THE MIGRATION PULSE

PILOTING INNOVATIVE WEB SURVEYS IN LIBYA

Key findings

- Conflict and climate change are among the key underlying factors that drive people to leave their home countries. In Libya, 35 percent of migrants and refugees reported conflict as one of the causes; and 25 percent climate related shocks such as extreme weather conditions, natural disasters and land degradation. These factors were seldom the only trigger. In many cases they were coupled with people's inability to meet their basic survival and livelihood needs.

- A key immediate driver for people to leave their home countries is the lack of means to sustain themselves and their families due to economic marginalization (34%) or the inability to meet essential needs such as education (25%), food (20%) and health (19%).

- In the current context in Libya, migrants and refugees are facing major human security and livelihood risks. As their main challenge, respondents reported lack of employment (21%), insecurity (20%), education-related constraints (12%), and the ability to afford food (11%). The latter was a more common constraint among recent arrivals and those originating from West or Eastern African countries.

- Migrants and refugees who have recently arrived are more likely to face distress to meet their food needs. Seventy percent are worried about having enough food to eat compared to 48 percent of those who have been in Libya for a longer period. Moreover, the more unstable the income source, the more worried respondents are about meeting their food needs.

- Despite the challenges faced, the majority of respondents did not express the desire to continue their journey to Europe. In contrast, a greater proportion are planning to stay in Libya and some prefer to return to their home countries. Attention must focus on ensuring migrants and refugees' safety in Libya, enhancing their capacities to support themselves and providing adequate support to those who wish to return to their home countries.

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BACKGROUND

Over the past years, migration to Libya has acquired significant global attention, although far from being a new event. Since the 1960s, Libya has attracted a considerable number of seasonal and economic migrants from neighbouring countries in North Africa, the Middle East as well as Sub-Saharan Africa[1]. While the political and economic landscape was conducive to these types of movements for many years, the erruption of conflict leading to the fall of Gaddafi in 2011 resulted in increasing irregular migration and onward movements to Europe. According to UNHCR, migration to Italy achieved a record high in 2016 with more than 180,000 migrants and refugees arriving via the Central Mediterranean Route. Out of these, it is estimated that 90 percent transited through Libya[2]. Arrivals by sea to Italy have since considerably dropped due to measures implemented by the European Union in 2017, which aimed to reduce migration flows to Europe by improving border security along the Libyan coast and facilitating return to home countries.[3] While there has been a decrease of arrivals to Italy via the Central Mediterranean Route, there has been a shift to the Western Mediterranean Route towards Spain[4], and so far there is no evidence that new inflows to Libya have significantly reduced.

As of December 2018, IOM estimates that there are around 660,000 migrants and refugees living in Libya, out of which 77 percent originate from sub-Saharan Africa, 17 percent from North African Mediterranean countries and 6 percent from the Middle East and Asia. The top countries of origin are Niger, Chad, Egypt, Sudan and Nigeria, which make up for 69 percent of the total migrant population.[5] The current political and economic instability in the country has exacerbated the already fragile situation of these groups, who are in need of protection and other assistance to meet their basic needs. According to REACH/UNHCR, the current liquidity crisis has contributed to increased risks for migrants and refugees, including kidnapping, robbery and not being paid or being partially paid for work, which also impacted their capacity to send remittances back home.

WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping unit (VAM) has set-up the **Migration Pulse** initiative to give a voice to the displaced and help further understand what is driving people to leave their country of origin, what are their needs, food security perceptions and the challenges they face, as well as their future plans. The collection of accurate, reliable and comparable data from people on the move has been one of the major challenges faced by the international community, which has also been acknowledged in the Global Compact on Migration (December 2018). WFP is one of the key actors providing food assistance to vulnerable displaced populations and refugees across the world. To overcome the challenge of access, WFP is testing new tools and technologies to collect information from hard-to-reach and mobile populations. This report presents the findings of the first round of data collection using web surveys among migrants and refugees in Libya.
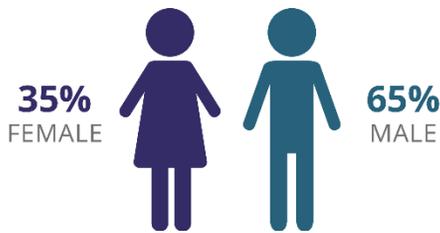
USE OF INNOVATIVE WEB SURVEYS[6]

Displaced populations and other people on the move are highly mobile and hard-to-reach. At the same time, they tend to be highly connected to mobile technology and social media. The Migration Pulse piloted web surveys to collect anonymous data from an anonymous and random sample of connected migrants and refugees across Libya. In more practical terms, when respondents navigate to a link that is broken or inaccurate, they encounter a survey form instead of a broken link notification. In total, 1,432 migrants and refugees were interviewed in Sept.-Oct. 2018 covering **327 West Africans, 123 East Africans, 759 North Africans** and **223 Middle Easterns.** Respondents originated from 26 countries, of which the top countries covered include Egypt, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Mali and Ghana. The minimum sample requirement for each group was 240 (90% confidence interval and a margin of error inferior to 6%). The sample requirements were reached or exceeded for most groups with the exception of East African migrants, which proved to be more difficult to reach due to a combination of lower presence and possibly, lower connectivity. Given the nature of the web-based methodology, these samples only cover literate internet users and hence, they are not representative of the general population. To counter the geographic bias, a weighting system was developed for the analysis, which assigned a specific weight to each respondent by region of origin. Population figures are based on IOM DTM's Flow Monitoring Report in Libya (July-August 2018).
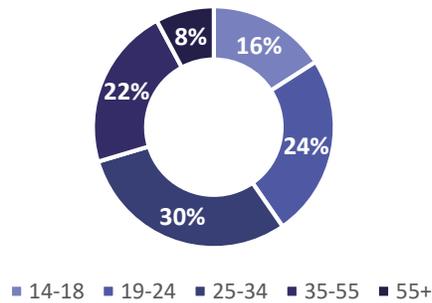
Profile of survey respondents

Surveys inside Libya targeted individuals above 14 years of age. The study captured the voices of women and men as well as a variety of different age groups in both rural and urban areas. Surveyed migrants and refugees originated from 26 countries in West, East and North Africa as well as the Middle East. The majority of the migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa originated from Sudan, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Ghana and Mali. Forty-five percent of respondents arrived to Libya between 2017 and 2018, the majority of them from West Africa (68%) followed by East African countries (19%).
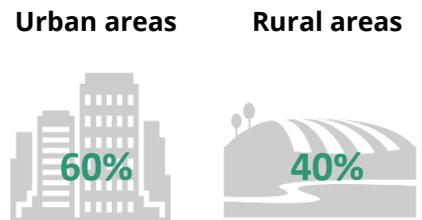
Gender of respondents

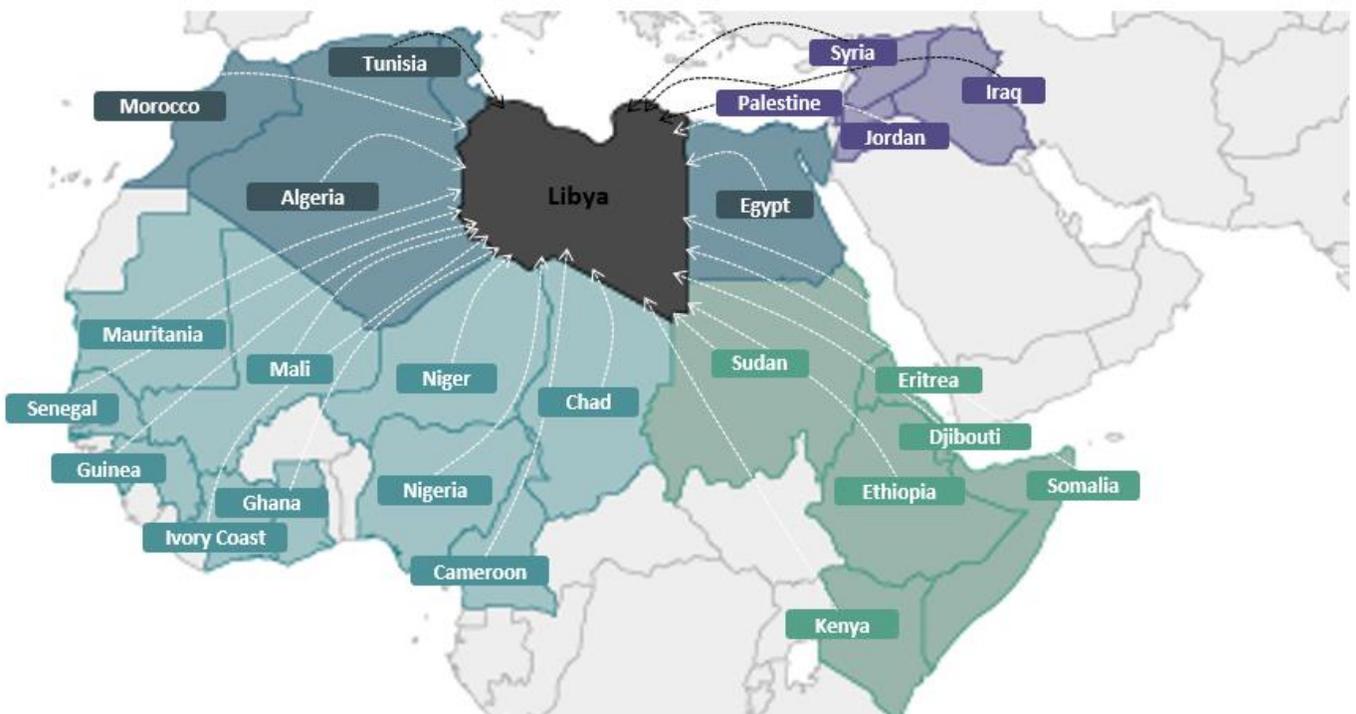**35%** FEMALE **65%** MALE

Age of respondents

8% 16% 22% 24% 30%

■ 14-18 ■ 19-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-55 ■ 55+

Living areas of respondents

Urban areas **Rural areas**

60% **40%**

Family composition of respondents

68% reported to be living with family

9% reported to be single adult women

19% reported to be single adult

4% reported to be unaccompanied minors (14-17 years)
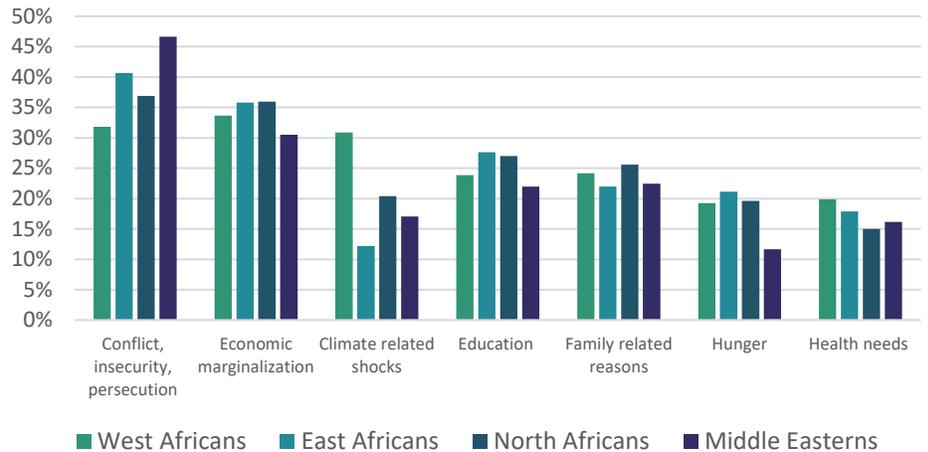
Regions and countries of origin

Drivers of migration and displacement

Migrants and refugees in Libya were asked the **two main reasons why they decided to leave their country of origin**. Overall, 35 percent of respondents reported **conflict, insecurity and persecution** as one of the main reasons, closely followed by **economic marginalization** (34%), and **climate related shocks** (25%). One in five respondents reported **hunger** as a reason for leaving their country.

Some differences could be observed by area of origin. Middle Eastern (47%) and East African respondents (41%) were more likely to have left due to conflict-related reasons compared to those from other regions. Also noticeable is the high percentage of West Africans (31%) who reported leaving due to climate-related shocks, including land degradation, water scarcity, extreme weather events or natural disasters, which was often coupled with conflict or hunger.

Why are people leaving their country of origin?

Legend: ■ West Africans ■ East Africans ■ North Africans ■ Middle Easterns

Categories: Conflict, insecurity, persecution | Economic marginalization | Climate related shocks | Education | Family related reasons | Hunger | Health needs

Location of migrant and refugee respondents

Migrants and refugees were surveyed across the entire country, covering all 22 mantikas. Fifty percent of respondents were currently based in West Libya, 40 percent in East Libya and 10 percent in South Libya. Sixty percent are living in urban centers with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Tripoli hosts about 21 percent of the entire sample, followed by 10 percent in Benghazi and 5 percent in Misrata.

A majority of migrants and refugees (55%) lived in urban areas before moving to Libya. The Migration Pulse found that these groups have a tendency to establish themselves in areas similar to where they are from: 76 percent of the respondents who originated from a larger urban centre in their country of origin, moved to an urban area within Libya. Out of the respondents originating from rural areas or smaller towns, 64 percent are now staying in similar environments, while 36 percent moved to larger urban cities.
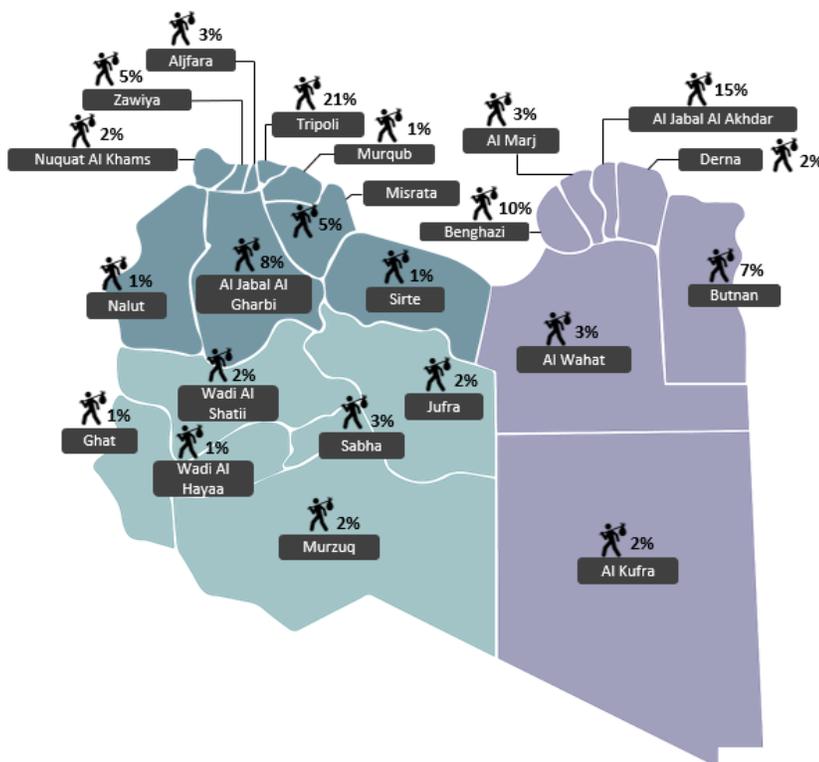

Livelihoods

The Migration Pulse found that **72 percent of migrants and refugee respondents inside Libya depend on unstable livelihoods as their main income source**, including casual labour, support, or engaging in high risk activities such as begging. Only 21 percent receive a wage on a regular basis. While the latter tends to be more stable, according to REACH/UNHCR, wages are usually based on oral agreements between individuals and employers and hence remain informal. Most common sectors for both wage and casual labour are services, construction and agriculture.[7]

How are migrant and refugees sustaining themselves?

- Casual labour
- Wage labour
- Support from family or friends
- Support from Government, UN or NGOs
- High risk activities
- Trade or business

Those who have recently arrived (2017/2018) are more dependent on support or high risk activities to sustain themselves. East Africans (51%) and Middle Easterns (47%) engage to a greater extent in casual labour compared to migrants and refugees from other regions. In addition, regular wage was slightly higher among North Africans (24%). Also noticeable is the higher percentage of West Africans reporting to be dependent on support and high risk activities, likely due to the more recent arrival of a majority of respondents.
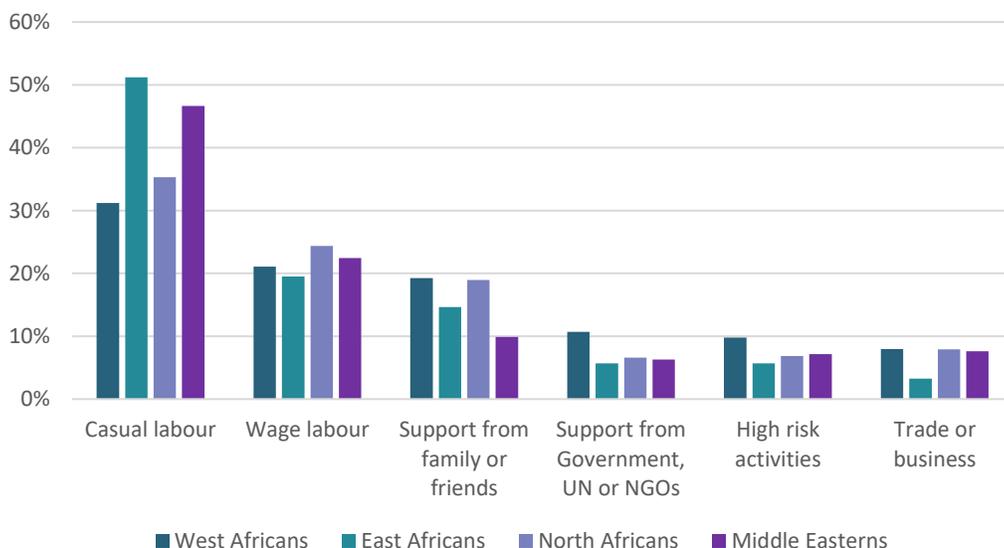
Remittances

More than half of respondents reported to have **sent money or goods back home in past 12 months.** Out of these, more than half reported to have done so only once or twice during this period. Overall, only 13 percent are able to send remittances on a regular basis (more than 6 times per year), which is higher among those with stable income: 19 percent of those with a regular wage and 16 percent of those engaging in trade or other businesses.
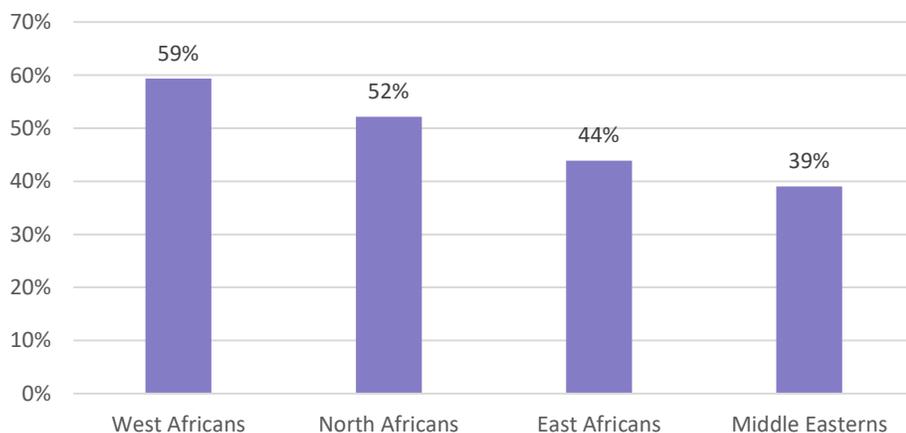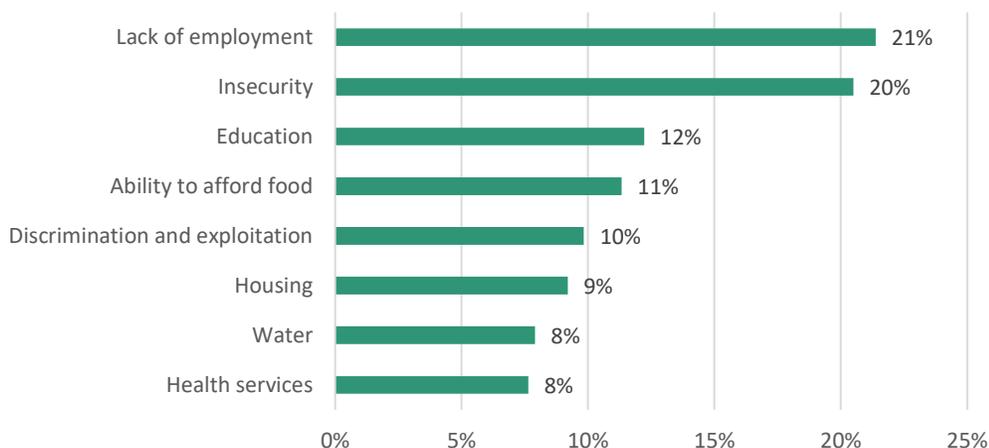

East Africans and Middle Easterners are the groups who are less likely to send remittances, however for different reasons. The majority of East Africans (69%) reported not being able to afford it, whereas among the Middle Eastern group there was a higher proportion of respondents reporting that there was no need. Moreover, among the West Africans who are not sending money, 32 percent reported the lack of mechanisms to transfer money.

Challenges and needs

Respondents reported lack of employment and insecurity as their main challenges. This is followed by education-related constraints and the inability to afford food, which was found to be a more important challenge among the more recently arrived migrants and refugees and among West and East Africans. No major differences were observed between women and men, and various age groups.

Protection-related issues are a concern for migrants and refugees across the country. Insecurity is particularly high in West and South Libya, with one in four respondents reporting it as their main challenge. It was found to be more commonly reported by East Africans, as well as migrants and refugees who have been in Libya for a longer period. Discrimination and exploitation was found to be higher in East and South Libya.
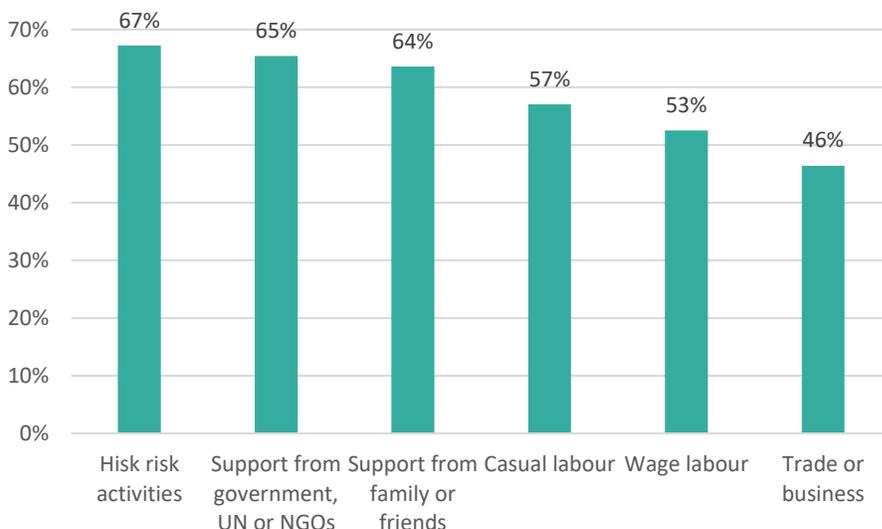
What is the main challenge migrants and refugees are facing in Libya?

| Challenge	Percentage
Lack of employment	21%
Insecurity	20%
Education	12%
Ability to afford food	11%
Discrimination and exploitation	10%
Housing	9%
Water	8%
Health services	8%

Food security perceptions

Migrant respondents were asked if they had felt worried about having enough food to eat in the past 30 days. Overall, 58 percent of respondents reported feeling distress about having enough food to eat. This compares to 28 percent of Libyan host community respondents. The study also found that 76 percent of unaccompanied minors had faced this stress, which compares to 59 percent of those living with other immediate family members.

Moreover, the more unstable the livelihood, the higher the percentage of reported distress around having enough food to eat. In particular, a high proportion of those relying on high-risk activities or support are worried compared to those with regular wages or involved in trade or business.

Livelihood	Percentage
Hisk risk activities	67%
Support from government, UN or NGOs	65%
Support from family or friends	64%
Casual labour	57%
Wage labour	53%
Trade or business	46%

Major differences were also found in terms of length of stay among surveyed migrants and refugees. The analysis shows that the tendency to feel worried about not having enough food to eat is higher among recent arrivals compared to migrants or refugees who arrived earlier. West Africans are relatively more worried, which may also be related to the fact that many of them have arrived more recently.
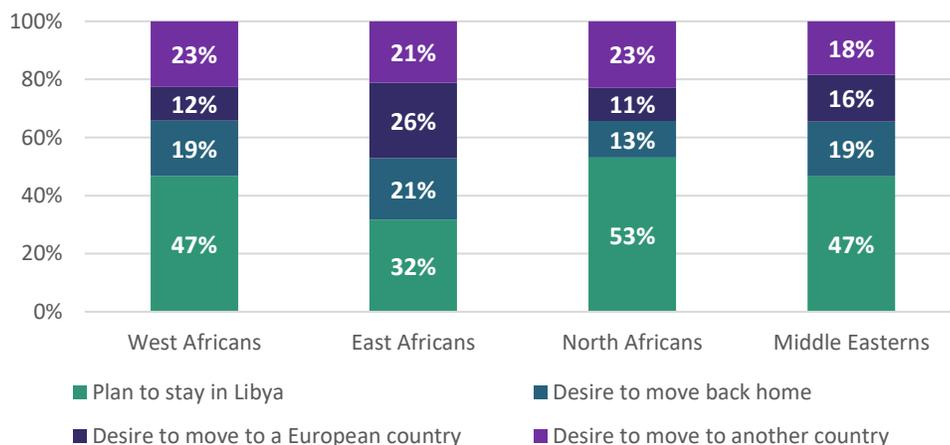
Are migrants and refugees worried about having enough food to eat?
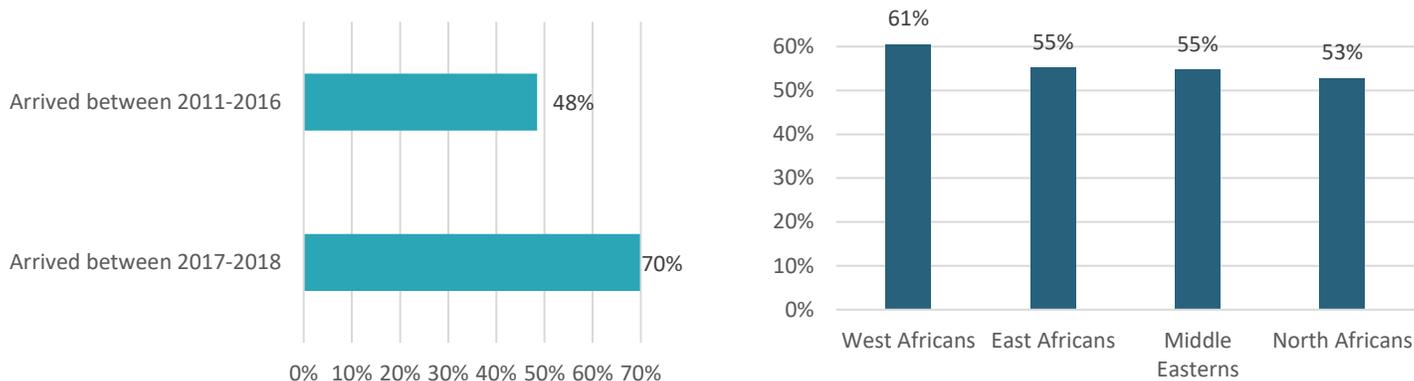
Intentions to move

According to REACH/UNHCR, there are two types of migrants in Libya; those with the intention to transit to Italy and those with the intention to stay and work in Libya.[8] This was also confirmed by this study, which found that overall, 45 percent of respondents plan to **stay in Libya**, 18 percent **plan to return home** and 14 percent desire to **reach Europe**. The remaining desire to move to another country. A higher percentage of men (17%) reported the desire to continue to Europe

Are migrant and refugees planning to move in the next months?

compared to women (10%). Of those who wish to continue to Europe, only 31 percent have sought information about the journey or the country of destination and 28 percent have made concrete arrangments. More than half reported to have friends or relatives in their planned destination country, illustrating the important role of networks in migrants's decision-making.

The analysis found that a higher percentage of North Africans plan to stay in Libya compared to migrants from other regions. East Africans reported the least desire to stay in Libya, with a majority of respondents reporting the desire to continue their journey.

In the words of the respondents

Through two open-ended questions, migrants and refugees were asked to describe what it would take to improve their lives in Libya and what it would take to improve the lives of their family left behind. In both cases, the main themes reported related to safety, stability, employment, financial security and education. The following quotes from respondents describe their needs inside Libya.

One respondent stated *"I cannot work regularly due to the scarcity of jobs and sectarian discrimination"*.

A Nigerian man also reinforced that *"the conflict needs to stop so [he] can secure a better job. Racism and discrimination also need to stop"*.

A young male from Sudan expressed the *"need for a profession that is enough to feed my family"*.

Another quote from a Syrian migrant reflects the need to invest in the youth: *"Assistance for education and encouraging the youth to learn and build a future, instead of them leaving their studies to provide food and housing, and thinking about migrating to the sea without knowing if they will arrive or not"*.

What would it take to improve the life of your family back home?

NEXT STEPS

The findings of this report are based on the first round of data collection with migrants and refugees in Libya using web-based surveys. This technology has proven to be a viable tool to gather information from highly mobile and hard-to-reach populations in countries with reasonable access to mobile technology and internet coverage. Drivers of migration, challenges and needs as well as factors influencing people's intentions to move change over time, and therefore need to be monitored on a regular basis. Based on the lessons learned and consultations with partners on the ground, tools have been refined and at least two additional data collection rounds will be implemented in 2019. In the next round in Libya, the coverage will be increased and the following adjustments will be made:

- Differentiation between voluntary and unvoluntary migration movements to Libya and factors preventing return;
- Better understanding of use of remittances in countries of origin, as well as debt incurred and reasons why;
- Enhanced capturing of vulnerable groups and their priority needs;
- Refinement of food security questions; and
- Jointly analysing data from different sources with IOM and other partners on the ground.

Further, the Migration Pulse intends to broaden its scope by gathering information in countries of origin. This will be critical to complement findings in Libya and better understand the backward and forward linkages between countries of origin, transition and destination. More specifically, the pulse will seek to further explain what roles food security and resilience play in migrant decision-making, as well as what can be done to reduce pressure on people to migrate out of destitution.

Endnotes (references)

[1] REACH/UNHCR (June 2018): Access to cash and the impact of the liquidity crisis on refugees and migrants in Libya: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/reach_lby_brief_refugees_and_migrants_access_to_cash_june2018.pdf.

[2] UNHCR, IMPACT Initiatives and Altai Consulting (February 2017): Mixed Migration Trends in Libya: Changing Dynamics and Protection Challenges: http://www.altaiconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2017_Mixed-Migration-Trends-in-Libya-Final-Report-Web.pdf.

[3] REACH/UNHCR (April 2018): Mixed migration routes and dynamics in Libya The impact of EU migration measures on mixed migration in Libya: http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/system/files/resource-documents/reach_lyb_so_mixed_migration_routes_and_dynamics_in_libya.pdf.

[4] Mixed Migration Centre (August 2018): The "Shift" to the Western Mediterranean Migration Route: Myth or Reality?: http://www.mixedmigration.org/articles/shift-to-the-western-mediterranean-migration-route/.

[5] IOM – DTM (August 2018): Libya's Migrant Report, Round 21, July – August 2018: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/DTM%20Libya%20Round%2021%20Migrant%20Report%20%28July-August%202018%29.pdf .

[6] WFP contracted RIWI Corporation to implement web-based surveys using its patented Random Domain Intercept Technology (RDIT™). Detailed information regarding RDIT can be found on the service provider's website: https://riwi.com/

[7] REACH/UNHCR (June 2018), ibid.

[8] REACH/UNHCR (April 2018), ibid.

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