



ASSISTANCE TO  
VOLUNTARY AND  
HUMANITARIAN RETURN  
2017- JUNE 2022

Profiles of migrants assisted to return to their  
country of origin - West and Central Africa

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# TABLE OF CONTENT

## Introduction

## Acronyms and Country Names

### I. Total for 2017- June 2022

#### 1.1. Trends by Year

#### 1.2. Trends by Country of Origin

### II. Host Countries

#### 2.1. Main Regions and Host Countries

#### 2.2. Trend over Time for Host Countries and Countries of Origin

#### 2.3. Cross Analysis of Host and Origin Countries

### III. Gender and Age

#### 3.1. Gender

#### 3.2. Host Countries by Gender and Age

#### 3.3. Gender by Country of Origin

#### 3.4. Average Age of Returnees

#### 3.5. Age Distribution by Country of Origin

#### 3.6. Gender and Age

## IV. Regions of Origin

### 4.1. Regions of Origin of Assisted Individuals

### 4.2. Main Regions of Origin

### 4.3. Regions of Origin by Gender

## V. Protection Cases

### 5.1. Protection Cases Overview

### 5.2. Unaccompanied Children

### 5.3. Significant Health Conditions

### 5.4. Victims of Trafficking

## Methodology

# INTRODUCTION

## CONTEXT

This document presents an analysis of interviews conducted with all individuals assisted in their voluntary return destination by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) between 2017 and June 2022 (148,681) to in one of the 23 countries covered by the West and Central Africa region (WCA). The analysis combines datasets from both **Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)** and **Voluntary Humanitarian returns (VHR)**.

**Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)** : Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration is an indispensable part of a comprehensive approach to migration management.

AVRR programmes provide administrative, logistical and financial support, including reintegration assistance, to migrants unable or unwilling to remain in host/transit countries and who decide to return to their country of origin.

The successful implementation of AVRR programmes requires the cooperation and participation of a broad range of actors, including the migrants, civil society and the governments in both host and transit countries and countries of origin. The partnerships created by IOM and a diverse range of national and international stakeholders are essential to the effective implementation of AVRR – from the return preparation to the reintegration stage.

For migrants who need to return home but lack the means to do so, IOM's AVRR programmes are often the only solution to their immediate difficulties and needs. Beneficiaries of IOM's assistance include:

1. individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn

2. stranded migrants
3. victims of trafficking, and
4. other vulnerable migrants, including unaccompanied migrant children, or those with health-related needs.

**Voluntary Humanitarian returns (VHR)** : In February 2011, civil unrest in Libya rapidly evolved into an armed conflict which led to the crossing of Libyan borders by some 796,000 migrants in 2011. In the aftermath of the conflict, the socio-economic conflict which remained unstable was further fragilized by the Covid 19 pandemic. In fact, the loss of livelihood, the lack of financial resources and inadequate housing made the living conditions very difficult. Despite those difficulties, Libya remained among the top two host countries for migrants who were nationals of the WCA region from 2017 to June 2022. IOM's Voluntary Humanitarians return program was thus necessary to assist the vulnerable migrants, and ensure them a safe and secure return.

Since the onset of the crisis, IOM's strategy is to support Member States in protecting their nationals by providing evacuation assistance to stranded migrants in Libya through its "Voluntary Humanitarian Returns" programme. IOM deemed necessary to adopt a new terminology from AVR to VHR to stress the humanitarian nature of this operation.

The **objective of this document** is to provide an overview of the profile of those assisted by IOM to return to their country of origin through AVRR and VHR programmes between from January 2017 to June 2022.

Information about the questionnaire and the applied **methodology** and **limitations** can be found at the end of the report.



# ACRONYMS

# AND COUNTRY CODES

## ACRONYMS

AVRR	Assistance to Voluntary Return and Reintegration
IOM	International Organization for Migration
UMC	Unaccompanied migrant child
VHR	Voluntary Humanitarian Return
VOT	Victim of trafficking
WCA	West and Central Africa

## COUNTRY CODE

BEN	Benin	LBR	Liberia
BFA	Burkina Faso	LBY	Libya
CAF	Central African Republic	MAR	Morocco
CIV	Côte d'Ivoire	MLI	Mali
CMR	Cameroon	MRT	Mauritania
DEU	Germany	NER	Niger
DZA	Algeria	NGA	Nigeria
EGY	Egypt	NLD	Netherlands
GHA	Ghana	(the) SDN	Sudan
GIN	Guinea	SEN	Senegal
GMB	The Gambia	SLE	Sierra Leone
GNB	Guinea-	TCD	Chad
Bissau		TGO	Togo
ITA	Italy	TUN	Tunisia





I. TOTAL FOR 2017- JUNE 2022

# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.1. TRENDS BY YEAR

Between 2017 and June 2022, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has organized the return of 148,681 nationals of West and Central African countries. Although most returns were organized from Niger and Libya, another 117 countries supported these operations from Europe, North Africa, West and Central Africa, East Africa and many other regions around the globe.

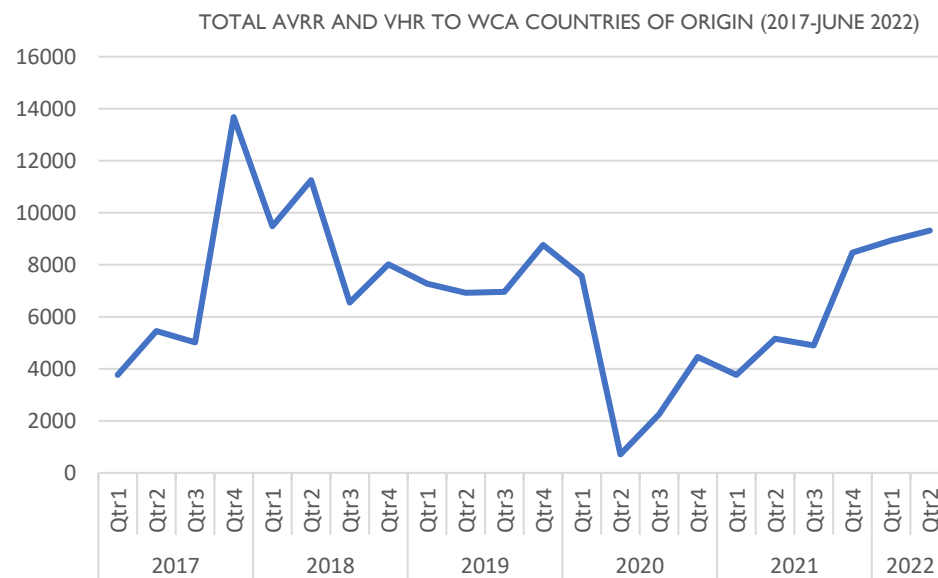
Following the high number of returns in 2021, in part due to the end of Covid-19 restrictions, the rate of increase of return figures has decreased in the first two quarters of 2022, in comparison to the previous year's rate of increase of returns. In fact, with the decrease of the pandemic, we have seen figures return to the normal. The **migrants assisted** in their return **were mainly from Guinea, Mali, and Nigeria**. This trend has remained unchanged since 2021. While the returns from Libya have increased in the first two quarters of 2022, the returns from Niger have decreased compared to the previous year. Although the Assisted Voluntary Returns have decreased from 10,433 returns to 7,410 returns, **Niger remains the top host country since 2019, followed by Libya and Morocco**.

### VOLUNTARY AND HUMANITARIAN RETURNS BY YEAR:

- 2017: 19% (27,913)
- 2018: 24% (35,303)
- 2019: 20% (29,920)
- 2020: 10% (15,002)
- 2021: 15% (22,291)
- June 2022: 12% (18,252)

# 148,681

ASSISTED IN THEIR RETURN BY IOM TO THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA (2017- JUNE 2022)

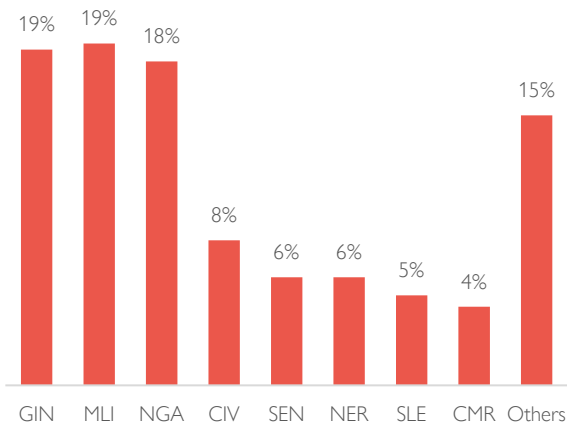


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2. TRENDS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

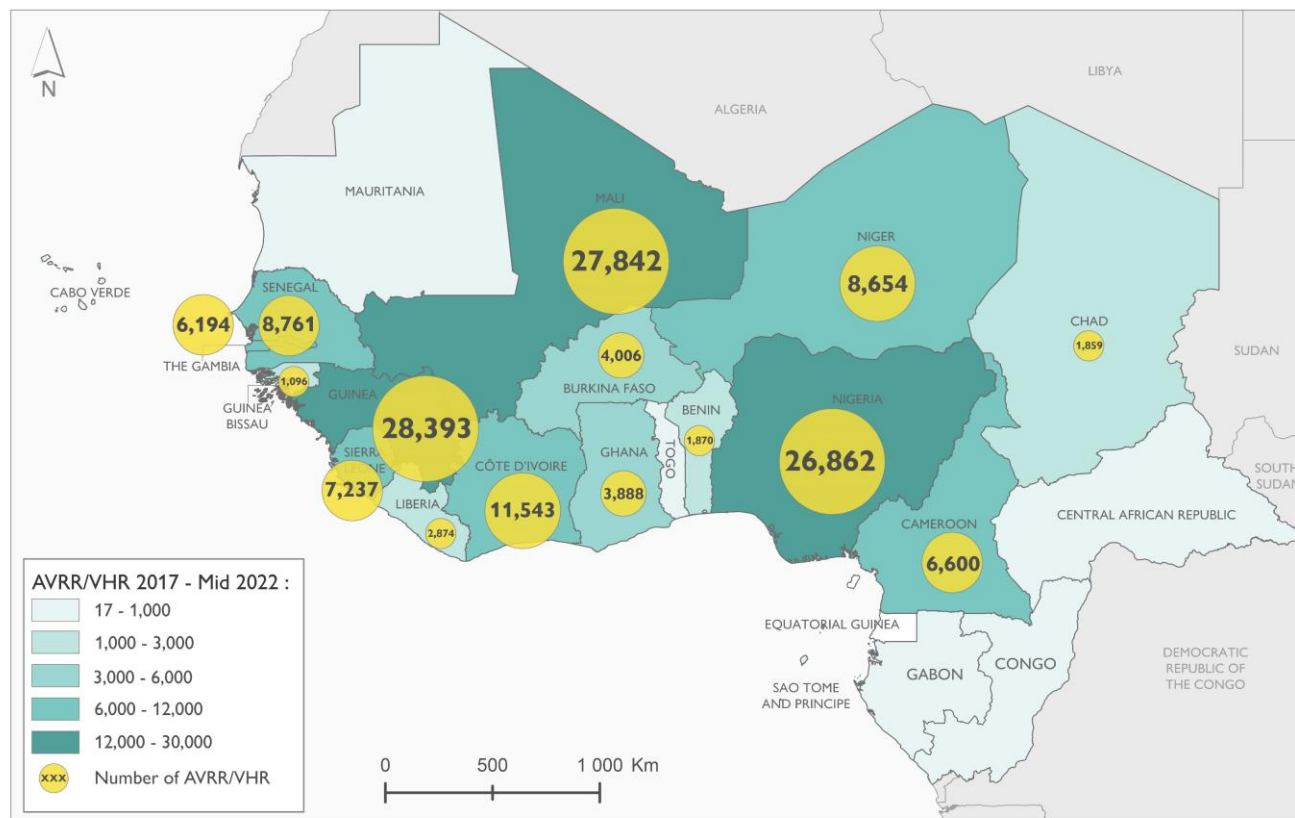
Three countries were the main countries of origin and accounted for over 56% of all AVRR and VHR to West and Central Africa from 2017- to June 2022: Guinea (28,393-19%), Mali (27,842-19%), and Nigeria (26,862-18%). AVRR and VHR were organized towards all 23 country offices covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa.

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2017 - JUNE 2022)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA 2017 - June 2022

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)



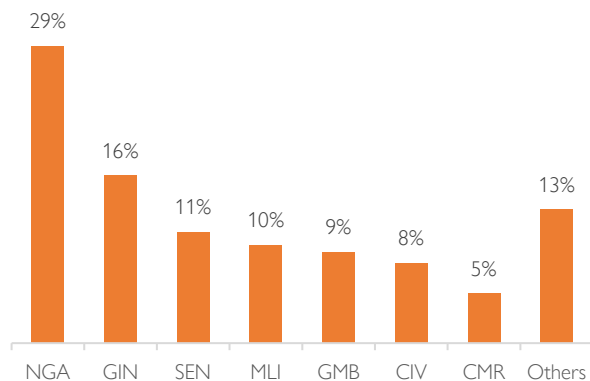


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.1. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2017

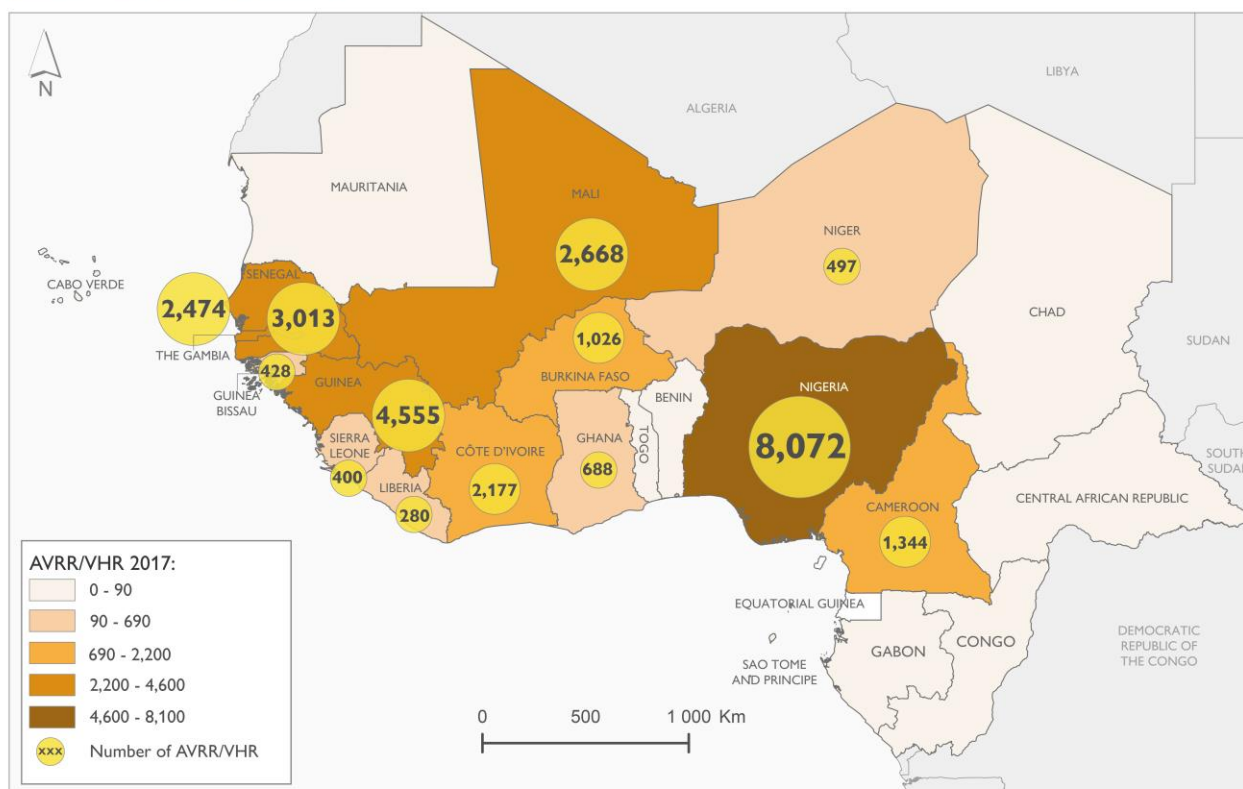
In 2017, IOM organized the return of 27,913 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (or in other words, countries of return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of returns were Nigeria (8,072) followed by Guinea (4,555) and Senegal (3,013).

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2017)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 2017

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

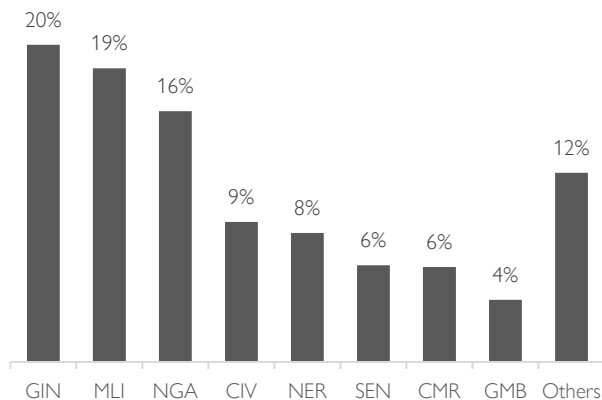


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.2. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2018

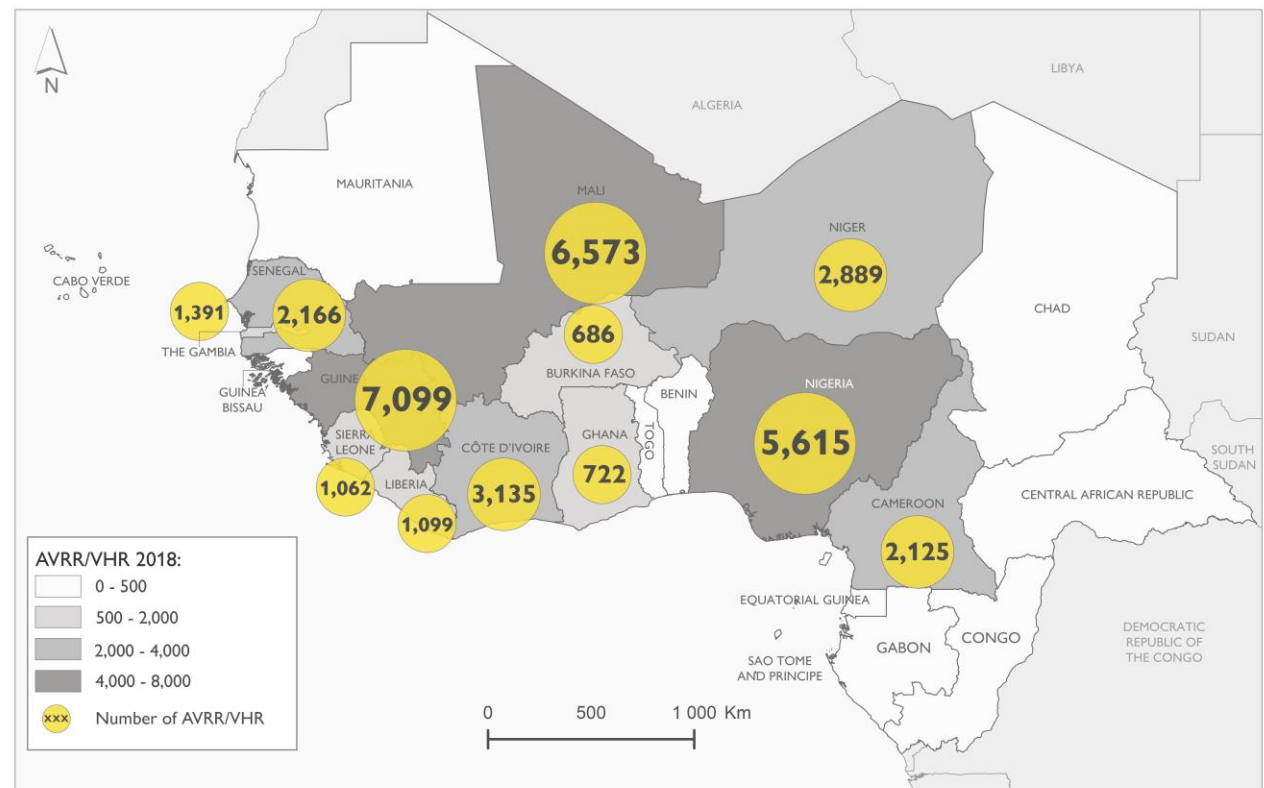
In 2018, IOM organized the return of 35,303 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of return were Guinea (7,099) followed by Mali (6,573) and Nigeria (5,615).

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2018)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 2018

Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM)

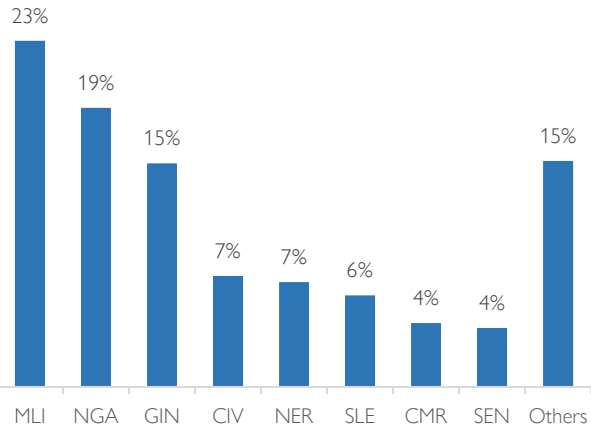


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.3. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2019

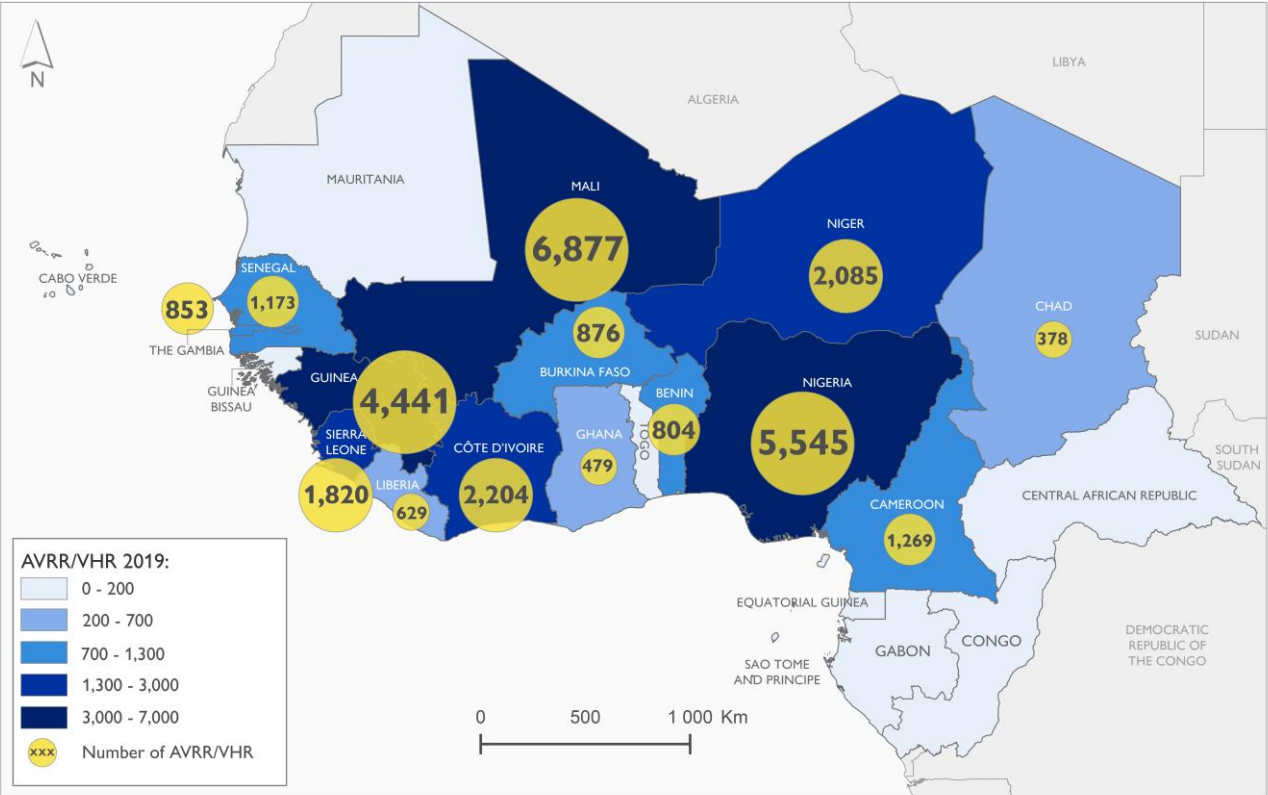
In 2019, IOM organized the return of 29,920 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of return were Mali (6,877) followed by Nigeria (5,545) and Guinea (4,441).

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2019)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 2019

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

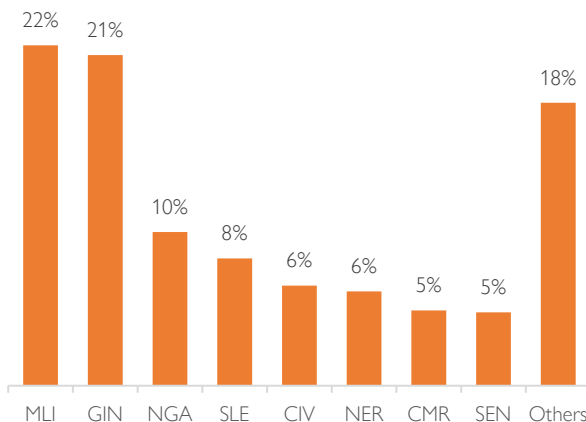


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.4. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2020

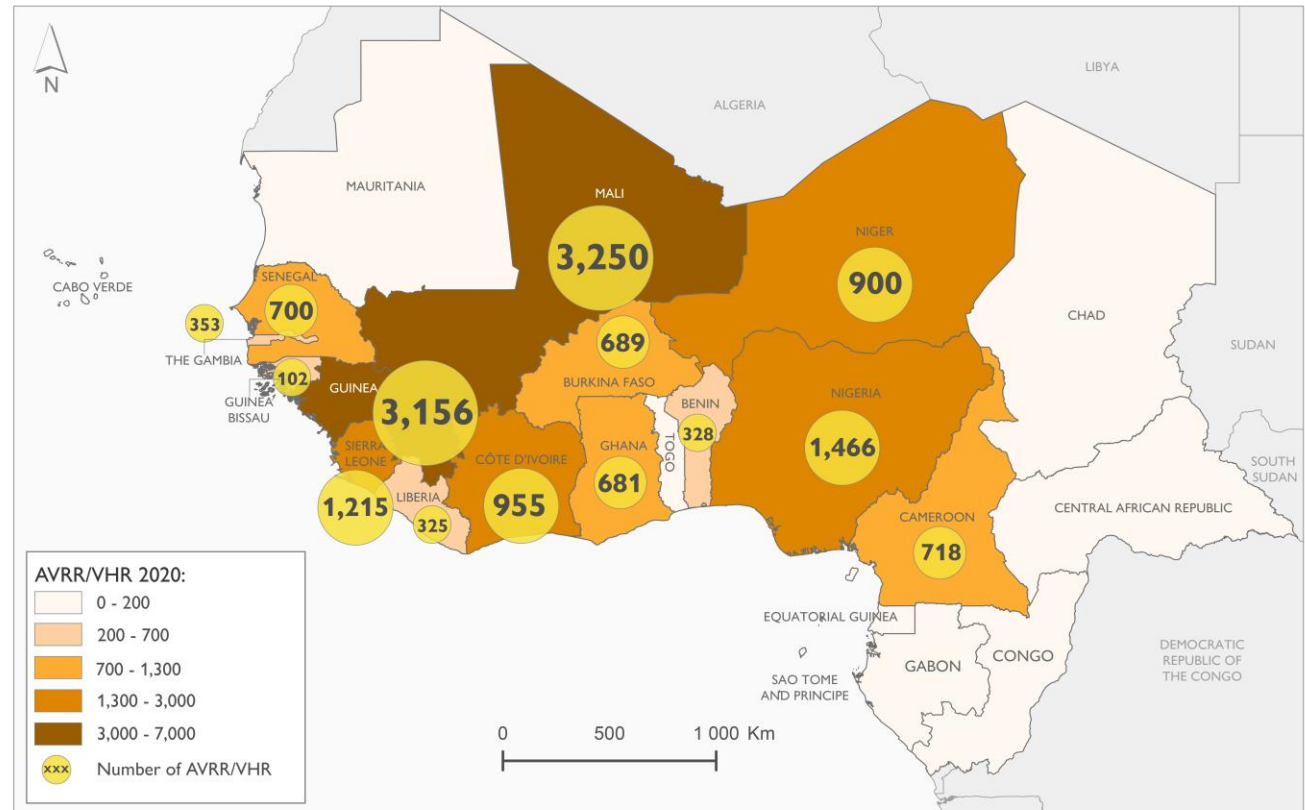
In 2020, IOM organized the return of 15,002 nationals of West and Central African countries. In 2020, two main countries of origin accounted for 43% of all AVRR and VHR to West and Central Africa in 2020: Mali (3,250 or 22%), and Guinea (3,156 or 21%). In total, 22 country offices covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa received returning migrants.

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2020)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 2020

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

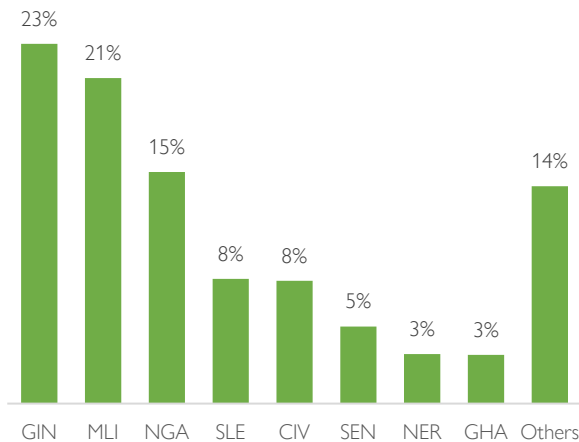


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.5. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN – 2021

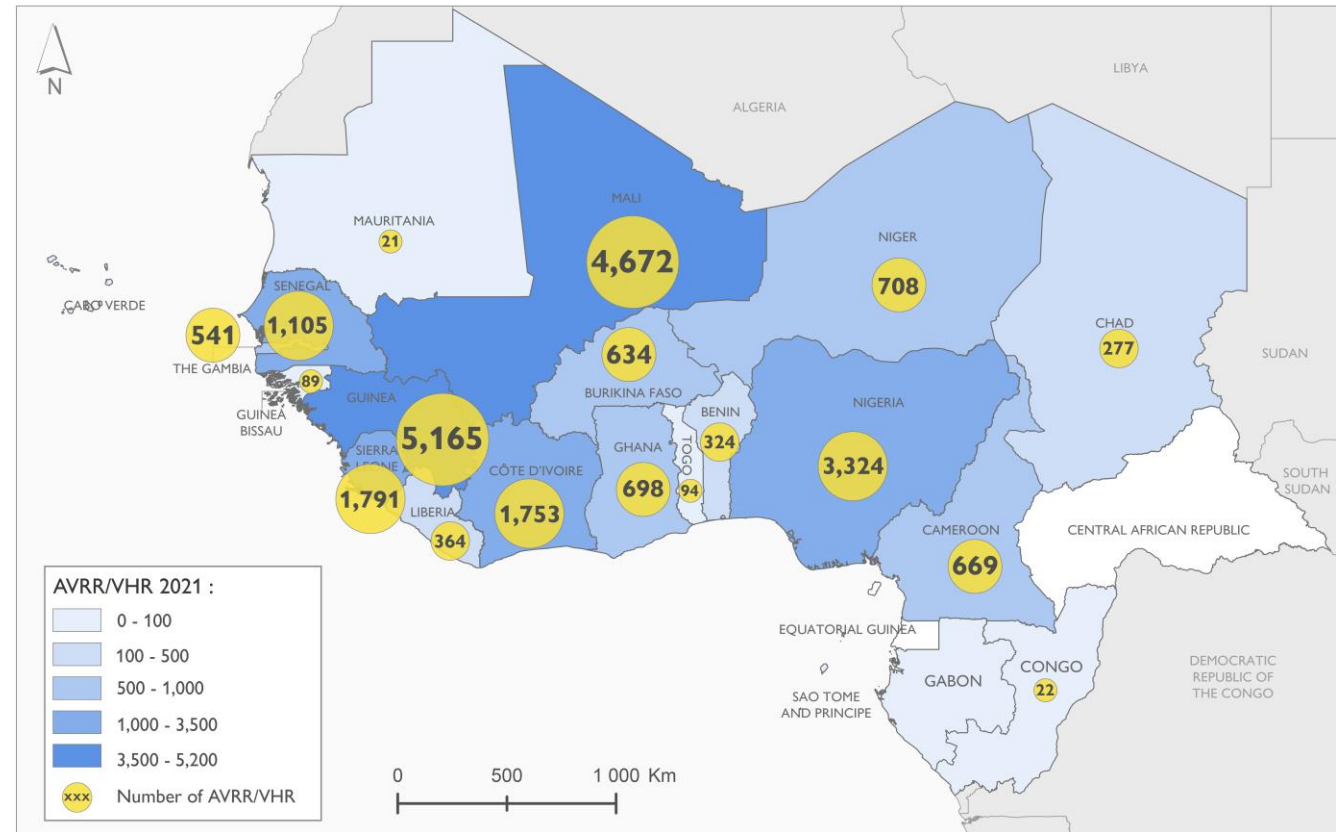
In 2021, IOM organized the return of 22,290 nationals of West and Central African countries. Three main countries of origin accounted for 59% of all AVRR and VHR from West and Central Africa in 2021: Guinea (5,165 or 23%), Mali (4,672 or 21%) and Nigeria (3,324 or 15%). In total, 21 country offices covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa received returning migrants.

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2021)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA – 2021

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

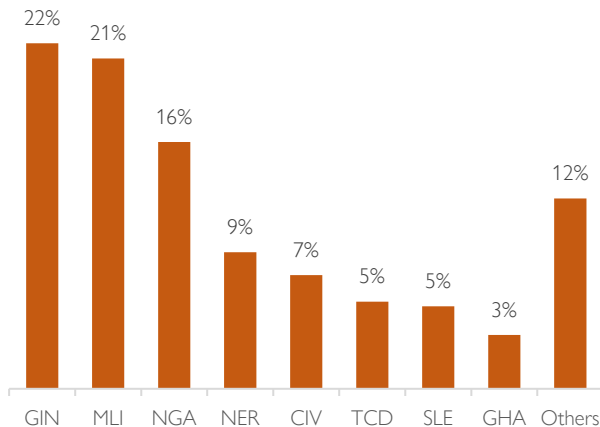


# I. TOTAL FOR 2017-JUNE 2022

## 1.2.5. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN – JUN 2022

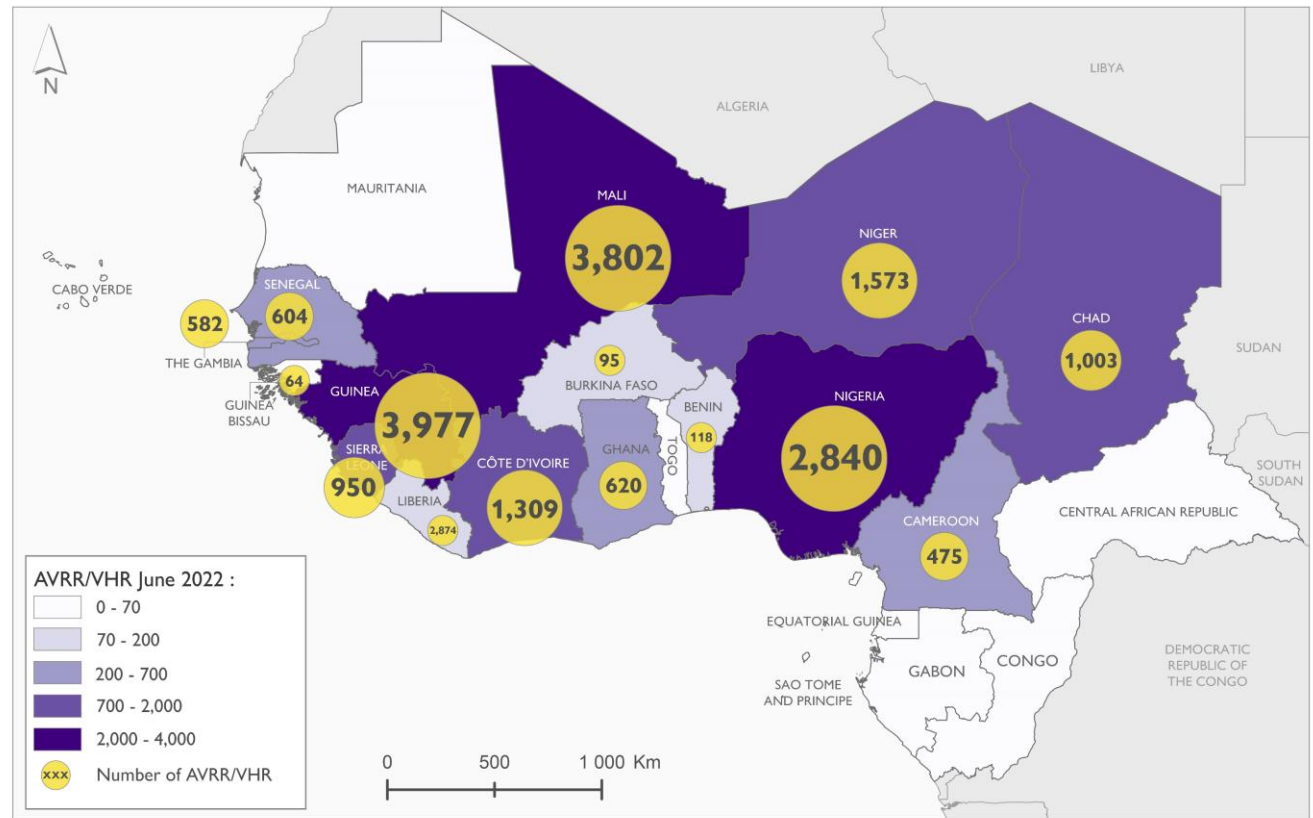
In the first two quarters of 2022, IOM organized the return of 18,252 nationals of West and Central Africa countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR in mid-2022. The main countries of origin were Guinea (3,977), Mali (3,802), and Nigeria (2,840). In total, 20 country offices covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa received returning migrants.

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (JAN - JUNE 2022)



## AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA June 2022

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)





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## II. HOST COUNTRIES

## II. HOST COUNTRIES

### 2.1. MAIN REGIONS AND HOST COUNTRIES

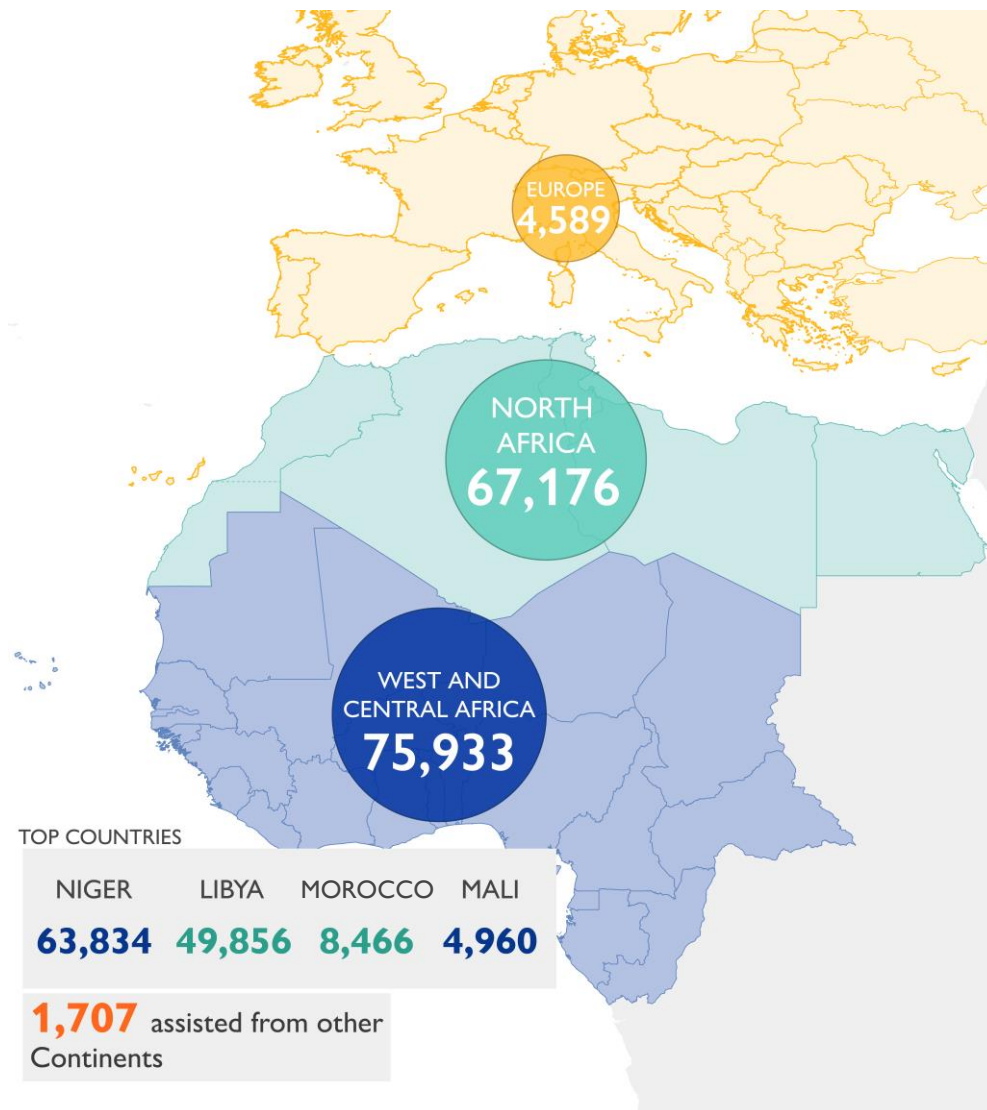
Of the 148,681 individuals assisted in their return by IOM to their country of origin in WCA, 51% (or 75,933) were assisted to return from a country in West and Central Africa, mainly from Niger.

North Africa was the second main host region for WCA individuals assisted in their return (45%, or 67,176 individuals assisted from a country in the region), mainly from Libya.

The primary regions from which AVRR and VHR movements are organized have shifted in recent years, with West and Central Africa being the region organizing the highest number of returns and thereby overtaking North Africa as the main host region since 2019.

Returns from Europe represent 3% of the total number of returns to WCA countries organized by IOM between 2017 and June 2022

Main host countries (countries that assisted migrants in their return) from 2017 to June 2022 were Niger (63,834, or 43%) followed by Libya (49,856, or 34%) and Morocco (8,466, or 6%).





## II. HOST COUNTRIES

### 2.2. TREND OVER TIME FOR HOST COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Since 2019, Assisted Voluntary Returns to Guinea have gradually increased. Since 2021, Guinea has remained the Top country of origin for AVRR and VHR Assistance provided by IOM in the WCA Region. In the first two quarters of 2022, 22% of the assisted returns in the region were towards Guinea. Mali and Nigeria have remained in the Top 3 country of origins, since 2017. Niger was among the top 3 “other” countries of origin until becoming the 4<sup>th</sup> main country of origin in the first semester of 2022.

TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN JUN-2022	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN 2021	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN 2019-2020	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN 2017-2018	% OF AVRR/VHR
GUINEA ↓	22%	GUINEA ↑	23%	MALI ↑	23%	NIGERIA	22%
MALI ↓	21%	MALI ↓	21%	GUINEA ↓	17%	GUINEA	18%
NIGERIA ↑	16%	NIGERIA ↓	15%	NIGERIA ↓	16%	MALI	15%
NIGER ↑	9%	SIERRA LEONE ↑	8%	COTE D'IVOIRE ↓	7%	COTE D'IVOIRE	8%
COTE D'IVOIRE ↓	7%	COTE D'IVOIRE ↑	8%	SIERRA LEONE ↑	7%	SENEGAL	8%
OTHERS ←	25%	OTHERS ↓	25%	OTHERS ↑	30%	OTHERS	29%

Niger has been the main host country for AVRR and VHR assistance since 2018, replacing Libya which had previously been the main host country in 2017. However, returns from Niger have been decreasing since 2020. In 2020, 56% of the returns were organized from Niger, before decreasing to 47% in 2021, and 41% in the first two quarters of 2022. In contrast, proportions of returns from Libya have increased by more than 20% from the first two quarters of 2021 (5%) to mid-2022 (29%). The host countries in the “Others” section have varied over the years, although Germany and Mauritania have been among the top 4 host countries.

TOP HOST COUNTRIES JUN-2022	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP HOST COUNTRIES 2021	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP HOST COUNTRIES 2019-2020	% OF AVRR/VHR	TOP HOST COUNTRIES 2017-2018	% OF AVRR/VHR
NIGER ↓	41%	NIGER ↓	47%	NIGER ↑	56%	LIBYA	51%
LIBYA ↑	29%	LIBYA ↓	13%	LIBYA ↓	20%	NIGER	33%
MOROCCO ↓	7%	MOROCCO ↑	10%	MOROCCO ↓	4%	MOROCCO	5%
ALGERIA ↓	6%	ALGERIA ↑	9%	MALI ↑	4%	MALI	3%
TUNISIA ↑	3%	CHAD ↑	4%	ALGERIA ↑	3%	TUNISIA	2%
OTHERS ↓	14%	OTHERS ↑	17%	OTHERS ↑	13%	OTHERS	6%

## II. HOST COUNTRIES

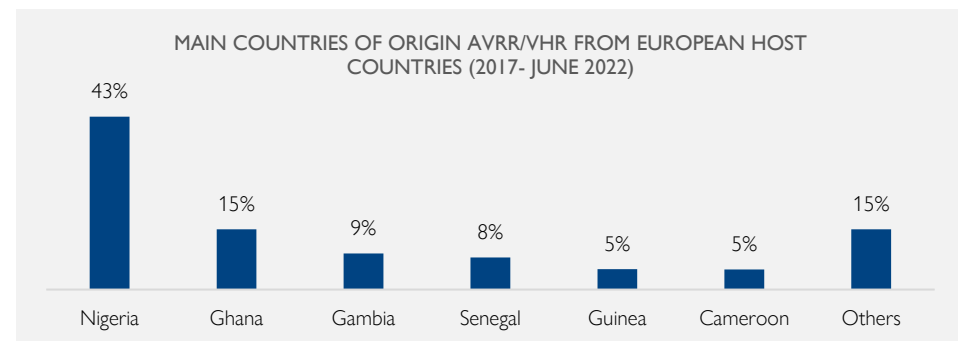
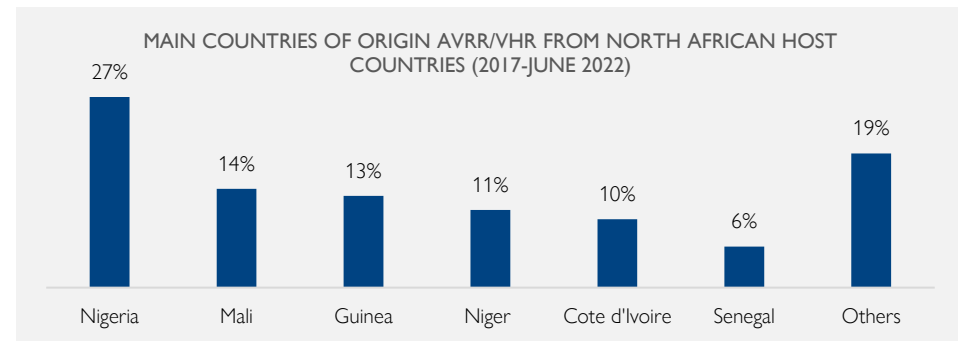
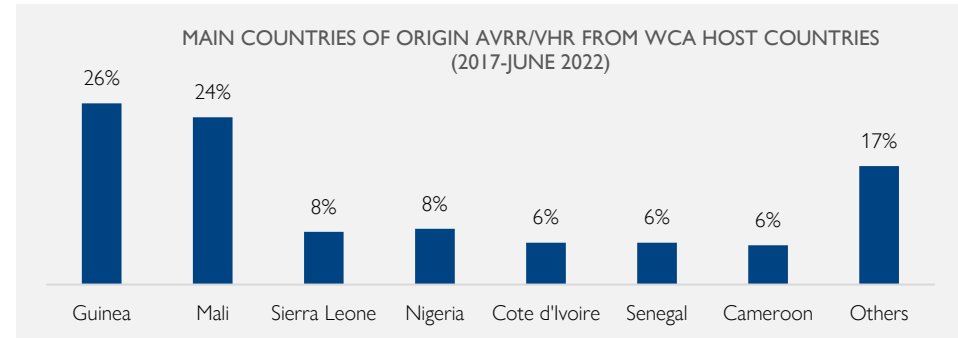
### 2.3. CROSS ANALYSIS OF HOST AND ORIGIN COUNTRIES

Between 2017 and June 2022, most returns from the WCA Region were towards Guinea (26%), Mali (24%) and Sierra Leone (8%). Migrants who were assisted to their country of origin from North Africa, were mainly from Francophone countries (Mali, Guinea, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire), with the exception of Nigeria which is the main country of origin (27%). Since 2017, Mali and Guinea have remained among the top 3 countries of origins for returns both from the WCA and North Africa region.

Germany, Italy, and Austria were the top 3 host countries for returns from Europe between 2017 and June 2022. Most returns from the three previously mentioned countries took place toward English speaking countries, Nigeria (45%), Ghana (17%), and the Gambia (10%).

#### TOP HOST COUNTRIES 2017-JUNE 2022

• NIGER	63,834
• LIBYA	49,856
• MOROCCO	8,466
• MALI	4,960
• ALGERIA	4,693
• TUNISIA	2,835
• MAURITANIA	2,089
• CHAD	2,019
• GERMANY	1,963





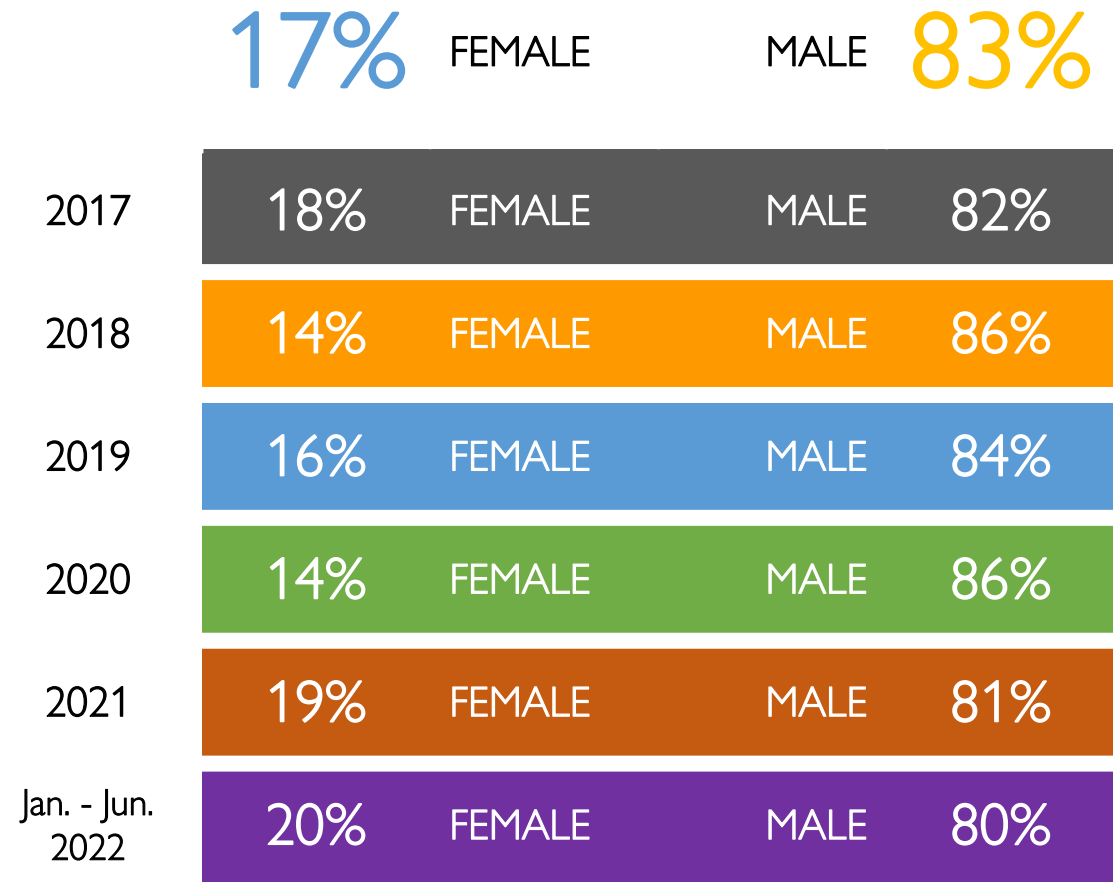
### III. GENDER AND AGE

## III. GENDER AND AGE

### 3.1 GENDER

Between 2017 and June 2022, more than 24,500 women were assisted by IOM to return to their country of origin in West and Central Africa, representing 17% of the total AVRR and VHR caseload during that period.

The proportion of women returnees reached in the first semester of 2022 its highest value (20%), and rose by 6 percentage points compared to 2020. Between 2018-2019 and June 2022; a decrease in returns from Niger (from 56 to 41%), one of the main host countries with the highest male to female returnee ratio (95%), was observed. In contrast, the fraction of returns from Libya and Tunisia (host countries with over 20% of female returnees assisted); increased from 2019-2020 to the first semester of 2022.



## III. GENDER AND AGE

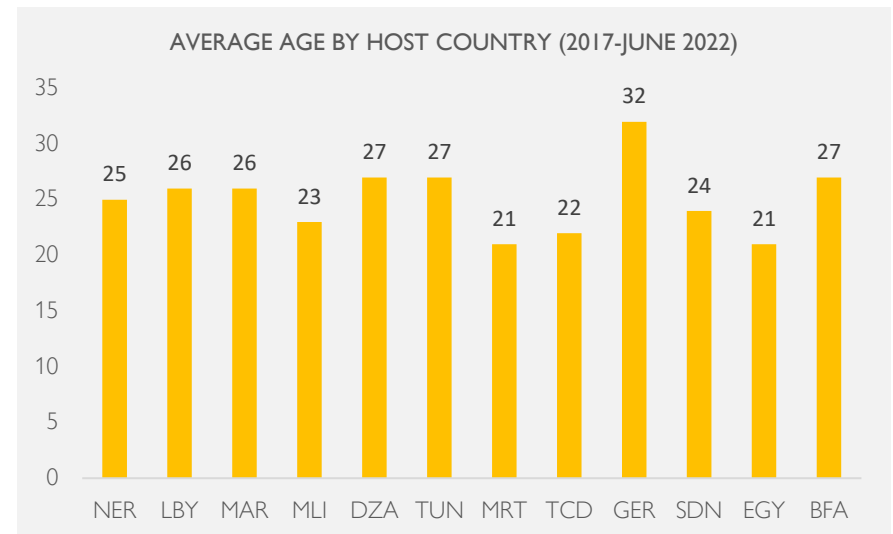
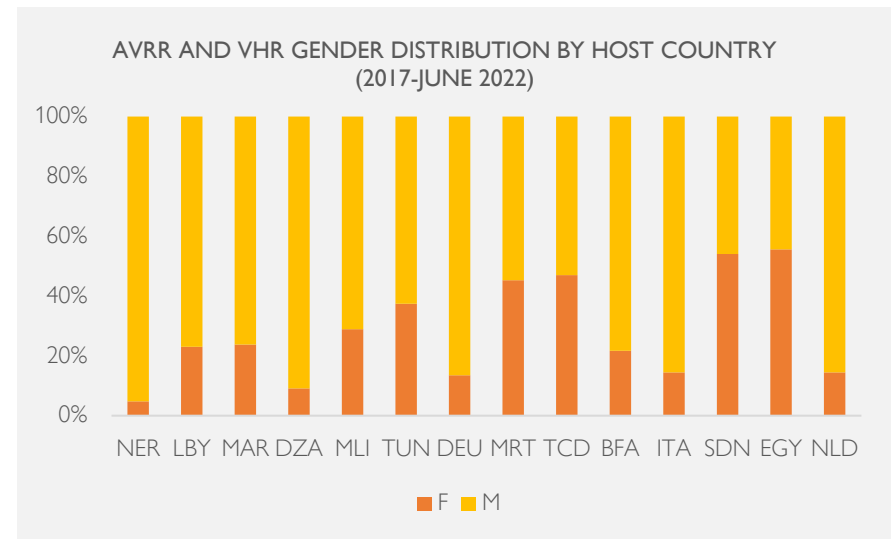
### 3.2. HOST COUNTRIES BY GENDER AND AGE

Host countries have a very different gender balance in their AVR and VHR caseload from WCA between 2017 and June 2022.

If beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR organized from Niger (95%), Algeria (91%), Germany (86%), Italy (85%), Burkina Faso (78%), and Libya (77%) are in vast majority made up of males, other host countries display high proportions of females among AVRR and VHR beneficiaries, including Ghana (78%), Gabon (73%), Cote d'Ivoire (58%), South Africa (58%), albeit the absolute number of returns from these countries is low. From the top 15 host countries shown in the graph, only Egypt (56%) and Sudan (54%) showed a high proportion of females among beneficiaries. All individuals returning from countries such as Lebanon, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, were women, although this finding should be nuanced by the fact that the total caseload from these countries is relatively low.

The type of migration has a significant impact on gender distribution. Host countries with high level of family and/or domestic work migration (e.g. Arabic Peninsula countries) tend to have higher proportions of female migrants within their AVRR beneficiaries.

The age variable also varies significantly from one host country to another. Egypt and Ghana (both countries with a high proportion of women among the AVRR caseload from West and Central Africa), have, on average, the youngest AVRR beneficiaries from WCA. The average age of the WCA AVRR caseload returning from Egypt and Mauritania is 21 years old. On the contrary, AVRR beneficiaries assisted from Germany to WCA are on average above 30 (Average of 32 years old).



# III. GENDER AND AGE

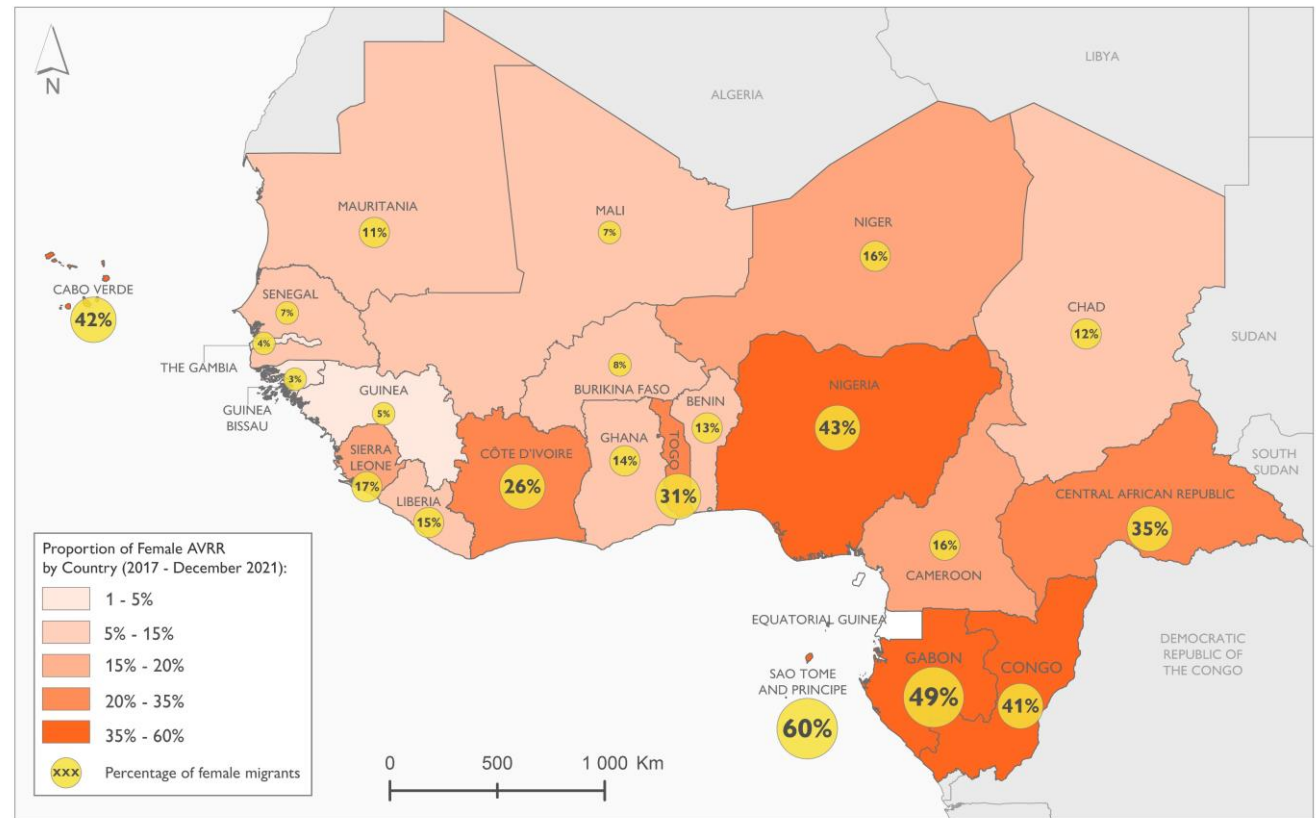
## 3.3. GENDER BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Amongst the main countries of origin Nigeria has the highest proportion of women amongst returnees (43%). Guinea Bissau (3%) and the Gambia (4%) recorded among the lowest proportion of women.

The high proportion of female migrants in Nigeria may be explained by multiple underlying or conjunctural factors including poverty, cultural approach to migration among the community and the family, trafficking networks, and facility to access certain visas.

### PROPORTION OF FEMALES AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA 2017- June 2022

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

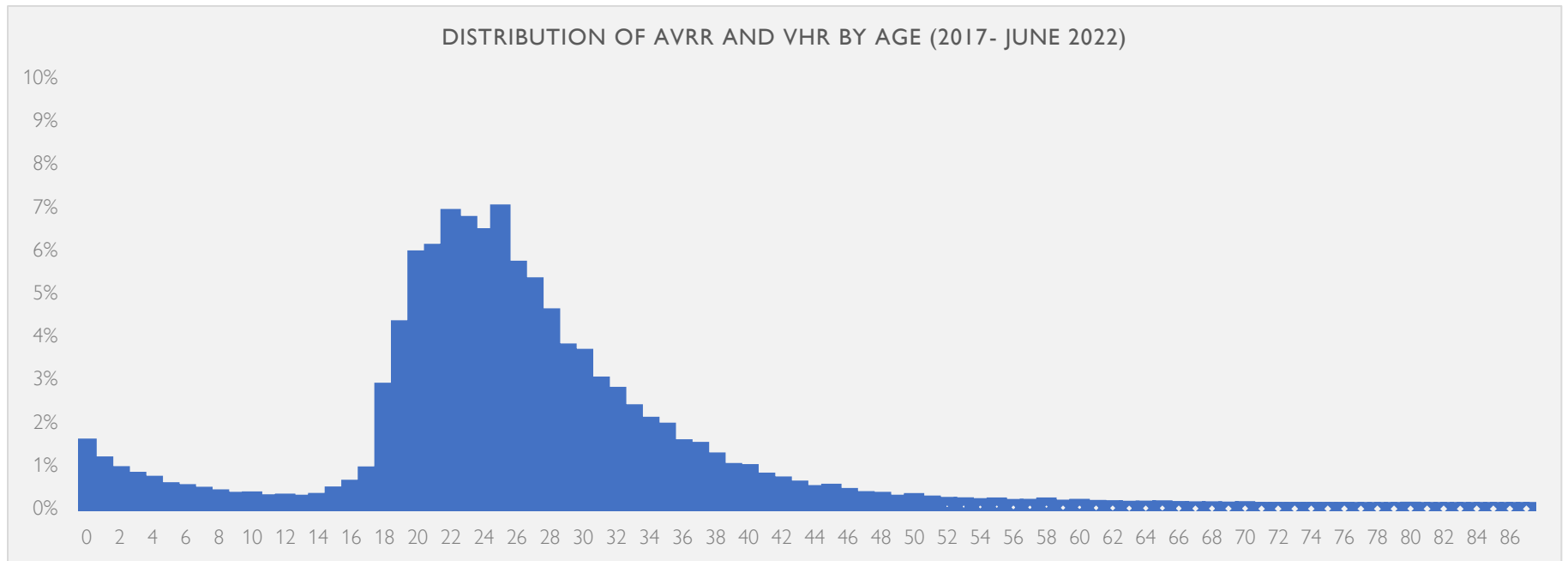


## III. GENDER AND AGE

### 3.4. AVERAGE AGE OF RETURNEES

On average, individuals assisted in their return by IOM between 2017 and June 2022, were 25 years old at the time of return. The below mentioned chart shows the distribution by age (min: 0, max: 87, mode: 25). 9% of individuals assisted were under 18, 46% between 18 and 25 years old and 34% between 26 and 35 years old. The remaining 11% were 36 years old and above.

# 25 AVERAGE AGE

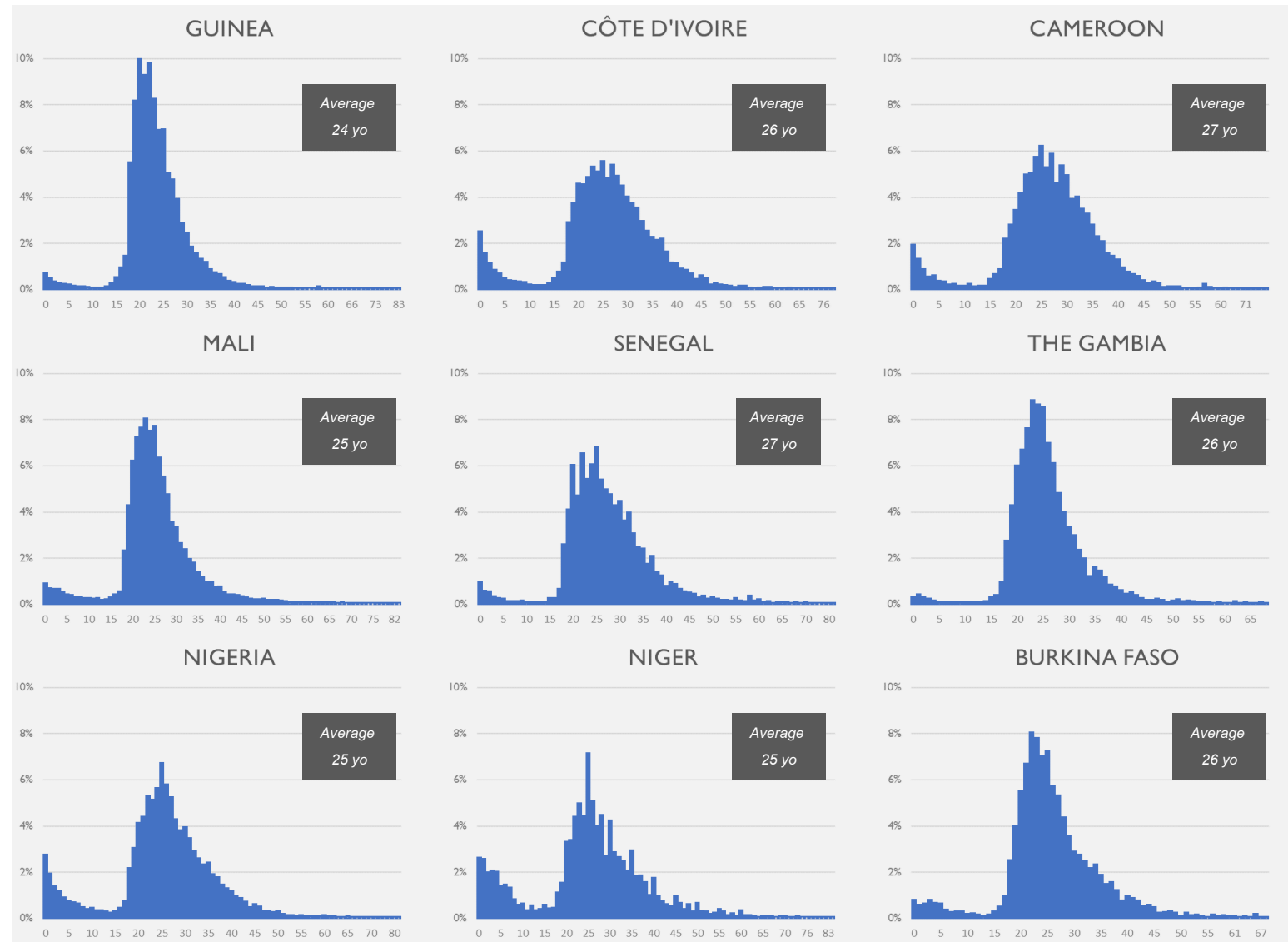


# III. GENDER AND AGE

## 3.5. AGE DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

This page presents the age distribution of the main countries of origin for AVRR and VHR organised by IOM between 2017 and June 2022.

The shape of Guinea chart displays a particularly young population (with an average age of 24 years old and the mode, most frequent value, being 20 years old). On the other hand, the shape of the age chart in Senegal presents an older population (average age above 27 with the mode at 27 years old).





# III. GENDER AND AGE

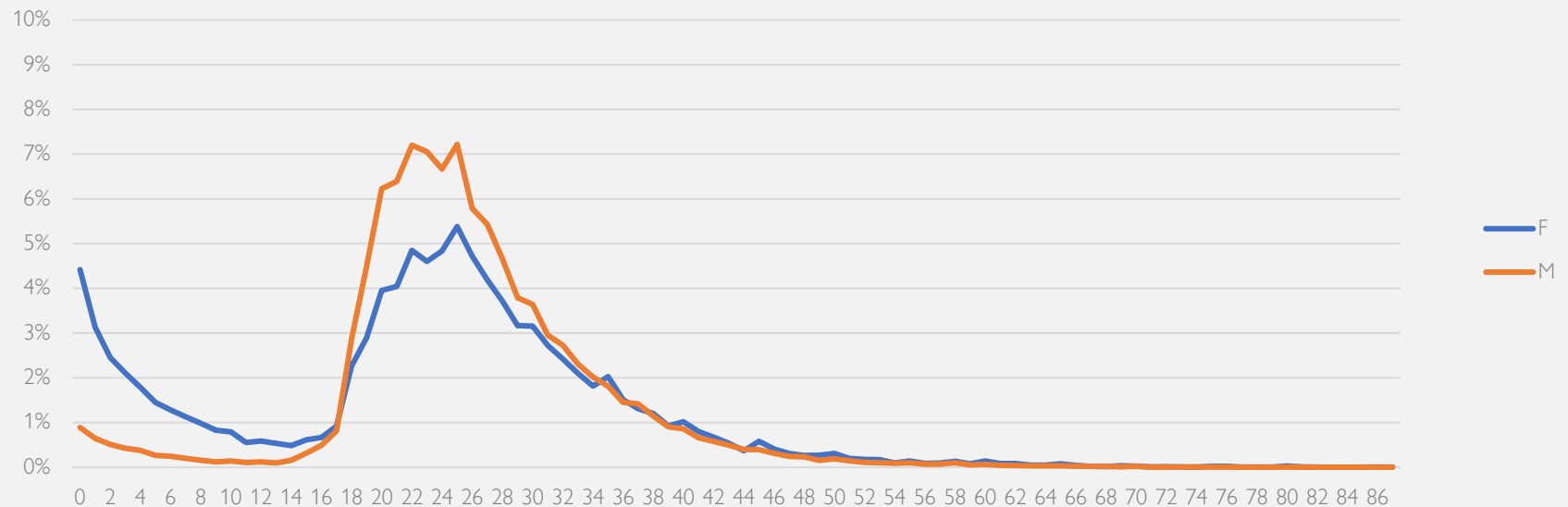
## 3.6. GENDER & AGE

When crossing age and gender variables together, two main results are visible:

1. Women supported in their return are on average younger (23 years old) than men (26 years old).
2. The proportion of minors within women (25%) is higher than the same proportion for men (6%). Minors are mainly nationals from Nigeria (27%), Mali (14%), Niger (12%), Guinea (12%) and Côte d'Ivoire (10%), returning from Libya and Niger (respectively representing 37% and 21% of the total number of minors assisted with AVRR and VHR).

FEMALE **23** years old  
MALE **26**

AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION (2017- JUNE 2022)





# IV. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

# IV. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

## 4.1. REGIONS OF ORIGIN OF ASSISTED INDIVIDUALS

Top regions of origin are based on places of origin as declared by migrants assisted by IOM between 2017 and June 2022. For this period, Conakry in Guinea, Bamako and Kayes in Mali, Lagos in Nigeria and Lagunes in Côte d'Ivoire were the five main regions of origin. These same five regions are present in the top five since 2019-2020. Since then, we note that the proportion of migrants returning to Conakry increased from 9% in 2019-2020 to 15% in the first semester of 2022, In contrast, the same figure for Kayes in Mali decreased from 9% to 5%.

However, the regions of origin were not documented for a notable number of returnees (mainly humanitarian returns organized from Libya between 2017 and 2018). The number of returnees with no documented information on their region of origin represents 29% of the total number of returns between 2017 and June 2022 in the WCA region.

TOP REGIONS 2022 (As of June 30)	% of AVRRVHR	TOP REGIONS 2021	% of AVRRVHR	TOP REGIONS 2019-2020	% of AVRRVHR	TOP REGIONS 2017-2018	% of AVRRVHR
CONAKRY (GIN)	15%	CONAKRY (GIN)	14%	BAMAKO (MLI)	11%	EDO (NGA)	12%
BAMAKO (MLI)	12%	BAMAKO (MLI)	11%	KAYES (MLI)	9%	CONAKRY (GIN)	12%
LAGOS (NGA)	6%	KAYES (MLI)	7%	CONAKRY (GIN)	9%	BAMAKO (MLI)	6%
KAYES (MLI)	5%	LAGUNES (CIV)	4%	LAGUNES (CIV)	5%	KAYES (MLI)	6%
LAGUNES (CIV)	4%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%	LAGUNES (CIV)	5%
KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	NZEREKORE (GIN)	4%	KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	LITTORAL (CMR)	4%
NZEREKORE (GIN)	4%	KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	EDO (NGA)	3%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%
KANO (NGA)	3%	KANO (NGA)	3%	LITTORAL (CMR)	3%	CENTRE (CMR)	3%
MAMOU (GIN)	3%	KINDIA (GIN)	3%	CENTRE (CMR)	3%	DELTA (NGA)	3%
WESTERN (GMB)	2%	DAKAR (SEN)	3%	NZEREKORE (GIN)	3%	KOLDA (SEN)	3%
OTHERS	42%	OTHERS	43%	OTHERS	46%	OTHERS	42%

# IV. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

## 4.2. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

Main regions of origin are displayed in this map for AVRR and VHR between 2017 and June 2022. Top regions by country of origin of migrants are displayed on the tables below.

BURKINA FASO	
Centre-Est	59%
Centre	17%
Sahel	10%

CHAD	
Ndjamena	99%
Bokou	1%
Kanem	0%

GAMBIA (The)	
Western	59%
Banjul	23%
Upper River	9%

GUINEA	
Conakry	52%
Nzerekore	13%
Kankan	9%

MALI	
Bamako	40%
Kayes	29%
Koulikoro	13%

NIGERIA	
Edo	31%
Lagos	21%
Delta	9%

CAMEROON	
Littoral	57%
Centre	40%
Ouest	2%

CÔTE D'IVOIRE	
Lagunes	71%
Marahoue	8%
18 Montagnes	5%

GHANA	
Ashanti	26%
Brong Ahafo	24%
Greater Accra	18%

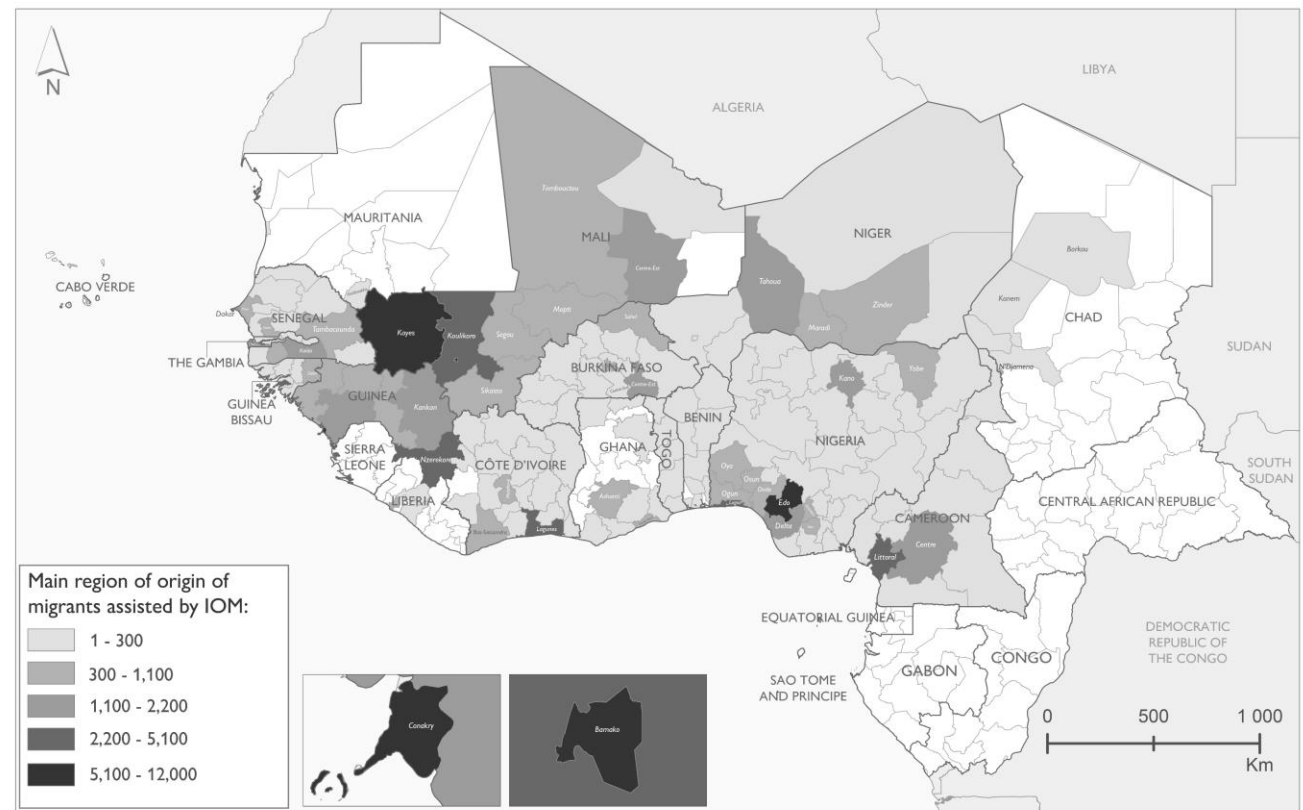
GUINEA-BISSAU	
Gabu	56%
Bafata	18%
Oio	11%

NIGER	
Tahoua	46%
Zinder	21%
Maradi	12%

SENEGAL	
Kolda	28%
Dakar	26%
Tambacounda	13%

## DISTRIBUTION OF AVRR AND VHR BY MAIN REGIONS OF ORIGIN (2017- June 2022)

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)



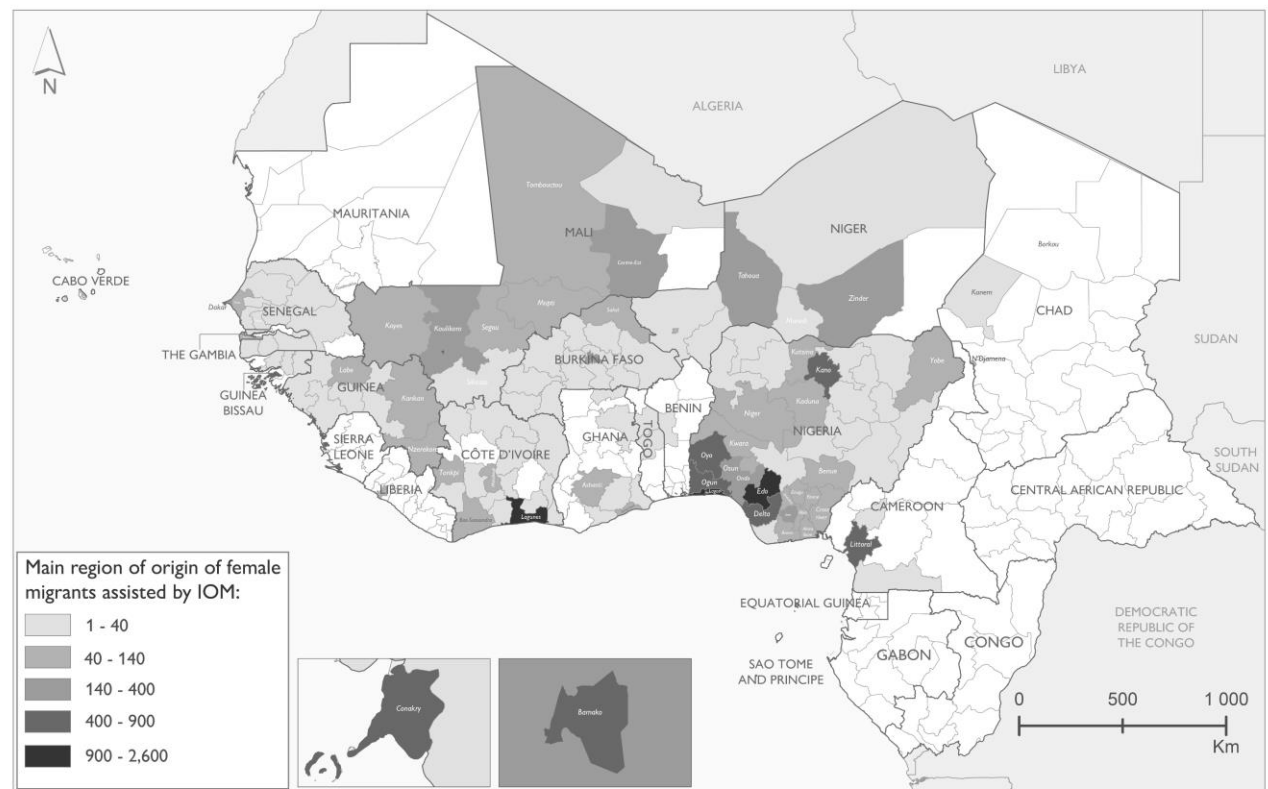
# IV. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

## 4.3. REGIONS OF ORIGIN BY GENDER

Main regions of origins of female migrants assisted to return by IOM are located in Nigeria (Edo, Lagos, Delta, Ogun), Cameroon (Littoral, Centre), Guinea (Conakry), Mali (Bamako), Niger (Tahoua, Zinder) as well as Côte d'Ivoire (Lagunes).

### MAIN REGIONS OF ORIGIN AND PROPORTION OF FEMALE AVRR AND VHR (2017- June 2022)

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)





V. PROTECTION CASES

# V. PROTECTION CASES

## 5.1. PROTECTION CASES OVERVIEW

A total of 8,114 protection cases benefited from AVRR/VHR between 2017 and June 2022, which represents 5% of the total number of beneficiaries assisted. Protections cases include unaccompanied children (UMCs), migrants with health conditions and victims of trafficking (VOTs).

Data collected based on discussions upon departure or return with assisted migrants shows that 1% of all migrants assisted to return were unaccompanied children. These are mainly nationals from Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria and Cameroon returning from Mali and Niger.

Nearly 2% of all migrants assisted to return displayed health conditions at the time of departure. They are mainly Nigerian nationals (55%) and the proportion of migrants with health conditions among women is higher (5%) than among men (1%).

3% of total individuals assisted between 2017 and June 2022, were identified as victims of trafficking during their journey or stay. About 84% of reported victims of trafficking are women and 76% are between 18 and 35 years old.

# 8,114

**TOTAL NUMBER OF PROTECTION CASES (5%)**

# 1,608

**UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN (1%)**

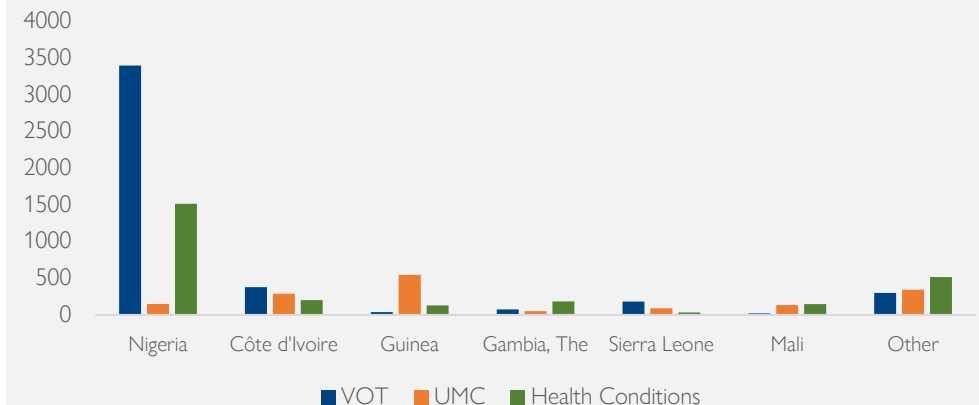
# 2,729

**SIGNIFICANT HEALTH CONDITIONS (2%)**

# 4,397

**VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING (3%)**

VOT, UMC, AND MIGRANTS WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS BY NATIONALITY (2017- JUNE 2022)



# V. PROTECTION CASES

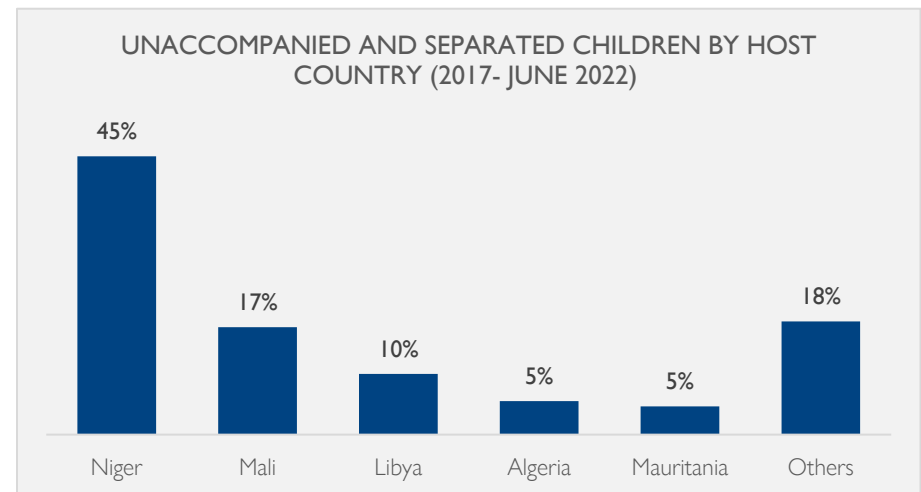
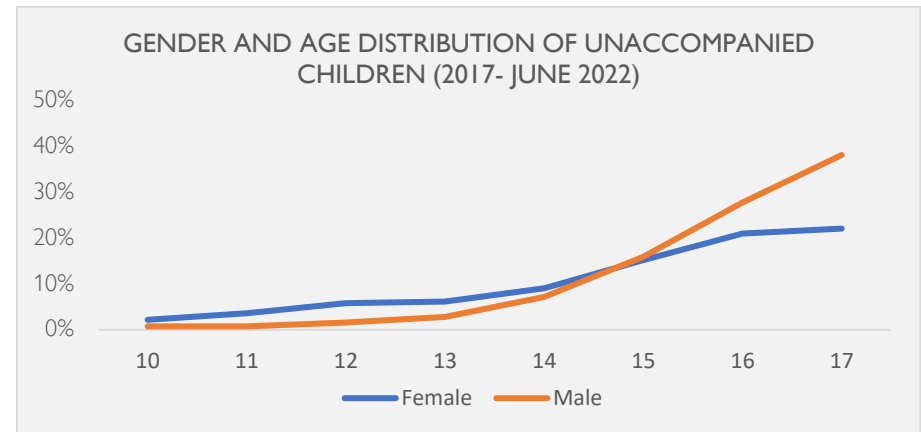
## 5.2. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN OVERVIEW

1,608 unaccompanied children were assisted with AVRR and VHR toward WCA countries between 2017 and June 2022. Unaccompanied children represent about 12% of the total number of children returnees in the region between 2017 and June 2022. 83% of the total number of unaccompanied children are boys and 78% are between 15 and 17 years old.

Niger (45%), Mali (17%), and Libya (10%) represent the main host countries from which AVR and VHR were organised toward WCA countries in terms of unaccompanied and separated children. 17% of the unaccompanied children are girls, mainly returning from Niger to Nigeria.

### UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN BY YEAR:

- 2017: 11% (184)
- 2018: 22% (358)
- 2019: 22% (353)
- 2020: 12% (192)
- 2021: 20% (315)
- 2022 (as of 30 June): 13% (206)





# V. PROTECTION CASES

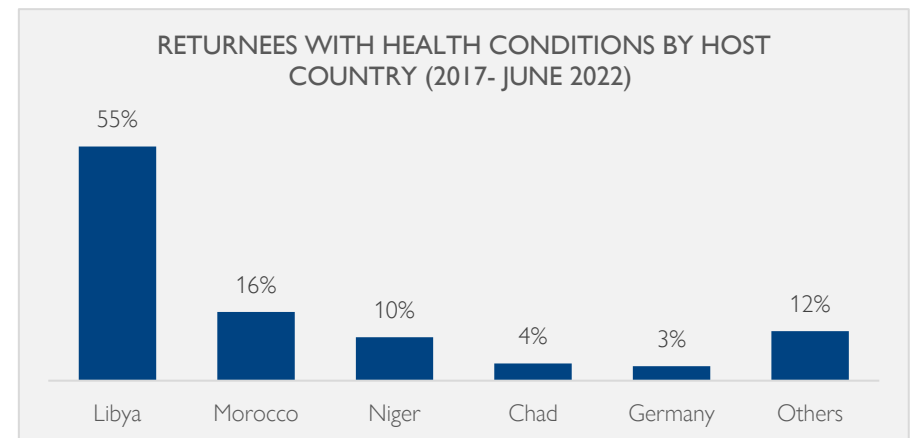
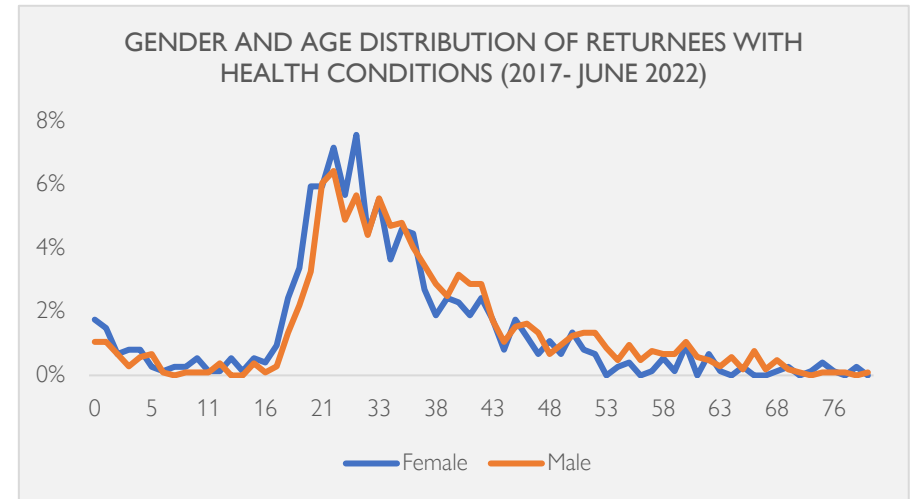
## 5.3. SIGNIFICANT HEALTH CONDITIONS OVERVIEW

Between 2017 and June 2022, over 2,700 returnees had health conditions at the time of departure. Their age range varies from 0 to 80 years old, with a mode (the most common value) at 25 years old. The proportion of women is lower compared to the same proportion for men within all ages. Nearly 41% of women with health conditions are nationals from Nigeria, mainly returning from Libya. It is important to stress that data collection on returnees' health conditions have been strengthened in late 2020, which explains the substantial increase in the number of returnees with health conditions reported in 2021 (1053 returnees) and 2022 (828 returnees in the first semester of the year).

The main host countries of returnees with health conditions are Libya (55%) and Morocco (16%). The North Africa region (mainly Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) recorded 73% of WCA returnees with health conditions.

### RETURNEES WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS BY YEAR:

- 2017: 3% (70)
- 2018: 4% (102)
- 2019: 10% (281)
- 2020: 14% (395)
- 2021: 39% (1,053)
- 2022 (as of 30 June): 30% (828)



# V. PROTECTION CASES

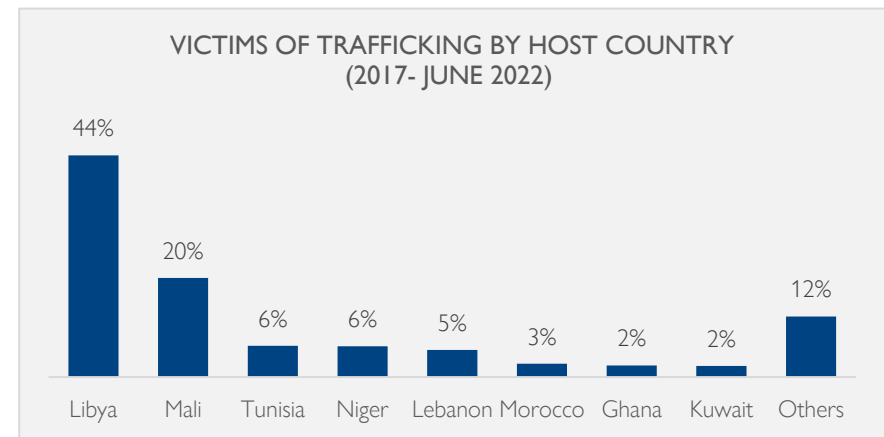
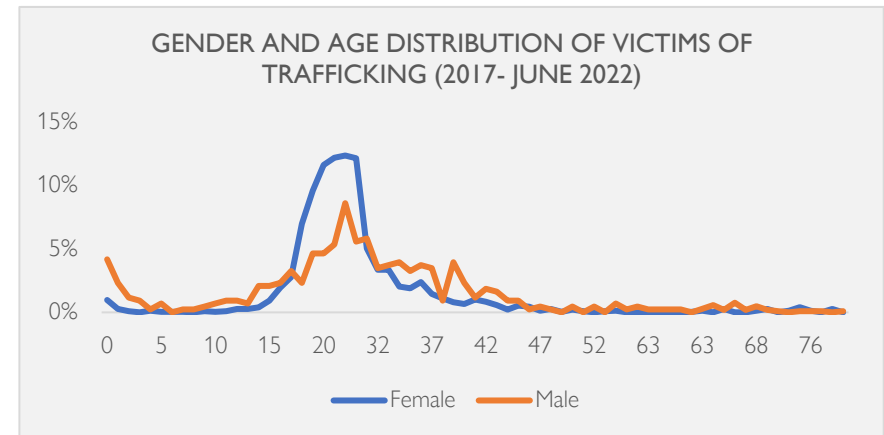
## 5.4. VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW

Nearly 4,400 victims of trafficking (VOTs) were assisted with AVRR and VHR toward WCA countries between 2017 and June 2022. Their age range varies from 0 to 80 years old, with a mode (the most common value) at 22 years old. 89% of VOTs are adults (above 18) and 84% of them are women. The proportion of VOTs among women between 16 and 25 years old is higher than the proportion of male VOTs in the same age group. Nearly 81% of women VOTs are Nigerians returning from Libya and Mali.

The main host countries of victims of trafficking are Libya (44%) and Mali (20%). Most victims of trafficking are identified in North Africa or on their way to West Africa (VOTs assisted in Libya on their way to Nigeria). A non-negligible number of VOTs were also assisted in Kuwait which is a major destination for female labour migration.

### VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING BY YEAR:

- 2017: 18% (370)
- 2018: 21% (932)
- 2019: 24% (1,065)
- 2020: 11% (466)
- 2021: 20% (863)
- 2022 (as of 30 June): 16% (701)



# METHODOLOGY

This report displays analysis conducted thanks to data collected from individuals that IOM assisted in their voluntary or humanitarian return.

## METHODOLOGY

Data is being collected by enumerators upon departure and arrival of each individual participating to IOM voluntary or humanitarian return programmes.

All data is then being entered and stocked by each host and origin countries. The regional office for West and Central Africa works on a consolidated overview every month.

In case of protection concerns (victims of trafficking or abuse), returnees are going through specific discussions with medical and psychosocial professionals.

## LIMITATIONS

Data displayed in this report presents the result of more than 145,000 migrants assisted in their voluntary/humanitarian return by IOM between 2017 and June 2022. It's therefore a particularly strong representation of inter-regional movements.

However, certain limitations should apply to these datasets. It does not represent accurately all movements and migration from the West and Central Africa region, but only represents migration undertaken by those voluntarily assisted to return by

IOM. Therefore, although the dataset allows for a certain confidence in the data given its width, it should not be considered as representative of all migration movements from the region.

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The framework for assisted voluntary return and reintegration (hereinafter referred to as the Framework) builds on IOM's long-standing contribution in this area and marks an important milestone in the Organization's engagement in AVRR. Designed to guide both policymakers and AVRR practitioners, the scope of the Framework goes beyond IOM's own engagement.

Considering the diversity of AVRR projects' eligibility criteria, available resources, national policies, implementation partners and operational contexts, the Framework proposes a road map to address voluntary return and reintegration in a holistic way – one that responds to the needs of the individual returnees, the needs of the communities to which they return and the priorities of concerned governments, calling for the adoption of coordinated measures, policies, and practices between stakeholders responsible for migration management and development at the international, national and local levels.

[https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our\\_work/DMM/AVRR/a\\_framework\\_for\\_avrr\\_online\\_pdf\\_optimized\\_20181112.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/a_framework_for_avrr_online_pdf_optimized_20181112.pdf)





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