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 Nigeria, who, as of April 2017, represent 8.4% of the total UASC population in Italy. This assessment is based on cluster level sampling of UASC in dedicated reception facilities across Sicily. In total, 68 UASC aged 15 to 17 from Nigeria were interviewed from January to May 2017 in 32 facilities. Results are statistically representative of the Nigerian 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 Nigerian UASC sample may have a lower confidence level and should be treated as indicative only.

Profile

Proportion of children interviewed, by age and gender:

Age
- 15% 17 55%
- 5% 16 25%
- 0% 15 0%

Map 2: Children's areas of origin, Nigeria

Reported child's caretaker in country of origin:
1. Parent(s) 69%
2. Extended family 21%
3. Alone 5%
4. Other caretaker 4%

Among these child's caretakers:
- 66% were reported to be still in Nigeria.
- 17% were reported to be dead.

Education and Work Experience

Reported ability of children to read and write in any language:
- Read:
  - 51% Fluent 57%
  - 33% A little 26%
  - 16% Not at all 17%

Primary languages spoken, by proportion of children interviewed:
1. Bini (Edo state language) 46%
2. Igbo 13%
3. Esan 12%

85% of children had reportedly been to school in their country of origin.
15% of children had reportedly not been to school in their country of origin.

Reported level of schooling attended before migration:
1. Middle school 44%
2. Primary school 40%
3. High school 16%

43% of children reportedly worked prior to arriving in Italy.
Most reported professions were:
1. Physical labour (construction work)
2. Low skilled service labour

Girls were more likely to have worked prior to migration than boys.
Unaccompanied and Separated Children from Nigeria in Italy

Departures

Top five reported reasons for leaving Nigeria:

1. Limited economic opportunities 26%
2. Political or religiously motivated persecution 24%
3. Problems or violence at home 22%
4. Separation from family 16%
5. Generalised violence 9%

Reported desired destinations when leaving their country of origin:

- 46% Italy
- 33% Libya
- 2% West Africa
- 3% Europe (unspecified)
- 16% Did not know

Girls were more likely to have left Nigeria already planning to reach Italy, rather than a country in West or North Africa.

Top five reported reasons for planned destination:

1. Better economic opportunities 38%
2. Respect for human rights 13%
3. Better education 11%
4. International protection 8%
5. Family at destination 8%

Journey

On average, children took eight months from leaving Nigeria until arriving in Italy.

83% of children left Nigeria traveling alone.

37% 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 94%
2. Niger 3%

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

- To work for three months or more 39%
- Kidnapped and imprisoned in Libya 38%
- Waiting for smuggler 16%
- To work for less than three months 15%
- Ran out of money 10%

End notes

2. School years were divided as follows: primary school: 1-5 years; middle school: 6-9 years; high school: 10-12 years.
3. Respondents could select multiple answer categories.
4. Defined in line with the 1951 Refugee Convention as persecution ‘for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership to a particular social group or political opinion’.
5. Social media was not reported as a source of information.