

## Regional Mixed Migration in the Horn of Africa and Yemen in 2011: Annual trend summary and analysis

In 2011 (January to December inclusive) based on data recorded, the following trends relevant to mixed migration in the region were identified:

### **Increased movement to Yemen**

103,154 new arrivals were recorded disembarking from vessels crossing both the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea in a total of 1,318 boat trips. This means that on average 25 crossings were made every week carrying, on average, 78 people per boat not including crew/smugglers. In the last 6 years of recorded data the largest number made the crossing in 2011, representing a 93% increase in the number that made the crossing in 2010 and 33% higher than the 2009 total.

Year	Total Arrivals
2006	25898
2007	29360
2008	50091
2009	77802
2010	53382
2011	103154

### **Increased number of Ethiopians crossing to Yemen**

In terms of absolute numbers, and as a proportion of the whole, the number of Ethiopians (non-Somalis) making the crossing to Yemen significantly increased in 2011. Of the 103,154 total, 80.6% (83,142 people) were Ethiopian and less than 20% were of Somali origin (overwhelmingly from South Central Somalia). This continues a trend that started in 2009 where more Ethiopians made the crossing than Somalis. The last year that Somalis outnumbered the Ethiopians was 2008 when 23,098 Somalis made the crossing as opposed to 10,361 Ethiopians.

### **Increased number travelling across the Red Sea instead of the Gulf of Aden**

There is a clear trend illustrating that those headed for Yemen increasingly use Djibouti as the main departure point. In 2011 an average of 70.25% of all those smuggled over the water crossed the Red Sea. Some months were higher than others : July was the peak with 95% of those making the crossing using Djibuti to cross the Red Sea with only 5% choosing to cross the Gulf of Aden. In January and February (2011) just 59% of the total crossed by way of the Red Sea.

### **Changing location of arrival points in Yemen**

Not surprisingly, with more people leaving from Djibouti and crossing the Mab El Mandeb strait, the numbers of those arriving in Taiz and Lahj governorates in Yemen have risen dramatically. Fewer people arrive along the southern coast although of the three main sites along the southern coast Hadramawt



governorate continues to be the most commonly used – being the part of the coats that most directly faces the migrant departure point of Bosaso in Puntland.

### **Changing vulnerabilities for Yemen-bound migrants1: Incident at sea**

Despite the continued impression that many of those making the Yemen crossing fall foul of violent smugglers and/or drown the statistics of incidents at sea have been changing significantly. In earlier years (especially 2007/8) reports suggested that the number of those who drowned at sea were high and abuse and even murder of migrants by smugglers was not uncommon. In 2011 of the 103,154 people that made the crossing 131 died or were reported missing by those migrants interviewed. Only 81 bodies were found and buried, the rest died but their bodies remained missing. This means those crossing during the year faced (on average) a 0.13% chance of such an event befalling them. 122 of these incidents took place in the first five months of 2011 (raising the chances of misadventure in that period to 0.32%) and just 9 cases of death or missing occurred in the last 7 months of the year. In the same period (June –Dec 2011) over 60,000 migrants made the crossing to Yemen meaning they faced a 0.015% chance of a terminal incident during the voyage. In the last three months of the year there were no incidents at all. These figures clearly reveal a falling trend. When compared with other risks migrants and asylum seekers face, the crossing itself appears to be becoming less risky.

### **Changing vulnerabilities for Yemen-bound migrant 2: Kidnaping and extortion**

There are a rising number of reported cases of kidnaping, torture and sexual attack in Yemen in close proximity to the points of arrival for migrants i.e. close to the shores and particularly in the Bar El Mandeb stretch in the governorate of Lahj and Tai'iz. These crimes are normally perpetrated by smuggler groups and directly associated with extorting money from migrants through international money transfers from the migrants' relatives elsewhere. In terms of reported cases this trend is rising as violence on the sea crossing appears to diminish. When the cases began to be reported in March 2011 it was thought that it was linked to the political turmoil in Yemen, but similar cases of kidnaping and extortion are being reported in the Sinai desert and eastern Sudan involving migrants (from the Horn) appear to indicate the rise of a new phenomenon.

### **Fleeing Somalis: To Ethiopia and Kenya**

The details of the explosive rise in IDPs, migrants and asylum seekers into Ethiopia and Kenya in 2011 are well covered by specialist agencies and mandated UN organizations and was the focus of sustained media interest throughout the year. Only an overview of broad trends are mentioned here:

Population movement greatly increased with the drought and insecurity being the drivers identified by those on the move. The annual number of Somalis arriving in Ethiopia and Kenya have been rising since 2008 but the rise in 2011 was extraordinary.



The total number of Somali refugees at the start of 2011 was just over 353,000. By the end of the year the total was approximately 520,000 representing a single year increase of 167,000 and an increase of 47%. The previous highest annual influx was during 2010 when 74,000 refugees arrived.

The proportional rise in the number of registered refugees in 2011 was even higher. At the start of 2011 there were just over 81,000 Somali refugees in camps inside Ethiopia, but by the end of the year the number had risen to 180,000. This represents a jump of 99,000 refugees in a 12 month period and a 122% rise against the start-of-year total. The previous highest annual influx was during 2010 when 27,000 Somali refugees arrived.

In Uganda, Djibouti and Tanzania the number of Somali refugees registered increased marginally during 2012.

The level of internal displacement in Somalia remained high throughout 2011. At the start of the year approximately 1.5 million people were reckoned to be displaced. By the start of 2012 UNHCR's number remained around 1,464,000 IDPs in all areas of Somalia. The relative stability of the figures should disguise the fact that the shifting movement of many IDPs throughout the year, sometimes fleeing and returning only to flee again etc.

The above summary overview of movements and trends offers a snap shot of 2011 main indicators. The details of particular movements and the issues and conditions around them can be found in other RMMS literature and resources on this website as well as on related websites of agencies active in the mixed migration sector (see links).

RMMS analysis is developed from data from different sources:

1. The central source of data for all arrivals and movement in Yemen is the Yemen Mixed Migration Task Force (predominantly developed from Danish Refugee Council and UNHCR systems in Yemen)
2. Data on internal displacement in the Horn of Africa as well as refugee data in the region is sourced from UNHCR.
3. Data used from outside these sources will always be attributed (e.g. from IOM or IDMC etc.)