DEATHS

• 65% of respondents reported to have witnessed one or more migrant deaths during their journey. Of these, 44% were reported in Libya, 38% in the Sahara Desert, and 15% in the Mediterranean Sea, and 3% in transit countries, such as Niger.

• Of those that reported witnessing deaths during their journey, when broken down by nationality, certain groups were more likely to have witnessed the death of a fellow traveler. Specifically, those from Senegal (84%), Gambia (78%) and Nigeria (69%) reported high rates of witnessing the death of another on their journey.

• Of the 44% who reported witnessing migrant deaths in Libya, 82% were attributed to physical abuse experienced in the country. 19% of these deaths from physical abuse were reported as from executions, torture, beating and starvation/dehydration specifically in detention (either official or unofficial detention sites). In addition to physical abuse, 9% reportedly died due to a physicians’ refusal to treat sick migrants. Migrants were reportedly denied access to medical attention in detention sites and also hospitals. Witnessing respondents interpreted these refusals as racism towards Sub-Saharan Africans. The remaining 9% of the respondents did not specify in which circumstances their companions died in Libya.

• The 38% who reported witnessing migrant deaths in the Sahara desert, 34% were due to starvation/dehydration. 25% occurred when drivers refused to stop when someone fell from transit vehicles leaving them in the dunes, leading the witness to presume their death. 21% were caused by weather conditions such as freezing temperatures at night or sunstroke by day. 10% occurred because of violence perpetrated by smugglers and bandits with the remaining 10% due to unspecified causes.

• Of the 15% of respondents that witnessed deaths in the Mediterranean Sea, 76% reported drowning as the main cause, followed by exposure to fuel (9% - many adverse health effects of gasoline are due to individual chemicals and being exposed to large amounts of can lead to coma or death), asphyxiation below the deck (3%), cold (3%), and other unspecified causes (9%). MHub will study this incidence of death in transit pre Mediterranean Sea and produce a research report soon.

RISKS AND ABUSES

• The majority of respondents (84%) reported they could not have imagined before departing that what they experienced/witnessed could happen on their journey (two examples of this can be seen in the final two quotes of this snapshot). Some also reported that they had chosen their destination countries according to misinformation and misrepresentations of the intended destination received from migrants already abroad, to the extent that 60% of respondents changed their destination after witnessing actual conditions in their initially intended destination country.

REALITIES IN ITALY

• Around 27% of respondents were disappointed with the situation they encountered in Italy, which some deemed as not worth the conditions they had endured to get to there. Mostly, the respondents cited a lack of access to regular documentation, poor functioning of the reception system, and scarce employment opportunities as the main challenges they faced in Italy.

• 80% of respondents indicated that they would like to stay in Italy.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Bangladeshi respondent showing a scar from being stabbed in Tripoli, Libya during an attempted robbery 1/17

Nigerian respondent interviewed in Venice on 11/01/17

“Once in Tripoli, we were imprisoned by the Libyan police. They used to beat us every day, we didn’t even know why they did it. We ate once a day, some biscuits, and sometimes they suspended the feeding for a few days. We were something like 40 prisoners in a 4x4 [meter] room. We were forced to work outside the prison, and those who refused to work were just shot down and killed. After one year, they took us to the coast and forced us to go on a boat. That was the beginning of our way to Italy. We did not have any idea of where we were going to.” - Male respondent from Mali interviewed in Venice on 6/01/17

“Many people from Africa ask me how it is here in Italy. But when I tell them the difficulties I have encountered, they usually don’t believe me. When I tell them that life is hard also in Italy, they are sure I lie. It is TV’s fault. In Africa, TV shows that in Europe everything is perfect, as well as the pictures that migrants usually post on Facebook or send to their beloved back home. People like taking pictures with Italian girls or next to big cars. They just pretend they are rich here, nobody will know that it is not true at all.” - Male respondent from Ghana interviewed in Venice on 6/01/17

“A lot of friends advised me to take this route. Now that I am here I understand why. In Libya we used to hear everywhere ‘Italy is good, go to Italy, in Italy they give you a monthly pay and free housing’. Now that I am here I cannot tell my friends that Italy is harsh, otherwise they will think I am bad person. That I am not generous and I don’t want to share with them what I have here. But I am not telling them the truth.” - Male respondent from Senegal interviewed in Venice on 11/01/17

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