Assessment Overview
REACH, in the framework of a partnership with UNICEF, conducted an assessment of the profile, drivers and journey of refugee and migrant unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) who arrived in Italy in 2016 and 2017. This factsheet presents findings on UASC originating from The Gambia, who, as of April 2017, represent 13.8% of the total UASC population in Italy.¹

This assessment is based on cluster level sampling of UASC in dedicated reception facilities across Sicily. In total, 123 UASC aged 15 to 17 from The Gambia were interviewed from January to May 2017 in 73 facilities. Results are statistically representative of the Gambian UASC population in Sicily with a 90% confidence level and a 10% margin of error. Findings which relate to a sub population of the overall Gambian UASC sample may have a lower confidence level and should be treated as indicative only.

Profile
Proportion of children interviewed, by age and gender:²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map 2: Children's areas of origin, The Gambia

Reported child's caretaker in country of origin:
1. Parent(s) 75%
2. Extended family 16%
3. Alone 1%
4. Prefer not to say 8%

Among these child's caretakers:
- 89% were reported to be still in The Gambia.
- 7% were reported to have moved to other countries.
- 2% were reported to be dead.

Reference Map
Map 1: Proportion of UASC facilities assessed by province in Sicily

Education and Work Experience
Reported ability of children to read and write in any language:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Ability</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Write</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary languages spoken, by proportion of children interviewed:
1. Mandingo 50%
2. Fula 26%
3. Wolof 13%
4. Jola 8%
5. Other 3%

75% of children reportedly had been to school in their country of origin.
25% of children reportedly had not been to school in their country of origin.

Reported level of schooling attended before migration:³
1. Middle school 37%
2. Primary school 31%
3. Madrasa 27%
4. High school 5%

42% of children reportedly worked prior to arriving in Italy.
Most reported professions were:
1. Fisher/ farmer
2. Low skilled service labour
Unaccompanied and Separated Children from The Gambia in Italy

Departures

Top five reported reasons for leaving The Gambia:

1. Problems or violence at home 47%
2. Limited economic opportunities 26%
3. Limited access to education 17%
4. Social pressure to leave 11%
5. Do not want to answer 12%

Reported desired destinations when leaving their country of origin:

- 46% Italy
- 18% Libya
- 18% West Africa
- 12% Europe (unspecified)
- 6% Did not know

Top five reported reasons for planned destination:

1. Better economic opportunities 57%
2. Respect for human rights 20%
3. Better education 20%
4. Friends at destination 17%
5. International protection 11%

Decision Making

Top five sources of information used to decide about the final destination:

1. Family/ friends at destination 35%
2. Traditional media 26%
3. People on the way 25%
4. Family at home 10%
5. Do not know 11%

64% of children interviewed reported they were the ones who decided to leave their country of origin.

81% of children interviewed reported they were the ones who chose their desired destination at departure.

52% of children interviewed reported they thought about the risks of the journey before deciding to migrate.

Top five risks considered before deciding to migrate:

1. Get hurt 48%
2. Be killed 41%
3. Shipwreck 29%
4. Get lost 23%
5. Be put in prison 22%

Journey

On average, children took one year from leaving The Gambia until arriving in Italy.

91% of children left The Gambia traveling alone.

42% of children changed their destination during their journey.

UASC in transit

Most reported countries where children stayed for more than one month during their journey:

1. Libya 99%
2. Niger 30%
3. Senegal 19%

Reported reasons for staying in Libya for more than one month:

- To work for three months or more 66%
- Kidnapped and imprisoned in Libya 39%
- Arrested 27%
- To work for less than three months 22%
- Waiting for smuggler 2%

End notes

2 No Gambian girls in the age group 15 to 17 could be found in assessed reception facilities at the time of the assessment.
3 School years were divided as follows: primary school: 1-5 years; middle school: 6-9 years; high school: 10-12 years. 'Madrasa' was defined as a 'college for Islamic instruction'.
4 Respondents could select multiple answer categories.
5 This was reported in some communities, where the ‘culture of migration’ is so widespread that migration is seen as rite of passage to adulthood.
6 Social media was not reported as a source of information.

For more information on this profile please contact: REACH Initiative: info@reach-initiative.org