

# Migrating to Yemen – One Woman's Experience

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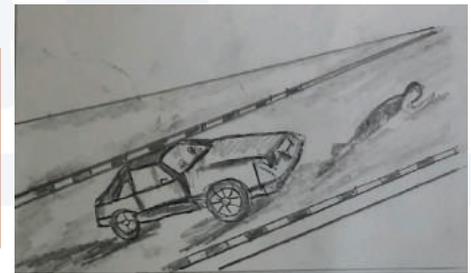


Lamlam\* (name changed for anonymity) is a twenty-year old Ethiopian woman who lived with her husband in a village, in the northeast Ethiopia. Her husband left the village and migrated to Saudi Arabia, leaving Lamlam behind. After he had settled, he sent Lamlam an amount of money and asked her to travel to Saudi Arabia. Lamlam contacted a smuggler to help her get to Saudi Arabia. She paid 5,000 Ethiopian Birr (approximately USD 200) to get to Yemen. Soon after she reached Yemen, she paid another 5,000 Saudi Rials (approximately USD 1,333) to a smuggler to get her into Saudi Arabia. The smuggler sent her with a group of people in a vehicle. The vehicle was stopped at a checkpoint on a Yemeni road that eventually led to Saudi Arabia. The people at the checkpoint demanded the migrants to call their families in Saudi Arabia and transfer money. Migrants who refused to do so were not allowed to clear the checkpoint.



Lamlam did not call her husband, even though she had his mobile number in Saudi Arabia, because she believed that she had already paid a lot to the previous smugglers and she could not pay more. Lamlam and her friend pretended that they did not have the mobile numbers, and they got off the vehicle and returned to Sana'a.

Upon her arrival in Sana'a, she was hit by a car while walking with her friend in the street. The car driver took her immediately to the hospital. The doctor decided that she needed to surgery on her leg. However, the driver paid for the surgery, left Lamlam in the hospital and disappeared.



Desperately seeking help, Lamlam called the smuggler who she paid to take her to Saudi Arabia and asked for his assistance. The smuggler contacted one of his friends in Sana'a, a woman who came to the hospital and took Lamlam to her house. Lamlam stayed with this woman for almost three months, but her leg got worse because she was suffering from complications. She heard about the IOM medical clinic in Sana'a and approached it. The woman encouraged Lamlam to return to Ethiopia, despite her health issues. During one of her

frequent visits to the clinic, Lamlam discussed with IOM staff her medical concerns associated with returning to Ethiopia. The IOM medical staff referred her to a hospital where she underwent another surgery and got intensive medical care. When she was discharged from the hospital, she stayed at IOM's temporary shelter under the supervision of IOM health staff. She received food, clothing, medical care and psychosocial support. IOM has helped Lamlam communicate with her family in Ethiopia to update them on her health condition. Lamlam requested IOM to be returned to her country. In May 2017, IOM provided Lamlam with humanitarian voluntary return to Ethiopia where she is going to finish her medical treatment.



These generous donors have supported IOM's humanitarian assistance projects.