

Protection risks for people on the move from East Africa and Yemen

This 4Mi snapshot highlights protection risks faced by refugees and migrants on the move from and within East Africa and Yemen. The data draws from 2,713 interviews conducted between June 2017 and July 2019. 1,866 Ethiopians, 672 Somalis, 122 Eritreans, 42 Yemenis and 11 Djiboutians were interviewed. MMC West Africa and MMC North Africa have also recently published snapshots on protection [here](#), and [here](#).

Profiles



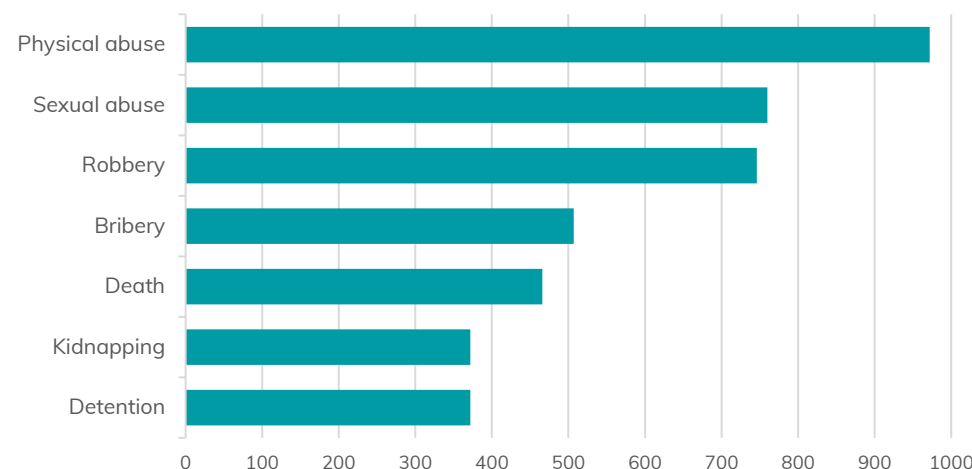
The majority of these interviews were conducted in Egypt (942), Kenya (531) and South Africa (375). The other countries of interview included Djibouti (311), Germany (231), Puntland (114), Somaliland (64), Yemen (61), Denmark (49), Norway (21), Somalia (9) and Sweden (5).

Of 2,713 refugees and migrants interviewed, 35% were women and 65% were men. The majority of the respondents were unemployed at the time of leaving their journey (22%) despite having the highest level of education being secondary or high school (31%).

Physical assault, sexual abuse and robbery were most frequent

Refugees and migrants on all routes out of the region consistently reported either witnessing or personally experiencing protection risks on their journey. Protection abuses were reported on a total of 4,195 separate occasions. Refugees and migrants often reported more than one person dying on each occasion, with the total number of deaths reported standing at 2,140.

Figure 1. Number of occasions of abuse witnessed or experienced reported, by type



n = 1649

The three most commonly reported types of incident were physical assault, sexual assault and robbery. Physical assault encompasses a wide range of abuses. The most cited types of physical abuse included mild abuse (e.g. slapping, hitting), verbal abuse and denial of food/water.

The northern route recorded the highest number of protection incidents

Respondents travelling north from the region towards North Africa and Europe were more likely to report having witnessed or experienced an incident (914 migrants reporting 2,837 incidents) than those travelling towards southern Africa (534 migrants reporting 1,060 incidents), those within the Horn of Africa region (168 migrants reporting 239 incidences), or travelling east towards Yemen and the Gulf (33 migrants reporting 59 incidences).

Figure 2. Number of reported incidents by route

Route	Bribes	Deaths	Detention	Kidnappings	Physical abuse	Robbery	Sexual abuse
Northern route	163	326	229	313	695	494	617
Southern route	274	107	110	42	216	213	98
Within region	63	20	30	16	43	30	37
Eastern route	7	13	3	1	18	9	8



Northern route (n = 1,249), Southern route (n = 906), within region (n = 498), Eastern route (n = 61)

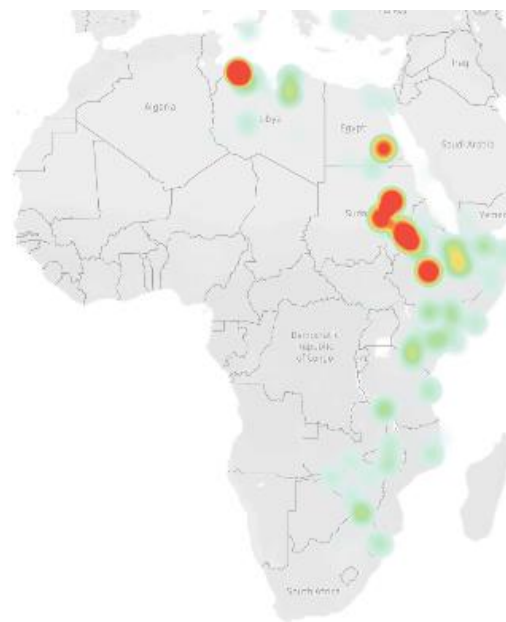
The types of risks faced varied depending on the route used. Along the northern route, the most prevalent risks were physical abuse, robbery, and sexual abuse. Along the southern route, bribery was the most occasioned risk, likely related to the number of border crossings made. Other frequently reported risks included robbery and physical abuse. And along the eastern route, the types of abuse were fairly evenly spread, with physical abuse and death being the most cited incidents.

The map below indicates that the reported incidents occurred mostly at border crossings and in major towns and cities.

While our data is not representative, and 4Mi cannot show the hotspots for protection incidents, interviews are carried out at a number of points along all the routes covered in this snapshot. Mapping incidents gives an indication of locations where incidents are more frequently reported, but it is important to bear in mind that the frequency of reporting may also relate to sampling bias. Protection risks were reported along all three routes, but the largest proportion (39%) of all protection incidents were reported to have occurred in Sudan, Libya and Ethiopia. Libya and Sudan are where the highest number of deaths were reported. The highest number of sexual assaults were reported to have occurred in Sudan (435) and Ethiopia (234).

The heat map shows the intensity of protection incident, with red indicating a higher number of reported incidents.

Figure 3. Risk hotspots as reported by 4Mi respondents*



n = 1,649

* It is important to emphasise that this is only an indication of the location of protection incidents according to the 4Mi sample, since the data is not representative.

“ I saw a boat with 150 migrants sink in ” the Mediterranean

23-year old Ethiopian man |
Interviewed in Germany |
July 2017 |

Capital cities and other urban hubs are most often cited as areas where incidents take place. The ‘unspecified locations’ category is also prevalent, particularly for Sudan and Libya, and implies that incidents occurred in the desert.

Figure 5. Cities with most protection incidents reported by 4Mi respondents, by type

Country	Location	Bribes	Deaths	Detention	Kidnapped	Physical abuse	Robbery	Sexual abuse
Sudan	Khartoum	28	2	29	33	121	133	148
	Gedaref	41	14	28	49	110	127	74
	Unspecified locations	6	243	14	52	55	16	50
	Atbara	30	65	46	119	77	29	43
	El Shemaliya	4	34	1		70	141	98
Libya	Tripoli		652	23	16	147	8	86
	Unspecified locations	1	277	3	9	27	4	8
	Ajdabiya		34	2	5	47	7	18
	Bani Walid		35	1	3	39	2	27
	Benghazi		24	9	5	22	3	11
Ethiopia	Debre Zeit		500			1		1
	Addis Ababa	13		1		22	89	34
	Unspecified locations	12	38	22	15	33	13	21
	Bahadar	4		5	5	27	31	29
	Azezo	2		2	5	10	13	6
Egypt	Aswan	9	9	8	87	179	27	75
	Unspecified locations	1	37	3	34	55	7	43
	Sinai	1	4		4	3	1	1
	Helwan				2	3		1
	Cairo	1		1		3		1
Kenya	Nairobi	50	1	7		6	11	5
	Garissa	50		7		6	1	
	Unspecified locations	13	6	4	1	3	3	7
	Liboi	16	5	3		10		2
	Mandera	12		14		3		

n = 1,649



81% of physical abuse perpetrated by smugglers

4Mi data indicates that smugglers were considered the main perpetrators of all forms of abuse against migrants and refugees. Other groups, such as thugs/criminal gangs and security forces, were identified to a lesser extent. Among 972 cases of physical abuse, for example, 81% were reportedly committed by smugglers, 36% by unknown individuals, 31% by thugs/criminal gangs and 28% by security forces (respondents can report more than one perpetrators). Among 746 cases of robbery, 68% were reportedly committed by smugglers, compared with 61% by groups of thugs/criminal gangs and 40% by single unknown individuals.

Figure 6. Perpetrators of physical abuse



n = 972

Despite this, the data indicates that 40% of respondents agreed that the smugglers helped them in achieving their goal of migrating to another country, while 16% disagreed. 20% of respondents described the smugglers as criminals.

Corruption prevalent in Kenya

19% (507) of respondents reported that they had to give government officials gifts, services or bribes during their journey. This almost exclusively comprised an exchange of money (99%). The amount paid in bribes ranged from US\$7–3,000, with an average total of US\$319 per respondent.

The data also indicates that the highest number of the bribery cases were cited in Kenya. Overall, bribes paid in Kenya account for 34% of the total, with Nairobi and Garissa being cited as the main hotspots. (835 of the respondents interviewed mentioned that they had transited through Kenya). This is reflective of findings from the 2018 [Corruption Perception Index](#) report that ranks Kenya as 144th out of 175 countries.

The Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move. 4Mi field monitors are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in West Africa, East Africa and Yemen, North Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. The findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make any inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at www.mixedmigration.org/4mi

