

In addition to being a country of origin, Sudan serves as a key country of destination as well as transit for refugees and migrants moving along the Central Mediterranean Route towards Europe or the Eastern Route towards the Gulf. This snapshot examines the main mixed migration routes through Sudan towards Libya and explores whether and how respondents interacted with smugglers on their journey.

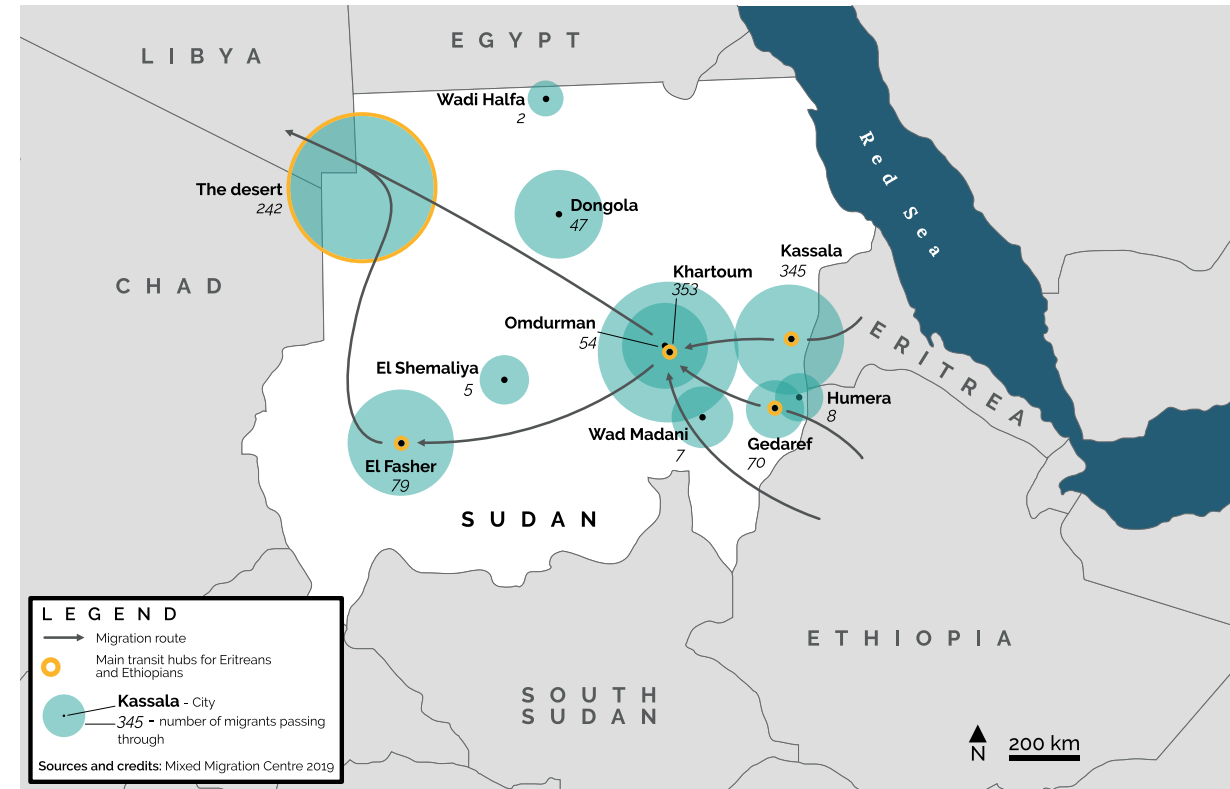
Profiles

This snapshot is based on 4Mi data on refugees and migrants who moved through Sudan to Libya.¹ Out of the 5,659 4Mi surveys of refugees and migrants conducted in Libya between May 2017 and October 2019, 627 refugees and migrants were Sudanese (11%) and an additional 483 had passed through Sudan, mainly from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia (a combined total of 1,110 respondents; 19.6% of the sample). All the Ethiopians in the 4Mi Libya sample had passed through Sudan (n=63). All but two of the Eritreans in the sample had passed through Sudan (n=363 v. 365) and all but one Somali had passed through Sudan (n=20 v. 21).

Two primary routes from Sudan to Libya: via Dongola in the North and El Fasher in the South-West

Eritreans (87%) mainly entered and/or transited Sudan through Kassala. The second most transited city was Gedaref (14%). Once further into the country, 79% reported passing through Khartoum, and 15% through El Fasher. The main transit city for Ethiopians (n=63) is Khartoum (84%; n=53), followed by Kassala (37%), and El Fasher (29%). Of the 20 Somalis who moved through Sudan, 13 transited via Khartoum, 7 through El Fasher and 5 through Dongola. 4Mi data also reveal that more than half of the East Africans and Sudanese report (57.7%) passing through 'the desert' to reach Libya. It is not clear whether these respondents did not want to disclose their exact location or were unfamiliar with their location in northern Sudan.

Figure 1. East African and Sudanese Routes through Sudan to Libya



4Mi data complement findings from a 2018 Overseas Development Institute (ODI) qualitative study which suggest there are two primary routes from Sudan to Libya: one through Dongola in the north-central region, and one through El Fasher in the southwestern region.² Of the 483 migrants who travelled through Sudan but are not Sudanese, 4.6% also transited through Egypt before reaching Libya, and 2.9% transited through Chad, indicating that most crossed directly to Libya from Sudan.

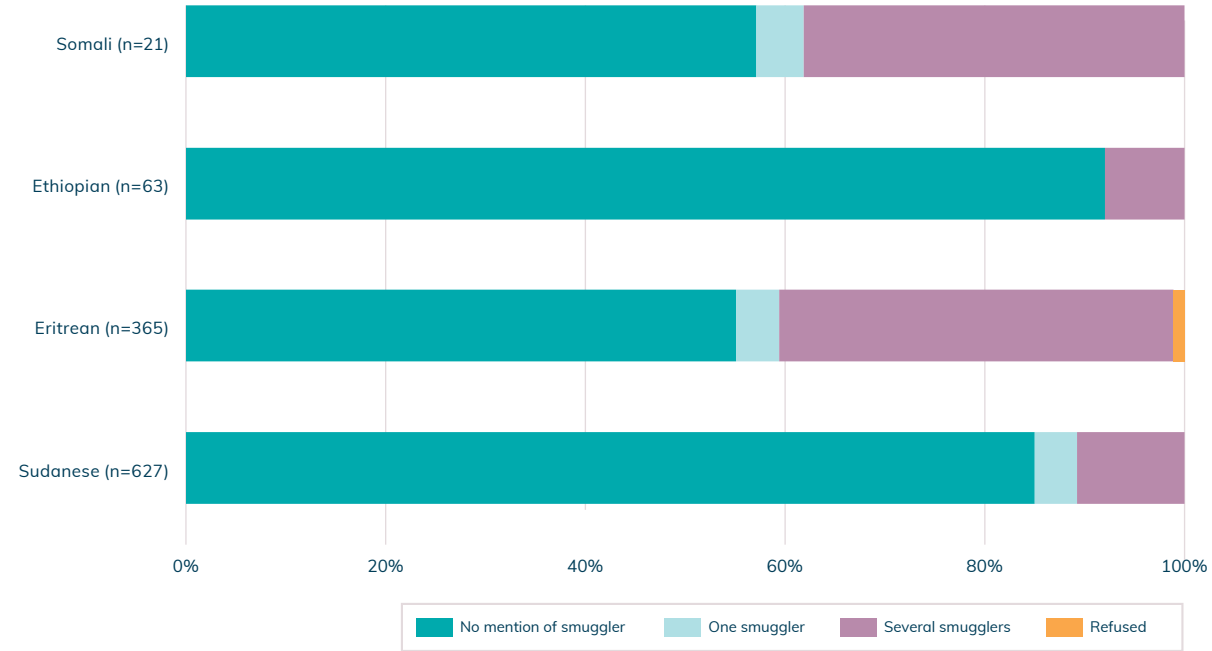
¹ No 4Mi data is currently collected in Sudan.

² Jaspers, S. and M. Buchanan-Smith (2018) "Darfuri migration from Sudan to Europe." ODI.

Eritrean, Ethiopian, Somali and Sudanese respondents more often travelled independently than used smugglers

Approximately 40% of Eritrean, Ethiopian and Somali ('East African') respondents and 15% of Sudanese respondents cited the use of at least one smuggler along their journey (country-specific breakdown can be found in Figure 2). This contrasts with the rest of the 4Mi sample in Libya, predominantly traveling along the Central Mediterranean Route from West African origin countries, of which 75% cited using one or more smugglers. A significant difference between these groups was determined (t-test: p=0.00).

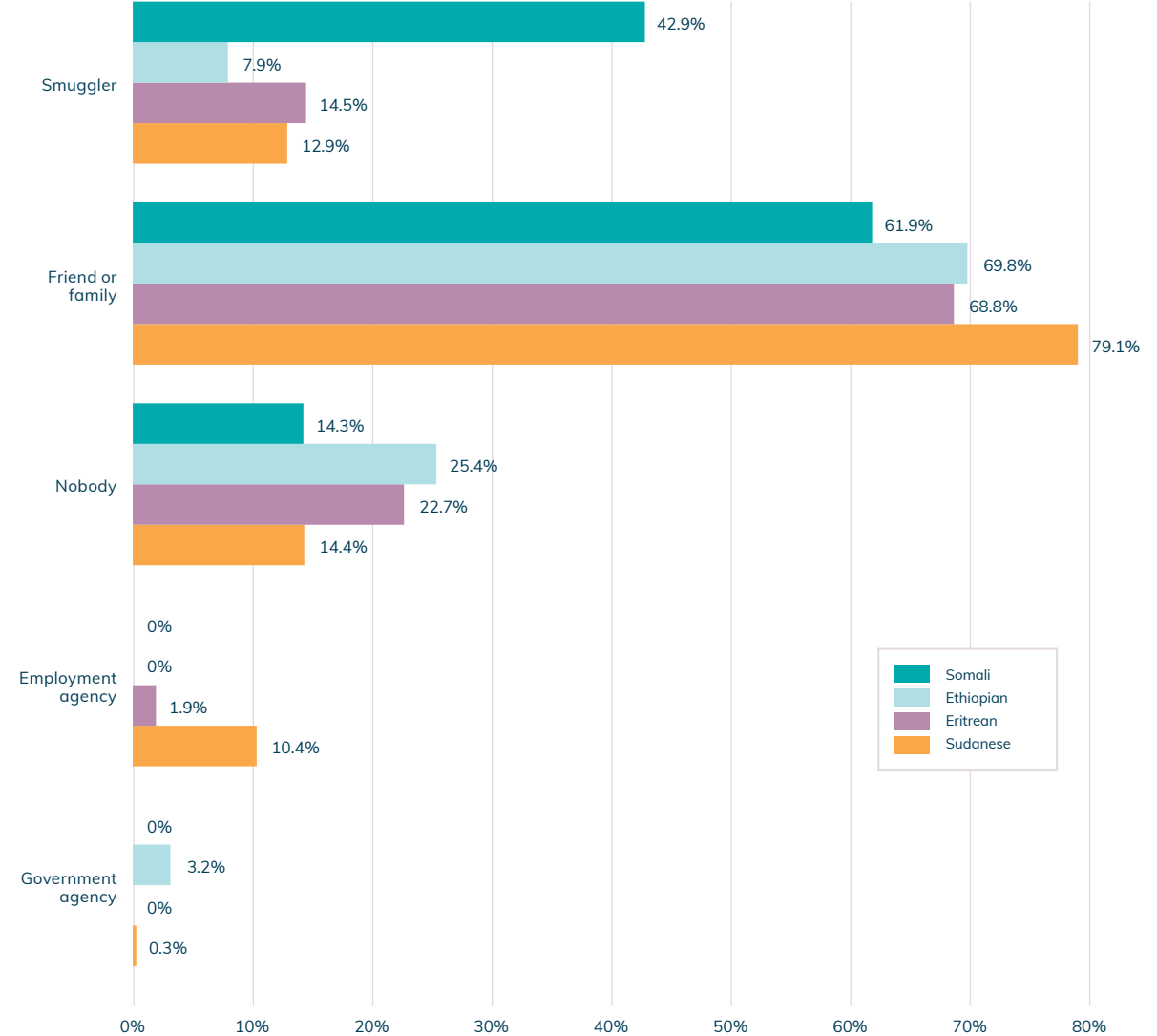
Figure 2. Have you been using one or more smugglers?



The fact that fewer Sudanese moved with a smuggler is not surprising when one considers Libya's history of receiving migrants from Sudan and Sudan and Libya's shared border. In 1987, Libya introduced visa-free entry for Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Sudanese before reintroducing restrictions in the 2000s. However, the data also suggest that Ethiopians, Eritreans and Somalis less often used a smuggler when passing through Sudan to reach Libya contrasting with common narratives on smuggling of East African through Sudan. It is possible that East African respondents felt less comfortable than their West African counterparts to disclose their interactions with smugglers. Such differences between East and West African respondents warrant further investigation.

Figure 3 illustrates the actors reported by respondents to have facilitated their journey, meaning they provided some form of support to aid respondents' migration. The data reveal that 'friends and family' was the most-cited actor across countries of origin. The data also highlight diverging patterns regarding the remaining actors. Among Somalis, smugglers were the second-most cited actor, while among Eritreans, Ethiopians and Sudanese, they were the third-most cited actor, reported by between 7.9% and 14.5% of respondents. Eritrean, Ethiopian and Sudanese respondents more often facilitated their own journeys than used a smuggler.

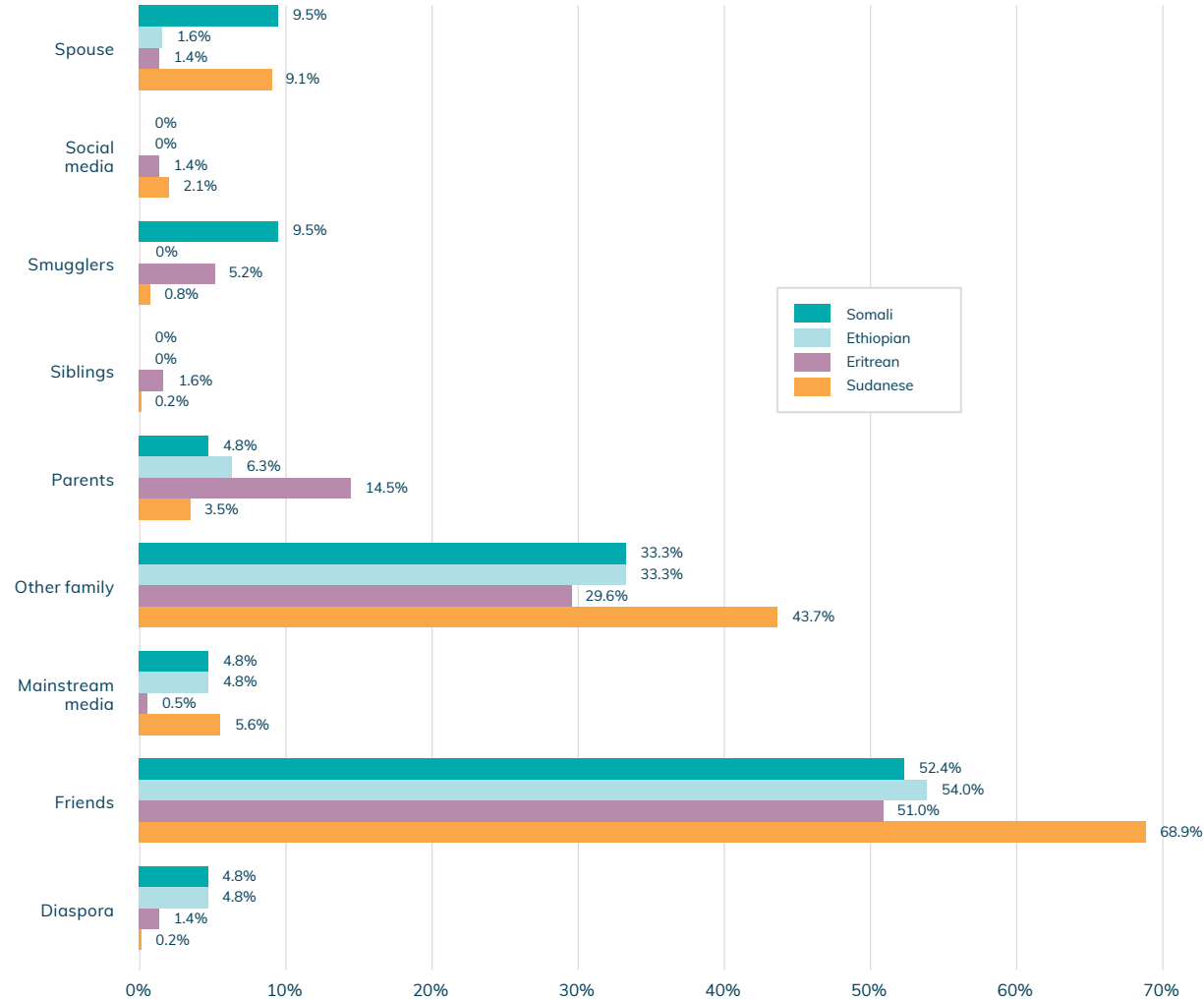
Figure 3. Who facilitated your journey?



Smugglers were among the actors least cited by East Africans and Sudanese as encouraging migration to Libya

The data suggest that smugglers played less of a role in encouraging Sudanese and East African respondents to start their journey compared to friends and wider family such as aunts and cousins (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Who encouraged you to migrate?



Supporting previous qualitative research into migration through Sudan, this snapshot identifies two main transit routes through Sudan to Libya via Dongola in the Northern Central Region and via El Fasher in the South-Western Region. Beyond routes, studies around migration drivers highlight the 'migration industry' to understand and map the various actors involved in migration processes.³ In alignment with such studies, the data from 4Mi refugees and migrants travelling through Sudan to Libya highlight that there are a multitude of actors involved in the migration process. That said, 4Mi data indicate that friends and family are key players in both encouraging and facilitating migration.

Perhaps contrary to dominant discourses on migrant smuggling and contrary to some previous studies which detail the reliance of refugees and migrants on smuggling networks through East Africa and Libya, smugglers were found to play less of a central role in mixed migration for East African and Sudanese respondents on the move to Libya,⁴ in comparison to West African respondents. The competing narratives on the reliance of East Africans on smugglers warrant further research: How do refugees and migrants perceive smuggling and smugglers? What are the structure and modus-operandi of smuggling networks operating from East Africa to Libya? How do these differ from those originating in West Africa? Do the nature and structure of smuggling networks present specific vulnerabilities to refugees and migrants.

3 Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., & Sørensen, N. N. (Eds.). (2013). *The migration industry and the commercialization of international migration* (Vol. 69). London: Routledge; Hernández-León, R. (2013). Conceptualizing the migration industry. In *The migration industry and the commercialization of international migration* (pp. 42-62). Routledge.
 4 Sahan. (2016) "Human Trafficking and Smuggling on the Horn of Africa-Central Mediterranean Route".



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, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

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