

Anti-migrant sentiment and human rights abuse

RMMS expects that 2013 will be a year where anti-migrant sentiment in the Horn of Africa and Yemen will not reduce but increase. In terms of abuses, including sexual violence, against migrants by criminals, state officials and communities, RMMS sees no indication that such treatment will reduce or end in 2013. In fact, the rising 'commoditization' of migrants (through kidnap and torture) and the increased profitability of human smuggling by sheer force of numbers suggest abuse will rise. Certain state officials gain significant profit from colluding with smugglers and direct encounters with migrants.

Deportations and detention

As migrants are increasingly treated as criminals and sometimes suspected terrorists, levels of detention and deportation (including possible refoulement of asylum seekers and refugees) is expected to continue as anti-migrant sentiment translates into policy and law (*de jure* and *de facto*).

Rising smuggling, trafficking and impunity

With increased movement for all the reasons above, the RMMS predicts a rise in the use of smugglers by migrants to achieve their desired movement, as well as (lower) levels of trafficking in a culture of impunity from prosecution and collusion from some state officials.

In summary, mixed migration movement in 2013 is expected to be characterized and influenced by the above issues. They illustrate the mixed nature of these flows where people move for a variety of reasons that may be a combination of political oppression, insecurity, economic necessity, environmental compulsion and opportunism.



Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat

Core Functions:

- Information & data management
- Coordinates & support
- Analysis & Research
- Policy dialogue & networking

The RMMS is an independent body established in mid – 2011. It is co-located with and hosted by the Danish Refugee Council regional office in Nairobi. The co-founders and Steering Committee members for the RMMS include UNHCR, IOM, DRC, INTERSOS and the Yemen Mixed Migration Task Force (MMTF).

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MIXED MIGRATION 2013 TRENDS

Within, and out of, the Horn of Africa and Yemen.

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Mixed Migration
Secretariat 

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Trends to watch in 2013

Based on events and dynamic trends already evident or highly likely in 2013, RMMS offers a summary of trends that may significantly impact mixed migration in the region. A full summary of trends in 2012, with data, can be found on the RMMS website [www.regionalmms.org]. RMMS expects more migration of an increased mixed nature in 2013.

Trends to watch:

- Continued hardship, natural disasters, political drivers
- Increased return of refugees to Somalia
- Host country reassessment of Somali refugees
- Labour migration from the Horn to the Middle East
- Climate change impact
- Economic growth fuelling migration
- Alternative migration routes and destinations
- Anti-migrant sentiment and human rights abuse
- Deportations and detention
- Rising smuggling, trafficking and impunity

Continued hardship, natural disasters, political drivers

Despite some countries in the region enjoying rapid economic growth (particularly Ethiopia and Kenya) distribution limitations, poor governance, political tensions, environmental factors (including natural disasters and climate change) as well as endemic poverty in some regions, means that hundreds of thousands of poor unskilled workers will continue to seek a better life elsewhere. This could give rise to greater movement within countries (as IDPs and normally towards urban centres) or across borders to countries considered safe and offering better welfare options (livelihood and assistance opportunities). As such, the existing trend of many Ethiopians and Somalis to enter Kenya as a destination country or in transit to other African nations (Uganda and South Africa, in particular) is expected to

continue, while many others are expected to try to enter Saudi Arabia (through Yemen).

With regard to Eritrea, as long as the regime in power maintains its current policies and in particular its forced military conscription rules, we should expect a continued flow of irregular migrants and asylum seekers from Eritrea into Northern Ethiopia and Sudan (seeking refuge and transit).

Increased return of refugees to Somalia

Due to increased Somali stability and reduced conflict, intolerable camp conditions, new directives and abuse against migrants and urban refugees in Kenya we expect to see an increased number of refugees returning. This may include members of Somali Diaspora as well as migrants who have not registered as refugees or asylum seekers. Major agencies and government officials are already busy planning for the expected return process.

Host country reassessment of Somali refugees

This expected trend of returning refugees may be augmented by push factors in neighboring countries and beyond as Somalia is proceeded as increasingly safe and free of conflict and persecution. As a result, it is likely that 2013 will see an increased return of some of the 1 million Somali refugees in the Horn of Africa and Yemen, and of the estimated 1-2 million Somali Diaspora, asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

Labour migration from the Horn to the Middle East

The young unemployed demographic in the Horn's population, unsustainability of the pastoralist way of life due to climate change, and the increasing withdrawal of some Asian countries who filled up the domestic work gap in the Middle East, signals a real chance that the Middle

East will increasingly look to Africa as a source for labour migrants. An increase in regular labour migration could also trigger the irregular movement of those seeking similar employment opportunities but incapable of accessing them through regular means. Similarly, smugglers and underground recruitment agencies may respond to the growing context of supply and demand of migrant labour.

Climate change impact

The impact of the changing climate and environment on rural communities cannot be overlooked as people move from harsh environments to seek livelihood opportunities elsewhere. Many such 'environmental migrants' may end up as urban IDPs or irregular migrants in neighbouring countries. This is expected to continue in 2013.

Economic growth fuelling migration

Economic growth in some countries in the region will continue to act as a pull and push factor for economically empowered and disempowered migrants alike – both groups seeking better opportunities, security and services outside their countries. Educated and skilled migrants will continue to leave the region.

Alternative migration routes and destinations

There is a strong possibility that migrants will pursue new routes to get to their preferred destination as they attempt for a better life out of poverty and unemployment. In 2012, some of the traditional migration routes such as the northern route through the Sinai into Israel were restricted by the Israeli governments new legislation promoting anti-infiltration, forced deportations and unlimited detention of migrants. There is also a possibility there will be increased migration to new destinations within Africa as African economies continue to stabilize and grow.