HORN OF AFRICA-YEMEN MIGRATION TRENDS

In the second quarter of 2022, migrants in Yemen continued to face dire situations along the journey to neighbouring Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and, to a lesser degree, Oman. Between April and June 2022, over 11,000 migrants arrived to Yemen via treacherous boat journeys from Djibouti and Somalia. Many become trapped in the hands of smugglers, exploited until they have nothing with nowhere to turn. IOM in Yemen estimates that over 43,000 migrants are stranded in various regions throughout the country.

The grave reality migrants face in the country continues to be underlined by severe human rights violations, with several incidents reported during the second quarter. IOM verified nine separate incidents resulting in the deaths of 189 migrants and injuries of 353 migrants in the northern area of Sa'dah governorate bordering KSA. However, these numbers are likely to be significantly higher. These killings and injuries are largely the result of shootings, mortar attacks and artillery fire.

In addition to these incidents, migrants continue to be subjected to abduction, extortion, violence, abuse and exploitation – including forced labour, prostitution and transfer – often at the hands of powerful and ruthless smuggling networks. In Sa'dah, migrants are reportedly detained and then transported to Sana'a, from where they are eventually forced to move south and cross active front lines in Ta'iz. Although IOM is unable to confirm, new information has indicated that a rising number of migrants have been forcibly transferred from the north to the south of Yemen every week – leading to an increased number of stranded migrants in the south.

In Sana'a, IOM continues to receive pleas for assistance from extremely vulnerable migrants, notably survivors of gender-based violence and unaccompanied children who are stranded and awaiting the opportunity to return to their countries of origin. At this time, IOM is not yet able to facilitate Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) from the north of Yemen, though discussions are underway regarding the resumption of VHR flights from Sana'a. In the meantime, the Organization continues to provide support to migrants with specific needs who have no other recourse to services. This includes the provision of safe shelter, basic services, psychosocial support and medical assistance. IOM has also observed an increase in number of Tigrayans coming to the north of Yemen. The vast majority of migrants IOM encountered in Sa'dah were from Tigray with a smaller number from Amhara. This trend is not reflected in the south, possibly because of non-disclosure upon arrival.

In Ma'rib, IOM was able to launch its first VHR operation from the conflict-affected area during the month of May. Yet the cruel practices of smugglers in Ma'rib have continued. Once smugglers became aware of the VHR operations, they accelerated efforts to contain and forcibly move migrants in order to prevent them from registering to return home. Women and girls are particularly at heightened risk of kidnapping and trafficking, given their ‘value’ to smugglers and the potential loss of income.
resulting from their return home. Hostility from smugglers to organizations assisting migrants has also heightened significantly in this area, rendering service delivery extremely challenging. Despite these challenges, IOM continues to be committed to helping as many people who wish to return as possible and has implemented special provisions to protect those most at risk of smuggler containment and abuse.

In Aden and along the southern coast, an increased number of stranded migrants has been observed. In a new trend, partners have reported a number of returned migrants from Oman in the governorate. This is thought to be the result of arrest and deportation campaigns of Ethiopian migrants in Oman, estimated to have impacted around 2,000 migrants during the reporting period. Further, systematic extortion of migrants upon arrival in Yemen is common, with demands of up to 3,500 Saudi Riyal for release from smuggling dens and onward movement from Yemen to Oman and up to 7,000 for release and transfer from Yemen to KSA. Migrants are forced to work throughout the journey, frequently in qat plantations (for men) and domestic settings (for women). The fraud, deception and power dynamics are such that many migrants encountered have been trafficked rather than smuggled.

First return flight departs from Ma’rib, others safely return home from Aden

IOM delivered return assistance to migrants throughout April and May through the Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme, supporting 1,032 migrants to depart on seven flights since 12 May. Six flights were conducted from Aden and one from Ma’rib. The latter was a great logistical undertaking given the isolated location and the extreme challenges of conducting registration and processing of migrants wishing to return under extremely challenging circumstances. In early June, the Government of Ethiopia suspended returns from Yemen and other countries due to administrative issues. Migrants registered for return and issued travel documents in both Aden and Marib had their flights cancelled. However, the suspension has since been lifted and returns are due to resume in late July.

IOM requires USD 7.5 million to help return 5,100 more migrants across Yemen who are anxiously waiting to go back home. VHR represents the only lifeline available to stranded migrants who have no recourse to services and are wholly dependent on an overstretched and under-resourced humanitarian migrant response.

HORN OF AFRICA TO YEMEN MIGRATION ROUTES

**Legend**

- **Stranded migrants**
- **Violations against migrants**
- **Active migrant routes**
- **Forced returns**
- **Yard**
- **Monabbih hospital**
- **Main route**
MIGRANT ARRIVALS

Between April and June 2022 an estimated 11,614 migrants arrived in Yemen, mainly from Ethiopia (85.5%) and Somalia (14.5%), underlining a continued increase towards similar trends observed in pre-pandemic years. However, overall arrivals flows decreased during the reporting period as compared to previous months, likely due to difficult weather conditions and increased security measures on the borders of Djibouti and Yemen. Yet by the end of June, over 31,000 migrants arrived in Yemen thus far in 2022, surpassing total migrant arrivals (27,693) in 2021.

As seen in previous reporting periods, migrants indicated departing from either Djibouti (52%) or Somalia (48%) with intentions to eventually reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In June, a slight shift was observed whereas more migrants arrived to landing points in Shabwah than Lahj, likely due to increased departures from Bossaso, Somalia ahead of the quickly approaching windy season which will render the journey even more dangerous. Among all arrivals, men made up the majority (66%).

RETURNS TO HORN OF AFRICA

Movement restrictions, perilous conditions and heightened protection risks have left some migrants with no choice but to return home through the same dangerous boat journeys they used to arrive. Between April and June, DTM teams in Djibouti recorded 1,592 migrants who took the risky 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.
### Breakdown of Arrivals

#### Migrant Arrivals April to June 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>Ethiopian</th>
<th>Somali</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Intended Destination</th>
<th>Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>11,614</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>98% KSA</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>52% from Djibouti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5,212</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100% KSA</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>43% from Somalia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3,228</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>97% KSA</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>39% from Djibouti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3,174</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>97% KSA</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>66% from Djibouti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Arrivals:** 19,018

---

**ARRIVALS APRIL TO JUNE 2022**

- **11,614** Migrant arrivals into Yemen through DTM Flow Monitoring Points
- **5,212** Migrant arrivals in April
- **3,228** Migrant arrivals in May
- **3,174** Migrant arrivals in June

---

**Intended Destination:**
- **KSA:** 98%
- **Yemen:** 2%
- **Djibouti:** 52%

---

**Gender Distribution:**
- **Men:**
  - April: 66%
  - May: 67%
  - June: 63%
- **Women:**
  - April: 22%
  - May: 22%
  - June: 21%
- **Boys:**
  - April: 7%
  - May: 6%
  - June: 8%
- **Girls:**
  - April: 5%
  - May: 5%
  - June: 8%

---

**Source:** IOM Yemen
YEARN MIGRANT ARRIVALS

YEARLY MIGRANT ARRIVALS

- 2022*: 31,266
- 2021: 27,693
- 2020: 37,535

RETURNNEES

April to June 2022:

- 17,233 Returnees
- 16,529 Men
- 192 Women
- 407 Boys
- 105 Girls

By the end of June, IOM recorded over 17,000 Yemeni migrants returning to Yemen during the reporting period, bringing the total to over 35,000 who have returned thus far in 2022. The majority (96%) were men and 97% were forcibly returned without any travel documents. Vulnerable persons including unaccompanied children, elderly persons, children under five years and pregnant or lactating women were among those observed returning to the country.

MIGRANT VOICES

Watch: Anisa Leaves War-torn Yemen on First Ever Voluntary Return Flight from Ma’rib
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 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 (Sana’a), strengthening advocacy and ensuring clear referral mechanisms at both regional and country levels.
In 2022, IOM projects that over 191,000 migrants will require at least one form of assistance. Due to the increasing number of stranded migrants in the country, case management needs are expected to increase drastically. Moving forward, IOM urges 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 is only used as a measure of last resort and when humane conditions can be met. No children should be detained.
- Forced relocations under inhumane conditions stop and migrants are 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.

IOM staff conduct medical checks of returning migrants prior to their departure from Ma’rib to Seiyun airport © IOM 2022/Elham Al-Oqabi

MIGRATION 2022 OUTLOOK

In 2022, IOM projects that over 191,000 migrants will require at least one form of assistance. Due to the increasing number of stranded migrants in the country, case management needs are expected to increase drastically. Moving forward, IOM urges 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 is only used as a measure of last resort and when humane conditions can be met. No children should be detained.
- Forced relocations under inhumane conditions stop and migrants are 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.