



‘MIGRANTS AS MESSENGERS’: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal

Impact Evaluation Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background




- The number of people migrating from West Africa to Europe increased significantly from 2014 to 2017. Over the same period, Senegal was in the top five African countries of origin in terms of migrant arrivals in Europe. Many migrants from Senegal migrate irregularly, face serious risks along their journeys and often have limited access to humanitarian protection and asylum.
- Studies have repeatedly shown that many irregular migrants decide to journey to Europe with limited or biased information. Misinformation and a lack of awareness can hamper safe migration decisions and increase the risk of migrants encountering vulnerable situations along their journey.
- A growing number of information campaigns designed to raise awareness of the potential risks of irregular migration in West Africa and to counter misinformation spread by migrant smuggling networks have been launched in recent years. Their effectiveness has not yet been assessed rigorously.
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has conducted a scientifically rigorous impact evaluation to assess the impact of the Migrants as Messengers (MaM) campaign in Dakar, Senegal. MaM was a peer-to-peer awareness-raising campaign made by migrants for migrants and implemented in Senegal, Guinea and Nigeria from December 2017 to March 2019. The impact evaluation in Senegal focused on a key pillar of the MaM campaign, namely town hall events, which screened video testimonies of migrant returnees followed by interactive question and answer sessions with migrant returnees.

Impact Evaluation Design




- IOM conducted a randomized controlled trial to measure the causal impacts of the MaM campaign element on potential migrants' perception, information levels, knowledge and intention to migrate (irregularly) to Europe.
- Potential migrants (community members who expressed interest in migrating) in eight neighbourhoods of Dakar were randomly invited to attend either a MaM film event or an unrelated "placebo" film screening (with no informational content on migration). This study uses a longitudinal data set of approximately 1,000 interviews of potential migrants surveyed several times across a period of five months.

Key Results

The impact evaluation provides evidence that peer-to-peer communication has measurable effects on potential migrants' perception and intention, which are key prerequisites for safe migration decisions. This report focuses on the main impacts of the MaM events. Future analyses will further explore the rich datasets collected in this study.

LARGE POSITIVE EFFECTS	
Potential migrants who participated in MaM events ("treatment group") in Dakar were...	
	19 per cent more likely to report that they feel well-informed about the risks and opportunities associated with migration compared to the control group.
	25 per cent more aware of the multiple risks associated with irregular migration compared to the control group.
	20 per cent less likely than the control group to report intention to migrate irregularly within the next two years.
These effects are statistically significant and sizeable relative to similar social and behaviour change communication campaigns in other fields such as health and education.	

SMALL POSITIVE EFFECTS	
	Participation in MaM events in Dakar had small but positive effects on potential migrants' social perception of returnees in their communities.

LIMITED EFFECTS	
Participation in MaM events in Dakar had limited or no considerable effects on...	
	factual knowledge on the legal context, length and cost of journeys, as well as expected potential earnings at destination.
	perceptions of economic opportunities in Senegal.
	perceptions of chances to successfully arrive in Europe or to remain there in case of arrival.

Further analysis shows that the events had larger effects on single, young people (aged under 24), without children and who were financially less stable.

Recommendations

- **There is a need for migration information:** The results point to information needs among potential migrants. Before the campaign, one in three migrants reported they were not well informed about the risks associated with migration. Many were misinformed about the legal context of migration, underestimated the length, costs and related deaths of the journey, and some had overly optimistic views on potential earnings at destination.
- **Peer-to-peer messaging works:** The results suggest that returnees are a trusted source of information for potential migrants, and that their emotional message has a large impact on risk perception and reducing intention to migrate irregularly. Furthermore, involving returnees in the design and implementation of the overall campaign can increase effectiveness and local ownership.
- **Targeting is key:** Campaign effects can vary depending on the particular subgroup and the desired outcome(s), thus highlighting the need for tailored messaging. Future campaigns could focus explicitly on youth and young adults in low-income (or economically marginalized) neighbourhoods. As fewer women were part of the study, it is more difficult to draw conclusions for this subgroup.
- **Empowering returnees is important:** One of the aims of the campaign was to provide returnees – the main protagonists of the campaign – with a purpose, community and support for coping with stigmatization and the difficult process of reintegration into society. Active participation in the MaM project as volunteers or messengers may therefore have positive psychosocial side effects on the returnees themselves.
- **Follow-up actions can strengthen the message:** One-off events do not answer all the questions of potential migrants. MaM treatment group participants sought more information after participation in film screenings and discussion. Campaigns should provide follow-up communication channels for participants to consult more in-depth information, including facts about the legal and procedural context as well as the situation at destination. This could be provided online, or via telephone, text-messages, social media or regular community meetings.
- **Evaluation should not be an afterthought:** Incorporating a strong data-collection and analysis component in the MaM events in Dakar created feedback loops among participants, implementers and evaluators that benefited the project design and implementation. Every campaign is an opportunity to provide new insights when evaluation is an integral part of the campaigns' planning and implementation from the beginning.

The results of the evaluation suggest that the campaign was successful in increasing subjective information levels and risk awareness among the groups of potential migrants participating in the study in Dakar, and it reduced the intention of participants to migrate irregularly.

This first MaM impact evaluation aims to provide a case study on the effectiveness of peer-to-peer messaging and also a pioneering use of randomized controlled trials in the field of migration programming.



..... Young Senegalese who returned home from
..... Algeria, Mali and Libya interview one another
..... about their migration experiences. © IOM
..... 2018/Julia BURPEE



1. INTRODUCTION

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Migrants as Messengers (MaM) project – a safe migration awareness-raising campaign for potential migrants – was implemented across three countries in West Africa (Senegal, Guinea and Nigeria) from December 2017 to March 2019. This report presents the results from a rigorous, experimental impact evaluation of MaM events in Dakar, Senegal. The main objective of the impact evaluation was to assess the (causal) effects of participating in MaM campaign events in Dakar on potential migrants’ perceptions, knowledge and intentions with regard to (irregular) migration towards Europe.¹

1.1 Migration context

In 2015 alone, over 1 million people – refugees, displaced persons and other migrants – made their way to the European Union (EU), either escaping conflict in their own country or in search of better economic prospects for themselves and their families. Nationals from the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Iraq were the largest migrant groups arriving in the EU. Several African countries were also among the top 10 countries of origin of migrants (Maher, 2017; IOM, 2018a; UNHCR, 2018a).²

International migration in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, increased sharply from 2014 to 2017. While African migration has been largely intraregional for decades, a spike in migration occurred in the last five years, mainly towards Europe (Beauchemin et al., 2018). Irregular migration from Senegal to Europe, mainly through the Central Mediterranean route, had been steadily increasing until 2016 with decreasing numbers in 2017 (Bernardini, 2018). In 2016, Senegal was the 10th largest country of origin in terms of irregular migration across the sea. From 2015 to 2018, Senegal was among the highest African countries of origin for migrants arriving in Greece, Italy and Spain, after Nigeria, South Africa and Somalia (IOM, 2018a; UNHCR, 2018a). An estimated 50,000 Senegalese arrived in Greece, Italy and Spain in 2017, and approximately 10,000 arrivals were recorded in 2018.³

¹ In the context of this report, “irregular migration” is defined as a: “movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. From the perspective of destination countries, it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country.” (*IOM Glossary on Migration*, available from www.iom.int/glossary-migration-2019)

² See also the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Operational Portal – Refugee Situation. Available from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean?id=105>.

³ See IOM Flow Monitoring – Mediterranean Arrivals. Available from <http://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals>.

Since 2010, there has also been a steady increase in annual asylum applications by nationals from sub-Saharan countries (Pew Research Center, 2018). In 2017, there were 25,000 pending asylum applications from Senegalese nationals worldwide.

According to the United Nations, 560,000 Senegalese lived abroad in 2017.⁴ Of the Senegalese diaspora, 50 per cent lived in the EU (European Commission, 2017). Globally, the recorded remittances sent back by the diaspora accounted for approximately 10 per cent of Senegal's GDP in 2014 (World Bank, 2018a).

Migration from Senegal is highly complex and contextual. There is no simple answer why people choose to migrate. It is a combination of limited employment opportunities, societal and family pressures and accepted social norms (Hernández-Carretero and Carling, 2012). Researchers have highlighted how migration and development processes are interdependent and heterogeneous, and deeply connected to wider processes of culture, social and economic change (de Haas, 2010; Piguet, 2013).

1.2 Misinformation and vulnerability

Studies have repeatedly shown that many migrants start their journeys with limited or strongly biased information (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, 2014a; Gillespie et al., 2016; Foran and Iacucci, 2017; IOM, 2017a; European Commission, 2018). A study by the European Commission (Sanchez et al., 2018) found that:

While migration literature often refers to information sharing as a fundamental element of the migration journey, most surveyed migrants left their countries of origin with minimal detailed information about specific destinations or the conditions of the journeys. This led to migrants having to constantly develop their own mechanisms to stay safe, which in turn also means a significant level of improvisation. In short, their journeys were not dependent upon the knowledge acquired or transmitted prior to the journey.

Correspondingly, over half (56%) of the migrants interviewed in IOM Niger transit centres in 2016 declared they did not collect information about migration before they left (IOM, 2017a). Over 80 per cent of the individuals who provided feedback on their information sources said the information turned out to be false. Only 16 per cent responded that the information they received proved to be true. Among those with any pre-departure information, most reported that their source of information was relatives and friends. Among those relying on friends and family for information about migration, 74 per cent mentioned they were ill informed about the risks and the conditions of the journey.

Misinformation and a lack of awareness can influence the initial decision to migrate (Allen and Eaton, 2005) and increase the risk of ending up in vulnerable situations along the journey (see Piguet (2013) for a review of theories on migrant decision-making processes). There are many accounts of the potential dangers of migration. Migrants who pass through or are stranded in transit countries can be exposed to a range of abuses, including physical and sexual violence, forced labour, financial exploitation, famine, abduction and extortion, or even face death (IOM, 2014; IOM, 2017b; Mixed Migration Centre, 2018a; UNHCR, 2018b). The IOM Missing Migrants Project has recorded at least 22,000 migrant deaths in North Africa and the Mediterranean since 2014.⁵

Many migrants experience high levels of distress resulting in long-term physical and psychological trauma (IOM, 2013). Migrant women and girls face high risks of exploitation and gender-based violence – during transit and also in the countries of destination (Migration Policy Institute, 2017; Mixed Migration Centre, 2018b). Children and youth on the move, especially those travelling alone, are at an elevated risk of falling victim to traffickers or facing exploitation (UNICEF and IOM, 2017).

Over 80 per cent of the individuals who provided feedback on their information sources said the information turned out to be false.

⁴ IOM Global Migration Data Portal based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs data. Available from <https://migrationdataportal.org/>.

⁵ IOM Missing Migrants Project. Available from <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>.

In response to these risks, the number of information campaigns designed to raise awareness of the potential risks of (irregular) migration have increased as the type, messages and strategies of such campaigns have diversified. The dissemination of information aims at “diminishing the capacity of traffickers and smugglers to exploit the limited knowledge of potential migrants and counterbalancing the false information provided by criminals involved in the facilitation of irregular migration” (IOM, 2003; see Schans and Optekamp (2016) for overview). This is consistent with a more recent report by the United Nations (2012) which states that: “where migrant smugglers recruit migrants through misinformation about conditions of travel and the opportunities for remaining and working in a destination country, awareness campaigns are crucial to counter such messages” (see Schans and Optekamp, 2016).

Information campaigns have attracted much attention and financial support across the world in recent years. In addition to activities funded by individual EU member States, the EU itself has also made funding available for information campaigns through various channels.⁶

1.3 Evidence gaps and assumptions

Despite the growing number of information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration over the past two decades, there is extremely little empirical evidence on the impact and effectiveness of these campaigns (Browne, 2015; Schans and Optekamp, 2016).

An IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) recent systematic review of available evaluation reports revealed that the evidence base for programming and policymaking in the migration field is strikingly limited (Tjaden, Morgenstern and Laczko, 2018). From a pool of 3,600 studies, the review identified only 60 relevant evaluations, 30 of which were not publicly available. Most of the evaluations relied on qualitative approaches limiting the degree to which programme effects could be measured and attributed to the intervention itself. Most evaluations were based on cross-sectional surveys of small numbers of participants (*N*) sampled at convenience, thus limiting the internal validity and the generalizability of the results. Only a few large studies employed a control group design or involved before and after measurements. None employed (quasi-) experimental methods for causal inference, for example, randomized controlled trials (RCTs), which some consider the “gold standard” for measuring causal impacts (Gertler et al., 2016). The systematic review found that the uptake in the use of information campaigns has far outpaced any rigorous assessment of the effects that campaigns may have on their respective target groups.

The debate on the potential of information campaigns as a policy tool is too often based on largely anecdotal evidence, which is predominantly sceptical towards the use of information campaigns (see work cited in Nieuwenhuys and Pécoud, 2007; Browne, 2015; Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016; Schans and Optekamp, 2016).

One key motivation for conducting information campaigns is the assumption that potential migrants lack information about the risks of migrating and that more-accurate information would shape migration decisions (Allen and Eaton, 2005; Pigué, 2013). However, some studies suggest that people often decide to migrate even though they are aware of the potential perils (Alpes and Sørensen, 2015; Van Bommel, 2019; cited in Schans and Optekamp, 2016). Migrants often believe the risks can be avoided if they behave smartly (Townsend and Oomen, 2015), or they do not think that the presented information is relevant for them specifically (Carling and Hernández-Carretero, 2011). “The outcome of migration is viewed as being influenced by personal traits and, therefore, knowledge of failed migration does not necessarily influence the decision of aspiring migrants (who deem themselves better equipped)” (Schans and Optekamp, 2016).

Alternative migration drivers such as material deprivation, poverty, joblessness (Hagen-Zanker, 2015), environmental degradation and family pressure to migrate may simply outweigh the known risk of perilous migration journeys. For those that succeed despite the risks, migration can be lucrative and support household incomes at home through remittances. According to the World Bank (2016): “migrants from the poorest countries, on average, experienced a 15-fold increase in income, a doubling of school enrolment rates, and a 16-fold reduction in child mortality after moving to a developed country.”

⁶ See, for example, EU activities and funding related to information campaigns in the European Migration Network (2018), the European Trust Fund for Africa and the EU Commission's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Another key assumption is that potential migrants trust new information provided by campaigns. However, they may perceive information campaigns as “biased propaganda” (Carling and Hernández-Carretero, 2011) to stop them from realizing their aspirations (Kosnick, 2014; Alpes and Sørensen, 2015). Information sources such as family and friends and other network members can be much more trusted than information from official sources (Dekker et al., 2016).

1.4 Impact evaluation of the Migrants as Messengers project

In light of the urgent need for more evidence on the impact and effectiveness of information campaigns, the IOM GMDAC in collaboration with the IOM [Media and Communication Division](#) set out to conduct a rigorous impact evaluation of an IOM information campaign component in the form of an RCT. This is the first time that this type of rigorous, experimental impact evaluation has been applied to an IOM intervention and, more broadly, to an institutional information campaign in the field of migration.

The MaM campaign was selected as the ideal candidate for a comprehensive impact evaluation for several reasons. MaM was one of the larger IOM campaigns as it was implemented in several countries using a standardized approach. The campaign had a focus on West Africa and was rolled out in Senegal, Guinea and Nigeria. There are plans to scale up the campaign across additional countries in the region in a second phase. Thus, evidence emerging from impact evaluation can provide information to adjust the design and assess the overall effect of campaign components. MaM was an innovative campaign leveraging peer-to-peer communication through screenings of returnee testimonies in combination with town hall discussions among the local communities.⁷ These design features provided a high degree of local ownership and credibility (see Chapter 2 for more details), as well as the promise to deliver better results than more traditional approaches to information campaigns.

This study tests a MaM campaign component based on a short but powerful documentary film about the risks of migration produced by migrant returnees and a subsequent discussion facilitated by returning migrants in a town hall meeting with the local community. In addition to informing the scale-up of the project for a second phase of MaM, this report’s broader aim is to contribute to a paradigm shift in programme evaluation in migration, add to the global evidence base and provide an example of mutual learning for all stakeholders in migration. As such, this pilot study is also a “proof of concept”, hoping to strengthen the case for evidence-based programming in migration-related awareness campaigns.

The following chapters of this report describe the MaM project (Chapter 2), discuss the evaluation methodology and data collection (Chapter 3), and assess the causal impact of the MaM campaign on changes in knowledge, self-assessed information levels, perception and migration intention of potential migrants from Dakar (Chapter 4), before elaborating on lessons learned and recommendations (Chapter 5) and concluding (Chapter 6).

⁷ The term “returnee” describes migrants who return to their country of origin (voluntarily or involuntarily) from a transit or destination country.



2. THE 'MIGRANTS AS MESSENGERS' CAMPAIGN

2.1 Project rationale

Many migrants leave their country of origin (e.g. Senegal) with a vision of life in Europe or other countries mainly for economic reasons. However, their expectations of the quality of life in Europe, the risks of the journey and their chances of staying in Europe are often misguided. The journey can be very dangerous. There are many accounts of extreme vulnerabilities (see section 1.2), especially in Libya where many migrants along the Central Mediterranean route – reportedly the most perilous migratory route – are stranded. Even if migrants arrive in Europe, the situation can be much worse than expected. African migrants are often caught in limbo for years without the ability to earn a regular income while their asylum claims are processed. The average rate for granting refugee status to African asylum seekers is relatively low across European countries – approximately 10–30 per cent for Senegalese asylum seekers in the EU (Eurostat, 2019). Ethnic minorities, particularly of sub-Saharan origin, also face racism, xenophobia and social exclusion in the EU (FRA, 2017).

"The novelty of the MaM project was that it did not rely on standard "top-down" approaches. Instead, IOM worked with returning migrants (volunteers) that tell their own stories to their peers."

Information campaigns are a standard policy tool to inform migrants about the potential dangers of the irregular migration journey: "In Senegal, messages about the dangers of migration by pirogue have appeared on radio, TV, newspapers, billboards and T-shirts, sponsored by the Senegalese and Spanish governments, the European Union and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Such campaigns can play a humanitarian role if they provide new information to prospective migrants." (Carling and Hernández-Carretero, 2011).

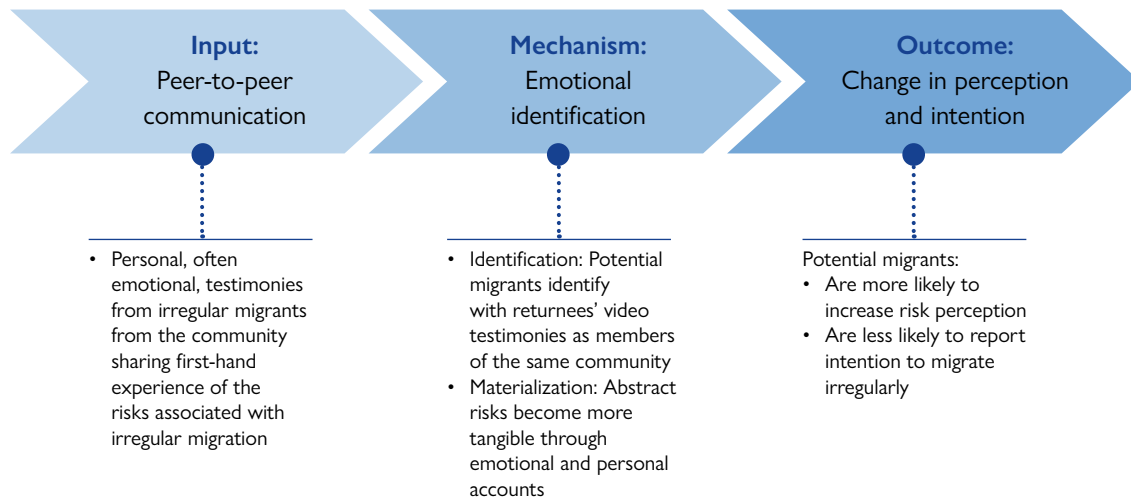
To raise awareness of the risks of the irregular migration journey, the MaM project was conceived to test a novel approach to relaying information to potential migrants through peer-to-peer messaging. The novelty of the MaM project was that it did not rely on standard top-

down information provided by the government, an international organization or a non-governmental organization (NGO). Instead, IOM worked with returning migrants (volunteers) that have experienced the perils of the journey first hand to tell their stories to peers via video recordings or in person. The design of the campaign was based on recent insights from psychology, which suggest that facts alone are not able

to change perception and behaviour (Kolbert, 2017). MaM relied on authentic first-person testimonies that aimed to achieve change through emotional identification (see Figure 1) rather than just relaying information. Potential migrants may emotionally identify with the personal experiences of their peers, which initiates an internal process where their own perception on migration is revisited.

The project's communication channels were varied. They included social media, for example Facebook, radio shows where returnees told their stories and town hall events in the participating MaM countries of Senegal, Guinea and Nigeria.

Figure 1: Theory of change



The unique and novel element of the MaM campaign was that returnees communicated directly with potential migrants. The theory of change (Figure 1) rests on the idea that potential migrants are more likely to be affected by real testimonies by returnees from their own country and region, rather than through messages from international organizations or NGOs. One hypothesis is that the exposure to authentic messages will correct prior, biased knowledge, perception and attitude towards the quality of life in Europe, the chances to stay in Europe legally and the risks related to the journey by land or sea, as well as appreciation of the opportunities at home. A second assumption is that a change in knowledge and perception may ultimately lead to safer migration decisions.

MaM built on a growing trend of using films or video content to convey messages ultimately aimed at social and behaviour change in developed and developing countries. Social and behaviour change campaigns often contain elements of “edutainment”, which is related to the concept of peer-to-peer messaging, because it circumvents traditional top-down “lecturing” approaches while making the messages easier to take on board and comprehend.



Evidence from behaviour change and information campaigns in other fields

Where rigorous evidence is available in other fields, such as education, poverty reduction efforts or health (where they are commonly used to induce behaviour change), information campaigns show a mixed record.

Awareness-raising campaigns are a common tool in public health (especially on HIV/AIDS, sanitation, immunization and sexual behaviour), where RCTs are more frequently used when compared to the field of migration. Broader conclusions that can be drawn from several systematic reviews of campaign evaluation in health are threefold. First, many campaigns achieve changes in knowledge and perception, but the effect on behaviour is mixed. Second, campaigns at the community level incorporating friends and families are generally more effective than mass media campaigns that address target groups individually. Third, given the variation in campaigns, effectiveness depends on the details of the design and their mutual interaction, for example with regard to different channels, messages, target groups and frequencies (see De Buck et al., 2017; Oliver-Williams et al., 2017; Wakefield, Loken and Hornik, 2010).

There are some robust evaluations that show providing information can successfully induce behaviour change. Examples include studies on HIV infection rates, school performance and school absenteeism, and labour market access for women (Evans, 2019).

There have been experimental impact evaluations that have investigated the effectiveness of social and behaviour change campaigns using shows or films. For example, Coville et al. (2014) measured the impact of an educational “Nollywood” film on the financial behaviour of small business owners in Lagos, Nigeria, and showed short-term results on attitude and behaviour. Also in Nigeria, Banerjee, La Ferrara and Orozco (2018) tested the effectiveness of an entertainment education TV series, *MTV Shuga*, aimed at providing information and changing attitude and behaviour related to HIV/AIDS. The authors demonstrated significant improvements in knowledge and attitude towards HIV and risky sexual behaviour. Treated subjects were twice as likely to get tested for HIV six to nine months after the intervention and showed reductions in sexually transmitted diseases among women. Coville, Reichert and Orozco (2019) provided experimental evidence on the effects of two information interventions, radio spots with and without print materials, that aimed to highlight the benefits of solar lamps, a technology innovation in rural Senegal. DellaVigna and La Ferrara (2015) and La Ferrara (2016) provided overviews of the effects of using media on socioeconomic outcomes.

Some scholars argue that potential migrants often do not consider that the presented information in communication campaigns is relevant for them specifically, as they think the risks are justified (Carling and Hernández-Carretero, 2011). This is where a peer-to-peer campaign might be more powerful than a traditional information campaign. The main vehicle for behaviour change is not the information itself, but that the message is being transmitted by someone who people can relate to. Another important aspect is that potential migrants distrust traditional information campaigns and see them as an effort to stop them from realizing their aspirations (Kosnick, 2014; Alpes and Sørensen, 2015). Information sources such as family and friends and other network members are much more trusted than information from official sources (Dekker et al., 2016).

There can also be a “culture of migration” or a “social expectation” in some West African countries (Mbaye, 2014). In many regions, migration has become a social institution in itself, with its own logic and social norms that influence who is sent abroad, and the money that is sent back as remittances (Hernández-Carretero and Carling, 2012). “Public and political discourse on migration converge when it comes to celebrating migrants as agents of development in their country and as local heroes in their communities. International migration has become a central feature of Senegalese identity and the standard model of social advancement (...). Accordingly, young people’s ‘career planning’ is increasingly directed towards the international labour market.” (Toma and Kabbanji, 2017). Families and individuals rely on migration as a legitimized strategy to increase resources and redistribute labour. This institutionalized pattern of migration, which has long governed internal and intra-Africa mobility, is now also well established for migration to Europe (Baizán and González-Ferrer, 2016).

Another goal of the MaM campaign was to help returning migrants who volunteer and share their experiences feel part of a community and overcome the stigma they may encounter when coming home. The project aimed to reinforce the idea that there are many others who have gone through similar experiences. This message was also aimed at communities of origin to develop a better understanding of returning peers.



Click on <https://youtu.be/ZuixXbhAejs> to watch a short introductory video about the MaM campaign.

2.2 Project implementation

The MaM project was implemented across three countries in West Africa – Senegal, Guinea and Nigeria – from December 2017 to March 2019.

Peer-to-peer storytelling based on real and personal experiences was the centrepiece of the project. Digital journalism and social networks formed the core of the project's strategy, leveraging the credibility and knowledge of migrant returnees.

Eighty migrant returnees, most of whom had been assisted by IOM for their return home, volunteered to join the project and participated in digital journalism training workshops organized by IOM. These trained volunteer field officers (VFOs) helped capture authentic video testimonies from fellow migrant returnees in their communities who were keen to share their experience. Equipped with a smartphone kit loaned by IOM (see Table A25 in the Technical Annex for an image and description), VFOs went on regular field visits to meet with migrant returnees (many of whom they knew from their own journey) and conducted video interviews (see Table A26 in the Technical Annex for a list of interview questions). VFOs were provided a small allowance that covered their living cost during deployment. No salary was paid to them.

The interviews were captured using the Community Response App, a smartphone application for collecting informed consent and video testimonies in the field, and then uploaded to a digital platform for editing before publishing via social media channels.⁸ The short videos were merged together and edited as a documentary film (*On est ensemble*), which was shown at local town hall screenings – the focus of the impact evaluation.⁹

Drawing on Communication for Development principles, the project adopted a highly participatory approach, with returning migrants at the centre of the design, planning and implementation of project activities. Volunteers received regular support and training from IOM to interview returning migrants in their communities, and also to organize focus groups, engage with local radio stations and facilitate town hall discussions. Indeed, all town hall events for the MaM project followed the same format, namely, a screening of a film containing video interviews filmed by VFOs, followed by a discussion facilitated by two or three VFOs.

Town hall events

Town hall events were a central pillar of the MaM campaign, providing a powerful platform to directly engage with, share and gather feedback from a live public audience. The events conducted in Dakar were designed collaboratively over the span of several weeks with a group of 18 VFOs and implemented with the logistical support of a local events agency and local authorities.

The MaM project team planned 18 screening events in eight neighbourhoods. These were followed by moderated in-person discussions with two or three returning migrant volunteers (see below). As the town hall events were the focus of the impact evaluation, in addition to the MaM film screening events, 18 “placebo” (“control” group) film

⁸ The Community Response App was developed by IOM in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence in Terrorism, Resilience, Intelligence and Organised Crime, a research and innovation centre at Sheffield Hallam University (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). See www.iom.int/community-response-app.

⁹ This film was shown only to the treatment group.

screening events were held at the same time.¹⁰ Thus, on each day in a neighbourhood, two films were shown (in two different locations): the “treatment” and the control/placebo screening (see Table A1 in the Technical Annex for a detailed screening schedule). The treatment and control venues were a few hundred metres to a couple of kilometres away from each other. Only people who were invited to a screening could attend their respective screening. The control film was about family life in Senegal and education of young children, and had no direct content on migration.

The programme for the treatment town hall events was as follows:

4–5 p.m.:	Arrival of participants at the venue
5–6 p.m.:	Screening of the documentary <i>On est ensemble</i>
6–7 p.m.:	Questions and answers facilitated by VFOs
7–8 p.m.:	Distribution of refreshments and exit survey

The control screenings followed the same schedule, but did not include the questions and answers facilitated by VFOs.

The control group saw the film *Le Cheval Blanc*, which was produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The film, released in Wolof with French subtitles, depicts the hardships, dangers and exploitation faced by the “talibés” (a Senegalese word for street begging children). It is estimated that 30,000 talibés are currently being forced to beg and exploited by adults in the city centre of Dakar. The film highlights the recruitment process, transportation patterns and exploitation that the children are subjected to upon arrival in the city. It also emphasizes the passive involvement by the general population: locals often give money to child beggars in fear of supernatural reprisals.¹¹



The film *Le Cheval Blanc* can be seen at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vOjdH8NhAk.

2.2.1 Screening of *On est ensemble*

A documentary-style film, titled *On est ensemble* (*We are Together*) was specifically put together for the town hall events and was their centrepiece. It is a collection of 80 short video testimonies of returnees, mostly from Senegal, but also from Guinea and Nigeria. The criteria used to select videos for the film were: quality of message, level of emotion and technical quality. The film runs for 52 minutes and almost all video footage was collected by VFOs themselves with the Community Response smartphone app.

Themes covered in the film are:

1. Modern slavery and “selling” migrants
2. Betrayal/cheating
3. Conditions of detention
4. Conditions in the Saharan desert
5. Mediterranean Sea
6. Conditions abroad
7. Returning home
8. Final words: advice and examples of success at home

Several focus groups with VFOs were organized to capture reactions to the film and gather input on content and style. Focus group participants had strong emotional reactions. Participants agreed that the testimonies from the three countries came across as “authentic, honest, voluntary and captivating” – key features of what the MaM project aimed to achieve.

¹⁰ *Le Cheval Blanc*, a film about traditional family life in Senegal, www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vOjdH8NhAk.

¹¹ www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/senegal-tipsom-cheval-blanc.html.

“It feels like the content comes from our very neighbours and our family members. It is very sad but interesting. This video is something we should project all over the city, and in other parts of Senegal, to sensitize parents as well. No mother who watches this video would think of sending her child to migrate like this.”

Maty, a VFO and mother in her late 30s

Participants further agreed on the content and length of the film. There was general consensus that French subtitles be used for English content (from Nigeria) instead of dubbing. All viewers agreed that even if someone does not understand English fluently, they can grasp the emotion, which should not be buried under or lost in dubbing. All VFOs agreed that French was a suitable language to use in testimonies and a film presented in Dakar, especially given that the film was only screened in Dakar rather than in remote, rural areas.



The full film *On est ensemble* (with English subtitles) can be seen at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XijjS5Q4lyU.

2.2.2 Group discussion

All screenings of *On est ensemble* were followed by group discussions facilitated by VFOs. The VFOs were given guiding questions (see Table 1), some of which were punctuated by short personal testimonies. Discussions were often lively, with audience members passionately engaging with facilitators and with each other well beyond the 60 minutes allotted for this component. All participants were asked to complete a short exit survey before leaving the venue.

Table 1: Guiding questions for group discussion following the film screening

No.	Question	Theme
1	Were you moved by the film?	Immediate reaction from the audience
2	What do you feel after watching this film?	Immediate reaction from the audience
3	(Before asking the question, VFOs were encouraged to share their own experience with social media) Is information disseminated on social media always reliable/trustworthy?	Reasons for migration
4	(Before asking the question, VFOs were encouraged to share their own experience with family pressure) How can we manage family pressure?	Reasons for migration
5	(Before asking the question, VFOs were encouraged to share their own experience with the risks of the journey) Is the irregular route worth taking?	Risks of the journey
6	What are the consequences of taking the irregular route?	Differences between regular and irregular migration
7	What can be done to address irregular migration (from the perspective of migrant returnees, potential migrants, parents of migrants, politicians and ordinary citizens)?	Opportunities in the home country



3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The MaM project team conducted a rigorous experimental impact evaluation for the town hall events, which were one of the campaign's key components (the others were radio spots, interviews and a strong social media presence). Impact was measured for the following three main categories of outcomes:¹²

1. Knowledge and subjective information levels on migration to Europe;
2. Perception of risks associated with the journey, chances to arrive and stay in Europe, local alternatives to migration and perception of returnees;
3. Intention to migrate irregularly and preparation for a potential move.

This chapter explains the impact evaluation method and how it is different from other evaluation methods. It also details implementation of the study step by step.

3.1 Impact measurement

Projects conducted by international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank and donor governments are often accompanied by evaluations. These evaluations can take many forms, from process evaluation (answering the question of whether the project was “well” implemented) to monitoring approaches that track progress of certain project indicators over time and impact assessments (“what are the impacts of the project?”). The word “evaluation” is not trademarked so it can mean different things for different audiences.¹³ Small evaluations could entail a limited number of interviews with a few key stakeholders, while others may involve massive multi-year RCTs costing millions of USD dollars. For this study, the following definition of impact evaluation was used: “An evaluation that makes a causal link between a program or intervention and a set of outcomes. An impact evaluation answers the question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a program on an outcome of interest” (Gertler et al., 2016).¹⁴

The goal of the MaM evaluation was to scientifically measure the causal impact of showing the MaM documentary film followed by a discussion with returning migrants in a town hall setting on key outcomes such as the intention to migrate. Commonly used techniques to assess impacts are often flawed. In many cases, evaluation relies on a limited number of surveys, interviews or focus groups providing a non-representative, partial part of the picture. Even when data are collected on larger scales, evaluation

¹² The study was not designed to measure the impact of the MaM project on migration behaviour or related migration flows.

¹³ See the United Nations Evaluation Group for a wide range of guiding documents. Available from www.uneval.org/document/guidance-documents.

¹⁴ See also Dunsch (2012) for an overview of the use of RCTs for development in Africa.

"Commonly used techniques to assess project impacts have severe limitations"

often does not employ a control group and simply compares results for the same target group before and after the intervention and declares the differences as the "impacts". However, just comparing a group before and after an intervention is not valid as it does not produce a reliable control group (or "counterfactual situation"). The main problem with before-and-after comparisons is that during the time of the project implementation and results measurement, various other factors can affect perception of participants: the economy can grow or shrink, education can improve or political instabilities might

arise. In terms of information campaigns, it is possible that migration policies change drastically during the duration of the measurement period. Policies could deter migrants from leaving. If so, the change in intention to migrate would be wrongly attributed to the information campaign rather than the policy context. Establishing a valid counterfactual is the only way to address this problem. Without a valid counterfactual, there is a risk of falsely attributing external factors to the impacts of the project.

Even if a control group is used, it is also problematic if it is selected without using randomization (or at least quasi-experimental techniques¹⁵). One such problematic technique often utilized is to select a group of individuals, villages or other subjects that "look like the group that receives the intervention". Although being common practice, "hand-picking" a control group (e.g. people from a neighbouring community) will introduce "selection bias" (Heckman, 1979). Even if a group is found that is identical (on average) when considering the observable characteristics, it cannot be assured that the group is also identical considering the latent or unobservable variables, for example, motivation, wisdom, morale, conservatism and happiness, which might often be more important than the measurable features (Gerber and Green, 2012).

3.2 Rigorous impact evaluation – randomized controlled trials

Experimental impact evaluations (RCTs are considered to be the gold standard) aim to solve the mentioned issues with other types of impact assessments and allow direct attribution of changes in one or more outcome variables (or impacts) to a cause (a project or programme) (see Figure 2). "Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer a specific cause-and-effect question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a program on an outcome of interest? This basic question incorporates an important causal dimension. The focus is only on the impact: that is, the changes directly attributable to a program, program modality, or design innovation" (Gertler et al., 2016).

Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer a specific cause-and-effect question.

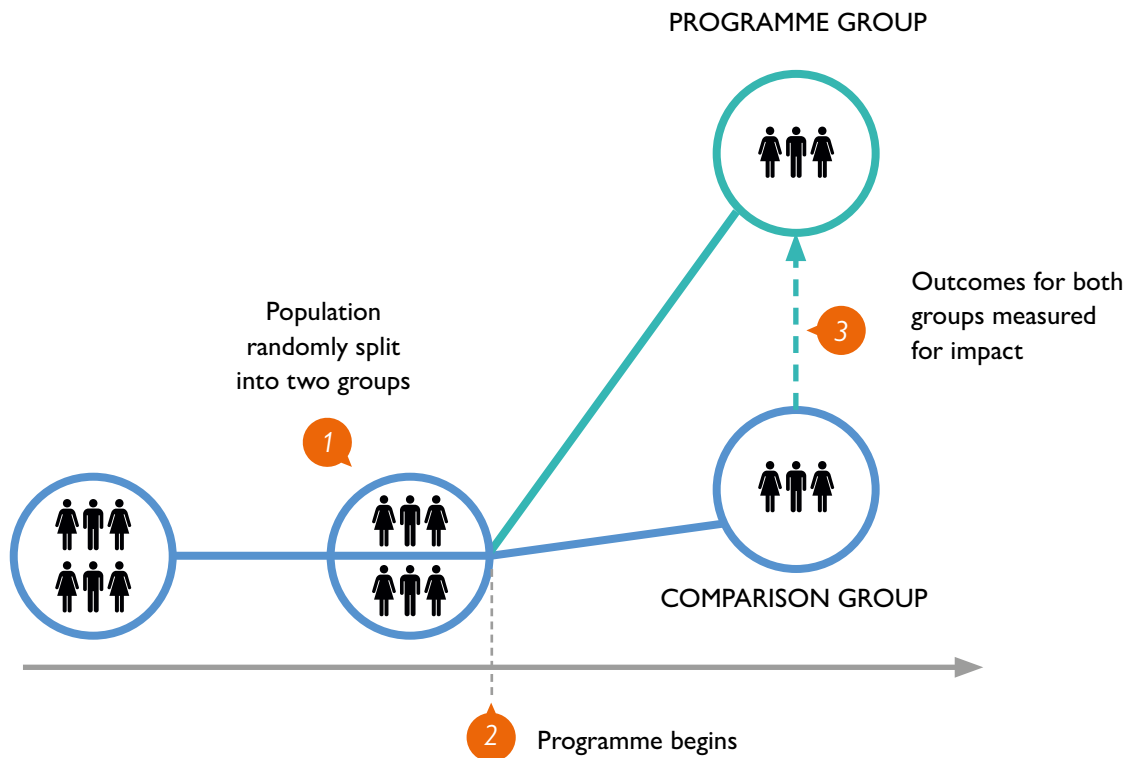
To isolate the impacts of the MaM project from all other factors that might affect the outcome, it was necessary to establish a counterfactual. A counterfactual describes a hypothetical state in which all conditions remain the same, with the only difference being that the project was not implemented. A counterfactual is established by randomly allocating individuals to a treatment and a control group. The treatment group participates in a programme and the control group does not.

¹⁵ Well-designed impact evaluations estimate the impact that can be causally attributed to the treatment (i.e. the impact that was a result of the treatment itself and not other factors). The main challenge in designing a rigorous impact evaluation is identifying a control group comparable to the treatment group. The gold-standard method for assigning treatment and control is randomization, which was applied in this study. "Experimental" in this context means that the researcher has control over the treatment allocation. Unlike in experimental research methods, in "quasi-experimental" designs, the investigator does not have direct control over the exposure. "Natural experiments", such as [regression discontinuity](#) designs and [event studies](#), identify existing circumstances where assignment of treatment has an exploitable element of randomness. In other cases, researchers attempt to simulate an experimental counterfactual by constructing a control group that is as similar as possible to the treatment group, using techniques such as [propensity score matching](#) (see the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) Wiki for more details, available from https://dimewiki.worldbank.org/wiki/Main_Page). See also Gertler et al. (2016) for more details.

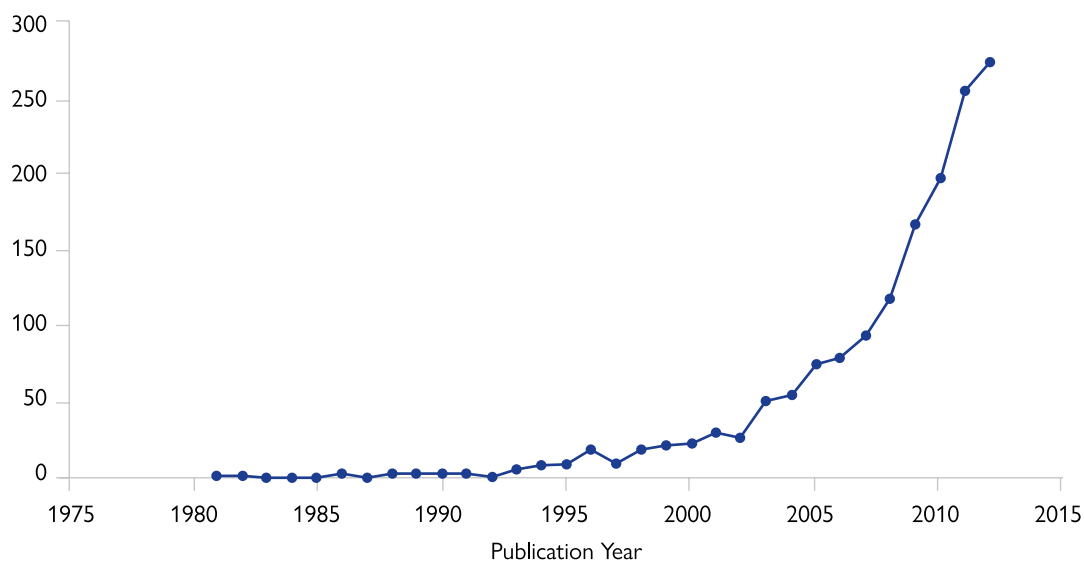
Taking advantage of the law of large numbers, random assignment ensures that both groups are identical on average. They are identical regarding observable or measurable characteristics (age, gender, income and so on), but – maybe more importantly – also regarding non-observable characteristics (e.g. motivations, values and abilities). Even though it is not possible to measure these characteristics with data, the randomization process ensures that the groups are balanced and comparable. If the randomization is successful, the only difference between the two groups is that one group receives the treatment (the project) and the other group does not. This also means that all differences that can be observed after the implementation of the project can be causally attributed to the project itself. These differences are the impacts of the project (see Figure 2 for a graphical illustration of the standard RCT design).

“The random assignment is helpful because of selection bias, or in other words because program participants are often different from non-participants. If instead we were to compare those who could participate in a program but choose not to, we would end up comparing two potentially very different sets of people. It is easy to see how these groups might differ in important but hard to measure ways. Those who join the program might be more driven to improve their situation, or more empowered, or better educated. [...] Researchers often try to control for these differences, but inevitably there are omitted variables, or others, like motivation, that can be problematic to measure. These differences mean that estimates of the impact of the intervention are biased, since differences in outcomes in the treatment and control groups may result from these unobserved characteristics, rather than being caused by the intervention.” (Karlan, 2009)

Figure 2: Illustration of an evaluation design based on an RCT



Source: Innovations for Poverty Action, www.poverty-action.org.

Figure 3: Number of published RCTs in international development (1975–2015)

Source: Cameron, Mishra and Brown (2015).

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Sampling and randomization

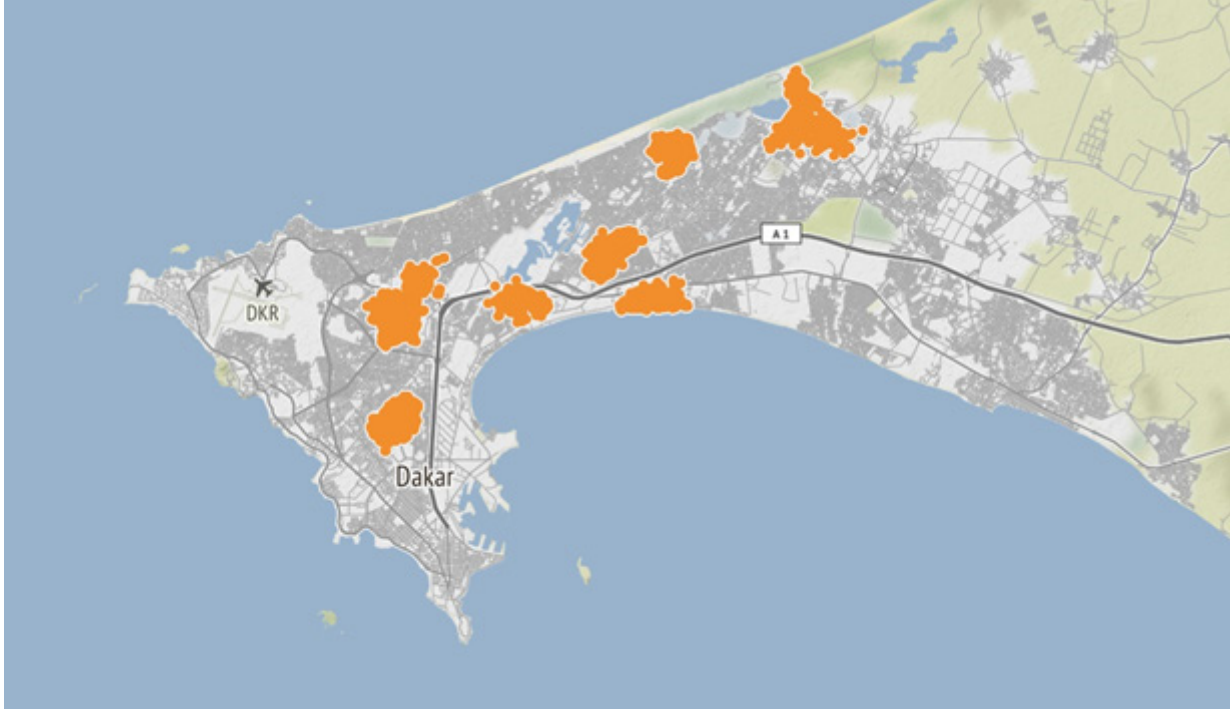
This study was designed as a “proof-of-concept” or “mechanism experiment” (Ludwig, Kling and Mullainathan, 2011), with the intention to evaluate whether an emotional film can have an impact with a high level of internal validity of the study (“lab-in-the-field experiment”). To do this, it was necessary to ensure a controlled exposure of the film to as many people as possible (over 8,800 invitations were extended). The primary goal of this first study was therefore not to extrapolate the results to a larger population (external validity), as other sampling techniques than those employed would have been necessary, but rather to assess the direct impact on the target group. The main aim was to establish whether there was a causal link between peer-to-peer risk communication and potential migrant perception, knowledge and intention, rather than quantifying possible effects of scaling up the intervention to the entire population of Senegal. If proven true, follow-up research would be warranted to elucidate the best (most cost-effective) distribution channels of such content and to see whether the results hold across other contexts.

Before data collection, the evaluation team estimated the appropriate minimum sample sizes required to statistically identify campaign effects using power calculations (see Table A27 in the Technical Annex).

The sampling strategy followed several steps.

First, eight neighbourhoods of Dakar (Malika, Guédiawaye, Pikine-Est, Patte d'Oie, Grand Yoff, Grand Dakar, Thiaroye Sur/Mer and Dalifort; see Figure 4) were hand-picked according to: (a) average migration propensity (following interviews with experts in the local IOM office) and (b) logistical feasibility (following correspondence with local administrations) and resource considerations (given that data collection in rural, spread-out areas can be more costly or take longer).

Figure 4: Map of participating neighbourhoods in Dakar where data were collected



Source: Map produced by the authors.

Second, enumerators conducted unstructured random walks around sites selected for the film screenings. Random walks are common in situations when official sampling frames such as population registers or microcensus data are not available or not reliable.

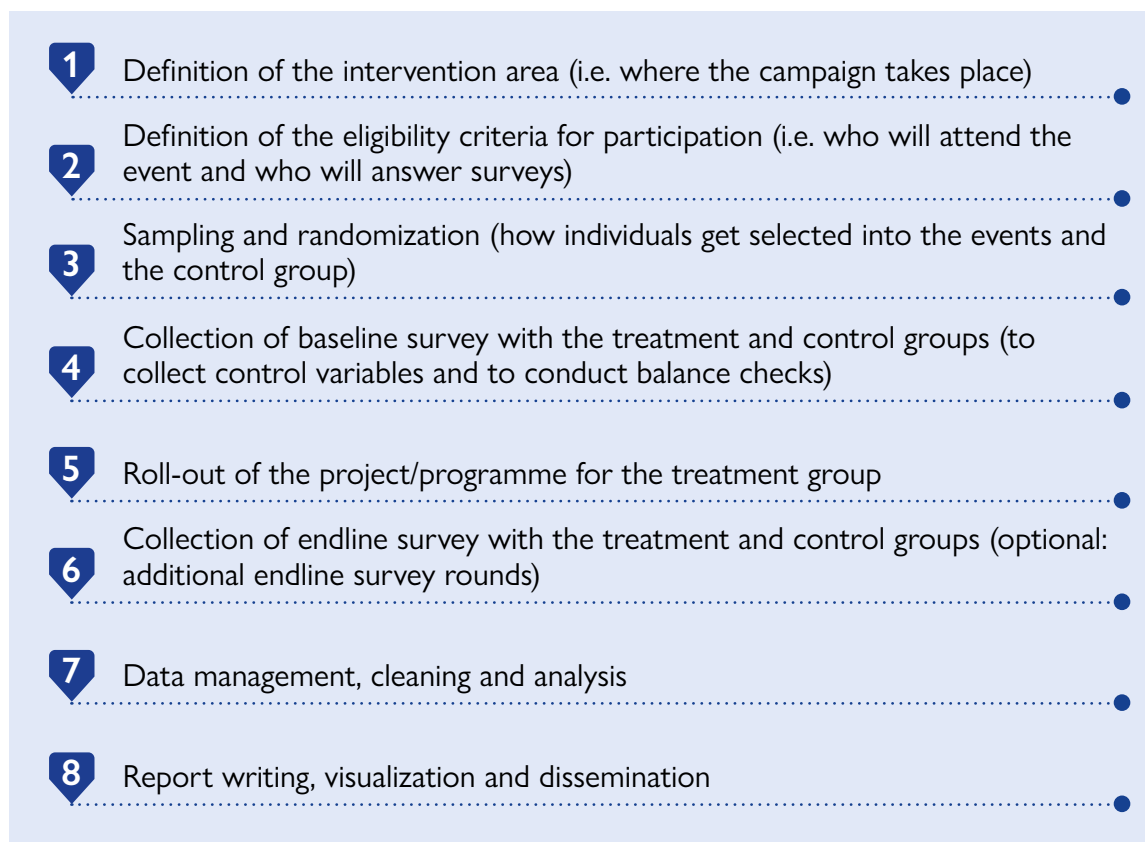
Third, every respondent that met certain criteria (intention to migrate and willingness to attend a screening) was invited *at random* to one of the offered films (*On est ensemble* versus the placebo film *Le Cheval Blanc*). Randomization was performed using a random number generator implemented in the tablet used for data collection (the CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) software SurveyCTO).¹⁶

¹⁶ A random number between 0 and 1 was created on the spot by the software. Respondents who were allocated a number below or equal to 0.5 were included in the control group and respondents who received a number above 0.5 were included in the treatment group.

3.3.2 Field implementation

Figure 5 outlines each step in the data-collection process.

Figure 5: Data-collection steps



The following describes these steps for the MaM impact evaluation.

The impact evaluation was rolled out in four separate phases:

1. Invite/baseline survey
2. Film screenings and first endline (exit) survey
3. Callback survey
4. Second endline survey

Table 2 shows the final sample size and timeline for each survey.

Table 2: Overview of survey samples

Survey type	Number of people (N)	Timeline
Invite survey	8,450	September/October 2018
Screening events and exit survey (first endline survey)	1,403	October/November 2018
Callback survey	1,393	December 2018
Second endline survey	1,207	January/February 2019
Final analysis sample	924	March 2019

Notes: Slightly more participants were reinterviewed in the endline survey compared to the callback survey. The endline survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews with multiple attempts to schedule appointments with survey participants, which reduces dropout from the study. The final analysis sample includes those respondents that were able to be matched across surveys and those that attended the assigned screening. About 120 people showed up to the screening without having received an invitation. They were dropped from the analysis.

3.3.2.1 Invitation/baseline survey

During the invite survey phase, enumerators were dispatched to the eight selected neighbourhoods of Dakar to invite people to the town hall events. Through unstructured random walks, the enumerators found and spoke to young people and administered the short invite survey form on tablet computers (CAPI, using the software SurveyCTO). The walks were done on all days (including weekends) from morning to evening hours. Random walks were applied in the control and treatment groups in the same way across all eight neighbourhoods due to the absence of official sampling frames.

Respondents had to fulfil all of the following criteria to be invited to a screening event:

1. Be between the ages of 18 and 35 (main demographic of migrants arriving in Europe);
2. Have a self-reported willingness to migrate of at least "medium" (3 on a scale from 1 to 5);
3. Have expressed an interest in participating in a film screening event.

During this process, in September and October 2018, the enumerators invited more than 8,800 people to the 36 screenings (18 for the treatment group and 18 for the control group).

In addition to the invitation cards (see Figure 6) that were distributed, the team sent short text message (SMS) reminders about the event (through the engageSPARK platform¹⁷) to boost attendance. On the day of the screening event, every invitee was sent an SMS message to remind them of the time and location of the screening event. In addition to the SMS message, a team of phone operators called the invited people to remind them of the screening on the day before. To counter potentially low turnouts for the screening events, the team decided to offer the attendees of the events a phone credit/airtime top up of *Communauté Financière Africaine* (CFA) 2,000 (roughly USD 4 (United States dollars)) for the treatment and control groups.

Figure 6: Invitation card for the event



¹⁷ www.engagespark.com/.

3.3.2.2 Screenings and first endline survey

Of the 8,800 people who were invited, approximately 1,420 showed up to the 36 screening events (ca. 17% of those invited) and could be resurveyed. While the reasons for no-shows could not be further investigated, there could be many reasons invitees did not attend the events, such as job or family commitments. The people who came were checked in at the door of the venue by staff who wrote down their name and unique invitation card ID so that their records could be matched to the invite survey. Table A1 in the Technical Annex shows the full screening schedule including location and date.

The treatment screening events were followed by discussions with the returning migrants who worked as volunteers for the campaign. The discussions were lively throughout and often lasted beyond two hours. Returning migrants told participants about their experiences and answered questions (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: An example of a MaM film screening event and a question and answer session



Note: Photographs taken during one of the MaM film screenings in Dakar in the autumn of 2018.

After the film (for the control group) or after the discussion (for the treatment group), the participants filled out a quick exit survey with pen and paper. Screening assistants helped the participants where necessary (for attendees with limited literacy skills). The quick exit survey questionnaire is included as Table A6 in the Technical Annex.

3.3.2.3 Callback survey

The project team added a round of callback telephone surveys in December 2018 to collect more information on how to recontact participants for the endline survey. This reached 1,160 participants. In addition to the contact information, information on one of the main outcomes was collected (to what degree the person has seriously thought about leaving Senegal as a migrant in the next two years).

3.3.2.4 Second endline survey

The second endline survey was implemented in January and February 2019. The goal was to reach as many people as possible that were registered as “present” during the screening phase (individuals were counted as present if they handed in an exit survey or were registered on the door list). More than 1,200 people were found and interviewed for the endline survey in their homes.¹⁸ The survey length was approximately 30 minutes per interview.

A portion of the people who received the invite (survey) and also filled out the exit survey could not be reached during the endline survey (ca. 20%). The survey teams had a harder time finding female respondents. Among those that were re-interviewed at endline, 13 per cent were women compared to 19 per cent among all potential migrants that were initially invited. Otherwise there was no statistical difference between the groups.

Note that the sample size may vary slightly depending on the outcome variable. Overall, missing responses to individual responses (item “non-response”) were low due to how the questionnaire was programmed and implemented.

¹⁸ In a few cases, people were interviewed over the telephone if they were not in Dakar during the period of the endline survey.

3.3.3 Data management

Before conducting the interviews, enumerators were instructed to explain the study goals and to ask for consent in each of the four surveys. The surveying continued only if explicit consent was given.

Data were collected and processed according to the IOM Data Protection Principles (IN/0013 2009), which include requesting consent from respondents, specifying the purpose for data collection and keeping personal data confidential. Personally identifying information (PII) was kept only to match data sets and was then removed from the data set before analysis. No data, including PII, were shared with anyone outside the core research team.

There were multiple potential sources of errors during the process, which were corrected during the data cleaning process. In cases where errors could not be resolved, the observations were not used in this study.

Common issues included:

- In some instances, the evaluation team identified enumerator data entry errors. For example, the enumerators could write the name of the respondent wrongly or enter a wrong identification number. Some surveys for the same person were submitted several times. Most data entry issues were duplicate entries and/or merging issues.
- In other instances, people handed their invite cards over to friends or family. In these cases, the persons that came to the screening would not match the respondents that were expected according to the registration lists. These people were allowed to participate in the screening, but dropped from the analysis.
- People who were not invited to the screening showed up or people who were invited left before the screening was over.

3.3.4 Balance, selection and attrition

3.3.4.1 Balance

The main reason for conducting a randomized trial was that it balances the treatment and control groups so that the only difference between the groups is that one group benefited from the MaM campaign (the treatment group) and the other group did not (the control group). If this is the case, it is possible to state that the observed differences between the groups measured during the endline survey can be attributed to the impact of the campaign. “Simple randomization ensures the allocation of treatment to individuals or institutions is left purely to chance, and is thus not systematically biased by deliberate selection of individuals or institutions into the treatment. Randomization thus ensures that the treatment and control samples are, in expectation, similar in average, both in terms of observed and unobserved characteristics” (Bruhn And McKenzie, 2009).

Table A2 in the Technical Annex shows the means for selected variables for the treatment group, the control group and both groups combined (for the restricted sample that was used for analysis, see section Table 3 for details). For most characteristics, the sample was balanced consistently with the randomization process, indicating that randomization was highly successful.

For three presented characteristics, there was a significant difference between the treatment and the control groups at baseline. However, the observed differences were small.¹⁹

¹⁹ In the treatment group, 5.1 per cent of participants were unemployed, compared to 2.9 per cent in the control group. The perceived chances to stay in the country of destination (if migration is successful) was slightly lower for the control group (-0.12 “steps” on the scale from 1 to 7, measured during the invite survey). The anticipated length of journey via the sea route was 14.8 days for the control group and 11.9 days for the treatment group; if an outlier was dropped (e.g. one that responded “180 days”), the average for the control group was reduced to 14.1 days.

3.3.4.2 Selection

Of the 8,800 people who were invited, approximately 1,420 showed up to the 36 screening events (ca. 17% of the invited) and could be resurveyed. There were many reasons why invitees did not attend the events, such as job or family commitments.

To avoid bias, some reasons for no-shows were further investigated. Table A3 in the Technical Annex provides further analysis on potential bias due to selection into participation in the evaluation. The only meaningful difference was that women followed the invitation less than men. In the group that attended, 14 per cent were female, and in the group that did not attend, 21.1 per cent were female. Further analysis of selective no-shows (i.e. selection) revealed that participants from both treatment groups had almost identical probabilities of attending the events (15.2% for treatment group events; 13.6% for control group events).

3.3.4.3 Attrition

Table 3 shows the sample sizes at each step of the data-collection process. The table also illustrates that attrition (dropout from the study after participation in the events) was balanced across the treatment and control groups. Table A4 in the Technical Annex reports further results from attrition (dropout) analysis. The results suggest that women and younger individuals were slightly less likely to participate in the final survey compared to the screening events.

The probability of dropping out from the study after the screening events was 18.8 per cent for participants in the treatment group events and 15.1 per cent for participants in the control group events. The difference in attrition was small and not statistically significant at the 5 per cent level. The degree to which attrition could be driven by out-migration of individuals included in the study remains speculative given that the study was not designed to measure actual migration behaviour.

Table 3: Sample size and attrition by survey round

Survey	Total sample size	Treatment group (% of total in parentheses)	Control group (% of total in parentheses)
Completed invite survey	8,450	4,218 (49.9%)	4,232 (51.1%)
Attended screening events and completed exit survey	1,403	737 (52.5%)	666 (47.5%)
Completed callback survey	1,393	737 (52.9%)	656 (47.1%)
Completed endline survey	1,207	630 (52.2%)	577 (47.8%)
Restricted sample for analysis	924	472 (51.1%)	452 (48.9%)

Note: The restricted sample is the remaining sample used for analysis after cleaning the data, dropping erroneous entries and matching cases across several surveys"

3.4 Sample description

To describe the sample, Table 4 reports summary statistics for variables collected during the invite survey (baseline) and time-invariant variables at the endline survey (this is a reduced version of Table A2 in the Technical Annex).

Table 4: Key sample characteristics

Variable	Mean
Age	24.8 years
Gender (female)	12.0%
Ethnic group: Wolof	33.9%
Family status: Never married	82.2%
Average household size	9.5
Average number of children	0.4
Education: Primary or less	22.7%
Education: Secondary	43.6%
Education: Tertiary	24.7%
Income per month: Nothing	7.8%
Income per month: CFA 0–50 000	40.4%
Income per month: > CFA 50 000	51.8%
Employment status: Permanent contract	12.0%
Born in Dakar	67.1%
Average number of people known that live abroad	8.2
Number that receive remittances from abroad	31.2%
Prior migration experience	5.4%

Note: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019, N=924.

The average age in the sample was 24.8 years. Respondents were predominantly male (87.9%). Only respondents that expressed at least some intention to migrate were included in the invite survey. As studies often show, women are much less likely to express intention to migrate, which can explain this large discrepancy (Baizán and González-Ferrer, 2016; Laczko, Singleton and Black, 2017; Appiah-Nyamekye and Selormey, 2018).

In this sample, 33.9 per cent of respondents belonged to the Wolof ethnic group, followed by 22 per cent Fulani and 14.8 per cent Serer. Some 29.3 per cent belonged to other ethnic groups, and 91.6 per cent were Muslims. Those that have never been married amounted to 82.2 per cent, and the average number of children the respondents had was 0.42. The average household size was 9.5, and respondents had 5.6 siblings on average. Seventy-three per cent had no siblings that lived abroad, 15 per cent had one sibling that lived abroad and 12 per cent had more than one sibling that lived abroad. On average, respondents knew one person in the United States of America and six in Europe. Thirty-one per cent received remittances from abroad.

Some 22.7 per cent received primary education or no formal education at all, 43.6 per cent received secondary level education and 24.8 per cent benefited from tertiary education.

Eight per cent of respondents said they did not earn any money at all, and 41.6 per cent earned up to CFA 50,000 per month (ca. USD 85, or USD 2.85 per day). Those two groups accounted for almost 50 per cent of the sample. They lived below the poverty line or just above the poverty line of USD 1.90 per day. This is in line with World Bank data for Senegal, which state that about 38 per cent of the Senegalese population live below the poverty line.²⁰ Some 36.4 per cent earn between CFA 50,000 and CFA 100,000 per month (ca. USD 85–170). Only 14 per cent earn more than CFA 100,000 per month (ca. USD 170).

²⁰ World Bank, [Poverty & Equity Data Portal – Senegal Country Page](http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/SEN). Available from <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/SEN>.

Some 37.2 per cent were currently unemployed or have never worked. Only 2.9 per cent reported they had permanent employment. Of people who were employed, 48.3 per cent reported they could not save any money at the end of the month. Some 34.9 per cent said they sometimes save some money and only 16.7 per cent said they do save some money at the end of the month.²¹

Of the respondents, 67.1 per cent were born in Dakar and 4.1 per cent moved to Dakar within the last two years. Some 28.8 per cent were not born in Dakar but have lived there for more than two years. In the sample, 5.4 per cent said they have previously migrated to another country.

3.5 Estimation of treatment effects

To estimate the impacts of the MaM campaign,²² ordinary least squares regressions were applied with the binary treatment variable as the independent variable without other control variables in the main specification (Mood, 2010; Friedman, 2012; Volfovsky, Edoardo and Rubin, 2015).²³

The following main model was used for estimation: $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_i + \beta_2 Y_0 + \beta_3 W_i + \varepsilon_i$.

Y_i denotes the outcome variables (subjective information level, risk perception, knowledge and intention) and T_i indicates whether the individual is assigned to the treatment group. Y_0 is the invite survey (baseline) value of the outcome (if available) and W_i designates the neighbourhood fixed effects.

The randomized design did not require additional control variables as the sample was balanced across the treatment and control groups (see Table A2 in the Technical Annex).²⁴ However, to assess the robustness of the results, further models that adjusted for a wide range of sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics, the relevant baseline level of the outcome, previous migration experiences and neighbourhood fixed effects were estimated. The results remained robust. Detailed results are provided in the Technical Annex.

To ensure quality, a restricted sample ($N = 924$) that was limited to those cases where the respondent met the following three characteristics was included in the final analysis:

- a. Completed the invite survey
- b. Attended the event and filled out the quick exit survey at the end
- c. Completed the in-person endline survey about three months later

This process eliminated some individuals who, for example, did not complete the exit survey but were interviewed at the endline survey. Some people also attended the events although they were not invited. While these cases were included in the survey, they were excluded from the analysis in this report. In addition, to be included in the database that serves as the basis for this report, the names of the respondents had to match across the different survey rounds.

As robustness checks, additional estimation models were conducted that accounted for a range of control variables, including the slightly imbalanced variables mentioned above, and tested the sensitivity of the results due to clustering standard errors at the neighbourhood and screening levels (see the Technical Annex). These checks returned similar results.

²¹ Once everyone was considered (those without and with a job), 20.8 per cent reported they were always able to save some money at the end of the month (in the control group).

²² As this was a pilot study, the “treatment of the treated” or the average treatment effect on the compliers was estimated, and not the “intention to treat”, as follow-up data could not be collected on the entire sample invited to the screening events.

²³ On the use of linear probability models for binary dependent variables, see for example, the DeclareDesign Blog: Estimating Average Treatment Effects with Ordered Probit: Is it worth it? Available from <https://declaredesign.org/blog/2019-02-06-ordered-probit.html>.

²⁴ Other than accounting for the neighbourhood stratification. All models accounted for neighbourhood fixed effects.

3.6 Study limitations

Although RCTs are often seen as the gold standard for causal identification of project and programme impacts, no study is free of limitations and every application of an impact evaluation poses unique challenges due to the specific context of the intervention.

It is important to be transparent about potential limitations regarding the design and implementation of the evaluation, to help readers to put findings into context and avoid misinterpretation. Table 5 shows common issues of RCTs and how the presented impact evaluation has attempted to address them to reduce bias.

Table 5: Overview of potential study limitations

Issue	Description
<p>Sampling</p> <p>(process of selecting participants for evaluation to make inferences to a larger population)</p>	<p>This study was a “proof-of-concept” or “mechanism experiment” (see Ludwig, Kling and Mullainathan, 2011 for the differences between mechanism and policy experiments). Given scepticism about the rationale behind information campaigns, the main goal was to test whether the MaM events have a measurable impact on those potential migrants that participated in them. Due to financial and time constraints, sampling was based on unstructured random walks to maximize the amount of people who partook in the study. The eight neighbourhoods for the study were selected as they were generally non-wealthy neighbourhoods and prone to outward migration (based on expert assessments). In addition, it was necessary to select neighbourhoods where local officials were willing to support efforts and also allow use of their community town halls for the screenings. Unfortunately, no aggregate-level quantitative information about neighbourhoods was available. However, all models estimating average MaM treatment effects included neighbourhood fixed effects accounting for the sampling design. Furthermore, the sensitivity to different clustering adjustments was tested. The random walks ensured the maximum number of extended invitations and therefore participants at the screenings. Thus, while the results are not representative of a larger population (due to the sampling techniques chosen regarding neighbourhoods and individuals), the results are internally valid for the group that did participate, as the participants were randomly allocated to the treatment and control groups.</p>
<p>Social desirability bias</p> <p>(type of response bias that is the tendency of survey respondents to answer questions in a manner that they believe will be viewed favourably by others rather than reflecting their true convictions)</p>	<p>Potential migrants in this study could under-report irregular migration intention and over-report a change of heart after the film because they believed this was the answer that was “socially desirable”. Social desirability bias is common to many survey-based studies and is difficult to detect and address. While it cannot be stated that this bias was fully eliminated, the RCT design allowed attenuation of the risk of bias given that the control and treatment groups were asked identical questions. In other words, it was reasonable to expect the same bias for both groups (if any at all). In addition, it was made clear that there were no right or wrong answers, there would be no judgement, the answers would not be shared with anyone and data were analysed only on an aggregated level. It was also made clear that answers would not trigger any entry into a programme, or gifts or anything of that nature.</p>

<p>Hawthorne effect</p> <p>(type of reaction in which individuals modify an aspect of their behaviour in response to their awareness of being observed)</p>	<p>The Hawthorne effect (also referred to as the observer effect) is similar to the social desirability bias as it is a type of response bias. Participants in the MaM treatment group could say they were less likely to migrate or have higher risk awareness because they knew that this was the goal of the study and what the enumerator wanted to hear. The Hawthorne effect is usually small, difficult to identify and difficult to avoid. It is inherent in most survey-based research.</p> <p>There are reasons to believe that this bias was mitigated in the present MaM evaluation. First, participants that were interviewed had already multiple touch points with the team (invite survey, screening, exit survey and endline survey), which contributed to a familiarity with the surveyors. Thus, Hawthorne effects are likely to wane off over time. Second, the design included a control group that was asked identical questions. Furthermore, the control group was exposed to a placebo film, which is not the case in the classic Hawthorne scenario and which would further decrease the risk of bias. Third, the enumerators were part of an independent consultancy. It was made clear that the government was not involved. Although not visible to survey respondents, IOM is perceived by potential migrants as a neutral broker that supports migrants. Fourth, the key protagonists of the campaign were returnees from the communities. The personal peer-to-peer character of the campaign further decreased the risk of the Hawthorne effect. Future research should also consider alternative techniques such as list randomization to further mitigate potential bias.</p>
<p>Contamination or spillover</p> <p>(also called contagion or spillover, can occur when members of the control group are affected by either the intervention or asymmetrically by another intervention, which also affects the outcome of interest)</p>	<p>In the MaM evaluation, spillovers would pose a problem if control group participants had been exposed asymmetrically to other information campaigns by other providers. This risk can be excluded, as both groups (due to the successful randomization) were exposed to outside factors, including other campaigns, in the same way (on average).</p> <p>It is also possible that potential migrants attending the MaM film events (treatment group) talked about their experience with friends or family who happened to be in the control group, given that participants were randomly selected within the same neighbourhoods. While it is believed that people may indeed have talked about their experiences seeing the film, it was hypothesized when designing this study that the risk for contamination of the impact was minimal as the full effect of the MaM film event would only be conveyed if a person actually watched the entire 50-minute film and was exposed to all the emotional content (rather than hearing about it indirectly).</p> <p>If, despite the precautions, spillovers did occur, this would decrease the observable effect (difference in outcomes) in this study, as the control group would also have increased outcomes. From this perspective, MaM effect estimates are conservative and can be read as a lower bound.</p>
<p>Survey mode</p> <p>(ways in which data are collected in a survey, for example as a self-administered paper-and-pencil questionnaire, on the Internet or as a face-to-face interview)</p>	<p>One potential source of bias for this study is that the exit survey (administered right after participation in the event) was implemented as a quick self-administered paper-and-pencil survey (often in the waning evening light) using icons and illustrations to facilitate comprehension and ad hoc assistance by event facilitators.</p> <p>In contrast, the endline survey (three months after participation) was administered as a computer-assisted, personal, face-to-face interview. Due to the difference in modalities, comparisons of campaign effects between the exit and endline surveys have to be treated with caution. As a result, this report relies more heavily on the endline survey and flags any issues regarding comparisons over time.</p>



4. IMPACT EVALUATION RESULTS

This chapter discusses the impacts of the MaM town hall sessions on potential migrants. It is structured in line with the main objectives of the MaM campaign, which were to induce changes in subjective information levels (section 4.1), objective knowledge on migration (section 4.2), risk perception and attitude (section 4.3) and the intention to migrate irregularly (section 4.4). The evaluation also assesses the impact on the perception of economic opportunities in Senegal (section 4.5) and the community's perception of the returning migrants (section 4.6).

Each section first presents its highlights and then a general background and descriptive results from the MaM surveys. Then, each section exploits the rigorous impact evaluation design (RCT) to present estimates of the causal effect of participation in the MaM campaign relative to the randomly selected control group. These analyses are based largely on the face-to-face endline surveys, conducted about three months after the film screening events (see Chapter 3).

Direct subjective feedback from participants was also collected. This was important to qualify any broader effects on knowledge, perception and intention and to account for differences between the quality and type of film that was presented to the two different groups (i.e. the MaM film for the treatment group and the unrelated placebo film for the control group).

Overall, more than 90 per cent of study participants reported they found their film interesting and emotionally engaging. Additionally, 98.3 per cent of the people who watched the MaM film said they trusted the information presented to them.

Of the treatment group, 89 per cent of respondents said they remembered the discussion with the returnees after the film and 38 per cent of those that remembered the discussion stated they said something during the interactive session. Some 62.7 per cent found the film more interesting than the discussion and 28.2 per cent preferred the discussion over the film. The remaining 9.1 per cent stated they did not remember what they preferred or said "neither". These results are based on feedback from event participants, not causal effects. However, as a first step, these results provide a strong indication that the peer-to-peer communication channel can be an effective tool for changing migration-related perception and intention.



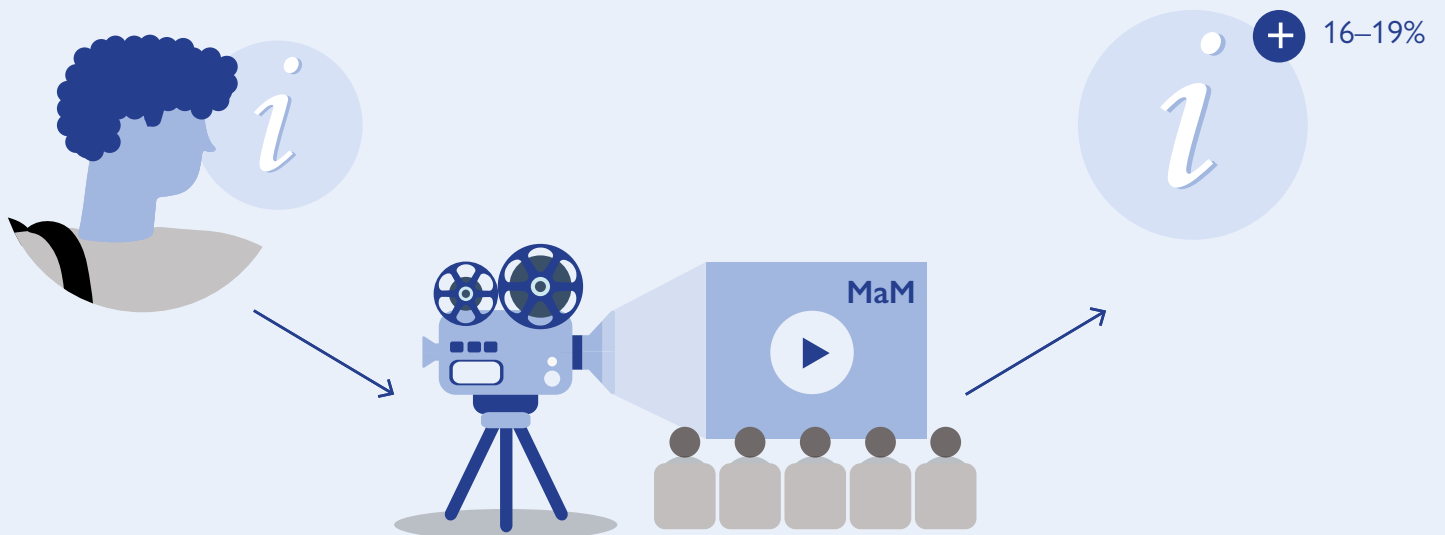
4.1

SUBJECTIVE INFORMATION LEVELS ABOUT MIGRATION

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION

More than **ONE IN THREE POTENTIAL MIGRANTS IN THE STUDY**

report that they do not feel 'well-informed' about the risks and opportunities associated with migration.



The **MaM EVENTS** increased the subjective information level of potential migrants **BY 16–19 PER CENT** relative to the comparison group.

4.1.1 Background

Migration information campaigns are based on the assumption that potential migrants are misinformed about the journey or the conditions in destination countries (Schans and Optekamp, 2016). In fact, surveys with potential migrants in many origin countries seem to suggest that migrants either lack crucial information or rely on biased information about migration (Foran and Iacucci, 2017; IOM, 2017a; European Commission, 2018; Sanchez et al., 2018). This may influence the decision to migrate (irregularly) and increase the risk of exposure to harm and vulnerability during or after the migration journey.

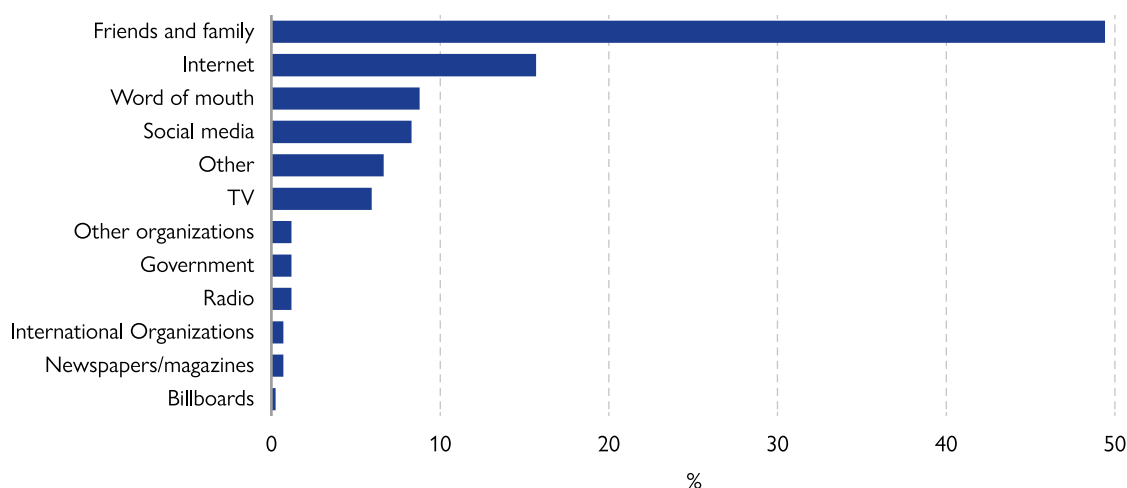
While the few available data sources often include knowledge questions, migrants are rarely asked how they (subjectively) evaluate their own level of information regardless of the objective accuracy of the information they obtain. However, this is an important factor. First, the level and quality of information that migrants think they possess could affect their susceptibility to new information. If potential migrants do not feel well informed (regardless of whether it is true or not), they might be more likely to receive, trust or use new information provided by information campaigns. Second, the subjective level of information may provide a more detailed picture of the extent to which migrants are aware of potential misinformation. Third, gathering data on subjective information levels is important as it allows examination of whether information campaigns are able to reach the right audience. Ideally, campaigns should aim to target those potential migrants who feel misinformed and are open to new information.

The results of the evaluation reveal information gaps among potential migrants participating in MaM town hall events. Almost 43 per cent of respondents with a general interest in leaving Senegal reported they did not feel well informed about how to migrate to Europe. Thirty-seven per cent said they were not well informed about the risks associated with migration. This shows there is a need for information relevant to certain sections of the population.

With regard to the main sources of information and influences for potential migrants, 53 per cent of respondents in the control group reported that no one had a strong influence on their intention to migrate, while 25 per cent identified parents as key influencers. The most important sources of information on migration for potential migrants (Figure 8) were family and friends (49%), followed by the Internet (16%). This finding is consistent with other studies (Dekker et al., 2018; Mixed Migration Centre, 2018c).

Thirty-seven per cent said they were not well informed about the risks associated with migration.

Figure 8: Main information source for potential migrants in Senegal



Note: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019. The question on the main information source was asked in the endline survey. This means that treatment group participants could have already been influenced by the MaM film screening. The graph is therefore based on respondents in the control group only (N = 421).

Networks with migrants living abroad can be a channel for information about migration. On average, respondents knew eight people who lived abroad. Half of respondents knew at least five people abroad. One in three participants received money (remittances) from friends or relatives abroad. Thus, personal networks abroad are a potential source of information and competing channels of communication with information campaigns.

The MaM campaign also disseminated information via the Internet and social media. While the online components were not part of this impact evaluation, the Internet and particularly social media channels played an important role for information exchange. Ninety per cent of respondents in Dakar reported they used social media regularly and 82 per cent of respondents stated they otherwise used the Internet frequently. Further studies are needed to assess whether online communication is viable in more rural settings where the available internet access is lower.

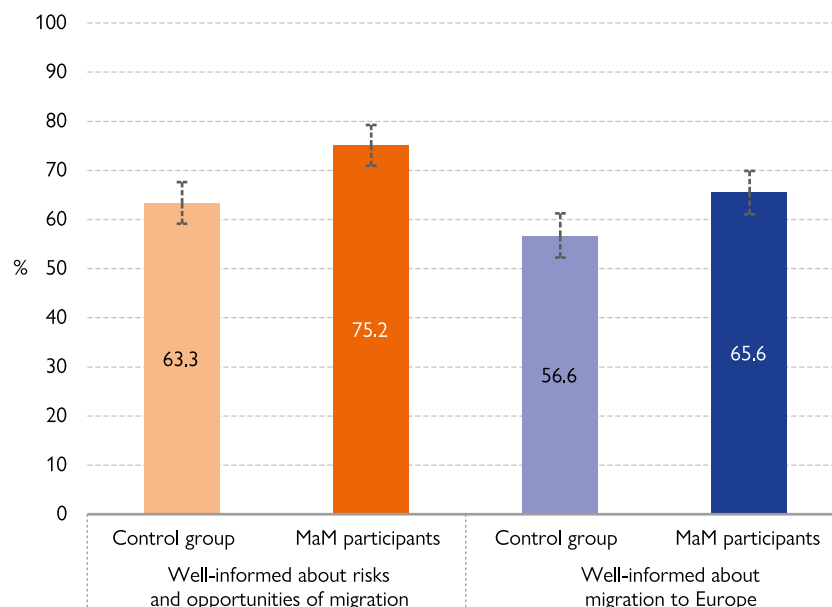
Another interesting descriptive finding is that official institutions (e.g. governments or international organizations), as well as traditional communication channels such as radio and posters, were used by few potential migrants in this study. This suggests that traditional or official channels may not be the best communication tool to reach potential migrants in urban settings. In contrast, the importance of friends, family and word of mouth point to the potentially powerful effect of peer-to-peer communication. When respondents were asked whether they would trust government, international organizations or returning migrants the most on information about migration, only 6.5 per cent reported they would trust the government and 39.6 per cent said they would trust international organizations (such as IOM). Some 53.9 per cent said they would trust returnees the most.²⁵

4.1.2 Campaign impacts

This evaluation estimates the (causal) effect of participation in the MaM campaign (attending the MaM film screening with subsequent discussion) on the subjective level of information of potential migrants three months later (endline). In other words, do potential migrants feel better informed after participating in the MaM film event?

The results show that MaM participants in the treatment group, on average, did feel better informed compared to the control group. The MaM project increased the subjective information level of potential migrants by 19 per cent (9 percentage points difference relative to the control group) regarding the risks and opportunities of migration and by 16 per cent (12 percentage points difference relative to the control group) regarding information on how to migrate to Europe (see Figure 9).²⁶

Figure 9: Average treatment effects of the MaM campaign on how well potential migrants feel informed about risks and opportunities of migration



Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019. Results based on an “empty” linear regression model with the treatment identifier as the only predictor. Results are robust against adjusting for a wide range of sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics, information levels at baseline and neighbourhood fixed effects. Treatment effects for both variables are significant at $p < 0.01$. See Table A10 in the Technical Annex for more information. $N = 923$. See Table A8 and A9 in the Technical Annex for a description and operationalization of model variables. The y-axis reflects the percentage of potential migrants who said they were “informed”, “knowledgeable” or “very well informed”.

²⁵ It is important to note that IOM was neither visible as a brand during project implementation nor during the face-to-face data collection for the evaluation. IOM was not visible to reduce response bias and assess the effect of peer-to-peer communication irrespective of the implementing agency. The purpose for data collection was clearly stated, consent was obtained and data were kept confidential according to IOM Data Protection Principles.

²⁶ Information levels were measured on a seven-point Likert scale and later recoded into a binary measurement for ease of interpretation. “Well informed” was defined as responding “informed”, “knowledgeable” or “very well informed” as opposed to “not at all informed”, “not informed”, “uninformed” and “neutral” to survey questions about subjective information levels.

There were also large campaign effects immediately after the screening (exit survey). In the control group, 61 per cent of respondents felt well informed compared to 80 per cent of MaM participants (treatment group). The difference (19 percentage points) is equivalent to a 31 per cent increase relative to the control group. As shown above, the campaign effects decreased over the course of three months to 19 per cent, which remains sizeable and statistically significant.²⁷

The sustainable effect could be due to further information-seeking behaviour resulting from the event experience. Potential migrants participating in the MaM film events (treatment group) were also asked whether they tried to find out more information following the events. Almost half of campaign participants said they sought out additional information afterwards. This shows that the event was successful in triggering some curiosity and additional information-seeking behaviour. Of those that confirmed they looked for additional information, 42.7 per cent said they gathered it from the Internet and 29.5 per cent said they received it from friends and family. The remaining respondents used various sources including social media, radio, TV, school or contacts living abroad. While the impact evaluation focused on a one-off event, this is an indication that following up with potential migrants after a campaign event can be worthwhile to strengthen sustainability.

4.1.3 Subgroup analysis

The data allow to go one step further and break down the effects on subjective information levels for particular subgroups (i.e. heterogeneous treatment effects, see Table A11 in the Technical Appendix).

With regard to the degree to which potential migrants feel informed about risks and opportunities of migration, the campaign had large effects on the unemployed, unmarried and respondents with limited resources and fewer personal contacts in Europe. Campaign effects were stronger for women than for men. The campaign did not show differential impacts on younger or older individuals, more or less educated respondents, different intensities of migration intention or information levels on migration (measured before the campaign). One possible interpretation is that migration intention does not correspond well with the level of information that migrants think they have. Potential migrants with a strong intention to leave do not necessarily know more than those with a lower intention to leave. It can also mean that reported information levels are not an accurate indication of how much potential migrants really know. The campaign could increase information levels for potential migrants at various stages of their decision-making process – those that feel well informed and those that do not, as well as those with a strong intention and less intention.

With regard to the degree to which potential migrants feel well informed about how to migrate to Europe, the events had large effects on young, single, male potential migrants with a very high intention to migrate, low information to start with and few contacts abroad.

²⁷ Note that the exit and endline surveys used different modalities, which can affect comparisons over time (see sections 3.3 and 3.6).



Young Senegalese who returned home from Algeria, Mali and Libya interview one another about their migration experiences. © IOM 2018/Julia BURPEE



4.2

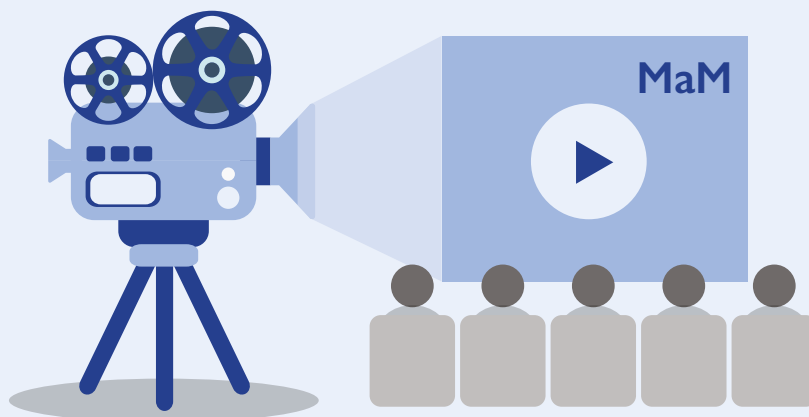
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MIGRATION

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION

Potential migrants are severely misinformed regarding the number of casualties associated with migrating to Europe and – more broadly – the legal and procedural context of migration.



73 PER CENT
of respondents are not familiar
with asylum procedures.



There is no evidence that MaM events increased ‘factual’ knowledge, for example, on the number of casualties, visas, access to international protection and asylum procedures, length and costs of the journey and realistic expectations regarding potential earnings at destination. This result is not surprising given that the focus of the events was on emotional identification with the personal experience of returnees rather than the dissemination of facts.

4.2.1 Background

The rationale for migration information campaigns arises from a lack of information about various aspects of migration and the often one-sided story promoted by smugglers. Reliable information is one relevant factor for the decision-making process of potential migrants. The lack of factual knowledge on the journey and the situation at destination may drive misperception among potential migrants and may increase the risk of ending up in situations of vulnerability. To measure knowledge on migration, in this study, potential migrants were asked a series of questions to assess the level of knowledge accuracy and degree of misinformation. However, it is important to note that factual knowledge was not the focus of the MaM events.

4.2.1.1 Migrant deaths

According to IOM, since 2014, at least 22,000 migrants have died trying to reach Europe.²⁸ Approximately 19,000 deaths have been recorded in the Mediterranean and 4,000 deaths in North Africa. Experts assume that official counts are a gross underestimate of the real number of migrant fatalities, but these counts provide a lower-bound estimate. Among MaM survey respondents in Dakar, 26 per cent say they do not know how many people died trying to reach Europe since 2014, another 43 per cent estimate the number to be less than 1,000, only 5 per cent estimate a number close to official figure provided by the IOM.

4.2.1.2 Asylum

Many West African migrants who arrive in Europe claim asylum given the absence of alternative regular pathways. While some may have legitimate claims for asylum and fulfil grounds for international protection, many West African migrants arrive in Europe irregularly and are not eligible for asylum in most EU countries. The average asylum recognition rates for Senegalese nationals in the EU/European Free Trade Association from 2008 to 2018 vary between 10 and 25 per cent.²⁹

According to survey results, approximately 73 per cent of respondents did not know what asylum is. Among those who reported economic reasons for wanting to leave, 40 per cent thought they would be eligible for refugee status.

These results indicate a general lack of awareness of and familiarity with the legal and procedural context of migrating to Europe from Senegal.

73 per cent of respondents did not know what asylum is.

4.2.1.3 Journey duration

It is difficult to provide reliable statistics on the actual length of journey. The migration journey may include periods of mobility and immobility – moving and waiting (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016). According to a 2016 IOM survey of migrants in reception centres in Italy, the average duration of a journey was 1.4 years for Senegalese migrants and 2.6 years for Eritreans (IOM, 2016). Another survey collected in 2016/2017 in Italy by IOM and UNICEF interviewing Senegalese migrants and refugees aged 14–24 years indicated that the duration of the journey for one third of respondents took less than three months, for 29 per cent, it took between three and six months and for the rest (39%), the journey took more than six months (UNICEF and IOM, 2017). For individual migrants, the irregular journey to Europe can take anything from a few days to weeks or even years. The duration of the journey will depend on the financial situation of the migrant (including whether they are victims of theft) and the number and type of difficulties encountered on the route (such as immigration detention or rejection at the border at first try). In cases where migrants decide to go “step by step” (remaining in a transit country to earn more money to continue the trip), journeys take a long time (up to several years) and depend on the number of stop-overs in transit countries or hub cities. Onward movement then depends on the possibility of work and earning the money needed to move on (European Commission, 2015).

On average, respondents in the MaM study estimated that the journey through the Saharan desert would take one month and the journey by sea approximately 19 days. While the estimated travel duration may not be unrealistic for some, the actual duration would likely be substantially longer. The results suggest that many migrants may not take into account the high possibility of “getting stuck” or running out of money in transit countries. This was an important theme communicated in the MaM campaign.

²⁸ See the IOM Missing Migrants Project. Available from <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean>.

²⁹ Eurostat asylum statistics, available from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics; Migration Policy Institute, 2018, available from www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/asylum-recognition-rates-euefta-country-2008-2017.

4.2.1.4 Journey cost

Previous studies suggest that one important area of misinformation is related to the costs associated with the migration journey (IOM, 2017a). Many African migrants grossly underestimate the costs. The money saved for the trip – often pooled from the wider family network – can run out or be stolen during the journey. Migrants then stay in transit countries to earn more money to pay for additional legs of the remaining journey to Europe.

According to UNODC, the typical price paid to smugglers from West Africa to Europe via Libya is about USD 2,500–5,500 to reach the North African coast from West Africa (UNODC, 2018) and USD 500–2,500 to get to Italy from the coast of Libya (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, 2014b; European Commission, 2015). These ranges are consistent with reports based on qualitative interviews with Senegalese migrants (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016). The price for crossing from Morocco to Spain is in the approximate range USD 1,000–3,000 (Frontex, 2017; UNODC, 2018). Another study reported the average costs for the Western Mediterranean route at approximately USD 3,500 (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016).

Smugglers offer different “packages”, depending on the wealth of their clients – some even include multiple attempts factoring in potential failures. Migrants along the Central and Eastern Mediterranean route can cross on cheap toy dinghies, larger rubber boats, inflatable boats with a powerful engine or a speed boat. Based on a case study of Afghanistan in 2016, social media discourse analysis revealed that smugglers sell the “European dream” with enticing pictures and promises of a good and safe life (UNHCR, 2017).

A survey collected in 2016/2017 in Italy by IOM and UNICEF interviewing Senegalese migrants and refugees aged 14–24 indicated a total cost of the journey less than USD 1,000 for one quarter of respondents, between USD 1,000 and USD 2,500 for half and more than USD 5,000 for 17 per cent (UNICEF and IOM, 2017).

Respondents in the MaM impact evaluation survey (control group) estimated the costs of migrating to Europe at, on average, USD 2,060. Half estimated the cost at about USD 1,000. There was minor variation across destination countries (see Table 6).

Table 6: Financial cost of irregular migration journeys estimated by potential migrants (by destination country, in USD)

Destination	Estimated cost
United States of America	2,300
Canada	1,900
France	2,000
Spain	1,800
Italy	2,300
Germany	3,000
Belgium	1,400
Europe (average)	2,060
Europe (median)	1,000
All other countries (average)	1,600

Note: Results based on control group only (N = 375).

A closer look suggests that respondents estimate their potential earnings fairly accurately when compared with average incomes for minimum wage jobs in European destination countries.

These results suggest that cost expectations are not far from reality for most potential migrants. Respondents in the MaM evaluation already had a strong intention to migrate and some had concrete plans. Many potential migrants in the evaluation had friends abroad who were a good source of information on reliable total costs. However, the cost estimates assumed that the journeys would go as planned.

4.2.1.5 Potential earnings in destination countries

A large body of economic research on migration drivers stresses the importance of income differentials between origin and destination countries in motivating migration (see EASO, 2016; World Bank, 2018b for reviews). In fact, migrants can often multiply their incomes by moving (Clemens, 2011). Hence, the estimated potential earnings in the country of destination are an important factor when deciding whether or not to migrate, especially as money will often be sent back to the country of origin in the form of remittances (Mckenzie, Gibson and Stillman, 2013). Previous evidence suggests that expected wages can often be overestimated due to misinformation in personal networks (Hoxhaj, 2015; Shrestha, 2017).

Senegal has been one of the top 10 remittance recipient countries in the world. In 2016 and in 2017, almost two thirds (61%) of the total remittances sent to Senegal came from France, Italy and Spain.³⁰ The total remittances sent to Senegal during that time frame represented about 14 per cent of the country's GDP (World Bank, 2018a) – outpacing development aid received by Senegal in the same years.³¹ From this perspective, future earnings and associated remittances may represent a key driver for the decision to migrate by the individual or the community. One in three potential migrants in the MaM evaluation received money from abroad.

On average, potential migrants in Dakar in the control group estimated they would earn approximately USD 1,258 per month (across all desired destinations). In comparison, according to the latest results of the National Survey of Employment in Senegal conducted by the National Agency for Statistics and Demography, the average salary in Senegal in 2017 was approximately USD 150 per month.³² Table 7 shows the estimated potential earnings by desired country of destination compared to average salaries in the destination country, average income on minimum wage and broad estimates of social support for asylum seekers.

A closer look suggests that respondents estimate their potential earnings fairly accurately when compared with average incomes for minimum wage jobs. However, expected earnings are approximately three times higher (on average) than social benefits per month for asylum seekers in the main destination countries, which is what many migrants would rely on, especially when they are not permitted to work legally. The figures suggest that potential migrants are fairly well informed about potential earnings assuming that African migrants can secure employment in the formal or informal labour market. However, average expected incomes could be overestimated for those migrants who claim asylum and depend on social support while their asylum claim is under review.

Table 7: Average expected monthly earnings in destination country (USD)

Destination	Mean estimated monthly income by respondents	Median estimated monthly income by respondents	Average gross monthly income at destination	Average monthly income at minimum wage	Per capita monthly financial support for asylum seekers
United States of America	1,395	540	5,047	1,257	200–600
France	1,174	864	3,542	1,715	230–400
Canada	1,121	864	4,174	1,467	450–650
Spain	1,736	950	2,642	1,184	340–560
Italy	1,181	864	2,750	n/a	85
Germany	1,240	432	3,714	1,796	150–400
Average	1,258	864	3,714	1,536	~400

Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019, $N = 448$ based on the control group only. Values for monthly incomes, monthly minimum wage and social support are broad estimates based on various reports (see Table A24 in the Technical Annex for a list of sources). Estimates may vary considerably by subgroup and individual case. Financial support for asylum seekers depends on whether housing is provided or not. The amount of financial support for asylum seekers can vary case by case, especially depending on the housing situation (reception centre versus private housing). Expected incomes are truncated at three standard deviations. The average in the final row is based on the full sample, not restricted to the list of displayed countries.

³⁰ IOM calculations based on data from World Bank bilateral remittance estimates for 2016 and 2017. Available from www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data.

³¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Aid at a glance. Available from www.oecd.org/countries/senegal/aid-at-a-glance.htm.

³² APA News. Available from <http://apanews.net/index.php/en/news/senegal-monthly-average-wage-at-cfa96206-survey>.

4.2.2 Campaign impacts

The average treatment effect of participating in the MaM film event on the knowledge of potential migrants about the journey and potential earnings at destination is presented here (see Table A12 in the Technical Annex for all results).

Generally, at endline, the results show that the MaM project did not have an effect on knowledge outcomes across the different measures and variables. While treatment group respondents estimated slightly higher costs associated with the journey, slightly lower average monthly incomes and a shorter duration of the journey by land or sea compared to the control group, none of these differences are statistically significant and so are not reliable (see Table A12 in the Technical Annex). Findings also indicate no effect of participation in the MaM project on knowledge about access to visas, the concept of asylum, eligibility for international protection or the estimated number of migrant deaths. Furthermore, there were no significant impacts on knowledge on the length of journey, the cost of the journey and the expected earnings in Europe in the exit survey measured immediately after the event.

While potential migrants appeared misinformed regarding certain aspects of migration (particularly the legal and procedural context), there were no sizeable knowledge gains resulting from the campaign. However, on average, potential migrants do not grossly misjudge the costs and potential earnings of migration.

The limited impact of the campaign on knowledge gains may appear less surprising when considering the focus of the MaM campaign. The MaM film contained emotional, subjective testimonies of returnees that mentioned facts only in passing. Rather than an instructional lecture, the MaM intervention was more likely to incite affective reactions that shaped attitude and perception rather than providing potential migrants with new facts.

Furthermore, in irregular migration, certain “facts” regarding the migration journey are contestable, as it is often difficult to establish any reliable, objective reference points. For example, potential migrants were asked to estimate the time it takes to cross the Sahara and the Mediterranean Sea, yet there is limited evidence on how long it actually takes (on average). Potential migrants were also asked how much they think it costs to migrate to Europe irregularly and what they expect migrants could earn after arrival. Yet due to the limited availability of reliable data on these questions, it is difficult to assess whether the respondents’ knowledge is accurate or not. While it is difficult to verify whether the estimated durations of the journey, their related costs and potential earnings in Europe are accurate, there appears to be no impact on the estimations due to participating in the MaM town hall screenings.

4.2.3 Subgroup analysis

The main analysis above shows that potential migrants who participated in the MaM campaign (treatment group) did not differ significantly in their responses to access to visas, asylum, length and costs of the journey as well as potential earnings at destination compared to potential migrants who did not (control group). This suggests that the campaign had no considerable effect on “factual” knowledge questions.

Technically, it would have been possible that certain subgroups still benefited from knowledge gains due to the campaign, even though the campaign had no effect on average. However, further analysis reveals that this was not the case (see Table A13 in the Technical Annex).

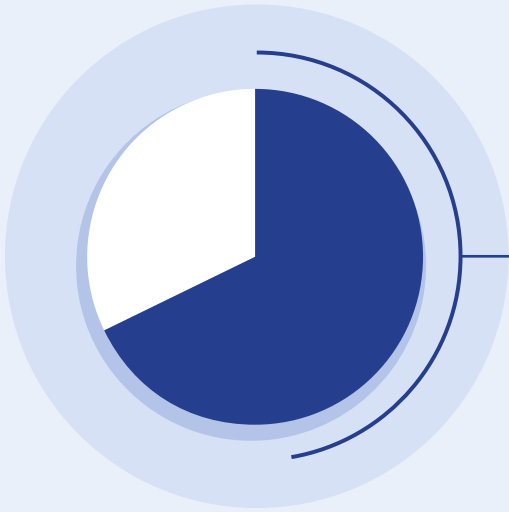
While potential migrants appeared misinformed regarding certain aspects of migration, there were no sizeable knowledge gains resulting from the MaM events.



4.3

PERCEPTIONS OF RISKS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION



51.1 PER CENT of respondents evaluate the risk of suffering from any form of violence of someone that tries to migrate irregularly as "very high" or "critical".



Despite already high levels of risk awareness, the MaM events further increase risk perceptions, by on average **25 PER CENT**, relative to the comparison group.

4.3.1 Background

Attitude and perception are important factors for the migration decision-making process of potential migrants. Raising awareness of the risks associated with migration is at the heart of most information campaigns that have been launched in West Africa in recent years. A recent review by Schans and Optekamp (2016) stated that:

most migration information campaigns (...) have focused on the dangers involved in irregular migration. Campaigns implemented in diverse geographical settings, such as Central and Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America, inform potential migrants about the risks and dangers involved in irregular migration (Pécoud, 2007; 2010). These risks and dangers concern the journey itself, pointing out the potential life-threatening situations at sea or in the desert, and the ruthlessness of smugglers. Other campaigns warn migrants about the risk of falling in the hands of human traffickers. Information campaigns have been deemed essential in fighting trafficking and smuggling, as they reduce the vulnerability of potential victims by raising awareness regarding the risk of being caught in criminal networks (Schans and Optekamp, 2016).

There are severe risks associated with irregular migration. In a recent report about forced labour, the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2017) stated:

Irregular migrants (...) may be subjected to kidnap and ransom demands, extortion, physical violence, sexual abuse, and trafficking in persons. They may start their journeys by willingly placing themselves in the hands of smugglers and become trafficked along the way. Once they reach their destination, migrants who have travelled through regular and irregular channels remain vulnerable to trafficking in persons and other forms of exploitation due to language barriers, challenges of social integration, and unscrupulous employers and landlords who take advantage of their limited knowledge of local conditions and reduced bargaining power.

Surveys have shown that up to three quarters of migrants along the Central Mediterranean route to Europe from North Africa (primarily Libya) reported direct experiences of abuse, exploitation, coercion and practices that may amount to human trafficking (IOM, 2017b).

Risk perception is therefore a crucial component for decisions about irregular migration. People are aware of the high risks that are posed by migrating irregularly over land via the desert or the sea route.

Of the interviewed potential migrants (in the endline survey), 51.1 per cent assessed the risk to suffer from any form of violence to be “very high” or “critical”, and 68.8 per cent evaluated the risk to the life of someone that tries to migrate irregularly as “very high” or “critical”.³³

On average, the perception that these risks were very likely to materialize was 34.7 per cent, and another 53.7 per cent thought they were “likely”. This means that on average, only 11.6 per cent of the respondents assessed the risks as neutral or not likely to occur (see Table 8 for details.)

Table 8: Likelihood of different risk scenarios

Likelihood of ...	Not likely or neutral (%)	Likely (%)	Very likely (%)
Losing all money	8.4	56.9	34.7
Beatings	13.2	53.8	33.0
Forced labour	14.2	54.4	31.4
Lack of food and water	8.6	50.0	41.4
Deportation	11.5	52.7	35.8
Imprisonment	15.9	55.6	28.5
Witnessing the death of someone en route	9.5	52.4	38.1
Total average	11.6	53.7	34.7

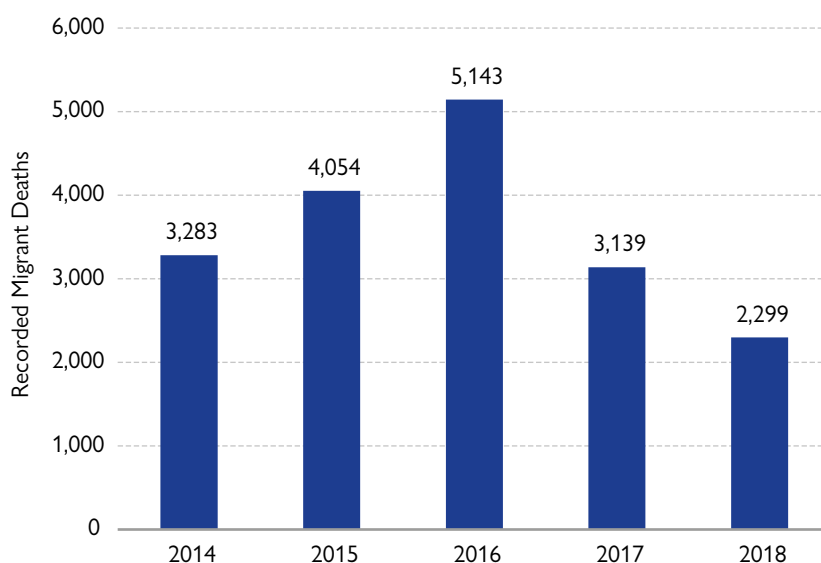
Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019, N= 924. The questionnaire offered response options on a five-point Likert scale. “Likely” represented step 4 and “very likely” represented step 5.

³³ “Very high” and “critical” represent answer options 6 and 7 on a seven-point Likert scale.

This is in line with other research findings that state migrants are generally aware of the abstract risks associated with the journey; however, they underestimate the relevance for themselves and their families (Sanchez et al., 2018). In reality, the journeys are most likely traumatic. A recent study based on a non-random sample of 650 asylum seekers in several cities in Italy stated that “in total 95 percent of migrants declared their journey was harder than they expected” (Sanchez et al., 2018). One IOM survey showed that more than one third (37%) of all interviewed migrants had a personal experience that indicated the presence of human trafficking or other exploitative practices along the route (IOM, 2017b). Seventy-three per cent of migrants interviewed along the Central Mediterranean route presented at least one indicator of exploitation (UNICEF and IOM, 2017).

According to data from the IOM Missing Migrants Project, thousands of African migrants die in the Mediterranean each year trying to reach Europe (Figure 10).³⁴

Figure 10: Annual number of recorded migrant deaths in the Mediterranean



Source: IOM Missing Migrants Project 2019, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>.

While some studies have attempted to estimate the risk of death along the migration journey (Bah and Batista, 2018; UNHCR, 2018b), available figures are not reliable given the limited availability and quality of underlying data on irregular flows and number of unrecorded deaths. The number of migrants who die trying to cross the Sahara likely far exceeds the number of migrants dying trying to cross the Mediterranean (Bergman et al., 2017; Laczko, Singleton and Black, 2017; Mixed Migration Centre, 2018d). For a sample of Gambian survey respondents, Bah and Batista (2018) found that respondents estimated the risk to be 49 per cent. Another study found that “potential ... migrants are willing to accept a substantial risk of death (...) 77 percent of Senegalese interviewed were willing to risk their life in order to emigrate. Harassment, violence and deaths are all considered part of the migration process and become the norm in migrants’ experiences” (Mbaye, 2014; cited in Hagen-Zanker, 2015).

Similarly, in MaM data from Dakar (for the control group), 38.1 per cent stated that it was “very likely” to witness the death of someone else during the irregular journey. In line with the high risk perception, many potential migrants were aware of the low chances of arriving in their destination country. Only 22.6 per cent thought that such chances were “good”, “very good” or “excellent”.³⁵ Similarly, even if the migration journey was successful, only 36.3 per cent assessed their chances to stay in the destination country as “good” or better (≥ 5 on a seven-point Likert scale).

These data illustrate that awareness of the risks of migration before leaving might not be the main problem. However, it remains unclear to what extent potential migrants apply this perception to their own situation or think about risks merely on an abstract level. Some potential migrants (22.6%) agreed with the statement: “Regardless of how difficult it will be, god will protect me”. When asked whether they were risk averse or not, the average risk-taking tendency among the potential migrants surveyed was 4.5 (on a scale from 0 to 10), slightly below the “medium” level of 5. Furthermore, it remains unclear whether high risk perception generally has a strong impact on the decision to migrate (irregularly).

³⁴ IOM Missing Migrants Project. Available from <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>.

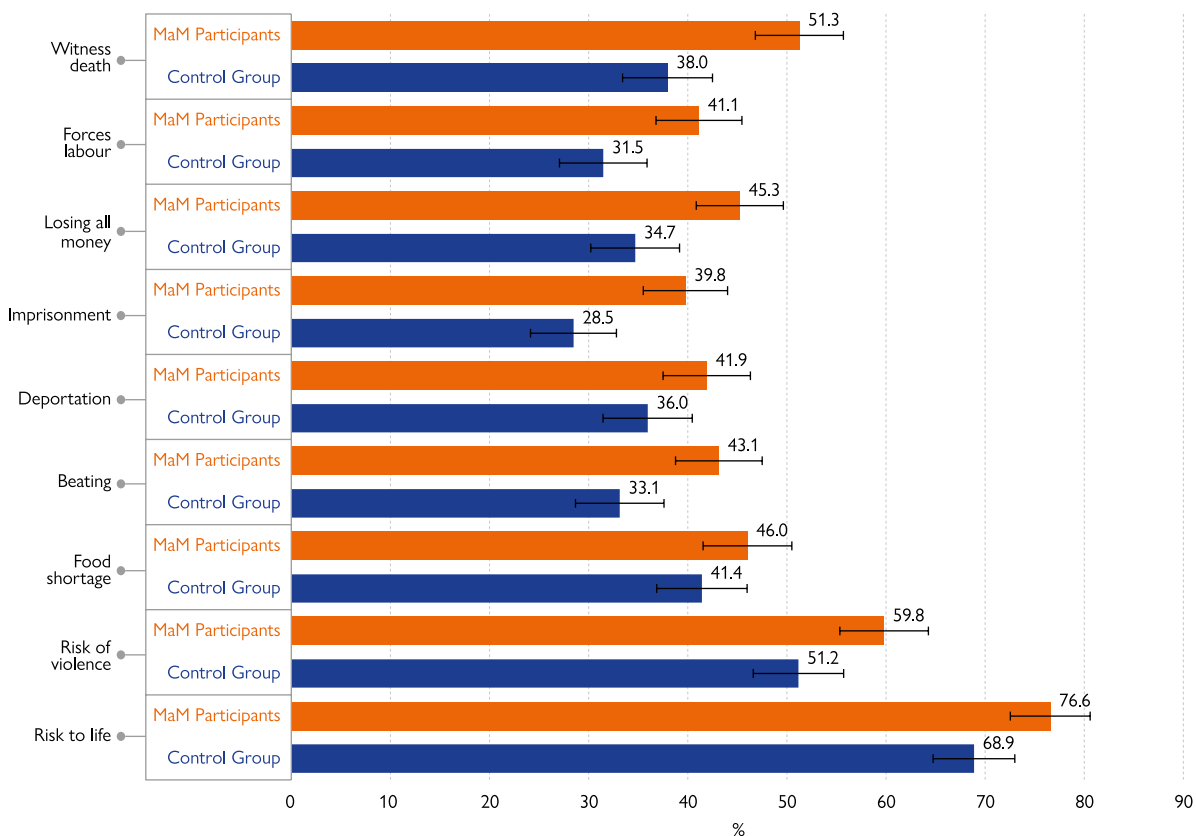
³⁵ Coded as levels 5, 6 and 7 on a seven-point Likert scale.

It is possible that alternative factors such as poverty, lack of economic opportunities and the potential for huge financial gains of migration outweigh the high risks involved.

4.3.2 Campaign impacts

Despite these already high levels of risk awareness, the evaluation finds consistent impacts of the MaM campaign on all risk variables at endline, with seven out of nine impacts being statistically significant (see Figure 11 and Table A14 in the Technical Annex). On average, the MaM town hall screenings increased risk awareness by 25 per cent across all risk dimensions (9.2 percentage points).

Figure 11: Average treatment effects of the MaM campaign on potential migrants' perception of various risk dimensions (in %)



Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019. Results based on the empty linear regression model. These variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale. For the purposes of the analysis, variables were recoded to binaries, with the two categories being “very likely” (5 on the five-point scale) and “likely or less” (4 or less on the five-point scale). The impacts are reported for people assessing risks as “very likely”. The regression results are robust to using the cut-off “likely” (step 4 on the five-point Likert scale). See Table A14 in the Technical Annex for more information. The sample sizes for this risk perception analysis ranged from 567 to 923 individuals (the number of total respondents varied by variable; see the Technical Annex for more information). See Table A8 and Table A9 in the Technical Annex for a full description and operationalization of variables.

The largest increases in risk awareness can be observed on “the risk to witness death of someone” (from 38.1% in the control group to 51.2% in the treatment group), followed by “risk of imprisonment” (from 28.5% to 39.7%) and “the risk of losing all of one’s money” (from 34.7% to 45.2%). The impacts for “risk of beatings” (+10.3 percentage points) and the “risk of forced labour” are also significant and large. These topics were all mentioned during the MaM film screenings. For the “risk of lack of food and water” (+4.7 percentage points) and the “risk of deportation” (+6.2 percentage points), the effect is positive but not significant.³⁶

³⁶ These variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale. For the purposes of the analysis, variables were recoded to binary measures, the two categories being “very likely” (5 on the five-point scale) and “likely or less” (4 or less on the five-point scale). The impacts are reported for people assessing risks as “very likely”. The regression results are robust to using the cut-off “likely” (step 4 on the five-point Likert scale). As an additional robustness check and to test for multiple hypotheses, an index variable was created, pooling the seven risk variables. The treatment impact on the index is highly significant. The results are shown in the Technical Annex (Table A15).

The probability that a migrant would suffer from violence and the degree to which a potential migrant would assess the risk to his or her life were asked during the exit and endline surveys. For the “risk of violence” question, the evaluation shows a similar effect for the exit and endline surveys (+9.1 and +8.8 percentage points, respectively, significant at the 1 per cent level). For the “risk to life” question, a large and significant effect for the endline survey can be observed (+8 percentage points), but no effect during the exit survey.³⁷ The “risk of deportation” variable is significant with a 6 percentage point increase, and the “risk of not having enough food” exhibits a positive coefficient, but the results are not significant.

The campaign had no impacts on the perceived “chances to arrive” or the perceived “chances to stay” in the destination country (see Table A18 in the Technical Annex).³⁸ Thus, overall, the film screenings were successful in raising the risk perception of participants.

4.3.3 Subgroup analysis – risk perception

The main analysis of the MaM effects on risk perception shows large increases in the perceived riskiness of the migration journey. The subgroup analysis for risk perception also reveals some interesting patterns (see Table A17 in the Technical Annex for a full list of interaction effects).

The impact on risk perception was almost entirely driven by younger (aged under 24) unmarried potential migrants without children. The impact for older potential migrants was much smaller and often non-existent (and mainly insignificant). For the group of younger potential migrants, the MaM film had a positive and significant effect for all nine risk variables.

The impacts are smaller for females, and, in some cases, negative (reduced risk perception for lack of food and water, beating and deportation). One of the reasons is that women were underrepresented in the study and the size of the female subgroup was therefore much smaller, making it harder to detect effects. For men, the effect on risk is large and significant for all nine questions.

The impacts are slightly smaller for people who knew more than five people abroad. For the group that knew more people abroad, the impacts are non-existent or barely significant. However, there are consistent impacts for the group of people who knew relatively few people abroad.

The MaM film screenings increased risk perception mainly for the group that reported lower initial intention to migrate during the invite survey. This is an interesting and relevant result for targeting purposes. It suggests that those potential migrants who have a lower intention to migrate seem to be more open to new information. Conversely, there are no impacts for the participants that voice a higher intention to migrate at baseline. It is possible that those that have already firmly made up their minds are less susceptible to new information contradicting already internalized narratives. For people who stated that at the end of the month, the money they earn is always enough, the campaign had virtually no impact.

³⁷ However, as discussed in the limitations section, the exit survey is considered not as reliable as the endline survey.

³⁸ The dependent variable was originally measured on a seven-point Likert scale, which was recoded to binary with the cut-off being “good chances” or better (step 5 on the scale).



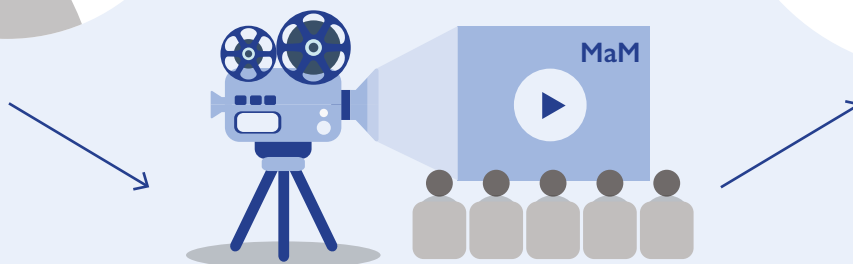
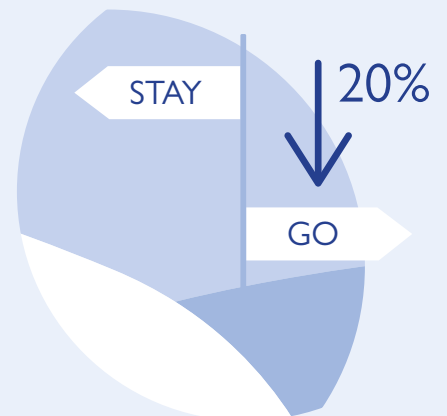
4.4

INTENTION TO MIGRATE (IRREGULARLY)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION



While **50 PER CENT** of potential migrants in the study report that it is 'probable', 'very likely' or 'certain' that they will leave Senegal in the next two years, **60 PER CENT** report that they would not consider migrating *irregularly*.



Overall, the MaM events further reduced the intentions to migrate irregularly by **20 PER CENT** relative to the comparison group.

4.4.1 Background

The previous sections outlined how participation in the campaign affected subjective information levels, objective knowledge on the migration journey, the situation at destination and the perception of risks associated with the journey. Changes in knowledge and perception may also affect overall intention to migrate irregularly (Allen and Eaton, 2005). In turn, intention shapes actual behaviour, which results in migration flows. Previous research has shown that migration intention is generally a useful predictor of actual behaviour (van Dalen and Henkens, 2008; Tjaden, Auer and Laczko, 2019). Emigration plans are associated significantly with actual migration flows.

Migration intention is generally a useful predictor of actual behaviour

Among those potential migrants who attended MaM town hall events, over half reported that it is “probable”, “very likely” or “certain” they will leave Senegal in the next two years (see Figure 12). This result is not surprising given that respondents were invited to participate in the campaign only if they revealed a general interest in migration before attending the events. This high emigration intention in West African countries is consistent with general population surveys (Laczko, Tjaden and Auer, 2017; Appiah-Nyamekye and Selormey, 2018).

Among survey respondents in this study, 38 per cent preferred to migrate to the United States of America or Canada, 57 per cent to countries in Europe, 2 per cent to other African countries and 4 per cent to other countries. The majority of people (51.8%) agreed somewhat or strongly that migration is a normal part of Senegalese culture. Survey respondents personally knew on average eight people who lived abroad, and 30 per cent received money in the form of remittances. Yet, only 7 per cent of survey respondents had previously migrated themselves.

Over 90 per cent of the potential migrants’ main reason to consider migration was to find work (68%) or to study abroad (22%). This finding is consistent with other surveys in West Africa (Mixed Migration Centre, 2018c).³⁹ Six per cent would migrate to escape family pressures to make more money. When asked about the largest influence on their migration decision, 25 per cent named their parents, while 10 per cent reported friends. Over half of respondents said that only they themselves influenced their migration decision. This is also consistent with other surveys in the region (Mixed Migration Centre, 2018c).

90 per cent of the potential migrants’ main reason to consider migration was to find work

Among all respondents, 44 per cent reported they had already made some preparation for a potential move. This shows a large difference between a general interest in migration and pursuing specific plans (Tjaden, Laczko and Auer, 2019). The most common preparation included seeking information about the journey (37%), preparing a passport (32%) and saving money (29%). Only 12 per cent of respondents prepared a visa application and just 6 per cent had already applied for a visa.

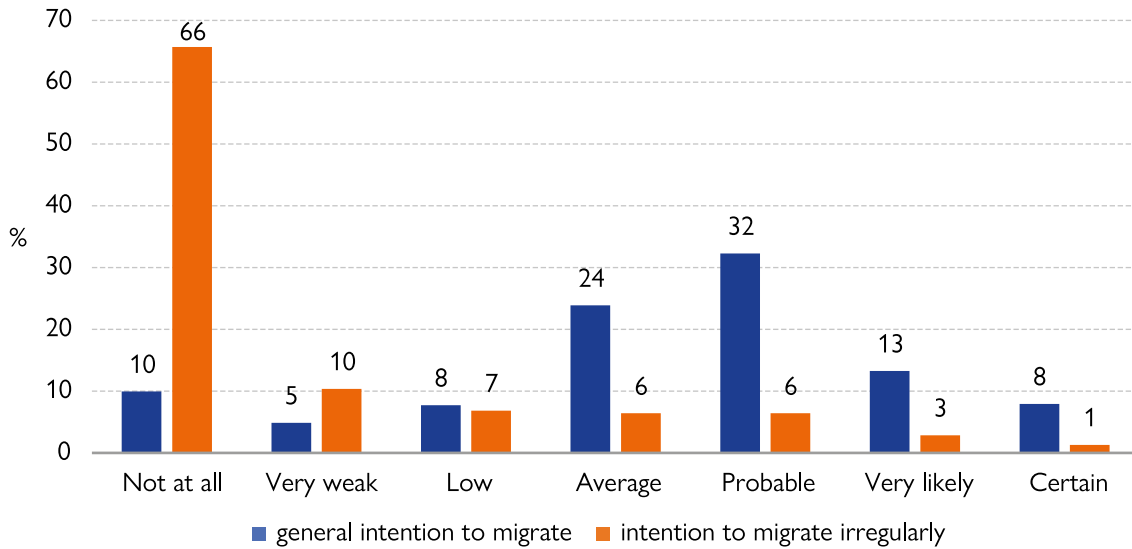
The results show a large difference between the interest in migration generally and the intention to migrate irregularly. Figure 12 shows, for example, that 53 per cent of respondents said that it is probable, very likely or certain⁴⁰ they will migrate within the next two years, yet only 10 per cent provided the same answer regarding irregular migration intention. Overall, 66 per cent of the respondents reported they do not seriously consider migrating irregularly and only 8 per cent of respondents would encourage a friend to migrate irregularly. These results presented in Figure 12 are based on the sample of control group participants only, given that the responses from the treatment group have already been affected by participating in the film.

³⁹ Migrations between Africa and Europe Project. Available from <https://mafeproject.site.ined.fr/en/>.

⁴⁰ Representing steps 5, 6 and 7 on a seven-point Likert scale.

The large differences regarding the types of intention to migrate (irregular versus regular) should be interpreted with caution. Respondents may not be willing to openly admit any intention to migrate irregularly given the legal implications. Furthermore, many potential migrants were not well informed about the legal and procedural context of their migration opportunities (see section 4.2). For example, over 90 per cent of potential migrants listed economic or educational motivations for leaving and 73 per cent said they were not aware of asylum procedures. Among the minority of respondents with knowledge on asylum, 70 per cent still reported economic factors as the main reason for migration. This suggests that the distinction between regular and irregular migration may not be apparent for some respondents or at least indicate a level of cognitive dissonance in the absence of legal alternatives.

Figure 12: Percentage of participants who have considered migration within the next two years



Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019. Results restricted to control group responses (N = 452). The question “have you seriously considered migrating within the next two years?” was asked in the endline surveys; by then, treatment group participants had already been affected by MaM film events and therefore would not represent an objective baseline reference.

4.4.2 Campaign impacts

The MaM impact evaluation design (RCTs, see section 3.2) allowed estimation of the effect of exposure to the MaM campaign on the intention to migrate, to migrate irregularly and to prepare a move. Findings show varying, small and mostly insignificant effects of the campaign on *general* migration intention (which includes destinations within Africa).⁴¹ This is not surprising given the strong focus of MaM on stressing the risks of *irregular* migration to Europe.

However, the campaign reduced the intention to migrate irregularly by 20 per cent and migration preparation by 16 per cent. Potential migrants who were exposed to the MaM campaign were 6.9 percentage points less likely to report any intention to migrate irregularly (27.4%) compared to the control group (34.3%) (see Figure 13). Participants were 7 percentage points less likely to report they have made any preparation for leaving in the period since participating in the film event (36.8%) compared to those in the control group (43.8%).

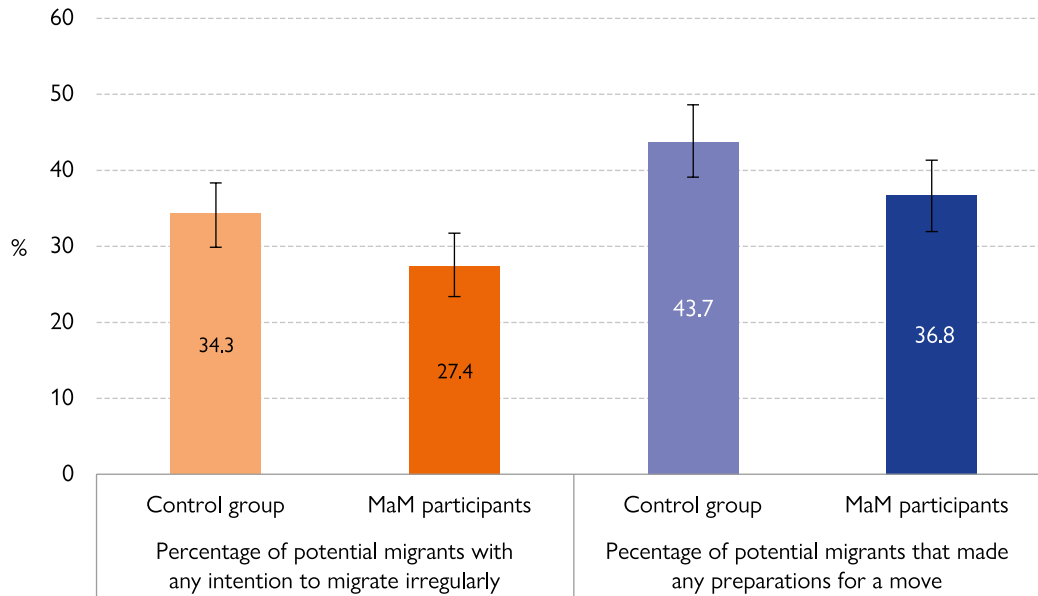
It is important to note that intention does not necessarily reflect migration behaviour, although previous research has provided a strong indication that intention is one of the strong predictors of eventual migration behaviour (van Dalen and Henkens, 2008; Tjaden, Auer and Laczko, 2019). The MaM

The campaign reduced the intention to migrate irregularly by 20 per cent

⁴¹ See the Technical Annex for supplementary analyses.

impact evaluation was not designed to measure the impact of the campaign on irregular migration flows. This is important but would have posed tremendous methodological (and financial) challenges that were beyond the scope of this study.⁴²

Figure 13: Average treatment effects of the MaM campaign on potential migrants' intention to migrate



Notes: MaM Impact Evaluation Dataset 2019. Results for the treatment group are identified based on the “empty” regression model without control variables. Results are robust against adjusting for a wide range of sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics, migration intention at baseline and neighbourhood fixed effects. Both treatment effects are significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. See Table A21 in the Technical Annex for full results. See Table A8 and Table A9 in the Technical Annex for a description and operationalization of variables. Intention to migrate irregularly includes potential migrants who responded with a “very weak”, “low”, “average”, “probably”, “very likely” and “certain” (excluding “not at all”) probability of migrating irregularly in the next 24 months.

Two main findings emerge from the analysis on migration intention. First, while most respondents had seriously considered leaving Senegal, 66 per cent reported they would not do so irregularly. At the same time, most potential migrants were neither aware of the legal and procedural context of migration to Europe nor that the reasons for leaving that most potential migrants report qualify them for international protection.⁴³

The second key finding is that the MaM campaign was successful in reaching out to potential migrants with an interest in migration. Attending the MaM town hall screening significantly reduced the likelihood of preparation for a move and the intention to migrate irregularly.

⁴² One reason for respondents not to participate in the endline survey could be that they have migrated in the meantime. The difference in attrition between control and treatment groups is minor and not statistically significant, which indicates limited scope for any link to emigration. However, the endline survey took place three months after participation in the MaM event, which was a very short observation period to assess migration behaviour.

⁴³ There is a risk of bias in the response to the question of irregular migration given that many potential migrants who may consider leaving irregularly would not say so openly in an interview (see section 3.6 on limitations, including social desirability bias). This could mean that the “true” intention to migrate irregularly could be higher.

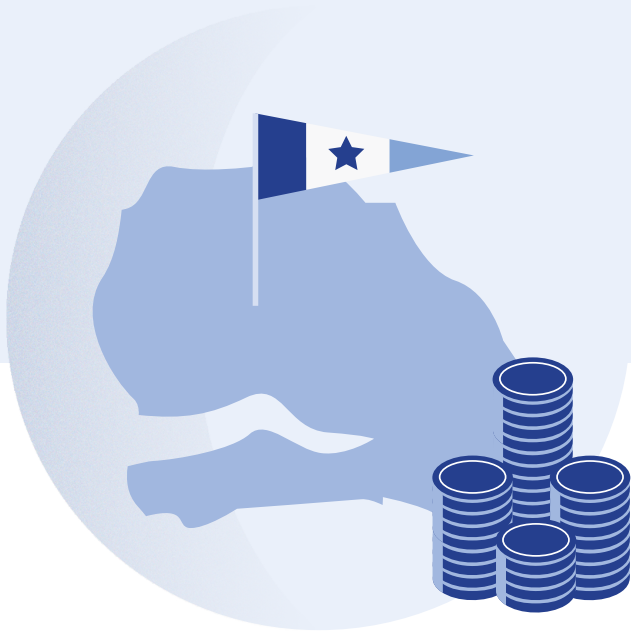
4.4.3 Subgroup analysis

The data allow for further analysis of the effects of the events for particular subgroups (see Table A22 in the Technical Annex).

The campaign was particularly effective in reducing the intention to migrate irregularly for potential migrants under the age of 24, women, single and unemployed people, as well as those respondents that had few contacts abroad, were less financially stable and felt generally less well informed about migration.

The primary aim of the information campaign was to raise awareness of the risks associated with irregular migration, not regular migration. The distinction between regular and irregular migration may not be clear to many potential migrants and the transition between the two can be gradual. For this reason, potential migrants were asked about regular migration intention. On average, there were minor effects of the campaign on general intention to migrate (regularly). However, some interesting results emerge for particular subgroups. The evaluation finds that the events have a larger effect on those who were over the age of 23, with the potential to save, with limited information about migration before the campaign and who do not receive remittances from abroad were less likely to want to migrate (in general) after participating in the MaM event. With regard to preparation to migrate (regularly), the campaign had a large effect on potential migrants older than 23, those with children and those with a very high intention to migrate.

It emerges from this analysis that potential migrants who have already prepared to migrate (regularly) are different from those migrants willing to migrate irregularly. Campaigns should tailor messages and assistance for groups that are at varying stages of their decision-making process. Efforts to facilitate safer alternatives to irregular migration should focus on the young (below 24), unemployed, unmarried, less financially stable and those with less access to information provided through networks abroad.



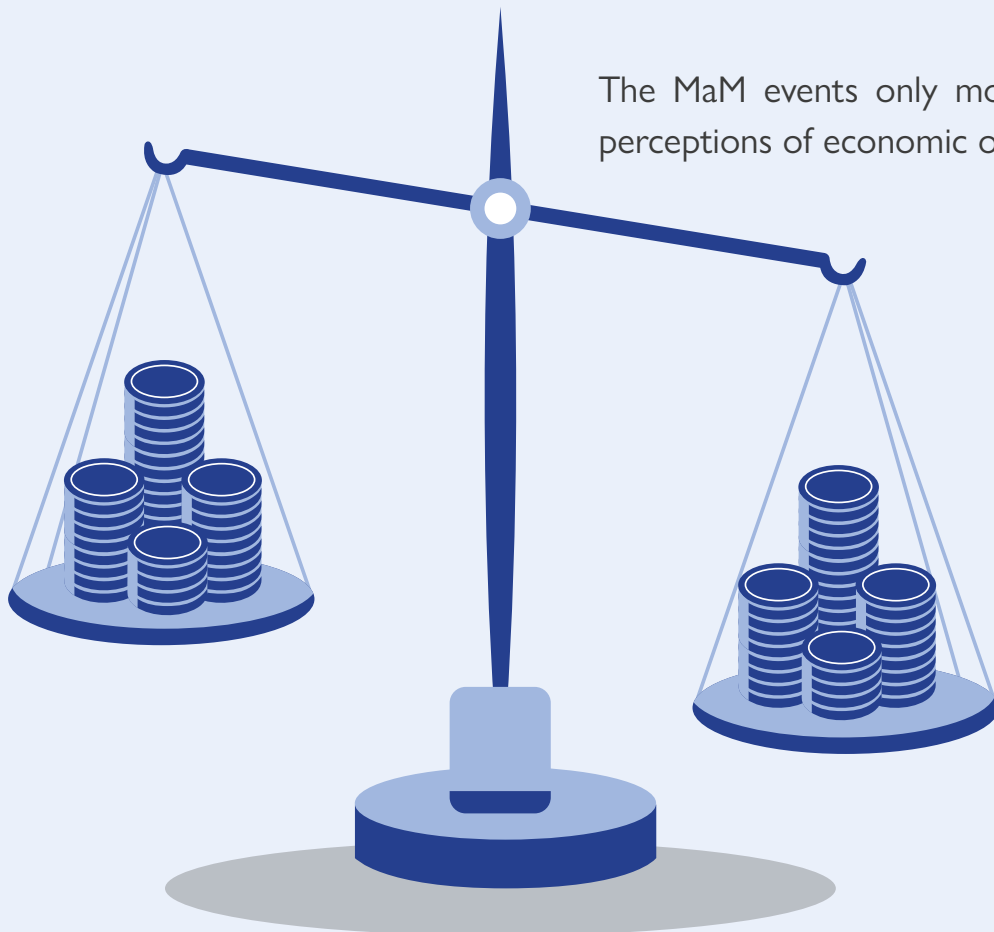
4.5

PERCEPTION OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN SENEGAL

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION



Almost half of potential migrants assess the economic opportunities in Senegal as at least average.



The MaM events only modestly increased positive perceptions of economic opportunities in Senegal.

4.5.1 Background

The main reason for irregular migration from Senegal is the lack of economic opportunities and rapid population growth (de Haas, 2010; Baizán and González-Ferrer, 2016). While economic growth has been strong in recent years, per capita GDP has been stagnating for the last 10 years and has only increased by approximately 43 per cent since 1987. Other countries in the region were more successful during this period. For example Ghana increased its GDP per capita by a factor of six in the same time period and Nigeria had a fourfold increase.⁴⁴ Every year, 200,000 young people join the labour market in Senegal.⁴⁵ “Families and individuals rely on migration as a legitimized strategy to increase resources and redistribute labor” (Baizán and González-Ferrer, 2016). Migration is often a risk-pooling family decision to increase incomes, as well as to avoid downward social mobility. Studies show that the unemployed in Senegal are three times as likely to migrate compared to those that are employed (Baizán and González-Ferrer, 2016).

While the lack of economic opportunities is commonly listed as a main driver of emigration, evidence remains inconclusive regarding the effect of higher incomes on migration pressures in the short term (Clemens and Postel, 2018; Lanati and Thiele, 2018; Dreher, Fuchs and Langlotz, 2019). Somewhat counterintuitively, additional financial resources may increase emigration because families can more easily afford the costly journeys. However, sustained economic development over longer time periods may decrease emigration pressures as local labour markets can provide sufficient income opportunities.

Only 20.8 per cent in the MaM participant sample said they were always able to save money and 32.5 per cent stated that their household income was always enough to meet monthly expenses for their household. Some 37.8 per cent had never held a salaried job, and only 13.5 per cent reported having permanent employment.

4.5.2 Campaign impacts

The MaM campaign marginally increased the positive perception of economic opportunities in Senegal immediately after the screening (in the exit survey). In the exit survey, the percentage of people who assessed the economic opportunities as at least “medium” was 63 per cent in the treatment group and 47 per cent in the control group.⁴⁶ During the more reliable endline data collection, the effect was smaller and not significant (a 4.5 percentage point increase from 56.2 per cent to 60.7 per cent; see Table A19 in the Technical Annex).

To summarize, there was a large short-term effect of the MaM campaign on the positive perception of economic opportunities in Senegal that faded over time.

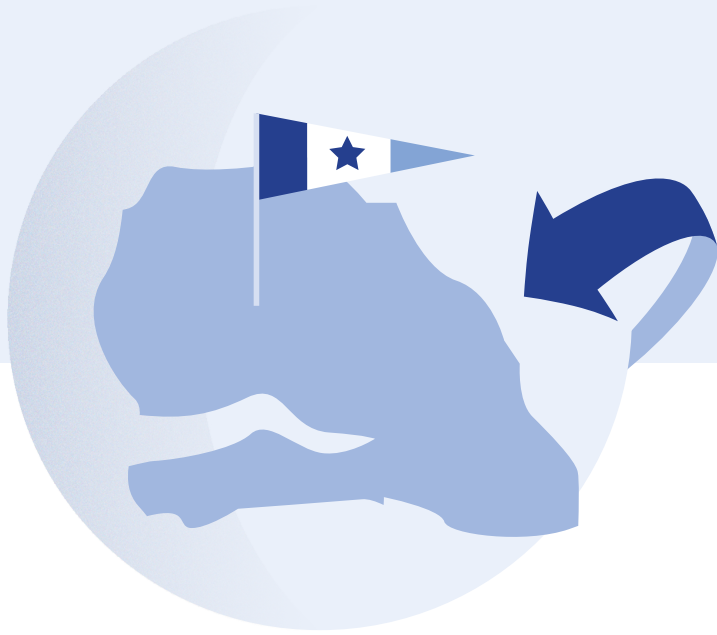
⁴⁴ World Bank Data – GDP per capita (current USD). Available from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAPCD?locations=SN>.

⁴⁵ Ighobor, K., “Africa’s jobless youth cast a shadow over economic growth”, United Nations Africa Renewal. Available from www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/special-edition-youth-2017/africas-jobless-youth-cast-shadow-over-economic-growth.

⁴⁶ “Medium” was the fourth level on a seven-point Likert scale.



Migrants who returned home from Libya get behind – and in front of – the camera in Lagos, Nigeria, to share their experiences and help inform their communities about the risks of irregular migration. The initiative is part of the Migrants as Messengers project. © IOM 2018/Julia BURPEE



4.6

PERCEPTION OF RETURNEES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SECTION

ONE IN THREE POTENTIAL MIGRANTS IN THE STUDY thinks that returnees should be 'ashamed' of themselves as a result of failed migration.



The MaM events had a small positive impact on the perception of potential migrants by increasing the percentage that respond that returnees can be 'proud' of themselves.

4.6.1 Background

Successful international migrants are often seen as heroes in their home communities. Conversely, returning migrants frequently suffer from the stigma of being perceived as a disappointment upon their return (Toma and Kabbanji, 2017). Often, families pool resources to send a member to Europe. Returning after years abroad (from a transit or destination country) with empty hands can then be perceived as a massive failure. This fear was echoed by the returnees in the MaM film. Indeed, data showed that 29.7 per cent of people who were not exposed to the MaM content stated that returning migrants should be “ashamed” of themselves and 56 per cent felt at least some family pressure to migrate. Coming back home (even on visits) with little or no money to hand out to the family can be a source of shame. Some migrants even delayed visits of family and friends due to the pressure of high expectations. This can become a vicious cycle, as families might expect even more financial success the longer the family member is away (Hernández-Carretero, 2015). “The pressure to try can be so intense that some men who fail never return home. Ashamed, they would rather have their families think they are dead” (Searcey and Barry, 2017). Indeed, debt, family commitments and the shame of failure are factors for stigmatization of returnees (Schuster and Majidi, 2015).

“Returning migrants frequently suffer from the stigma upon their return”

IOM is implementing assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programmes to help irregular migrants return to their home countries safely and with dignity rather than facing deportation. The MaM project attempted to tackle objectives 3 (Returnees are able to overcome individual challenges impacting their reintegration) and 4 (Communities have the capacity to provide an enabling environment for reintegration) of the IOM Framework for AVRR (IOM, 2018b). Returnees are assisted to overcome their individual challenges by becoming part of a returnee community (as migrant “messengers” – objective 3), and potential migrants learn about the plight of the returnees through the MaM campaign contents (objective 4). By being exposed to the personal and emotional testimonies of returnees, communities of origin can feel empathy and raise awareness about the difficult situations that returnees have lived through.

4.6.2 Campaign impacts

During the course of the MaM project, returnee volunteers who contributed and shared their testimonies (anecdotally) highlighted they did not suffer as much from stigma after they returned home as they might have expected before their return.

The MaM campaign had a small positive impact on the perception of returnees among the sample of potential migrants in Dakar

Findings demonstrate that the MaM campaign had a small positive impact on the perception of returnees among the sample of potential migrants in Dakar (see Table A20 in the Technical Annex). In the MaM treatment group, 58.6 per cent stated that returnees could be “proud” of themselves, as opposed to 52.7 per cent in the control group. However, the effect of 5.9 percentage points is only marginally statistically significant.

The MaM film also increased the level of trust in returning migrants as an information source on migration, as opposed to governments or international organizations, by 9.4 per cent.



5. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 4 presented the main effects of the MaM campaign on different outcomes (information level, knowledge, perception and intention). In this chapter, lessons learned are drawn from the results based on the study and pointers for future campaigns provided.

- **There is a need for migration information:** Participants in the study in Dakar revealed information needs. One in three MaM study participants reported not being well informed about the risks associated with migration. Many were misinformed about the legal and procedural context of migration, underestimated the length, costs and related deaths of the journey and slightly overestimated the expected earnings at destination. These results underline a general demand for awareness-raising and information campaigns.
- **Peer-to-peer messaging works:** The MaM campaign trained returnees to record personal testimonies of their journeys, which were then shared with communities. The results show that returnees are a trusted source of information on migration and that their emotional messages had a large impact on increasing risk perception and decreasing the intention to migrate irregularly. Furthermore, involving returnees as volunteers to support the design and implementation of the campaign can boost local ownership and help tailor the campaign for its intended audience.
- **Targeting is key:** Campaign effects vary depending on the subgroup and the desired outcome(s), thus highlighting the need for tailored messaging. The results suggest that risk communication about migration is particularly effective for younger populations under the age of 24, who are single and who do not have access to resources. While taking into account the limitations of the study, this suggests that future campaigns could focus on youth and young adults in economically marginalized neighbourhoods. Attempts to draw gender-disaggregated conclusions have been made where possible. This is more difficult as less women than men were invited (and showed up) to the screening, making this subgroup smaller.⁴⁷
- **Empowering returnees is important:** The impact evaluation shows that returnees have the potential to be powerful communicators who can significantly change the risk perception and migration intention of their peers. However, participation in the MaM project also had positive side effects on the returnees themselves. The campaign provided returnees with a purpose, a community and support for coping with reintegration into society.

⁴⁷ Enumerators were instructed to approach as many women as men during the random walks for the invitation phase. It is hypothesized that the main reason for the gender imbalance is that individuals were excluded from the study that did not report at least a medium level of migration intention (on a scale from 1 to 5) at the invitation stage. It could be the case that women reported heightened migration intention less than men and were therefore not invited.

- **Follow-up actions can strengthen the message:** One-off events do not answer all potential migrant's questions. MaM treatment group participants sought more information after participation in the events, highlighting that campaigns should provide a place to turn to if more specific information is needed. The campaign also had no positive impact on factual knowledge about the legal and procedural context of migration and the situation of migrants in the country of destination – information that is highly relevant for those that are seriously considering or planning to migrate. Possible follow-up information could be provided online, or via a telephone line, text-message services, social media or regular community meetings.
- **Evaluation should not be an afterthought:** Incorporating a strong data-collection component creates feedback loops between implementers and evaluators. This benefits project design and implementation. Thinking about how to measure causal impact sheds light on implicit assumptions and helps to turn abstract objectives into more measurable targets. For every campaign, evaluation is an integral part of its planning and implementation, and should be considered from the beginning of the campaign.



6. CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

Debates on the impact of information campaigns in migration are often based on anecdotal evidence. A growing body of research suggests that potential migrants are more likely to believe information obtained through their trusted social networks rather than “official” information campaigns. The IOM MaM campaign in West Africa was designed to address this distrust through the use of innovative peer-to-peer messaging relying on emotional identification rather than sharing facts. A rigorous impact evaluation in the form of an RCT was conducted to identify the causal effects of the campaign in Dakar. This report has focused on the impact evaluation of information events in Dakar, one core element of the overall MaM campaign. Additional future analysis will further explore the rich data sets collected in this study to help answer other important questions on migration.

The results of the evaluation suggest that the campaign was successful in increasing subjective information levels and risk awareness among the groups of potential migrants participating in the study in Dakar, and it reduced the intention of participants to migrate irregularly. In the treatment group, risk awareness of potential migrants went up by approximately 25 per cent. Similarly, the campaign reduced the stated intention to migrate irregularly by 20 per cent. The size of the MaM project effect on potential migrants was considerable compared to a large body of evaluations of similar social and behavioural change communication interventions (Elder et al., 2004; Snyder, 2007; Wakefield, Loken and Hornik, 2010; Mwaikambo et al., 2011; Coville et al., 2014; Banerjee, La Ferrera and Orozco, 2018).

It is important to note that the study did not analyse the effect of the campaign on actual migration flows. Yet, the results presented here are important, as expressed intention to migrate has been shown to be associated with actual migration behaviour. The results are limited to the sample of potential migrants in eight neighbourhoods of Dakar. The findings provide strong indication that the mechanism of peer-to-peer communication can work. This suggests that there is potential for scaling up the campaign (and accompanying it with further research) to facilitate informed migration decisions and reduce harm for irregular migrants embarking on perilous journeys towards Europe.

This study is a first step in a broader learning process for the entire field of migration. It is hoped that this report will motivate further evaluations across agencies, countries and campaigns. Future evaluations could address the following open questions:

1. Do the effects of information campaigns last beyond six months?
2. Does information play a crucial role in changing behaviour towards safe migration in comparison with alternative pressures (e.g. economic, security and social issues)?
3. How do information campaigns affect subgroups of people in different settings (e.g. rural areas or other cultural contexts)?
4. How do other means of information dissemination, particularly popular online communication approaches (and also radio, posters and school interventions), perform in relation to the peer-to-peer approach in the town hall settings that were assessed in this evaluation?
5. What is the role of the extended peer network or so-called “secondary audience” (family, friends and contacts abroad) in the decision to migrate irregularly and how can they be considered in campaign efforts?

Additional studies of this type are needed for the MaM project to be adjusted where needed and inform scale-up in the West African region and beyond.

This impact evaluation aims to provide a case study on the effectiveness of peer-to-peer messaging and also a pioneering use of RCTs for migration information campaigns. The current lack of evidence on impacts slows progress in designing and implementing effective communication campaigns. This study hopes to encourage a broader push to further improve the evidence base in other fields of migration programming. Systematizing these types of evaluations and building them into IOM programming will push the boundaries of knowledge on migration issues and ultimately help increase the Organization’s global impact.



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Technical Annex

The Technical Annex, including detailed results tables, questionnaires and robustness checks, is available online at https://publications.iom.int/sites/default/files/technical_annex.pdf.

