

QUARTERLY MIGRATION OVERVIEW

JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2022



A migrant departs on the first Voluntary Humanitarian Return flight from Ma'rib. © IOM 2022/Elham Al-Oqabi

HORN OF AFRICA-YEMEN MIGRATION TRENDS

In Yemen, where millions continue to grapple with one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, migrants remain among the most vulnerable persons in the country. From July to September 2022, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix recorded over 15,700 migrants arriving to the shores of Yemen, bringing the total arrivals to more than 42,000 thus far in 2022. Among the tens of thousands of migrants arriving, mainly from Ethiopia and Somalia, many continue to face severe protection risks such as abduction, torture, detention and exploitation throughout every step of their difficult journey to neighbouring Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). During the reporting period, an increase in the number of migrants approaching IOM Migrant Response Points (MRPs) in both Aden and Ma'rib for assistance was observed, indicating the severe situation migrants perpetually face throughout the country.

The primary migration routes through the country remain under the grip of ruthless smugglers and traffickers, a reality increasingly indicated by protection monitoring reports. Smugglers in particular maintain strong networks preying on migrant's vulnerable situations, where extortion, forced/unpaid labour and rape among other forms of abuse are utilized to keep migrants trapped in inhumane conditions. In transit areas such as Ma'rib, smugglers have an undeniable presence and considerable influence over movements in and out of the governorate, onwards to the north of Yemen toward the border with KSA. On the other hand, in areas near landing points, such as Ras Al Ara (Lahj governorate), migrants routinely report physical abuse and detention upon arrival where they are extorted for additional funds before they can be released and continue their journeys. Often, photos of their abuse are sent to family members in their countries of origin in order to provoke them to send money to secure release. Sexual abuse perpetrated by smugglers against male and female migrants, including children, has also been reported at all transit points in Yemen from the southern coast to the northern border. Further exacerbating the situation, a power struggle between both Yemeni and Ethiopian smugglers has emerged, with smugglers resorting to violence against one another in order to take control of the migrants' movements – where migrants bear the brutal brunt of consequences.

Yet, these exploitative practices are reportedly common not only while migrants are in transit in Yemen but also while awaiting return. Those who resort to return home independently (due to conditions and lack of available assistance) via the perilous boat journey used to arrive, are routinely forced to work for an indefinite period of time, contained in inadequate shelters and deprived of food, water and other basic needs.

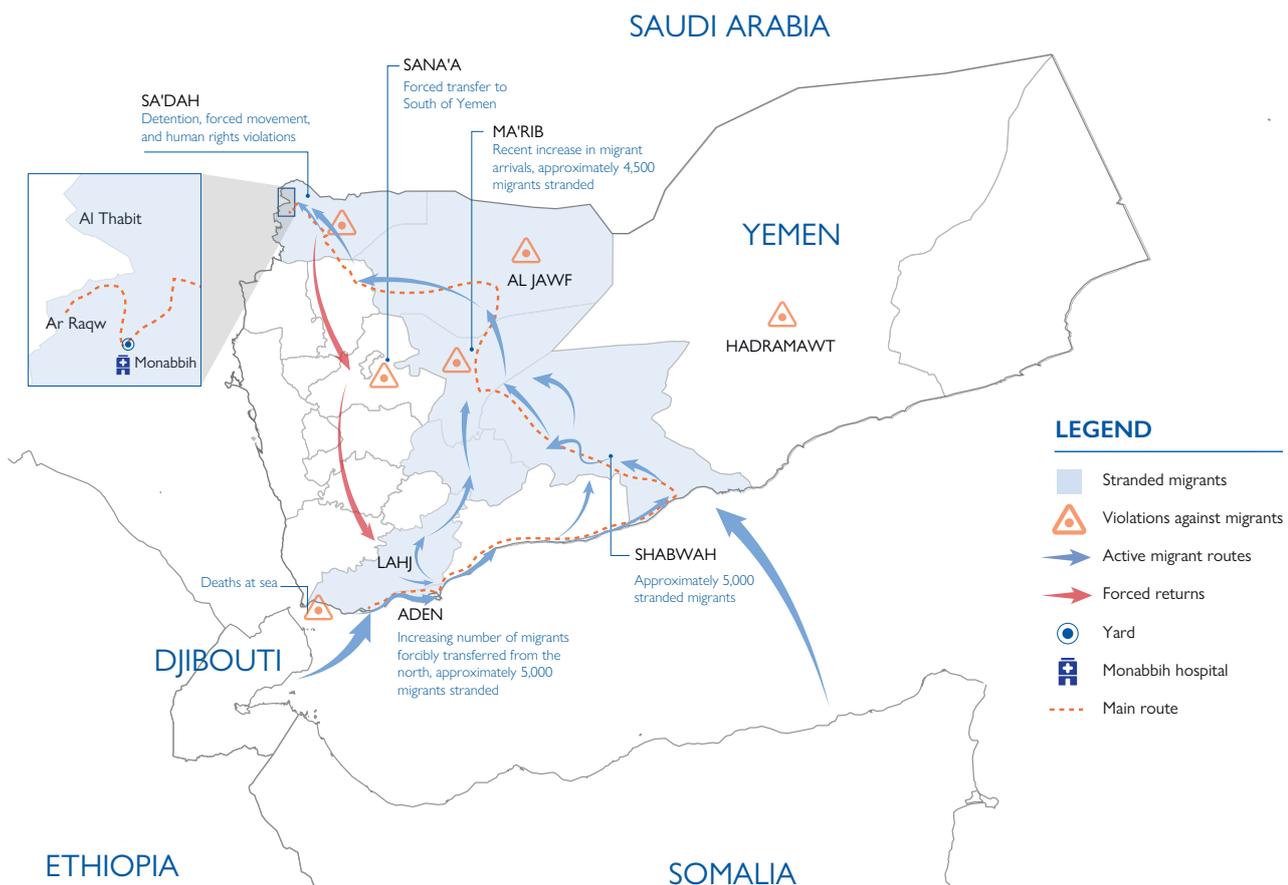
Women and girls continue to be disproportionately at risk of violations, as they remain a high value ‘commodity’ for smugglers and traffickers and as such are becoming increasingly hard to reach by humanitarian and protection actors. During the reporting period, several instances of this reality were observed. Smugglers and traffickers in Al Hasoon (in Ma’rib governorate) have reportedly begun preventing the entry of female migrants to locations where they can receive assistance. A significant number of female migrants were also reportedly relocated from Ma’rib to Shabwah, where there are few to no services available, and where smugglers can contain and exploit them in smuggling dens without risk of ‘losing’ them to migrant response actors. In addition, during the quarter, partners reported over 130 female migrants were abducted by smugglers from camps in Shabwah and subjected to rape, sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence. The psychological and physical trauma that survivors of these incidents sustain continue to remain unaddressed due to limited access and resources.

The situation along border areas remains precarious with violations perpetrated against migrants continuously reported. Unverified reports suggest 345 migrants were impacted by violence at the KSA and Omani borders during the reporting period. Further, the forced transfer of migrants from the north to the south of Yemen continues to be reported, as well as forced return from neighboring countries of both Yemeni and non-Yemeni migrants.

Facilitating Safe Return Home

IOM continues to facilitate safe and dignified pathways for migrants wishing to return home via Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) support. Between July and September 2022, 783 migrants (mostly Ethiopian) were assisted with return via a series of flights from Aden and, for the first time, from Ma’rib. By expanding VHR departure operations to Ma’rib, migrants wishing to return must no longer find means to travel to Aden to do so, a difficult journey further exposing them to serious protection risks. Among those supported with VHR during this period were 128 children and 44 women. The Organization also made significant progress in securing an agreement to assist migrants stranded in Sana’a to return to Ethiopia. Although a series of obstacles prevented movement planned for September from taking place, IOM was able to obtain the required approvals to schedule a flight in early Q4 from Sana’a – marking a tremendous step forward in supporting vulnerable migrants in Sana’a.

HORN OF AFRICA TO YEMEN MIGRATION ROUTES



MIGRANT ARRIVALS

During the reporting period, similar to previous months, migrants arrived to the shores of Yemen mainly via landing points in Lahj and Shabwah. A total of 15,754 arrivals were recorded, the majority of whom Ethiopian (92%) who departed via Djibouti or Somalia. A notable increase in arrivals was observed starting in August, when 6,542 arrived (as compared to 3,171 in July) and 6,041 in September. The overall increase in arrivals can be largely linked to improved weather conditions at sea during the quarter. However, it may also be attributed to the approaching windy season in the coming months, in which the already dangerous boat journey will become even more difficult. DTM field staff on the ground reported smugglers utilizing larger boats arriving one to two days per week at fixed intervals throughout the day in order to avoid coast guards. Although migrant arrivals increased during August and September, there was an observed decrease in arrivals to Lahj during the month of September (2,421 as compared to 3,238 in August). The decrease may be linked to increased patrolling activities of the coast guard in Djibouti and unfavourable weather conditions.

RETURNS TO HORN OF AFRICA

In light of the few options to return and harsh conditions for stranded migrants in Yemen, some resort to returning home utilizing the same dangerous paths they travelled to arrive. Between July and September, IOM DTM teams in Djibouti recorded 753 migrants who took the precarious journey to Djiboutian shores from Yemen with the intention to reach their homes in Ethiopia.

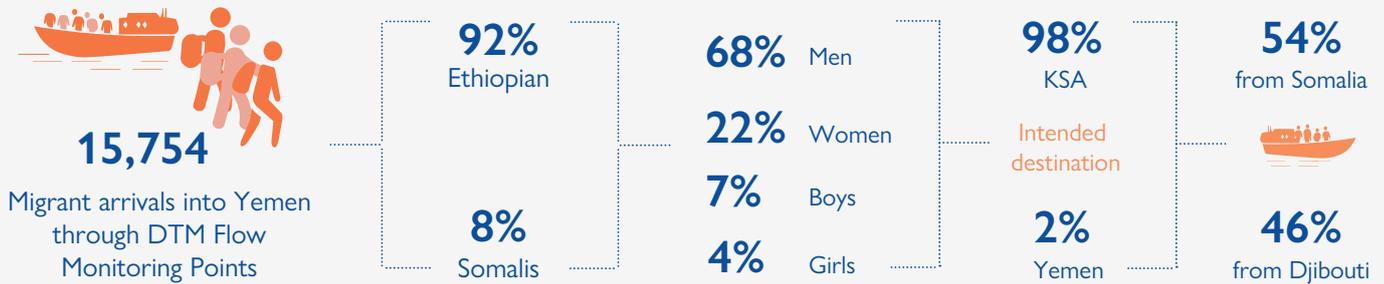
For further information on flow monitoring activities, please see <https://migration.iom.int/reports>



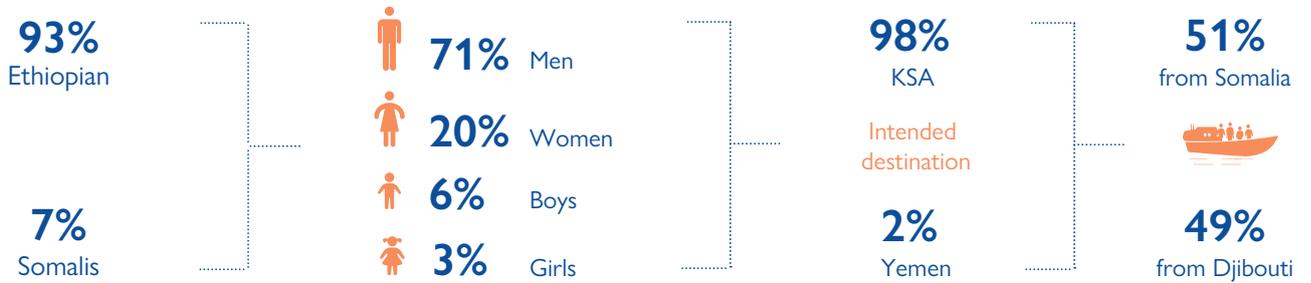
Injured migrants stranded in Sana'a sit outside of a safe centre where they seek refuge and receive medical care. © IOM 2022/Rami Ibrahim

BREAKDOWN OF ARRIVALS

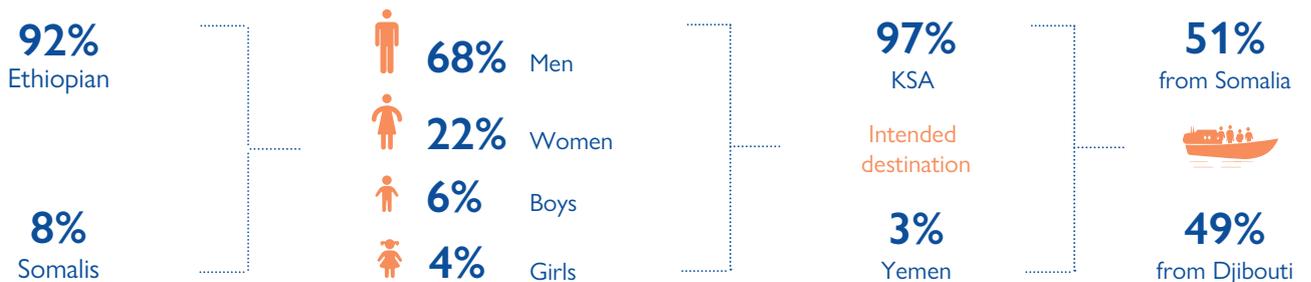
ARRIVALS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2022



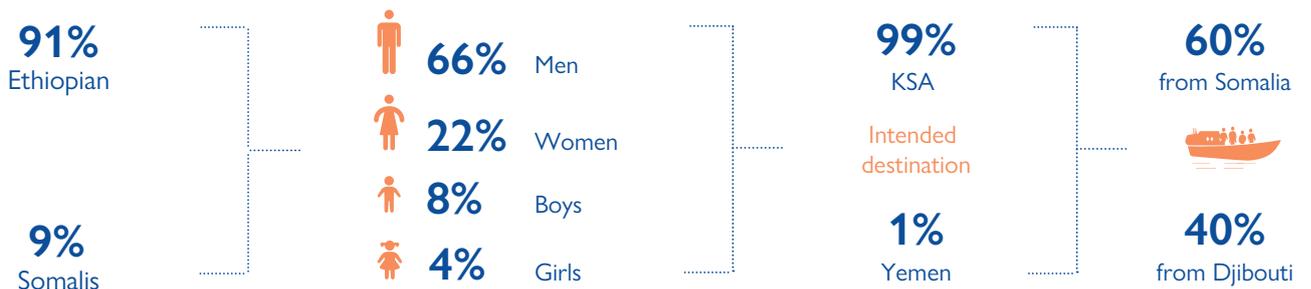
3,171 MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN JULY



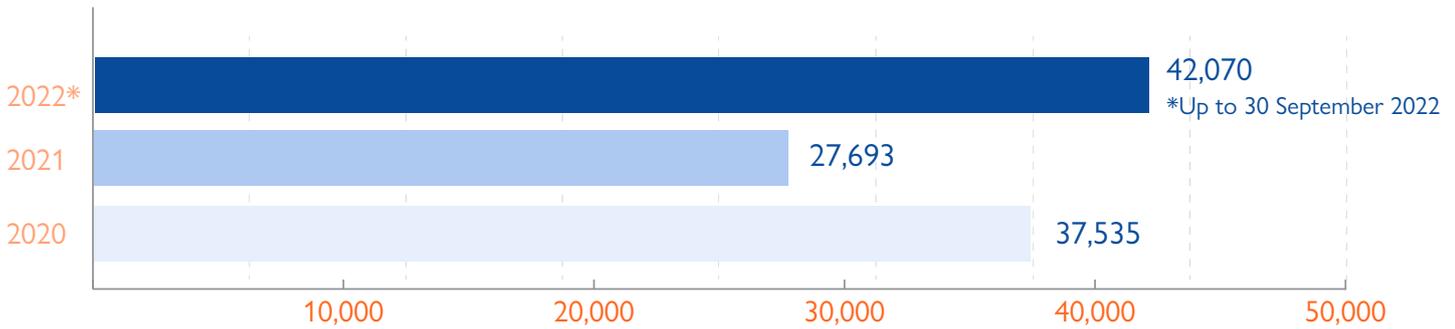
6,542 MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN AUGUST



6,041 MIGRANT ARRIVALS IN SEPTEMBER



YEARLY MIGRANT ARRIVALS



MIGRANT RETURNEES

July to September 2022:



14,530 Returnees



14,012 Men



175 Women



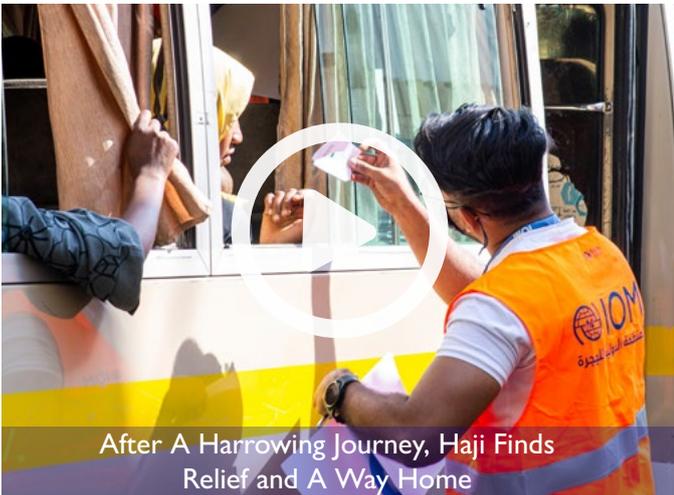
242 Boys



101 Girls

By the end of September 2022, IOM recorded over 14,000 Yemeni migrants returning from KSA to Yemen during the reporting period, bringing the total to 49,815 who have returned thus far in 2022. The majority (96%) were men and were forcibly returned without any travel documents. Vulnerable persons including unaccompanied children, elderly persons, children under five years and pregnant or lactating women were observed among those returning to the country.

MIGRANT VOICES



After A Harrowing Journey, Haji Finds Relief and A Way Home



Helping Migrants Restore Dreams Lost to Trafficking in Yemen

Migrant Protection and Assistance Activities July to September 2022



4

Migrant Response Points/
Community Response
Centres supported



2,247

Migrants received dedicated
case management support



3

Mobile Medical Teams
operational along key
migratory routes



11,052

migrants provided with
material assistance

IOM MIGRATION RESPONSE IN YEMEN IN 2022

PILLARS OF INTERVENTION

Since IOM began operations in Yemen, its migrant assistance programme has aimed to ensure that migrants in Yemen have access to life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection of their rights, safety and dignity.

Throughout Yemen, IOM:

1. Delivers life-saving humanitarian protection and assistance through fixed centres (health clinics, migrant response points) and mobile teams that improves access to immediate medical care, relief items (clothes, shoes and hygiene items), food, information on safe migration, case management, psychosocial support, Cash for Work and options for Voluntary Humanitarian Return.
2. Provides opportunities for safe and voluntary return assistance for undocumented Ethiopian migrants and stranded migrants of other nationalities through IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Returns mechanism. Assistance includes the provision of 'fit-to-travel' medical screenings and medical escorts as needed before and during travel.
3. Analyzes trends including inflows, push and pull factors, migration routes, protection dynamics, risks and mitigation measures. The gathering of this information is done through key informant interviews, focus group discussions and safety audits along migratory routes to inform a routes-based approach to programming.
4. Develops and implements of a regional approach to safe, dignified and orderly migration to promote engagement within the region on a coordinated rights-based response at the governance level, a component of which involves strengthening the capacities of relevant actors in counter-trafficking and assistance to victims.
5. Enhances coordination with partners on multi-sectorial migration responses through the Mixed Migration Working Group (Aden) and the UN Network on Migration, strengthening advocacy and ensuring clear referral mechanisms at both regional and country level.



IOM health staff conduct a psychosocial support session at the IOM clinic in Aden. © IOM 2022/Majed Mohammed

KEY ADVOCACY POINTS

Among the 191,000 stranded migrants in Yemen, many require at least one form of assistance, IOM continues to urge that:

- Safe and dignified return support is provided to those who wish to leave Yemen.
- Human rights of all migrants in Yemen are upheld at all points of the migrant journey.
- Detention only be used as a measure of last resort when humane conditions can be met. No children should be detained.
- Forced relocations under inhumane conditions must stop and migrants should be accorded due process of law including but not limited to fair trial.
- Humanitarian organizations are granted unconditional access to migrants across Yemen.
- Migrants are included in all humanitarian programming, based on needs not status and the migrant funding should be mainstreamed across the humanitarian response.



An IOM doctor assesses the medical condition of a migrant after being injured in a car accident on his journey in Yemen. © IOM 2022/Rami Ibrahim

IOM'S MIGRANT ASSISTANCE IN YEMEN IS SUPPORTED BY



Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs