

EAST & HORN OF AFRICA COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT - #42



10 February 2021 Update

EHoA SITUATION OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact people across East & Horn of Africa. Migrants, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are among some of the world's most vulnerable groups likely to be impacted 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. Migrant groups are also less likely to have access to medical care, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and the COVID-19 vaccines being developed and distributed.

Thousands of migrants remain stranded across East and Horn of Africa due to the impact of nearly one year of movement and mobility restrictions, 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 suffered involuntarily return to their countries of origin, some have experienced detention and faced abuse in facilities. Others are facing stigma and xenophobia, resulting from being blamed for the spread of the disease.

As of 7 February 2021, there were 7,710 new cases of COVID-19 in the region, including Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia and South Sudan, according to the World Health Organization.

IOM is supporting governments throughout the region to respond to COVID-19 in the areas of risk communication, disease surveillance, infection prevention and control, case management, 'Points of Entry' (PoEs), 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 December 2020)*



2,500

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



6.4M

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 Burundi in partnership with the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) visited two Points of Entry (PoEs) and a health center in Makamba and Rutana provinces to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 prevention programs and to assess the current needs and meet with religious leaders. The team recommended the strengthening of COVID-19 prevention efforts targeting travelers and those at high risk of transmissions such as PoEs with high number of migrants. IOM Eritrea is working in coordination with the UN Country Team, as well as UN Technical Working Groups on COVID-19 response, in support of the state Government of Eritrea and its High-Level Task Force on COVID-19 via the Ministry of Health. UN agencies including IOM through the Resident Coordinator are working with the Ministry of Health to determine the level and nature of support needed.

IOM Ethiopia is the designated lead agency supporting the Government of Ethiopia in the management of migrant returnees. IOM continues to support 7 temporary places of shelter in Addis Ababa and at Points of Entry (PoEs), where returnees receive direct assistance and transportation home to their communities of origin. IOM Kenya in partnership with the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Health and partners including UNICEF launched the European Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development funded COVID-19 project across the four counties of Garissa (Dadaab), Mandera, Wajir (Diff), and Marsabit (Moyale). The project aims to respond to health and social economic impact of COVID-19 in semi-arid regions. 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 Uganda is actively participating in COVID-19 related meetings including the incident management team meetings, surveillance, PoE Working Group and the UN Emergency coordination meetings and the COVID-19 national steering task force.

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Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

IOM Djibouti conducted sensitization activities on the risks and prevention measures against COVID-19 for 290 migrants in transit at the Migrant Response Centre (MRC) in Obock region. IOM Eritrea is supporting the government's COVID-19 prevention strategy by incorporating a comprehensive media campaign through TV, radio and mobile phones to sensitize the population to facts about the pandemic, as well as what individuals and communities to practice sanitation and social distancing. Technical support has also been provided for the review the RCCE plan of action. In this regard, TV and radio spots on social distancing and public gathering have been developed. IOM Somalia reached 6,697 people with COVID-19 information at 9 IOM supported health facilities across the country over the past two weeks. IOM Ethiopia has reached 62,938 individuals including internally displaced persons (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, Jigjiga, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as at 2 IOM IDP intervention sites in North Gondar, during the reporting period. IOM Rwanda is planning to partner with the Prison Fellowship Rwanda, a local nongovernmental organization, to conduct COVID-19 awareness. IOM South Sudan continues to mainstream COVID-19 response and prevention into humanitarian, recovery, resilience, and development programming. IOM 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, 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 175,868 individuals. IOM has now reached over 7 million people with COVID-19 messages since the outbreak of the pandemic. IOM continues with the dissemination of COVID-19 related radio messages, combined with protection, gender equality and GBV mainstreaming with City FM radio, with its 24th radio broadcast focusing on access to clean water and the management and maintenance of motorized boreholes in Shirkat and Munuki. IOM has also conducted a survey on the COVID-19 prevention measures in the capital Juba. Of the more than 14,600 individuals observed at handwashing facilities, 33 percent washed their hands. The survey was conducted in 29 out of the 36 public places where IOM is conducting COVID-19 prevention related activities. A similar exercise was conducted in Nimule. Of the more than 2,900 people surveyed at two public places, 66 percent washed their hands while 26 percent had their facemasks on. As part of COVID-19 response plan, and in coordination with Action Against Hunger and Ministry of Health, IOM South Sudan distributed 1,096 water sanitation and hygiene kits to 1,096 Juba-based targeted households. Over 1,300 households have been reached with these items. IOM also reached 5,541 people in Wau, Bentiu and Malakal with COVID-19 related mental health and psychosocial support messages. IOM Uganda donated two electronic messaging boards to the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, to help carry multimedia messages about COVID-19 at Uganda's Entebbe International Airport. IOM has continued to distribute information and communication materials with COVID-19 related messages to the PoEs including at the fishing sites of Kasensero and Mutukula PoEs, on the border with Tanzania.

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National Laboratory Systems

IOM Ethiopia continued providing COVID-19 testing for UN staff and their dependents at the Migration Health Assessment Centre (MHAC) lab. IOM Rwanda is supporting the government with laboratory and diagnostic services by providing a laboratory technician to assist in Kigali while IOM medical staff are supporting the Rwanda Biomedical Centre with contact tracing in Kigali.

Disease Surveillance

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 in Makamba and Muyinga Provinces bordering the United Republic of Tanzania. This will enhance rapid alert systems and strengthen coordination between the national levels with the remote areas. Since the beginning of the pandemic, IOM Ethiopia has received 51,169 migrant returnees, assisting with disease surveillance in the process. Over the last two weeks 2,196 new arrival migrant returnees were registered at PoEs. IOM Uganda has handed over more equipment and supplies to support the COVID-19 response at Entebbe Airport. The project has previously handed over various equipment and supplies to Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, including a walk-through disinfectant booth.

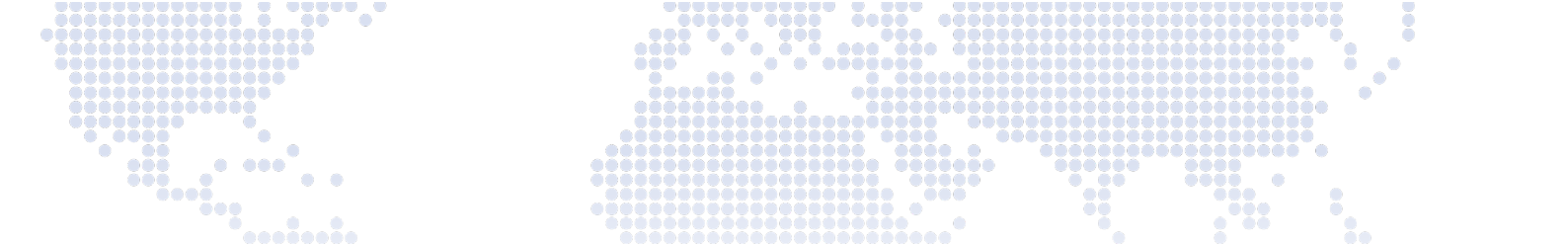
Points of Entry

IOM Ethiopia has screened 7,705 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 South Sudan conducted arrival and departure screening for COVID-19 at Nimule Ground Crossing reaching 5,246 travellers. IOM continues to provide infection prevention and control (IPC)/WASH support to Nimule Ground Crossing 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. IOM Eritrea, in partnership and coordination with the UN Country Team is advocating for the establishment of quarantine facilities at airports and land transport hubs as part of preparations for the end of the current COVID-19 induced lockdown.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

IOM Ethiopia continued with the provision of facemasks and sanitizers to IOM staff and migrant returnees at different PoEs and temporary accommodation facilities across the country. Two health facilities have been provided with clean supply of water while schools in the area have benefited from the installation of seven handwashing facilities. IOM Rwanda installed 66 handwashing stations in three districts. In South Sudan, IOM maintained 652 handwashing devices. During the reporting period, 45,954 individuals were reported to have used the handwashing facilities, bringing the total number of people benefitting to 1,131,174. Some 90,168 people benefited from 88 handwashing stations built by IOM in the capital Juba. More than 1,860,000 people have now benefited from these stations since they were built.

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The upgrading of three boreholes in Juba is ongoing while the handover of two completed boreholes to the community is planned for the coming week. Over the last two weeks, 4,553 people washed their hands at three handwashing stations in Nimule. More than 82,000 people have benefited from these three stations since they were built. IOM handed over seven handwashing stations to three market committees in Wau. They were also provided with soap.

Case Management and Continuity of Essential Services

IOM Ethiopia provided medical consultations to 7,705 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.

Logistics, Procurement and Supply Management

IOM South Sudan assisted one partner with the integration of COVID-19 preparedness activities in their flood response. IOM also provided soap to 3,355 households in Masna and Naivasha IDP sites in Wau. IOM received 2,000 boxes of multi-purpose soap and handpump spare parts. The prepositioning of vital commodities to key logistics hubs is ongoing. Some 50,000 pieces of reusable facemasks were prepositioned to the logistics hub in Bor.

Protection

IOM Ethiopia reached 2,181 people in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jigjiga, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as 2 IOM managed IDP intervention sites in North Gondar, with gender-based violence and related mental health and psychosocial support and risk mitigation. They were also provided with referral to specialized mental health services in relation to COVID-19. The beneficiaries also received psychosocial support and follow up counselling through home-to-home visits, self-help group discussion, mass community mobilization, and public campaigns. IOM also conducted 4 focus group discussions and ten individual counselling sessions throughout its intervention sites. IOM also provided non-food items such as blankets, bedsheets, dignity kits to 1,811 unaccompanied minor children and adult migrant returnees at different PoEs and places providing temporary accommodation. Another 189 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 1,016 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 conducted 5 coordination meetings at IDP sites and districts in North Gondar and West Guji zones. IOM also reached 23,234 IDPs and host communities with Site Management Support (SMS) related activities in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Jigjiga, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones as well as 2 IOM IDPs intervention sites in North Gondar over the reporting period.

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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. IOM Djibouti's DTM enumerators also continue to raise awareness on risks and prevention measures against COVID-19 for individuals tracked at flow monitoring points in the country's five regions. DTM continues to raise awareness on COVID-19 among migrants at seven flow monitoring points in Somalia. More than 4,700 people were reached during the reporting period and COVID-19 information shared with 1,936 who reported being unaware of the pandemic. DTM enumerators in South Sudan carried out 2,716 interviews representing 8,078 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 910 interviews representing 3,240 individual movements at the displacement sites. The data from 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 Djibouti provided life-saving assistance (including water, food and medical first aid) to 511 returning migrants from Yemen.



EU-IGAD COVID-19 RESPONSE provided test kits, PPEs, ambulances & mobile lab for #COVID-19 response in Turkana, Marsabit, Garissa, Mandera & Wajir counties. IOM Kenya, UNOPS, UNICEF & TradeMark East Africa are implementing partners. Photo: © IOM Kenya

POINTS OF ENTRY & MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS

