

EAST & HORN OF AFRICA COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT - #43



24 February 2021 Update

EHOA SITUATION OVERVIEW

COVID-19 continues to affect people across East & Horn of Africa. Migrants, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are among some of the world's most vulnerable groups being adversely affected by the disease. Migrant groups are more likely to be exposed to the conditions and circumstances in which COVID-19 spreads, which includes living in poorer and makeshift locations, and/or overcrowded settings. They are less likely to have access to COVID-19 testing, medical care, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and the COVID-19 vaccines being developed and distributed.

Thousands of migrants are currently stranded across East and Horn of Africa due to the impact of nearly one year of movement and mobility restrictions in the region, including air, land and sea border closures, and quarantine rules. Many of these people are in need of food, water, medical assistance, transport, counselling and psycho-social support. Migrants have also been forced to return to their countries of origin, losing jobs and livelihoods in the process. Thousands of migrants are in detention where they are facing abuse in prison like facilities. Others are experiencing stigma and xenophobia, resulting from being blamed for the spread of the disease.

As of 23 February 2021, there were 1,366 new cases of COVID-19 in the region, including Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan, according to the World Health Organization. This brings the total of confirmed cases in the region to 342,547, since the start of the pandemic last year.

IOM is supporting governments throughout the region to respond to COVID-19 in the areas of Risk Communication, Disease Surveillance, Infection Prevention & Control, Case Management, at 'Points of Entry' (PoEs), in Procurement and Logistics, and in other areas. IOM is advocating for migrants, including IDPs to be included in all government responses to COVID-19, including the roll out and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. IOM launched a regional appeal for the East and Horn of Africa for \$71.6m in April 2020, to meet the many needs of these communities.

Link to the EHOA COVID-19 appeal document; <https://ronairobi.iom.int/publications/iom-east-and-horn-africa-strategic-and-preparedness-and-response-plan-covid-19>

In August 2020 IOM launched an appeal to specifically respond to the needs of migrants on the 'Eastern Route' from the Horn of Africa to Yemen.

Link to the Regional Migrant Response Plan for Horn of Africa and Yemen' (RMRP) 2020 Appeal: <https://ronairobi.iom.int/publications/regional-migrants-response-plan-horn-africa-and-yemen-2018-%E2%80%93-2020>

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116,061

Migrant movements observed (DTM, January 2021) (70% reduction compared to January 2020)*



2,500

Migrant arrivals in Yemen from the Horn (DTM, January 2021) (77% reduction compared to January 2020)



6.5M

IDPs (January 2021 – DTM, OCHA)

*This reduction is partially due to the suspension of DTM Flow Monitoring operations in some countries.



IOM COUNTRY RESPONSE

Partnerships and Coordination

IOM Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the 8-country trading bloc, and the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), organised the 2nd IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. The conference brought together government, thought-leaders, academia, researchers, policy makers and development partners to discuss the long-term impact of COVID-19 on countries in the IGAD region. Data published at the conference showed a 73 per cent drop in migrants from the Horn of Africa travelling to the Gulf countries through Yemen. Participants discussed policy ideas to help IGAD countries protect migrants, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and the communities that host them, to respond to the pandemic. IOM has been working with and supporting IGAD countries to develop and implement an integrated and regional approach to responding to the needs of migrants and other vulnerable mobile groups, since the start of the pandemic, to harness the benefits of a regional approach to migration, to reduce the negative impact of COVID-19. Nations in the region are grappling with the economic fallout from the pandemic, which includes millions of job losses, businesses closed, and a drop in cash remittances that support millions of people across the region. IOM Ethiopia is working with the Government of Ethiopia in the support of tens of thousands of migrant returnees, who have returned to the country since the start of COVID-19. IOM continues to support 7 temporary places of shelter in Addis Ababa and at Points of Entry (PoEs), where migrants receive direct medical assistance, food, water, and transportation home to their communities of origin. IOM Uganda is actively participating in government led COVID-19 related meetings including the incident management team meetings, surveillance, Point of Entry (PoE) Working Group and the UN Emergency coordination meetings and the COVID-19 National Steering Taskforce. IOM also met with the district leadership of the border districts of Adjumani and Amuru district bordering South Sudan to introduce the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) funded project and discuss the implementation modalities as part of efforts to strengthen partnerships and coordination with the border communities. IOM South Sudan is continuing to work in partnership with the authorities on the Strategic Advisory Group, the National Task Force, the COVID-19 National Steering Committee meetings, Technical Working Groups, and State Task Forces. With the support of the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, IOM is also working with four partners including the International Rescue Committee, Medair, the Norwegian Refugee Council, and the United Networks for Health in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities, aimed at curtailing the spread of COVID-19. The International Rescue Committee, operating in Rubkona County, and Medair, operating in Juba County, conducts health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities. In Yei County, Torit, and Nimule, the Norwegian Refugee Council conducts WASH activities. The United Networks for Health conducts health activities in the same locations with the support of IOM.

IOM, IGAD and GIZ organised the 2nd IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.



Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

IOM Ethiopia has reached 38,842 individuals including IDPs and migrant returnees with COVID-19 prevention messaging through door to door campaigns, community mobilization, and health education at health facilities in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jijjiga, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well in two IDPs sites in North Gondar, during the reporting period. IOM also distributed 2,504 comic books with COVID-19 related information in Borena and west Guji IDP sites and provided four public address systems to in East Wollega to help with community sensitization campaigns. IOM has reached over 3.6 million people in Ethiopia for COVID-19 prevention and mitigation during 2020. In the first year of the global pandemic, IOM attended to a variety of beneficiaries including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), returnees and victims of human trafficking, as well as people living in host communities. IOM Rwanda donated a public address system and information, education and communication materials to Prison Fellowship Rwanda to scale up COVID-19 awareness raising campaigns in refugee camps and host communities. The items also included a generator and solar panels to power a public address system to reach higher numbers of people. IOM South Sudan continues to conduct COVID-19 sensitization and hygiene promotion activities for communities in Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites and Malakal PoC, as well as outside the PoCs in Juba, Jur River, Magwi and Wau, as well as PoEs in Abyei, Renk and Nimule. Risk communication and awareness messages on COVID-19 continues to be disseminated through a network of 276 community hygiene promoters working across the country and reaching 386,123 individuals. IOM South Sudan has now reached nearly 8 million people with COVID-19 messages since the outbreak of the pandemic. IOM has also conducted a survey on the COVID-19 prevention measures in the capital Juba. Of the 19,785 individuals observed at handwashing facilities, 56 percent washed their hands while 29 percent wore facemasks. The survey was conducted in 28 out of the 36 public places where IOM is conducting COVID-19 prevention related activities. A similar exercise was conducted in Nimule. Of the 2,762 people surveyed at three public places, 59 percent washed their hands. IOM also conducted two focus group discussions with 28 individuals in Kololo East and West to discuss signs, symptoms and prevention of COVID-19 and related 'false information' rumor tracking.


National Laboratory Systems

IOM Ethiopia continued providing COVID-19 testing for UN staff and their dependents at the Migration Health Assessment Centre (MHAC) lab conducting some 179 tests during the reporting period. IOM Uganda is also providing COVID-19 testing for UN staff and their dependents as part of the First Line of Defense program. IOM laboratory in Uganda will be introducing a new COVID-19 testing platform to enhance testing. IOM Rwanda is providing COVID-19 testing to refugees due for resettlement.

Disease Surveillance

IOM Burundi met with authorities and community leaders in Ruyigi province to introduce a Community Event Based Surveillance which will help in early detection of epidemics such as COVID-19. The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development. IOM also trained 50 Community Health Workers in Ruyigi

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province on COVID-19 surveillance. Each trainee was provided with a bicycle, a mobile phone, PPEs, and information, education and communication material, to facilitate their daily work. Since the beginning of the pandemic, IOM Ethiopia has helped over 54,000 migrant returnees. During the reporting period, IOM received and assisted 1,952 new arrival migrant returnees at PoEs. They are being assisted with medical care and other basic essentials.


Points of Entry

IOM Ethiopia has screened 10,499 returnees and local community members for COVID-19 at IOM mobile health team sites and government supported health posts in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jigjiga, Gedee, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega as well as two IDP sites in North Gondar during the reporting period. IOM Uganda formally commenced a two-year project to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in the northern districts of Amuru and Adjumani, on the border with South Sudan. The initiative is part of the two-year, “EU Response to the Health and Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 in the IGAD Region” project funded by the European Union. The project was formally introduced to political and health leaders in Adjumani and Amuru, in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Health, UN Children’s Fund and other partners. While focusing on migrant and cross border communities, and while complementing efforts of other programme partners, IOM will focus on strengthening the healthcare system to respond to COVID-19 and ensure continuity of essential services, provision of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services in selected sites, integrating measures against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the COVID-19 response and carrying out awareness raising and community engagement on COVID-19. In Tanzania, IOM collaborated with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children to facilitate mentorship and onsite trainings to border and port health officers. They were trained on Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR), IPC as well as case management skills including surveillance, contact identification and contact tracing, isolation techniques and use of relevant medical equipment to treat and respond to public health events including COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease. The participants were also oriented on Health, Border and Mobility Management (HBMM) framework, early detection and reporting of potential cases of public health events. The mentorship activities are on-going and have so far reached 66 participants from 12 formal Points of Entry (POEs) in Kigoma and Kagera regions including Kagunga, Kibirizi, Kigoma airport, Kigoma port, Ujiji, Manyovu, Mabamba, Murongo, Rusumo, Murusagamba, Kabanga and Mutukula border points. IOM South Sudan conducted arrival and departure screening for COVID-19 at Nimule Ground Crossing reaching 9,214 travellers. IOM continues to provide (IPC)/WASH support to the PoE in Nimule by supplying clean water through water trucking, rehabilitation and maintenance of sanitation facilities, construction and installation of handwashing facilities, and supply of materials such as face masks, soap, and hand sanitizers.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

In Ethiopia, thousands of people will benefit from 30 secure handwashing buckets with lockable stands installed by IOM in IDP sites and youth recreational sites in Dire Dawa. IOM also delivered water to handwashing facilities in schools and health facilities in Gambella region.

IOM Burundi supported 200 Community Health Workers currently implementing Community Event-based surveillance of epidemics, with a focus on COVID-19 within cross-border communities



IOM Rwanda donated 50,000 reusable facemasks to be distributed to refugees across the country. In South Sudan, IOM maintained 652 handwashing devices. During the reporting period, 91,908 individuals were reported to have used the 17 operational handwashing facilities in Juba bringing the total number of people benefitting to 1,269,136. Some 177,936 people benefited from 93 handwashing stations built by IOM in the capital Juba. More than 2,133,644 people have now benefited from these stations since they were built. The upgrading of three boreholes in Juba is ongoing. Over the last two weeks, 8,607 people washed their hands at three handwashing stations in Nimule. More than 95,263 people have benefited from these three stations since they were built. IOM handed over a handwashing facility to the Comboni Church Administration in Wau. They were also provided with soap. Still, 16 handwashing facilities have been handed over to the community in Wau.

Case Management and Continuity of Essential Services

Humanitarian workers including UN staff and their dependents in Burundi received COVID-19 health-related assistance at IOM Burundi's clinic. Psychosocial support was also offered to help them manage stress related to COVID-19. IOM Ethiopia provided medical consultations to 10,499 returnees and members of host communities in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as at two IOM-managed IDP intervention sites in North Gondar during the reporting period.

Logistics, Procurement and Supply Management

IOM South Sudan assisted seven partners with the integration of COVID-19 preparedness activities in their WASH response in Fashoda, Malakal, Fangak, Ayod, Mayendit and Leer counties. The critical WASH items provided were soap, buckets, aquatabs, filter cloths, hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) kits, and water tanks to support approximately 27,600 individuals with COVID-19 IPC. Another 17 partners were provided with PPEs to benefit healthcare and frontline workers. IOM received the delivery of additional 8,560 boxes of medical gloves, 16,500 buckets with tap, and 6,480 buckets, as well as 500,000 pieces of re-usable cloth face masks from Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. The PPEs are now included in the pool of PPE supplies to continue supporting partners protect their healthcare and frontline workers to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. The re-usable cloth face masks are ready for distribution to partners for provision to vulnerable populations in South Sudan to help protect against COVID-19 spread. Additional procured items including hand sanitizers and thermometers will be delivered in the coming week. IOM is carrying on with dry prepositioning operations to key logistics hubs accessible by road. About 113 metric tons consisting of hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene management kits, filter cloths, buckets with and without taps, aluminum sulphate, collapsible jerry cans and latrines digging kits left Juba by road to Bor logistic hubs. Another 104 metric tons of soap were transported from Rumbek to Bentiu logistic hub.

Humanitarian workers including UN staff and their dependents in Burundi received COVID-19 health-related assistance at IOM Burundi's clinic.



Protection

IOM Ethiopia reached 3,751 people in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jigjiga, Geddo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as 2 IOM managed IDP intervention sites in North Gondar, with GBV and related mental health and psychosocial support and risk mitigation. IOM also organised 25 counselling sessions on mental health and psychosocial support and GBV risk mitigation across IOM managed sites, while 34 cases of mental health and GBV were provided with counselling. IOM also provided non-food items such as blankets, bedsheets, dignity kits to 1,309 unaccompanied minor children and adult migrant returnees at different PoEs and places providing temporary accommodation. Another 122 accompanied and unaccompanied minor children as well as adult migrant returnees were provided with food and medical assistance at different PoEs and temporary accommodation centres across the country. Some 1,139 accompanied and unaccompanied minor children and adult migrant returnees received onward transportation allowance assistance to travel to quarantine facilities or places of origin. Six accompanied and unaccompanied child migrants were assisted with family tracing and reunification.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

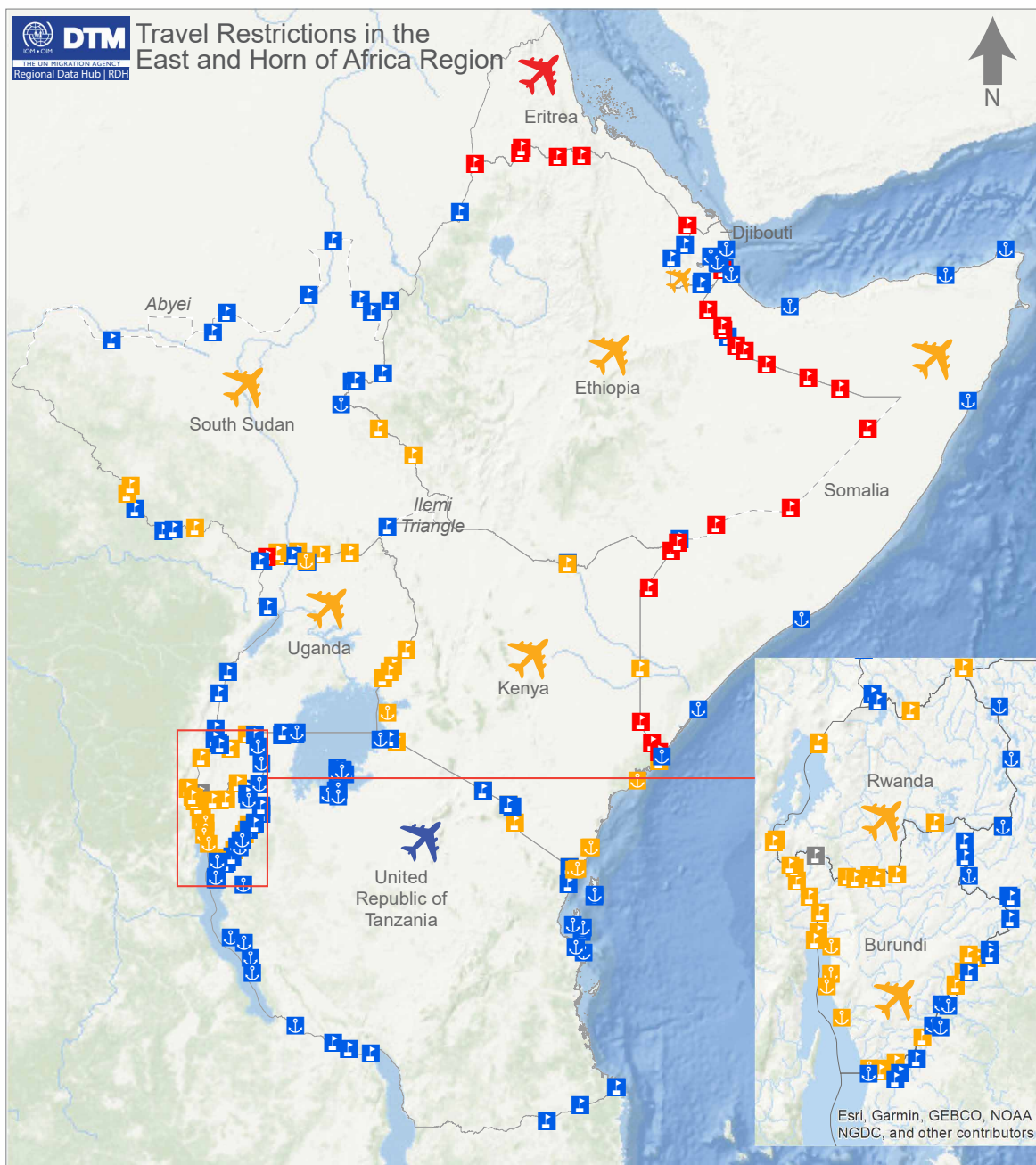
IOM Ethiopia reached 20,124 IDPs and host communities with Site Management Support (SMS) related activities in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jigjiga, Geddo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as 2 IOM IDPs intervention sites in North Gondar over the reporting period. In Tanzania, IOM is supporting the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees by providing predeparture medical checks.

Displacement Tracking Matrix

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Burundi is continuing with Flow Data collection for COVID-19 surveillance at the borders with the United Republic of Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo. DTM enumerators in South Sudan carried out 5,443 interviews representing 16,725 individual movements at flow monitoring points. DTM is operating 4 displacement site FMPs at the gates of PoC sites in Wau, Bentiu and Malakal as well as Masna Collective Centre. Enumerators conducted 1,336 interviews representing 4,072 individual movements at the displacement sites. The data from IOM enumerator interviews provides an insight into mobility trends, migration drivers and traveller profiles to inform COVID-19 programming by humanitarian, development partners and the government.

IOM also organised 25 counselling sessions on mental health and psychosocial support and GBV risk mitigation across IOM managed sites, while 34 cases of mental health and GBV were provided with counselling.

POINTS OF ENTRY & MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS



Status of international flights*

- Not Restrictive
- Partially Restrictive
- Totally Restrictive
- Disputed Areas
- Countries East and Horn of Africa

Status of other border points

- Sea Border Point
- Land Border Point
- Closed for entry and exit
- Partial closure
- Open for entry and exit
- Unknown

Source:

International Air Transport Association (IATA)
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

Date: 18 February 2021

Disclaimer: These maps are for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

*Details of the travel restriction can be found on IATA website: <https://www.iata.org/>