



# Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa



This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the West Africa (WA) region. The core countries of focus for this region are Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to any of the countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

The Mixed Migration Centre is a global network consisting of six regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. For more information on the MMC, the QMMUs from other regions and contact details of regional MMC teams, visit [mixedmigration.org](https://mixedmigration.org) and follow us at [@Mixed\\_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

### **MMC's understanding of mixed migration**

"Mixed migration" refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people in mixed flows have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Those in mixed migration flows travel along similar routes, using similar means of travel - often travelling irregularly, and wholly, or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

**Front cover photo credit:**

Jean-Baptiste Joire (2017)

Women watching boats in Joal-Fadiout, Senegal, February 2017.

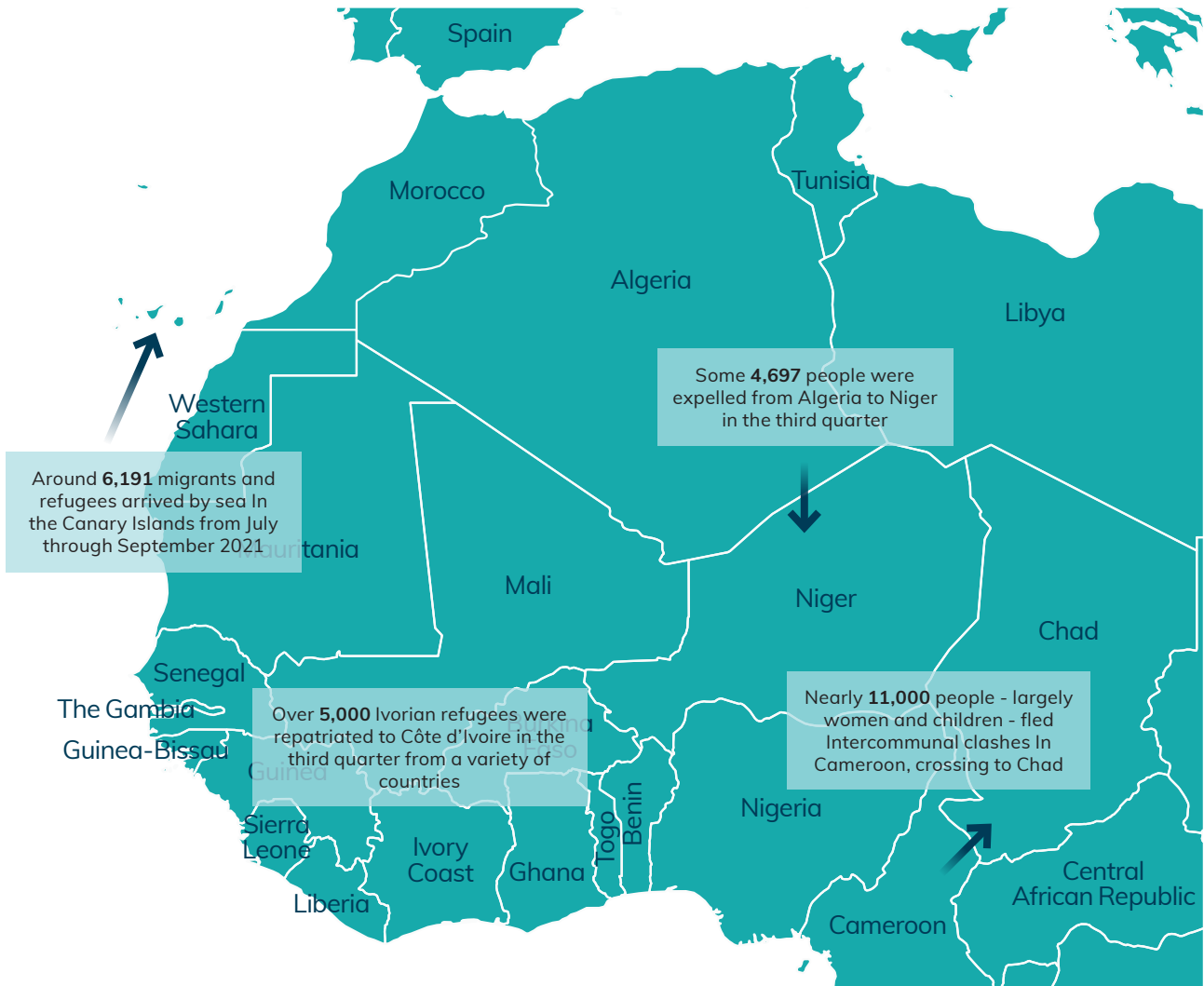
# Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa

## Quarter 3 - 2021

### Key Updates

- **Displacement in and from Burkina Faso:** By the end of August, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Burkina Faso had reached some [1,423,378](#). UNHCR also expressed concerns about cross border displacement, as they reported that the number of Burkinabè [refugees and asylum seekers](#) in the region had nearly doubled from January through July, with 17,500 new departures bringing the number to approximately 38,000.
- **Algeria expulsions to Niger:** According to the NGO [Alarme Phone Sahara](#), during the third quarter of 2021, Algerian officials forcibly expelled an estimated 4,697 people to Niger. Some 2,651 persons of primarily Nigerien origin, including substantial numbers of minors, were expelled in “official” convoys taken into Niger. Another 2,046 of other mainly West and Central African nationalities were expelled in “unofficial” convoys which typically leave people at the border in the desert. Alarme Phone Sahara estimates that at least [16,580](#) people have been expelled from Algeria to Niger in the first eight months of the year.
- **Cessation of Ivorian refugee status:** The [Abidjan Joint Declaration](#) on the Updated Roadmap for Comprehensive Solutions for Ivorian Refugees, issued by Côte d'Ivoire, neighboring states and UNHCR, has “recommended the application of the cessation clause of their refugee status” for Ivorian refugees, due to take effect as of 30 June 2022. Over [5,000 Ivorian refugees](#) were repatriated to Côte d'Ivoire during the quarter.
- **Canary Islands arrivals:** Some 6,191 refugees and migrants arrived by sea in the Canary Islands during the quarter, according to a compilation of UNHCR’s [Spain Weekly Snapshots](#). As of 15 August, there had been almost [2.5 times](#) as many arrivals since the beginning of the year as in the same period in 2020, and with the typically [favorable weather](#) conditions of October and November, further increases are expected.
- **Deaths at sea along the Atlantic route:** IOM reported over [780 deaths](#) of refugees and migrants along the Atlantic route to Spain’s Canary Islands in the first eight months of the year. However, the recording of deaths at sea is notoriously difficult, and the NGO Caminando Fronteras has estimated a death toll closer to [2,000](#) so far this year, a [526% increase](#) compared to the first half of 2020.

## Regional Overview\*



\*Information on the map relates to selected updates and does not represent all mixed migration flows within and out of West Africa.



# Mixed Migration Regional Updates

## West Africa region

According to the [UNHCR](#) spokesperson in a briefing on **Burkina Faso** in late July, “the speed of internal displacement shows no sign of slowing as attacks on civilians and security forces continue unabated.” The first half of 2021 showed a substantial increase in the volume of displacement compared to the second half of 2020, with an average of [13,000](#) people displaced each week since April. As of late July there were more than 1.3 million IDPs in Burkina Faso, equalling [6% of the population](#). As at the end of August, this number had reached some [1,423,378](#).

At the same time, UNHCR also registered concerns about cross border displacement from Burkina Faso. From January through July, the number of Burkinabè refugees and asylum seekers around the region nearly doubled, with 17,500 new departures bringing the number to approximately [38,000](#). While the largest number were hosted in [Mali](#), as of July at least [11,423 Burkinabès](#) had been driven by armed groups across the border into Niger. That number was considered an under-estimate by UNHCR, and numbers were expected to keep rising. As of late July Côte d'Ivoire had received 430 asylum seekers from [Burkina Faso](#), and as of mid-September there were [reports](#) from southwestern Burkina Faso that people continued to enter Côte d'Ivoire by crossing the Comoé River, as they “are so afraid that they no longer dare to take the road.” [Benin](#) had also registered 179 Burkinabè asylum seekers, with reports of thousands more living in insecure border areas beyond the reach of humanitarian actors.

A worsening security situation has reduced desire on the part of [Malian refugees](#) in Burkina Faso to return to **Mali**. Whereas some 3,500 Malian refugees in Burkina Faso expressed intentions to return in 2020, as of July 2021 only five Malian refugees were expressing such intentions. UNHCR has registered more than 2,200 refugees and asylum seekers from Mali in Burkina Faso since the beginning of 2021, and this process is ongoing with an additional 4,900 persons. Some 30% of these individuals had previously been refugees in Burkina Faso, returned to Mali, and then came back again to Burkina Faso, demonstrating cycles of recurrent displacement.

[UNHCR](#) reported that more than “10,000 new arrivals seeking asylum settled in three villages of the department of Guidan Roumdji during the first week of August 2021.” These three villages are located in the Maradi region of **Niger**, where over several years tens of thousands of Nigerians have fled ongoing violence by non-state armed groups in northwestern **Nigeria**.

In remarks made on the margins of the G5 Sahel summit early July, Niger’s president Mohamed Bazoum announced that Niger and the governor of Borno State in Nigeria had reached an agreement to [repatriate](#) the more than 130,000 Nigerian refugees living in Niger’s Diffa region. The president stated, “We have set a deadline of the month of November-December for all the refugees from Nigeria who are in the Diffa region (of southeast Niger) to return home...” In June the Nigerien government had also stated its intentions to facilitate the return of all IDPs in Diffa, and as of the end of August, more than [40,000 IDPs](#) had gone back to their villages of origin. According to president [Bazoum](#), in the context of militant attacks, “the only solution for us to assert our authority is to ensure that we reoccupy our space and that we normalize the situation of our people.” Preparations for repatriation from neighboring countries of Nigerian refugees

were also being made on the part of the [Nigerian government](#), which was in the process of developing tripartite agreements for repatriation.

From July through September, over [5,000 refugees](#) were repatriated to **Côte d'Ivoire** from across the sub-region, which was hosting approximately 48,000 Ivorian refugees. This was a dramatic uptick over the first two quarters of 2021, in which only 26 repatriations took place, and also in comparison to 2020, in which 327 occurred. Low repatriation rates at the end of 2020 and into 2021 are likely explained by the tensions and insecurity surrounding the 31 October 2020 presidential elections, which as of late March 2021 had created more than [30,000](#) new Ivorian refugees. The trend of increasing repatriation seen in the third quarter is likely to continue given the September 7 signing of a [roadmap](#) to facilitate voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees (see Policy Updates below for more details).

Following intercommunal clashes in the Far North region of **Cameroon** in August, nearly [11,000 people](#) – 98% of whom were women and children – crossed the border into **Chad**. The conflict was caused by disputes over land and water usage, with UNHCR pointing to underlying climate changes, and the [Institute for Security Studies](#) citing the prevalence of firearms in an area of longstanding insecurity as an exacerbating factor. The social services of local host communities across the border in [Chad](#) have been hard pressed to receive this volume of refugees.

## Policy and legal updates

UNHCR issued a [position on returns](#) to **Burkina Faso** in July. It judged that people who had fled the conflict in Burkina Faso, or who were already outside of Burkina Faso as the situation worsened, are “likely to be in need of international refugee protection” under the [1969 OAU convention](#),<sup>1</sup> and may also meet the 1951 Convention standard for refugee status. It stated that “in light of the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation, UNHCR calls on States not to forcibly return to Burkina Faso any person originating from the following regions: Boucle du Mouhoun, Cascades, Centre-Est, Centre-Nord, Hauts-Bassins, Nord and Sahel.” It also cautioned against denial of international protection on the basis of a potential internal flight alternative elsewhere in Burkina Faso, except in situations where a person has a strong connection to that location, identified only after “careful consideration of the individual circumstances of the case.”

In July the [European Commission](#) proposed placing additional restrictions on the issuance of Schengen visas to nationals of **The Gambia**, following a notification by Germany and an assessment by the Commission which found that “Germany is confronted with substantial and persisting practical problems in cooperation with The Gambia in the readmission of irregular migrants...” This proposal is facilitated by the EU’s revised [Visa Code](#) which provides for explicit linkage of visa privileges to cooperation on readmission. Some [2,000 Gambians](#) in Germany whose asylum applications have been rejected await return to the Gambia, but a deportation slated for 1 September did not go forward as the Gambian Foreign Ministry stated concerns related to security and difficulties in reintegrating returnees. The issue of forced returns has been very [politically sensitive](#) in the Gambia, where [remittances](#) comprise more than 20% of the country’s GDP.

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1 Article 1(2)

During the third quarter Human Rights Watch published its [submission](#) to the Africa Regional Review on Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). It focused on several African countries in which it had carried out recent research, finding that while some advances had been made in relation to GCM objectives, there were still significant gaps. It highlighted in particular pervasive practices of human trafficking in **Nigeria** and **Senegal**, with insufficient assistance available for victims; arbitrary detention of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, frequently in inhumane conditions, in **Mauritania**; and forced returns, without due process, of migrants, refugees or asylum seekers by Mauritania, as well as abuses against returned asylum seekers in **Cameroon**.

Representatives of the Governments of **Côte d'Ivoire**, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania and Togo, as well as UNHCR, met in Abidjan in early September, where they issued the [Abidjan Joint Declaration](#) on the Updated Roadmap for Comprehensive Solutions for Ivorian Refugees. This “recommended the application of the cessation clause of their refugee status.” The Joint Declaration also agreed upon accompanying measures which would facilitate repatriation or permanent residency in host countries for Ivorian refugees, thereby allowing the cessation of refugee status to become effective as of 30 June 2022. According to [UNHCR](#), 60% of Ivorian refugees that they had surveyed wanted to return to Côte d'Ivoire, 30% were undecided, and 10% wished to remain in their host country.

## Mixed migration from West Africa towards North Africa and Europe

### Western Mediterranean Route and Atlantic Route<sup>2</sup>

As of 3 October, UNHCR reported a total of [29,349](#) irregular arrivals by land (Ceuta and Melilla) and sea (Spanish mainland, Canary Islands, Balearic Islands, Ceuta and Melilla) in Spain up to that point in 2021, a 46% increase over the corresponding period in 2020. While the latest nationality figures currently available are from [September 2020](#), in recent years multiple West African countries have been among the top nationalities of arrival in Spain.

#### Canary Islands arrivals on the rise

The popularity of the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands continues to grow, with more and more migrants and refugees from West Africa and Morocco attempting the journey. In the third quarter of the year, there were an estimated 6,191 arrivals in the Canary Islands, according to a compilation of UNHCR's [Spain Weekly Snapshots](#) (5 July – 3 October). As of 15 August, there were almost [2.5 times as many arrivals](#) recorded in the Canary Islands in 2021 as compared to the same time period in 2020 (8,222 and 3,364, respectively). The increase in arrivals to the Canary Islands continues the trend of 2020, which saw [seven times](#) as many arrivals when compared to the same time period in 2019 (approximately 571). This trend seems set to continue, especially as the [weather conditions](#) for departure are generally particularly favorable in October and November, and if this happens arrivals numbers could surpass [40,000](#) for the year, according to Le Monde. It appears that a further uptick may already have begun, with over [700 arrivals](#) tallied in the Canary Islands in one weekend at the end of September.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers in this section reflect best estimates available at time data was accessed (early October 2021) but source figures may be subject to later updates.

This has placed a strain on [reception services](#) on the island of Lanzarote, where 90 people – including [five children](#), two of whom were newborn babies – were forced to sleep in the open on the Arrecife docks. The temporary reception center meant to house new arrivals on the island was well over capacity (308 migrants stayed at the facility, built for 200). However, in terms of [overall reception capacity](#) across the islands, in mid-September a government spokesperson had said that only 2,260 reception places out of 7,000 were in use, stating “For now we have resources. But it’s true that more complicated months are coming.”

Issues previously brought forth by the [Spanish Ombudsman](#) regarding unaccompanied minors and age verification tests continue to persist in the Canary islands, with more than [1,700 minors having yet to take their age verification test](#). Only 3 percent of possible minors received residence authorization, a procedure guaranteed by law and to be carried out immediately upon arrival, due to this backlog. Researchers from [UNICEF](#), who conducted an assessment based on 27 shelters across the islands, concluded that “In a context of crisis, the current model [in the Canary Islands] is insufficient, inadequate and ineffective.” Given the expectation that arrivals will increase during the fall, Canary Islands authorities have called on the central government for further support in responsibility sharing for [minors](#) to ensure they get “the care they deserve in a sustainable way over time.”

### Atlantic route profiles and dangers

The NGO Caminando Fronteras is observing [greater numbers of women](#) on the Atlantic route, and that they are frequently seeking to escape conflict or human rights abuses. At the same time, Frontex has stated that from January through August 2021, [67%](#) of refugees and migrants on the Western Africa route (Atlantic route), originated from sub-Saharan Africa. These reports were echoed in late September by the spokesperson for the [Spanish Committee for Aid to Refugees \(CEAR\)](#) in the Canary Islands. CEAR estimated that 34% of arrivals were women and minors, and that they came primarily from Mali, Senegal, Morocco, Ivory Coast and Guinea, raising important considerations regarding international protection.

IOM reported over [780 deaths](#) of refugees and migrants along the Atlantic route to Spain’s Canary Islands in the first eight months of the year. They also highlight the fact that almost half of reported deaths along this route in 2021 have occurred during the month of August alone. The difficult nature of recording such deaths has led the NGO Caminando Fronteras to estimate [closer to 2,000 deaths](#) so far this year, a [526% increase](#) compared to the first half of 2020. The challenges in accounting for deaths and disappearances, and the perilous nature of the journey are underscored by reports of two small boats that washed up in the [Caribbean](#) over the summer. They carried the bodies of thirty Africans, and were thought to have drifted off course during attempts to reach the Canary Islands from the African coast. Caminando Fronteras estimated that in the first half of 2021, some 36 boats en route to the Canary Islands [disappeared](#) entirely.

The third quarter saw multiple shipwrecks along the Atlantic route to the Canary Islands. One report from [El Pais](#) explained how one group of West African 54 migrants left Laayoune, Western Sahara for the Canary Islands. After two weeks at sea, seven survivors washed ashore: the remaining 47 (mostly from Mali and Senegal) were never found. Treated and then detained in Nouadhibou, the seven survivors were [deported](#) three days later by Mauritanian officials. UNHCR and IOM called for alternatives to detention for shipwrecked migrants, given the physical and psychological traumas and challenges they have faced.



## Pushbacks of West Africans from other Spanish territories

While usage of the Atlantic route towards the Canary Islands continues to grow, there are other northbound routes to Spain which should not be overlooked. In late September Spain [returned](#) to Morocco some 125 people, including from Senegal, Guinea and Mali, who entered the Spanish territory Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera, essentially a large rock attached to Morocco by a sandy spit of land. The NGO Alarma Phone said the group contained more than 60 women and eight children, and according to the NGO Coordinadora de Barrios, more than 90 of the group had applied for asylum. Both the Spanish Ombudsman and [UNHCR](#) reminded the Spanish government of its commitments under international law in relation to this case.

The Ombudsman also was requested to investigate the return to Morocco of a group of 41 people, which included Malians and Burkinabès, from another piece of Spanish sovereign territory, the islet of Isla de Tierra. Audio footage of the late August intervention suggests that members of this group wished to [seek asylum](#) and voiced this during the return. Just a week later, Spanish border guards pushed back some 350 people from sub-Saharan Africa who were seeking to climb the [Melilla](#) border fence. In the third quarter there have been multiple attempts by large groups to scale the fences of the autonomous Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla, which border Morocco by land.

## Central Mediterranean Route

According to [UNHCR](#), as of 3 October, Italy had received some 46,850 sea arrivals to that point in 2021, a 94% increase over 2020. There were two West African nationalities among the top ten nationalities of arrival: Côte d'Ivoire (7%) and Guinea (4%).

## Southbound mixed migration

### International activities in Niger relating to evacuation, registration and return

As of the end of July, UNHCR had biometrically registered [1,431](#) refugees (45%) and asylum seekers (55%) in Agadez, 89% of whom were Sudanese. This compares to the [1,196](#) biometrically registered as of early May.

As of the end of August 3,124 of the 3,361 persons evacuated from Libya to Niger under the auspices of UNHCR's [Emergency Transit Mechanism \(ETM\)](#) had departed from Niger, heading to destinations of resettlement or "complementary pathways" in North America and Europe. As of that time 313 evacuees from Libya remained in Niger, down from [373](#) at the beginning of June.

A recent report from [IOM](#) indicated that in both 2019 and 2020, Niger had hosted the most 'migrants willing to return' through IOM assisted return programs than any other country, with 9,069 migrants returned from Niger in 2020.<sup>3</sup> West Africa was the top region of origin for migrants assisted to return by IOM (36% of global total) and Mali was the top country of origin, with 3,249 Malians assisted to return, most of whom ([78%](#)) came from Niger. The majority of [intra-regional returns](#) also took place in West Africa (65%).

3 It was followed by Germany with 5,723 and Libya with 3,391.

In the third quarter, at least two such returns occurred, with 109 Malians assisted to return from Niger on [7 September](#), and an additional 109 (including four unaccompanied minors, four other children, and two women) supported to go back on [14 September](#).

In July, IOM facilitated the return of 113 West African citizens from [Algeria](#) through two flights. These included Gambians, Liberians, Sierra Leonians and Senegalese. While the majority of returnees were men, the flights also included five women, one girl and 20 boys.

## Expulsions from Algeria

In the third quarter, Algerian authorities continued to forcibly expel Nigeriens and other people of sub-Saharan African origin – primarily West and Central Africans. Whereas Nigerien citizens are taken into Niger in “official convoys,” non-Nigerien citizens are typically left in the border area between the two countries, forcing them to walk through the desert for some 15-20 kilometers to reach the Nigerien village of Assamaka. In [July](#), three “unofficial convoys” were observed by the NGO Alarme Phone Sahara, carrying 1,456 people, with Guinea (556 people) and Mali (467 people) being the top countries of origin. “[Official](#)” convoys of some 1,530 people, the majority of whom were Nigerien, also occurred in early and mid-July, and included 286 children. In [August](#) some 1,121 people, primarily of Nigerien origin and including 170 children, were expelled in official convoys, and 590 people of other African nationalities were expelled in an unofficial convoy. Alarme Phone Sahara estimates that at least 16,580 people had been expelled from Algeria in the first eight months of the year.

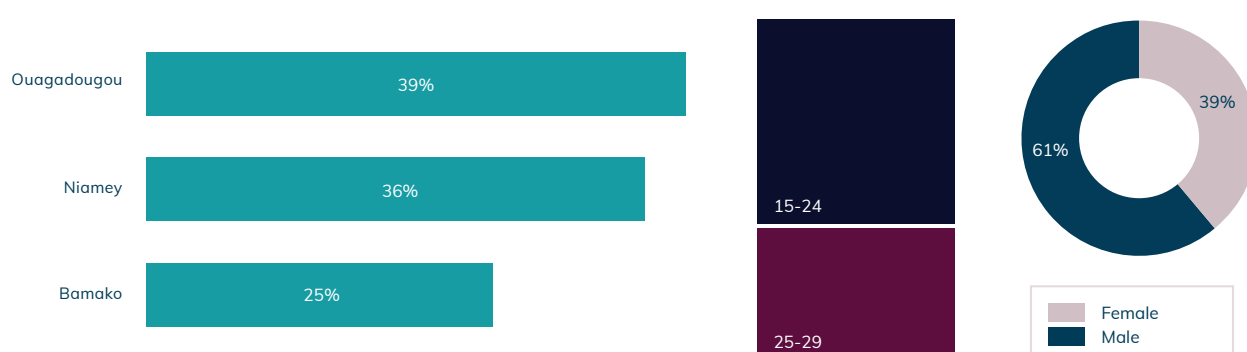
# Thematic Focus: Needs of Young Refugees and Migrants in Urban Transit in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger

This analysis provides an overview of the needs of young refugees and migrants in urban transit in relation to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), information and material assistance. It is based on 2,008 interviews conducted between November and December 2020 with youth aged 15-29<sup>4</sup> in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (n=789), Niamey, Niger (n=718), and Bamako, Mali (n=501). This research was conducted in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) under the Youth Mixed Migration Project.

## Profiles of respondents

About 40% of the young refugees and migrants surveyed were women. The age of the respondents ranged from 15 to 29 years old, with an average age of 23 years and a majority (61%) under 24 years of age. The largest proportion under the age of 24 were surveyed in Ouagadougou, where they comprised 68% of the sample, as compared to 57% in Bamako and 55% in Niamey. Respondents were overwhelmingly single (83%) and childless (81%), although more women reported having children (25%) than men (15%).

**Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by city, gender and age**



The nationalities most frequently encountered among respondents were Beninese (18%), Ivorian (14%), Togolese (10%) and Guinean (10%), with some variance depending on the country of interview. In Bamako, the three nationalities most frequently encountered were Guinean (29%), Burkinabè (11%), and Ivorian (11%); in Niamey, the respondents were mainly Burkinabè (16%), Beninese (15%), and Malian (13%); in Ouagadougou, mainly Beninese (28%), Ivorian (19%), and Togolese (12%).

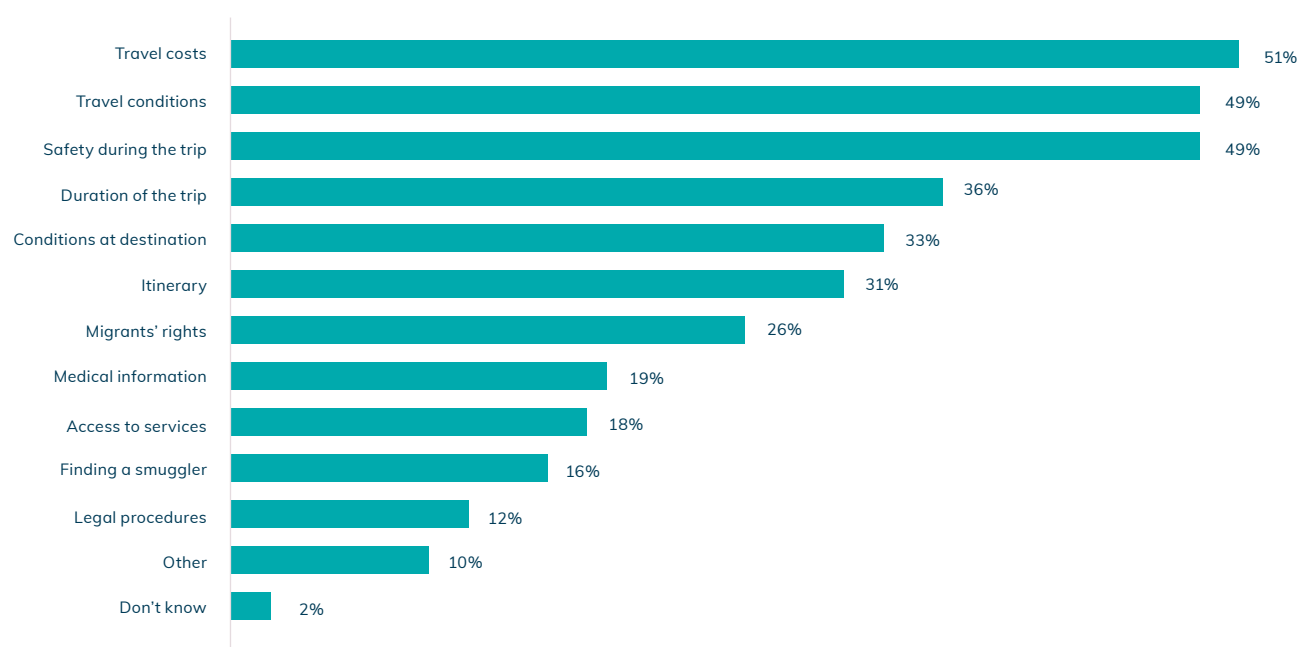
<sup>4</sup> MMC ensured compliance with consent procedures for respondents following international standards and validated by UNFPA and the Ethics committees of the relevant data collection countries.

The **main countries of departure** cited are almost the same as the countries of nationality, i.e., mostly coastal and Sahelian countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, etc.). The **main reasons for leaving** given by respondents were economic (80%) and personal/family (24%), which is consistent with recent analyses of migration factors in the region.<sup>5</sup> The **length of stay** in the cities of interview varied considerably among respondents, from one week to over five years. The majority (85%) of the migrants surveyed (both men and women) can read and write, and more than 80% of the respondents have at least a secondary education.<sup>6</sup>

## Type of information needed during the journey

Migrants generally expressed a strong need for various types of information to be able to continue their journey, primarily **information needs about travel costs (51%), travel conditions (49%), and safety during the trip (49%)**.

**Figure 2. What information would you need now to continue your trip?**



Specificities emerged between men and women. Men more frequently expressed needs for information in relation to travel costs (53%), travel time (38%), and itinerary (34%), as compared to women (48%, 33% and 27% respectively). Women more often mentioned a need for information about where and how to access services in general (21%) in the destination country, and about safety during the trip (51%), as compared to men (16% and 47% respectively). Also, an analysis by age shows that migrants aged 25-29 more often expressed a need for information on travel costs (55% of respondents), travel conditions (51%), and itinerary (36%) than did those aged 15-24 (travel costs 49%, travel conditions 48%, and itinerary 28%).

<sup>5</sup> See MMC (2021) [Migration drivers and decision-making of West and Central Africans on the move in West and North Africa](#)

<sup>6</sup> Note that there are disparities in the education levels of respondents in each city, due to the diversity of survey locations. The sampling method used by 4Mi is not representative. The sample sizes are clearly stated and represent only a limited portion of the people on the move. The results obtained from the survey sample should not be used to make interpretations about the total population. For more information on the 4Mi approach and details of the methodology, go to <http://www.mixedmigration.org/4mi>

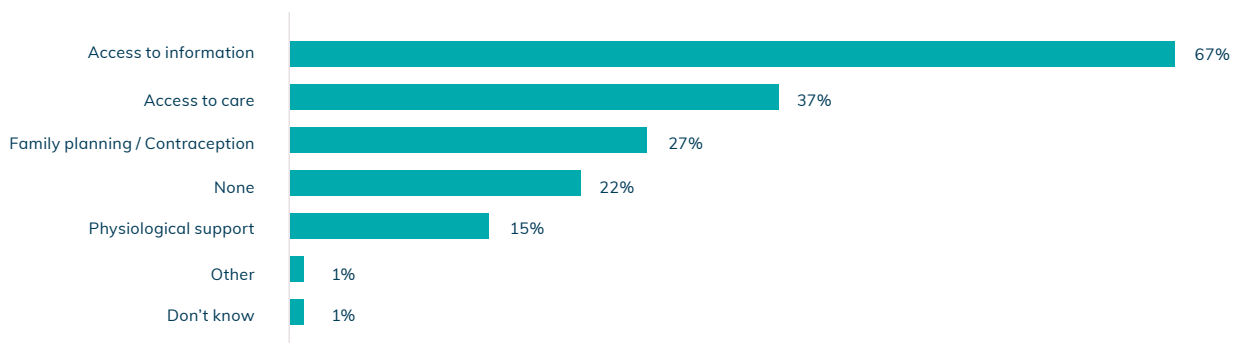
In addition to the need for information on travel costs, travel conditions and safety during the trip, respondents expressed additional differences depending on the city of interview. The respondents surveyed in Niamey particularly expressed a need for information on the duration of the trip (61%), itineraries (45%), conditions at the destination (40%) and migrants' rights (37%). In Ouagadougou, respondents expressed needs for information on conditions at destination (33%) and medical information (22%); in Bamako, respondents highlighted information needs on routes (42%), migrants' rights (25%), and how to access smugglers (24%).

## Sexual and reproductive health needs

**The main sexual and reproductive health need expressed by 67% respondents was access to information [on SRH].** This was followed by access to care (37%) and family planning (FP)/contraception (27%), where a greater variation between the genders was evident. Women more often cited the need for access to health care (48%) and FP/contraception (34%) as compared to men (30% and 22% respectively). In terms of age, **migrants aged 15-24 years most frequently indicated a need for psychological support** in sexual and reproductive health (17% of respondents in this age category compared to 11% of migrants aged 25-29).

**Figure 3. What are your current sexual and reproductive health needs?**

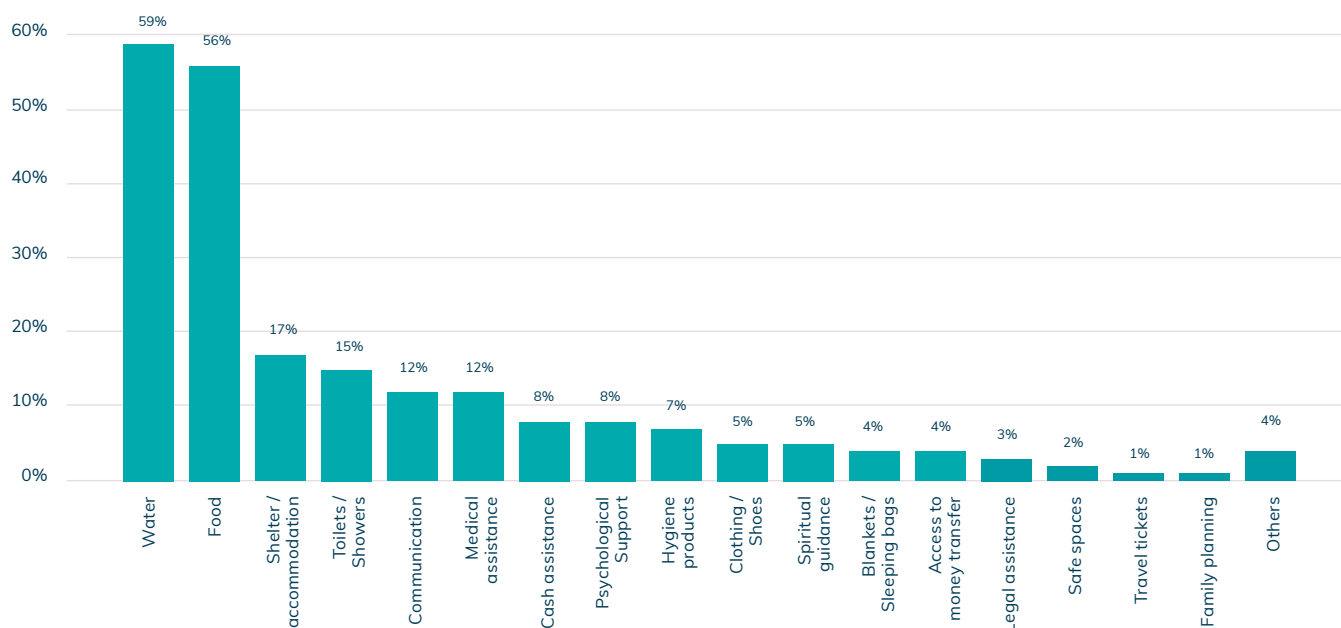
Some assistance received on the road with unmet needs



While 29% of the migrants surveyed received free assistance during their journey, **85% of the respondents said they needed assistance which they had not received during their trip.**

Among the assistance that was received, respondents indicated water (59%), food (56%), and to a lesser extent access to shelter/housing (17%). A greater proportion of women (22%) than men (10%) received access to toilets/showers.



**Figure 4. What types of free assistance did you receive?**

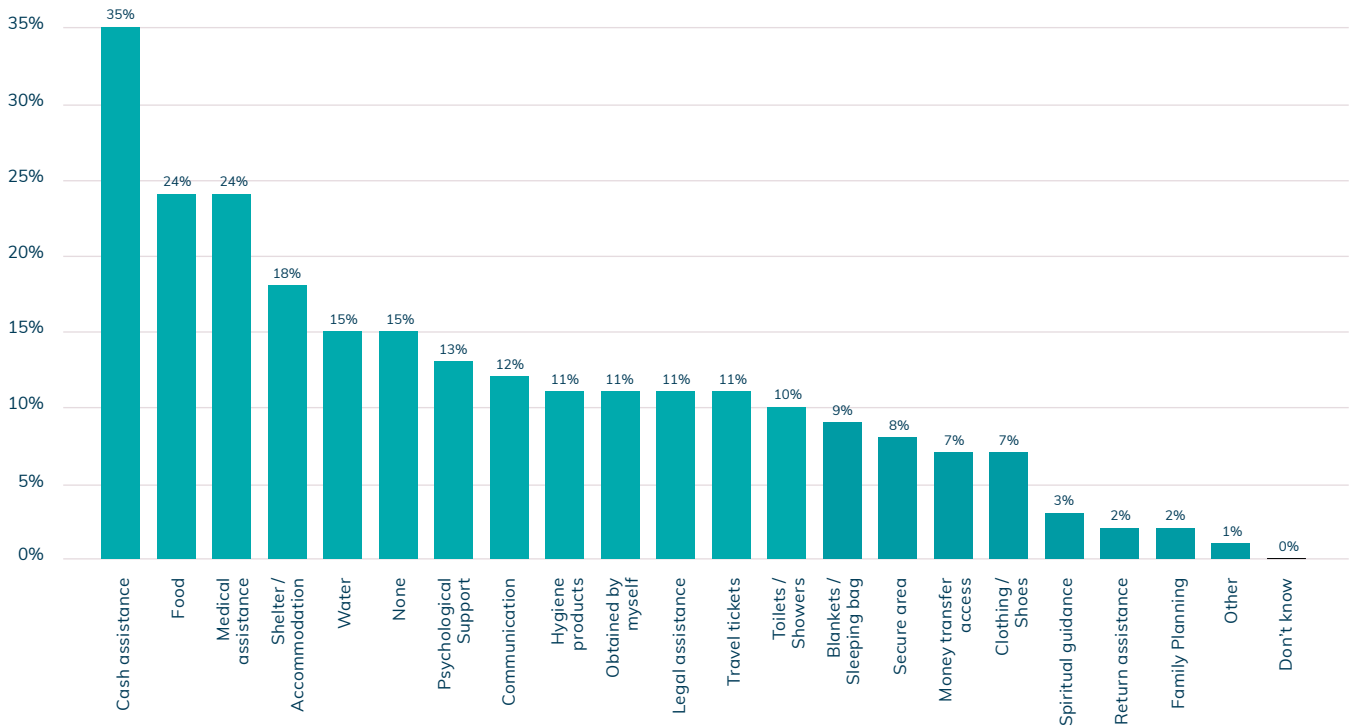
**Cash assistance (35%) and medical assistance (25%) stood out as the main unmet needs of respondents, especially for respondents** in Niamey and Bamako. Indeed, these needs were among the least covered by the assistance received en route, with 8% of respondents having received cash assistance and 12% having received medical assistance.

**Women particularly expressed a need for medical assistance (31%) compared to men (20%).** They were also the most likely to cite needs (not exhaustive) for shelter/housing (20%), hygiene products (18%), psychosocial support (16%), water (16%), safe spaces (14%), and access to toilets/showers (13%), as compared to men (17%, 7%, 10%, 13%, 4% and 7% respectively).

**Cash was the number one need** expressed in all three cities, followed by medical assistance and food. However, there were some variations by city with the need for travel tickets emphasized to a greater extent in Niamey (16%), communication in Bamako (15%) and legal aid in Ouagadougou (14%).

**Generally speaking, lower proportions of respondents in Ouagadougou expressed unmet needs as compared to respondents in other cities,** perhaps because they had been in the city longer (84% for a year or more) than migrants in other cities (16% Niamey, 20% Bamako). The latter have therefore traveled during the Covid-19 period, which may have had an impact on their needs (less assistance available, closure of certain services, fear of seeking assistance, etc.) Additionally, respondents interviewed in Ouagadougou may have had more time to establish themselves and gain useful knowledge and social capital, making them more resilient and less likely to express unmet needs.

**Figure 5: What type(s) of assistance that you did not receive would have helped you during your trip?**



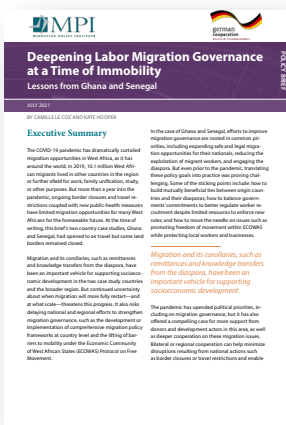
## Conclusion

It is clear through this analysis that **young migrants have important needs for information related to their journey** (ie the need for information on travel costs, travel conditions and safety during the journey). This **need for information is expressed to an even greater extent in relation to sexual and reproductive health**, cited by 67% of respondents.

This analysis also reveals significant assistance needs in the three cities concerned. **Among the unmet needs expressed by respondents, cash is predominant**, but essential needs such as medical assistance and food were also prominent. **These results also reflect to some extent a mismatch between the needs expressed and the assistance received, particularly in relation to cash**, the most frequently cited unmet need (35%) which only 8% of respondents had received.

By better understanding the specific needs of young migrants – both in terms of information and material assistance – it will be possible to provide them with more targeted and more effective assistance.

# Highlighted New Research and Reports



## [Deepening Labor Migration Governance at a Time of Immobility: Lessons from Ghana and Senegal](#)

### **Migration Policy Institute | July 2021**

This article delves into the medium and long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on labor migration policies within Senegal and Ghana. It focuses specifically on the strategies that these two countries (and their regional and European counterparts) can implement to better address the impacts of Covid-19 on migration policy and governance in origin countries. The authors highlight the importance of these efforts for broader development efforts and improving the implementation of the ECOWAS Free Movement enforcement within the region. The article highlights the tenuous impact of bilateral agreements on labor migration regulation within the two countries, and advocates for an approach that prioritizes intra-regional partnerships and increased collaboration with diasporas in order to more effectively meet the new labor migration circumstances imposed as a result of the pandemic. The recommendations focus on boosting diaspora engagement, promoting ethical recruitment, and tackling human trafficking within the ECOWAS region and further abroad in order to address the new barriers to labor migration governance created as a result of the pandemic.



## [Migration de retour : Trafic et traite des migrants ivoiriens le long de la Route Méditerranéenne Centrale et Occidentale](#)

### **International Organization for Migration (IOM) | August 2021**

Drawing on 500 telephone interviews with migrants who had been assisted to return by IOM Côte d'Ivoire, as well as focus group discussions and key informant interviews, this study seeks to understand how Ivorian migrants may end up vulnerable to smugglers or in a situation of trafficking. It does so by examining their motivations to migrate as well as pressures or influences they faced to do so; their preparations and conditions of departure; conditions of their journey

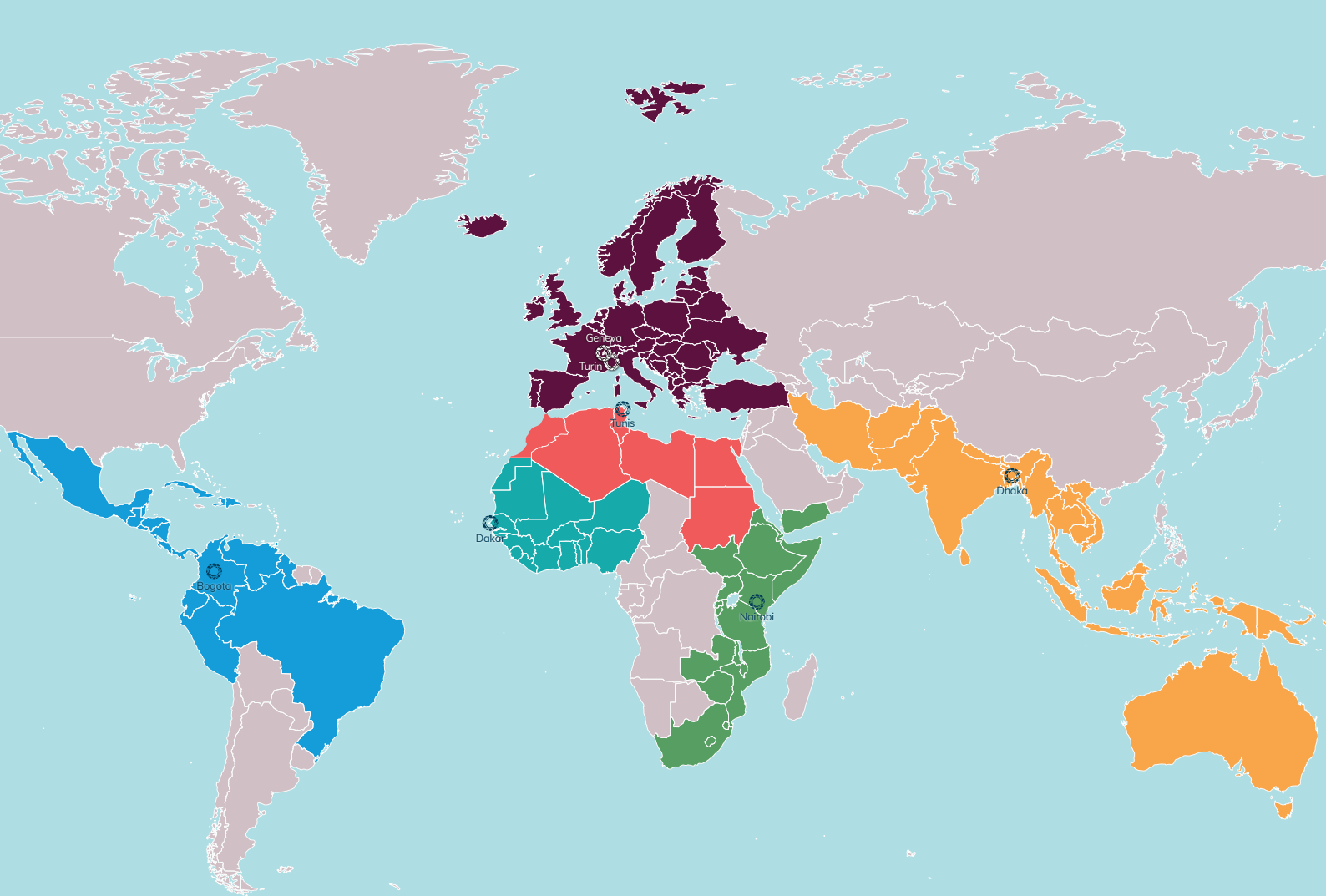
and elements that could lead them to be trafficked; and their stay in countries of transit or destination and risk factors for trafficking. It finds that they face the main risks of smuggling and trafficking in countries of transit or destination, and that lack of information and a strong desire to help their families back home could make them particularly vulnerable. Additionally, having an irregular status was also an important factor in causing respondents to end up in situations of trafficking.



## Nigeria: returning migrants at risk of new displacement or secondary migration

### **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) | July 2021**

Through qualitative interviews with more than 100 Nigerian returnees (spontaneous, assisted and forced) this study looks at voluntary and forced return policies and programs, and seeks to analyze the sustainability of the return and reintegration they support, as well as linkages to new displacement or secondary migration. It found that many respondents did not see an easy way to return once they had embarked on their journey; many had been subject to exploitation and abuse during their migration experience; and the majority came back in worse economic circumstances than they had begun. The report ultimately concludes that there could be grounds to include returned migrants in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) framework on durable solutions. It also underscores the need for return and reintegration policies and programming to account for protection challenges in places of origin, and to take a longer-term, development oriented approach to reintegration, in order to mitigate against secondary migration or displacement. The report ends with several practical recommendations for reintegration coming from the study respondents: support accommodation needs for returnees who are waiting for reintegration assistance (usually in-kind start-up assistance); streamline the process of obtaining reintegration assistance to avoid delays and reduce up-front costs; and support returnees in starting individual businesses rather than mandating group projects.



The MMC is a global network consisting of six regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration. The MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

The MMC is part of and governed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). Global and regional MMC teams are based in Geneva, Turin, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis, Bogota and Dhaka.

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