

'Immense' needs of migrants making perilous journey between Yemen and Horn of Africa prompts \$45 million UN migration agency appeal

As conflicts and natural disasters have sharply deteriorated living conditions in the Horn of Africa and Yemen, more and more people have been crossing the Gulf of Aden in both directions, leading the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) to appeal for \$45 million to provide critical aid to 81,000 people over three years.

The agency's Regional Migrant Response Plan (RMRP), launched on Monday, is meant to cover movements in both directions between Yemen and Horn of Africa nations, Djibouti, Somalia and Ethiopia.

"The humanitarian needs in the region remain immense, which leave migrants and host communities in a vulnerable situation," said Jeffrey Labovitz, IOM Regional Director for the region, including East Africa.

In 2018 alone, IOM anticipates 100,000 arrivals into Yemen – despite the ongoing conflict there – and approximately 200,000 returns from Yemen and Saudi Arabia to the Horn of Africa countries. Of these, the UN migration agency and its partners, including the UN refugee agency ([UNHCR](#)), will target the most at-risk.

They number around 81,000, including vulnerable women; unaccompanied children and the elderly; members of ethnic and religious minorities; and victims of violence, as well as persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and victims of human trafficking.

Irregular migration by those mostly looking for work from the Horn of Africa to Gulf countries has been steadily increasing over the past few years, with approximately 100,000 people entering Yemen in 2017 alone. Often, migrants and refugees cross the Gulf of Aden from Djibouti or Somalia, arriving in Yemen with the support of smugglers.

The countries on this route are beset with humanitarian challenges. In Yemen, where conflict has been raging since March 2015, more than 20 million people need humanitarian assistance, while Somalia and Ethiopia are also in the grip of complex emergencies because of conflict and recurrent natural disasters such as flooding and drought.

The three-year migration plan includes key humanitarian activities such as return registrations, psychosocial counselling for abuse and violence survivors, transportation assistance, and support for economic reintegration into their communities.

It also details longer-term actions, working hand in hand with governments to build national and local capacities on migration management; rescue-at-sea and coastguard interventions; and sustainable socioeconomic infrastructure to support communities of origin, transit and destination.

In a statement, IOM said the objectives of the plan are in line with the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) of the 2030 Agenda, ensuring that humanitarian and development efforts feed into each other.