

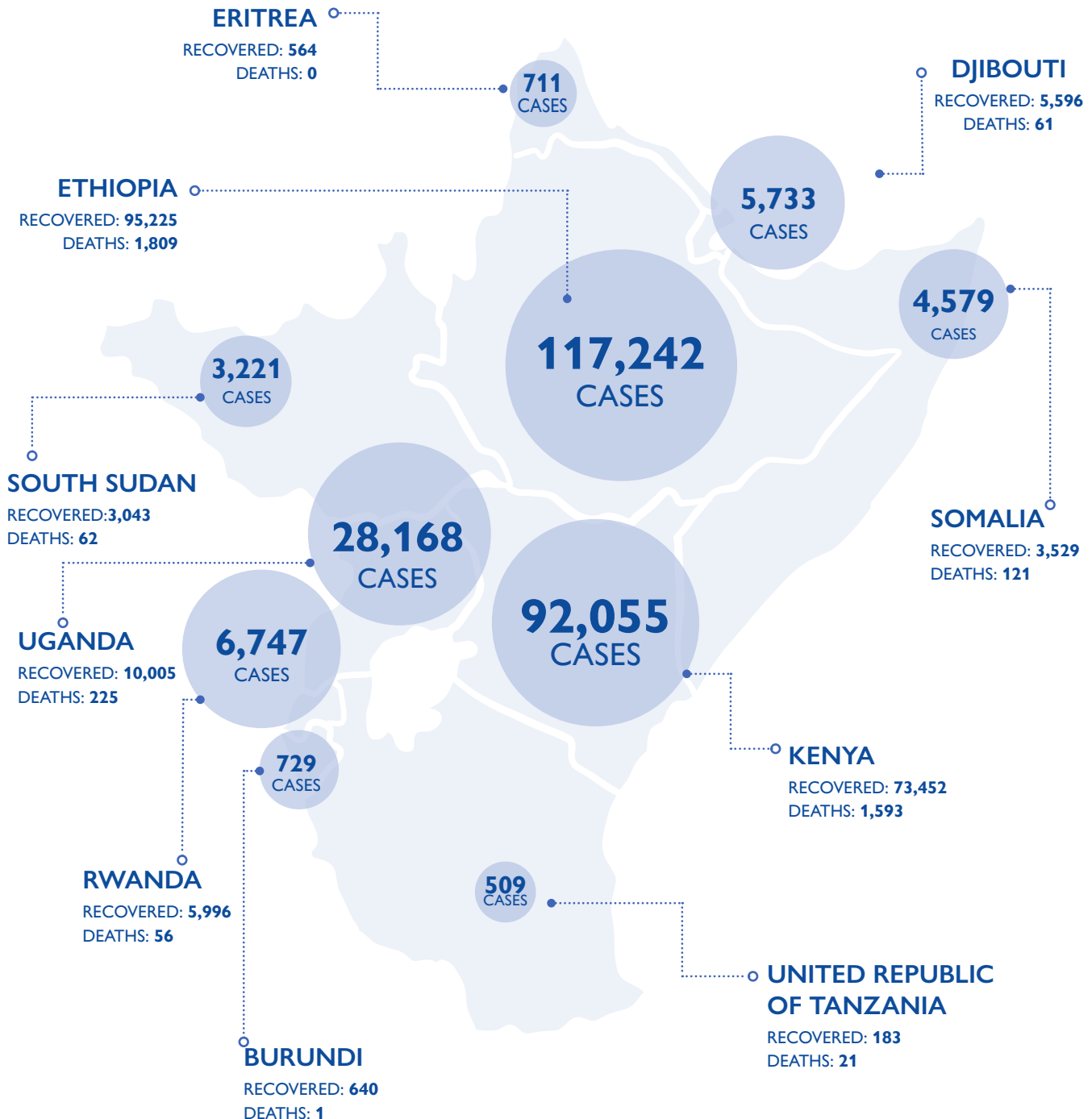
EAST & HORN OF AFRICA COVID-19 SITUATION REPORT - #36

16 DECEMBER 2020 Update

259,694
CONFIRMED CASES

3,949
CONFIRMED DEATHS

198,233
TOTAL RECOVERED



DISCLAIMER: The maps in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Representations and the use of boundaries and geographical names on these maps may include errors and do not imply judgment of the legal status of a territory, nor official recognition or acceptance of these boundaries by IOM.



181,823

Migrant movements observed (DTM, October 2020) (55% reduction compared to October 2019)



1,038

Migrant arrivals in Yemen from the Horn (DTM, October 2020) (92% reduction compared to October 2019)



6.3M

IDPs (October 2020 – DTM, OCHA)



EHoA SITUATION OVERVIEW

The number of people infected with COVID-19 continues to increase across East & Horn of Africa. Migrants, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are among some of the world's most vulnerable to have been impacted by the disease, compared to non-migrants. Migrants are more likely to be exposed to the conditions and circumstances in which COVID-19 spreads, which includes poorer and makeshift conditions, overcrowded settings and a lack of access to hygiene. Migrants are also less likely to have access Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and medical care and may suffer an over-representation of pre-existing health issues due to a historical lack of access to healthcare.

Thousands of migrants are currently stranded across the East and Horn of Africa due to COVID-19 related border closures and movement restrictions. Many are in need of food, water, medical assistance and transport. Migrants are also being involuntarily sent back to their countries of origin by some governments. Migrants are experiencing detention and abuse in some countries, and facing stigma and xenophobia, resulting from being blamed for the spread of the disease.

As of December 15, the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the region stands at 259,694. 1,445 new cases have been reported in the last day with most new cases reported in Ethiopia (473 daily increase 0.4%), followed by Uganda (402 daily increase 1.4%), Kenya (163 daily increase 0.2%) and Rwanda (88 daily increase 1.3%). Ethiopia remains the country with the highest number of confirmed cases in the region at 117,242 (45.2% of total case), followed by Kenya 92,055 (35.5%), followed by Uganda 28,168 (10.9%).

IOM is working with governments across the region to respond to the impact of COVID-19 in the areas of protection, risk communication, disease surveillance, infection prevention and control, case management, 'Points of Entry' (PoEs), Camp Coordination and Management, procurement and logistics, among others. IOM is advocating for all migrants, including IDPs, to be included in all government responses to combat COVID-19 and access to the development of vaccines for the disease.

A regional financial appeal to assist migrant groups in the East and Horn of Africa was launched in April for \$71.6M. So far, 72% of the required funds have been raised.

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 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>

The number of COVID-19 cases in East and Horn of Africa continues to increase with 259,694 people now infected.

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IOM COUNTRY RESPONSE

Partnerships and Coordination

IOM Ethiopia is assisting migrants across 14 national COVID-19 quarantine facilities in Ethiopia, in partnership with the Government. IOM has established temporary accommodation for migrant returnees in place of schools which were being used as migrant quarantine facilities. IOM South Sudan is working in partnership with the authorities as a member of the Strategic Advisory Group, National Task Force, COVID-19 National Steering Committee, and the Needs Analysis Working Group (NAWG), a key platform providing decision-makers and responders with data and analysis on the impact and needs around COVID-19. IOM is also working with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and collaborating with the International Rescue Committee, Medair, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Networks for Health, on conducting health, water and sanitation, and hygiene activities to prevent the spread of the disease.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)


IOM Ethiopia has reached nearly 60,000 people with COVID-19 awareness messages in Dire Dawa, Jijiga, Togo wuchale, Dewolle, East and West Hararghe, West Guji, Gedeo, Borena, East and West Wollega Zones during the reporting period. IOM Rwanda and one of its partners have reached an estimated one million people in Musanze, Karongi and Rubavu Districts with COVID-19 prevention messages through megaphone public broadcasts, radio and posters. IOM Somalia reached nearly 8,000 people with COVID-19 awareness and prevention messages at nine of its clinics in Afgooye, Hudur, Dhobley, Bardhere, Kismayo, Baidoa, Doolow, Hargeisa and Sanaag. IOM South Sudan reached over 4,000 people in Malakal, Bentiu and Wau with messages on mental health and psychosocial support in relation to COVID-19 as part of efforts to create behavior change and tackle misinformation about the disease. IOM Tanzania and the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children conducted a workshop on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) focusing on COVID-19 and other public health issues. The workshop brought together 46 border and port health officials from strategic Points of Entry (PoEs) in Mbeya, Songwe, Mwanza, Mtwara, Rukwa, Lindi and Dar es salaam regions. IOM has also conducted a three-day workshop on producing COVID-19 related Information, Education and Communication materials (IEC) for distribution to POEs, health facilities and communities along mobility corridors.

National Laboratory Systems

IOM Ethiopia has conducted 179 COVID-19 tests for UN staff at the Migrant Health Assessment Centre in Addis Ababa during the last week. IOM is also supporting 5 quarantine facilities in Jijiga, Moyale, and Addis Ababa with COVID-19 testing. IOM Kenya has established COVID-19 testing laboratories for thousands of truck drivers at main border crossings, facilitating the free flow of trade and the movement of essential goods which had been impacted by COVID-19 movement restriction.

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Over 27,500 truck drivers have been tested to date. IOM is also testing humanitarian personnel including UN staff as part of efforts to support the government's surveillance activities, in Uganda, Burundi, Kenya and Rwanda.

Disease Surveillance

IOM Ethiopia has assisted over 41,700 migrants who have been returned to the country since the start of the pandemic as part of disease surveillance efforts to stop the spread of the disease. IOM has also registered and is supporting nearly 360 new returnee migrants who have arrived during the reporting period. IOM Rwanda is continuing with the construction of handwashing stations in Mahama refugee camp to benefit some 25,000 school children from the camp and the host community.

Points of Entry

IOM Ethiopia has screened over 4,500 returnees and local community members for COVID-19 at IOM mobile health team sites and government supported health posts in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Gedeo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones. IOM is also supporting some 14 temporary shelter facilities for migrants impacted by COVID-19 in Addis Ababa and other areas. IOM Somalia is supporting the Ministry of Health with COVID-19 screening at 6 PoEs in Baidoa, Dhobley, Hudur, Doolow and Kismayo. More than 11,600 travellers were screened during the week. Over 15,200 travellers have been screened for COVID-19 at Juba International Airport and other areas by IOM South Sudan. IOM is also providing clean water, rehabilitation and maintenance of sanitation facilities, construction and installation of handwashing facilities, and supply of Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) materials such as face masks, soap, and hand sanitizers, at the PoE at the Juba International Airport and other areas. IOM also carried out an assessment mission to the PoE situated in Maban refugee camp in partnership with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and WHO, the World Health Organization and Humanitarian Development Consortium. The mission included field visits to four screening sites, including those in Shatta, Khortumbak POEs and Kaya and Ofrah screening sites. The team also visited Bunj Hospital's isolation facility.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

IOM Ethiopia provided facemasks to 48 people including quarantine facility staff, IDP led committees and community members in different locations. IOM also provided training on COVID-19 surveillance, IPC as well as integration of tuberculosis (TB) prevention in COVID-19 response activities to 177 community health workers in West Wollega and Gedeo zones. Nearly 11,100 people in Afmadhow district, Kismayo, Bardere, Belethawa, Luuq, Baidoa and Bossaso were reached with hygiene promotion activities by IOM Somalia. IOM also provided 14 hygiene kits to 84 people in Bossaso while 89 community hygiene promoters and workers have been trained and deployed to Doolow, Bardere, Belethawa, Luuq, Baidoa and Bossaso. IOM has established 14 handwashing stations in Bossaso. IOM Kenya conducted IPC training for border officials in Namanga, Lunga Lunga, Isebania, Malaba and Busia and provided them as well as those from the National Registration Bureau with PPEs.

IOM has also registered and is supporting nearly 360 new returnee migrants who have arrived during the reporting period.

Over 15,200 travellers have been screened for COVID-19 at Juba International Airport and other areas by IOM South Sudan.



Case Management and Continuity of Essential Services

IOM Ethiopia has provided over 4,300 migrant returnees and members of the host community with COVID-19 related medical checks and assistance in Dire Dawa, East Hararghe, Gedo, Borena, West Guji and East Wollega Zones during the reporting period. IOM Somalia provided training on basic psychosocial support skills for COVID-19 responders including supportive communication skills, psychological first aid (PFA), addressing social stigma and self-care to 29 health workers from Forlanini (Lazarati) and De Martino Hospitals in Mogadishu during the week.

Logistics, Procurement and Supply Management

IOM South Sudan has supplied water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) items including soap, buckets and water treatment tablets to one partner organizations for COVID-19 IPC in Munuki and Northern Bari area in Juba county during the week. They were also provided with menstrual hygiene management kits. The supply will benefit an estimated 4,000 households. IOM also provided handpump spare parts for borehole rehabilitation to allow communities access to clean water as part of COVID-19 IPC. IOM provided two partners with WASH items to be distributed along with floods and displacement response in Bor South, Mayom and Wau. These items will benefit over 3,300 households. IOM is coordinating with partners to start the distribution of the recently procured facemasks.

Protection

Over 3,300 people in Dire Dawa, West Guji, Gedo, Borena, East Hararghe, East and West Wollega were provided with gender-based violence (GBV), mental health and psychosocial support as well as child protection awareness in relation to COVID-19 by IOM Ethiopia. IOM also provided empowerment and self-defence training to 48 women from the government, local stakeholders and GBV actors. Some 59 accompanied and unaccompanied migrant children as well as adults in Semera, Jijiga and Metema were provided with food and onward transportation assistance home. Another 92 were provided with items such as blankets, bedsheets and dignity kits at various PoEs and quarantine facilities during the week.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

IOM Ethiopia is continuing camp coordination with the Disaster Risk Management Office on COVID-19 preparedness at IDP sites in various locations. IOM Tanzania is continuing with voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in adherence to COVID-19 prevention measures.

Displacement Tracking Matrix

IOM Somalia shared COVID-19 information with over 4,500 people entering and exiting Somalia at 7 Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) during the week. More than 1,700 of them reported not being aware of COVID-19. IOM South Sudan carried out 2,574 interviews representing 7,473 individual movements across 24 FMPs. Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) surveyed people on the move at key transit points within South Sudan and at its borders.

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DTM is operating 4 displacement site FMPs at the gates of Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites in Wau, Bentiu and Malakal as well as Masna Collective Centre. Enumerators conducted 155 interviews representing 365 individual movements. The data from these interviews provides an insight into mobility trends, migration drivers and traveler profiles to inform COVID-19 programming by humanitarian, development partners and the government. DTM is continuing with data collection for the multi-sectoral household survey in urban areas of Bentiu town, including in the Protection of Civilian Site (PoC) and in Malakal town and PoC. The survey aims to provide information on people's vulnerabilities and the impact of COVID-19 on access to different services.

Information Sharing & Communication

IOM, jointly with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) published an Op-Ed in the East African newspaper on the impact of COVID-19 and migrants and mobility in the region. The editorial highlighted the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the need to protect the rights of migrants in order safeguard the enormous social and economic gains that labour migrants and mobility in the region has brought to East & Horn of Africa. Thousands of migrant workers from the region, have lost work and businesses due to the pandemic, severely impacting incomes and remittances. The World Bank estimates a 23.1 per cent decline in remittances to sub-Saharan Africa in 2020 due to COVID-19 affecting households of migrants, and the economies in their countries. The report also highlighted the long term risk of losing momentum for free movement regimes in the region and on the continent due to COVID-19 related restrictions on movement.

The Op-Ed: Migration: A force for inclusive, social and economic development in eastern Africa.

Enumerators conducted 155 interviews representing 365 individual movements.



IOM Rwanda with partners conclude a 2-week campaign to educate shoppers travellers & communities to stem the spread of COVID-19. Photo: © IOM

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

Young people stranded in Somalia due to COVID-19, helped by IOM




Hakim, in the Ethiopian Community Centre Bossaso. Photo: Zachariah Mohammed © IOM/2020

The days are long and full of worry for Hakim, a 17-year-old Ethiopian migrant who has been stranded in Bosasso, Puntland, for three months, due to COVID-19 border closures and movement restrictions.

Originally from Harar, Ethiopia, Hakim planned to travel to Saudi Arabia to look for a job. “My dream was to become a doctor,” he says. He was hoping to gain an income to put himself through school.

But COVID-19 meant he could not travel from Bossaso to Yemen to cross into Saudi Arabia because all borders were closed and it was impossible for migrant workers to get through.



“I became afraid, my biggest fear has been getting COVID-19 pandemic and dying in a place that is not my home.”

Hakim is currently being helped IOM with food, shelter and other basic necessities at ‘Ethiopian Community Committee Safe House’ in Bosasso, which is supported by the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa. He was among hundreds of young migrants stuck in the same situation.

IOM estimates that there are large groups of Ethiopian migrants stranded in Bosasso, outside of the safe house.

“I have done nothing all of these days. At least the Community Centre is giving us food and shelter as well as health care.”

Hakim’s mind is now bent toward one single thought: returning home. “All I want is to go back Ethiopia, my future is there now, even if the borders are open or not. I have already asked IOM to help me.”

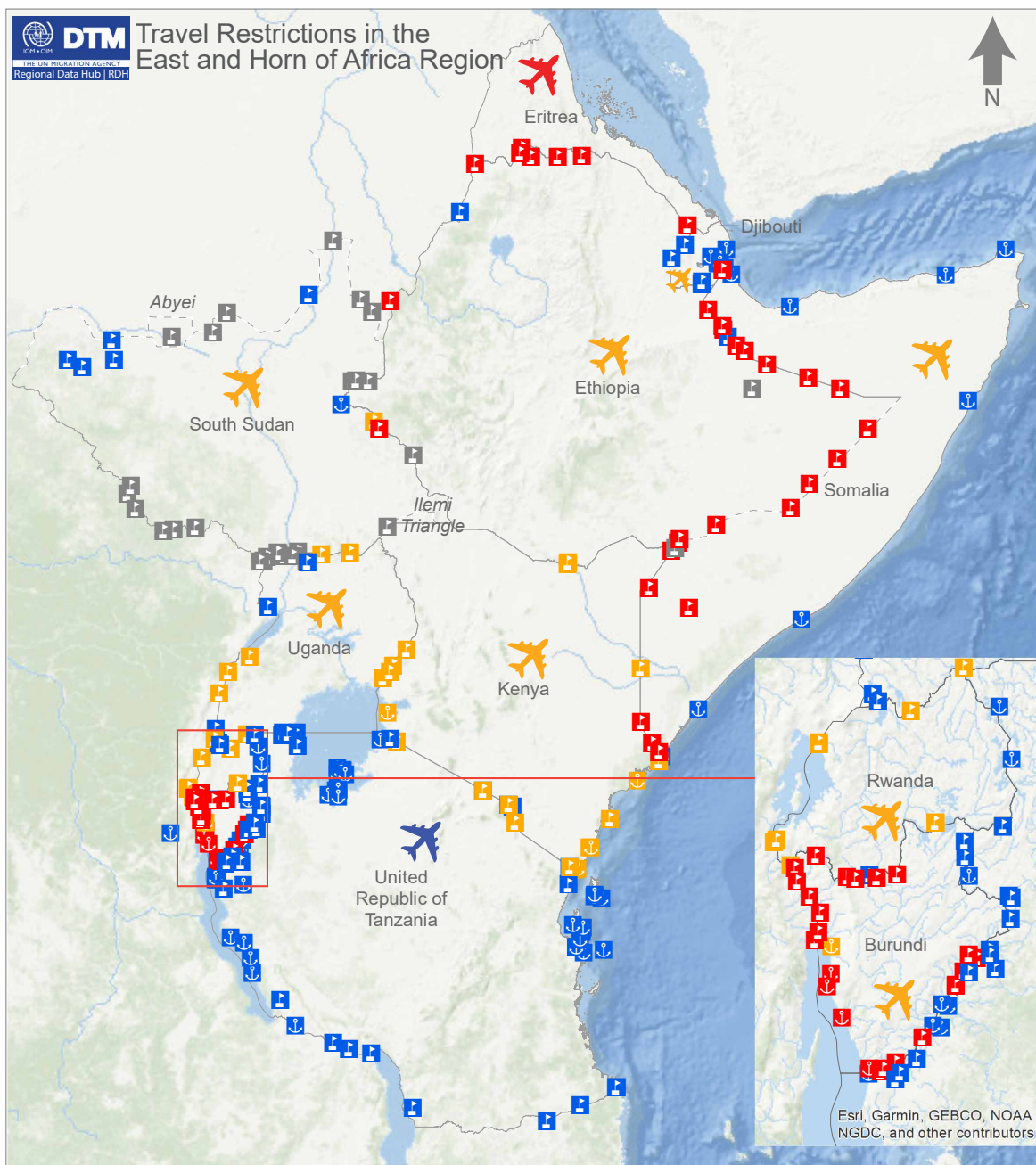
IOM runs an Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Programme to help migrants like Hakim to return to their countries of origin in a safe and dignified way.

The programme is offered to migrants willing to return home. It facilitates their travels and ensures that they receive support to restart their lives. But AVRR support is currently on hold because of COVID-19 movement restrictions.

If and when Hakim is able to return IOM plans to offer migrants like his reintegration assistance which includes medical assistance, counselling, and can include small grants to set up a small business, vocational training or job placement and education.

“*I became afraid, my biggest fear has been getting COVID-19 pandemic and dying in a place that is not my home.*”

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: 10 December 2020

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/>