



4Mi: Innovative and
global data collection
with refugees and migrants
on mixed migration routes

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4Mi: Introduction

4Mi

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) is a **global data collection and research initiative** on the profiles, journeys and experiences of refugees and migrants moving along irregular mixed migration routes - called 4Mi.



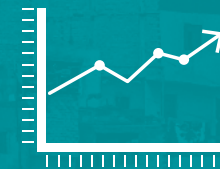
Through 4Mi, MMC offers the **largest, in-depth, globally comparable dataset**, based on direct interviews with refugees

and migrants along mixed migration routes around the world, providing **key insights for better knowledge, policy and programming on mixed migration and contributing towards the implementation of GCM Objective 1.**



The MMC is currently the **only civil society organisation providing such rich, large-scale, in-depth information**, capitalising on our links with an international humanitarian NGO (the Danish Refugee Council), close cooperation with national civil society organisations and our large network of field enumerators - embedded within local communities and often refugees and migrants themselves -, **continuously conducting the interviews in key migration hubs around the world.**

The MMC is currently the **only civil society organisation providing such rich, large-scale,**



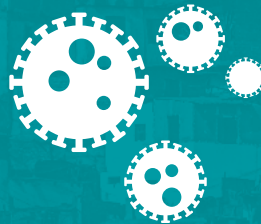
MMC can continuously generate large-scale and in-depth data and analysis on mixed migration.

Data and analysis which are in high demand, exemplified by the wide range of partnerships and data sharing agreements of MMC with UN agencies, where MMC provides the data to feed into their initiatives, and the high number of data analysis requests MMC receives on a daily basis.



4Mi is an innovative data collection approach as it is **both global and local, standardized yet flexible, offering**

quantitative yet rich and detailed insights, presenting the human face of mixed migration. 4Mi fills information gaps on a hard-to-reach and often vulnerable population of migrants and refugees, adding to evidence for policy and operational responses to people on the move. 4Mi ensures the provision of reliable information on a priority population of concern, and contributes to continued innovation in research on mixed migration.



Due to the **innovative and flexible set-up** MMC has been able to rapidly adapt within weeks during the

Covid-19 pandemic and to (remotely) interview more than 25,000 refugees and migrants on the impact of the pandemic on their lives. As such, we could **continue to contribute to humanitarian programming and policy throughout the pandemic.**



In short, 4Mi offers:

- Continuous access to hard-to-reach populations
- Standardised methodology, combined with flexibility, adaptation & innovation
- Community-based enumerators
- Large-scale quantitative data, with rich insights offering the human face of mixed migration
- Large samples, allowing for advanced analysis
- Complementarity with other data collection systems

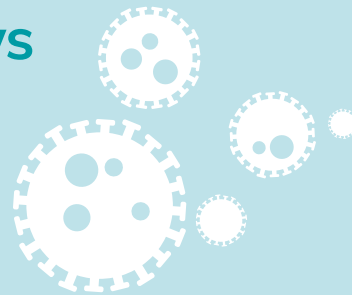
4Mi at a glance: facts and figures

Our data

- More than **86,000 interviews** with refugees and migrants since 2014



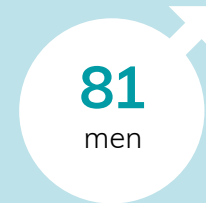
- **25,500 interviews** on the impacts of the **Covid-19** pandemic in 2020



- Over **7,000 interviews** in the first five months of 2021

Our enumerators in 2021

- **133 enumerators**, the majority of whom are refugees and migrants



- Speaking **19 languages**



Where we work in 2021



Knowledge and analysis

- Three **4Mi Interactive portals:** open access, interactive portals for data exploration and visualisation
- **53 4Mi data snapshots** published in 2020



- **8 easy-access data 'snapshots'** and 2 longer reads in the first half of 2021

Surveys

- **4 survey questionnaires:** migrants, smugglers, returnees, Covid-impact (in 2020)



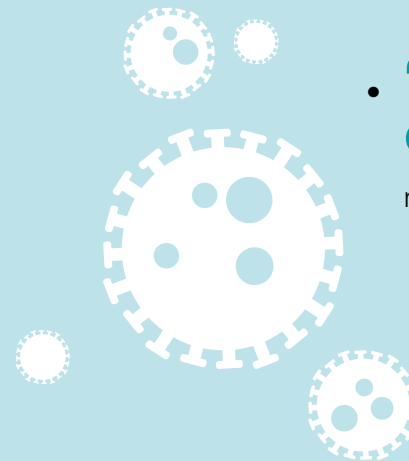
- Multiple **thematic or regional specific add-on survey modules** (e.g. on children on the move, economic integration, perceptions of policies, labour exploitation)

Innovation

- **Longitudinal methodology**
to understand decision-making and resilience (2021)
- **4Mi cities:** mapping, interviews and work with local stakeholders to understand mixed migration in urban settings (2020 and 2021)
- **‘Smuggler survey’**
data collection with smugglers re-launched in 2021
- **Data collection among returnees** launched in 2019



- New approach to understanding **links between climate-related events and mobility**
(launched 2021)



- **‘Remote and face-to-face capacity’** in response to the information needs and contact constraints of Covid-19

About the Mixed Migration Centre

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, information, research and analysis on mixed migration. MMC's objectives are to contribute to:

Knowledge: a better, more nuanced and balanced understanding of mixed migration

Policy: evidence-based and better-informed migration policies and debates

Programming: effective evidence-based protection responses for people on the move

Collectively, these objectives serve a broad community of researchers, journalists, policy makers, practitioners, decision makers and others working on migration.

“The Mixed Migration Centre were particularly quick off the blocks in the early phases of the COVID-19 crisis. By swiftly adapting their collection method and focus MMC are now in a position to provide highly relevant and much needed data and information on the actual situation of migrants on the migratory routes. This proves to be of great use at a time when hard evidence from the field is particularly hard to get.”

Conradin Rasi, Head of Foreign Policy section on Migration, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Directorate of Political Affairs, Human Security Division

MMC is a field-based network, with offices in Bogota, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis, and Dhaka, led by a small central unit in Geneva. It is part of, and governed by, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). This ensures MMC’s work is grounded in operational reality, as it acts as an independent source of data, research and analysis. For more information on MMC’s activities, see the detailed introduction to the MMC available here: <https://mixedmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Insights-evidence-introduction-to-MMC.pdf>



MMC’s understanding of mixed migration

Mixed migration refers to cross-border movements of people including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people in mixed flows have different legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities.

Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Those in mixed migration flows travel along similar routes, using similar means of travel – often travelling irregularly and wholly or partially assisted by migrant smugglers.

MMC, 4Mi and the Global Compact for Migration

Recognising the need for accurate, reliable and in-depth data on migration, states agreed on the need to “collect and disseminate quality data” as one of the guiding principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). Objective 1 of the GCM is to “Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies”.

Through its data collection programme 4Mi, contributes towards the implementation of GCM Objective 1 and helps states to deliver on this objective. MMC offers the largest, in-depth, globally comparable dataset, based on direct interviews with refugees and migrants along mixed migration routes around the world. It provides key insights for better knowledge, policy and programming on mixed migration.

The remainder of this introduction explains 4Mi, its unique characteristics, different modalities, key deliverables and partnerships and data-sharing.



Why 4Mi? Background

4Mi offers a regular, standardized, quantitative system of collecting globally comparable primary data on mixed migration flows. It has been collecting data directly from refugees and migrants on the move since 2014, when it first started in East Africa. 4Mi field enumerators situated along frequently used routes and in major migratory hubs in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America conduct face-to-face interviews with refugees and migrants on a continuous basis. These interviews offer unique, in-depth and rich information on the profiles of people on the move, the drivers of migration, aspirations and intentions, facilitation of journeys (including interactions with smugglers) and the experiences along the journey and in destination countries, with a strong focus on protection.

Since it began in East Africa in 2014, 4Mi has conducted more than 86,000 interviews and has become the largest globally comparable, in-depth data collection mechanism on

migration, operational (as of 2021) in between 14 countries with 133 enumerators. Teams in MMC's regional hubs recruit, train, and oversee the enumerators, conduct rigorous data validation and cleaning, analyse data and publish research on the latest insights and trends related to mixed migration, and engage local, national and regional stakeholders to inform policy and programming.

4Mi data aims to contribute towards building a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses on the ground, as well as informed policy decisions. The data is revealing new insights all the time. Examples of our latest research and insights include: the [drivers of migration decisions](#), including [onward migration](#) decision making, the [scope and scale of bribery](#) during migration journeys and the [key 'hotspots' for incidents of violence](#) and the factors that [impact the vulnerability](#) of refugees and migrants. Knowledge generated through 4Mi is

regularly published in 4Mi snapshots and research reports; made publicly available in the online interactive portal ([4Mi Interactive](#)) fed into programmatic responses; and, increasingly, disseminated through reports by partner organisations that have data-sharing agreements with MMC (see sections below).



Photo credit: Sven Torfinn / Panos (2017)

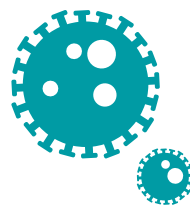
4Mi's unique characteristics



Access to hard-to-reach populations

Refugees and migrants who are on the move along (irregular) mixed migration routes, or who settle outside of camps, are a particularly hard-to-reach population, both for research and data collection, as well as for operational responses on the ground. They form a highly diverse group, with different education and skills, different experiences with conflict and crisis, speaking many languages, and they are highly mobile. Moreover, they are often 'under the radar' and deliberately keeping a low profile, perhaps because of their irregular status or out of fear of discrimination. Nonetheless, it remains important to know more about this population overall, without forcing unwanted visibility. Over the years, MMC has developed a unique capacity to reach this group through 4Mi.

Another harder-to-reach group accessed by MMC through 4Mi is migrant smugglers. Over the years, our 4Mi enumerators have interviewed over 700 smugglers all over the world. This makes it the largest database of interviews with smugglers globally, offering a unique perspective directly from those involved in facilitating irregular migration.



Flexible, adaptive tool: the example of Covid-19

4Mi's infrastructure, with regional teams managing a network of enumerators who are continuously collecting data in numerous locations, coordinated by a central unit, makes it an extremely versatile tool, that can be adapted to fill information gaps at a particular time, in a particular place, or within a particular population. It also enables innovation and rapid implementation of new methodological approaches: it is

thanks to this infrastructure that MMC was able to rapidly adapt data collection after the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Within weeks, MMC had consulted with stakeholders and developed a new survey and methodology to enable remote data collection. By the end of April, MMC was publishing analysis of the impact of the crisis on refugees and migrants, and one year into the pandemic MMC had interviewed more than 25,000 refugees, migrants and returnees on the impact of Covid-19 on their lives and migration journeys.



Community-based monitors

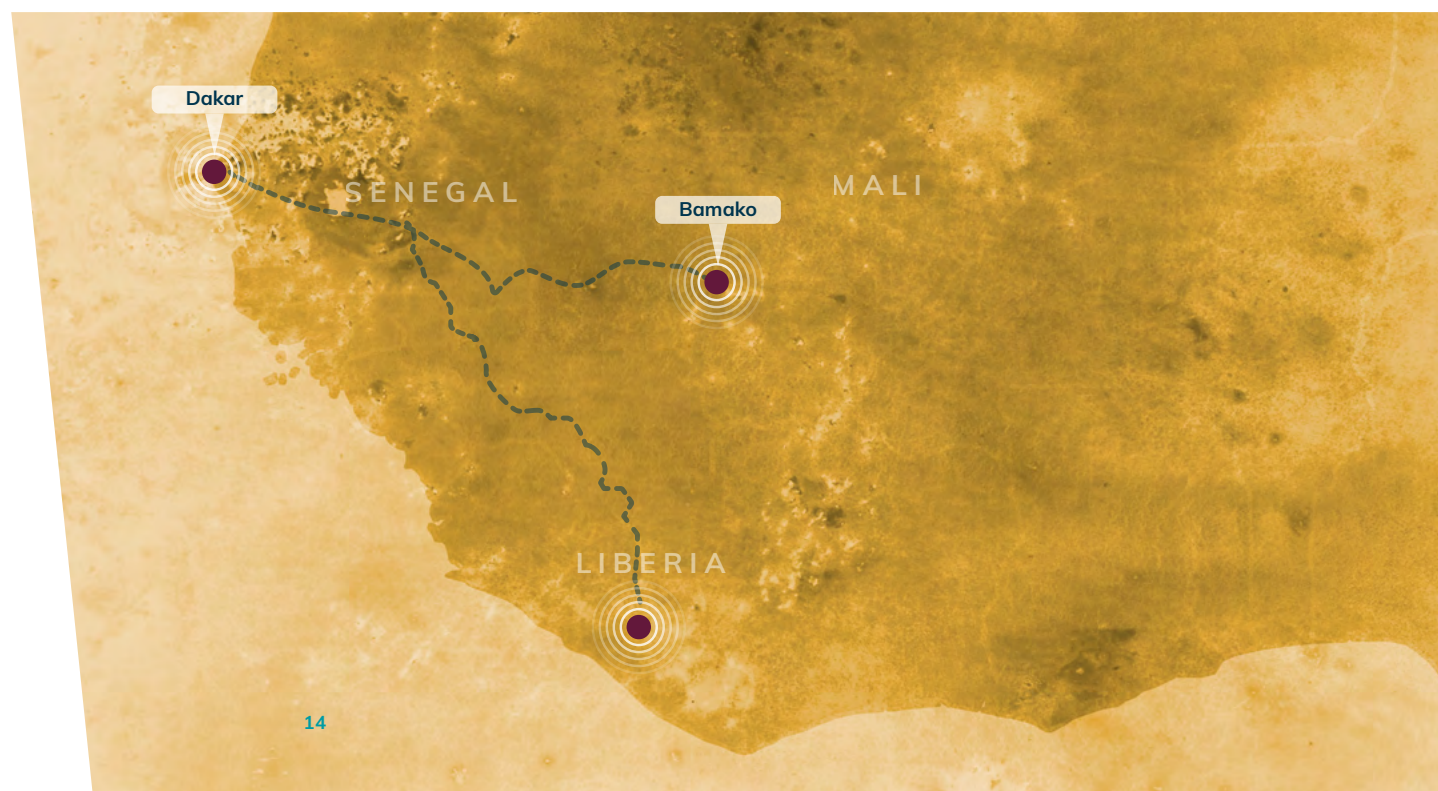
4Mi works with enumerators the majority of whom are refugees and migrants, who are deeply embedded within local communities and/or networks of people on the move. This ensures a level of trust between respondents and enumerators and increases enumerators' access to a hard-to-reach populations. It also means that the target population is involved in the research process – 4Mi enumerators primarily conduct interviews, but are also involved in scoping and mapping exercises, and provide direct observation to our data collection. They are often consulted as primary sources for additional locally contextualised interpretation of findings. Moreover, while they identify as working for MMC/DRC, 4Mi enumerators do not carry visible organisational affiliation, increasing the likelihood respondents offer accurate, honest stories of their journeys, drivers and intentions.



Quantitative data, with rich insights offering the human face of mixed migration

4Mi collects a large volume of quantitative data. Using a survey based largely on closed questions that cover the entirety of the migration journey, many break-down

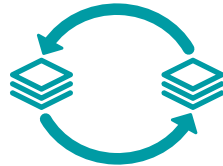
questions and with a limited number of open questions to allow for quotes and new themes to arise, the survey can take up to one hour to complete. This allows us to understand in detail people's motivations, aspirations, decisions and journeys. 4Mi allows us both to quantify the information and to gain in-depth insights into the human face of mixed migration, even allowing us to deconstruct detailed individual migration journeys.





Large sample, allowing for advanced analysis

4Mi collects thousands of interviews per year. These large samples, with up to 10,000 interviews in a particular geography (for example a region, or a migration route), allow for advanced statistical analysis offering a more granular understanding of mixed migration than when only using descriptive statistics. For example, in West and North Africa, we used regression analysis, to analyse what determines the likelihood of experiencing detention and other protection incidents or the likelihood of choosing particular destinations. These studies offer statistically robust and solid findings, going beyond the more common descriptive analytics.



Complementarity with other data collection systems

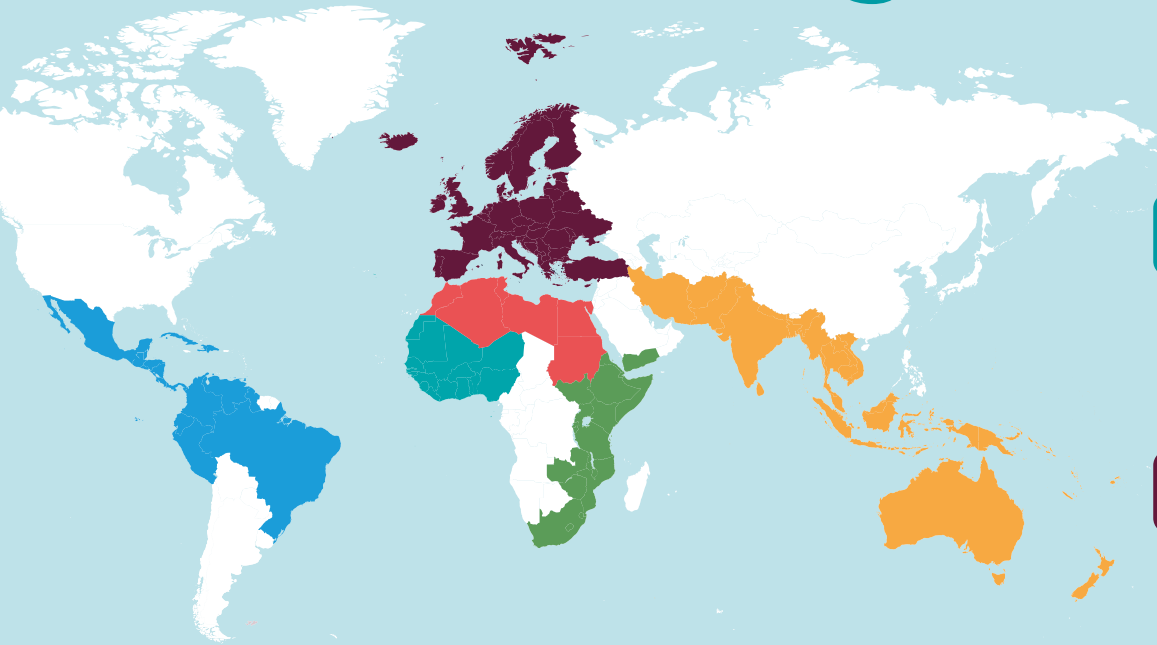
Very little standardized or comparable data is available on people travelling along mixed migration routes, although many studies look at particular geographies, themes, or populations. MMC triangulates its 4Mi data with other sources where possible and frequently collaborates with research partners. Its unique approach means it provides a complementary data source to existing initiatives such as IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Comprehensive Flow Monitoring. Each system has its own focus and methodology, and can enrich the other thanks to these unique approaches: MMC and IOM DTM frequently collaborate and presenting findings together, demonstrating this complementarity.

"The Mixed Migration Centre's unique data collection set-up, their research capacities and analytical work are of great value to the Danish MFA. Evidence-based research and analyses are essential when it comes to ensuring that decisions and policies are based on a comprehensive and factual understanding of the situation at hand."

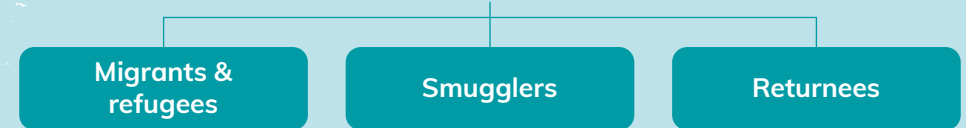
Mia Steninge, chief advisor and team leader, migration and development, Migration, Stabilization and Fragility, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark



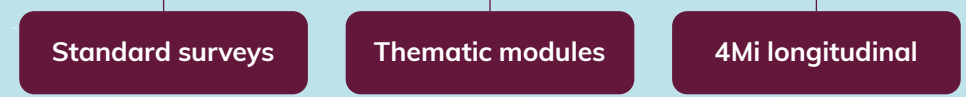
4Mi building blocks



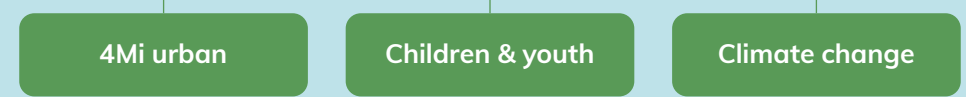
Target populations



Tools



Specific target groups / themes



Outputs



Geographies

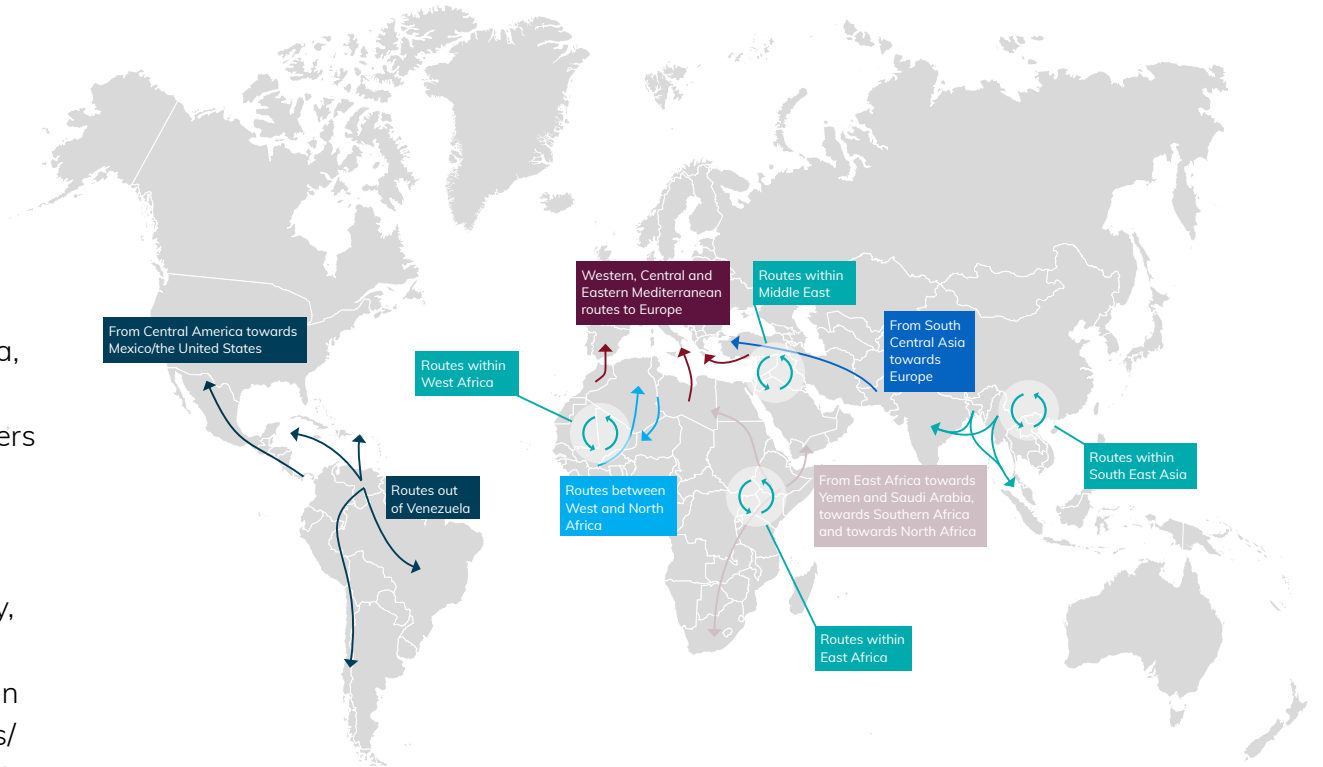
North Africa	Asia
East Africa	Europe
West Africa	Latin America

Geographical scope, topics and tools

Geographical scope

As of 2021, 4Mi is operational in the following countries: Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Somalia, Italy and Greece. With enumerators stationed in key migration hubs in these countries, it covers the mixed migration routes depicted on the map below.

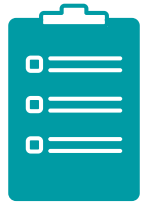
In 2021 MMC is actively exploring or preparing to set up new 4Mi operations in several countries, including Turkey, Thailand, Ethiopia, Morocco and Egypt. With an agile structure and a standardised research protocol, MMC can relatively quickly set up new 4Mi operations. Other areas/countries of particular interest for expansion include Spain, southern Africa (especially on the route from the Horn of Africa towards South Africa), Yemen (to cover the 'eastern route' from the Horn to the Gulf), and West African coastal countries (to cover southbound migration from the Sahel, or, in the case of countries like Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal, implement a 4Mi Returns programme).



Main migration routes MMC focuses on as of 2020

Themes and target populations

The 4Mi programme runs 3 globally comparable surveys, targeting three population groups:



- **The migrant survey:** (interviewing both refugees and migrants) is the foundation of 4Mi and the most widely used, operational in all active countries. It focuses on drivers of migration, aspirations and intentions, facilitation of journeys (including interactions with smugglers), experiences along the journey, and in destination countries, protection, assistance, information and the financing of journeys. On average, we collect approximately 1,500 interviews per month with refugees and migrants.



- **The smuggler survey:** since 2014, the smuggler survey has primarily been implemented in Africa and Afghanistan with a total of just over 700 interviews. In 2019, the use of the smuggler survey was temporarily suspended, to allow time for a review and revision of the survey and methodology. As of 2021, the survey is operational again in West and North Africa, covering a wide range of subjects related to smugglers' profiles and modus operandi.



- **4Mi returns & reintegration:** a globally comparable survey, covering returnees' (both spontaneous and forced) experiences, needs, challenges, intentions and aspirations. First implemented in Afghanistan, MMC now aims to implement 4Mi returns in a number of additional relevant countries.

In addition, MMC has developed and/or implemented specific 4Mi data collection projects on specific themes, including, but not limited to:



- **4Mi Urban:** the latest addition to MMC's specific, thematic 4Mi projects, 4Mi Urban specifically focuses on the situation and needs of refugees and migrants in cities, their integration in cities and contribution to local economic development. Developed in partnership with the Mayors Migration Council and in close collaboration with municipal authorities to inform city policies, 4Mi Urban is piloted in 2021 in selected cities in Latin America, to allow for potential upscaling after the initial proof of concept.



• **Children and youth:** in 2016-17, MMC implemented a 4Mi project with UNICEF, interviewing children on the move in Southern Africa. In

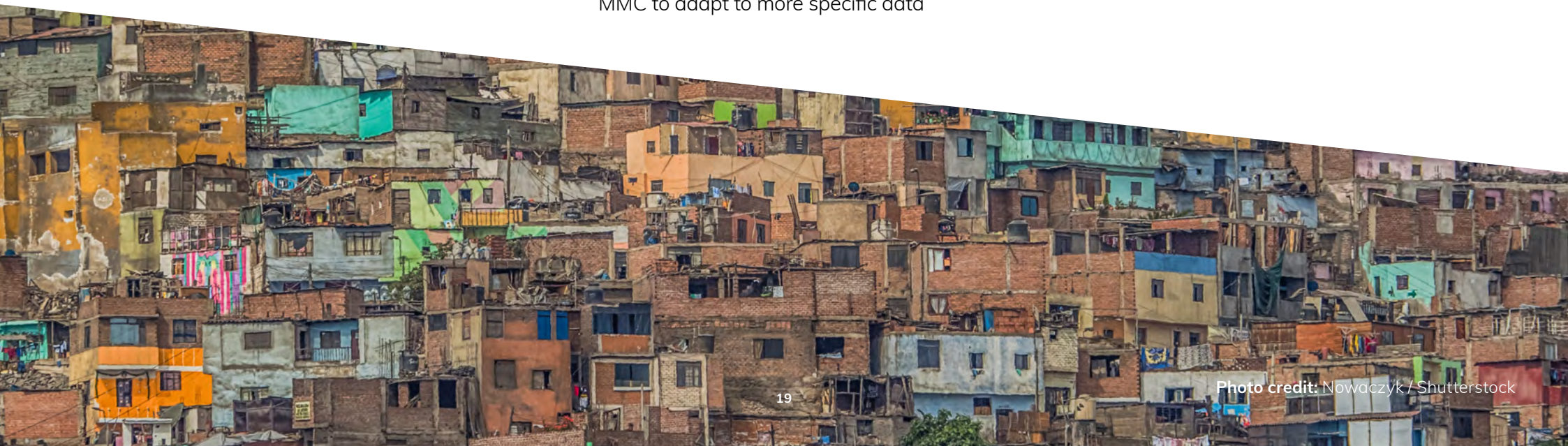
2017 and in 2020, a UNFPA supported 4Mi project focused on migrant youth in cities, with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health. In 2021, MMC started new projects in collaboration with Save the Children, focusing on children and young people on the move between East and North Africa and with Helvetas, Terre des Hommes and GIZ on children and youth on the move in West and North Africa.



• **Climate change:** In 2021, MMC conducts quantitative and qualitative data collection in several hotspots in Africa on the linkages between

climate change and environmental stressors and mobility, alongside Columbia University, and as part of a larger multi-stakeholder high-level initiative on Climate-Forced Mobility in Africa, currently led by the African Union, UNDP, the World Bank Group, IOM and UNFCCC. While not a 4Mi project, its design is influenced by the knowledge acquired in developing 4Mi, and is another example of how 4Mi enables MMC to adapt to more specific data

collection. This project is meant to provide strong input for the addition of a climate change module (see below) to our core migrant survey, enabling a better understanding of the complex relationship between climate change and (international) mobility.



4Mi tools

Standardised methodology

4Mi collects data through one-to-one interviews, using an in-depth closed-question survey. Due to the difficulties of building a sampling frame for migrants and refugees travelling along mixed migration routes, sampling is purposive. A scoping exercise and subsequent mapping exercises are conducted to identify locations where refugees and migrants gather, and where enumerators will recruit respondents. The large scale of data collection, the careful selection of sites for data collection, and setting of targets to achieve diversity in sampling, means that while 4Mi data is not representative, and MMC cannot measure stocks, flows, and volumes, it is highly indicative and provides good information on the overall perceptions and experiences of the target population.

All data collection is anonymous and confidential, and is collected on a smartphone app, then housed on a dedicated data collection platform, before being validated, cleaned and analysed, or shared on 4Mi Interactive (see below). MMC has developed a comprehensive handbook and protocol for 4Mi activities. MMC is transparent about its methods: for more information on 4Mi methodology, see our [FAQ](#).

MMC is constantly exploring and developing innovative concepts for 4Mi data collection, to continue to advance our knowledge and strategically align our work with new developments. We are keen to cover new topics, and develop new approaches to better reach our target population, improve quality and make sure that people are receiving the information that is needed, as our recent activities demonstrate. The most recent innovation currently being developed further is 4Mi Longitudinal (see below).

Modules

As discussed above, 4Mi's primary tools are globally comparable and standardised surveys with migrants and refugees, smugglers or returnees, or specific sub-groups within these target groups.

However, the context differs per region or migration route. For example, questions around disembarkation after inception at sea are relevant in Libya, but irrelevant in Ethiopia. Refugees and migrants in Indonesia or Colombia are less likely to be still on the move compared to those in Niger or Djibouti. To allow for these differences, we developed the concept of modules. In addition to the core migrant survey, specific modules can be added to the survey, to dig deeper on relevant topics in a particular context. Examples are recent modules on destinations, exploitation, access to socio-economic rights, and migrant smuggling.

Furthermore, modules can be implemented for a short period of time, to zoom in on timely or specific topics. For example, in 2020, we

ran a module on the impact of and exposure to explosive ordnance along migration routes for the Danish Demining Group for several weeks, collecting over 300 interviews with refugees and migrants. Another example is the addition of questions to surveys with Eritreans and Ethiopians who are interviewed in Sudan or Libya about the ongoing conflict in Tigray.

With the 4Mi data collection infrastructure already in place, there is no need to set up a new, expensive standalone research project; such questions can be added without additional costs. The 4Mi model, with enumerators continuously present in data collection locations, means that questions can be added to the survey from an MMC office, and a short enumerator training is all that is needed to run a select number of questions for a limited period of time.

4Mi Longitudinal

Normally, all respondents are interviewed only once, and not repeatedly over time. While this allows for comparisons between locations of interview, locations along routes, between nationalities of origin and between different profiles, it only allows for 'between-subject' comparison. It does not allow for 'within-subject' comparison: understanding how the drivers of migration, experiences (including during the current COVID-19 pandemic), decisions and aspirations of individuals develop over time and at several points along their journey.

As such, in 2021 MMC has been piloting an additional component to the 4Mi data collection, namely longitudinal data collection, in which we will interview the same respondent repeatedly over time. To the best of our knowledge there are currently no systems in place that repeatedly interview refugees and migrants while they are on the move. Longitudinal interviewing fits the often non-linear nature of so many migrant and refugee journeys, characterised by

fragmented journeys and twists and turns along the way.

Longitudinal data collection will allow us to both complement the existing 4Mi approach and enrich existing approaches of migration diaries and other in-depth qualitative research covering the journey with large scale quantitative data collection and analysis. It will provide critical knowledge to both policy makers for more successful migration management and humanitarian actors for better protection and assistance responses for people on the move. While 4Mi has always been interviewing respondents face-to-face, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic made us [switch](#) to remote respondent recruitment and data collection by phone. This means we have now developed a system to collect respondents phone number in a secure way and have developed our enumerators' capacity to conduct interviews by phone. This allows for shorter follow-up interviews by phone, after the initial full interview (face-to-face or remote, pending the COVID-19 pandemic limitations on travel and data collection).

4Mi outputs

The 4Mi programme forms the foundation of much of MMC's work. It feeds into all three objectives – knowledge, policy and programming - and features in almost all deliverables. This section describes the main outputs of the 4Mi programme, reflecting the objective to be flexible and meet the various needs of our audience.

Datasets

4Mi's core migrant survey consists of some 150 items, measuring around 100 variables, meaning that one year of data collection can culminate in millions of data points. Much of the data is categorical, with single- or multi-select questions, but there is ordinal data measuring perceptions, as well as numerical data. Comprising a similar range of data types, the returns survey is of similar length and the smuggler survey is slightly shorter, at around 70 questions. Our datasets go through rigorous validation and cleaning procedures before they are shared or

analysed. Depending on specific agreements, selected clean datasets can be shared with partners and donors for further analysis.

4Mi Interactive

[4Mi Interactive](#) – launched in February 2021 – offers an online portal for exploration and visualisation of 4Mi data on mixed migration. It offers much of the 4Mi data and can be accessed freely, so that users can always find the information they are looking for. 4Mi Interactive currently consists of 2 portals: one with the data from over 22,000 interviews with refugees and migrants on the impact of Covid-19 and one with the data from the standard migrant survey, covering the full range of themes: profiles, drivers, intentions, protection issues, financing, smuggling, access to information, and needs for assistance. Soon, MMC will also launch a third portal, with data from the 4Mi returns survey.

Users can filter the data to focus on the population of interest to them: age, sex, nationality, place of interview, time of interview or date the journey began.

Publications: 4Mi snapshots, briefing papers, research reports

MMC also regularly publishes its analysis of 4Mi data, providing its own interpretation and insights. Data snapshots, briefing papers and research reports including 4Mi data are all publicly available on our website, and focus on particular themes, routes, countries or target groups. The online [introduction to MMC](#) (available on MMC's website) provides a more detailed description of these various types of publications. 4Mi data and analysis usually features extensively in all our publications.

Presentations

MMC staff around the world regularly give presentations at international conferences, roundtable discussions, briefing at embassies or inter-agency and NGO fora on a wide range of topics. 4Mi data analysis is often used to bring a strong evidence base and the latest updates on migration dynamics to enable well-informed discussions on policy and responses.

Info and data requests

MMC's position within DRC, and its partnership with numerous other operational agencies, facilitates direct information requests. MMC offices respond to frequent requests to inform programming teams, and we have developed mechanisms to ensure rapid response to information requests from partners. We also share data with a wider range of stakeholders (see partnerships and data sharing below). This means that 4Mi data informs the programming processes of operational agencies, policy units, think tanks, academics, advocacy. In 2020 alone, MMC received and responded to data

analysis requests from, among others, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNODC, GIZ, UN WOMEN, various embassies (e.g. Netherlands, United States, Switzerland, Germany); Human Rights Watch, International Rescue Committee, international Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies RC); Clingendael, ISPI and individual researchers and PhD students. This exemplifies the extent to which 4Mi data responds to a critical need for data on migration.

Orientation system

4Mi enumerators spend a long time with refugees and migrants and receive information on different protection incidents they experienced or witnessed. Through 4Mi we have access to people who may have limited awareness of the services available to them and are often not found by humanitarian implementing agencies, but who may have humanitarian and protection needs. Acknowledging our unique position in terms of access to a hard-to-reach population, we have developed an orientation system to capitalise on this access

and create more and better links with the protection teams on the ground.

Through this system, enumerators can offer to connect respondents with organizations providing assistance and provide information on existing services. However, acknowledging that some refugees and migrants do not wish to be reached and would like to stay invisible and continue their onward journey, the decision to get in contact with a protection team will always remain with the refugees and migrants. These are not referrals and such orientation only takes place where we can work with trusted partners whose quality of services can be assured.

Evidence-based programming

Over the past decade “evidence-based programming” has become extremely important in humanitarian response, with donors and practitioners alike emphasising the role of data in particular as a basis for informed decision-making. “Mixed migration” contexts are proving particularly challenging

for effective programme response as they require the adaptation of previously existing models and approaches to the “new” reality of diverse and often very mobile target populations. How to offer better protection and assistance responses to people in mixed flows, coming from different countries and with different legal statuses, but travelling along the same routes, using the same smugglers, and facing similar risks and challenges while on the move? Working within a large humanitarian organisation (the Danish Refugee Council), alongside other INGOs, and through collaboration with UN Agencies and other partners, MMC ensures the production of evidence that fills operational information gaps and play an increasingly important role to inform evidence-based operational responses on mixed migration.

While MMC itself does not provide direct assistance and service delivery to refugees and migrants, by nature of being part of the Danish Refugee Council and with its aim to serve the broader humanitarian sector, it is important to ensure the uptake of evidence

in operational programming. In various settings and regions, 4Mi data and analysis by MMC is already and has been informing programming by DRC or other agencies. Between 2017 and 2020, 4Mi data collection and research made up a large component of a large DFID-funded migration programme along the migration routes from West to North Africa, through which new and better ways of working were developed, ensuring a better uptake of data and analysis in the operational programmes.

MMC has ensured the production of evidence that fills operational information gaps, in a timely and easily digestible format. MMC’s research objectives and questions are produced through a collaborative process with operational partners on the ground, and its findings are disseminated in various formats and fora.

Furthermore, new tools have been developed to respond to tailor-made requests for quick 4Mi data and analysis from other humanitarian partners (as mentioned above) and to create closer links between data

collection and protection responses. In North and West Africa, the MMC has developed an information request system, to allow humanitarian partners to submit specific requests for data and analysis.

In a more indirect way, our research has also informed the set-up of programmes by donors funding operational responses. Several donors have indicated that MMC research and data informed the development of migration programmes and global decision-making on allocation of funds.



Photo credit: Pascal Mannaerts / Alamy

“MMC is an industry leader and an invaluable source of timely, accurate and principled data, research and analysis on migration. They move beyond the more limited counting and tracking exercises, to provide in-depth qualitative analysis and reporting based on the views and perspectives of migrants themselves – voices that are so often missing in the debate. The UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) regularly relies on MMC’s thoughtful analysis and expertise in informing our work on migration. MMC’s important and timely analysis on the key trends and challenges facing migrants around the world is an invaluable resource to governments and to the UN system.”

**Ben Lewis, Human Rights Officer,
Migration and Human Rights,
Office of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Human Rights
(OHCHR)**

Partnerships

4Mi data serves a wide range of other organisations. Over the years, we have engaged in many partnerships and data-sharing agreements, contributing to advancing the work of others, and ensuring that our evidence reaches a wider audience, and is not siloed.

As examples, at a global level, we have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with major international organisations working on migration:

- With the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for several years we have shared our 4Mi data on missing migrants and migrant deaths, providing the largest source of data for IOM’s Missing Migrants Project.
- With the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) we have shared our 4Mi data on protection incidents along migration routes to and

through Libya for a [joint UNHCR-MMC report](#) on violence against refugees and migrants.

- With the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, we have signed a global MoU to streamline our cooperation and ease the sharing of 4Mi data, to feed into OHCHR’s reports.
- With the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), we have signed a global MoU to generate synergies between sound migration governance and evidence-based protection responses for people on the move. As part of the cooperation with ICMPD, MMC brings 4Mi data analysis into policy workshops, presentations and research papers.

But these are just four examples. We often partner with other organisations and are active members of different fora both at global and regional level, to make our data

and analysis more visible, and increase its reach and uptake. MMC provides the data and research in various large consortia of NGOs in Africa, Asia and Latin America or as part of larger projects run by UN agencies. Examples are the earlier mentioned projects with UNFPA and UNICEF, various projects with UNHCR in West and East Africa and, most recently, 4Mi data collection with migrants and smugglers, to provide key data on migrant smuggling for the newly established UNODC [Observatory on Migrant Smuggling](#).

This wide range of partnerships indicates to what extent 4Mi provides the data and evidence needed for the successful implementation of an increasing number of UN programmes.

4Mi

