

Migrating to Yemen-One Family's Experience

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Eftou (name changed to respect confidentiality) is a thirty-year-old Ethiopian migrant. She lost both of her parents when she was a child. She lived in a city located East of Addis Ababa and near the border shared with Djibouti and Ethiopia. She decided to go to Djibouti seeking a job opportunity to improve her family's income. However, she could not find work. A while after arriving in Djibouti, she got married to a vegetable-selling Oromo man. He told her that he had escaped from Somalia where he used to work because the authorities were chasing him but he did not tell her the reason. A couple of years later, Eftou was already a mother of two.



Suddenly, Eftou's husband disappeared. She understood from his friends that he migrated to Yemen. A few years later, he called Eftou and asked her to join him in Yemen. Using a migrant smuggler, Eftou and her two children crossed the Red Sea and arrived at the Yemeni coast. A gang received them at the shore, abducted her with her kids, and kept them for three months. Eftou was extremely worried to expose her children to any risks; therefore, she gave the gang her husband's number. When her husband received the news, he went to the gang and paid them to release his family.

For six years, Eftou had a relatively decent life with her husband and children in Yemen. Her husband cleaned cars for a living, and Eftou worked as a domestic worker in houses. She was paid around USD 100 per month. One day, Eftou found herself jobless because the family for whom she was working fled to another country when the war broke out in 2015. After that, and while Eftou was three months pregnant with her third child, her husband disappeared. Eftou looked for him in hospitals, police stations, and every where possible but in vain. When she delivered her baby, she had no one to take care of her and her children.



Her psychological wellbeing deteriorated due to her debt and lack of work.



She went to a humanitarian agency in Yemen, and she was referred to IOM. Eftou and her children stayed in IOM's temporary shelter for two months where they received assistance, such as food, non-food items, psychological support, medical treatment, until they were evacuated from Yemen to Djibouti. IOM Djibouti referred Eftou to UNHCR and the ONARS in Djibouti as an asylum seeker. She met her sister in Djibouti and has decided to stay with her children in Djibouti while awaiting news about the asylum claim.



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