

MONTHLY MIGRATION OVERVIEW

OCTOBER 2019



HORN OF AFRICA-YEMEN MIGRATION FLOWS

As a country of origin, transit and destination, Yemen has a complex and dynamic migration history. Flows to and from the country are often linked to Yemen's internal political and security situation (outflows), as well as regional dynamics (inflows).

Affected by the economic crisis and seeking refuge from the conflict, Yemeni nationals and Somali refugees have been the two main groups of people leaving Yemen, primarily, for countries in the Horn of Africa ¹, such as, Somalia and Djibouti.

For decades, Yemen has seen migration flows of both Yemenis and people from the Horn of Africa to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in search of economic opportunities. The recent trend of returns from KSA of Yemeni nationals, Ethiopian nationals and other nationalities has not shown to deter migration towards the Kingdom ².

Yemen is a key part of the "Eastern Route" (also referred to as the "Gulf Route") through which migrants from the Horn of Africa – primarily Ethiopia and, to a lesser extent, Somalia – head to the Arabian Peninsula and, in much smaller numbers, to the Middle East. These mixed migration flows are comprised of several categories of individuals, including irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers ³.

While outbreaks of fighting in Yemen in 2010 and 2015 initially led to temporary lulls in arrivals into the country, expectations that conflict would deter migration or at least decrease migration flows have not come to fruition. Conflict has, however, influenced the geography of routes through Yemen. Prior to 2015 the western coast around Al Hudaydah was the main docking point for smugglers' boats. High levels of fighting in Al Hudaydah and along the west coast caused a significant decrease in arrivals in that area, making the southern coast the preferred entry point to Yemen (from Ethiopia to Bab al Mandab and Ras al Ara in Lahj governorate or from Somalia to Hadramaut and Shabwah governorates).

In the Horn of Africa, at sea and in Yemen, migrants are exposed to many forms of abuses and human rights violations, including injuries from cramped conditions and overcrowded boats, physical abuse and torture, sexual exploitation, death by drowning or starving due to boats taking on water, being adrift for days or capsizing, forced disembarkations before reaching the shore, abductions for ransom, arrest and detention in inhumane conditions, forced labour and trafficking ⁴. Migrants can also find themselves trapped within frontlines in Yemen's conflict.

¹ Yemen Regional Refugee Response Plan, 2017 and IOM World Migration Report, 2018 (page.54).

² IOM 'A region on the move. Mid-year mobility overview – January to June 2019' and Yemen DTM Flow Monitoring data (41,958 Yemeni were returned from KSA between January and October 2019).

³ In 2018, the number of asylum seekers, refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR amounted to over 270,000 individuals (http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern)

⁴ IOM World Migration Report, 2018 (page 53)

OCTOBER MIGRATION TRENDS

During October, 12,905 migrants entered Yemen via five entry points in Lahj, Hadramaut and Shabwah governorates. IOM mobile team and partners observed a higher prevalence of migrants moving by foot through the northern Yemen migration routes in the reporting period. An increased number of new arrival migrants arriving from Djibouti in the area of Ras al-Arah, Lahj governorate, in comparison to arrival rates from the previous five months was also reported.

Of the migrants encountered along the main migratory routes in the month of October in the south and around Sana'a governorate, lack of water and food were among their primary concerns. The risk of being abducted, generally in exchange for ransom, was also a concern held by the migrants interviewed. Most of the migrants on the route are Ethiopian and entered Yemen through the southern coast with an intention of travelling through Yemen to cross the border into KSA.

DRIVERS AND MIGRANT PROFILES

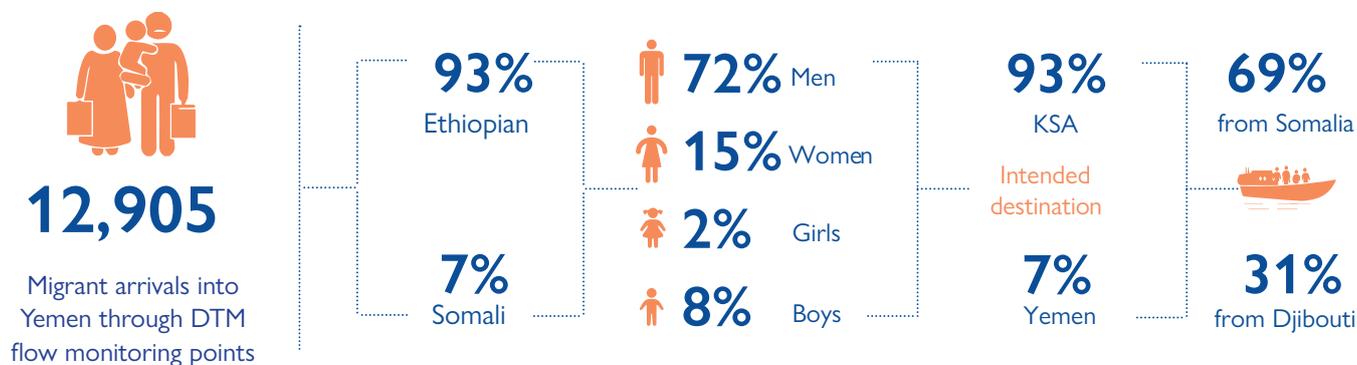
Ethiopian and Somali nationals represent nearly all the migrants moving towards Yemen, with Ethiopians making up over 85 per cent of maritime crossings many of whom are from Oromo and Tigray regions⁵. Increasing numbers of women and unaccompanied children are observed in 2019 inflows. IOM Yemen's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) flow monitoring points estimate that women and children constitute approximately 27 per cent of the migrants flows into Yemen since January 2019, while in 2018 the percentage was only 16.

Overlapping factors drive migration from the Horn of Africa including on-going political instability, insecurity, environmental crisis and displacement, severe deprivation and poverty, and ethno-social marginalization. Employment opportunities in the Gulf States, including domestic or farm labour, continues to exist as a significant migration driver⁶.

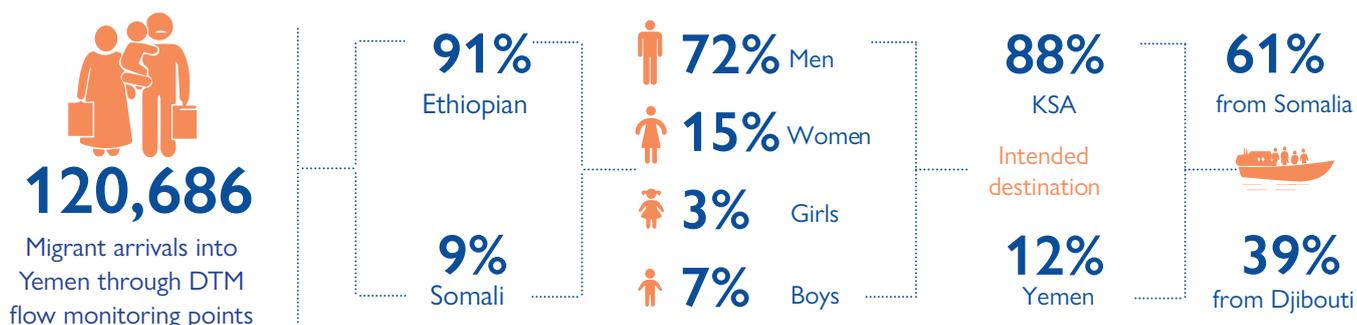
KSA is by far the preferred destination for migrants arriving in Yemen. Being one of the more affluent countries in the Gulf of Arabia, and due to its geographic proximity to the Horn of Africa, there is a high incentive for young migrants to migrate towards KSA in the hope of finding gainful employment, better supporting their families back home towards a more stable financial future.

Many migrants do not seem to know about the conflict in Yemen or the extend of it before they leave home. However, they generally find out along the route, for example, in Djibouti before boarding the boat to Yemen. At the same time, the perception of expected future affluence is so strong that the perilous journey across the Gulf of Aden in unseaworthy vessels, the threat of conflict in the transit country of Yemen, and even the strict border controls in place in KSA do not seem to deter this movement.

BREAKDOWN OF OCTOBER ARRIVALS



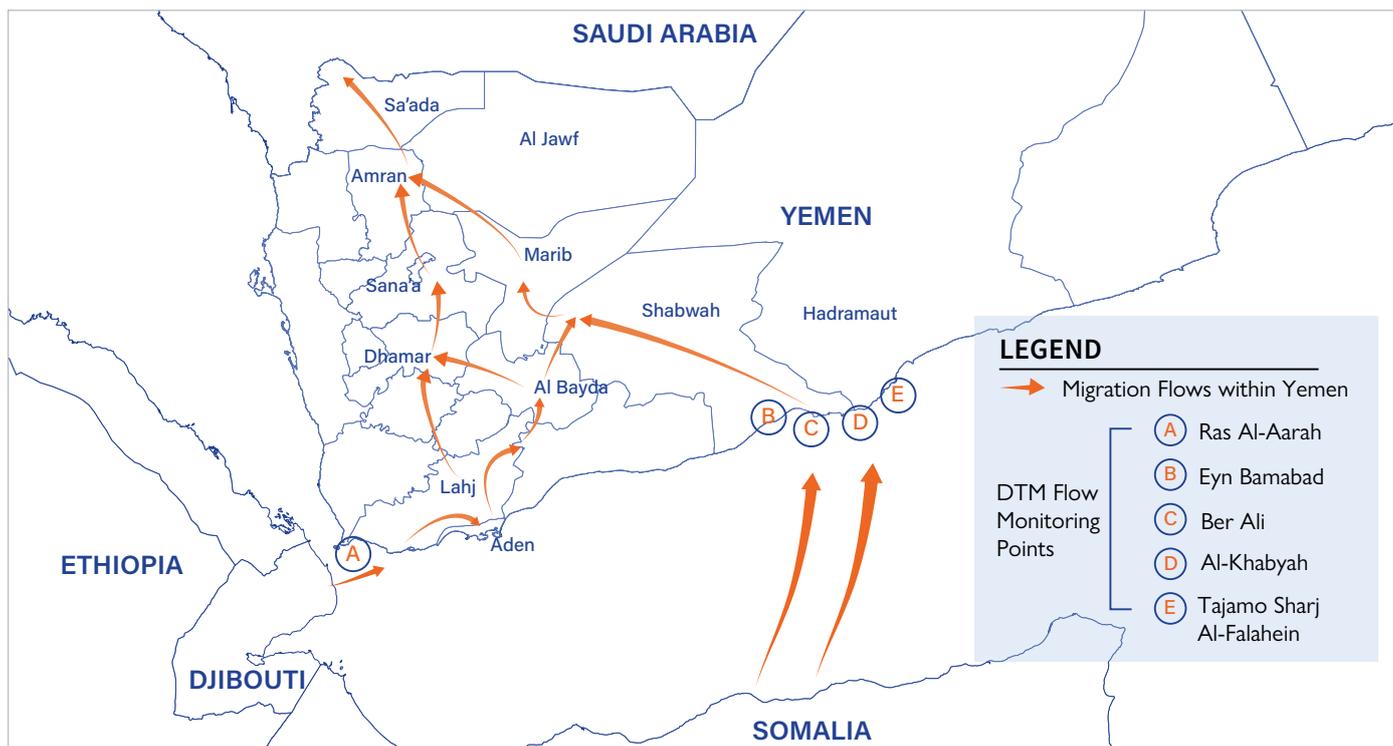
ARRIVALS JANUARY TO OCTOBER 2019



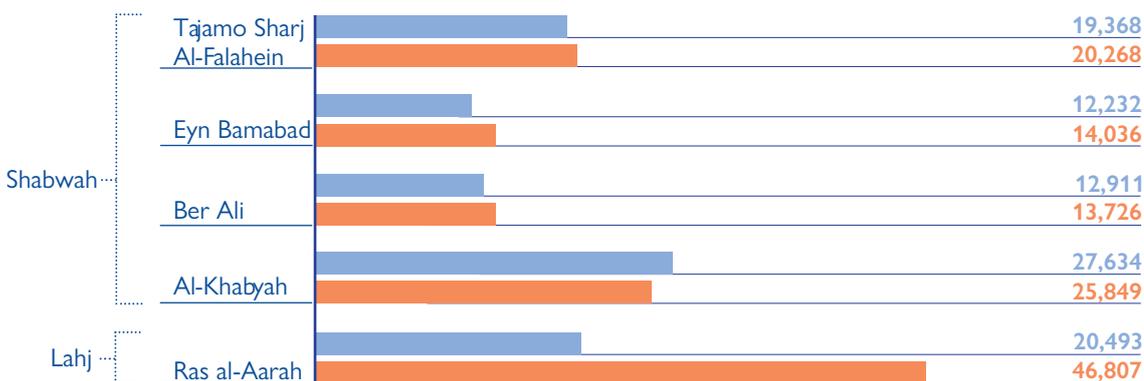
⁵ IOM 'A region on the move. Mid-year mobility overview – January to June 2019'

⁶ IOM World Migration Report, 2018 (page 53).

HORN OF AFRICA-YEMEN MIGRATION ROUTES



ARRIVALS PER DTM FLOW MONITORING POINT 2018 & 2019



 **2018 / 92,638**
2019 / 120,686



Ethiopian migrants in Djibouti are guided by a smuggler to an area somewhat shaded by trees where they will wait, sometimes for days, until a boat is ready to take them to Yemen. © IOM 2019/Headon

IOM MIGRATION RESPONSE IN YEMEN

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

PILLARS OF INTERVENTION

1. Life saving humanitarian services through fixed centres, for example, health clinics and migrant response points, and mobile teams providing access to immediate medical care, relief items, food, information on safe migration, case management, psychosocial support, and options for voluntary humanitarian return.
2. Assistance for safe and voluntary return for undocumented Ethiopian migrants through the Voluntary Humanitarian Returns mechanism, and for Somali refugees through the Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) programme, in coordination with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), including provision of 'fit-to-travel' medical screenings and medical escorts before and during travel.
3. Strengthening analysis of mixed migration flows, risks and mitigation measure, including of protection dynamics related to migrants in Yemen and of push and pull factors and patterns of migration.
4. Development and implementation of a regional approach to safe, humane migration to promote dialogue and engagement of relevant authorities within the region on a coordinated rights-based response at governance and policy level, including migration-aware health care policies and strengthening the capacities of relevant actors in counter-trafficking and assistance to victims.
5. Enhancing coordination with partners on multi-sectoral migration responses, strengthening advocacy and ensuring clear referral mechanism at both regional and Yemen country level.

Notes

- Health assistance includes: emergency primary health care, access to mental health and psychosocial assistance, referrals to secondary/tertiary health facilities for specialized support, hygiene awareness and information provision.
- Protection assistance includes: case management, immediate needs assistance, VHR and ASR support.

OCTOBER 2019

114 Somali refugees helped return through ASR with UNHCR

6,473 Migrants provided with health assistance

2,599 Migrants supported with protection assistance

JANUARY-OCTOBER 2019

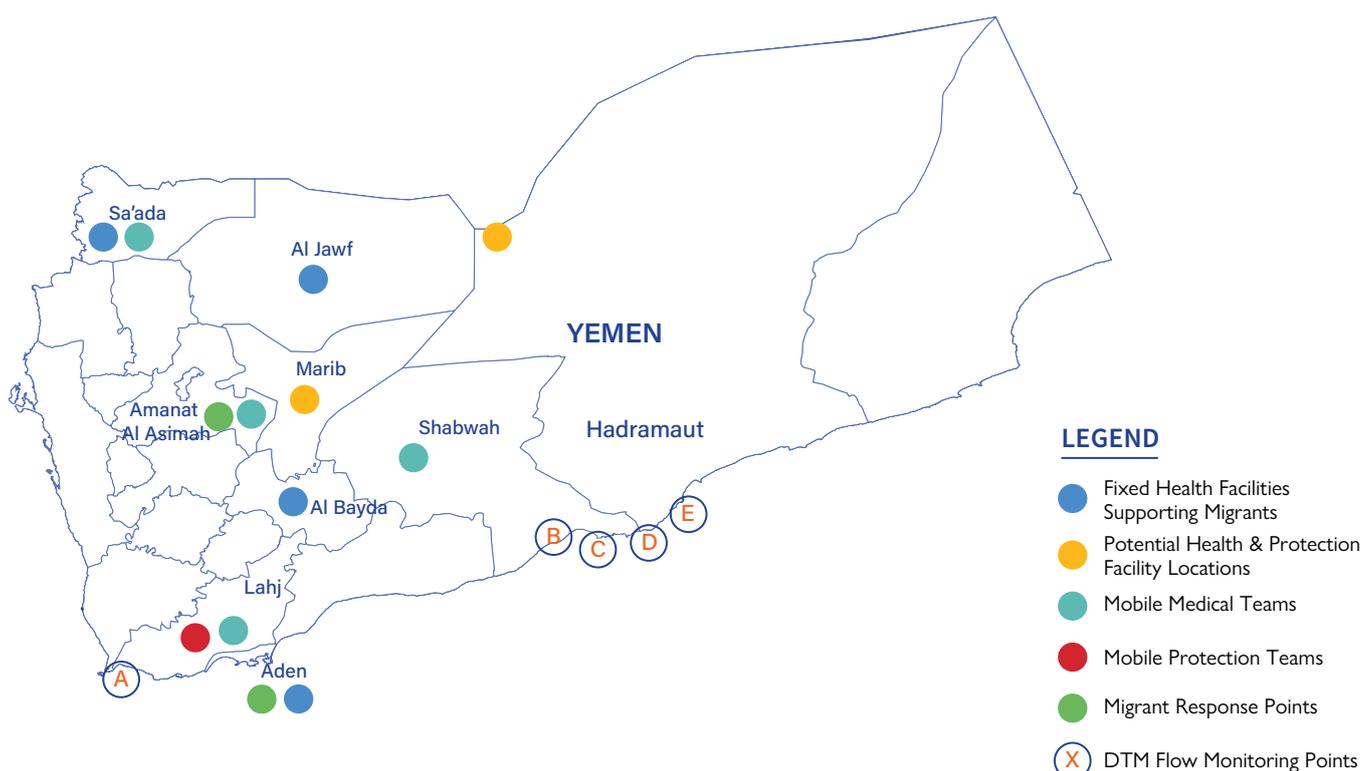
1,407 Somali refugees helped return through ASR with UNHCR

3,751 Ethiopian migrants and 32 stranded migrants of other nationalities assisted through VHR

64,900 Migrants provided with health assistance

44,946 Migrants supported with protection assistance

IOM MIGRANT ASSISTANCE ACTIVITY LOCATIONS



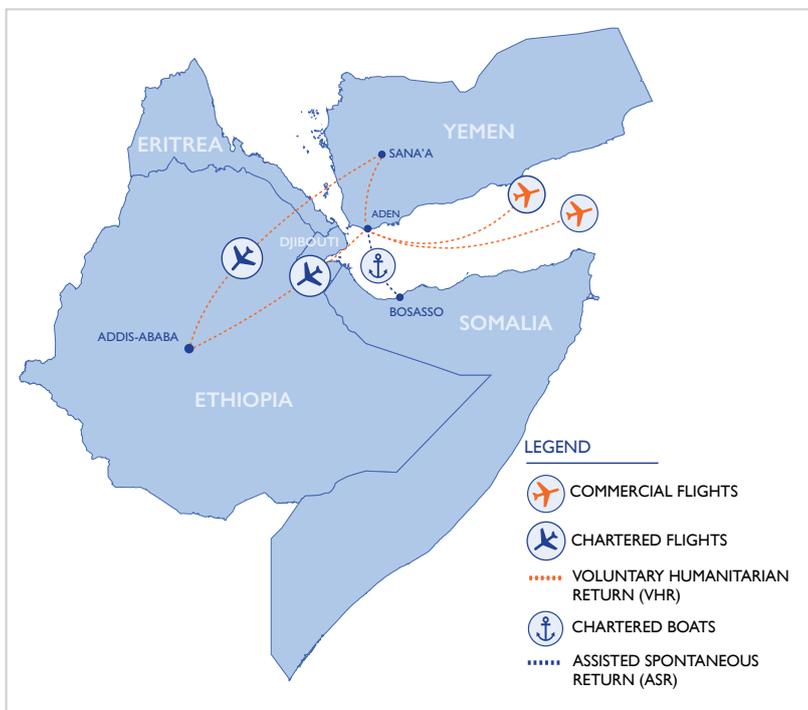
IOM YEMEN MOVEMENT ASSISTANCE

IOM helps migrants return from Yemen to their countries of origin through its VHR programme. All migrants receiving VHR assistance are individually counselled and provided with all necessary information to make an informed decision in line with their desires and specific needs. During counselling, IOM makes an initial assessment of any risks of ill-treatment, persecution or other human rights violations that the migrant could suffer should they return to their country of origin. Similarly, ASR support is available for Somali refugees wishing to return home. ASR movements, initiated by UNHCR, are facilitated by IOM, which uses commercial sea vessels to transport the refugees from Aden to Berbera port, Somalia. Prior to travel, IOM evaluates fitness for travel.

While the vast majority of migrants who are assisted travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, other nationalities also benefit from the programme. IOM organizes commercial flight bookings from Aden to their respective country of origin, including places such as Pakistan, India and Egypt. Currently, ASR is only carried out to support Somali refugees return to Somalia.

JANUARY-OCTOBER 2019

					
VHR	2196	192	909	487	3,784
ASR	464	377	283	281	1,405
	2660	569	1192	768	5,189



A Somali family whose income was wiped out by the crisis start their return to Somalia from Yemen through IOM and UNHCR's support under the ASR programme. The children have never been to or do not remember Somalia. © IOM 2019/Headon