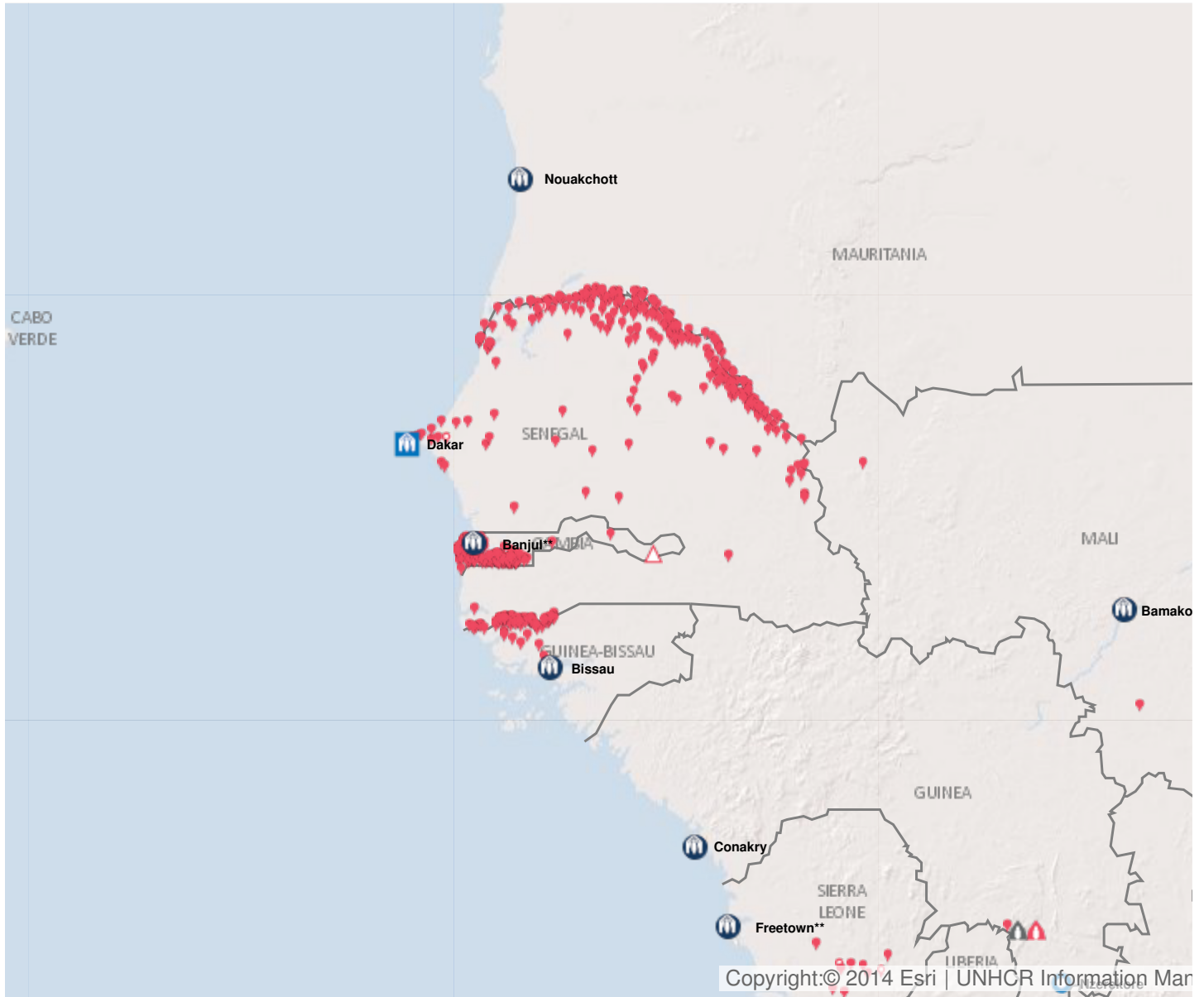


2018 Planning summary

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Operation: Senegal Regional Office

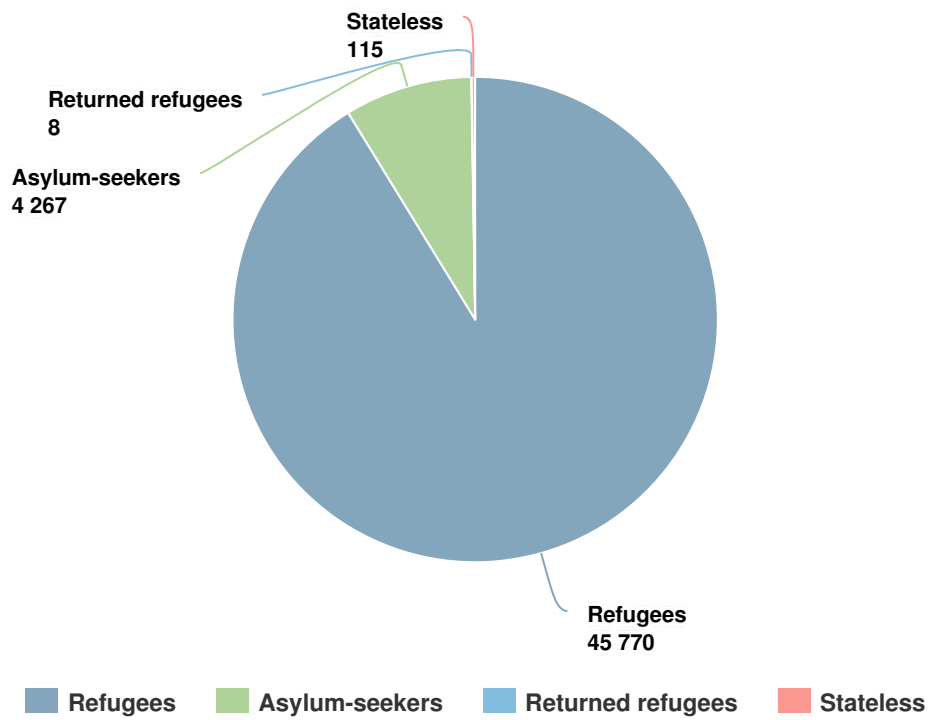


Latest update of camps and office locations **21 Nov 2016**.

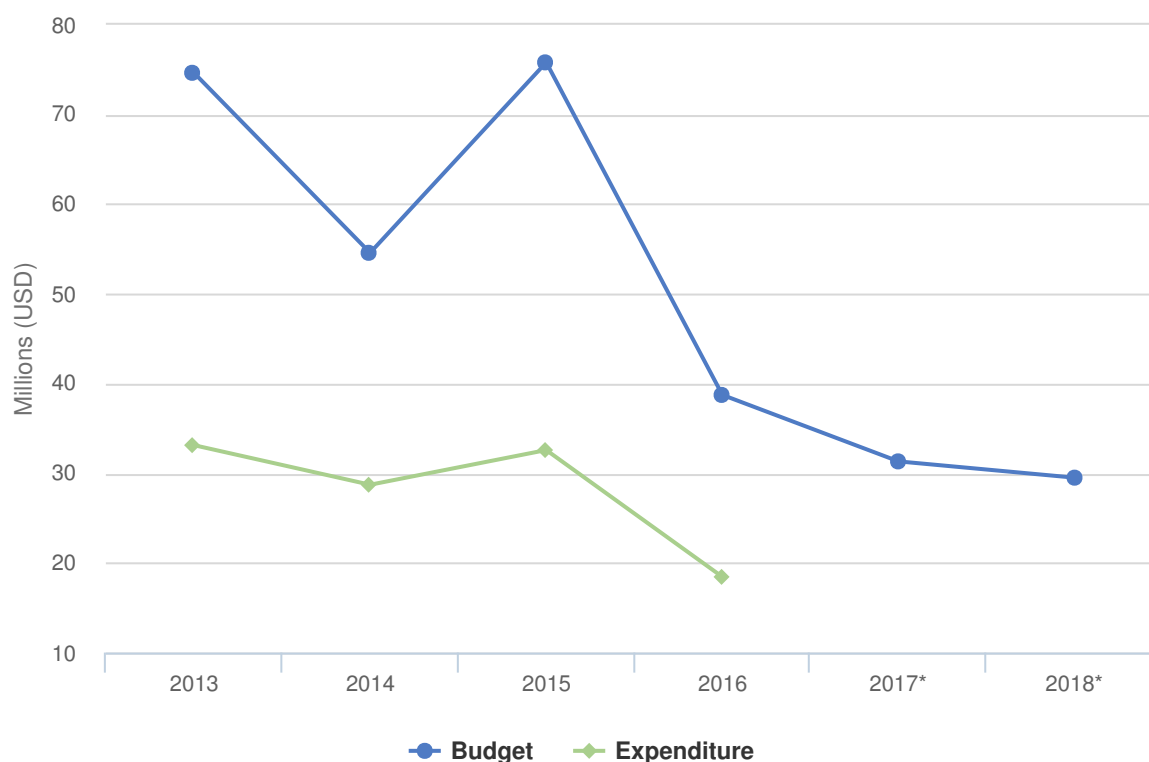
People of Concern

DECREASE IN
98% **2016**

2016	50,160
2015	2,232,797
2014	1,252,221



Budgets and Expenditure for Senegal Regional Office



Plan Overview

Operational environment

The overall economic and political situation in West Africa will be relatively secure despite the fact that threats from terrorist groups will remain real during 2018.

Under RO Dakar, the protracted refugees currently include Mauritians in Senegal, Senegalese in Gambia and Guinea Bissau, Ghanaians in Togo, Ivoirians in Guinea and Togo, and exempted - from application of the cessation clause - Liberians and Sierra Leoneans and a number of urban refugees of various nationalities in most of the countries in West Africa.

The multi-year multi-partner (MYMP) protection and solutions strategy for Senegal (Mauritians in Senegal and Senegalese returning from Gambia and Guinea Bissau) will continue to be pursued in 2018-2019 and beyond. In January 2017, all ECOWAS member States, under the Abidjan declaration, officially appointed a government coordinator on statelessness; 12 countries elaborated an action plan to end statelessness, seven countries have started the revision of the nationality law; two countries worked towards ensuring that people eligible to nationality obtain documentary proof; and 12 States are parties to the international Statelessness Conventions.

In 2018, RO Dakar will continue to work towards finding durable solutions for the refugees, mainly those in a protracted situations, with a specific emphasis on obtaining alternative legal status that will include long term resident permits/work permits and nationality documentation. Meanwhile, options for naturalization will also be explored for those refugees who are willing, keeping in mind that administrative procedures for naturalization are often cumbersome, very expensive and include numerous requirements which hamper the local integration process.

Response

Benin is hosting 800 refugees and 235 asylum-seekers of various nationalities: 77 per cent from Central African Republic, 17 per cent from Côte d'Ivoire and 6 per cent of other nationalities. The biggest needs are in the area of legal and institutional capacity, refugee status determination, access to education for children at school age and income generating activities for people of concern, women and girls protection against sexual violence and abuse, as well as child protection. Legislation in Benin guarantees access to work and business creation for people of concern.

UNHCR's response through RO Dakar in 2018 (Benin Office is scheduled to be closed by the end of 2017) will focus on reinforcing the protection environment, improving livelihood and self-reliance, partnerships and search for solutions. In particular, the strengthening of national legal and institutional frameworks. The consolidation of the asylum system will be carried out by continuing support to the Government to establish an autonomous, sustainable and quality asylum system. This will involve continuous advocacy for the passage of the asylum law, the nationality code and the decree reorganizing the national refugee commission. The revamped national strategy, which is based on four main pillars (employment, self-employment, vocational training, microfinance), is expected to enable refugees to have the necessary resources to meet their basic needs.

In **Gambia**, the current refugee population is close to 8,000 people consists mainly of refugees from Casamance, Senegal, (7,470). Most of the Senegalese refugees live in the rural area in over 80 host villages in Foni (West Coast Region), along the Gambian border with Senegal. The intensified peace initiative in Casamance did not result in any significant decrease in the Senegalese refugee population, even though spontaneous returns take place from time to time. In addition, the urban refugee population is 1,227 – the majority of whom are Senegalese but also include Ivorians, Liberians and Sierra Leoneans living in the Greater Banjul area.

In 2018, UNHCR's response will continue to revolve around the four main pillars of favourable protection environment, durable solutions, self-reliance and integration of refugees into the national systems. The key elements of this strategy include capacity development of relevant Government institutions and civil society organisations to assume more responsibility in refugee protection and assistance. Another key element is the continuation of information dissemination on durable solution options, especially voluntary repatriation and local integration, through sensitisation. With the recent political change in the country, many Gambians who fled the country under the former regime have now started returning. In light of the increasing numbers of returnees in 2018-2019, UNHCR will aim to provide the necessary support services for their reintegration in the country of origin.

Guinea-Bissau is home to some 8,500 refugees from the Casamance region of, Senegal. The majority of these refugees, who arrived more than 20 years ago, are well settled in villages across the rural area because they are farmers and share a similar ethnicity as well as affinities in culture, lifestyle, livelihoods and language with the local population. The country also hosts 76 urban refugees of various nationalities.

For Senegalese refugees in Guinea-Bissau, the main objectives will be to assist in voluntary repatriation of some 800 individuals and to finalize cases of 481 naturalization and 24 land formalization.

Political instability has created challenge in the implementation of planned activities, while bureaucracy curbs the land formalization and naturalization processes. The cost of naturalization is also very high and the presence of Government, private institutions and NGO's in Cachew Region is insufficient.

Senegal hosts 14,725 refugees and 3,313 asylum-seekers mainly from Mauritania. The main needs identified for 2018 are harmonization of UNHCR and the National Eligibility Committee' statistics and identification of gaps in addressing asylum claims; issuance of conventional travel documents easily-read by Senegalese authorities to ease refugee movement and ensure protection against illegal arrest; renewal of expired refugee ID cards and

advocacy for their recognition by private and public institutions; including protracted refugees in the new health policy (*'La Mutuelle'*) to increase the enrolment rate (currently stands at 15 per cent).

UNHCR's 2018 MYMP Protection and Solution strategy for Senegal will focus on six areas: 1. Mauritanian refugees who opt for local integration in Senegal will receive nationality certificates or long term resident permits. 2. Mauritanian refugees in Senegal who opt for the individual voluntary repatriation will be assisted for a safe and dignified return to their country of origin. 3. Mauritanian refugees who opt for local integration will be included in the development programme on par with nationals. 4. Given the spread of refugees across 244 sites, the complexity of the procedures and the illiteracy of most refugees, awareness centers will be established at the prefectures and sous-prefectures level where refugees will be assisted with their naturalization applications prior submitting the applications to the relevant ministries. 5. All Senegalese refugees living in the Gambia and Guinea Bissau who opt for the voluntary return will receive assistance for legal and socio-economic reintegration in Senegal. 6. Refugees who opt for local integration will have received documentation and Mauritanian refugees who will opt for mass repatriation will be assisted to do so.

Sierra Leone hosts some 700 refugees and asylum seekers in the beginning of 2017. A joint participatory assessment conducted by UNHCR and the National Registration Secretariat in February 2017, revealed the following findings: Reluctance of refugees to opt for local integration and voluntary repatriation as durable solutions; security and violence concerns; limited access to land for agricultural activities and shelter construction; and limited access to safe drinking water in two out of eight refugee locations.

The most notable constraint were due to the austerity measures implemented by the Government.

In 2018, UNHCR's priority areas of intervention will include: support the Government in the implementation of the National Action Plan on statelessness; reinforce advocacy with Government and relevant stakeholders for the inclusion of refugees in national development programmes; conclude the implementation of local integration and facilitate naturalization process for 632 refugees; ensure government assumes full responsibility of all protection matters related to refugees and other people of concern; advocate for the provision of compliant travel documents. Sierra Leone Office is scheduled to close by the end of 2017 and all the activities will be directly monitored by RO Dakar.

Togo hosts close to 10,000 Ghanaian refugees, including some 5,500 who arrived in 1982 and 1994 in the Kara and Sotouboua districts, as well as some 4,000 who arrived in 2012 and 2014 in the Tandjoare district. These refugees are not formally recognized by the Government, but those who arrived in 2012 and 2014 continue to benefit from UNHCR's assistance. Furthermore, there are close to 3,500 urban refugees of various nationalities, the majority of whom are from Cote d'Ivoire. Ghanaian refugees continue to perform regular cross-border movements between the two countries.

In 2018, UNHCR will organize data collection and share information on situation prevailing in the country of origin. This will include the carrying out of go-and-see visits, collecting information on the people of concern's intention to return. UNHCR's priority outcomes will be: 1. Strengthening the livelihood and self-reliance of refugees through the agro-pastoral project; 2. Local integration of 500 Ghanaian refugees in legal terms through the grant of alternative status; 3. Strengthening the capacity of the Government partner (the National Commission for Refugees) to manage UNHCR's project in rural areas; 4. Establishing the appeal commission and reducing the backlog of pending asylum applications; 5. Advocacy for ratification of two Conventions on statelessness by the Government; 6. Voluntary repatriation of some 300 Ivoirian refugees; 7. Naturalization of 116 Rwandan refugees; 8. Legal local integration of 500 Ghanaian refugees with access to alternative status.

The significant level of poverty of host communities where refugees are also living, which requires the intervention of development actors, remains a constraint.

Key priorities

The main priorities in the countries with RO Dakar in 2018 will be:

- Capacity development of relevant Government institutions and civil society organisations to assume more responsibility in refugee protection and assistance.
 - Gradually phasing out the direct material assistance, while consolidating the support to the most vulnerable refugees for self-reliance.
 - Focus on the implementation of the activities of the National Action Plan on statelessness.
 - Reinforce advocacy with government and relevant stakeholders for the inclusion of refugees in national development programmes in all the countries under the preview of RO Dakar.
 - Conclude the implementation of local integration and facilitate naturalization or alternative legal status process in Senegal and other countries.
 - Reinforcement of livelihood and self-reliance of urban and rural refugees through agro-pastoral project in Togo
 - Support the Government in the implementation of the National Action Plan on statelessness in all the countries within the preview of RO Dakar
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