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# Voluntary Return Assistance to Migrants in Tanzania

SITUATION REPORT I

April-May 2014

IOM Tanzania and AVR@IOM



The main objective of the project is to assist stranded and destitute migrants in Tanzania and increase the capacity of the government to document and manage return migration. The actions are part of a large programme sanctioned by the government and funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom in the area of registration and return specifically for Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, as well as Ethiopia and, in certain cases, Somalia.

The project includes assisted voluntary return (AVR) of stranded migrants, capacity building of immigration officials and a workshop to enhance regional cooperation on the protection of vulnerable migrants.

The following report is a brief update of the project activities conducted in April and May 2014.

## 1. Verification mission to seven prisons in Tanzania

As of April 2014, 334 Ethiopian irregular migrants were reported by Immigration Department to be held in Tanzanian prisons. When they were arrested, most of these migrants were seeking to reach South Africa to pursue work and livelihood opportunities.

From 12 to 19 April, two teams, each composed of one IOM Tanzania staff member, one IOM Addis colleague, one Ethiopian official, as well as Tanzania Immigration and Prisons officials, conducted verification visits across seven prisons (in Coastal, Tanga, Moshi, Mbeya, Iringa and Morogoro regions). During the mission, the nationality of 220 migrants was verified and, afterwards, single interviews were conducted.

### IOM and Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) over the years

1.2+ million migrants assisted since 1979

400,000+ migrants assisted over the last ten years

25,000 to 30,000 migrants assisted per year on average

### IOM Tanzania in action

In the last two months IOM has achieved the following results:

- Assessment visit to seven prisons in Tanzania
- 220 Ethiopian irregular migrants identified
- 115 Ethiopian migrants repatriated to date

During the interviews, all migrants talked about their experience, the reason for leaving their country, the journey, the time in prison, the fees paid and the intended final destination.

As Daniel, 30 years old, explained during his interview, "I left my country one year and a half ago, I was told by a friend that Kenya offers many well-paid jobs, so I went there and stayed for some months. I had troubles with papers and permit, so I moved to Uganda and then tried to go back to Kenya for another job."

Finally I decided to go the way down to South-Africa through Tanzania, but in Tanzania I was caught and sent to prison. I have been here for more than five months and haven't spoken to my wife and children since then. Maybe they think I am dead".

This is only one of the many stories told by Ethiopians migrants who have tried to reach South Africa and instead have ended up stranded in overcrowded prisons in Tanzania. With the Northern Route being increasingly perilous and following Saudi Arabia's 2013 decision to deport over 160,000 irregular Ethiopian migrants, the numbers of Ethiopian irregular migrants in Tanzania en route to South Africa has increased. Overall, a total of 14 migrants were unaccompanied minors between the age of 16 and 17. Four migrants started their prison sentence when they were still children. The migrants were issued with laissez-passers to enable them to travel back home.

## 2. 115 migrants repatriated

To date, IOM has organized the return of three groups (29th April, 2nd May and 20th May), thus facilitating the voluntary return of 115 migrants.

Back in Ethiopia, the returnees will be provided with assistance to facilitate their reintegration.

For more information on the topic of irregular migration in the region, please consult IOM studies:

### In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity. Assessment of irregular movement of men from East Africa and the Horn to South Africa

[http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/In\\_Pursuit\\_of\\_the\\_Southern\\_Dream.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/In_Pursuit_of_the_Southern_Dream.pdf)

### or Health Vulnerabilities of Mixed Migrants from the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes to Southern Africa (Executive Summary Findings from the Formative Stage)

<https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2013/pbn-listing/study-highlights-health-vulnerab.html>



Two groups of Ethiopian migrants awaiting their departure at Dar es Salaam airport , ©IOM 2014



## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

- Assisted voluntary return of 82 Ethiopians migrants from Mkuza prison (Dar es Salaam)
- Training for immigration officials on return management, including mixed migratory flows, human rights of migrants and principles of international protection
- Regional workshop with the Governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania to enhance the dialogue on the management of migratory flows



The new programme logo

IOM produced a logo for the "Humanitarian Assistance to Migrants in Tanzania" programme, including the donors and the main partners; the logo displays the main services that IOM will provide under this programme (funded by DFID, Japan and EU), namely reaching out migrants households, registering irregular migrants and offering the choice to regularize their status or to go back home.

## MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

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## WITH THANKS TO OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS:

