



## Mission report - Protection Cluster Mali 11 July 2012

### I. Summary

PROCAP SPO as part of his assignment within the Global Protection Cluster Help Desk unit has conducted a monthly field mission from 7<sup>th</sup> June to 5<sup>th</sup> July in order to support UNHCR Mali Office in its role of protection cluster lead. Following-up on the Consolidated Appeal Process and as part of his mission of protection cluster coordinator, SPO has assessed the protection situation and conducted consultations with Protection cluster agencies and partners in coordination with UNHCR country representative in Mali. The protection situation and response has been identified as follow.

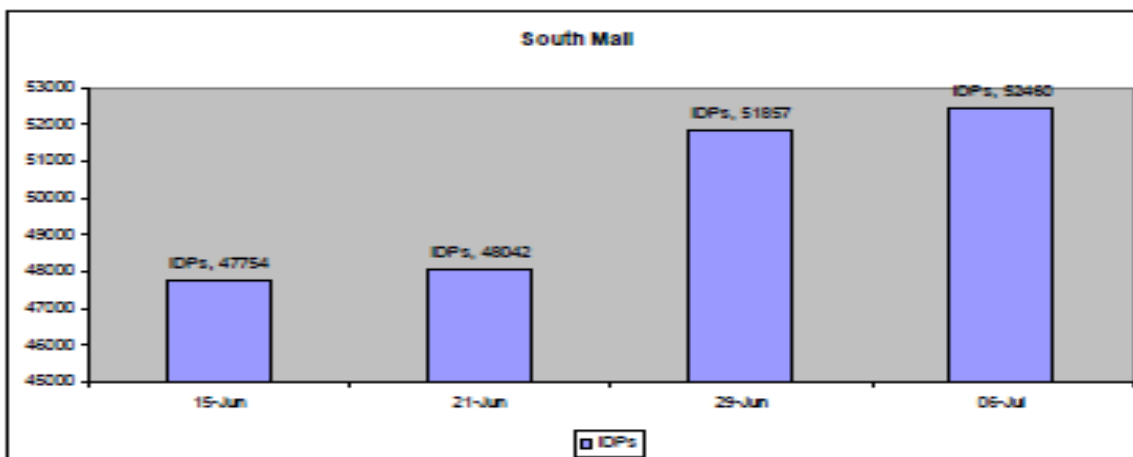
### II. Political and security situation

The situation in Bamako remains tense and unpredictable as the Transitional Government still face difficulty to impose its authority and the interim president did not come back to Mali yet. Former regime officials have been reportedly arrested and detained in military facilities by members of the military junta. Precarious calm reigned over north Mali after MNLA Tuareg rebels were evicted from the cities of Timbuktu and Gao where Islamists took control in late June 2012. The fortification over northern Mali territory of the Islamists presence reinforced their capacity to impose Sharia Law against local habits and civilian population will. In addition *Ansar Dine* started to destroy Sufi mausoleums of Muslim saints in Timbuktu allegedly as a direct reaction to UNESCO's decision to place the city on its list of endangered World heritage sites. In Bamako civil unrest took place in which daily protests took place in reaction to the lack of action by the Government of Mali and the army in the north. In the northern cities of Timbuktu and Kidal civilian, peaceful demonstrations were organized against the imposition of Sharia Law by radical Islamist movements and in Gao a demonstration against armed groups presence ended into clashes between MNLA and MUJAO elements involving civilian demonstrators. The security situation in Mali remains volatile with regard to the preparation of a military intervention by international forces against the occupation of North Mali by armed groups. Such operation might affect civilian security and increase internal and transnational population movement as well as extends the conflict to the neighboring countries which are already witnessing armed elements presence and insecurity.

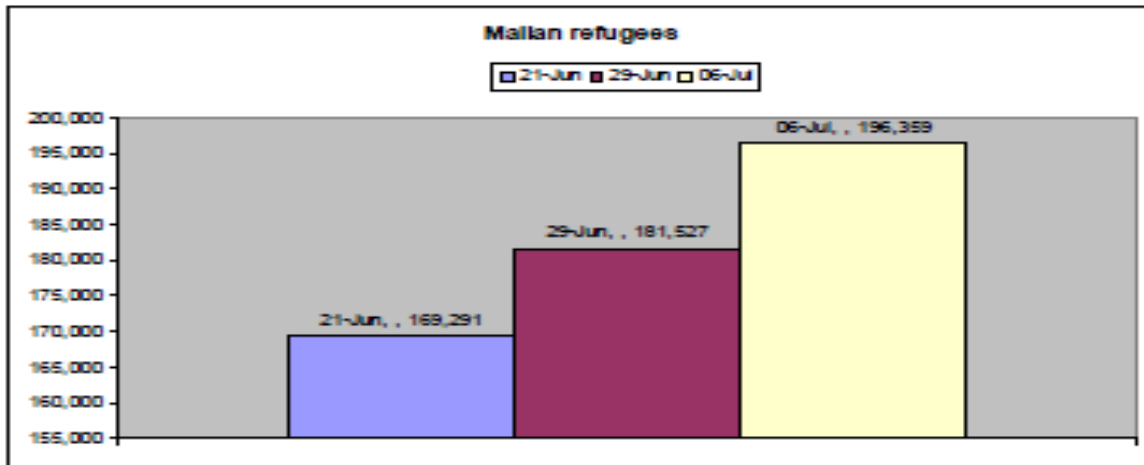
### III. Protection situation

#### 1. Dynamic of population movement

- 1.1. First population movement started in Mali January 17<sup>th</sup> 2012 with the fighting between governmental forces and opposition armed groups MNLA (*Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azaouad*) and Islamic groups *Ansar Dine*, MUJAO and AQMI. After a period of calm between May and June 2012, new population movement from north Mali to south Mali and to the neighboring countries took place in relation to clashes between MNLA and Islamic groups in Timbuktu between June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> with *Ansar Dine* and on 26 and 27 June in Gao where 35 persons, including civilians were killed and over 40 injured in violent confrontations between the MNLA and the MUJAO. According to primarily registrations, 5,000 new IDPs were registered in south Mali for the period between June 15<sup>th</sup> and July 6<sup>th</sup>.

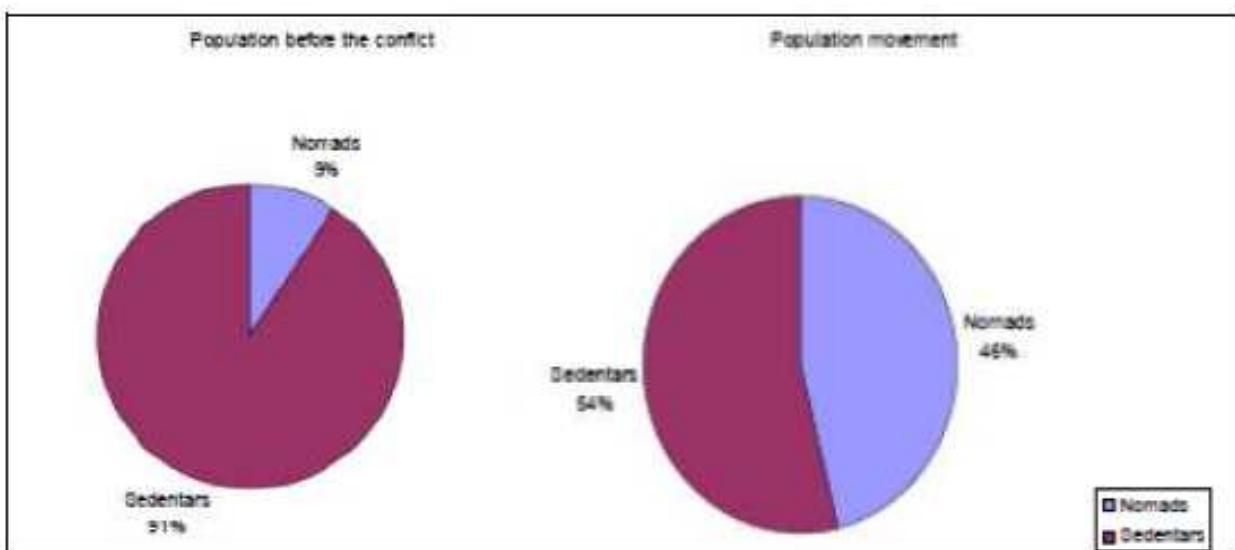


1.2. According to UNHCR registration figure 27,000 new refugees have also arrived in the neighboring countries for the past three weeks this including 26093 Malian nationals in Mauritania and 811 in Niger.



1.3. In south Mali the protection cluster through an ad hoc commission on population movement has coordinated registration and profile of population displacement. Displaced population to south Mali is reported to be sub-Saharan ethnicities originally from the urban cities of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 50,818 IDPs were registered in south Mali. Three participatory assessments conducted in Bamako, Mopti and Sikasso followed these registrations and identified that 90% of IDPs are residing in urban host families, 8% able to ensure their own shelter and 2% settled in public sites. They have found refuge in Mopti (54%), Bamako (20%), Segou (17%), Sikasso (7%), and Kayes (0.4%) and are originally from Gao (60%), Timbuktu (40%), Kidal (6%) and Mopti (5%).

1.4. In relation to the difficulty to access north Mali for protection agencies, an assumption of population movement was based on WFP food distribution that estimated 107,000 IDPs, this was followed by a needs assessment conducted by INGO ACTED. This evaluation identified the presence of 19,386 Tuareg IDPs settling in 10 localities in Menaka area (Gao region). Moreover IDPs in north Mali and Malian refugees in Mauritania and in Niger are reported to be mainly Tuaregs and Arabs, some 200,000 peoples in north Mali being part of nomadic and pastoral groups including 10% of Malian nationals in the three regions affected by the conflict (116,277 peoples for a total population of 1,284,836) while 80,000 undocumented people might face statelessness (this figure includes 56,000 Malian Tuaregs returned from Libya between November and January 2011 settled in the regions of Gao and Kidal). According to population profiling, nomadic populations were confronted to more displacement than sedentary inhabitants of north Mali (see figure below).



## 2. Key protection concerns

### 2.1. Basic needs and essential services

- 2.1.1. Population livelihood and economy was seriously impacted after the occupation of north Mali by opposition-armed groups who systematically looted or destroyed public and private sector infrastructures<sup>1</sup> including farmer livestock and seeds. Pastoral activities that constitute 40% of population income were disrupted in March and April and the looting or killing of cattle by MNLA and *Ansar Dine* combatants.
- 2.1.2. The threatening presence of armed groups at the borders with Niger and Burkina Faso and the commission of attacks against foreign traders resulted in the reduction of 70% of food supply to the northern regions of Kidal and Gao and the front line located in Mopti region the supply to the region of Timbuktu.
- 2.1.3. Three participatory assessments conducted with host communities in south Mali in May and June 2012 revealed that the population was insufficiently resourced to support the IDPs and reported shortages of food, NFIs and sanitation installations as priority needs.
- 2.1.4. The lack of protection mainstreaming and integration of protection standards into the general humanitarian response led to diversion of humanitarian aid by opposition armed groups in north Mali especially in Kidal and Timbuktu.

### 2.2. Security from violence and exploitation

- 2.2.1. Forced imposition of the Sharia law by Islamic groups has been reported in the localities of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal and their surroundings. Women are reported to be unable to move freely and forced to wear Hijab, children forbidden to practice sport, some shops closed and population not respecting Sharia law received physical punishments. As example a couple has been arrested on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June in Timbuktu and two days later whipped 100 times in public by the *Ansar Dine Islamic Police* for having a child out of marriage. In Timbuktu from 26<sup>th</sup> July to date *Ansar Dine* has conducted a systematic destruction of ancient Muslim Sufi shrines in the northern city of Timbuktu, after UNESCO declared it a World heritage site in danger. The town of Timbuktu with its Sufi monuments is known to be an important pilgrimage location and a major source of income for the local population and national economy.
- 2.2.2. Protection risks based on ethnical/tribal origin and confessional practice were also identified. In Bamako on April 27<sup>th</sup> Tuareg residents faced act of reprisal during civilian riot that took place after the killing of military officers in north Mali, three civilians including a woman were reportedly injured. On June 27<sup>th</sup> in the city of Gao Tuareg civilians associated to MNLA by the MUJAO were looted and systematically arrested. Behind the political agenda of Islamic armed groups in north Mali, criminal activities constitute a major source of income. In addition to drug and weapon smuggling, human trafficking is an important part of this illicit network established by Salafist groups in the entire Sahel region. Mali is known to be a country of emigration and a route for migration for third country nationals from sub-Saharan to Maghreb. However, eviction of sub-Saharan and Malian economic migrants from Algeria to northern Mali has been reported by local community leaders and might reach a figure of 150 to 200 individuals per week.

### 2.3. Family separation

- 2.3.1. In south Mali, half of the displaced families is reported to be separated from their relatives as many men remained home to take care of their lands and cattle and displaced populations was identified to be mainly women and children. 410 unaccompanied minors including 23 girls and 387 boys, and 92 separated children, 43 girls and 49 boys were registered in south Mali within the IDPs population.

### 2.4. Durable solutions

- 2.4.1. During the participatory assessments conducted in May and June in south Mali 87% of the IDPs expressed their willingness to return home, 69% after the conflict will be over and 31% before the end of the conflict for resuming their agricultural and pastoral activities.



## **2.5. Personal documentation**

- 2.5.1. As mentioned before 49% of displaced peoples are originally from nomadic groups (Tuaregs and Arabs) who faced difficulty to access personal civil documentation before the conflict<sup>ii</sup>, this population includes as well a population of some 28,000 Tuaregs who returned from Libya in December/January 2011<sup>iii</sup>.

## **2.6. Child protection**

- 2.6.1. The impact and damage on education infrastructures and capacity is reported to be high as most of education assets were entirely looted or burnt down. Eighty percent (80%) of education staff is reportedly displaced to south Mali. In Timbuktu formal education has been suspended since April while in Gao and Kidal schools closed in January 2012. According to local leaders and some members of the population, attempts were made to negotiate with armed groups who stated their willingness to implement a new education system based on Shari law including the separation of boys and girls as well as a ban on philosophy and sport.
- 2.6.2. According to the Child Protection sub cluster an important population of separated children are reported living in the streets of Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal by local leaders. Islamic-armed groups may have targeted for recruitment these children especially for the boy or the girl for sexual abuse. Forced marriage of youth girls and women by Salafistes has been reported to child protection specialists. To date 175 cases of child recruitment by Islamic groups have been reported to UNICEF.

## **2.7. SGBV**

- 2.7.1. In addition to the cases of forced marriage mentioned before, 18 cases of rapes and other form of sexual abuses have been reported to the GBV sub cluster 8 victims being reported to be minors including an 11 year old girl.

## **2.8. Mine and UXOs**

- 2.8.1. Thirty six (36) incidents related to unexploded ordinances (UXOs) were reported to UNICEF by local communities these cases that occurred between April to end June 2012 resulted in forty eight (48) victims. Seventeen (17) are reported to children including two (2) deaths and four peoples killed and twenty-three (23) injured within the adults. This report includes the regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal and is expected to increase.
- 2.8.2. In an attempt to prevent a counter attack by MNLA Tuareg rebels, the Islamist fighters allegedly planted anti-personnel mines around the town of Gao according to local leaders.

## **3. Protection response**

### **3.1. Child protection**

- 3.1.1. UNICEF is coordinating the child protection sub cluster and provide child protection programs. Child protection monitoring is implemented in Mali including in its northern part through local partners as well as through capacity building and support of local community and leaders on early warning and community child protection.
- 3.1.2. UNICEF and its IPs provide psychosocial support and capacity building of crisis committee through its implementing partners IRC and save the children.

### **3.2. SGBV**

- 3.2.1. Prevention and response for GBV: UNFPA is coordinating the GBV sub cluster. Psychosocial support and capacity building of crisis committee is provided by UNIFPA through it implementing partner IRC. UNFPA at country level is lacking capacity of monitoring, documenting and managing data of SGBV incidents and risks.

### **3.3. General protection response**

- 3.4. Protection cluster has been activated in April 2012 by UNHCR. However, UNHCR Mali is lacking sustainability of protection staffing, including for the management of protection cluster. Two standby



partners were deployed in April and in June 2012. Protection cluster coordination is ensured remotely until the deployment of PROCAP SPO on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

- 3.5. An ad commission on population movement has been set up within the Protection cluster including the participation of the INGOs ACTED and Catholic Relief Service (CRS), IOM and the Ministry of Interior agency for Civil Protection. ACTED and Catholic Relief Service are already supporting the capacity of the civil protection and the local crisis committees for IDPs registration and profiling. ACTED has submitted a concept note to UNHCR country representative and PROCAP SPO in June 21<sup>st</sup> for partnership in registration and profiling activities in Bamako and the region of Gao in the “cercle de Menaka” where 20,000 IDPs are reported. ACTED is already UNHCR implementing partner in Niger for the camps bordering Mali and might cover Menaka from Niger.
- 3.6. For information collection and documentation of protection incidents and risks, protection monitoring is actually not active in Mali due to the lack of UNHCR protection capacity and the lack of expression of interest for partnership in such activities by INGOs present in Mali. Moreover, the difficult access to north Mali constitutes an obstacle for direct protection monitoring and advocacy. UNICEF model of local partnership and support of local communities for self-protection might constitute the best option but needs human resources with the technical expertise that is not present in UNHCR Mali.

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<sup>i</sup> 85% of public infrastructures were looted according to reports from civilian committee of crisis in Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal.

<sup>ii</sup> 25% of nomadic peoples have been categorized as foreign resident in a governmental census conducted between 2009 and 2011.

<sup>iii</sup> The populations of Malian Tuaregs were brought to Libya in early 1980s. Some men were involved in Mohamar Gadhafi Islamic brigade and then integrated in national army before deserting in February and March 2011. The total population of “Malian Tuaregs” residing in Libya is estimated to be 250,000 peoples. 80% of this community born in Libya according to UNHCR Libya assessments conducted in 2011 and 2012.