



ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY
AND HUMANITARIAN RETURNS
IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA
2017-2022

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ACRONYMS

AND COUNTRY CODES

ACRONYMS

AVRR
Assistance to Voluntary
Return and Reintegration

IOM
International Organization for
Migration

UASC
Unaccompanied and
Separated Children

VHR
Voluntary Humanitarian
Return

VOT
Victim of trafficking

WCA
West and Central Africa

COUNTRY CODES

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



INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT

This document presents an analysis of interviews conducted with all individuals assisted in their voluntary return by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) between 2017 and 2022 (163,259) to 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)**.

AVRR is a part of a comprehensive approach to migration management. AVR programmes provide administrative, logistical and financial support, including reintegration assistance, to migrants unable or unwilling to remain in host and 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 migrants themselves, the 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 programmes – 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 individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn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.

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 within the same year. In the aftermath of the conflict, the socio-economic situation which remained unstable was further fragilized by the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the loss of livelihood opportunities, the lack of financial resources and the 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 2022. IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian return program was thus necessary to assist the vulnerable migrants, to return in a safe and dignified manner.

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 AVRR 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 from January 2017 to December 2022. The trends in the main countries of origin and host countries are also displayed in this report to showcase the evolution of the returns in the region

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





I. TOTAL FOR 2017-2022

I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.1. TRENDS BY YEAR

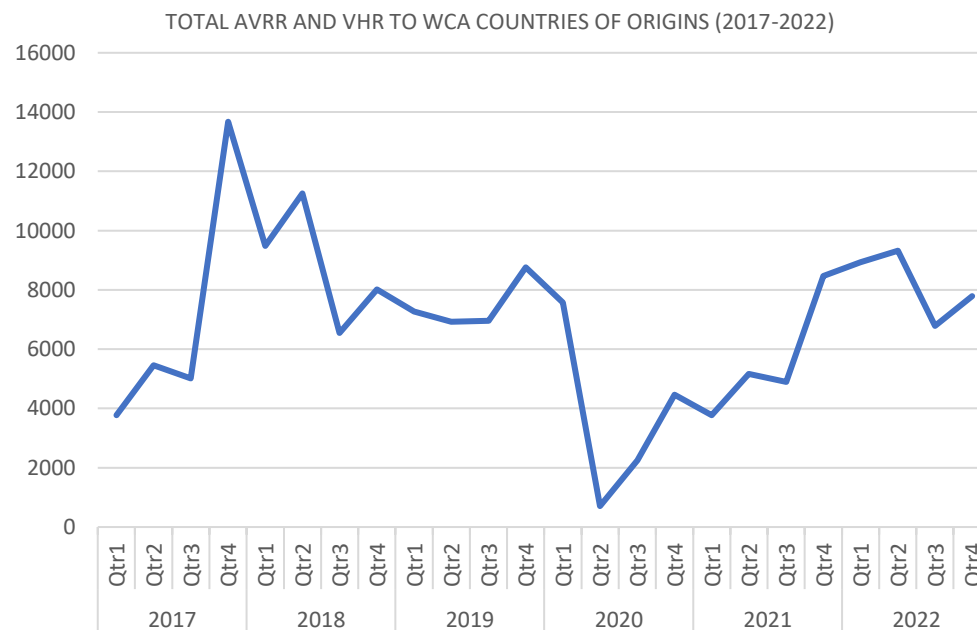
Between 2017 and 2022, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has organized the return of 163,259 nationals of West and Central African countries. Although most returns were organized from Niger and Libya, another 117 countries supported these operations from Europe, North Africa, West and 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 returns rate has decreased in the first two quarters of 2022, in comparison to 2021. In fact, with the decline of the pandemic, figures returned to their initial trends. The **migrants assisted** in their return **were mainly from Mali, Guinea, Nigeria, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire**. This trend has remained unchanged since 2021. Returns from the two main host countries, Libya and Niger, have increased massively from 2021 to 2022. In 2022, 8,327 migrants returned from Libya, compared to 2,961 the previous year. **Niger remains the top host country since 2019, followed by Libya and Morocco.**

VOLUNTARY AND HUMANITARIAN RETURNS BY YEAR:

<u>2017</u>	27,913	17%
<u>2018</u>	35,303	22%
<u>2019</u>	15,002	18%
<u>2020</u>	15,002	09%
<u>2021</u>	22,298	14%
<u>2022</u>	32,824	20%

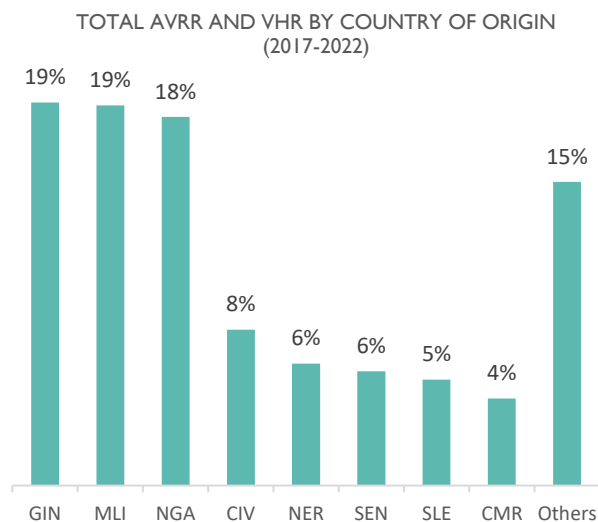
163,259 MIGRANTS ASSISTED IN THEIR VOLUNTARY RETURN BY IOM TO THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA (2017- 2022)



I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

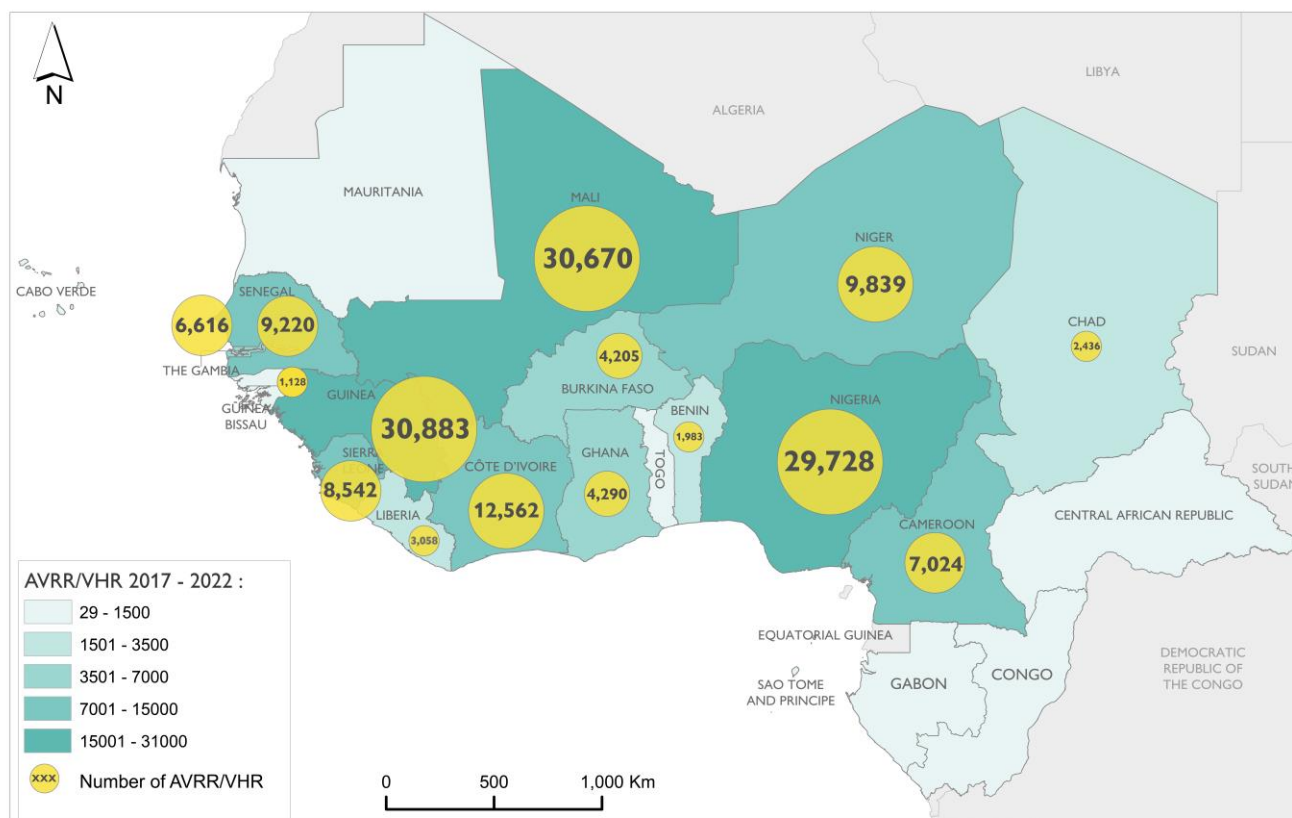
1.2. TRENDS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Three countries were the main countries of origin and accounted for over 56 per cent of all AVRR and VHR to West and Central Africa from 2017 to 2022: Guinea (30,883 or 19%), Mali (30,670 or 19%), and Nigeria (29,728 or 18%). AVRR and VHR were organized towards all 23 countries covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa..



AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA 2017 - 2022

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

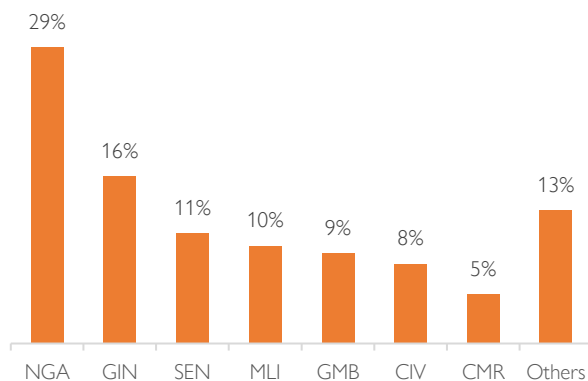


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.1. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2017

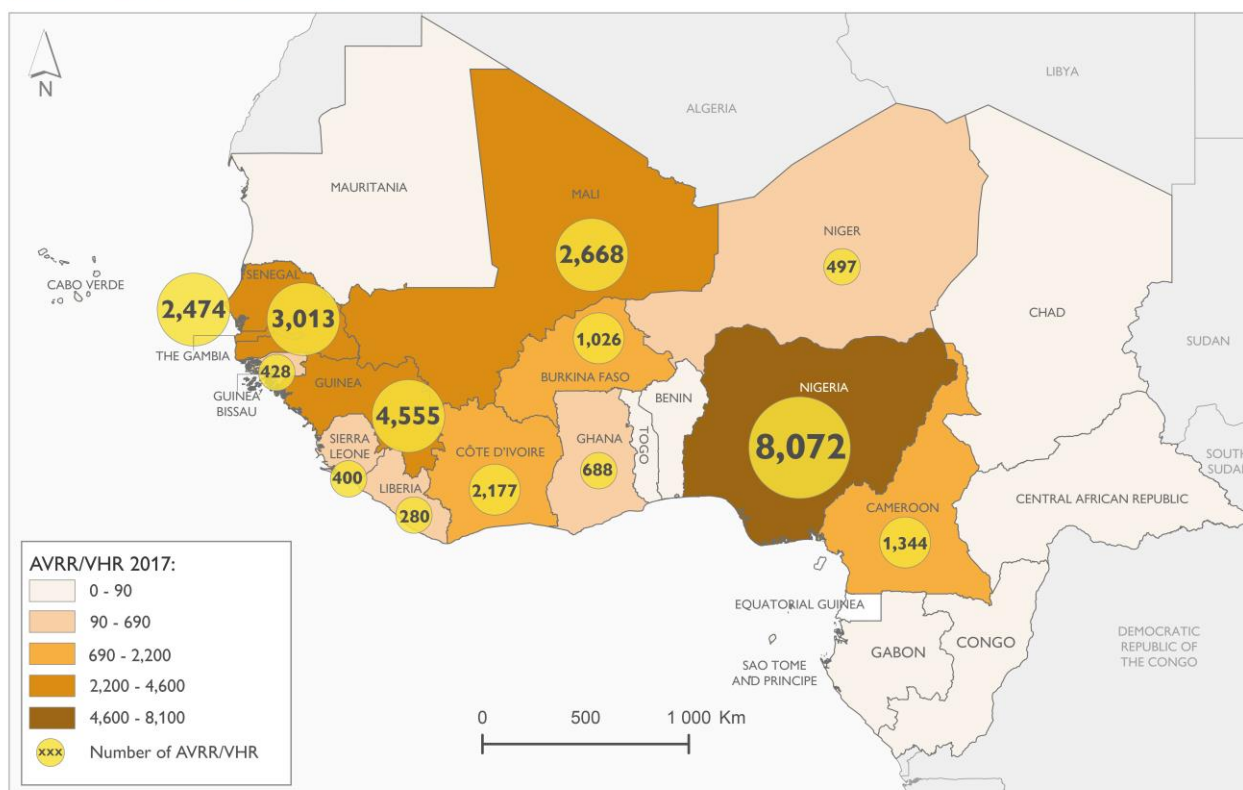
In 2017, IOM organized the return of 27,913 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (or in other words, countries of return) of West and Central African migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of returns were 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)

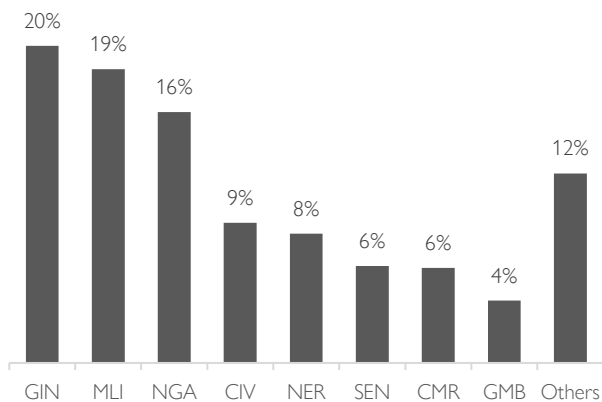


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.2. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2018

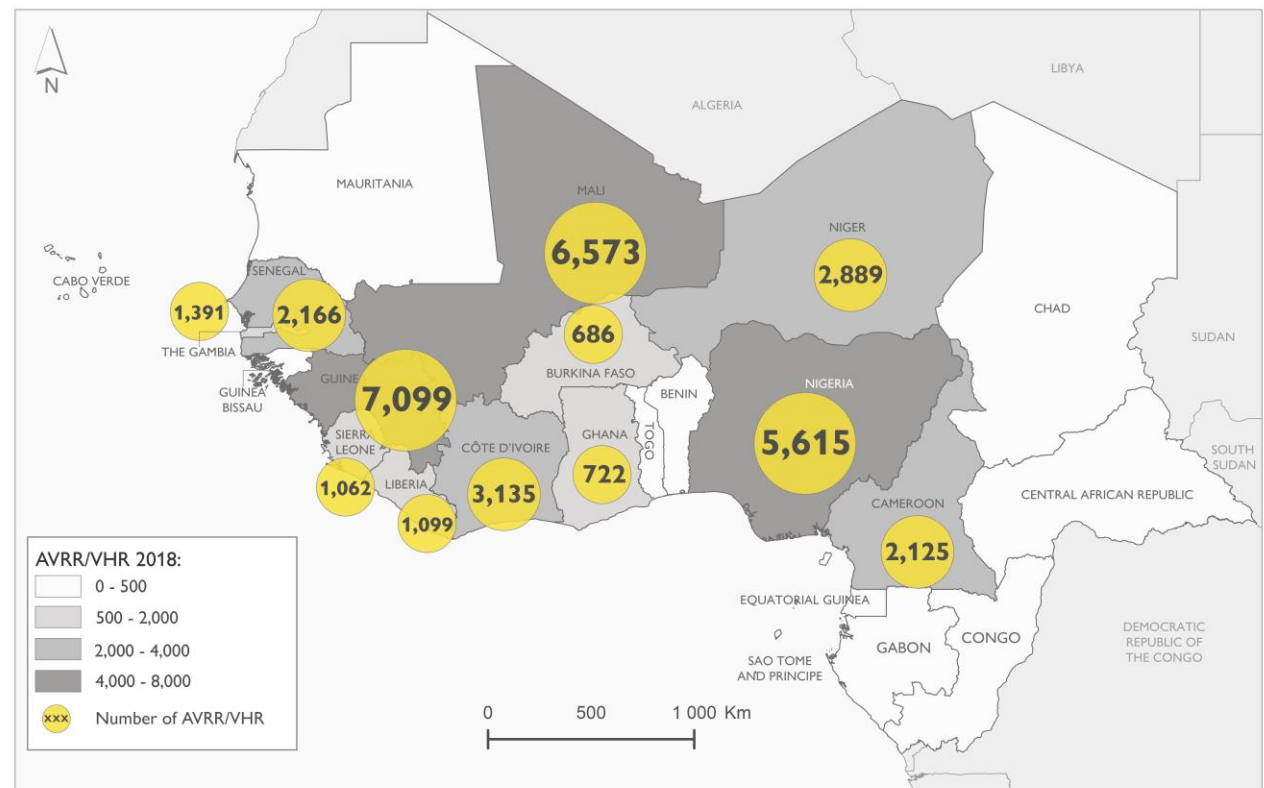
In 2018, IOM organized the return of 35,303 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of return were Guinea (7,099) followed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

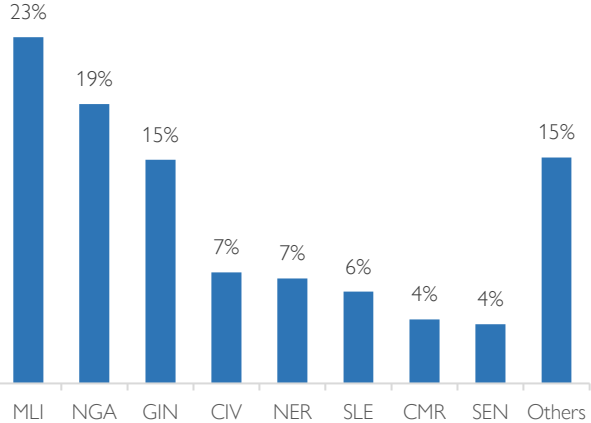


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.3. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2019

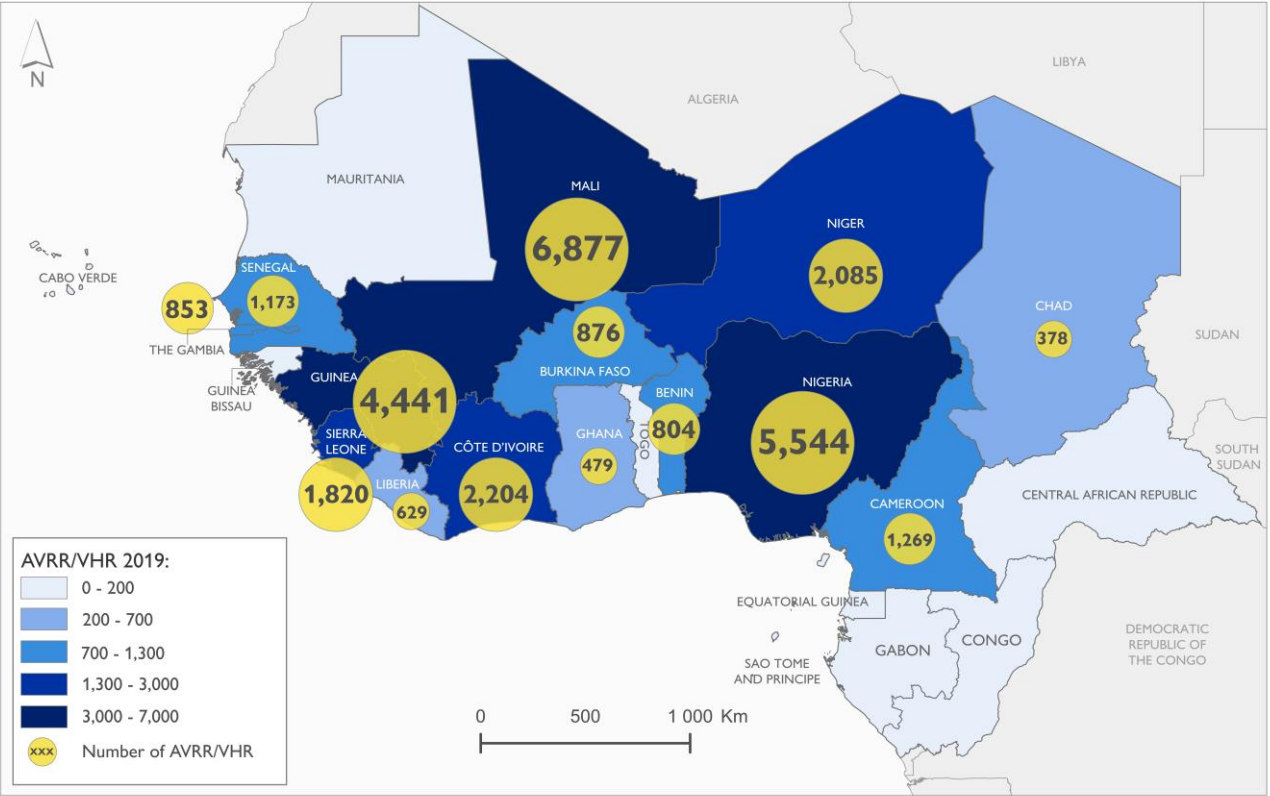
In 2019, IOM organized the return of 29,919 nationals of West and Central African countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR that year. The main countries of return were Mali (6,877) followed by Nigeria (5,544) 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)

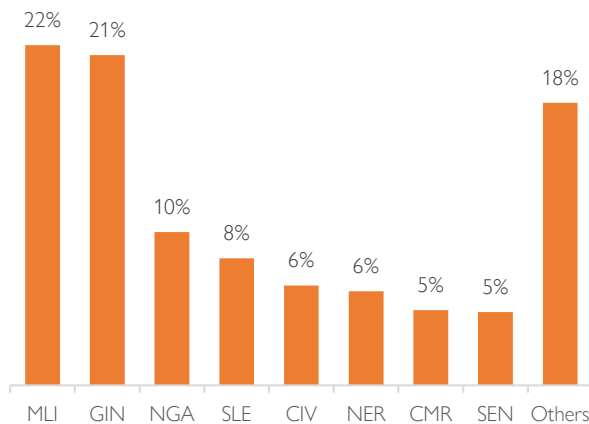


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.4. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN - 2020

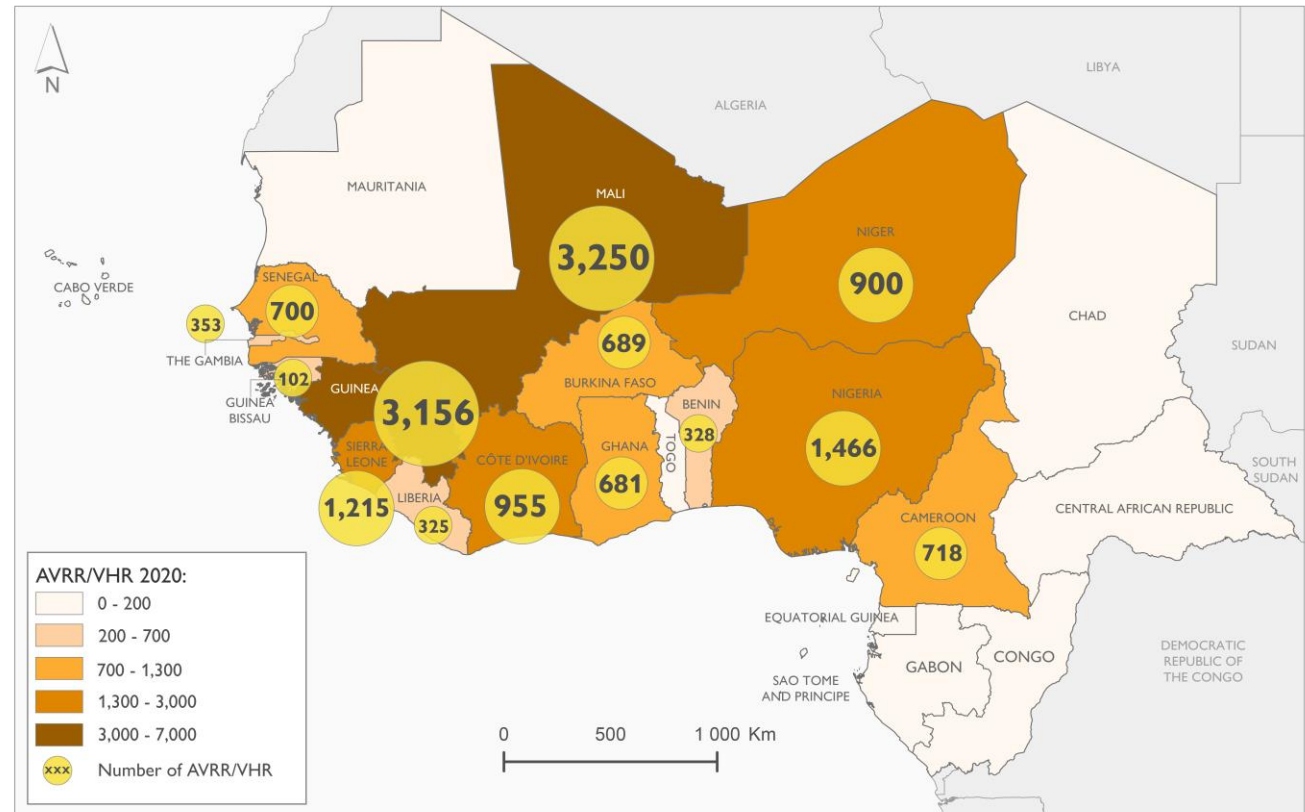
In 2020, IOM organized the return of 15,002 nationals of West and Central African countries. In 2020, two main countries of origin accounted for 43 per cent of all AVRR and VHR to West and Central Africa in 2020: Mali (3,250 or 22%), and Guinea (3,156 or 21%). In total, 22 countries covered by the IOM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

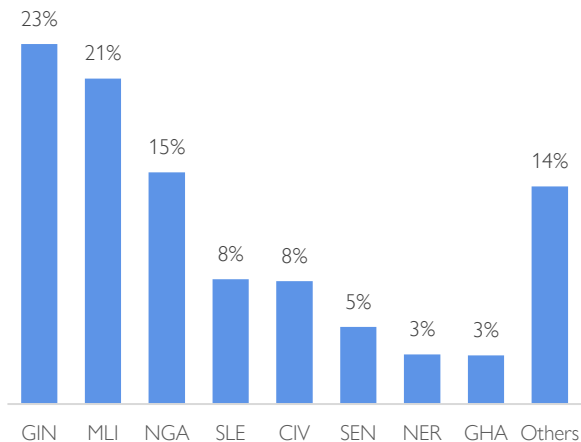


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.5. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN – 2021

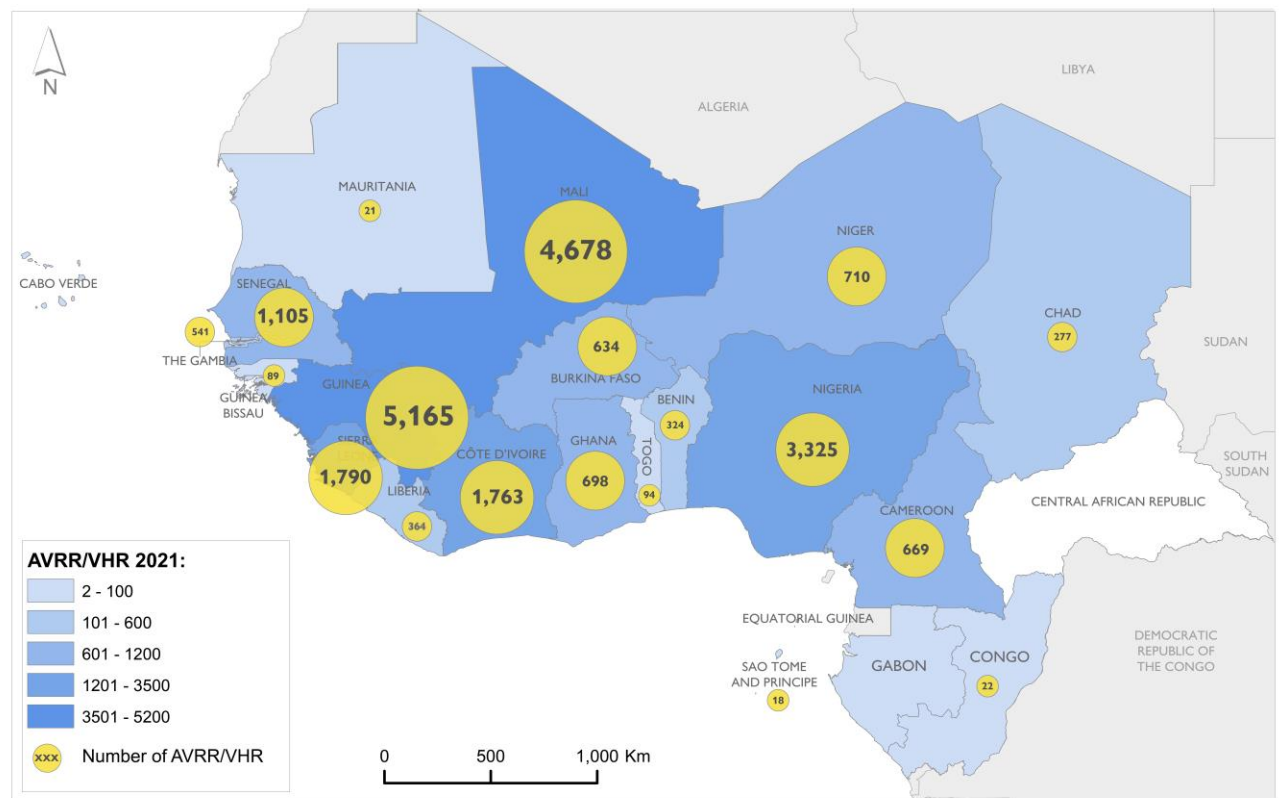
In 2021, IOM organized the return of 22,298 nationals of West and Central African countries. Three main countries of origin accounted for 59 per cent of all AVRR and VHR from West and Central Africa in 2021: Guinea (5,165 or 23%), Mali (4,678 or 21%) and Nigeria (3,325 or 15%). In total, 21 countries 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)

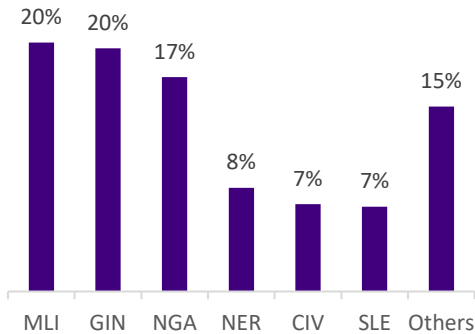


I. TRENDS FOR 2017-2022

1.2.5. BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN – 2022

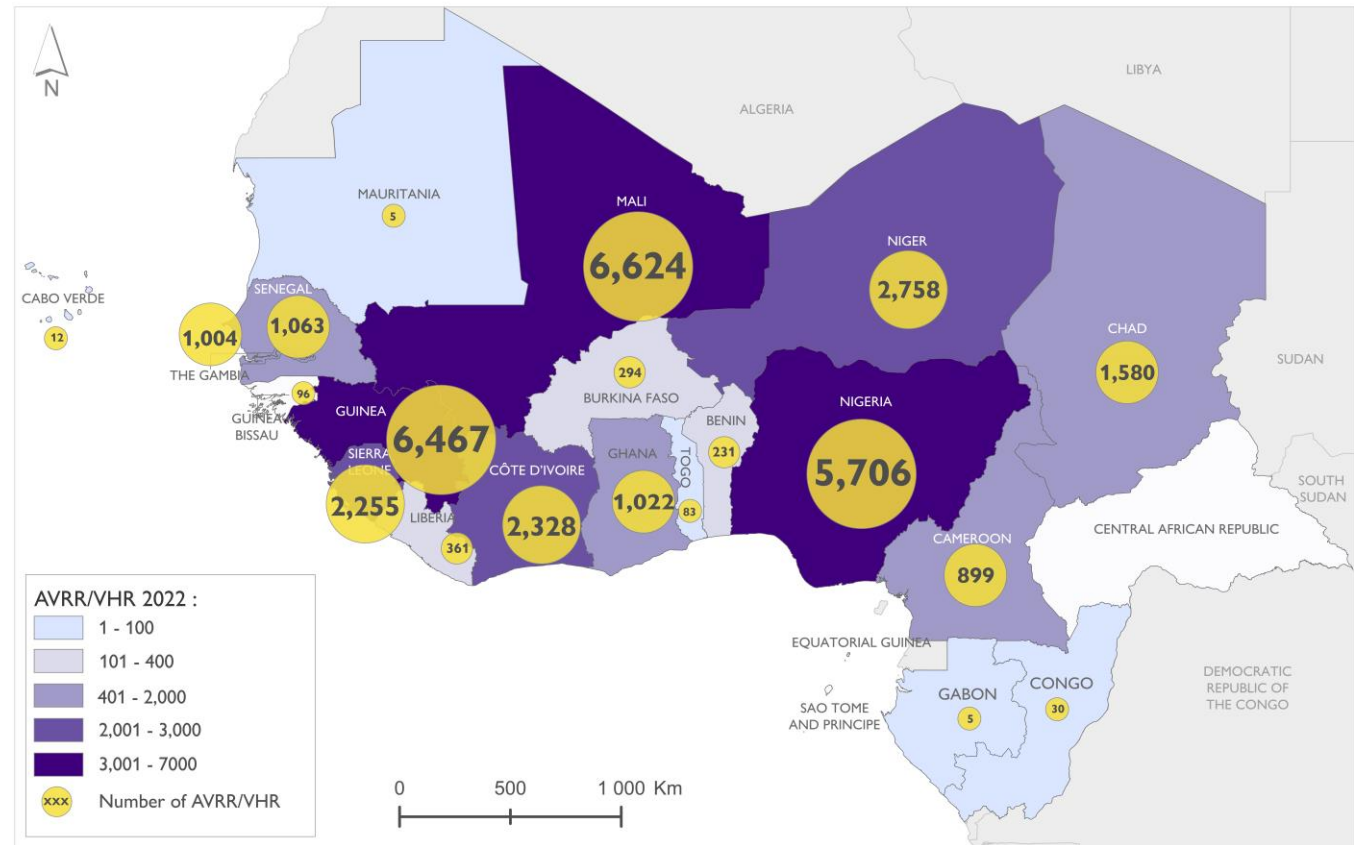
In 2022, IOM organized the return of 32,824 nationals of West and Central Africa countries. The map displays the main countries of origin (and therefore return) of West and Central Africa migrants who were beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR in 2022. The main countries of origin were Mali (6,624), Guinea (6,467) and Nigeria (5,706). In total, 22 countries covered by the IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa received returning migrants.

TOTAL AVRR AND VHR BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (2022)



AVRR AND VHR TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA - 2022

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)





II. HOST COUNTRIES

II. HOST COUNTRIES

2.1. MAIN REGIONS AND HOST COUNTRIES

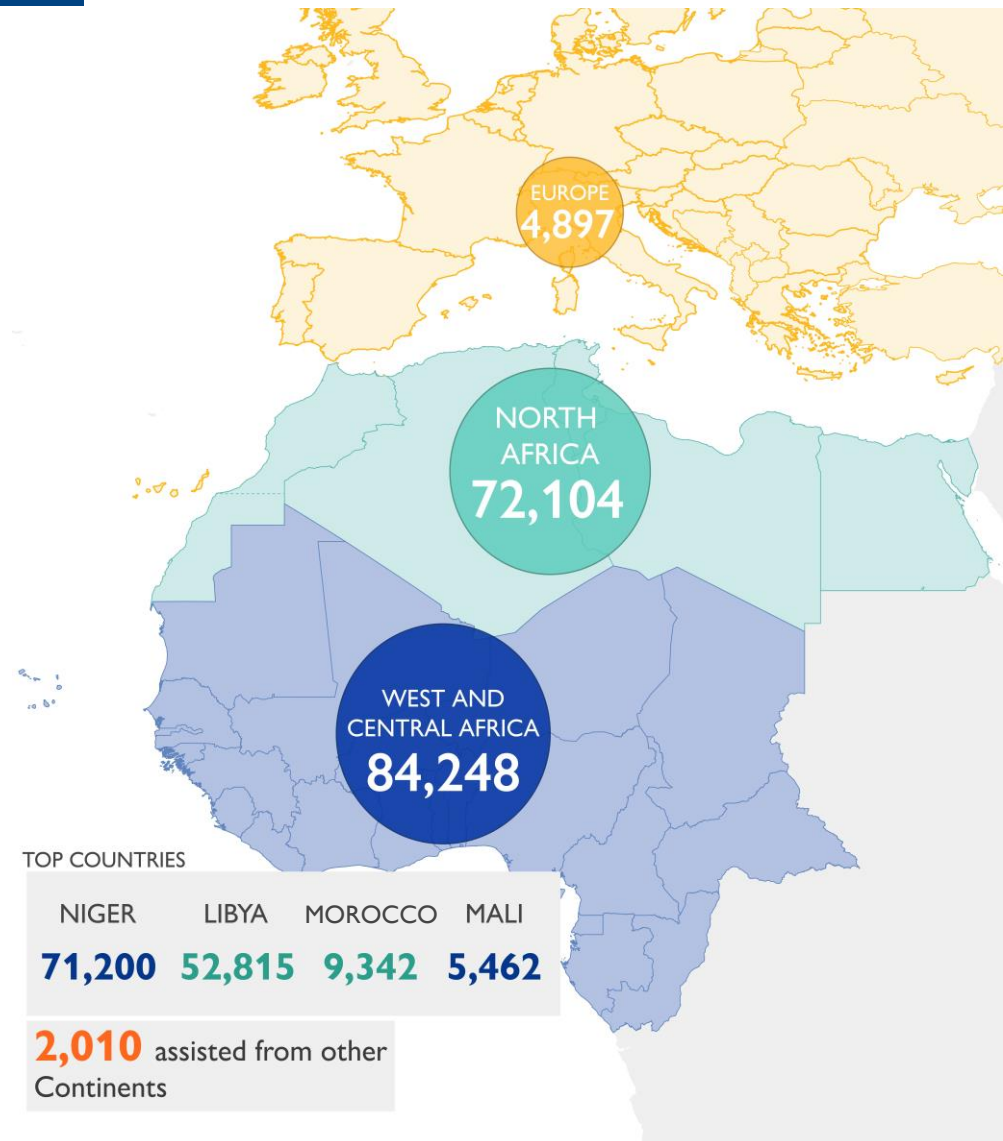
Of the 163,259 individuals assisted in their return by IOM to their country of origin in WCA, 52 per cent (or 84,248 individuals) were assisted to return from a country in West and Central Africa, mainly from Niger.

North Africa was the second main host region for WCA individuals assisted in their return (44%, or 72,104 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 per cent of the total number of returns to WCA countries organized by IOM between 2017 and 2022.

Main host countries (countries that assisted migrants in their return) from 2017 to 2022 were Niger (71,200, or 44%) followed by Libya (52,815, or 32%), Morocco (9,342 or 6%) and Mali (5,462 or 3%)..



II. HOST COUNTRIES

2.2. TRENDS FOR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN AND HOST COUNTRIES

Since 2019, Assisted Voluntary Returns to Guinea and Mali have gradually increased and remained, until 2022, the top 2 countries of origin for AVRR and VHR organized by IOM towards the WCA Region. Nigeria completes the top 3 since 2017. In 2022, returns to Nigeria and Niger increased, from 15% to 17% for the first, and from 3% to 8% for the second.

TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN 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
MALI ↓	20%	GUINEA ↑	23%	MALI ↑	23%	NIGERIA	22%
GUINEA ↓	20%	MALI ↓	21%	GUINEA ↓	17%	GUINEA	18%
NIGERIA ↑	17%	NIGERIA ↓	15%	NIGERIA ↓	16%	MALI	15%
NIGER ↑	8%	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 ↑	27%	OTHERS ↓	25%	OTHERS ↑	31%	OTHERS	29%

Niger has been the main host country for AVRR and VHR assistance since 2019, replacing Libya which had previously been in this position in 2017 and 2018. However, returns from Niger have been decreasing since 2020. In 2020, 56 per cent of the returns were organized from Niger, before decreasing to 47 per cent in 2021, and 45 per cent in 2022. In contrast, proportions of returns from Libya have increased by more than 10 percentage points between 2021 (13%) and 2022 (25%). Since 2020, Mali is no longer among the top host countries, induced by the rise of returns from the North African countries, such as Algeria, Tunisia, or Morocco.

TOP HOST COUNTRIES 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 ↓	45%	NIGER ↓	47%	NIGER ↑	56%	LIBYA	51%
LIBYA ↑	25%	LIBYA ↓	13%	LIBYA ↓	20%	NIGER	33%
MOROCCO ↓	7%	MOROCCO ↑	10%	MOROCCO ↓	4%	MOROCCO	5%
CHAD ←	4%	ALGERIA ↑	9%	MALI ↑	4%	MALI	3%
ALGERIA ↓	4%	CHAD ↑	4%	ALGERIA ↑	3%	TUNISIA	2%
OTHERS ↓	15%	OTHERS ↑	17%	OTHERS ↑	12%	OTHERS	6%

II. HOST COUNTRIES

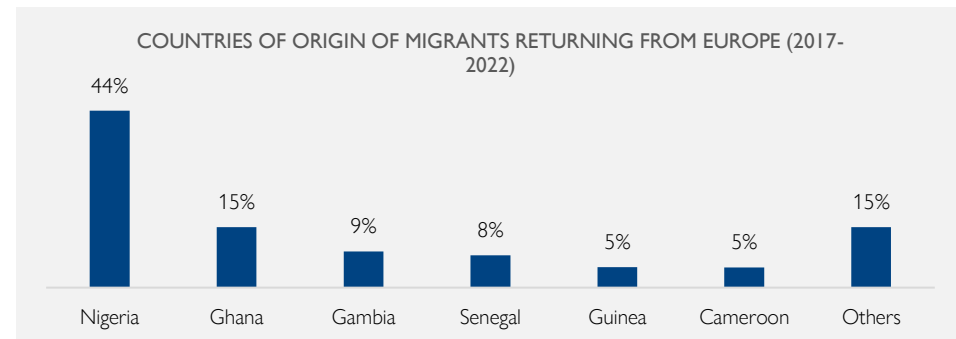
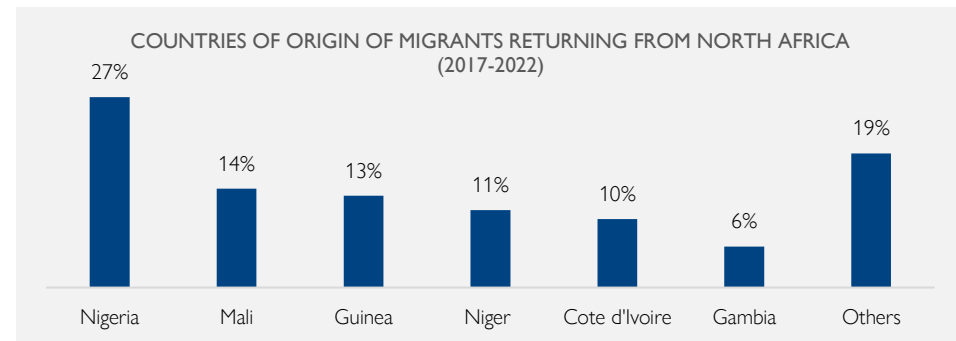
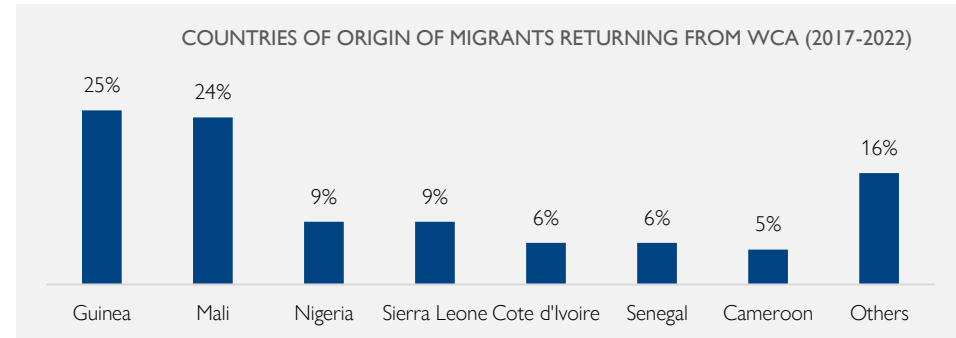
2.3. CROSS ANALYSIS OF HOST AND ORIGIN COUNTRIES

Between 2017 and 2022, most returns from the WCA Region were towards Guinea (25%), Mali (24%) and Nigeria (9%). Migrants who were assisted to return to their country of origin from North Africa were mainly from WCA French speaking countries (Mali, Guinea, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire), except for Nigeria which is the main country of origin (received 27% of all returns from North Africa). Since 2017, Mali and Guinea have remained among the top 3 countries of origins for returns both from WCA and from North Africa.

Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands were the top 3 host countries for returns from Europe between 2017 and 2022. Most returns from the three previously mentioned countries took place towards English speaking countries, namely Nigeria (44%), Ghana (15%), and the Gambia (9%).

TOP HOST COUNTRIES 2017-2022

NIGER	71,200	44%
LIBYA	52,815	32%
MOROCCO	9,342	06%
MALI	5,462	03%
ALGERIA	4,938	03%
TUNISIA	3,489	02%
CHAD	2,757	02%
MAURITANIA	2,266	01%





III. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

III. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

3.1. 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 2022. For this period, Conakry in Guinea, Bamako and Kayes in Mali, and Lagos in Nigeria were the main regions of origin. These four 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 per cent in 2019-2020 to 15 per cent in 2022. In contrast, the same figure for Kayes in Mali decreased from 9 per cent to 5 per cent.

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 30 per cent of the total number of returns between 2017 and 2022 in the WCA region.

TOP REGIONS 2022	% of AVRR/VHR	TOP REGIONS 2021	% of AVRR/VHR	TOP REGIONS 2019-2020	% of AVRR/VHR	TOP REGIONS 2017-2018	% of AVRR/VHR
CONAKRY (GIN)	15%	CONAKRY (GIN)	14%	BAMAKO (MLI)	11%	EDO (NGA)	12%
BAMAKO (MLI)	10%	BAMAKO (MLI)	11%	KAYES (MLI)	9%	CONAKRY (GIN)	12%
LAGOS (NGA)	7%	KAYES (MLI)	7%	CONAKRY (GIN)	9%	BAMAKO (MLI)	6%
KANO (NGA)	6%	LAGUNES (CIV)	4%	LAGUNES (CIV)	5%	KAYES (MLI)	6%
KAYES (MLI)	5%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%	LAGUNES (CIV)	5%
N'DJAMENA (TCD)	5%	NZEREKORE (GIN)	4%	KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	LITTORAL (CMR)	4%
KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	KOULIKORO (MLI)	4%	EDO (NGA)	3%	LAGOS (NGA)	4%
LAGUNES (CIV)	4%	KANO (NGA)	3%	LITTORAL (CMR)	3%	CENTRE (CMR)	3%
WESTERN (GMB)	3%	KINDIA (GIN)	3%	CENTRE (CMR)	3%	DELTA (NGA)	3%
GAO (MLI)	3%	DAKAR (SEN)	3%	NZEREKORE (GIN)	3%	KOLDA (SEN)	3%
OTHERS	38%	OTHERS	43%	OTHERS	46%	OTHERS	42%

III. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

3.2. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

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

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

CAMEROON	
Littoral	56%
Centre	39%
Ouest	2%

CHAD	
N'Djamena	99%
Bokou	0%
Kanem	0%

CÔTE D'IVOIRE	
Lagunes	70%
Marahoue	8%
18 Montagnes	6%

GAMBIA (The)	
Western	61%
Banjul	22%
Upper River	9%

GHANA	
Ashanti	28%
Brong Ahafo	22%
Greater Accra	19%

GUINEA	
Conakry	54%
Nzerekore	13%
Kankan	8%

MALI	
Bamako	39%
Kayes	29%
Koulikoro	13%

NIGER	
Tahoua	49%
Zinder	19%
Maradi	14%

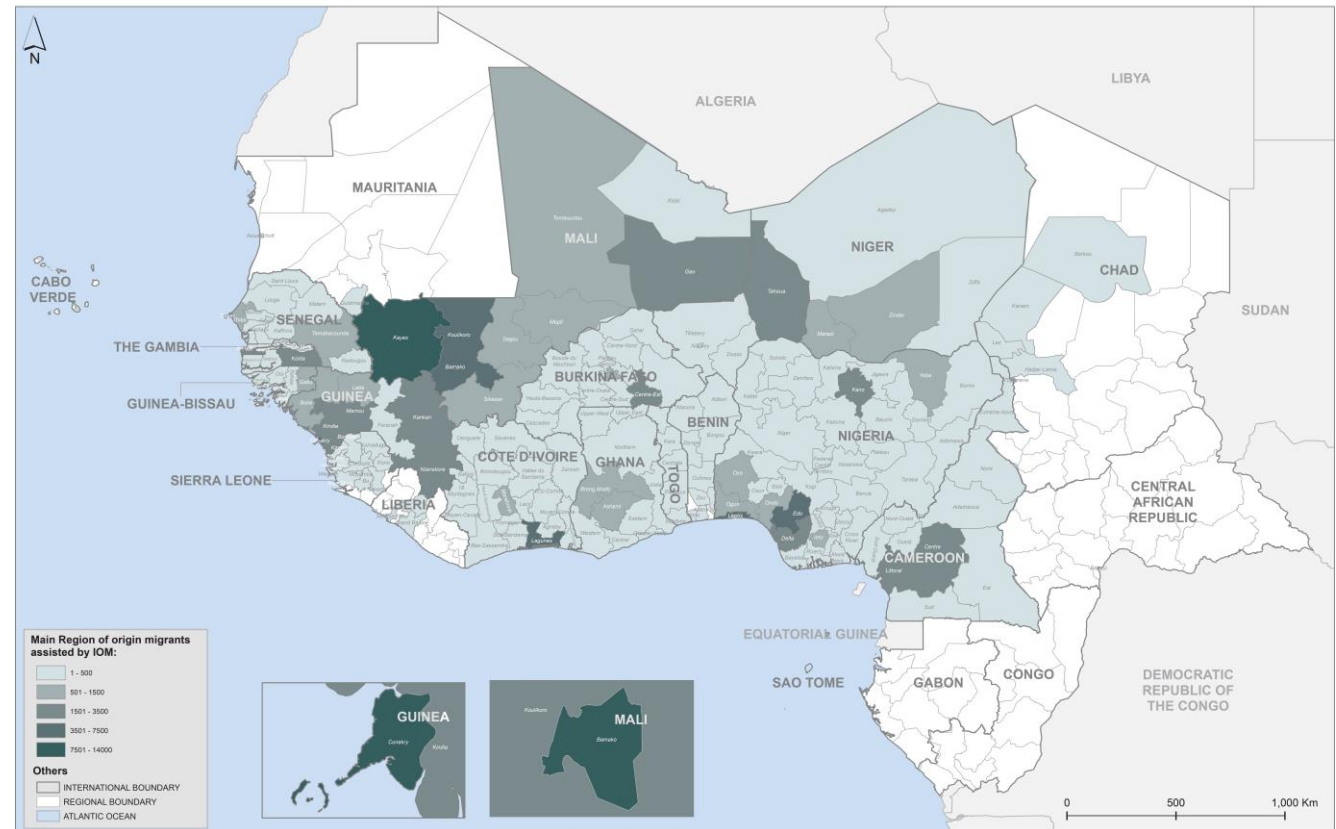
NIGERIA	
Lagos	31%
Edo	24%
Kano	10%

SENEGAL	
Kolda	28%
Dakar	26%
Tambacounda	13%

SIERRA LEONE	
Western Area Urban	31%
Bo	30%
Kenema	20%

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

Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM)



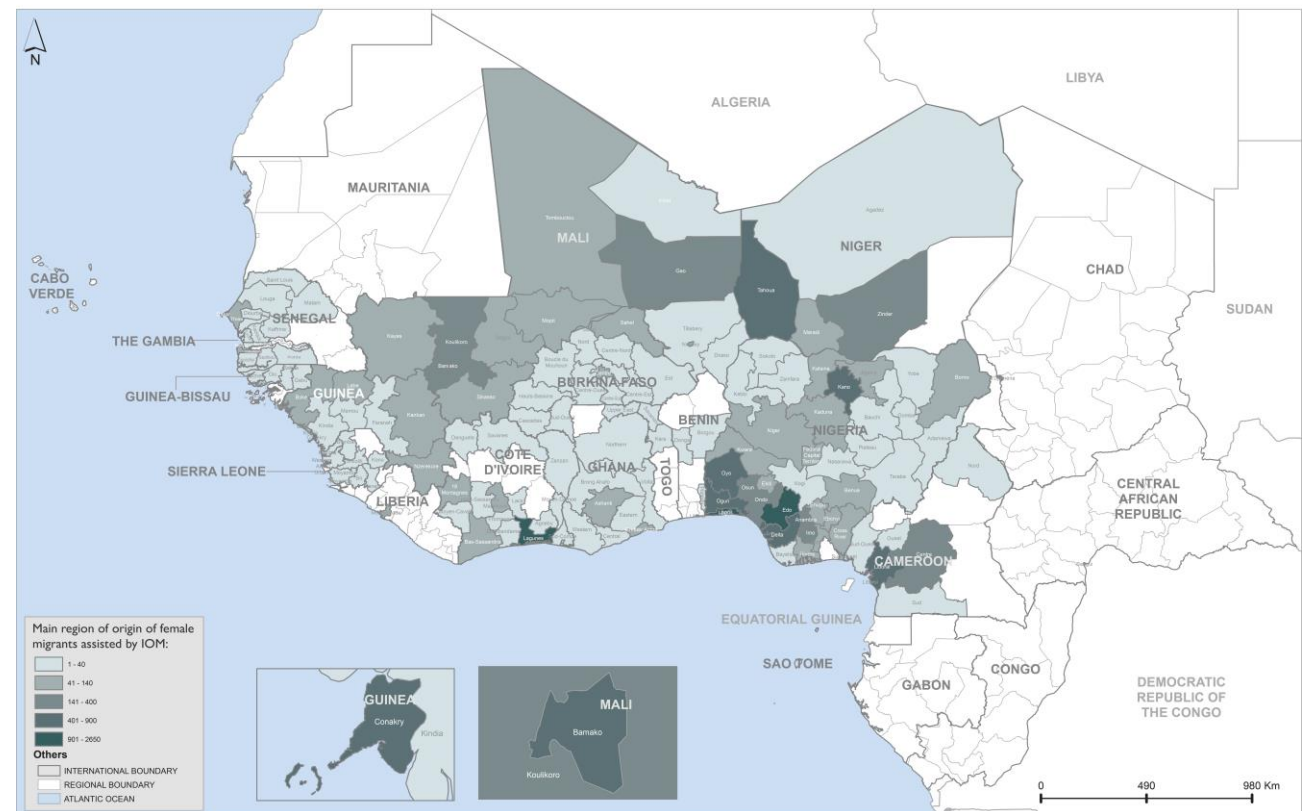
III. REGIONS OF ORIGIN

3.3. REGIONS OF ORIGIN BY SEX

Main regions of origins of female migrants assisted to return by IOM are located in Nigeria (Edo, Lagos, Delta and 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- 2022)

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)





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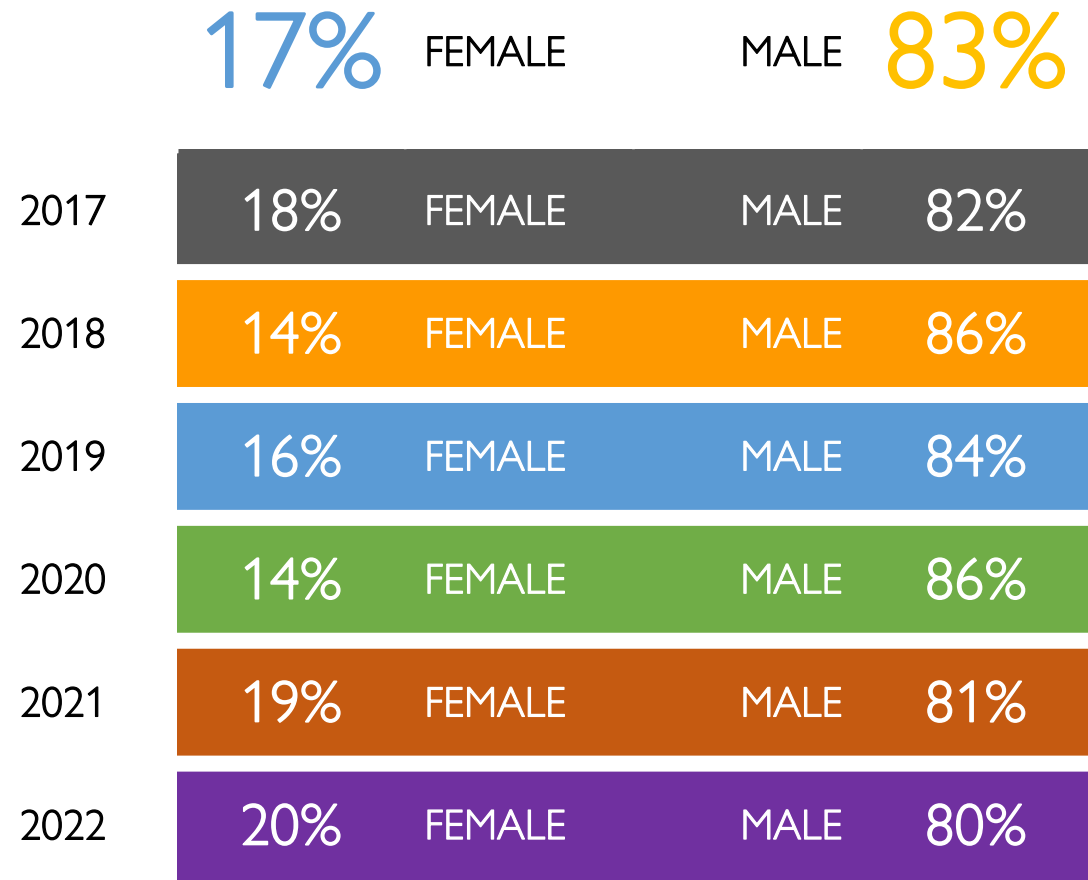
IV. SEX AND AGE

IV. SEX AND AGE

4.1 SEX

Between 2017 and 2022, more than 27,500 women were assisted by IOM to return to their country of origin in West and Central Africa, representing 17 per cent of the total AVRR and VHR caseloads during that period.

The proportion of women returnees reached its highest value during the year 2022 (20%), and rose by 6 percentage points compared to 2020. Between 2019 and 2022; a decrease in returns from Niger (from 54% to 45%), one of the main host countries with the highest male to female returnees 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 to 2022.



IV. SEX AND AGE

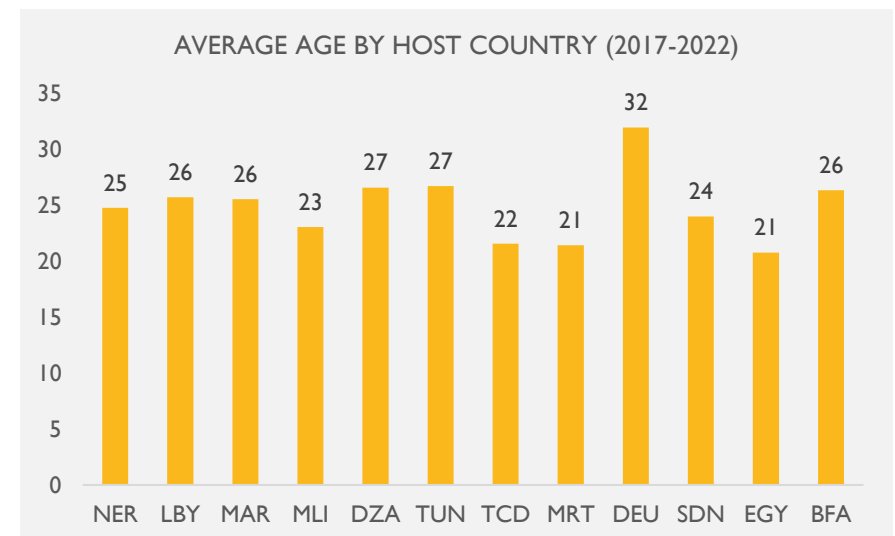
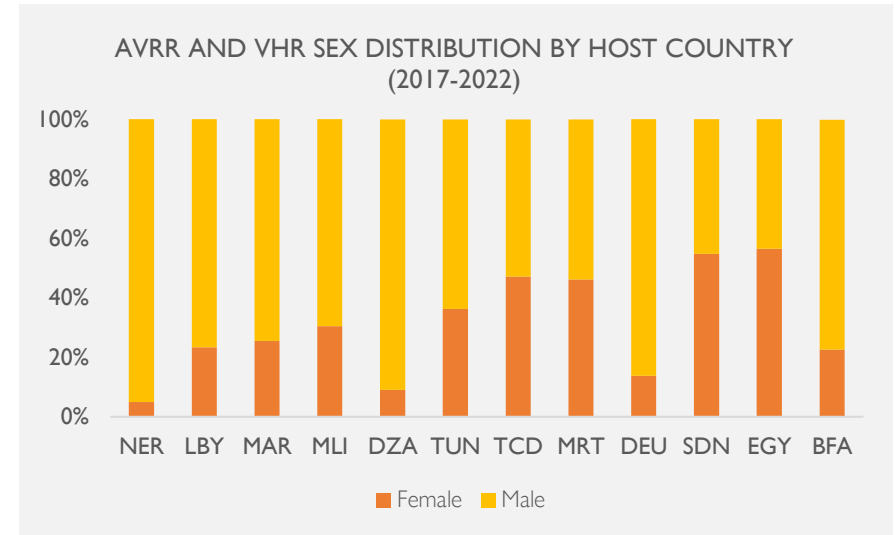
4.2. HOST COUNTRIES BY SEX AND AGE

Host countries have a very different sex ratio in their AVRR and VHR to WCA between 2017 and 2022.

If beneficiaries of AVRR and VHR organized from Niger (95%), Algeria (91%), Germany (86%), Italy (85%), 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 Lebanon (96%), Ghana (73%), Gabon (73%) and Côte d'Ivoire (60%), albeit the absolute number of returns from these countries is low. From the top 12 host countries shown in the graph, only Egypt (56%) and Sudan (55%) showed a higher proportion of females among beneficiaries.

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

The age variable also varies from one host country to another. Egypt and Ghana, 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).



IV. SEX AND AGE

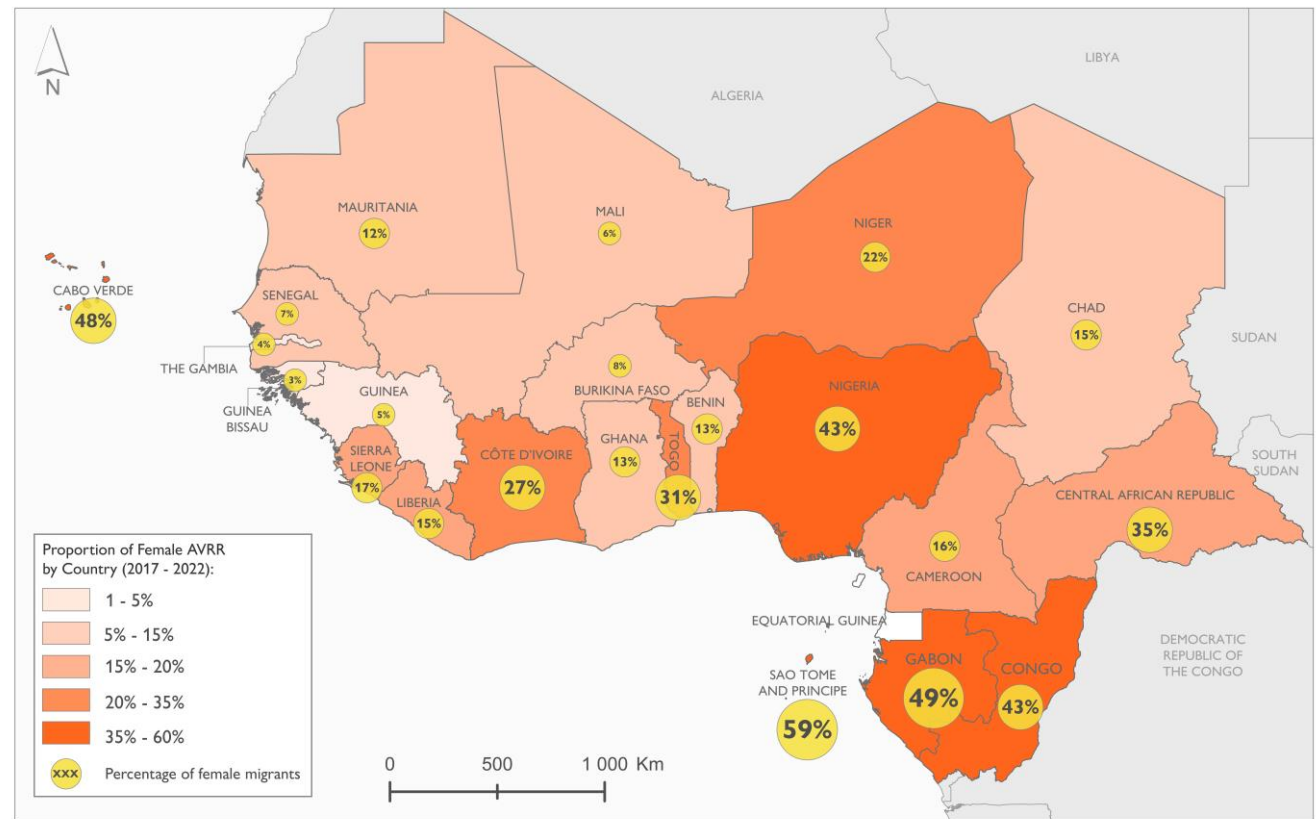
4.3. SEX BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Among the main countries of origin, Nigeria has the highest proportion of women returnees (43%) as opposed to Guinea Bissau (3%) and the Gambia (4%) which recorded the lowest proportions 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 ease of obtaining visa for certain countries.

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

Source: International Organization for Migration(IOM)

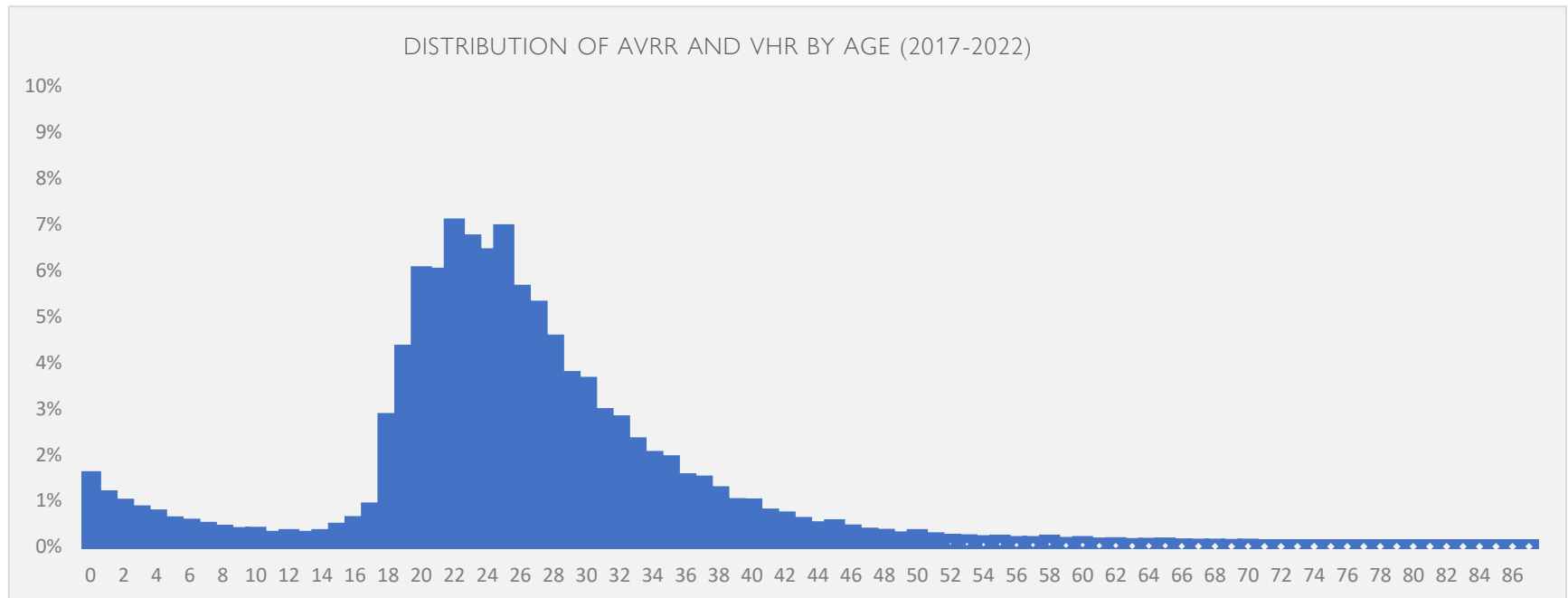


IV. SEX AND AGE

4.4. AVERAGE AGE OF RETURNEES

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

25 AVERAGE AGE

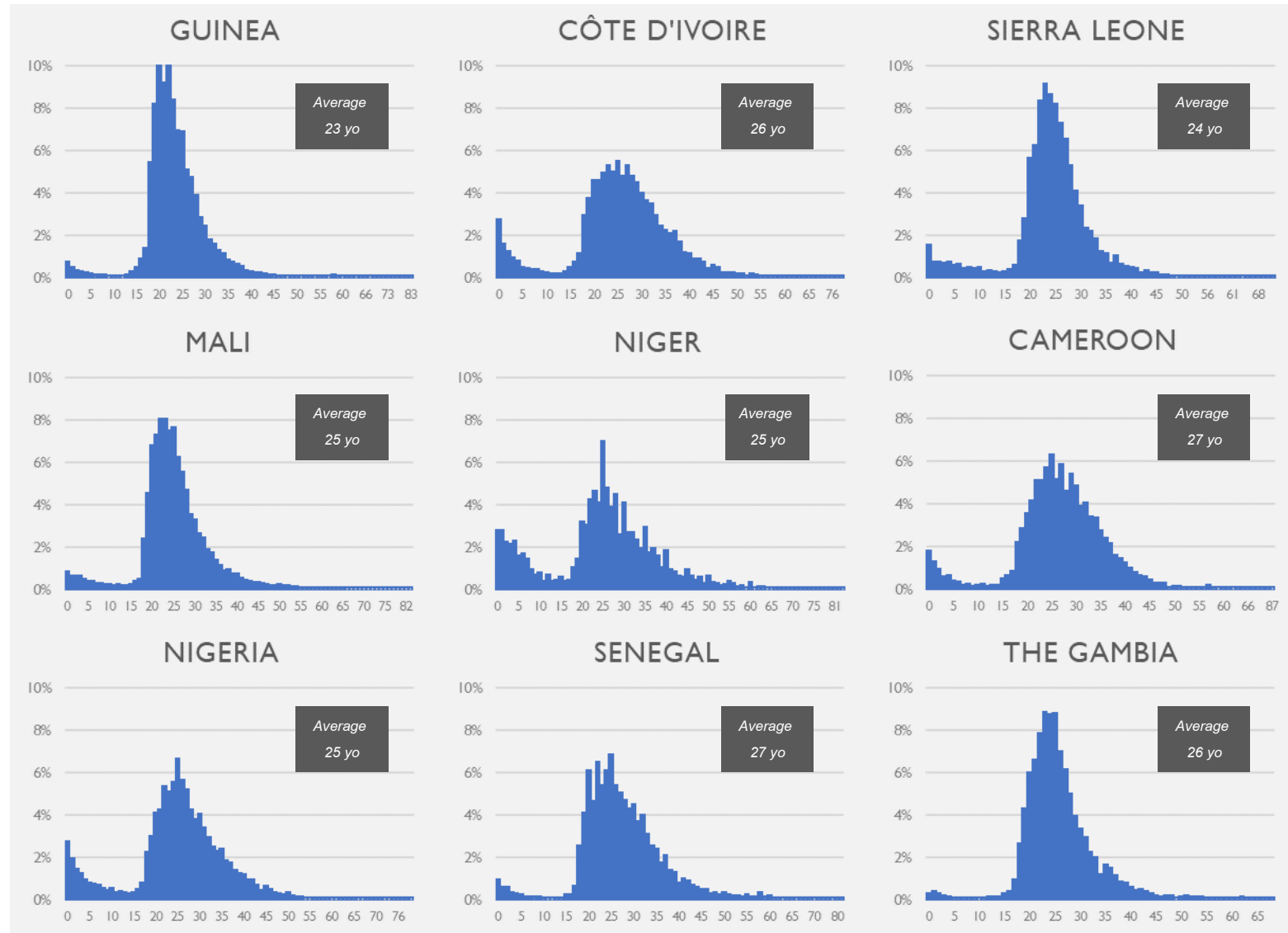


IV. SEX AND AGE

4.5. 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 2022.

The shape of Guinea's age chart displays a particularly young population; an average age of 23 years old and the mode, most frequent value, being 20 years old. On another hand, the shape of the age chart in Senegal presents an older population; the average age being above 27 with the mode, similarly, at 27 years old.



IV. SEX AND AGE

4.6. SEX & AGE

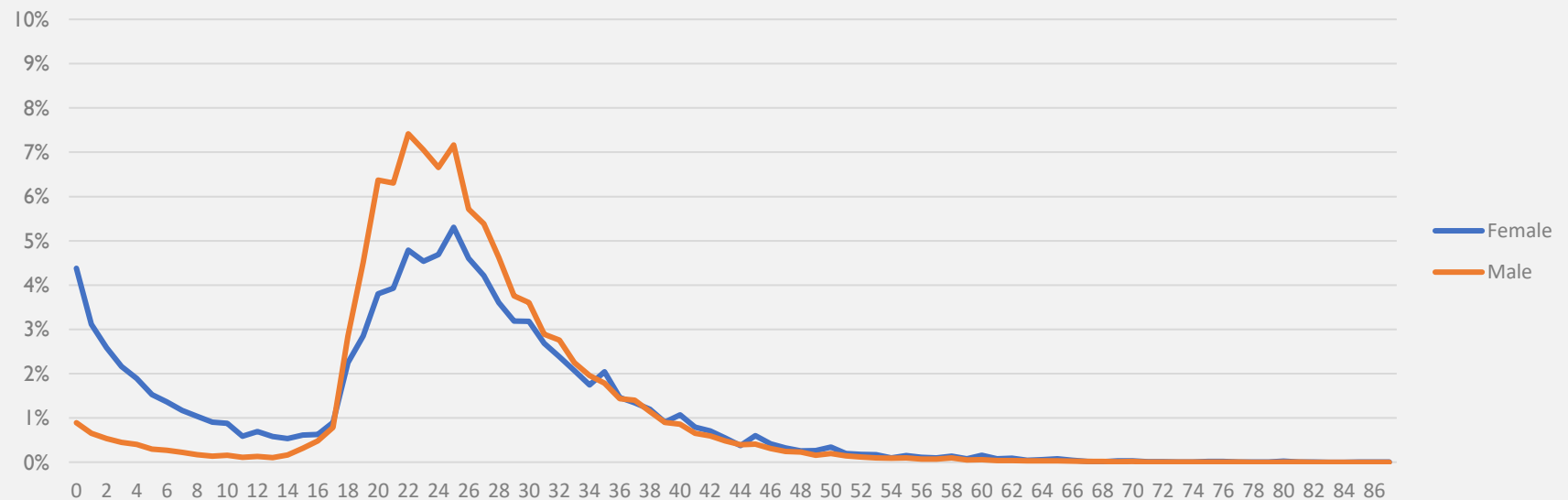
When crossing age and sex variables together, two main results are visible:

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 (26%) is higher than the same proportion for men (6%).

Minors are mainly nationals from Nigeria (27%), Niger (14%), Mali (13%), Guinea (11%) and Côte d'Ivoire (10%), returning from Libya and Niger (respectively representing 36% and 21% of the total number of minors assisted with AVRR and VHR).

AVERAGE AGE	
FEMALE	23 years old
MALE	26 years old

AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION (2017-2022)





V. PROTECTION CASES

V. PROTECTION CASES

5.1. PROTECTION CASES OVERVIEW

A total of 9,660 protection cases benefited from AVR/VHR between 2017 and 2022, which represents 6 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries assisted. Protections cases include unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs), migrants with health conditions and victims of trafficking (VOTs).

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

Over 2 per cent of all migrants assisted to return presented health conditions at the time of departure. They are mainly Nigerians (46%) and the proportion of migrants with health conditions among women is higher (5%) than among men (2%).

Three per cent of all individuals assisted between 2017 and 2022, were identified as victims of trafficking during their journey or stay. About 83 per cent of reported victims of trafficking were women, 68 per cent of all identified VOTs were between 18 and 30 years old.

9,660

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROTECTION CASES (6%)

1,768

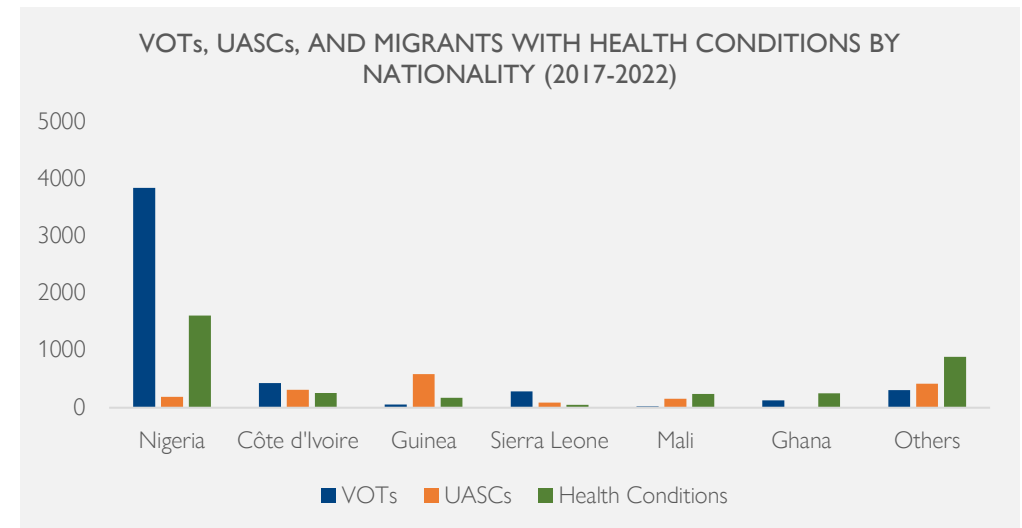
UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN (1%)

3,490

SIGNIFICANT HEALTH CONDITIONS (2%)

5,088

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING (3%)



V. PROTECTION CASES

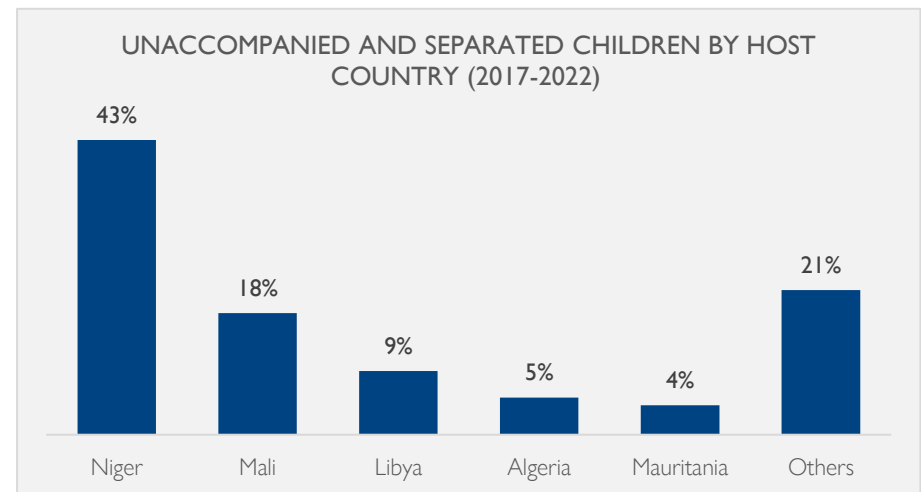
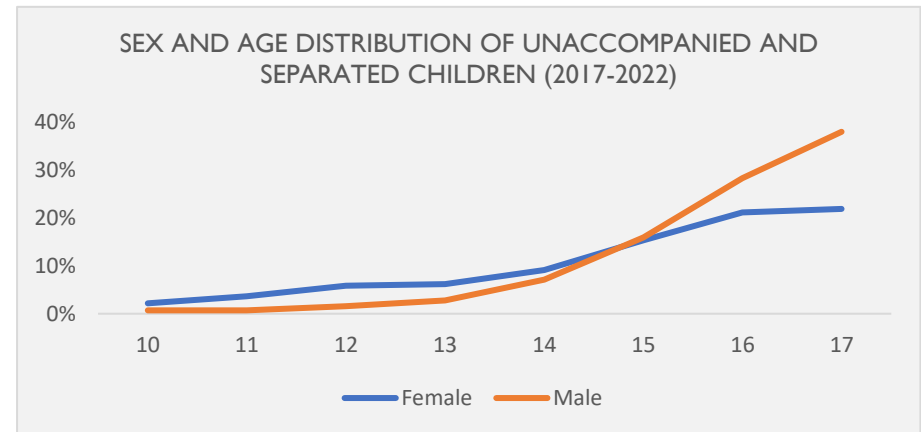
5.2. UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN OVERVIEW

A total of 1,768 unaccompanied and separated children were assisted with AVRR and VHR towards WCA countries between 2017 and 2022. UASCs represent about 11 per cent of the total number of children returnees in the region between 2017 and 2022. 81 per cent of the total number of unaccompanied children were boys, and 76 per cent of all UASCs were between 15 and 17 years old. During the period covered by this report, the highest number of UASC returns was observed in 2022 with a total of 367 returns.

Niger (43%), Mali (18%), and Libya (9%) represent the main host countries from which AVRR and VHR were organised towards WCA countries in terms of UASCs. 17 per cent of the unaccompanied and separated children were girls, mainly returning from Mali and Libya to Nigeria.

UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN BY YEAR:

<u>2017</u>	184	10%
<u>2018</u>	358	20%
<u>2019</u>	352	20%
<u>2020</u>	192	11%
<u>2021</u>	315	18%
<u>2022</u>	367	21%



V. PROTECTION CASES

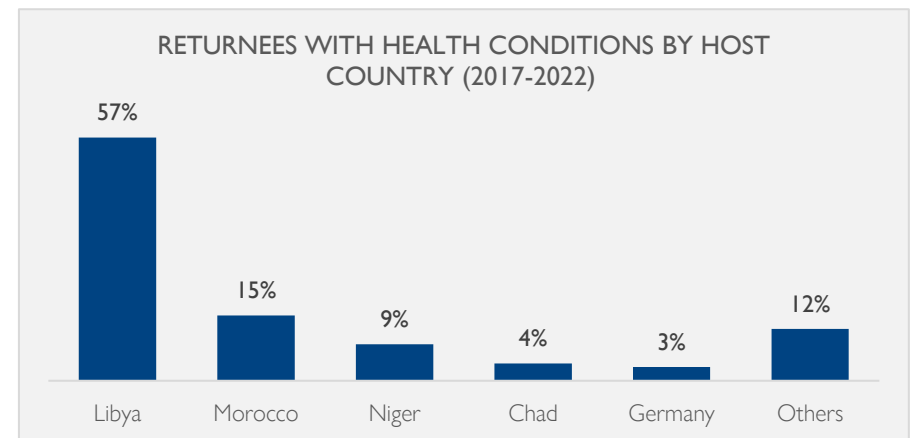
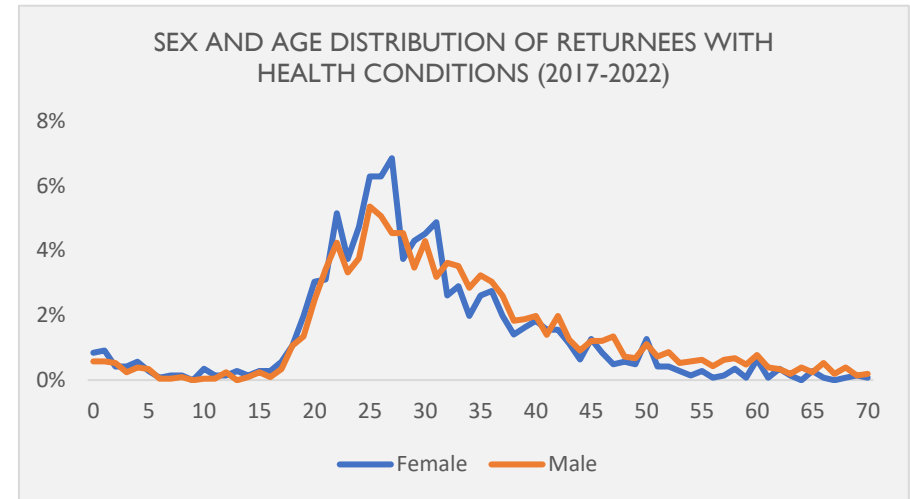
5.3. SIGNIFICANT HEALTH CONDITIONS OVERVIEW

Between 2017 and mid-2022, over 3,400 returnees had significant health conditions at the time of departure. Their age range varied from 0 to 84 years old, with a mode (the most common value) at 25 years old. Nearly 41 per cent of women with health conditions were nationals of 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 (1,055 returnees) and 2022 (1,584 returnees).

The main host countries of returnees with health conditions are Libya (57%) and Morocco (15%). 77 per cent of migrants with health conditions returned from North Africa.

RETURNEES WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS BY YEAR:

<u>2017</u>	70	02%
<u>2018</u>	102	03%
<u>2019</u>	283	08%
<u>2020</u>	396	11%
<u>2021</u>	1,055	30%
<u>2022</u>	1,584	45%



V. PROTECTION CASES

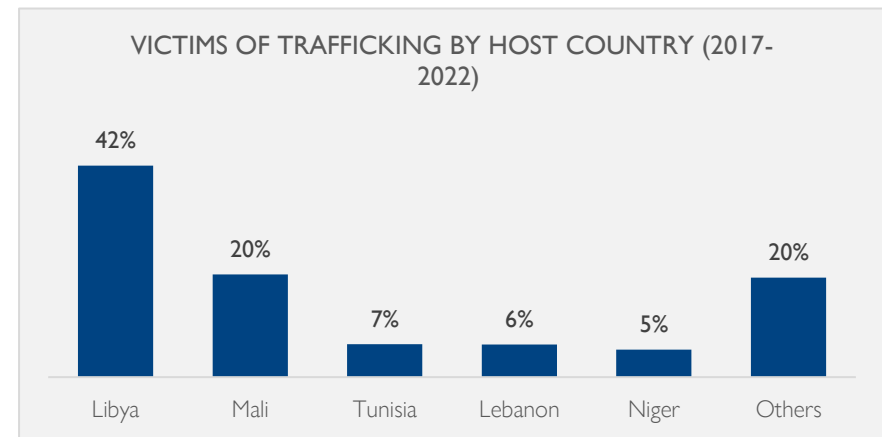
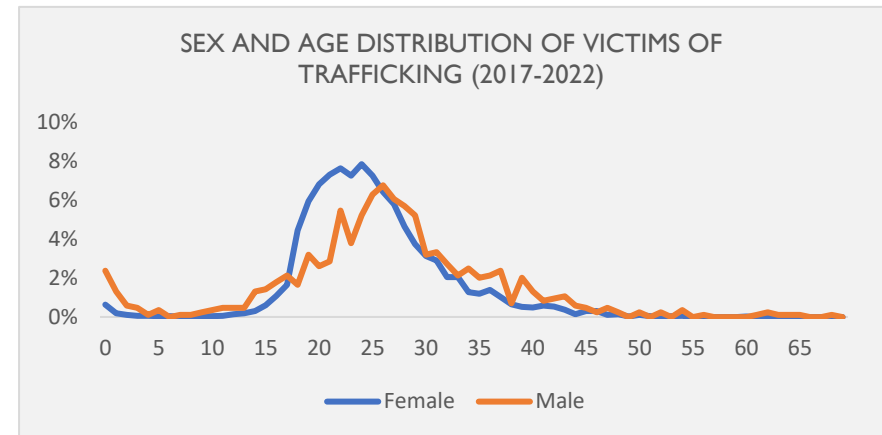
5.4. VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW

Over 5,000 victims of trafficking (VOTs) were assisted with AVRR and VHR towards WCA countries between 2017 and 2022. Their age range varied from 0 to 80 years old, with a mode (the most common value) at 24 years old. 92 per cent of VOTs were adults (above 18) and 83 per cent of them were women. Nearly 82 per cent of women VOTs were Nigerians, they returned mainly from Libya and Mali.

During the period covered by this report the highest number of VOT returns was observed in 2022 with 1,382 returns. The main host countries of victims of trafficking are Libya (44%) and Mali (20%).

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING BY YEAR:

<u>2017</u>	370	07%
<u>2018</u>	932	18%
<u>2019</u>	1,068	21%
<u>2020</u>	468	09%
<u>2021</u>	868	17%
<u>2022</u>	1,382	27%



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 163,000 migrants assisted in their voluntary or humanitarian return by IOM between 2017 and 2022. It is therefore a particularly strong representation of intra and inter-regional movements.

However, certain limitations should apply to this dataset. 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.

To access the document, please visit:

https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/AVRR/a_framework_for_avrr_online_pdf_optimized_20181112.pdf





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