination type*



The vast majority of migrants—almost eight in ten (79%) headed to urban areas, including cities or large towns while a small fraction (11%) are relocating to rural areas. As data was only collected in an urban area (Nairobi and surrounding communities), the data collection was biased towards those moving to urban locations. However, it is likely that most migrants preferred destination is an urban area given that the top reported attractor for migration whereby socio-economic conditions are generally more favourable in urban areas.

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding

DTM IN KENYA

Flow Monitoring Background

IOM Kenya's Displacement Tracking Matrix implements multiple methodologies across various locations in Kenya. Flow Monitoring (FM) aims to derive quantitative estimates of the flow of individuals through a defined location, and to collect information about populations on the move. To identify the locations for given flow monitoring points (FMPs), DTM Kenya first conducted participatory mapping in March 2024 with government agencies, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations, to identify locations where migrants often transit. From the 60 mapped locations, DTM met with agencies that provide protection services including health clinics, violence-safety centres, case workers for gender-based violence and victims of trafficking and identified points among the mapped locations that protection services could be offered when needed. From a pool of translators and expert enumerators, DTM Kenya hired Flow Monitoring enumerators and trained them on data collection, trauma-informed interviewing techniques and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Flow Monitoring Methods

The DTM Kenya FM enumerators collected data from consented migrants aged 18 and above, transiting through four key locations around Nairobi: Eastleigh, Kangemi, Athi River, and Thika Road. Data collection occurs Monday through Saturday, from 08:00 to 18:00, with support from community mobilizers, including Nyumba Kumis, Community Health Workers, Elders, and Chiefs, to foster trust and explain the purpose of the survey. Information is gathered through surveys, registration, or both, in languages such as Swahili, French, Somali, Amharic, English, and Arabic, and translated into English for analysis. This report summarizes the movements and demographic profiles of Kenya's migrant population encountered at the four flow monitoring points.

Limitations

FM data is collected exclusively from four locations in and around Nairobi, offering a snapshot of migrants passing through these Flow Monitoring points. However, this report does not capture the profiles or movements of migrants in other parts of Kenya. FM respondents are purposively sampled to reflect the unique experiences of non-Kenyan migrants. As with all purposive sampling methods, the data provides indicative insights rather than statistical representation.



An IOM enumerator conducts interview with a respondent at a flow monitoring point in Eastleigh, Nairobi, Kenya

DONORS

