



# Malaria risk perception and barriers for effective prophylaxis in the Sub-Saharan Africa 'Visiting friends and relatives' (VFR) traveller community in Hamburg

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**No conflict of interest to declare!**

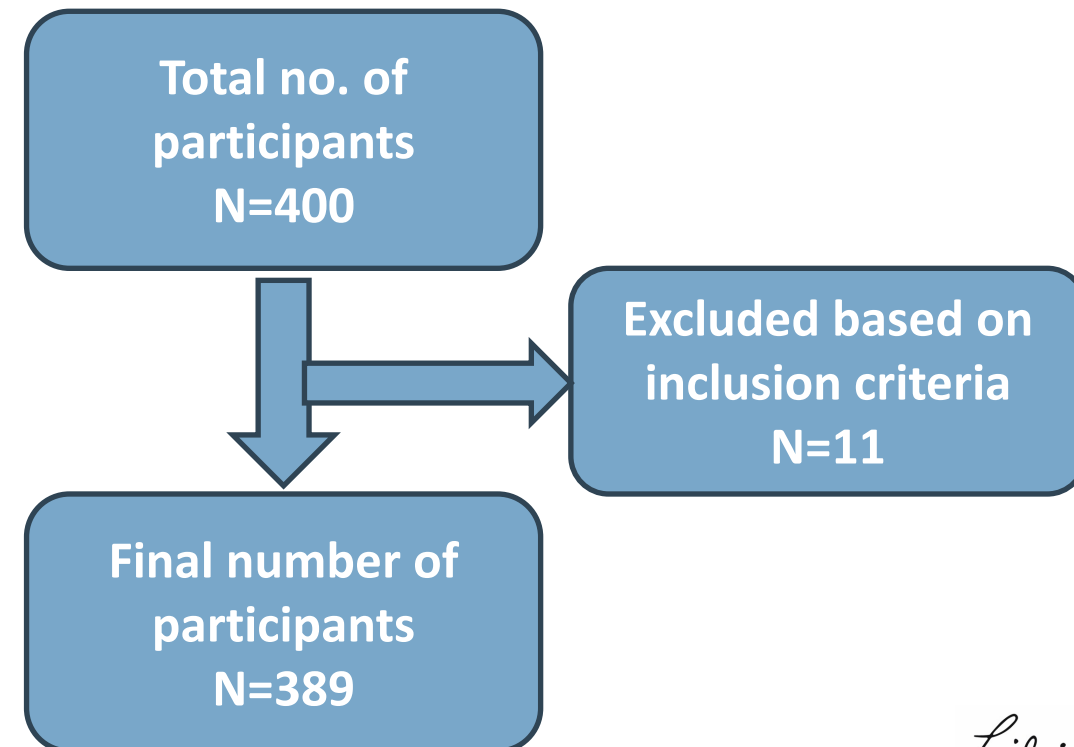
- VFR travellers to Africa have higher risk of contracting preventable travel associated infections such as malaria than other travellers.
- About 1000 malaria cases are reported in Germany per year: 65% of these infections are VFR travellers.
- Approximately 60 patients with malaria (hospitalised annually) in UKE-Hamburg, 80% are West African VFR travellers(own data)
- Improved access to travel medicine consultations for VFR travellers may help
- Identification of barriers important to improve malaria prevention in VFR.

## Aims

- explore the malaria risk perception and experience of West African VFR travellers and their attitude towards prophylactic measures and travel medicine advice
- identify strategies to better reach this group with tailored travel advice

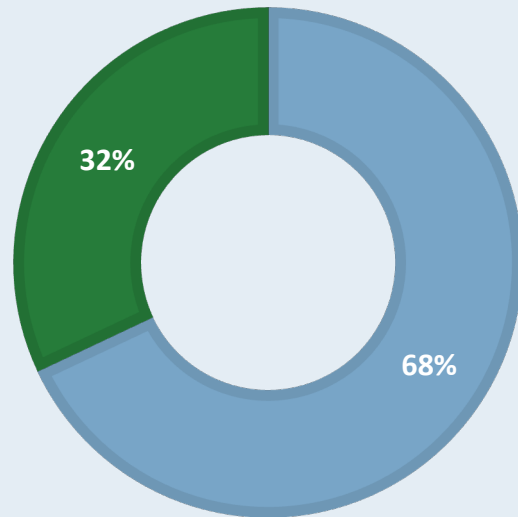
## Methods

- Questionnaire based anonymous survey
  - Interviewers: African VFRs
  - VFR from Sub-Saharan Africa at Hamburg Airport
  - 3 languages- English, French and German
- Conducted from Jan-August 2023
- Educative leaflet was given to participants after the interviews
- Inclusion Criteria
  - 18+
  - Sub-Saharan African decent
  - Visited an African country recently



## GENDER

■ Males ■ Female

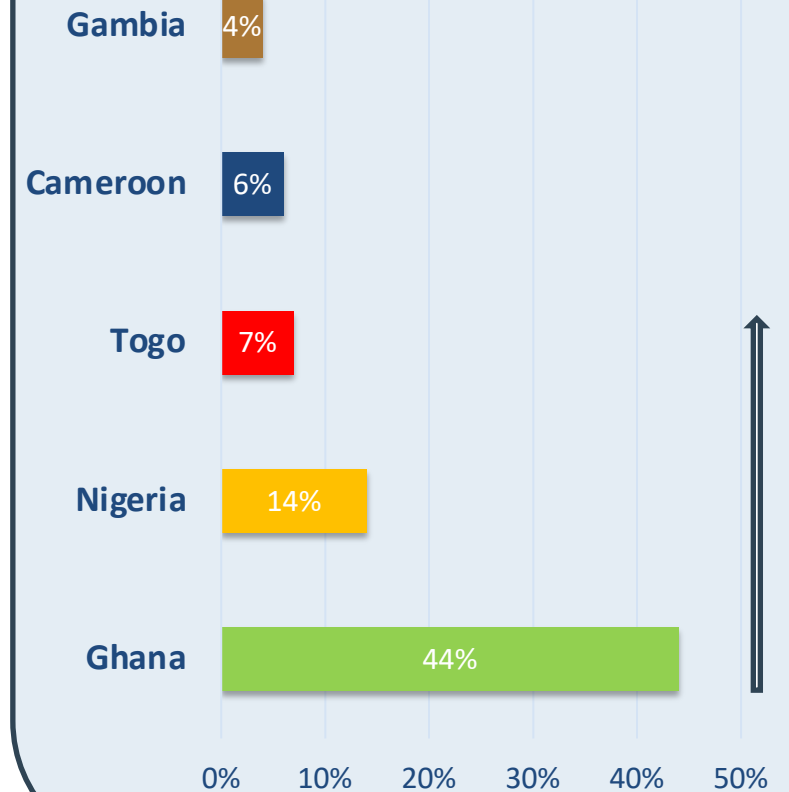


- **N = 389 adults**
- **N = 92 Children**
- **Male > Female**

## Duration

- 70% = 4 wks and less
- Median duration: 4 wks
- 90% = 2018-2023

## Countries visited



<b>N=389</b>			
<b>Before your last journey to Africa, did you seek medical travel advice?</b>	<b>N (col %)</b>	<b>What was the reason for not seeking travel medical advice?</b>	<b>N=181</b>
Yes	208(53)	I don't think its important	71(39)
No	181(47)	I did not think of it	64(35)
<b>Where did you seek travel medical advice?</b>	<b>(N=208)</b>	I didn't have time, because I had to travel on short term notice	9(5)
Institute for tropical medicine	51(26)		
Medical practice specialized in travel medicine	8(4)	I didn't have time, because I had to work	5(3)
General practitioner	127(61)	I only sought travel medical advice for the vaccination against yellow fever and my vaccination was still valid	3(1)

\*\*\* 9% thought there was either a vaccine for malaria or believed they were vaccinated against malaria.

## Mode of transmission

- 308(79%) knew how malaria can be transmitted
- However only 260(67%) chose bite from mosquito as the only and correct mode of transmission.
- 16%- food and water,
- 3% direct human to human
- 10%-did not know

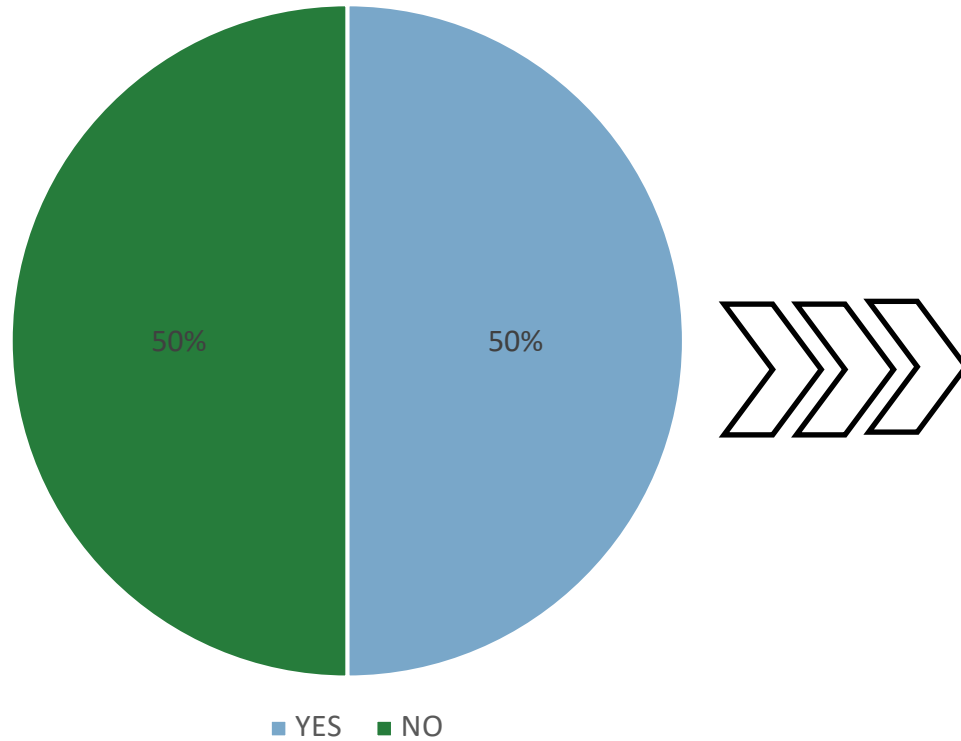
## Personal risk perception

- 32% - perceive risk as high

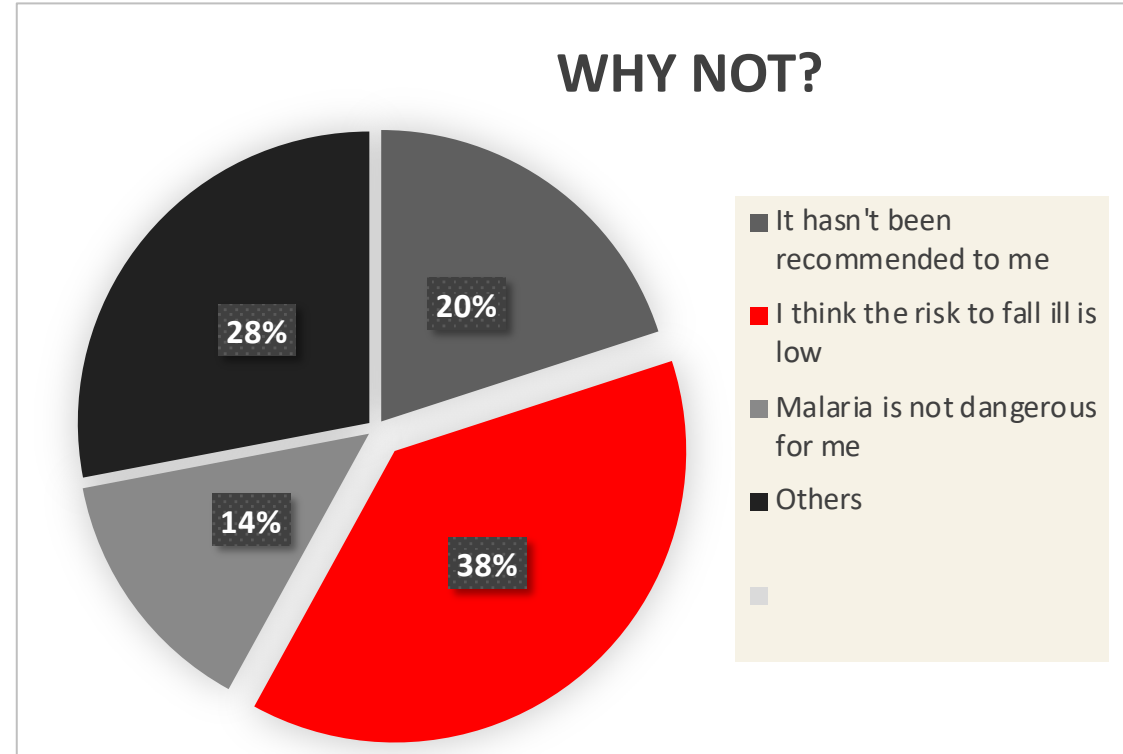
## Exposure prevention methods

- 212(54%) : Bed nets
- 174(46%): Mosquito repellent
- 73(19%) : Clean environment/ good hygiene
- 8(2%) : Impregnation of clothing with mosquito repellent

## USE OF CHEMOPROPHYLAXIS

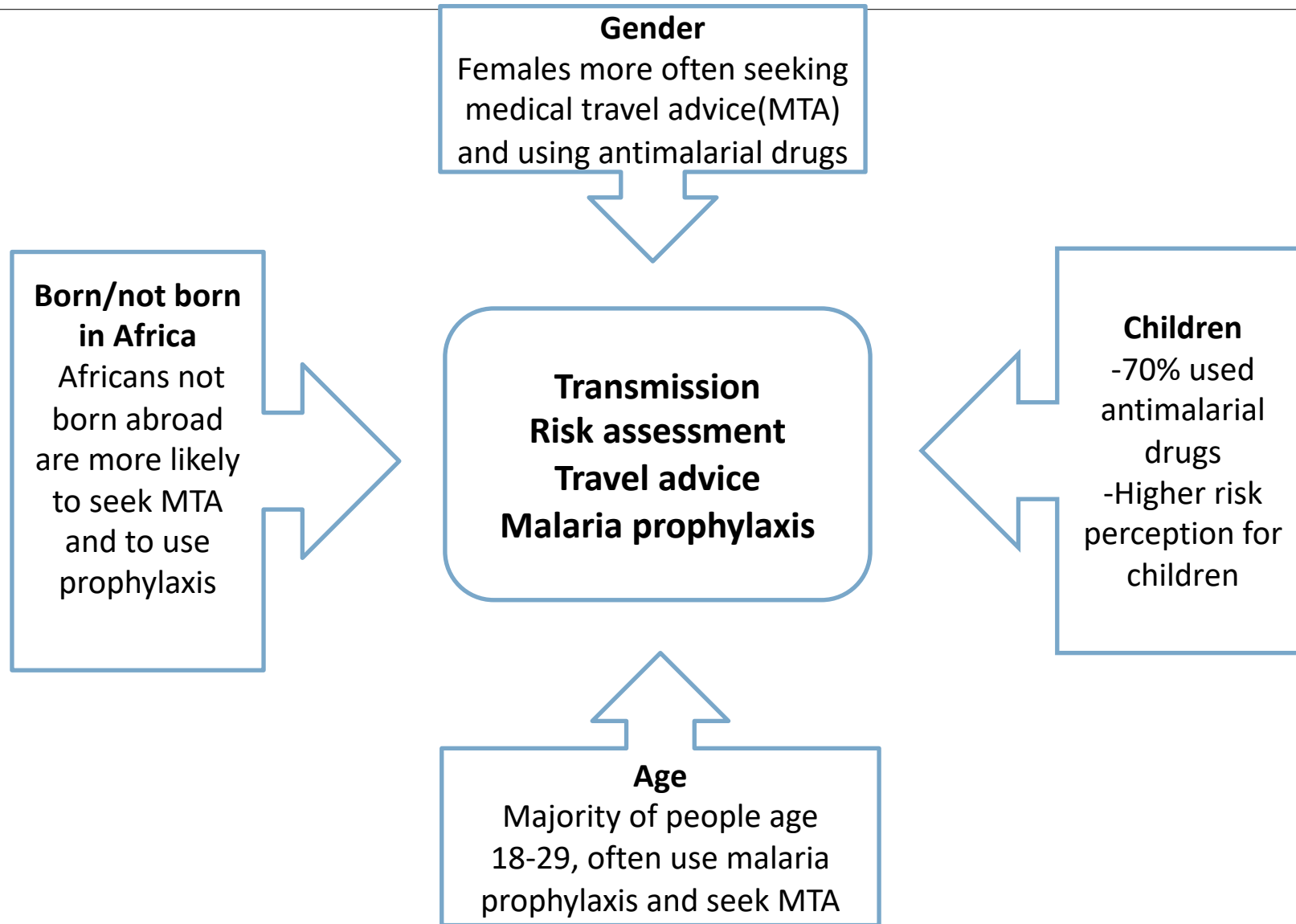


## WHY NOT?



**81% - no side effects**  
**19% - experienced side effects**





- General knowledge of malaria is satisfactory
- About 50% sought travel medical advice, 50% used malaria chemoprophylaxis
- Risk perception is low
- Risk perception for children is high
- Mistrust in healthcare providers on tropical infections was noted

## Strengths

- The mode of administration of the survey allowed us to properly assess the knowledge of malaria
- Unbiased setting and interviewers were of African descent
- The data is representative
- Survey was in English, French and German

## Limitations

- Rejections due to time constraints at airport
- Data is representative for Hamburg- potentially Germany
- More data from other countries needed
- VFRs predominantly from West and Central Africa

- VFRs - 65% of malaria cases in Germany
- Main reasons; low risk perception, mistrust and lack of culturally tailored medical travel.
- GPs play a key role, better doctor-patient communication
- **More specialized services for VFR travel advice!**

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*Thank you for your attention!*