

This snapshot seeks to better understand refugees' and migrants' access to different sources of information on COVID-19. In particular it seeks to learn the sources of information to which respondents have the greatest access and the channels people on the move use to receive information about the pandemic. The objective is to inform the work of humanitarian actors in their awareness-raising and outreach activities about coronavirus in Libya and Tunisia.

Recommendations

- Awareness-raising programs and information campaigns should create content on COVID-19 that can be easily shared and disseminated via social media and messaging apps given the prevalent use of new media by refugees and migrants in both Libya and Tunisia.
- Awareness-raising programs should include information on how to identify reliable information from online platforms and social media to inform the majority of refugees and migrants accessing information on these platforms.
- Expand the geographic scope of awareness-raising programs and information campaigns of UN agencies and NGOs particularly in Southern (i.e. Sabha) and Eastern (i.e. Ajdabiya) Libya where surveyed refugees and migrants report less access to information from these actors.
- Systematically translate all materials on COVID-19 to English and French, along with Arabic.

Profiles

This snapshot is based on 777 surveys with refugees and migrants in Libya and 723 surveys in Tunisia conducted from April 6th - May 20th 2020. The survey data from both countries were triangulated with qualitative data from 12 key informant interviews conducted in Tripoli, Ajdabiya, and Sabha and 12 in Greater Tunis, Médenine, Sfax and Nabeul.

In Libya, respondents were surveyed in 34 cities, most notably Tripoli (38%; n=297), Sabha (37%; n=284), Ajdabiya (8%; n=61), and Benghazi (6%; n=46). The primary nationalities of surveyed refugees and migrants were Nigerian (28%; n=220), Sudanese (14%; n=112), and Nigerien (11%; n=83). Other nationalities that were prevalent in the sample include Ghanaian, Malian, Cameroonian, Burkinabe and Ethiopian. 72% of respondents are men and 28% are women, ranging from 18 to 65 years of age.

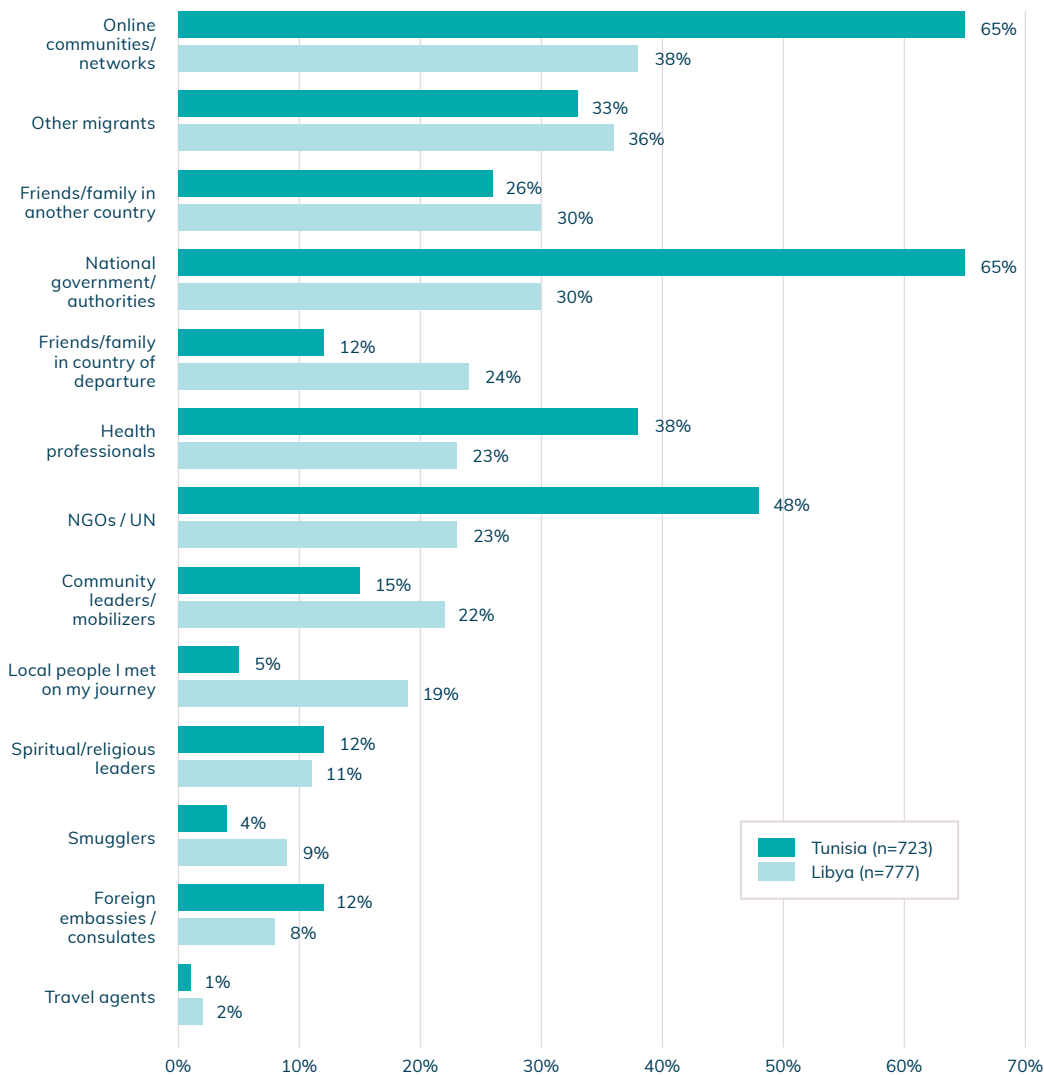
In Tunisia, refugees and migrants were surveyed across more than 15 cities, most notably Tunis (22%; n=160), Sfax (26%; n=186), and Médenine (29%; n=207). The primary nationalities of surveyed refugees and migrants were Ivorian (n=173; 24%), Sudanese (n=75; 10%), and Eritrean (n=59; 8%). Other nationalities prevalent in the sample include Libyan, Guinean, Congolese (Brazzaville), Somali, and Cameroonian. 64% of respondents are men, and 36% are women, ranging from 18 to 70 years of age.

Online communities are the most frequently cited source of information on COVID-19

When asking refugees and migrants "If you have received information on coronavirus and how to protect yourself, who did you receive it from?", the most common response in Libya and Tunisia was "online communities and networks" (38% and 65%, respectively).

Refugees and migrants surveyed in Tunisia highlighted receiving information from multiple sources, which may indicate a greater availability of information or an overlapping of sources if, for instance, information from government authorities is being shared by online networks. In contrast, in Libya respondents appear to receive information from fewer sources (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. If you have received information on coronavirus and how to protect yourself, who did you receive it from?



In Tunisia, other key sources of information about COVID-19 include the national government and authorities (65%) and NGOs and the UN (48%). A Sudanese man in Sfax reported receiving information from these different sources while trying to catch up with news on the virus: “We try to follow what the government says, what UNHCR tells us to do. We even had some information from our friends about some websites where we can follow the news about this virus.”

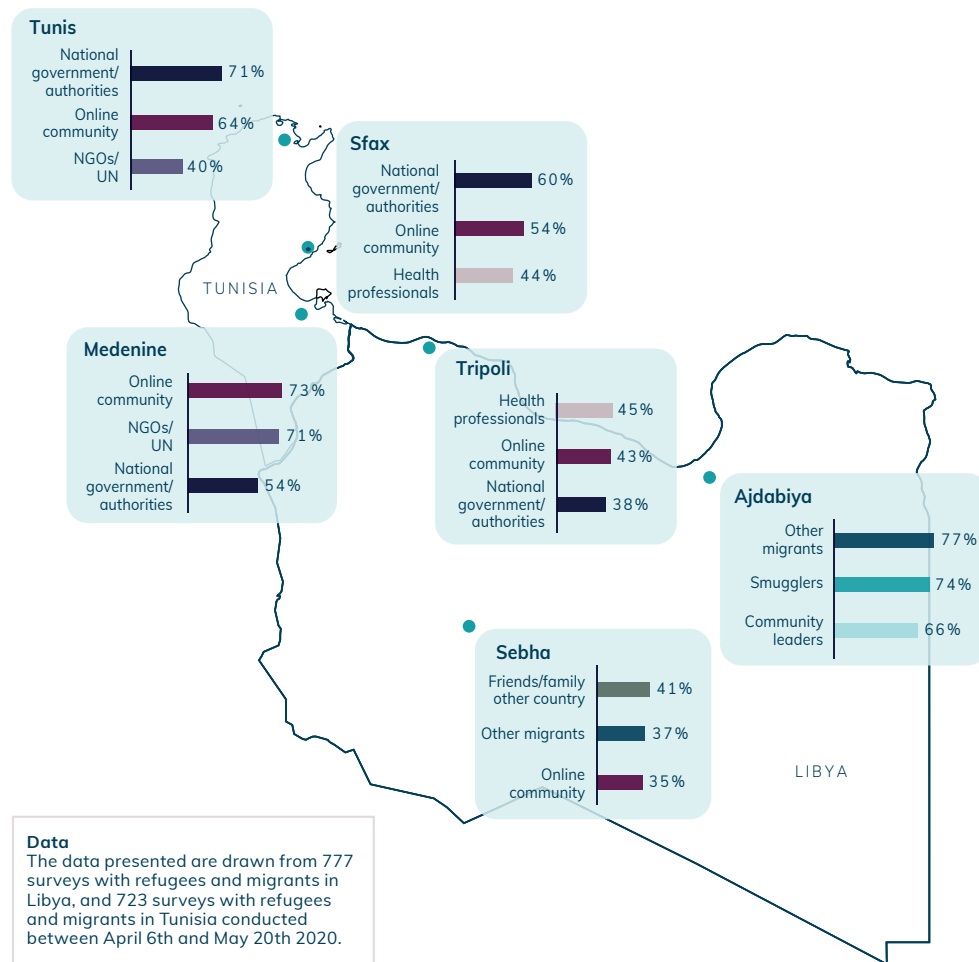
In Libya, after online communities and networks, respondents obtained information from other migrants (36%), friends and family in another country (30%), and government authorities (30%).

Location plays a role in access to information in both Libya and Tunisia, particularly information from UN agencies and NGOs

In Libya, disaggregating the data by location revealed that respondents in Tripoli more often received information from health professionals (45%), while those in Sabha more often received information from friends and family in another country (41%), and those in Benghazi tended to receive information from online communities or networks (70%) (see Figure 2). While we would expect a greater incidence of health professionals in Tripoli, as the capital, the figures for Ajdabiya and Benghazi should be treated with caution given their considerably smaller samples. In Tunisia, disaggregating the data by location highlighted that refugees and migrants surveyed in Tunis and Sfax more often received information from national authorities (71% and 60%, respectively). Respondents in Médenine, on the other hand, tended to receive information about COVID-19 from online communities (73%) and from NGOs or UN agencies (71%). This is not surprising given the large UN (most notably UNHCR) and NGO presence in the south of Tunisia.

On average, just under half of surveyed refugees and migrants in Tunisia noted receiving information from NGOs or UN agencies. In Libya, 23% of all respondents noted that they had received information from NGOs and the UN. 50% of respondents in Benghazi reported receiving information from NGOs and the UN, compared to 34% of those in Tripoli, 7% of those in Sabha, and 2% in Ajdabiya.

Figure 2. If you have received information on coronavirus and how to protect yourself, who did you receive it from? (By location)



Malians more frequently reported turning to community leaders than other migrants

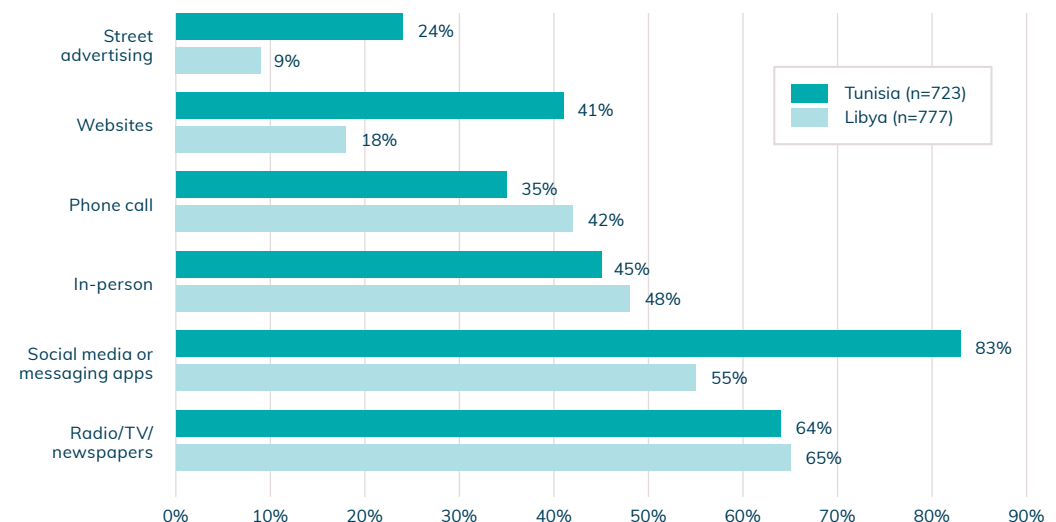
As shown in Figure 1, in Libya, approximately 22% of respondents cited receiving information from community leaders and mobilizers, as compared to 16% in Tunisia. Of the top 5 nationalities surveyed in Libya and Tunisia, Malian respondents most often highlighted receiving information from community leaders (25% and 28%,

respectively). A Malian man based in Tripoli explained the important role played by community leaders in ensuring their members take preventive measures seriously: “as head of [a] diaspora group, you need to do your best to always raise awareness and ask them not to sit very close to each other like before, they may think you are crazy but still we do it.”

Social media and messaging are the main modes of COVID-19 information dissemination in Tunisia, compared to traditional media in Libya

Refugees and migrants in Libya are receiving information on COVID-19 largely through radio, TV, newspapers (65%), followed by social media and messaging applications, in-person communication, and phone calls. In Tunisia, respondents report receiving information primarily through social media and messaging applications (83%), followed by radio, TV, and newspaper, in-person, and websites.

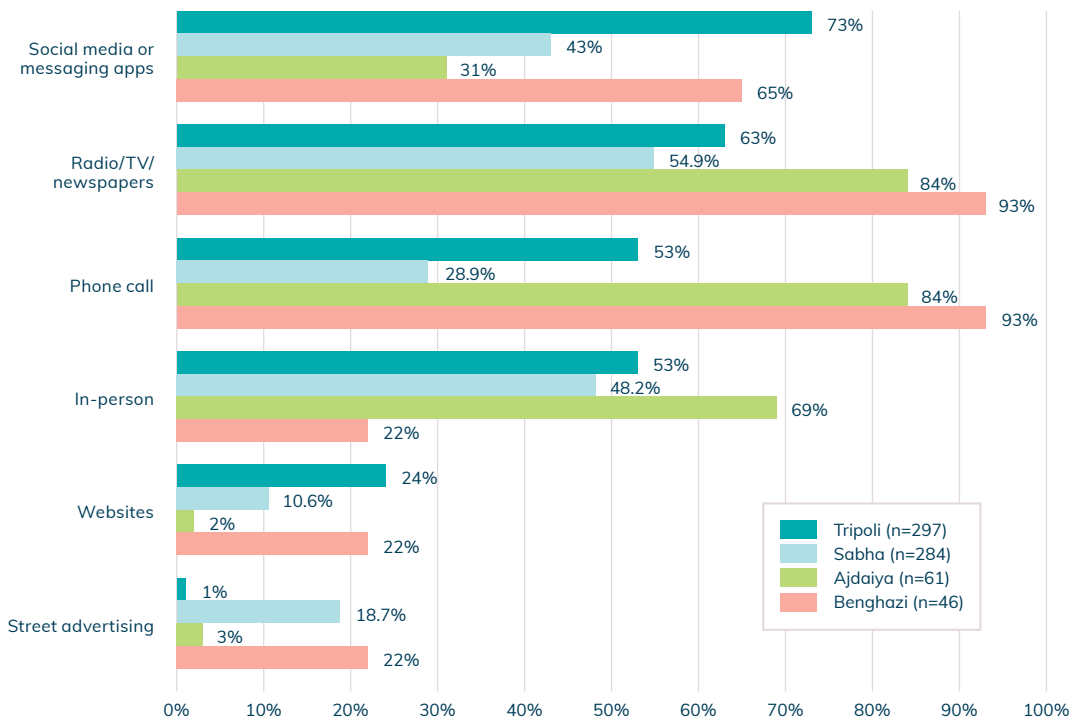
Figure 3. Through what channels did you receive the information? (Tunisia and Libya)



At the city level, in Tunisia, 73% of respondents in Tunis highlighted receiving information via radio, TV, and newspapers, and 69% via social media and messaging apps. Alternatively, 94% of those interviewed in Medénine and 87% in Sfax noted receiving information through social media and messaging applications, where access to traditional media may be more limited than it is in the capital.

In Libya, 73% of respondents in Tripoli cited receiving information primarily through social media and messaging applications (see Figure 3). A Malian man based in Tripoli explained that TV channels overall were less useful, preferring social media and an international radio channel for better-quality information, because of the Arabic language barrier: “[We use] mostly WhatsApp, so TV is in Arabic and it wouldn’t help them, but all internet platforms are helpful, especially WhatsApp and Viber and IMO [are] very important, or Radio France sometimes which has better information.” Figure 3 reveals that, on average, respondents in Ajdabiya, Benghazi, Sabha, and Tripoli receive information through 2 to 3 different channels.

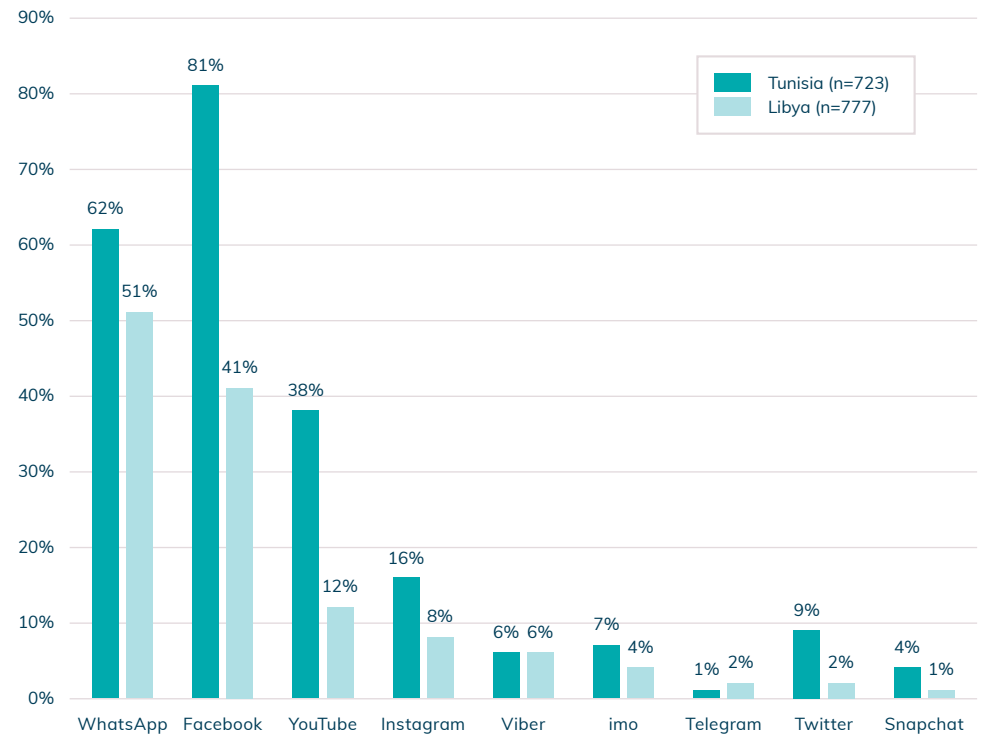
Figure 4: Through what channels did you receive the information? (By location in Libya)



WhatsApp is most commonly used by refugees and migrants surveyed in Libya; Facebook is most common in Tunisia

Going into further detail about the types of social media and messaging apps employed by respondents, in Libya refugees and migrants cited WhatsApp (51%) as the main type of social media and messaging platforms through which information on COVID-19 is shared, followed by Facebook (41%). In comparison, respondents in Tunisia highlighted receiving information on coronavirus mainly through Facebook (81%), followed by WhatsApp (62%). This also shows that the majority of surveyed refugees and migrants in Tunisia are receiving information on COVID-19 not only through multiple sources and channels, as detailed in the previous sections, but also through multiple social media and messaging platforms.

Figure 5. Through what means did you receive the information? (By type of social media)





4Mi & COVID-19

The [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative](#) (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements. Normally, the recruitment of respondents and interviews take place face-to-face. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face recruitment and data collection has been suspended in all countries.

MMC has responded to the COVID-19 crisis by changing the data it collects and the way it collects it. Respondents are recruited through a number of remote or third-party mechanisms; sampling is through a mixture of purposive and snowball approaches. A new survey focuses on the impact of COVID-19 on refugees and migrants, and the surveys are administered by telephone, by the 4Mi monitors in West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Asia and Latin America. Findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make inferences about the total population of refugees and migrants, as the sample is not representative. The switch to remote recruitment and data collection results in additional potential bias and risks, which cannot be completely avoided. Further measures have been put in place to check and – to the extent possible – control for bias and to protect personal data. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at www.mixedmigration.org/4mi