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# Migration and conflict in the Horn of Africa: a review of recent literature

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# Introduction

This paper builds on an earlier detailed review completed by the Research and Evidence Facility (REF) of the EU Trust Fund for Africa (Horn of Africa Window) in 2017. It provides an overview of new literature related to migration in the Horn of Africa published since that earlier review was released, that is, between 2017 and 2019 (REF, 2017a). It is testament to the huge academic and policy interest in this area that there is more research than can be covered in the paper. It has been necessary to be selective and we have focused on high-quality studies that provide new and original insights.

The paper is arranged around three broad themes:

- **Theme 1: Stability, instability and migration;**
- **Theme 2: Movement and mobility structures and patterns;**
- **Theme 3: Changing policy and programmes.**

The conclusion of the paper highlights some ongoing gaps in research and newly emerging issues that need further exploration.

# Theme 1:

## Stability, instability and migration

Since the previous REF literature review was carried out, there have been a number of significant high-level changes in the region; these will probably affect migration patterns in future, but it is too early to see robust studies that look beyond descriptions of migration flows. These changes include:

- The selection by Ethiopia's ruling party of new reformist Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in April 2018, and the resultant policy changes, including the release of political prisoners and the installation of a new gender-balanced cabinet (Verjee & Knopf, 2019).
- Related to the above, the official end of the 20-year 'frozen conflict' between Eritrea and Ethiopia on 9 July 2018 (Mwangi, 2018).
- The ousting of Sudan's former president, Omar el-Bashir, in April 2019, following months of popular protests, and the establishment of, first, a transitional military-led government and, subsequently, a joint military–civilian transitional government in September 2019 (BBC, 2019).

Chronic insecurity in both Somalia and South Sudan continues, with fluctuating effects on outward and return migration, primarily within the region: an intensification of conflict in South Sudan from July 2016, particularly affecting the Greater Equatoria region (along the border with Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)), caused a dramatic rise in the number of refugees, particularly to Uganda, in the latter half of 2016 and 2017.

The following sections expand in more detail on some of the contextual changes that have taken place across the region since 2016.

### 1.1 Uganda's evolving approach to refugee hosting

Uganda is now the largest refugee hosting nation in Africa. As of the end of 2018, it was reportedly hosting 1.2 million refugees and Bidi Bidi camp is now the largest in Africa; this actually represents a reduction on previous figures, largely thanks to verification of refugees revising the numbers downwards by 300,000 (UNHCR, 2019b). According to 2018 figures, around three-quarters of the refugees in Uganda are South Sudanese, with the second-largest group being from the DRC, and smaller numbers from Burundi and Somalia (Coggio, 2018).

Uganda is so far maintaining its extremely progressive policy on refugee hosting, where refugees are given land, food, materials for shelter and access to services on the same basis as Ugandan nationals. Refugees are integrated into Ugandan society and valued as economic contributors (Coggio, 2018). However, following the political crisis and resurgence of violence in South Sudan in July 2016, there was a dramatic increase in the number of refugees into the country and the system is now under severe strain, both in terms of government provision and of support from host communities. The refugee population in Uganda is centred in the already impoverished northwest of the country, an area that is also subject to environmental shocks, including drought and unpredictable rainfall, as well as environmental degradation. The Government of Uganda is working to develop more sustainable approaches to refugee hosting, and to move from a humanitarian and emergency approach to one that centres on long-term development, for both refugee and host populations. The Settlement Transformative Agenda (STA) was launched in 2016 and seeks to foster sustainable livelihoods for both refugee and host communities, directly linking to Uganda's National Development Plan. The Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Framework (ReHoPE), supported by the UN and the World Bank, promotes the transition from emergency refugee hosting measures to a "development-minded refugee response". It sets out a 30–70 Principle, whereby 30 per cent of all interventions targeting refugees must meet the needs of the host community; some humanitarian organisations, including UNHCR, are aiming for a 50–50 split. The shift to a more development-oriented focus is also problematic in some ways: in some areas, refugee response and distribution of aid have degraded local markets; significant differences have been found between the strength of local markets in areas of northern Uganda, where refugees receive cash assistance and/or develop their own livelihoods, and in those where they receive in-kind assistance, which undercuts local markets (Hemberger et al, 2018).

Some refugee settlements (such as Palorinya) are distant from markets and other services, with poor infrastructure and limited options for transportation and employment. Moreover, land allocations to refugees are often small and of poor quality. This limits the ability of refugees to benefit from development aid, particularly as a result of the focus on agriculture, which ignores the diversity of refugees' skills and interests (Krause, 2016). Concerns have also been raised about the limited ability of South Sudanese refugees to contribute to the economies of host nations in the region because of very low adult literacy levels (reported to be 27) (Lanciotti, 2019). Such issues, particularly those related to markets, have led to an increasing focus on cash-based aid. Support for adult education remains extremely limited.

In February 2018, revelations of misappropriation of refugee funds, implicating both the government and UNHCR, led some major donors (including the US and the EU) to threaten to withdraw support, and UNHCR to change its top-level representation. There were allegations that refugee numbers had been inflated, leading to the undertaking of a biometric identification exercise for refugees in 2018; this confirmed the allegations, with one particular settlement overestimating its numbers by 58 per cent.

Significant research has investigated the impact of refugees on the economy in Uganda. One study found that Ugandan populations living near settlements of Congolese refugees benefited in terms of

consumption and access to public services; however, they had negative perceptions of their own economic situation and felt alienated from the state, in favour of their own ethnic identity (Kreibaum, 2016). Research has also found that, while it is often assumed that refugees will increase competition for employment, in Kampala, Congolese and Somali refugees have developed their own economic spaces that are not in competition with indigenous ones while, at refugee sites, refugees' economic activities result in interdependence between refugees and host communities (Omata, 2018). However, some have noted that the shift towards reframing refugees as having an economic benefit for local economies in Uganda risks transforming them into "exploitable workers" (Ramsay, 2019).

Research has also shown that in Uganda localised and informal networks of support and protection exist, with established refugees helping those more newly arrived (Mukandayisenga, 2016), and communities playing a central role in supporting those forcibly internally displaced and then returning as a result of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (Dunovant, 2016).

## 1.2 Ethiopia's ongoing role as a hosting country, and early indications of more liberal migration policies

Ethiopia is the third-largest refugee hosting country in Africa, currently home to some 700,000 refugees, primarily Eritreans, Somalis, Yemenis and South Sudanese. Most refugees in Ethiopia are living in camps supported by UNHCR and managed by the Ethiopian government's Administration of Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA). These are situated in rural areas, with limited opportunities to access services or to integrate into the local economy. Following returns of Somali refugees from Kenya, as of late 2018 Ethiopia was the country hosting the largest number of Somali refugees (UNHCR, 2019b).

The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) migration tracking in May 2019 reported that nearly three-quarters of cross-border movements for that month were outgoing, with the majority of incoming movements being Sudanese nationals. Eighty-two per cent of Ethiopians migrating claimed to be doing so for economic reasons (IOM DTM, 2019).

The ban on Ethiopians migrating to Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries put in place in 2013 was lifted in 2018; it is not yet clear what the results of this will be. Ethiopia also adopted new labour agreements with Saudi Arabia in 2017 and with the United Arab Emirates in 2018, aimed at regularising the flow of Ethiopians in search of labour opportunities in those countries (Freitag, 2019). Deportations, however, remained high during this period; IOM estimates that 260,000 Ethiopians returned to Ethiopia from Saudi Arabia between March 2017 and March 2019, and it registered 17,713 of these returnees as minors (IOM, 2019).

## 1.3 South Sudan's ongoing conflict continues to drive refugee movements

South Sudan remains the third largest country of origin for refugees in the region, with 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees reportedly living outside the country, the majority of them in neighbouring

countries, particularly Uganda (UNHCR, 2019b). Given the increasing strain on Uganda's refugee hosting policy, there are some indications that South Sudanese may be choosing to return to South Sudan from Uganda, as food is unavailable in the latter (Patinkin, 2017). However, IOM's May 2019 migration tracking found that more South Sudanese were entering Uganda than were leaving (IOM DTM, 2019).

Sixty-two per cent of the South Sudanese refugee population is under 18; as of May 2017, there were over 75,000 unaccompanied children in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia receiving refugee support services. Ethiopia is the second-largest hosting country of South Sudanese refugees, and has been working to strengthen refugee support, including working towards allowing some refugees to live outside camps, to work and to enrol in schools. Other countries hosting South Sudanese refugees include the Central African Republic (CAR), the DRC, Kenya and Sudan – in many cases, particularly in DRC, CAR and Sudan – they are in insecure locations that cannot be accessed by humanitarian workers. Very few South Sudanese refugees have settled beyond the region.

Hunger and drought have long been key drivers of displacement in South Sudan. In February 2017 the UN officially declared famine in two counties in the country; this was lifted four months later. Six million people in South Sudan are food insecure, and 1.1 million are malnourished. Continuing conflict has also driven internal and external displacement, and hampered attempts to deliver food.

The Government of South Sudan, supported by the EU (through the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa – in particular the Better Migration Management Programme), IOM, and the Government of Japan, among other donors, has been developing its first migration policy, the draft of which was endorsed by a stakeholders' panel in Juba in February 2019.

## 1.4 Eritrea's changing political context and migration fluctuations

While in 2015 Eritreans were the largest single group of migrants arriving in Italy, a significant reduction was seen from 2016 onwards. The reasons behind this reduction are unclear, but may be linked to: changes in migration patterns that have seen more Eritreans moving towards South Africa or the Arabian Peninsula; refugees being stuck in refugee camps in neighbouring areas (Ethiopia and Sudan); Eritreans joining existing expatriate communities in cities in the region, such as in Sudan and Egypt; increasing numbers of migrants being intercepted as they try to cross Egypt and Sudan; deaths along migration routes; and lower numbers leaving Eritrea for Europe (Frouws, 2017b). This downward trend has continued since 2016, albeit in the context of reduced total numbers of migrants reaching Europe (Botti, 2018). Alongside this, however, there was a notable spike in Eritreans entering Ethiopia when the borders between the two countries opened after the 2018 peace declaration: including more than 14,000 Eritrean refugees registered between September and October 2018 (UNHCR, 2018a).

Following the war between May 1998 and June 2000, Eritrea was in a state of 'frozen conflict' with Ethiopia for nearly two decades until both countries signed a declaration ending this situation on 9 July 2018. By clearly defining Eritrea's national border, the declaration was a key success for Eritrea's foreign policy, supporting the country's national identity with territorial integrity, although it is



unlikely to change the more fluid cross-border processes on the ground and it remains to be seen how the two governments will operationalise the declaration over the longer term (Müller, 2019). In addition, Eritrea's official state of conflict had been the justification for its national service for people aged 18 to 50. Under the 1995 Proclamation on National Service this was to be limited to 18 months but in reality could last up to a decade or more, and had been a major driver of forced migration from the country, as well as a factor in high rates of asylum claims from Eritreans being accepted. In 2017, Eritreans had the fourth-highest rate of acceptance of refugee status in the EU of any nationality, with over 95 per cent of claims for refugee status being granted. Eritreans continue to have a high rate of recognition of their asylum claims, at 82 per cent over the six months to August 2019, behind only Syria and Yemen (EASO, 2019b). National service is also a factor in the large numbers of unaccompanied minors among Eritrean migrants and refugees (Belloni, 2019a), and has resulted in a situation where it is suspected that not all those claiming to be Eritrean are in fact Eritrean, but may be Ethiopians, Djiboutians or Somalis (Runde, 2018). In the context of the peace agreement, there have been renewed calls for the Eritrean government to amend its strict national service policy, with hopes that this may lead to a subsequent drop in forced migration of Eritreans (Mwangi, 2018).

However, as of mid-2019, the national service situation had not been revisited. A recent EASO report cited Eritrean government calls for jobs creation as a precondition to reforming national service (EASO, 2019a). For the time being, exit visa requirements remain in place (with travel to Ethiopia an exception to this) and large numbers of Eritrean youth continue to migrate clandestinely, with 3,500 unaccompanied Eritrean minors seeking asylum in the EU in 2018 (UNHCR, 2019b). Belloni (2019a, p.13) found that there is evidence of children dropping out of school early so that they cannot be traced for national service, indicating how early decisions begin to be made. Migration reportedly remains "the main route out of generational and socio-economic immobility" for Eritrean young people, with research showing that they are proactive in their migration choices, often made without consulting their families (Belloni, 2019b). Patterns of Eritrean migration continue to show the effects of protection and migration policies in neighbouring countries: limited opportunities and protection in Libya and Egypt are pushing Eritrean migrants on to Europe (Horwood & Hooper, 2016).

## 1.5 Kenya's developing approach to refugee integration

A long-term host of refugees, particularly from Somalia and South Sudan, Kenya is now transforming its approach to refugee hosting and seeking more durable solutions. Devolution is reported to be a key mechanism for refugee integration, with county-level revenue raised through taxation enabling refugees' contribution to the local economy to be clarified; however, further economic integration is limited because work permits are only issued centrally (Majidi & Dadu-Brown, 2016).

Some research has found that refugee inflows have increased economic activity in areas close to Kakuma camp; household consumption in that area is 25 per cent higher than further away. This is thought to be thanks to the availability of new employment opportunities around Kakuma, and price changes in local markets that are favourable to local producers (Alix-Garcia et al, 2018). However, others note that Kakuma has disadvantaged the host community in terms of access to infrastructure

and of economic opportunity. As a result, Kenya has opened a new integrated settlement for 60,000 people, the Kalobeyei Integrated Social and Economic Development Program, which will run until 2030 and provide livelihood opportunities and infrastructure for both refugees and host communities. While it is too soon to see the results of this approach, the attitude of the local community is positive (Terada et al, 2017). However, funding for the settlement is reported to be a challenge, as is the ongoing drought in the Turkana region (Gebrekidan, 2017).

## 1.6 Gradual returns to Somalia

The number of Somali refugees is reported to be slowly declining as a result of verification exercises in Kenya, and also because of returns to Somalia from Kenya – in the context of uncertainty about the status of Dadaab refugee camp (Ombur, 2019) – and (less often) returns from Yemen. At the end of 2018 the number of Somali refugees in the region was 949,700, representing a small decrease on 2017 numbers. Over 80 per cent of Somali refugees have remained in countries close to Somalia, with 18,800 in Uganda and 12,700 in Djibouti (UNHCR, 2019b). As of May 2019 IOM's migration tracking has reported roughly equal levels of inward and outward migration, which had also been the case earlier in the year. The largest single group of those tracked (32 per cent) claimed to be undertaking seasonal migration, with 18 per cent claiming to be undertaking conflict-driven migration, and 15 per cent economic migration.

## 1.7 Djibouti's ongoing position as a transit country

Djibouti reportedly remains primarily a transit country for migrants, with over 99 per cent of the movements tracked in Djibouti by IOM in May 2019 being of Ethiopian nationals, and a similarly high percentage claiming to be migrating for economic reasons (IOM DTM, 2019). In addition to this, Djibouti is retaining its open approach to refugees and currently hosting nearly 28,000 of them, 45 per cent of whom are from Somalia, 35 per cent from Ethiopia, 16 per cent from Yemen and 3 per cent from Eritrea (UNHCR Djibouti, 2019).

The recent political changes in Sudan are likely to have an impact on migration and migration patterns, although it appears to be too early to see analysis on the results of this.

## 1.8 Changing drivers of migration

Recent research has sought to problematise the sharp distinction made between 'forced' and 'voluntary' migration, which is often taken for granted in policy analysis and public debate. Academic research has contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the role of agency in migration decisions, going beyond the often two-dimensional conception of migrants and refugees as disempowered 'victims or villains'. This is linked to the idea in the Global North that migrants are expected to perform 'depoliticised suffering' to be worthy of rescue or support, while those demonstrating higher levels of agency are more likely to be viewed with suspicion and thus securitised (Mainwaring, 2016). Examples of agency discussed in the academic literature include unusual migration trajectories, which have developed in the face of increasingly restrictive migration policies in the Global North. An example is that of young Kenyan men taking advantage of female sex tourism to Kenya (among other African destinations) to marry European women and access visas

(Scheel, 2017). Belloni (2019a) highlights the importance of recognising agency, rather than simply vulnerability, in young Eritreans' decisions to migrate: migration is seen as a step to adulthood, and is a decision often made independent of the family. However, individual aspirations remain closely intertwined with structural factors, including communal values about family stability and wellbeing, and a context of protracted crisis. Massa (2018) also explores the ways in which Eritrean refugees and Ethiopian returnees on the border between the two countries manipulate legal labels and categories, and leverage the border as a resource for mobility.

Increasingly, research is finding that migrants are motivated by a complex mixture of drivers (Frouws & Horwood, 2019). Recent work by Van Hear et al (2018) suggests that a better understanding of migration flows would be gained by distinguishing between *predisposing*, *proximate*, *precipitating* and *mediating* drivers; these drivers can be both positive and negative, as well as both push and pull. Predisposing drivers are those that create a context where migration is more likely, for example structural issues such as political or economic disparities. Proximate drivers link to predisposing ones, but are more immediate: for example, a specific security or economic downturn. Precipitating drivers are those that actually trigger departure, and as such are linked to a specific event, such as an outbreak of conflict. Mediating drivers are those that enable or constrain migration, such as the availability of transport and networks, and so on (Van Hear et al, 2018).

A detailed report on global migration drivers published in 2018 found that the key such drivers are structural in nature and include the level of economic development in the country of origin, migrants' social networks and demographic change in the country of origin (Migall et al, 2018). Additional factors include the level of geographical and cultural difference between origin and destination countries (with migrants more likely to move to countries that are closer to their own country, geographically and culturally); the level of education of migrants; and the GDP of both destination and origin countries: rising GDP per capita in countries of origin leads to an initial increase in migration, and a subsequent decrease over time. In terms of demographic changes, countries with high fertility rates do not (yet) produce higher migration, but young people are found to express a greater intention to migrate, so a 'youth bulge' of migration can be expected in future. However, of the 20 per cent of people expressing a desire for migration, only 1 per cent actually take steps to migrate.

Where migration to the EU is concerned, the strongest pull factor appears to be the presence of people with a migration background in the target country, irrespective of their country of origin. Additional pull factors include the presence of families or people from the same country of origin, and a favourable labour market in the destination country.

While issues such as state fragility and conflict in origin countries affect the number of asylum claims, other drivers are also significant in terms of asylum claims, including levels of poverty in countries of origin, the presence of migration communities in destination countries, favourable economic conditions in destination countries and geographical vicinity.

These global findings are largely supported by specific research on migrants from the Horn of Africa. Data from the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) project show that migration drivers are mixed and vary to some extent depending on the routes followed. Migrants from the Horn of Africa to North Africa, Europe and South Africa weighted economic drivers and violence roughly equally, with lack of rights, lack of services and personal and family reasons also being significant. Migrants from the Horn of Africa to Yemen weighted economic drivers much more highly, which may be linked to the domination of Ethiopians along this route, and the draw of Saudi Arabia as a destination for labour migration. The latter point demonstrates the specific draw of target destinations, with 93 per cent of those migrating towards Yemen and Saudi Arabia claiming to be doing so for employment and to send remittances home, while those from the Horn of Africa migrating to North Africa, Europe and South Africa display a more complex interaction of pull factors, including better living standards and increased rights and freedoms, along with better economic opportunities and the chance to send back remittances (Frouws & Horwood, 2019). The same data show that the largest single group of migrants made the decision to migrate themselves, with the next four largest categories being influences from friends and family. Of the respondents, 12 per cent claimed to have been influenced by smugglers, 9 per cent by diaspora and 2 per cent by social media. Between one- and two-thirds of respondents to the 4Mi research (depending on the stage of their migration journey) had experienced some form of violence on the journey; nonetheless, close to 70 per cent of them said they would choose to migrate again, even knowing what they now know, although nearly 60 per cent said they would not encourage others to migrate. In addition to the drivers outlined above, nearly 90 per cent of migrants along the route from the Horn of Africa to North Africa and Europe named corruption (in government, politics and the security services) as a major factor in their decision to leave. Another significant factor is the claim by 26 per cent of migrants from the Horn of Africa that they had had to bribe officials as part of their migration journey. The rates of bribery were reportedly higher on migration routes from West Africa through the Sahel than on routes from the Horn of Africa to Europe, but the average amount for Horn of Africa migrants was higher, at US\$219 per bribe for those travelling to North Africa, \$189 for those going to South Africa, and \$60 for those heading to Yemen or Saudi Arabia (Frouws & Brenner, 2019).

The sections below highlight specific and contextual drivers found in the literature.

### The role of education as a driver for migration

Education is reported to correlate strongly with decisions to migrate: at a global level, the picture of the typical migrant is one of an educated young man (Migall et al, 2018). Studies in Ethiopia have found that higher levels of education are positively correlated with rural–urban migration, although this declines as the number of dependent household members increases (Tegegne & Penker, 2016). The current generation of Ethiopian youth is the first to receive primary education on a wide scale, which has coincided with an aspirational shift from rural livelihoods to urban professional ones, as well as with rapid urbanisation, and a change in internal migration patterns from rural–rural to rural–urban or urban–urban over the past decade. Those migrating to or from urban areas tend to be more highly educated than those migrating between rural areas; migrants are also reported to

receive higher returns on education than non-migrants. After employment, education is the second most common reason for rural–urban migration in Ethiopia. Two-thirds of the youth interviewed in Ethiopia as part of the Young Lives study stated that they wanted to migrate, and most of the 58 per cent of these with a destination in mind wanted to move to an urban centre in Ethiopia, while a minority wanted to migrate abroad. Education has been found to be “significantly and positively related to the aspiration to live elsewhere”, with international migration aspirations highest among those with the highest educational attainment (Schewel & Fransen, 2018, p.568). Beyond this, a less clear correlation between wealth, education and the desire to migrate is likely to be linked to the diversification of international migration trajectories from Ethiopia: those seeking further education and highly paid work aim to migrate to Europe or North America, while those seeking domestic work aspire to migrate to the Middle East and those seeking lower-skilled employment (which tends to be irregular) to migrate to South Africa (Gavonel, 2017). Tertiary education is also a driver of internal migration in Ethiopia, with ethnically diverse university campuses acting in counterpoint to Ethiopia’s rigid system of ‘ethnic federalism’ (Breines, 2019).

Beyond Ethiopia, tertiary education may be a determinant of out-migration in Kenya and Uganda, as 5 per cent of university graduates have been found to have left the sub-region in the 1990s and 2000s (Simson, 2019).

Research in Uganda and Ethiopia conducted by the REF showed that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) tended to increase people’s interest in migrating, but mainly internally or to a neighbouring country rather than further afield. In Ethiopia, many respondents planned to move to other parts of the country in search of work. In Uganda, where many of the respondents were refugees from South Sudan, many graduates of TVET were interested in returning to their home country. In Ethiopia and Uganda, only very small numbers of respondents were thinking of moving further afield (fewer than six per cent), referring to Europe, the US and South Africa (REF, 2019a).

### The role of employment and livelihoods

Research by the International Labour Organization (ILO) has found that youth unemployment has been rising in Ethiopia, including among educated youth, particularly in urban areas; this, combined with population pressure, has resulted in significant out-migration over recent years. Those most likely to migrate are young people aged 15 to 35 who lack employment or access to livelihoods. High levels of poverty and low wages also drive out-migration, while pull factors include socioeconomic opportunities, higher wages, and the existence of social networks and support systems (ILO, 2018). Academic research has found that unemployment is a migration driver for Ethiopian men and women alike, with urban unemployment of women more than double that of men. As a result, “emigration from Ethiopia has shown strong feminisation” in recent years, with 60 per cent of all Ethiopian migrants in 2014 being women (Bilgili et al, 2018). Dessiye and Emirie (2018) found that the primary driver for migration for Ethiopian female domestic labourers was employment opportunities in destination countries, with Saudi Arabia being particularly favoured thanks to its perceived quality of life and higher salaries. This is supported by Reda (2018), who notes that the

major factors driving the migration of Ethiopian women to the Middle East include the lack of job opportunities and limited income in Ethiopia, as well as false promises from brokers. The REF (2017b) study on migration between the Horn of Africa and Yemen also found that employment was the major driver for people making the perilous sea crossing to Yemen.

Lack of economic access in rural areas is also reported as a driver for rural–urban migration among Acholi youth in Uganda (Stites et al, 2019). The REF study on migration from rural areas to secondary cities in Ethiopia (Dire Dawa), Uganda (Gulu) and Kenya (Eldoret) also found that the mainly young migrants were drawn into the urban areas by the better job opportunities. It also noted that rural–urban migration created important linkages between origin and destination areas, helping to spread risk and providing a critical safety net for rural populations, especially in politically unstable landscapes. In this way, rural–urban migration plays an important role in strengthening livelihoods in both rural and urban areas (REF, 2018b).

There have been attempts to provide more access to economic opportunities and livelihoods within Ethiopia, as a means of deterring economically driven migration. Hardy and Hauge (2019) report that Ethiopia’s state-led industrialisation has driven economic success, but weakened the power of labour: in the absence of collective action, there is significant turnover of the industrial workforce, to which the Ethiopian state has responded with restrictions on emigration. International investment has also supported the creation of livelihood opportunities, such as the development of rural flower farms for women’s employment as a way of deterring economically driven migration. However, while these opportunities alleviate some economic pressure, they remain low-wage and cannot bring about the same sort of significant economic and social changes to families, and in particular to young women, that international migration to the Middle East is believed to enable (Schewel, 2018). In terms of scale, these opportunities remain insufficient given the high numbers of unemployed young people in the region.

### The role of the family as a migration driver

Internal migration among young people in Ethiopia is reported to be driven by concerns such as family formation and family reunion, as well as by education and employment (Gavonel, 2017). In contrast, family disputes are reported to be a push factor in driving rural–urban migration among Acholi youth in Uganda, particularly for female migrants, who also mention physical and sexual abuse as a driver (Stites et al, 2019). Research among Somali refugees in Dagahaley camp in Kenya also shows the presence of relatives as a key aspirational driver in terms of their desire for onward migration to destinations such as the US – particularly Minnesota, where the largest Somali American community – is located, despite the fact that very few Somali refugees are resettled from Kenya (around 1 per cent in 2014) (Ikanda, 2018).

### Land access as a migration driver

Inadequate access to land is reported as a key driver of rural–urban migration among Acholi youth in Uganda. Most rural–urban migrants retain strong economic, livelihood, social and emotional ties to their rural places of origin, with those who do not, especially women, being the most vulnerable

(Stites et al, 2019). In contrast, in Ethiopia research has found that there is a weak correlation between migration and access to land (Mueller and Schmidt, 2016).

### Climate change as a driver for migration

Research has not yet established a solid direct correlation between climate change impacts and international migration. However, it is believed that this will become increasingly significant in future, with slow-onset climate events (such as a rise in droughts) driving migration from rural to urban areas, and fast-onset climate events (such as flooding) driving temporary migration. Northern, eastern and western Africa are all expected to be increasingly affected by the effects of climate change, and thus to become sources of increasing climate change migration, in future (Migall et al, 2018). Schraven et al (2019) state that the effects of climate change in sub-Saharan Africa are linked to rainfall variability and increases in flooding and droughts, which may have consequences in terms of labour migration and forced displacement, but the situation is highly contextual.

South Sudan in particular has been identified as one of the ten most climate change-vulnerable countries in the world, with increasing rural–urban migration identified as a likely potential impact, alongside increased conflict (American Security Project, 2019). Schraven et al (2019) note that the risk of forced migration resulting from climate change within Sub-Saharan Africa is highest in the Horn of Africa, but many climate-affected households are ‘trapped’, either with mobility not an option at all or, if it is, with only individual or circular labour migration, rather than long-term, household-level migration an option.

In the broader Horn of Africa area, droughts and the resulting food scarcity are repeatedly mentioned as a potential driver of migration in various areas, including from Ethiopia to the Arabian Peninsula, and from South Sudan to Uganda, although it is not clear whether such droughts are direct impacts of climate change (WFP, 2017). It is thought that climate change indirectly influences migration in Africa by affecting other drivers of it; however it is highly contextual and hard to predict (Borderon et al, 2018).

Analysis of the numbers of out-migrants from the drought-affected countries in the Horn of Africa in mid-2017 does not necessarily support the idea that drought causes increases in international migration, as declining numbers of migrants from drought-affected countries were seen on both the route from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and the route to Europe, despite an overall increase in migrant numbers on both routes.<sup>1</sup> It seems more likely that, while drought was a driver of internal migration, and in particular of rural to urban movement, during this period (eg with 700,000 Somalis internally displaced because of drought, but only 6,000 crossing international borders during the same period), it was more likely to have contributed to a decline in international migration, because of the constrained household resources available for costly international migration processes (Akumu & Frouws, 2017). Historical analysis of whether climatic changes from 1963 to 2014 had an impact on increased conflict and displacement in East Africa found that climate

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<sup>1</sup> This is also supported by the REF study on migration between the Horn of Africa and Yemen, which found few respondents citing drought as a reason for moving (REF, 2017b).

variations and temperature did not significantly affect regional conflict or displacement; drivers of conflict in fact were population growth, economic growth and the relative stability of political regimes (Owain & Maslin, 2018). However, climatic variation, especially severe droughts, did have an impact on refugees crossing borders during this time.

### Militarised economies as a context-specific migration driver

In the border regions between Sudan and South Sudan, the highly militarised economy limits livelihood opportunities, causing significant out-migration to Khartoum and Juba, particularly for men (Kindersley & Majock, 2019).

### Social media as a migration driver

Evidence collected in 2016 shows that smugglers make active use of social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, and so on) to give information to people in the Horn of Africa wishing to migrate (UNHCR, 2016). Migrants themselves use social networks to help them find information about routes, smugglers, and so on (RMMS, 2016).

The exposure of migrants to already successful migrants and diaspora in destination countries through social networking and smartphone usage is not only a factor in making the decision to migrate, but also means that migrants are likely to be aware to some extent of what to expect from smugglers and the journey itself. Horwood and Hooper (2016) note the particular influence of social media on Eritrean migrants.

### Gender inequality as a migration driver

Gender inequality in Ethiopia has been found to be one driver affecting women's decisions to migrate: in particular, girls' educational achievements are hampered by their domestic responsibilities, and poor school results have been found to be a direct driver of migration. Some cases have been reported of parents forcing their daughters to marry young and then to divorce as a means of fulfilling cultural expectations, so that when they subsequently migrate to the Middle East their remittances will be sent to their birth families rather than to their husbands' relatives (Bilgili et al, 2018). Ethiopian women's migration to the Middle East has also been reported to be a way to avoid early marriage (Schewel, 2018).



# Theme 2:

## Movement and mobility structures and patterns

This section outlines a number of developments in migration patterns within and from the Horn of Africa, including changing routes to Europe and the Middle East, as well as return migration. It also looks at financial flows through remittances.

### 2.1 A significant increase in internal displacement in Ethiopia

As of October 2018, there were 2.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia, compared with 291,000 in July 2012; this increase has primarily been caused by environmental changes such as droughts and floods, inter-communal tension and resource or border conflicts, with conflict accounting for 70 per cent of cases of displacement. Ethiopia's Somali Regional State accounts for the largest number of IDPs, with one-sixth of the people in the region having been displaced. Most responses to date have been emergency or humanitarian in nature, and significant challenges remain, in part because humanitarian actors do not have complete access to many IDP-affected areas in Ethiopia. The government is now starting to develop more mechanisms to meet IDPs' short- and long-term needs, both humanitarian and developmental. In October 2017, the Somali Regional State developed a regional durable solutions strategy, spearheaded by the Durable Solutions Working Group: this is the first framework in Ethiopia to target internal displacement (Habte & Kweon, 2018).

### 2.2 Bi-directional flows between Somalia and Yemen

Two-way migration flows between Yemen and Somalia are reportedly ongoing, with many of the hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees that had been hosted in Yemen returning to Somalia since the intensification of the conflict in the latter, together with Yemeni nationals seeking refuge (REF, 2017b). Reception centres for arrivals from Yemen have been set up in Bossaso (Puntland) and Berbera (Somaliland). These areas and the South Central region of Somalia have all been willing to take back returning Somali refugees, but have been pushing them to return to their regions of origin, even if the factors causing their initial displacement still exist there. There are limited overarching policies and frameworks in place to support returnees' reintegration. Meanwhile, Yemenis are challenging UNHCR's encampment approach, believing that it will disempower them, and preferring instead to self-settle in urban centres and link with existing Yemeni populations. Yemeni Diaspora

Chapters in Hargeisa and Mogadishu are tracking the arrival of Yemenis arriving, and are supporting them (Mohamud, 2016). This is linked to longstanding links between Somalia and Yemen, particularly in coastal regions, connected with fishing, and unofficial freedom of movement between the two countries: an attempt by the UAE to impose the use of ID documents for Somali fishing boats landing in Yemen was short-lived thanks to local resistance (Majid & Abdirahman, 2019).

### 2.3 Increasing migration from the Horn of Africa to Yemen and beyond

In parallel to the bi-directional flows between Somalia and Yemen, a record number of migrants and asylum seekers arrived in Yemen in 2016, despite the conflict and the worsening humanitarian crisis in the country. Eighty-three per cent of arrivals as of November 2016 were Ethiopians; there was also a large number of Somalis, who had reportedly travelled overland to Obock in Djibouti or to Bossaso, and then across the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden, assisted by smugglers. It was initially expected that the escalation of the conflict in Yemen from March 2015 onwards would divert migration routes from that country; however, migration to Yemen has actually increased, and the expected diversion of Horn of Africa migrants to other destinations, such as Europe or South Africa, appeared not to have taken place, or to have been extremely marginal, as of late 2016.

The increased flows of Ethiopian migrants to or through Yemen in 2016 were probably linked to the Oromo protests (with Oromos forming a greater part of those migrating), as well as to drought (Frouws, 2016).

While rates of migration to Yemen have reportedly fluctuated over the past few years, 2019 has seen another spike in arrivals of East African migrants and refugees, with 84,378 estimated to have arrived in the first six months of 2019. IOM's migration tracking from May 2019 shows an increase in migrants reporting their intentions to migrate to Saudi Arabia and Yemen, with the number intending to travel to Saudi Arabia (46 per cent) more than doubling the figures from April 2019 (21 per cent) (IOM DTM, 2019). Around 90 per cent of arrivals are Ethiopians, and the remaining 10 per cent are Somalis; they are primarily young men, but around 20 per cent are women and children. It is thought that this migration is driven by high levels of unemployment and political insecurity in the countries of origin, as well as by employment prospects in Saudi Arabia, which is understood to be the destination country of most of these migrants.

Yemen's fragility, as a result of war, has weakened its central institutions, including its borders, and opened up new avenues for smugglers, as well as increasing the perception among potential migrants that there will be ease of movement into Yemen and onwards into Saudi Arabia; this is the same pattern that has taken place in Libya since 2013. Migrants are reported to be travelling to ports in Djibouti and Puntland, whereupon passage across the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden is supported by smugglers. All three parts of the journey are perilous: travelling across the Horn of Africa to reach ports; crossing the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden (there were reports from August 2017 of smugglers forcing migrants off the boat at gunpoint close to the coast of Yemen, resulting in many drowning (Botti & Horwood, 2017) and 274 deaths were recorded on sea journeys to Yemen in 2018 (Botti & Phillips 2019)); and travelling across the desert to towns in Yemen or to the border with Saudi Arabia. On arrival in Yemen, irregular migrants are particularly at risk of exploitation and detention,

with Aden becoming a ‘detention hub’ for Ethiopian and Somali migrants and refugees.

The routes chosen by Ethiopian migrants are strongly gendered, with 68 per cent of those migrating to the Middle East being female; the latter also tend to make less arduous journeys to destination countries (as they are more likely to fly directly than to travel overland), but are more likely to face hardships and abuse on arrival (Bilgili et al, 2018). Dessiye and Emirie (2018) found that migration of female domestic workers from Ethiopia to the Middle East was processed through *hajj* and *umrah* (pilgrimage) travel arrangements, facilitated by existing networks of Ethiopian women in Saudi Arabia, which made it easier to find jobs. Illegal employment agencies also had a role in facilitating migration.

In addition to the dangers of the journey, migrants are at risk of exploitation and deportation if they manage to reach Saudi Arabia, other Gulf States or Lebanon, which is a major employer of Ethiopian domestic workers. Saudi Arabia has a history of sporadic deportations of all illegal workers (in 2013–14 and again in 2017–19), as a means of reducing reliance on foreign workers, limiting unrest and stemming the flow of remittances out of the country; however, the country continues to rely on immigrant labour and those expelled quickly return to meet demand. Interviews with deported Ethiopians indicate that they were detained for long periods in very poor conditions, with widespread allegations of abuse. Reda (2018) reports that 85 per cent of Ethiopian women working in the Middle East have been trafficked, while Dessiye and Emirie (2018) found that Ethiopian women employed as domestic workers in the Gulf States and Lebanon were in very insecure situations because of the lack of regulation of this work in the destination countries. They were vulnerable to abuse, including that related to their ethnic and religious identity. Growth in demand for Ethiopian domestic workers is reported to be linked to rising wage demands from Asian domestic workers and bilateral and regional agreements aimed at better protecting Asian workers’ rights, with employers seeking cheaper and less regulated sources of labour (Zewdu, 2018).

During the 2013–14 deportations, Ethiopia significantly underestimated the number of Ethiopians who would be returning from Saudi Arabia; for the 2017 deportations, much higher numbers were planned for, supported by IOM (Frouws, 2017a). IOM estimates that by July 2019, 300,000 Ethiopians had been deported from Saudi Arabia. Those labour migrants in the country with previously valid visas are also at risk, with Saudi Arabia revoking all visas for Ethiopian housemaids in May 2019 (Al-Diyabi, 2019).

Despite the various risks of the journey, information from IOM indicates that migrants are aware of the risks they are taking but consider that the economic opportunities in Saudi Arabia outweigh them. In addition, the journey is reportedly cheap, costing less than \$600, in comparison to much more expensive routes from the Horn of Africa to North Africa, Europe or South Africa (Botti & Phillips, 2019).

## 2.4 Return migration from the Middle East to Ethiopia

A significant amount of academic literature has investigated return migrants in Ethiopia, particularly women returning from domestic labour in the Middle East. Research paints a varied picture of

migrants' lives following return. Fentaw (2018) reports that remittances and savings from migration to the Middle East were primarily spent on basic needs rather than saved, and most returnees were either at the same or a lower socioeconomic level than they had been before migrating. Dessiye and Emirie (2018) also report that the need to repay debts related to the cost of migration affects the ability of female Ethiopian labour migrants to the Middle East to save. In contrast, Gomes (2018) found that the subject of her life-history research, Meseret, a female Ethiopian return migrant, had experienced an increase in status on return, thanks to her ability to spend the money that she had earned on high-status items. Meseret stated that, despite the various humiliations and anxieties she suffered while working in Saudi Arabia, she would advise other Ethiopian women to follow the same path. While it may not be representative, this detailed case study shows how labour migration can result in upward social mobility for some women on return to Ethiopia. A survey of returned Ethiopian migrant domestic workers found a number of facilitators of a positive migration experience, including conforming to cultural and behavioural expectations in the Middle East, learning Arabic, making use of domestic appliances in the place of work, showing confidence and assertiveness, and having links to external forms of communication (such as mobile phones and local SIM cards) (Busza et al, 2017). Further research has found that female return migrants from the Middle East to Ethiopia have significantly worse perceptions of their living conditions on return, which is thought to be linked to their migration experiences (Bilgili et al, 2018). Reda (2018) reports that Ethiopian women returning from the Middle East face ongoing issues related to post-traumatic stress, linked to their migration experience. There remains limited evidence on practices that may foster safer migration experiences, and recent research calls for policy and programming to make better use of migrants' own knowledge of migration (Busza et al, 2017).

## 2.5 Return migration to Somalia

An examination of return migration to Somalia by the REF (2018a) has found it to be driven by a number of factors, including negative pressures in locations of displacement (such as the uncertainty around the future of Kenya's Dadaab camp), as well as optimism about return. Most returnees to Somalia were returning to cities, in the belief that they would be able to access more support there, although this was not usually the case; nearly half of them expressed the intention to return to their (generally rural) place of origin at some point, when the time was right. A case study looking at displaced Somalis and the host population living in Nairobi, and at Somali returnees to Mogadishu and Baidoa highlights the importance of responses that focus on the self-reliance and resilience of the affected populations, while noting that such approaches are easier in more stable and developed contexts such as Nairobi, rather than in places where there are ongoing cycles of insecurity and where state services are lacking (ReDDS, 2018).

## 2.6 The role of smugglers and traffickers

Tighter immigration controls have reportedly increased migrants' reliance on smugglers (Crawley et al, 2016). Eighty-six per cent of migrants from the Horn of Africa to South Africa use smugglers, as do 66 per cent of those from the Horn of Africa to North Africa and Europe. Smugglers make migration an option for more people, thus 'democratising' migration (Frouws & Horwood, 2019). Research shows that smuggling networks from the Horn of Africa are vibrant and organised, and involve

government officials either directly or indirectly, as their cooperation is needed for smuggling to continue. Migration via smugglers is costly, with an average pre-departure spend of \$1036 per migrant, and an average expenditure of \$2731 on bribes and extortion. Migration along smuggling networks is mixed, including both forced and economic migrants (Davy, 2017).

Information collected through 4Mi indicates that 50 per cent of the incidents of violence against migrants are perpetrated by smugglers; however, this overall statistic masks variations in specific routes. Among migrants travelling from the Horn of Africa to North Africa and Europe, smugglers are the most common cause of violence, being responsible for 76 per cent of incidents. By contrast, among those moving from the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, smugglers were only responsible for 19 per cent of incidents, the third-highest group after 'single unknown individuals' at 41 per cent, and security forces at 27 per cent. While this is likely to be linked to the different nature of the journey, these statistics may also be affected by the much smaller sample size of incidents for the latter group of migrants, at 93 incidents compared to 3204 incidents in the former group (Frouws & Horwood, 2018). This reinforces earlier data collected in 2015, which showed similarly high rates of violence perpetrated by smugglers, with 76 per cent having experienced violence from smugglers and 29 per cent having witnessed someone die along the route. While the specific activities carried out by smugglers vary somewhat, they appear to be within a 'chain of diminishing trust', with closer relationships between smugglers and migrants from the same country (Frouws & Horwood, 2018).

Irregular migrants from the Horn of Africa through North Africa on the route to Europe are most at risk of abuse from smugglers, and from the officials they encounter along the way. Research shows that the migrants themselves are aware of the risks that smugglers pose and are prepared to take them; data gathered through 4Mi indicate that 10 per cent of initial contacts between migrants and smugglers were initiated by the smuggler, with 87 per cent of migrants choosing instead to contact smugglers directly, or through friends and relatives (Horwood, 2016).

Experiences with smugglers appear to be strongly contextual. Somali migrants report that smugglers are members of local communities, with smuggling being maintained through community connections and family ties. However, the social organisation of smuggling weakens the further people get from their homes (Majidi, 2018). This is supported by research into the Somali phenomenon of *tahriib*, ie youth migration to Europe via Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya: smugglers operate on a leave-now-pay-later basis, which allows for migration to be an individual decision, as there is no need to gather funds from the family at the point of departure. However, migrants are generally held for ransom at later points in their journey: families reportedly pay an average of \$7,700 on *tahriib*-related expenses, the majority of which is spent on ransom (Ali, 2016). In contrast, smugglers of Eritrean refugees exiting through Ethiopia, who are often migrants or former migrants themselves, reportedly function as supportive communities and try to minimise violence against migrants. Smuggling from Eritrea is understood as a 'socially embedded collective practice', seeking to facilitate the safe migration of Eritreans in a context of migration criminalisation (Mengiste, 2018).

## 2.7 The role of social media along migration journeys

The use of social media and smartphones has an impact along migration journeys. Those who have reached Europe use social media or phones to contact migrants who are still in Libya; these then often relay information back to those still in their home countries (Wittenberg, 2017). Research shows that migrants who have phones are less reliant on smugglers while on their journeys, as they are able to make contact with others (Frouws & Horwood, 2018). However, the use of social media may also pose a risk on arrival – Norway, for example, is reported to be increasingly using data from applicants' social media in its asylum claim assessments, and other countries may follow suit (Brekke & Staver, 2019).

## 2.8 Remittance flows and the diaspora

The dependence of the economies of Somalia and Somaliland on remittances is widely known. In 2016, remittances to Somalia (including Somaliland) were estimated at \$1.4 billion per year, 23 per cent of Somalia's GDP; however, only 40 per cent of households receive them, and there are broad regional variations: Puntland and Somaliland reportedly receive higher value amounts than South Central Somalia, at \$254 per month on average, compared to \$191 in South Central. In addition, rural areas in South Central are less likely to receive remittances at all (although there is some secondary distribution of remittances from urban to rural relatives, so remittances are not an entirely urban phenomenon). Remittances are reported to be closely linked to resilience at household level, with lack of access to remittances reported to have increased the vulnerability of some households to famine in 2011. Remittances also enable access to credit, increase households' purchasing power, and enable diversification of their nutritional intake. Remittances are reportedly linked to individual people, and as such are likely to be highly variable (Majid, 2018). One focus of World Bank support to Somalia since 2016 has been to strengthen its banking system, as its deficiencies have in the past led to international transfers from the Global North to Somalia being shut down, thus disrupting remittances, with significant effects on the population (World Bank, 2016). In Somaliland alone, remittances are estimated at between \$500 and \$900 million per year, representing 35–70 per cent of GDP; however, they are essentially unsustainable, as people in the diaspora are ageing and the remitting behaviour of second-generation migrants is not well understood (but they are expected to send less than their parents do) (Pegg & Walls, 2018).

Remittances are also reported as having a political role in Somaliland. Over the past several years, political parties there have been increasingly linked to clans, which has polarised diaspora communities. The parties have become increasingly dependent on diaspora remittances for funding, which has increased division and affected coexistence inside Somaliland. As a result, the 2017 election was more bitterly contested than previous elections, since political parties allied themselves with diaspora along clan lines as a means of accessing remittance funds (Abokor & Ali, 2018).

Belloni (2019a) notes the important symbolic role of diaspora in supporting people in Eritrea during the country's struggle and the continuing role of remittances; these factors lead to young Eritreans growing up admiring emigrants, which may factor into their decisions to migrate. Cole (2019) reflects more ambivalent attitudes among Eritreans towards those who have emigrated, and explores both

the ways government narratives about migration affect personal experiences and perspectives, and how citizens – including those opposed to the current regime – play a role in constituting authoritarian power.

In terms of internal remittances, Abdelmoniem and Litchfield (2016) have found that, on average, rural migrant-sending households in Ethiopia have improved living standards, although this is not evenly distributed, and poorer households actually experience a decline in living standards.

# Theme 3:

## Changing policy and programmes

This section seeks to highlight some key policy and programmatic developments over the past three years, including some national policy shifts in countries of reception, noting ongoing changes in narratives around transnational migration.

### 3.1 Current challenges to supporting migrants in the Horn

A review of best practice within projects seeking to support migrants in Africa found that the success of a project is highly contextual, and as such should be based on detailed market, political and policy mapping, as well as on the knowledge of migrants, refugees, host communities and other key actors. Successful projects also promote refugees' human and economic rights, are highly adaptable (based on rigorous monitoring and evaluation), and should document and analyse the costs of refugee self-sufficiency and resilience (Millington & Bhardwaj, 2017).

Despite this, EU approaches to managing migration in the Horn of Africa often reveal a tension between concerns with preventing irregular migrants from reaching Europe and supporting migrants and refugees. This tension is seen in the Migration Partnership Framework, which was announced in June 2016 (European Commission, 2016), with countries of origin and transit for migrants, and offers a mixture of positive and negative incentives to curb migration. It has been criticised by human rights activists for outsourcing the management of Europe's borders and designing its foreign policy around the prevention of migration (Akumu, 2016).

One of the Migration Partnership Framework's priority countries is Ethiopia, which is a key migration hub, important for transit, hosting and sending migrants. While it is not the most important country of concern in the Horn of Africa, it was thought by the EU to be the most promising potential partner. However, the EU migration partnership with Ethiopia has faced challenges to implementation: the EU reported "very limited" cooperation on returns, with 145 effective voluntary returns facilitated in 2016, followed by slow operational progress processing selected pilot cases for identification and return after 17 months (European Commission, 2017). Others have analysed this slow progress, critiquing the framework for focusing too heavily on returns, and remaining at odds with Ethiopia's own priorities and concerns, such as supporting displaced populations within the region (Castillejo, 2017). The focus on returns has also resulted in claims that non-refoulement principles may have been breached. There are further worries that the EU's efforts to try and limit migration to Europe may influence refugee-hosting countries: "Refugee-hosting countries such as



Ethiopia are closely watching the European Union’s policies toward refugees, and efforts to limit protection in Europe may have a chilling effect on the willingness of developing nations to host refugee populations if they perceive themselves to be bearing a disproportionate burden” (Collett & Ahad, 2017).

One element of bilateral support for Ethiopia from the UK, the EU and other donors has come in the form of the Ethiopia Jobs Compact, which seeks to support that country’s industrialisation through the creation of over 100,000 jobs, including 30,000 for refugees, in the manufacturing sector, with a particular focus on jobs in textiles for young women (Devtracker, 2019a). Launched in December 2017, it is too early to see the results of the project, as the only existing Annual Review, dated January 2019, states that it is still in the start-up phase. It does, however, highlight a number of early successes, primarily around negotiations and agreements with the Ethiopian government, including on the development of frameworks for refugee protection (Devtracker, 2019b). Perhaps the most significant development has been the issuing of Proclamation No 1110/2019 which, once implemented, will grant enhanced rights to many refugees, including the right to work, travel and receive services commensurate with those for nationals. However, research into the role of employment as a driver of migration, discussed above under Theme 1, shows the limited effect of local, particularly low-wage job creation in curbing international migration from Ethiopia.

### 3.2 The role of international actors in ‘borderwork’

Within the context of international support for migrants and managed migration, international organisations and humanitarian actors are reportedly taking on quasi-political roles in some contexts. Frowd (2018) examines the growing role of intergovernmental organisations such as the IOM in the governance of borders in countries such as South Sudan, situating IOM as a ‘developmental borderwork’ actor, with practices underpinned by humanitarian and development approaches, as well as a technical best practice focus, but operating in the context of continuing tensions between humanitarianism, state building and state sovereignty. IOM’s work in Djibouti, particularly around building capacity for migration management, has also reportedly worked to strengthen state sovereignty by enhancing the government’s ability to exclude irregular migrants from its territory, and by strengthening its governance over its own citizens when entering the country (Dini, 2018).

The potential role of humanitarian actors is even more significant in situations where borders are more fluid, as Jansen (2018) points out in the context of humanitarian programmes dealing with forced displacement in the disputed region of Abyei, on the border of Sudan and South Sudan. These programmes have arguably become politicised in the border dispute, and may have an eventual role in shaping its outcome.

### 3.3 The impact of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) on countries of origin

The CRRF was adopted in September 2016, and informed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which was affirmed by UN Member States in December 2018. Both the CRRF and GCR have at their

heart the idea of community inclusion for refugees, with camps being seen as a last resort (UNHCR, 2019a). The CRRF has four key objectives: to reduce the pressures experienced by host countries; to improve the self-reliance of refugees; to expand the access of refugees to third-country solutions to displacement; and to improve conditions in refugee-producing countries. Thanks to Uganda's progressive refugee policy, and its position as the third-largest refugee-hosting nation in the world, it was chosen by UNHCR as a pilot country for the CRRF. This was followed by a Solidarity Summit on Refugees, co-hosted by UNHCR and the Government of Uganda in June 2017, seeking \$2 billion in funding for the CRRF in Uganda. Despite significant high-profile interest in the event, only \$350 million was raised in pledges, with 82 per cent of these coming from the EU and its member states. Among non-traditional and private sector donors, \$500,000 was pledged by China, while the largest private-sector pledge was \$1 million, from an African telecommunications company (Coggio, 2018).

Other countries in the region where the CRRF is being implemented are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In each of these countries, the dynamics reflect the different situations with displaced populations. However, with support from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), these countries have been focusing more on learning from and sharing experience with each other. Following ministerial agreements on education and jobs/livelihoods, these areas have been particularly subject to attention within the region (by both CRRF and non-CRRF countries) (REF, 2019b). In the case of Somalia, in March 2017, Heads of States adopted the Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia, along with its Plan of Action. These seek to take a regional approach to finding solutions to the protracted Somali migration crisis (UNHCR, 2018c). Other regional agreements and approaches include the Djibouti Declaration on Regional Refugee Education, adopted in December 2017 and committing to integration of refugees in national education plans, and the Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods and Self-reliance for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities in the IGAD Region, adopted in March 2019, which commits to advancing livelihood opportunities and economic inclusion for refugees (UNHCR, 2018b).

The CRRF has been successful in leveraging support from other donors, for example Germany's support for a range of livelihoods projects through a variety of implementers in the refugee-hosting parts of northern Uganda (Federal Ministry (BMZ), 2018); support from other donors such as SIDA (Sweden) and JICA (Japan) also focuses on livelihoods and resilience.

The CRRF is also supporting activities in Ethiopia, for example funding from Germany to support refugee education and to drive policy changes within the country. Ethiopia started recording refugee life events in its civil registry in October 2017, representing an increasing integration of refugees into society (Salant, 2017).

### 3.4 EU policy towards tackling migration transit countries

The development of funding instruments supporting new frameworks and projects addressing migration issues in areas of origin and transit has become an important part of the EU's overall policy towards tackling irregular migration since 2015. This expanding external action has run alongside continued internal funding for reception, management and integration within the EU. Research suggests that this increasing 'externalisation' of European migration control is resulting in

the empowerment of third countries, which are able to use migration issues in international negotiations. These approaches use the humanitarian and neoliberal logic of governing migration to complement securitisation policies, thus stabilising and strengthening the trans-Mediterranean migration regime (Bartels, 2017).

The Khartoum Process, established in 2014, is an international dialogue between the African Union and the European Union (Member States, European Commission and External Action Service) to combat migrant trafficking and smuggling from the Horn of Africa through transit countries to Europe (Khartoum Process, 2016a). This has given rise to a number of initiatives to support the process. For example, the Regional Development Protection Programme (RDDP) for the Horn of Africa, a flagship programme of the Valletta Action Plan, was launched in 2015, funded by the EU and led by The Netherlands. Focusing on Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya, as they are the countries hosting large numbers of refugees from Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan, the stated aim of the RDDP is to “create evidence-based, innovative and sustainable protection and development approaches for refugees and their host communities”, through four pillars:

1. capacity building of authorities;
2. protection of refugees (particularly vulnerable groups);
3. promoting access to integrated services for refugees and the host population;
4. supporting socioeconomic development (Khartoum Process, 2016b).

However, recent studies have criticised the Khartoum Process in relation to both its execution and concept. In execution, some have claimed that, despite its stated aims to tackle irregular migration in Sudan, it has primarily functioned as a means to try and strengthen borders, effectively outsourcing migration management from Europe. They have also questioned the very idea of trying to strengthen borders in an area where ethnic groups often straddle borders and migrate back and forth at will (Lindsay, 2019). Since 2016, the EU has been criticised by human rights campaigners for providing support to repressive regimes through the provision of equipment intended to strengthen border processes in transit countries such as Sudan, despite the potential for such equipment to be used for repression (Akumu, 2016). Notwithstanding these criticisms, bilateral support in many cases continues to focus on increased securitisation of migration routes. An example is the UK’s East Africa Migration Programme, led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and National Crime Agency (NCA). The programme’s stated aims are to disrupt organised crime in East Africa by strengthening law enforcement and community engagement and providing policy and technical support.

Oette and Babiker (2017) have shown that there are systemic weaknesses in Sudan’s law that hamper its ability to “manage migration” effectively or in accordance with human rights: for example, in its approach to summary deportations without access to asylum processes. Writing in 2017 on the first phase of the Khartoum Process, they also argue that the Process undermines the EU’s external policy: Article 21(1) of the Treaty on European Union provides that the EU’s international actions shall be guided by a set of principles, including human rights, whereas the Khartoum Process takes a “managerial, project-based approach”, rather than a rights-based one (Oette & Babiker, 2017).

Additional research by Crawley and Blitz (2019) has reiterated concerns around the lack of rights-based language and practice under the Khartoum Process. Their survey of and interview data from refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa arriving in Europe suggest that “It is ultimately the ability of refugees and other migrants to secure access to rights and protection that will remove, or at least reduce, a perception that these are only to be found elsewhere” (Crawley & Blitz, 2019, p 2272). The researchers call for the EU to use its resources to re-centre rights in its migration management processes, rather than focusing on security and border management in origin and transit countries. In mid-2019, the EU put on hold the capacity-building components of its programmes, which worked with Sudanese government institutions, citing political and security concerns (European Commission, nd).

### 3.5 Regional approaches to migration governance

The role of regional mechanisms such as the IGAD in the Horn of Africa in managing migration is receiving increasing recognition. Dick and Schraven’s (2018) exploration of migration governance by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and IGAD indicates that these regional bodies are well placed for regional migration governance, albeit with different strengths – for example, IGAD focuses on informal cooperation between member states, while ECOWAS has strong formal powers to enforce regional policies. Both bodies are in need of enhanced financial and technical support to strengthen their ability to manage migration.

# Conclusion

This overview of new literature on the links between migration, development and conflict in the Horn of Africa can only give a partial picture, highlighting those issues that have been most prominent in the past three years and paying less attention to chronic concerns, where there may have been fewer new insights to report. These ongoing issues are covered in the previous REF literature review (REF, 2017a). By way of conclusion, we highlight some areas where research is still lacking. Some refer to long-standing issues that require new approaches; others are concerned with newly emerging issues and those where conditions are changing rapidly in this fast-moving region.

1. The impact of the CRRF (the subject of an ongoing REF study) is expected to deliver more integration between refugees and host communities. However, even as governments in Uganda and Ethiopia develop new refugee policies, we are seeing insufficient funding to support CRRF initiatives in the region. Many challenges to CRRF progress remain, including questions around how more 'progressive' or open approaches to refugees can be sustained – both financially and politically – in the face of such funding shortfalls.
2. There is clear evidence of growing urbanisation across the region – seen in the multiple references to rural–urban migration. As REF research in Somalia has shown, urbanisation is intimately connected with displacement, refugee returns and other elements of forced migration, as well as rural–urban migration that can be characterised as driven more by livelihoods. How do these links between urbanisation and displacement play out in other parts of the region? The REF is already planning a study on this in South Sudan, but the changing conditions in Eritrea and Sudan may make this an important and viable area of research in those two countries as well.
3. Education is an important driver of migration across the region (as it is in other parts of the world). However, not only do people move in search of education, they also resist moving to ensure they or their children can complete their studies. How does this shape patterns of displacement and return movement where there are high levels of instability and political violence? In particular, when we are concerned with cross-border movement, what qualities of education play the most important role in shaping people's decision – quality, qualifications or language? Moreover, how do the changing cultures of education change people's ideas about moving – for example, will a female migrant want to return to a more socially conservative environment where putting girls into schools may be discouraged?
4. There is research into the role of social media in driving migration – providing the images that stimulate ideas of moving, and the information and contacts that facilitate it. However, there

is an important role for social media in ensuring that the benefits of migration are delivered – maintaining networks, enabling rural–urban safety nets to function, and so forth. It is not clear how far social media may serve to exacerbate migration behaviour or potentially reduce the need for it by enabling the benefits of migration to be shared.

5. There are frequent calls to understand better and learn from the perspectives of migrants and their communities. However, it is not clear how this can be taken into account in programming, especially where these perspectives do not resonate with the interests of states, donors and international organisations. For example, returned ‘failed’ migrants are being recruited to deliver messages about the risks and costs of irregular migration. This reflects a rather narrow set of perspectives. Is there anything to be learned from those who are successful?
6. It is striking that the discussions on migration governance across the region are making much more reference to the GCR and the CRRF. Is there any prospect of an equivalent articulation of the Global Compact on Migration in policy and programming across the region? Is there any implementation strategy for the region?
7. Crossing borders, often using irregular routes, plays a very important role in the livelihoods of millions of people across the region (especially pastoralists and many labour migrants) and also provides protection in times of crisis as people seek asylum in the face of political crises and violence. The EUTF is making significant investments in trying to improve the safety of these movements and ensure people’s rights are upheld, in particular through the Better Migration Management programme. However, there is a tension between the imperatives of humanitarianism (ensuring protection and rights), development (enabling livelihoods) and state building and state sovereignty over borders. Is it possible to resolve such tensions, and if so how? If not, which should take priority and who decides?

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