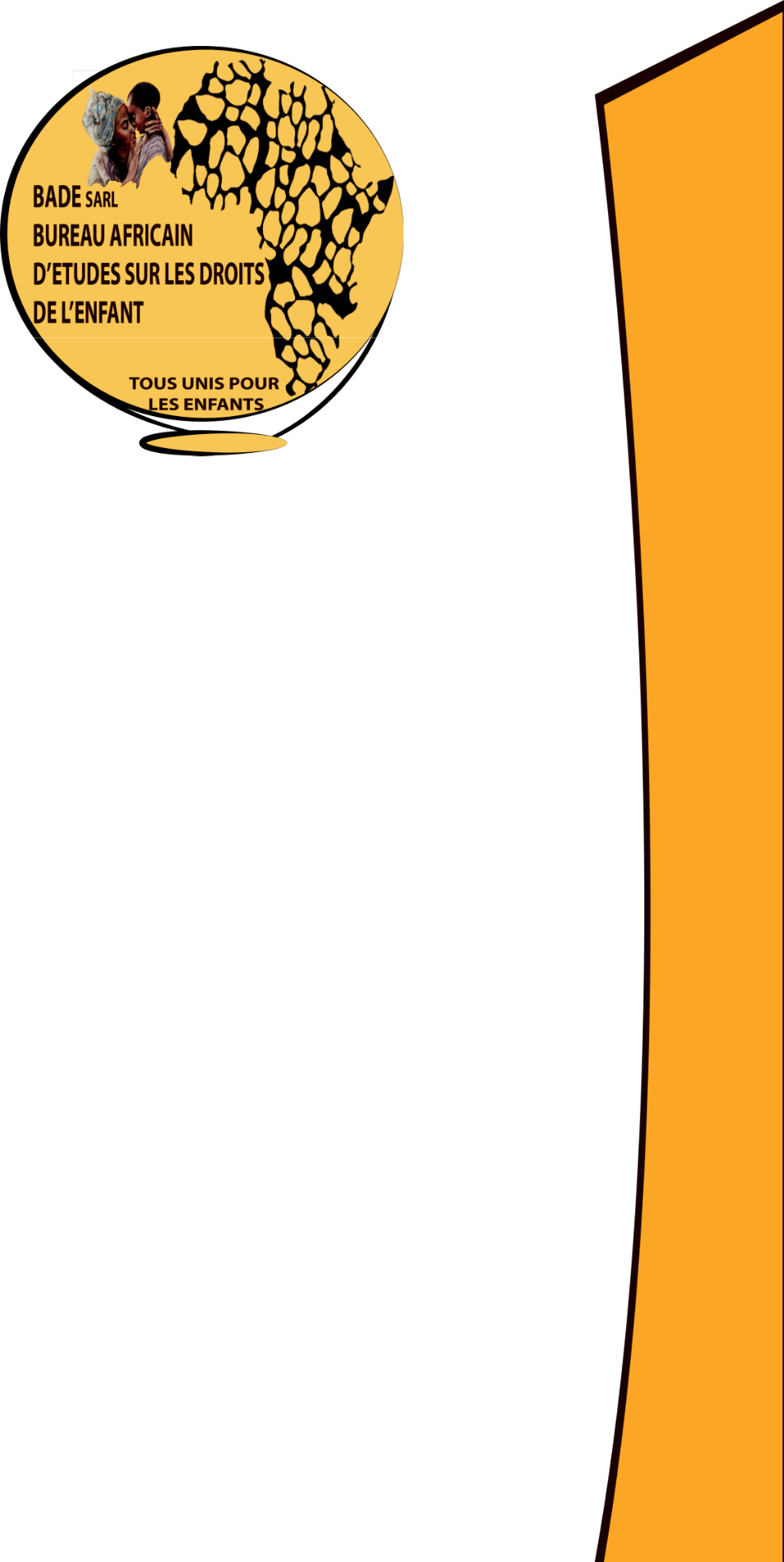
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 **CHILDREN AND YOUNG MIGRANTS’ PROFILES**

Study «Profile of Migrant Children and Youth (CYM) and mapping of child protection actors and services in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Gambia and Senegal»

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country :** The Gambia | **January 2021** |

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List of Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACRWC** | African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child |
| **ADRS** | Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat |
| **ANWG** | Adolescence Neighbourhood Watch Group |
| **AVRR** | Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration |
| **BSED** | Basic and Secondary Education Directorate |
| **CCPC** | Community Child Protection Committee |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer |
| **CEDAG** | Child Environmental Development Association Gambia |
| **CYM** | Children and Young Migrants |
| **CPA** | Child Protection Alliance |
| **CPS** | Child Protection System |
| **CRR** | Central River Region |
| **CRU** | Child Rights Unit |
| **CSO** | Civil society organization |
| **DHS** | Directorate of Health Service |
| **DSW** | Department of Social Welfare |
| **ECOWAS** | Economic Community of West African States |
| **EUTF** | European Union Trust Fund |
| **FGM/C** | Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting |
| **ICWU** | Immigration Child Welfare Unit |
| **IMU** | Irregular Migration Unit |
| **LGA** | Local Government Area |
| **MoHSW** | Ministry of Health and Social Welfare |
| **MoWC&SW** | Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare |
| **NAATIP** | National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons |
| **NALA** | National Agency for Legal Aid |
| **NCPSC** | National Child Protection Steering Committee |
| **NDB** | Net Domestic Borrowing |
| **NGOs** | Non-Government Organisations |
| **NYC** | National Youth Council |
| **NB** | North Bank |
| **PCWO** | Police Child Welfare Officer |
| **PCWU** | Police Child Welfare Unit |
| **RVA** | Risk and Vulnerability Assessment |
| **UN CRC** | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |
| **UNICEF** | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| **URR** | Upper River Region |
| **VDCs** | Village Development Committees |
| **WAN** | West African Network |
| **WCR** | West Coast Region |
| **WDCs** | Ward Development Committees |

# INTRODUCTION

**Legal and policy framework**

As demonstrated in the actors and services mapping which accompanies the present profiles’ report, The Gambian government has signed, ratified, and/or accepted the main international treaties on child protection such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The home child protection legal framework consists of several Acts, among which the Children’s Act 2005 is the central one and the most comprehensive, specifically made to protect children. Child protection is addressed in several policies such as the Health Strategy 2010-2014, Social Welfare Policy 2003-2013 and Education Policy 2016-2030, among others. The creation, in 2019, of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, responsible for children affairs, is another testimony of the will of the government to better enhance coordination of services in relation to children issues.

However, even if the child protection legal and policy framework is aligned with the main international instruments in the field of Human Rights promotion, there are gaps between policy and practice. First and foremost, available legislation and policies are not well implemented and enforced: this is largely due to the fact that social and cultural practices are deeply entrenched, with somewhat religious justification, most especially in the area of child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting (FGM/C). In relation to those harmful community practices, the Children's Act 2005, amended in 2016 serves as the main basis of the protection legal framework. The children’s Act is complemented with other relevant Acts like the Trafficking person’s Act 2007 and the Women’s Act 2010 amended in 2015 to address the issue of FGM/C.

**Child Protection / migration related issues in The Gambia**

Child protection and migration issues are closely related in The Gambia. Indeed, as we will see in the general data presented below, child and youth migration generally involves illegal child labor and, sometimes, the worst forms of child labour, child and/or forced marriage, and also involves violence and abuse.

According to a study conducted by End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT[[1]](#footnote-1)), *Child prostitution* is a significant problem in The Gambia. Families and parents are pressuring or encouraging children to become involved in prostitution, despite legislation is banning the practice. Many attribute this harmful practice to poverty as a driving force.

The Gambia is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking in children for sexual purposes as well as for labour exploitation (such as using children for economic gains through selling). Both Gambian and foreign children are trafficked, particularly to Banjul, for sexual exploitation by Gambian nationals and tourists. In particular, children from nearby West African countries are trafficked into The Gambia for commercial sexual exploitation, primarily with European tourists. According to the US Department of State[[2]](#footnote-2), authorities have identified Gambian trafficking victims in Egypt, Kuwait, UAE, Finland, Cyprus, and Algeria in previous reporting periods. Between January 2017 and October 2018, an international organization repatriated at least 3,500 Gambians from Libya, many of whom were vulnerable to trafficking.

The practice of the “talibe” children also appears to be a matter of concern in several international studies realized in The Gambia: Gambian boys attend Quranic schools in The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal, and some corrupt teachers, the marabouts, force their students into begging, street vending, and agricultural work.

Also, according to UNICEF, *Child, forced and early marriages* are traditional practices in The Gambian culture and continue to take place, particularly in rural areas. 36% of Gambian women have been married or in a union before the age of 18. Due to traditional cultural and religious reasons, cases relating to early or forced marriage are not viewed as inappropriate and often times go unreported as a result of privacy concerns or fear of social stigmatisation.

As we will see in this study, dangerous migration toward Europe, commonly called the “backway” has been observed as a growing phenomenon amongst The Gambian youth, including children, since 2015. In 2016, 181,436 people arrived by sea in Italy, including 11,929 Gambians (6.6%). Most of them were men aged 15 to 40[[3]](#footnote-3). Also, the number of Gambian minors arriving to Europe is rising. They account for the top three nationalities arriving on the Italian shores, along with Nigerians and Eritreans. IOM reports that between January 2017 and October 2019, over 4,800 Gambian returnees were assisted.

Despite the concerning “backway” phenomenon, since 2000, The Gambia is, above all, a country of internal migration, also called rural-to-urban migration. Soma and Farafenni are destination places for this kind of migration.

**Methodology**

The present study focusing on children and young migrants in The Gambia, is part of a broader study gathering 4 countries: Ivory Coast, Guinea, Senegal, and Gambia. This report is an outcome of the research conducted in The Gambia targeting Farafenni, in the North Bank Region, and Soma, in the Lower River Region. An assessment of the current Child Protection Services in those localities was undertaken by a team of researchers, mainly of social work background and experiences in child protection and migration issues. The mapping and research process was done through individual interviews with children and Young migrants (CYM), decisions makers, children and young migrants’ families, community actors. Focus group discussions were also undertaken with children and young migrants as well as their families. Key stakeholders in child protection were also interviewed, both at regional and national level. The research took place in the two identified communities as well as the national level from the 24th of September 2020 to October 5th, 2020.

As shown below, 100 CYM were interviewed through individual surveys and focus group discussions.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **City/Town** | **CYM initial sample** | **Actual individual surveys realized** | **Female CYM individuals** | | **Male CYM individuals** | | **# FG (6-8) CYM realized** | **Female CYM in FG** | | **Male CYM in FG** | |
|  |  |  | **< 18** | **> or = 18** | **< 18** | **> or = 18** |  | **< 18** | **> or = 18** | **< 18** | **> or = 18** |
| Banjul | 0 | **0** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  |  |
| Farafenni | 62 | **38** | 3 | 9 | 7 | 19 | 3 |  |  |  |  |
| Soma | 62 | **38** | 0 | 12 | 3 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
|  | 124 | **76** | **3** | **21** | **10** | **42** | **6** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **24** |
| **24** | | **52** | | **0** | | **24** | |

Also, 38 community actors were met: 23 CYM families (13 women and 10 men) and 15 community leaders (2 women and 13 men).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **City/Town** | **Initial sample** | **Individual interviews** | **Female community actors (individuals)** | **Male community actors (individuals** | **FG (6-8)** | **FGD Females** | **FGD Males** |
| Banjul | 0 | **0** | 0 | 0 | **0** | 0 | 0 |
| Farafenni | 25 | **38** | 15 | 23 | **0** |  |  |
| Soma | 25 | **1** | 2 | 4 |
|  | 50 | **38** | **15** | **23** | **1** | **2** | **4** |

28 institutional actors providing or coordinating protection services for CYM, amongst other, were interviewed in this survey’s framework.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Acteurs institutionnels publics et structures de PEC privées** | | | **ONG/UN** | | |
| **City/Town** | **Initial sample** | **Individual interviews** | **City/Town** | **Initial sample** | **Individual interviews** |
| Banjul | **6** | **9** | Banjul | **11** | **4** |
| Farafenni | **4** | **6** | Farafenni | **1** |
| Soma | **4** | **7** | Soma | **1** |
| **Total** |  | **22** |  | | **6** |

It has been a strongly participatory study: community and institutional actors have been paving the way for the study to be more effective in targeted areas. The alkalos (Gambian village chief) of the two towns, for instance, were very helpful in leading the investigation team to the CYM and facilitating, in some extent the interview to take place. Partner organisations, rooted in the community, have also been prone to facilitate investigation activities in close partnership with the community structures, such as the Child Protection Committees.

**Limits of the study:**

It appears that under-18 children are underrepresented in the research sample: this is due to various reasons:

* Most talibe children have not been interviewed because of the reluctance of their marabous who do not want children to testify on their life conditions.
* Many children on the move face hard daily conditions. This leads them to mistrust anyone they don’t know. Most of them have rejected the data collectors’ request to interview them. Also, in many cases, there were no safe places to interview children. Most of them are found in the street or in marketplaces.
* The covid-19 related health guidelines, to some extent, were also a contributing factor as children themselves were advised not to go close to people they don’t know most especially strangers.
* Investigation entry points (community actors, social workers, peer to peer) have led to interview more young migrants than children on the move.

Due to the difficult interview conditions, some individual surveys related to children lack key information on their personal condition. This makes the data analysis under a child protection perspective more difficult than for young migrants. Desk review that was undertaken, allowed the experts to fill this gap.

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG MIGRANTS’ PROFILES

# General profile of the CYM

CYM profiles described below in this report, are the fruit of 76 individual interviews (38 in each town) and 6 Focus Groups Discussions (3 in each town). 24 CYM cases have been added to the data base, making possible a statistical analysis on a broader sample.

The 100 CYM met during the research activities (both individual interviews and FGD) are globally described in this part.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GENERAL PROFILE OVERVIEW[[4]](#footnote-4)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Town** | **Sex** | | **Country of origin** | | | **Marital status** | | | | **Age range** | | | | |
|  | Male | Female | Guinea | Gambia | Senegal | Single | Married | Divorcee | Other | 10-13-year-old | 14-17-year-old | 18-21-year-old | 22-25-year-old | + de 25-year-old |
| **By town** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Farafenni** | 31 | 29 | 6 | 46 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 17 | 5 | 5 |
| **Soma** | 28 | 12 | 3 | 33 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 16 | 11 | 10 |
| Total CYM | **59** | **41** | **9** | **79** | **12** | **11** | **4** | **2** | **4** | **1** | **11** | **33** | **16** | **15** |

60% of the CYM were met in Farafenni and 40% in Soma.

59% are males and 41% are females.

**The nationalities of the respondent**s found during the research amongst CYM are as follows: Gambian 79%, Senegalese 12%, Guinean 8% and Guinea Bissau 1%.

**The age categories** of the children and young migrants found during the study are categorized as follows: 10-13 years (1%), 14-17 years (11%), and 18-21 (33%), 22-25 (16%) and above is at 15%.

**Occupations of the CYM** are: Agriculture (1%), Petty trading (5%), begging (30%), exploitation through sexual transaction (10%), Quranic studies (12%), without any occupation (32%).

**Desired destination** at the time of the departure: 59% said West Africa, 12% wanted to go to Europe and 1% to Maghreb. Although 12% claimed that they wanted to go to Europe, it appears that a wider proportion tried the “backway”. It could mean that international migration can evolve towards a bigger and more dangerous project.

**Migration duration**: 9% of the CYM spent 1 year or less on migration, 34% spent from 2 to 3 years on migration, 25% spent from 4 to 9 years on migration and 8% spent 10 years or more on migration. 24% did not answer.

NB: for stabilized and returnee migrants, there is no indication about their return date or their stabilization date.

50% went through one country (mainly internal migration in The Gambia – rural to urban migration). 4% went through more than 5 countries. 45% of the sample did not answer.

**Reasons for CYM to start migration** are the following:

* Poverty and/or need to work in order to support the family (35%)
* breakdown of the family support systems: abandonment/orphans (11%), flee violence at the family or community level like forced marriages and child marriages as well as other sociocultural practices like female genital mutilation (10%).
* Marriage: 11%
* Try the Adventure: 23% / Become independent: 5%
* Formal education or Quranic studies: 17%

Half of the respondents claimed that it was their own choice to leave on migration. The other half claimed it was mainly their family’s choice.

**The expressed needs** of the total children and young migrants interviewed in Farafenni and Soma are mainly related to professional insertion, either through vocational training, or through starting/start-up capital.

Student children, including quranic students, also express their needs in education or quranic materials.

During the FGD, the responses revealed the following needs Temporal Shelter under proper guardianship, food and clothing, psychosocial counselling, family reintegration or tracing (including in West Africa region), assessment and reintegration package.

**Risks to which CYM are exposed**: 62% of the respondents claimed that they have been exposed to dangers during their journey: 12% to blows and wounds, 13% to labor exploitation, 3% to sexual exploitation, 50% to street life (they had to sleep in the street).

**Vulnerability** is a key determinant to many children and young migrants making them to move away in order to seek for a conducive environment. Vulnerability also increases the risks of being exposed to violence, abuse and exploitation.

**The vulnerabilities** which have been analyzed are as follows:

* The age
* The gender
* The occupation sensibility (sexual transaction, begging, no occupation at all)
* The family background (violence within the family, no links with the family)
* The economic background (most of the CYM respondents are poor)
* The trauma background (CYM who have experienced violence, torture, hanger… during their journey are more vulnerable to dangers)

Vulnerabilities are further analyzed for each profile.

**Covid19 impact:** 72% of the respondents claim they have been impacted by the pandemic. Most of them mentionned they were impacted by the difficulties to earn money during the lock down (couldn’t receive financial help from migrants relatives in Europe, couldn’t practice their commercial activity, collected less money through begging…). The other part answered that they were affected in their education because of schools and Quranic centers closures. Only one CYM mentions the difficulty to contact his parents. The difficulties of movement or migration pending projects were never mentioned.

Within the global sample, 4 profiles have been identified:

* The economic CYM (45% of the global sample)
* The marriage related CYM (17% of the global sample)
* The education-related CYM – both formal or Quranic students – (22% of the sample)
* The returnee CYM (31% of the sample)

NB: *15% of the CYM belong to more than one profile*.

# Detailed CYM profiles

**Profile 1: Returnee migrants**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RETURNEE MIGRANTS OVERVIEW** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Town** | **Sex** | | **Country of origin** | | | **Marital status** | | | | **Age range** | | | | |
|  | Male | Female | Guinea | Gambia | Senegal | Single | Married | Divorcee | Other | 10-13-year-old | 14-17-year-old | 18-21-year-old | 22-25-year-old | + de 25-year-old |
| **By town** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Farafenni** | 12 | 5 | 0 | 15 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| **Soma** | 14 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| Total returnee CYM | **26** | **5** | **0** | **28** | **3** | **2** | **2** | **0** | **2** | **0** | **6** | **7** | **7** | **7** |

Returnee migrants represent 31% of the total survey’ sample. They left The Gambia with the intention to reach Europe and escape from poverty and/or support their families. According to them, returning home is an issue of no option to reach their desired destination, as such got stranded along the journey. Most of them returned through the intervention of IOM and the government of The Gambia.

They are Gambian young men: 74% of them are above 18-year-old. Most of them don’t know the cities they pass through due to communication barrier and often move in a haste. As result they could not highlight in detail the experiences they have encountered and the route they took. Also, many believe that they still might want to go back again through the same route. For that reason, they decide to hide most of their experiences.

Most of them tried to reach the Mediterranean Sea crossing Senegal-Mali-Niger-Lybia. A minority tried the Atlantic route through St Louis, in Senegal, or Nouadhibou, in Mauritania. Half of them report very hard journey conditions: kidnapping, torture in prison, violence amongst migrants, forced work, forced sex with women migrants.

Some of them can’t go back to their family because of shame and the fact that they don’t have much skills and education for making it in their place of origin. There is a **crucial integration challenge to deal with**.

**Profile 2: Learning/student migrants**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STUDENT MIGRANTS OVERVIEW** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Town** | **Sex** | | **Country of origin** | | | **Marital status** | | | | **Age range** | | | | |
|  | Male | Female | Guinea | Gambia | Senegal | Single | Married | Divorcee | Other | 10-13-year-old | 14-17-year-old | 18-21-year-old | 22-25-year-old | + de 25-year-old |
| **By town** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Farafenni** | 10 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| **Soma** | 7 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Total returnee CYM | **17** | **5** | **6** | **12** | **4** | **3** | **0** | **1** | **1** | **0** | **4** | **6** | **5** | **2** |

This profile is composed of CYM who decided to migrate or who were sent on migration by their family for education reason: religious or secular education. They represent 22% of the global CYM sample.

**Quranic students /Talibes children**: They represent 64% of the profile “Learning migrants”. This sub-profile can be split into 2 profiles: 1) Children sent by their family, traveling alone with poor contact with the family 2) Young men with different profiles (amongst them returnee migrants) in search of deep spirituality and Islamic knowledge.

They are all teenagers and young men, most of them are between 18-24-year-old. 30% of the students met are below 17-year-old. They come from The Gambia, Guinea Conakry and Senegal. As explained in the introduction of the study, most of the marabouts are reluctant to let the talibe children being interviewed because of the fear that children might provide “unpleasant” information.

The high majority declare that they need material to learn the Quran and that their needs are covered by the marabout (or host families in the case of young adults who do not live the Quranic school). Even if they don’t recognize it, they are living in very poor conditions and in most cases compel to leave the place to go and beg in the street for survival.

**Formal education students:** they are internal migrants who came to Soma or Farafenni to study in a public school or to learn a trade. Beside their studies they work to help their host family or their family of origin. They show few signs of vulnerability.

**Profile 3: Economic migrants**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Children and Young economic migrants** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Town** | **Sex** | | **Country of origin** | | | **Marital status** | | | | **Age range** | | | |
|  | Male | Female | Guinea | Gambia | Senegal | Single | Married | Divorcee | Dependent children | 14-17-year-old | 18-21-year-old | 22-25-year-old | + de 25-year-old |
| **Farafenni** | 15 | 15 | 2 | 22 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| **Soma** | 3 | 12 | 1 | 12 | 2 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 3 |
| Total CYM in economic survival | **18** | **27** | **3** | **34** | **8** | **10** | **2** | **1** | **3** | **6** | **17** | **7** | **5** |

Most of the participating CYM are economic migrants (45% of the global sample). This profile concerns mainly women, and youth from 18 to 21. They often moved out of their settlements to other places in search of better opportunities. Most of them come from families that have little or no economic viability to be able to provide for the basic necessities that the children and young migrants need. The situation at home often compels them to leave and search for better work, Europe being the primary target, no matter the challenges. Most of them are determined to reach their desired destination in other to support their families back home. Some families even went extreme to sell the valuables that they have at their level in order to facilitate the journeys of their children at all cost.

In the context of children on the move, a good number of them are either those running away from the “Daras” due to the hardship they are exposed to or those coming from other towns wanting to move to a place of safety often left unaccompanied by adults or guardians. They are mostly found in market areas looking for food or someone who can come to their rescue. In this survey, 13% of the profile “economic CYM” are children. It is difficult to draw their specific profile as they provide few information on their occupations. From the stories that were told to the investigators, it has been deduced that 2 girls belonging to this profile, are victims of sexual transaction or exploitation.

According to this study, most of the CYM are facing financial constraints are adults (81.8%), most often between 18 and 21 years old. It is unusual to have migrants in financial difficulties over 25. When they left home, they were in most cases aged between 13 and 18 years old, and they travelled alone (65.4%). In addition, they were rather forced to leave on migration (75%) by parents or tutors (husband, uncle, etc…) than involved in the decision of their departure. They have generally been in migration for two or three years.

Economic migrants are rather to be found in Farafenni (66.7%) than in Soma (33.3%). They are internal migrants in most cases (73.8%). Those who came directly from their homeland to Gambia are most often Senegalese or Guinean. Their destination was in general another Gambian city or African country. Some are directly headed to Europe (the Maghreb is not clearly designed as a direction or a transit point). In Farafenni, migrants facing most difficulties are often single, but in Soma we came across married and divorced economic migrants.

The economic migrants often left their home to become independent or earn income to support families. They generally live in collocation with other youth or family members (sibling, spouse, etc…). Many travelled also to experiment adventures or to have a chance to grow and become adult. Others left to run away from domestic violence or exploitation.

Most of the migrants of this profile beg in the street to survive (44%) or work as occasional/ permanent sex workers (22.2%). The talibe in the Daaras (14%) represent another important group of CYM having financial constraints for daily survivance. Others do not have any occupation (17.6%), what leave opened doors for high risk behaviours (dangerous immigration, burglary, prostitution, violence, substance dependency, etc…). They expressed their boredom and hunger when found, often alone and walking ramblingly in streets, sitting near marketplaces or garage.

Barely surviving, most of these migrants are constantly exposed to dangers (65%), the principal one being residency in the street (59%). There, they are victims of robberies, aggressions, fights with arms, sexual abuse, etc…

CYM in difficult economic situation are most often in contact with their families today (92.3%). Also, some of them did prepare the trip by keeping line of communication (53.3% with people in transit zone, 41.2% at destination zone).

**Young women in commercial sex work sub-profile:** Girls and women sex workers are teenage girls and young women. In this study, 10 of them have been identified as such: 2 girls and 8 women. They are Gambian and Senegalese girls and women. 86% of them are between 15 and 24-year-old. Most of them come mainly from Kauur and Basse (for the Gambian) and from Kaolak (for the Senegalese). Most of them are in Farafenni, both in cross-border and internal migration,

The reasons given are that they are divorced or single mothers. The youngest claim that they could not find another way to earn a living. There first intention was to find a regular economic activity. They are exposed to sexual exploitation by men who don’t want to pay for sexual intercourses due to the fact that these women are vulnerable and have no choice. Some explain that they are hiding from their family because of their activity.

**Profile 4 : GBV related migrants**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Marriage related migrants** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Town** | **Sex** | | **Country of origin** | | | **Marital status\*** | | | | **Age range** | | | |
|  | Male | Female | Guinea | Gambia | Senegal | Single | Married | Divorcee | Dependent children | 14-17-year-old | 18-21-year-old | 22-25-year-old | + de 25-year-old |
| **Farafenni** | 5 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| **Soma** | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |  | 2 |  |  | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Total CYM in economic survival | **5** | 12 | **0** | **12** | **5** | **0** | **2** | **1** | **2** | **1** | **6** | **3** | **2** |

*\*Data on marital status are missing for most of the respondents in this profile.*

This profile represents 17% of the global sample. It concerns the CYM facing Gender Based Violence. The surviving migrants from GBV are generally adult women, married, divorced or single with dependent children. Many are between 18 and 21 years old (50%) and like most other Gambian migrants, Farafenni or Soma were either their final destination, or a transit point before continuing to another West African country (Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, etc...). Most of these migrants arrived at an early age (13-18) and have been around for two to three years. They travelled in-group, mainly when they came from Senegal, shadowed by the spouse or a marriage ceremony escort.

Almost all migrants (94.1%) surviving from GBV stay in contact with their families, mainly through phone or internet.

Parents or tutors forced most of the CYM (87.5%) surviving from GBV to leave home. It is sporadic that they left home for marital reason or troubles (only 5.9% entered in migration to prepare their ceremony and 11.8% ran away from conjugal violence). Forced at first to go, they resigned themselves, trying to make the best of their trip: the revised objective is often to become independent or earn money to return as a hero in the family (41.1%) or live interesting life experiences (35.3%). Some of them were abandoned by parents who sent them away to continue their life.

CYM from this profile often face dangers (68.8%): the most frequent one is to end up living in the street (70.6% of GBV migrant survivors), or become a victim of work exploitation (11.8%) or sexual exploitation (11.8%).

# CYM profiles fact sheets

CYM Fact sheet 1 : RETURNEE MIGRANTS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PROFILE GENERAL DESCRIPTION** | |
| **Main category : stabilized and returnee migrants** | **Profile 1 : Returnee young migrants** |
| **Sub-profile 1.1 : Returnee from the “Backway”** | **Sub profile 1.2 : Retour de migration interne ou régionale** |
| **Country of identification : The Gambia** | **Identification town :**  **Farafenni :** 17 (55%)  **Soma:** 14 (45%) |
| **Profile/sub-profiles descriptive abstract :**  **Returnee migrants from the “Backway”:** 12 out of 31 identified as returnee migrants have tried the backway and got stranded before reaching Europe, most of them in Libya.  **Returnee migrants from regional or intern migration:** Very few indications have been provided from the returnee migrants from regional or intern migration. It seems that most of them migrated inside The Gambia. The most quoted west African country is Burkina Faso (as desired destination). | **Identification place :**  [X] IOM/Enabel  [X] COOPI (Farafenni) |

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| **PERSONNAL INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE CYM** | |
| **Nationalities :**  Gambia : 16 (89%)  Senegal : 2 (11%) | **Administrative situation :**  **[X] Deported**  **[X] On the move without any specific status** (Those who came back home by their own*)* |
| **Sex :**  Male : 26 (83%)  Female : 5 (17%) | **Tranche d’âge départ :**   * **0-12-year-old : 4** * **13-year-old : 12** * **+18-year-old: 11**   **Current age range :**   * **14-17-year-old : 6** * **18-21-year-old : 7** * **22-25-year-old: 7** * **+ 25-year-old : 7** |
|  | **Accompaniement (Or family situation Where does the CYM live ?)**  [X] With friends / shared home : 12  [X] Family of origin or spouse and children : 6  [X] Host family/employer : 2  [X] Quranic school : 1 |

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| **ELEMENTS RELATED TO MOBILITY** | |
| **Types of mobility**  [ X ] **Internal mobility**  [ X ] **Transborder mobility** | **Main factors of mobility :**  (*Cumulative answers*)  **Escape pauverty / Help the family** : 15  **Dysfonctionnement familial**  *Abandonment/orphans* : 8  *GBV* : 7  *Escape family conflict*: 1  **Prepare his/her wedding** : 3  **Try the Adventure**: 6  **Become a man or a woman** : 1  **Fleeing from being a maid**:1  **Influence** of other migrants or decision of family: 3  **Study the Quran**: 2 |
|  | **Is the decision to migrate made by the CYM's own choice?**  **[X] Yes : 19 (70%)**  [X] No : 8 (30%) |
| **Journey duration from migration departure**  Less than 1 year: 1  2-3: years: 10  4-9 years: 13  10 years and more: 4 | |
| **Occupations :**  **1. Agriculture : 1**  **2. Trading : 2**  **3. Begging : 1**  **4. Prostitution : 2**  **5. Quranic studies : 2**  **6. Without occupation : 12** | **Migration routes**  Country/ies of departure: The Gambia  Alone (5) / in a group (6)  Social services or assistance during the journey:  Family (most of them)  IOM (quoted by 4)  ENABEL (seems to be the main source of employment)  Desired countries of destination: Europe: 18 (tried the “backway) / West Africa (including The Gambia): 10 |

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| **PROTECTION RELATED ISSUES DURING THE MIGRATION ROUTE** | |
| **[X] Violence and physical abuse: Returning migrants report torture in many cases.**  **[X] Violence and sexual abuse**  **[X] Gender-based violence** | **[X] Labor exploitation: slavery in Libya**  **[X] Sexual exploitation**  **[X] Mental health problem:** |
| **Vulnerabilities**  **Gender vulnerabilities**  - Are victims of forced marriage: 3  - Young men returnee migrants report they were forced to have sex with migrant women in front of their tormentors.  **Vulnerabilities related to trauma experienced**  - Confrontation with violence during the trip. 77% say they have faced dangers.  o Blow and wounds (8)  o Labor exploitation (9)  o Sexual exploitation (7)  o Living in the street (18)  o Hunger and disease (3)  - Almost one third (12) said they were not happy to be back home (feeling of failure) | **Family vulnerability:** Family failures indicators are much less quoted than in other countries.  - 8 are orphans or abandoned  - 7 fled GBV  - 2 are not in contact with their family  **Situation-related vulnerability**  - Almost one third (12) have no occupation  - Almost one third (12) are not happy to have returned. |

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| **RISK LEVEL** | | |
| **Tick** | **Level of risk** | **Principal reasons** |
| **X** | **HIGH** | Risk of mental health issues due to the hard conditions of the backway (torture, prison, hunger…) |
| **X** | **MEDIUM** | Risk of repeating dangerous migration as, some of them believe that Europe is the only opportunity to get a future. Also, at least one third of this profile show signs of poor reintegration (frustration, no occupation) |
|  | **LOW** |  |
|  | **NONE** |  |

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| **URGENT NEEDS TO BE ADRESSED** | | |
| **Tick** | **Urgent Need** | **Principal reasons** |
| **X** | **HEALTH** | Mental health support |
|  | **SECURITY** |  |
| **X** | **SUPPORT** |  |
| **X** | **RÉINTEGRATION** | Vocational training |

CYM Fact sheet 2 : STUDENT MIGRANTS

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| **PROFILE GENERAL DESCRIPTION** | |
| **Main Category : CYM on the move** | **Profile 2 : Student migrants** |
| **Sub-profile 2.1 : Talibes children** | **Sub-profile 2.2. : formal education students** |
| **Country of identification : THE GAMBIA** | **City/Town of identification**  **Soma: 9 / Farefenni: 13** |
| **Profile/sub-profiles descriptive abstract :**  **Quranic students** : only 3 children under the age of 18 were met in the frame of the survey. They are 14 or 15-year-old. The others are young adults who show a strong motivation to finish their Quranic studies. Most of them claim that the decision to migrate was their own choice, including children who left their home family at a very young age. Half of them are begging to finance the marabout et Quranic center.  **Formal education student:** those CYM are very similar to the economic CYM profile as they work beside school. Their common point is that they have a strong family basis, which makes them more resilient. | **Place of identification :**  [X] **In Quranic schools**  [X**] Market**  [X**] Street** |

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| **PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE CYM** | |
| **Nationalities :**  Gambia : 7  Guinea : 6  Senegal : 2 | **Administrative Situation:**  [X] In a mobility situation without any specific status |
| **Sex :**  Male : 17  Female : 5 | **Age range at departure time :**   * **0-12-year-old: 4** * **13-18-year-old: 5** * **+18-year-old: 2**   **Current age range :**   * **14-17-year-old :** 3 * **18-21 ans-year-old :** 5 * **22-25-year-old:** 2 * **+ 25-year-old :** 1 |
|  | **Accompamiement (Or family situation – Where does the CYM live ?)**  [X] **Accompanied children** (some of them moved with their parents)  [X] **Separate children** (Student children living in a host family)  [X] **Non-accompanied children** (mainly talibés)  [X] **With his/her family of origin: 2**  [X] **In a foster family: 2**  [X] **Shared home:** 3  [X] **With the employer: 1**  [X] **Quranic school**: 11 |

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| **ELEMENTS RELATED TO MOBILITY** | |
| **Types of mobility**  [ X ] **Internal mobility :** Most of them are intern migrants  [ X ] **Transborder mobility**  [X**] at destination :** most Senegalese and Guinean CYM are at destination.  [X**] in transit**: 6 | **Main factors of mobility :**  (*Cumulative answers*)  [X] Escaping poverty / Helping the family: **8** (some decided to study the Quran during their trip. Their first motivation was to earn money)  [X] Family dysfunction: *None*  [X] Prepare for the wedding: **3**  [X] Try the adventure:**3**  [X] Becoming a man or a woman: **1**  [X] Apprenticeship / study: **5**  [X] Study the Quran : 14 |
|  | **Is the decision to migrate made by the CYM's own choice?**  **[X] Yes : 16**  [X] No : 3 |
| **Journey duration from migration departure**  1 year or less: 4  2-3: years: 6  4-9 years: 4  10 years and more: 1 | |
| **Occupations :**  **1. Begging: 7**  **2. Quranic studies (Arabic) : 11**  **3. Other : 5 (2 teachers)**  **4. Public education: 0**  **5. Petty Trading : 7**  **6. Apprenticeship : 1** | **Migration routes**  Country/ies of departure: Gambia, Guinea, Senegal  Region of departure:   * Gambia: Basse, Kaur, Lamin   Alone (10) or in a group (2)  Social services or assistance during the journey:  Most of the quoted services were supplied by marabouts and host families. Only a young woman quotes the Ministry of social Affairs which helped her.  Desired country of destination:  West Africa (12) > 5 claim they wanted to go to Burkina Faso.  Europe: 1 apprentice wants to reach Portugal. |

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| **PROTECTION RELATED ISSUES DURING THE MIGRATION ROUTE** | |
| **[X] Deprivation of ressources**: *The only services provided to talibes come from the marabout. They are not acceding to public health facilities.*  **[X] Violence et abus sexuels :** girld and women report sexual harassment from men in the street. | **[ X**] Work Exploitation : talibes |
| **Vulnérabilities**  **Family vulnerability (very few in this profile)**   * A minority is not in contact with their family (3/22) * A minority did not decide the migration (5/22)   **Situational vulnerability** :   * 7 talibe children are begging for their marabout * Poor living conditions for talibe children (only reported by the investigator and not by children themselves).   **Gender vulnerabilities :**   * Girls and yound women report being harassed in the street whild practicing their economic occupation. * Young married women who depend on their husband while studying * Early marriage has been detected for 2 women (1 young man) |  |

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| **RISK LEVEL** | | |
| **Cocher** | **Niveau de risque** | **Raisons principales** |
| **X** | **HIGH** |  |
| **X** | **MEDIUM** | **From the studied sample, there is no high risk detected.** |
|  | **LOW** |  |
|  | **NONE** |  |

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| **URGENT NEEDS TO BE ADRESSED** | | |
| **Cocher** | **Besoin urgent** | **Raisons principales** |
| **X** | **HEALTH** | Talibes do not have access to health facilities |
| **X** | **EDUCATION** | Talibés children need formal education |
|  | **SECURITY** |  |
| **X** | **SUPPORT** | Quranic student CYM only express their needs in terms of Quranic learning materials. |
|  | **AFFECTION** |  |

CYM Fact sheet 3 : Economic children and young migrants

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| **PROFILE GENERAL DESCRIPTION** | |
| **Main category : CYM on the move** | **Profile 3 : Economic migrants** |
| **Sub-profile 3.1 : Regular work situation or without occupation** | **Sub profile 3.2 : Worst forms of Child Labor victims** |
| **Country of identification : THE GAMBIA** | **City/Town of identification**  **Soma: 15** (33%)  **Farefenni: 30** (67%) |
| **Profile/sub-profiles descriptive abstract :**  The common base into this profile is that CYM moved from their home to find economic opportunities, either to help their family or to become independent.  Amongst the respondents CYM, few have a regular job. Most of them are unoccupied or begging. Teenage girls and young women were pushed to practice prostitution as they had no alternative to earn a living. It’s possible that girls who declared to beg are, in reality, sex workers. | **Place of identification :**  [X] **In the street**  [X**] In the market** |

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| **PERSONNAL INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE CYM** | |
| **Nationalities :**  Gambia : 74%  Guinea : 19%  Senegal : 4,3% | **Administrative Situation:**  [X] In a mobility situation without any specific status |
| **Sex :**  Male : 40%  Female : 60% | **Age range at departure time :**   * **0-12-year-old:** 21% * **13-18-year-old:** 58% * **+18-year-old:** 21%   **Current age range :**   * **14-17-year-old :** 12% * **18-21-year-old :** 45,5% * **22-25-year-old:** 18% * **+ 25-year-old :** 15% |
|  | **Accompamiement (Or family situation – Where does the CYM live ?)**  [X] **Separate children** (children living in a host family)  [X] **Non-accompanied children**  [X] **With his/her family of origin/spouse: 17,5%**  [X] **In a foster/hist family:** 2,5%  [X] **Shared home:** 60% |

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| **ELEMENTS RELATED TO MOBILITY** | |
| **Types of mobility**  [ X ] **Internal mobility :** Most of them are intern migrants  [ X ] **Transborder mobility**  [X**] at destination**  [X**] in transit** | **Main factors of mobility :**  (*Cumulative answers*)  [X] Escaping poverty / Helping the family: 23%  [X] Family dysfunction:  Abandonment (death of parents): 13,5%  Ran away from GBV: 13,5%  [X] Try the adventure: 24%  [X] Becoming an independent man or a woman: 6% |
|  | **Is the decision to migrate made by the CYM's own choice?**  [X] Yes : 25%  **[X] No : 75%** |
| **Journey duration from migration departure**  Less than 1 year: 11%  2-3: years: 31%  4-9 years: 29%  10 years and more: 11% | |
| **Occupations :** *(cumulative answers)*  **1. Begging :** 44%  **2. Prostitution:** 22%  **3. Petty trading :** 2%  **4. Without occupation :** 70% | **Migration routes**  Country/ies of departure: Gambia, Senegal, Guinea  Regions of departure : for The Gambia: Basse, Kuntaya, Kaur are mainly mentioned.  Alone (65%) / in a group (35%)  Social services or assistance during the journey:   * Farfenni General Hospital is mentioned once for health services * Otherwise families and/or boyfriends are the most quoted.   Desired country of destination: Europe: 18% / West Africa (including The Gambia): 23%. |

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| **PROTECTION RELATED ISSUES DURING THE MIGRATION ROUTE** | |
| [X] Deprivation of ressources and services  [X] Gender-based violence  [X] Labor exploitation  [X] Sexual exploitation |  |
| **Vulnerabilities**  **Gender-related vulnerabilities:**  Girls are more vulnerable to fall into prostitution. Then sex workers are specifically exposed to sexual violence and abuses. They do not dare to go to health facilities.  **Age-related vulnerabilities:**  Most of them went into migration while children. | **Family vulnerabilities**  **-** Some of them (13,5% ran away from GBV, same proportion are abandonned or orphans).  **Vulnerabilities linked to the vital situation**  -Beggers / prostitution (most of this profile)  - Without occupation (70%: they are mostly the CYM who beg or prostitute for a living)  - They live without adult supervision. |

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| **RISK LEVEL** | | |
| **Tick** | **Level of risk** | **Principal Reasons** |
| **X** | **HIGH** | Very fragile situations: poverty, begging, prostitution. |
|  | **MEDIUM** |  |
|  | **LOW** |  |
|  | **NONE** |  |

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| **URGENT NEEDS TO BE ADRESSED** | | |
| **Tick** | **Urgent Need** | **Principal Reasons** |
| **X** | **HEALTH** | Give access to Health facilities for sex workers |
|  | **EDUCATION** |  |
|  | **SECURITY** |  |
| **X** | **SUPPORT** | Direct support like food and clothe so that the CYM do not have to fall into dangerous activities. |
|  | **AFFECTION** |  |
| **X** | **RÉINTEGRATION** | Vocational training, Income Generating activities. |

CYM Fact sheet 4 : GBV related children and young migrants

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| **PROFILE GENERAL DESCRIPTION** | |
| **Main category : Both CYM on the move or stabilized migrants** | **Profile 4 : GBV related CYM** |
| **Sub-profile 4.1 : Marriage related migration** | **Sub profile 4.2 : Victims of GBV during migration** |
| **Country of identification : THE GAMBIA** | **City/Town of identification**  **Soma: 88%**  **Farefenni: 12%** |
| **Profile/sub-profiles descriptive abstract :**  GBV related CYM moved from their home because of marriage reasons (gather money for the wedding, follow the migrant husband) or got married while migrating and started to be exposed to GBV within the couple. Indeed, 40% are married and 20% divorced. | **Place of identification :**  [X] **In the street**  [X**] In the market** |

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| **PERSONNAL INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE CYM** | |
| **Nationalities :**  Gambia : 69%  Senegal : 31% | **Administrative Situation:**  [X] In a mobility situation without any specific status |
| **Sex :**  Male : 30%  Female : 70% | **Age range at departure time :**   * **13-18-year-old:** 67% * **+18-year-old:** 33%   **Current age range :**   * **14-17-year-old :** 8% * **18-21-year-old :** 50% * **22-25-year-old:** 25% * **+ 25-year-old :** 17% |
|  | **Accompamiement (Or family situation – Where does the CYM live ?)**  [X] **Non-accompanied children** (few children in this profile)  [X] With his/her family of origin/spouse**: 17%**  [X] Shared home**:** 70%  [X] Quranic schools: 12% |

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| **ELEMENTS RELATED TO MOBILITY** | |
| **Types of mobility**  [ X ] **Internal mobility :** Most of them are intern migrants  [ X ] **Transborder mobility**  [X**] at destination** (Senegalese) | **Main factors of mobility :**  (*Cumulative answers*)  [X] Escaping poverty / Helping the family: 18%  [X] Family dysfunction:  Abandonment (death of parents): 12%  Ran away from GBV: 12%  [X] Prepare the wedding: 6%  [X] Try the adventure: 35%  [X] Becoming an independent man or a woman: 23,5% |
|  | **Is the decision to migrate made by the CYM's own choice?**  [X] Yes : 12,5%  **[X] No : 87,5%** |
| **Journey duration from migration departure**  Less than 1 year: 17,6%  2-3: years: 35,3%  4-9 years: 17,6%  10 years and more: 11,8% | |
| **Occupations :** *(cumulative answers)*  **1. Begging :** 12%  **2. Prostitution:** 12%  **4. Quranic studies :** 65% | **Migration routes**  Country/ies of departure: Gambia, Senegal  Regions of departure : for The Gambia: Basse, Kuntaya / For Senegal: Kaolak and Fouta.  Alone (33%) / in a group (67%: husband, escort ceremony)  Social services or assistance during the journey:   * Ministry of Education * Covid19 support * Husband   Desired country of destination: West Africa (including The Gambia): 88%. |

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| **PROTECTION RELATED ISSUES DURING THE MIGRATION ROUTE** | |
| [X] Deprivation of ressources and services  [X] Gender-based violence  [X] Sexual exploitation |  |
| **Vulnerabilities**  **Gender-related vulnerabilities:**  This profile is highly related to gender vulnerabilities: dependent women from their husband, victims of domestiques violence, single/divorced women with dependent children, women who have to prostitute in order to survive. | **Family vulnerabilities**  **-** Some of them (12% ran away from GBV, same proportion are abandonned or orphans).  - They did not choose to migrate (forced by families)  **Vulnerabilities linked to the vital situation**  -Beggers / prostitution (most of this profile)  - Without occupation (they tend to consider that begging and prostitution are not occupation) |

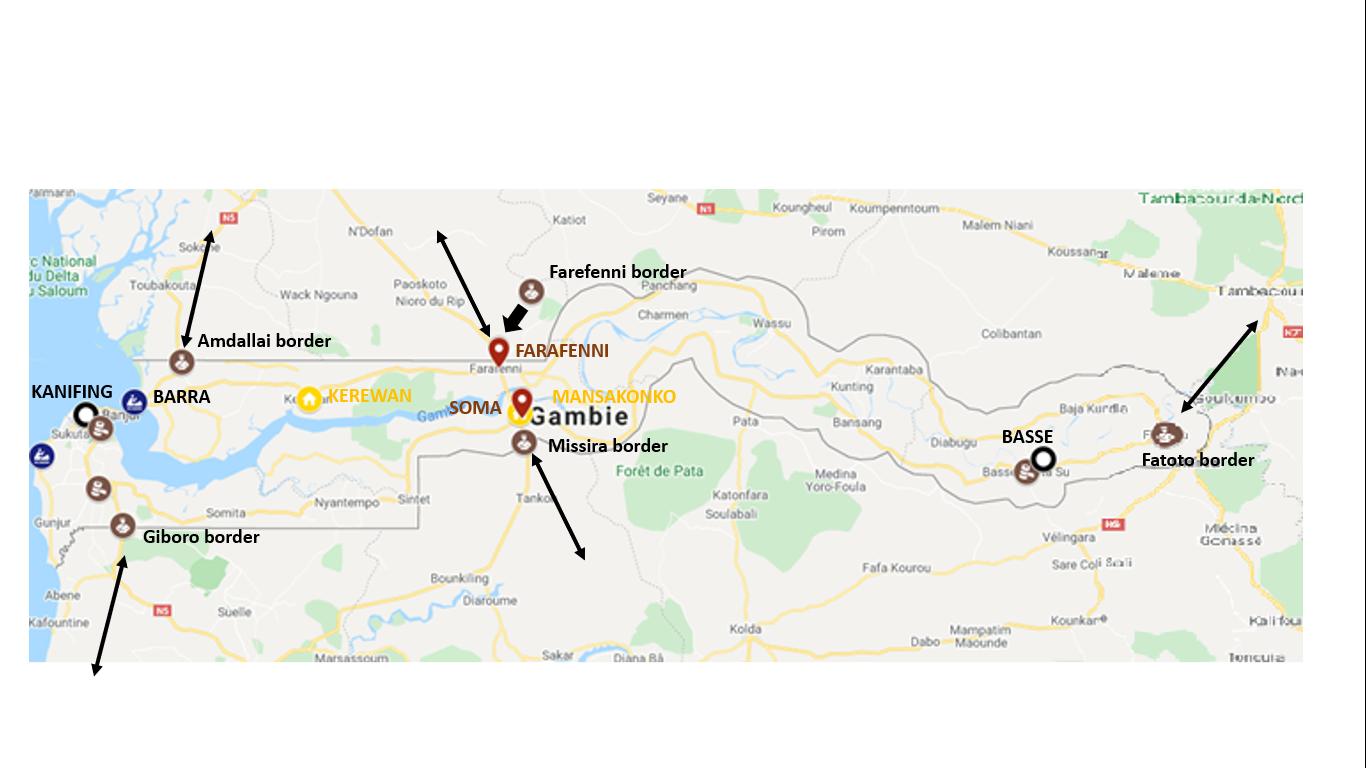
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| **RISK LEVEL** | | |
| **Tick** | **Level of risk** | **Principal Reasons** |
| **X** | **HIGH** | Divorced or single women: Very fragile situations: poverty, begging, prostitution. Dependent children. |
| **X** | **MEDIUM** | Married women: they are dependent to their husband and probably suffer domestiques violence. |
|  | **LOW** |  |
|  | **NONE** |  |

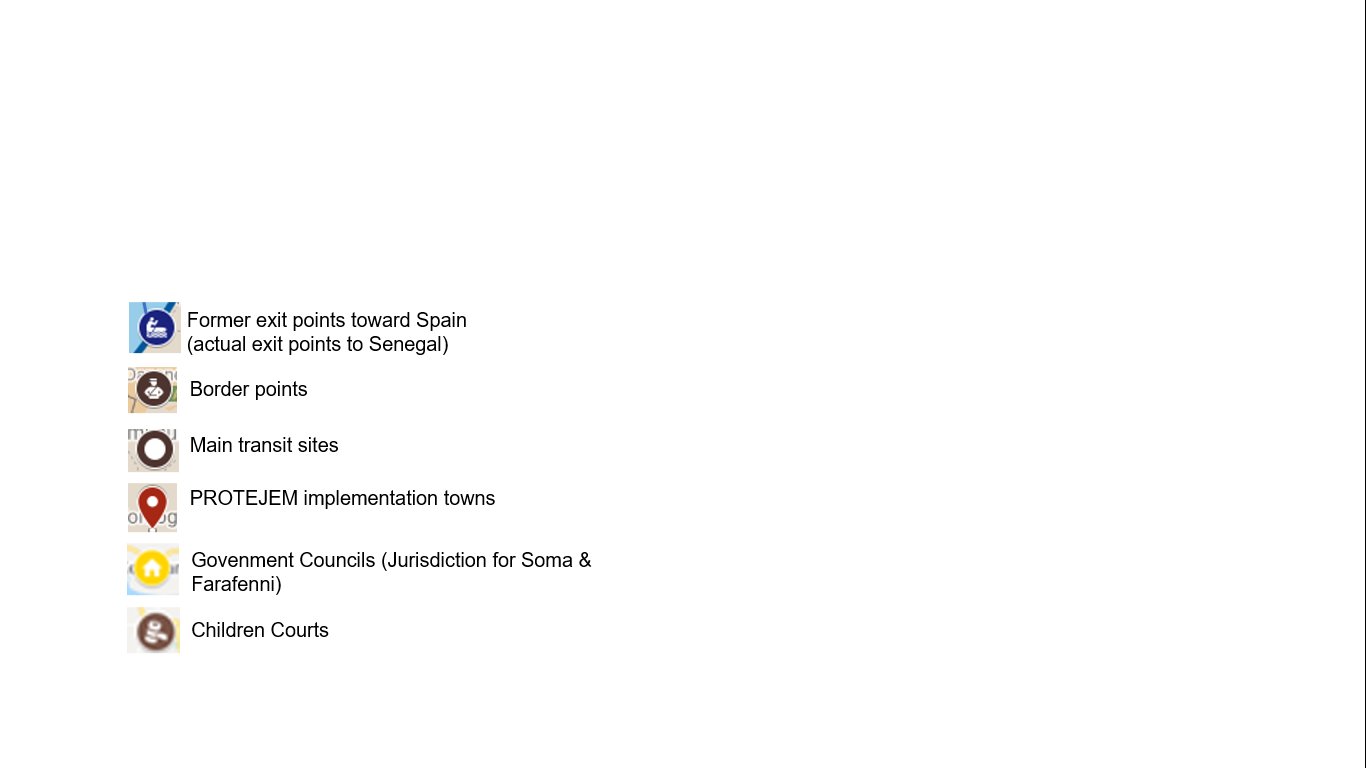
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| **BESOINS URGENTS DEVANT ÊTRE RÉGLÉS** | | |
| **Tick** | **Urgent Need** | **Principal Reasons** |
| **X** | **HEALTH** | Give access to Health facilities (Reproductive and sexual Health) |
| **X** | **EDUCATION** | Education is needed to dependent children |
|  | **SECURITY** |  |
| **X** | **SUPPORT** | Direct support like food and clothe are highly demanded in this profile (mostly to sustain the children). |
|  | **AFFECTION** |  |
| **X** | **RÉINTEGRATION** | Vocational training, Income Generating activities. |

# MIGRATION ROUTES

# General trends on the routes

The map below present the main relevant points related to CYM routes in The Gambia:





The children and young migrants used different routes and different means of transportation to reach their destination but one thing that stand out is the use of boat for those who went through the Mediterranean and bus, for those who travel internally and within the subregion using land transportation available. Since January 2019, a bridge has been opened on the Gambia River, between the towns of Soma and Farafenni, facilitating communication between the North and the South of the country which was, before that, only carried out by ferry. Despite this new infrastructure, it does not seem that there has been any impact on the migration routes.

**Example of “Backways”’s routes:**

Example 1. From Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Algeria. The wanted destination was Germany using bus and by boat

Example 2. From Gambia, **Senegal**: Kaolack,(BUS) Tamba,(BUS) Yillireh,(BUS) / **Mali**: Kai, (BUS) Bamako, (BUS) / **Burkina Faso**: Ougadougou, (BUS) Kancham, / **Niger,** Niamey, (BUS) Agades,/ **Libya**: Gatrone (PICK-UP) Sebah (PICK UP) Sabratah / He got deported from Tripoli Airport to Gambia. His wanted destination was Italy

Example 3. From Gambia, **Senegal**, Kaolack, Dakar, St. Louis / **Mauritania,** Nouhadibu / **Mali,** Gao **Burkina Faso**, Ouagadougou, /**Algeria**, Tamanraset, Debdeb / **Libya**: Sabratah, Zaniya, Zuwaaru, Tripoli. CYM testify of violence suffered from the security forces located on checkpoints all along the way.

**Neighbouring countries et Intern routes**:

According to IOM, although most rural-to-urban migrants moved directly to their intended destination, a significant part of them moved to multiple locations, with nearly half stopping in Kanifing LGA, before settling in their destination. From the same source, 64% of returnee migrants attended by IOM, migrated directly from their place of origin to a foreign country – They did not travel through multiple communities in The Gambia in search of better opportunities before venturing abroad. This finding suggests that international movements towards Europe are not as closely linked to internal movements. Indeed, in the current study, the intern CYM, and even the CYM coming from neighbouring countries do not show specific interest in migrating to Europe.

In the frame of this study, very few consistent information was provided by respondents to explain the routes they took to Reach Farafenni or Soma. It seems that a large number came from Basse in the Upper River Region. Others are native from the Coast (Barra, Lamin…). Most of Senegalese come from Kaolak (if some of them come from Casamance, it has not been indicated in the surveys). Surprisingly, some native of Kaolak went to Gambia through Tambacounda and Basse.

# Profiles identified in Farafenni and Soma

**General presentation of the towns of Soma and Farafenni:**

**Soma** is a town in The Gambia, lying south of the River Gambia. It belongs to the South River Region and is located only 3 kilometres far from Mansakonko (Government Council). **It is an important crossroads**, where the Trans-Gambia Highway (west-East) intersects with an extension of the Trans-Gambia Highway (also known as Senegal route N4) that provides northward access to the town of Farafenni, on Gambia's northern bank, via the Senegambia Bridge, opened in January 2019. Soma is known as a vibrant market town and an economic hub of the region. The town has a number of higher learning centers, three Lower Basic Schools; Soma Senior Secondary School and Tahir Senior Secondary School attract thousands of students to the town. Soma has seen a robust response from its citizens living abroad and locally by forming associations to initiate developments to the town.

From an administrative point of view, **Farafenni** belongs to Kerewan LGA (North Bank Region). Lying on the Trans-Gambia Highway in the North Bank Division, just south of the border with Senegal. Farafenni is an important market town. The population of Farafenni is around 30,000. Farafenni is the site of a recently built hospital. It is sometimes called *Chakubanta* or *Faracity*. There is only one senior secondary school and two junior Secondary. Farafenni is a commercial town, were transactions are carried out in various commercial sectors. Farafenni is at the northern end of the segment of the Trans-Gambia Highway containing the Senegambia Bridge.

**Profiles met in Soma and Farafenni:**

It stands from the survey that the only profiles which have been identified in a larger proportion in Farafenni than in Soma are the GBV related CYM and the young sex workers (sub-profile of economic migrants).

Otherwise, economic migrants, student migrants and returnee migrants are present in the 2 towns in quite similar proportions.

We can also highlight that, despite the fact that the two towns are important economic places, due to their geographical position, on the South Senegal – North Senegal axe, very few CYM met are living from trading.

According to the mapping report realized in the frame of this study, there are more services in Farafenni than in Soma. The impact can be observed through the CYM comments, mainly from the returnee migrants: CYM living in Farafenni report in larger proportion than in Soma that they are receiving support for the integration from IOM/Enabel (Cash for work project).

**Story of a young sex worker in Farafenni**: a young Senegalese girl went from Kaolak to Farafenni while she was 16 in order to find economic opportunities and support her old and sick mother and siblings. She is now 20-year-old and is earning her living as a prostitute. She declares that it is not what she likes doing and suffers violence with other sex workers and with her clients. Because of the pandemic she has no more incomes and urgently needs support in food. She feels that she has no support neither from institution nor from the community and doesn’t know where to report abuses she might suffer.

**Story of a returnee migrant in Soma**: a 19-year-old teenager told us his story: he left to migration while he was 14. His intention was to reach France: after stealing his mother’s money, he started his journey with a friend without knowing anybody on the way neither having any contact at the destination place. He reached Niger where he got arrested and tortured. He doesn’t know any service to help him and wants to establish his own tailoring workshop. Because of the pandemic, he’s not able to work as a tailor. According to the investigator, the young man needs psychosocial support even he doesn’t express this need.

# KEY FINDINGS

**CYM needs**

It is important to make feel the needs expressed by the CYMs by categorizing (ex: “I want to go home”, “I want money to set up my business”, “I want to study the Koran”) and the needs that emerge from the whole interview or in the interviewer's comments (eg: a young child who lives in unsanitary conditions will not necessarily know how to express it).

CYM met in the frame of FGD and individual surveys, mainly express economical needs and direct support needs. Nevertheless, there is a strong need among them, for psychosocial support: it is urgent to set in both town recreative spaces and youth centres with privates counselling rooms and peer-to-peer meeting spaces.

Also, most girls and young women testified from suffering insults and harassment on a daily basis while working or walking in the street and markets. There is an important work of sensitization to realize gathering men and women so that men understand their offences and the reasons why they owe respect to the girls and the women.

Moreover, it appears to be urgent to reinforce health services to make them confidential and more accessible for young girls and women who suffer diverse type of GBV (mainly abuses through prostitution and domestique violence).

**Structures, functions, and capacities**

Despite the existence of the various services most of them are more of preventive than responding to when issues are out of hand and numerous children and young migrants didn’t know the roles and responsibilities of most of this organisations (low knowledge on the available support systems).

Civil society’s involvement in child protection is mainly represented through the activities of community child protection committees (CCPCs) that exist both in Farafeni and Soma, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). However, their number is limited, and their activities tend to be donor dependent. Most often they don’t exist physically in Soma and Farafeni but do extend services to those areas. Religion and religious leaders play a crucial role in shaping people’s attitudes and approaches to child rearing and define local norms and values. Nevertheless, most quranic centres tend to value less about the plight of children and young people who are under there care than for quranic memorisation. Others send the children to beg for their survival in the streets and market-places.

The weak family setting and poverty is a key driver to most of the children and young people moving away from their families to other places in search of greener pastures. At the level of the communities, practices and services are not sufficient to provide the basic requirement for children and Young people. For example, there are not good standard child friendly spaces and youth centres in Soma. Only Farafeni has a youth centre which is being renovated while the study is being realized.

Poverty appears as being the most visible driver for children and youth’ migration: family members, at some point, will motivate their children to go out and search economic livelihood either in bigger towns or out of the country. No matter how hazardous the journey could be. Even though government have policies in place to combat the rate at which Young people move, the challenges are enormous. The reality is that those policies are reactionary instead of preventive.

**Migration routes**

Farafeni and Soma have been identified as urban settlements in rural Gambia with much opportunities for commercial activities and the fact that is the two towns serve as entre points to either side of Senegal it also serve as a destination points to most of the communities surrounding the two towns. The availability of Quranic schools is another catalyst for mobility in the two settlements. Unemployment is a vehicle that have affected a good number of families in the settlements and break down of the livelihood avenues due to poor yields in the agricultural sectors.

1. Global monitoring status of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children, ECPAT, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: The Gambia, US department of State. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Gambian migration profile, IOM [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Of the 100 CYMs, information on nationality, age, and marital status is not available for each respondent. There are therefore discrepancies in the totals. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)