SUPPORTING REFUGEES, MIGRANTS AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN THE IGAD REGION

Introduction
The Horn of Africa has been an epicentre of some of the largest and longest-running migratory and refugee movements. Migration can be a source of integration, development, prosperity and the exchange of ideas and values. However, it can also be driven by structural challenges such as poverty, conflict and lack of economic opportunities. When it happens out of necessity, it is often unsafe and irregular, exposing people to a variety of risks. Migration can create challenges both in the places of origin (e.g., loss of young, ambitious people) as well as in the places of transit and destination (e.g., increased pressure on public infrastructure and natural resources).

11.3 million
Number of internally displaced persons and refugees in the IGAD region

In response to this, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) set up a 3-year project, the Regional Migration Fund (RMF) in September 2019. This initiative aims to create economic opportunities, improve living conditions and promote social cohesion among refugees, migrants and host communities. A Fund Management Unit (FMU) was established to operate, continuously develop and manage the Fund.

Investment Windows
Investment Window 1 aims to promote local economic development and employment growth, improve migrant and host community livelihoods and strengthen social cohesion in two areas. The cross-border areas selected by IGAD member states include Metemma-Gallabat on the Ethiopia-Sudan frontier and Moyale-Moyale on the Ethiopia-Kenya frontier.

One-stop border post in Moyale (Photo: RMF)

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Investment Window 2 aims to promote economic and social development in a protracted refugee settlement plus adjacent host community areas to improve refugee and host community livelihoods, connect and upgrade the settlement and host community areas, and strengthen social cohesion. The area selected for implementation is the region of Ali Sabieh, including the refugee settlement and village of Ali Addeh, close to the Djibouti-Somalia-Ethiopia borders.

The RMF also promotes shared social services and public infrastructure. This means that a variety of multisectoral measures can be supported (e.g., training sessions, irrigation infrastructure, road construction or access to finance) if they are needed for the improvement and upgrade of one or more selected value chains.

Organizational Setup
The Regional Migration Fund comprises a three-tier governance structure:

- **Steering Committee** – responsible for guidance, technical advice and oversight. It is composed of IGAD, all IGAD Member States, the German Government and contributing development partners of the RMF. KfW and GIZ have an observer status
- **IGAD** – responsible for decision-making, operational control and operations
- **Fund Management Unit** – responsible for the day-to-day decisions and implementation. It is currently housed within the Health and Social Development Division (HSDD) of IGAD.

Women vendors in an open air market in Ali Sabieh region in Djibouti (Photo: RMF)

Our Approach
Local communities are at the centre of the development process and they play a key role in the development of investment plans and make decisions on selection of priority measures. They are also involved in implementation and monitoring. Putting them at the centre ensures sustainability.

The project is implemented using the area-based approach. It focuses on selected areas where it combines two types of interventions:

- **Rapid cycle projects** – small-scale, use local resources, have a quick turnover and are strongly learning-oriented
- **Catalytic projects** – larger-scale, longer-term and have impacts within and across economic sectors, and establish structural conditions for sustained and inclusive economic growth

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development consists of eight countries, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. It is estimated that the region, with a population of almost 264 million, hosts about 12 million internally displaced persons. The Regional Migration Fund, established as the nucleus of the IGAD Migration Fund, aims to improve the living conditions and livelihoods of refugees, migrants and host communities, and to strengthen social cohesion amongst these groups. It is funded by the German government through KfW.