

Mixed movements in West and Central Africa

May 2020 – July 2020

External

This update covers the period **May 2020 – July 2020** and provides an overview of regional **trends** as well as **programming** by UNHCR and partners in the field of mixed movements.

Mixed movements refer to situations where a number of people are travelling together, generally in an irregular manner, using the **same** routes and means of transport, but for **different** reasons.

Key data

Niger

Niamey - border monitoring (except Agadez Region):

As part of the mixed movement monitoring project carried out by UNHCR' implementing partner CIAUD Canada, on the borders, the following activities have been achieved during the period under review:

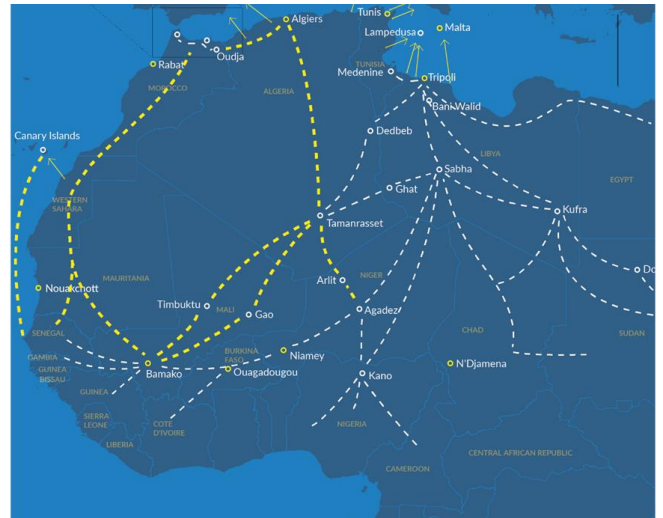
- 406 people have been identified at the border posts and expressed the intention to seek asylum in Niger. The breakdown analysis per nationality shows: 54.67% Nigerians, 30.04% Burkina, 11.57% Malians and 3.72% other nationalities including DRC, Cameroon, Chad, Sudan and Togo.
- Of 72 refugees identified in an onward movement situation, 90% were recognized in Chad, 7% in Cameroon and 3% in Nigeria and 74 people reported by the monitors at risk of statelessness.

Agadez:

- UNHCR SO Agadez continues to record regular deportations from Algeria to Assamaka border area in Niger. From 01 May to 31 July 2020, 1,048 deportations from Algeria were recorded, of which 539 (51%) were Nigerien nationals.
- Between 01 May and 30 July 2020, 45 new cases/56 individuals were registered in Agadez, the majority of which continue to be Sudanese nationals from Darfur fleeing Libya to Niger through Madama border crossing.

Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM):

- During the period under review, a total of 170 cases representing 197 refugees (163 ETM and 34 Niger) were assessed and submitted for resettlement consideration to Canada, Netherlands, France, Germany and Sweden.
- As of end of July 2020, the total number of individuals evacuated out of Libya to Niger stands at 3,208. Out of this number, 2,454 have departed for resettlement while 815 remain in Niger, including 104 unaccompanied and separated children.



Mixed movements in West and Central Africa UNHCR

Mali

- 857 persons were identified by the partner [CIAUD-Canada](#) at the ports of entry and border crossings in Bamako, Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Ménaka and Kidal in the context of border monitoring and identification of persons in mixed movements. Among them, 709 persons were identified in outgoing flows and 148 in incoming flows, including 20 expelled from Algeria and 92 voluntary returnees from Algeria. They come from Mali, Guinea Conakry, Burkina Faso and Nigeria. From mixed flows, 37 unaccompanied/separated children were referred to the National Directorate for the Promotion of the Child and the Family.
- In May, five persons of Guinean nationality, including an unaccompanied child, were identified in Timbuktu and referred to Bamako because assessment shows that they are in need of international protection. The National Commission for Refugees (CNCR) following individual interview and assessment concluded that they meet the criteria for refugee status.
- In June, a family of 09 potential Nigerian asylum seekers was identified in Mopti and assisted by the partner CIAUD-Canada with dignity kits. RSD interviews concluded that they were Malian nationals from the Ménaka Region.

Burkina Faso

- 517 migrants have been identified during profiling activities, including 413 from Burkina Faso, 41 from Mali, 13 from Nigeria, 11 from Côte d'Ivoire, 32 from Niger, 5 from Togo, 1 from Senegal and 1 from Liberia. Of the Burkinabe, 57 were IDPs.

Chad

- During the period under review, the Red Cross, interviewed 2,470 people on mixed movements throughout the country, including 29 refugees and 46 asylum seekers;
- Since 1 January 2020, data has been collected from 7,213 persons on mixed movements in Chad, including 204 refugees and 147 asylum-seekers;
- 624 migrants, including 575 Chadian nationals and 49 persons of other nationalities expelled from Libya, were received at the Ounianga transit site in the Border Province of Ennedi Ouest. Six persons of Chadian nationality reportedly died of thirst as a result of a breakdown in the truck that was transporting them into the desert.

Algeria

- During June, over 500 persons were expelled to the border with Niger, the majority (68%) were from Niger. UNHCR continued to monitor through its emergency line available 24h/7 days and advocate with the authorities for any persons of concern affected.

Nigeria

- In the reporting period, a total of 394 households of 1,304 refugee/returnees¹ arrived from Cameroon through Banki and Pulka, from Niger through Damasak, and from Chad through Gamboru-Ngala.
- No cases of refoulement were reported but 3% of the population interviewed reported incidents of extortion

¹ UNHCR Refugee Returnees registered at the entry points by the Nigerian Immigration Services in May and June 2020

- During routine border monitoring and advocacy on access to territory in Benue and Taraba, UNHCR border monitors visited over 150 refugee communities at the border with Cameroon.

[Senegal](#)

- 66 new asylum applications (48 men and 18 women, mostly Central Africans) were registered by the National Eligibility Commission.

[Central African Republic \(CAR\)](#)

- As of 30 June 2020, the Central African Republic (CAR) had registered 8,952 refugees and asylum-seekers, compared to 6,951 refugees in May, an increase of 22 per cent in the total number. This increase is explained by the arrival of new refugees from the DRC between May and June 2020, numbering 1,995, settled in the sub-prefecture of Kouango, in the Ouaka prefecture.

COVID-19

[Niger](#)

Regarding access to territory, the restriction on movement, the isolation of the capital city Niamey from other regions and the closure of international traffic and land borders as well as the compulsory self-quarantine for travelers throughout the country has heavily impacted refugees and asylum seekers in mixed movement flows.

Nevertheless, these restrictions did not hinder the ability of UNHCR and its implementing partners to deliver key activities, particularly protection case management and protection response, respecting social distancing without mass gathering.

Agadez region

Awareness-raising continues at the level of the various reception sites on COVID-19 prevention, and the limitations placed by the authorities on travel, in particular to Arlit.

UNHCR Agadez continued its support to the authorities in the context of strengthening human resources at the Integrated Health Center in the Toudou district of Agadez through the APBE partner. A team made-up of a doctor and 3 nurses is present to strengthen the medical team for normal health care management as well as issues related to COVID-19.

[Mali](#)

Although Mali's borders are officially closed, the cross-border movement has continued at unofficial entry points. The identification of persons in mixed movements as well as awareness sessions for people on the move on "COVID -19 pandemic prevention and control methods" have also continued.

The strengthening of border monitoring and communication mechanisms between the UNHCR offices in Mali, Mauritania, Burkina and Niger was discussed during the three cross-



A medical team holding an awareness session on hygiene and COVID-19

border meetings held in the second half of July. Some cases of movements of refugees/returnees temporarily blocked at the border with Mauritania were reported.

[Burkina Faso](#)

In the framework of sensitizing the population on the issue of protection and prevention of risks related to Covid 19, 32 educational talks were held during the period under review by the community networks. These educational talks reached 1,532 people during the month: 732 men, 217 women, 150 girls and 433 boys.

During the period under review, the Government of Burkina Faso has eased some of the barriers such as the lifting of quarantine and the resumption of inter-city transport since May 5. It should be noted, however, that land and air borders remained closed.

[Chad](#)

The measures taken by the Government of Chad to combat the spread of the coronavirus have had a negative impact on access to territory and asylum for persons in mixed movements. These measures include the closure of air and land borders and restrictions on inter-city travel for several months.

[Nigeria](#)

In Edo State, Telling the Real Story (TRS) project in Nigeria adapted its messaging to join other actors to promote risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) on the COVID-19 pandemic. The project collaborated with Great Esan Returnee Association (GERA) to produce a pidgin drama on stigmatization of suspected persons in local settings such as a barbershop, and further explained modalities to prevent contracting the disease. The group also produced a second short information skit in Esan and Bini languages, translated from prevention messages shared by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)². In July, the audio file of the video was aired on KU FM Benin radio for 21 days and Independent TV (ITV) Benin aired the drama for 10 days.

On a positive note, the Borno State Judiciary granted courts “to recommence in Bama, Monguno, Dikwa and Damasak. In the same vein, the sitting of the 2 mobile courts located in Bakasi and Gubio Road IDP Camps was extended to twice a week, in line with both camp and health regulations. Similar extensions have been granted to other courts³ in addition to virtual court sittings, as a COVID-19 prevention measure. As part of the government’s measures to curb the spread of COVID-19, correctional institutions were ordered to release inmates to decongest the detention facilities.

In the South, UNHCR completed the renovation of a six-bed isolation and treatment facility at the General Hospital Ogoja, Cross River State (CRS). A 30-bed capacity children’s ward is also being rehabilitated to meet the infection control requirements for spill over COVID-19 care. Knapsack sprayers were provided to the Ogoja isolation centre to improve infection control. Meanwhile, two quarantine centres for new refugee arrivals have been completed in Adagom and Ikyogen settlements in CRS and Benue, as part of the COVID-19 preventive measures.

² <https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/>

³ *ibid*

[Gambia](#)

The closure of borders and the limitation of commercial activities due to COVID-19 has negatively impacted the lives of the refugee population and other persons of concern, especially those engaged in petty trade. During the reporting period (May-July 2020), [Gambia Food & Nutrition Association](#) provided assistance in the form of cash vouchers to 25 refugees.

Activities

[Niger](#)

- Organisation from 13 to 14 July 2020 of a workshop, co-facilitated by UNHCR and Government on capacity building to 40 officials from the Directorate General of Civil Status, Migration and Refugees (DGDEC-MR) on international protection in the context of mixed movements. The audience was composed of officials of the State Entity, at central and decentralised level in order to facilitate the identification and response to individuals identified at borders in the context of mixed movements that could fall under UNHCR mandate.
- A second workshop on International Protection co-facilitated both by UNHCR and Government at Maradi from 22 to 23 of July 2020, benefited thirty-five (35) border police officials and Regional Directorate of Civil Status, Migration and Refugees (DREC-MR). It was an opportunity to address issues related to the referral of persons of concern to UNHCR, identified in mixed movements and to strengthen border monitoring.
- Beside the workshop which was held in Maradi from 22 to 23 of July 2020, UNHCR officially handed over to the government four renovated and equipped buildings of the “Compagnie Mobile de Contrôle des Frontières” (CMCF), a Government entity that works closely with UNHCR on mixed movements programme.

[Mali](#)

- Broadcasting of 11 radio programs targeting women and youth on the risks of irregular migration.
- Organization of 58 awareness-raising sessions which reached 2134 people on the move on various themes including the risks of irregular migration, asylum procedures, barrier gestures against covid 19 etc.
- Organization of 5 capacity building sessions for members of the Local Community Protection Committees (LCPCs), monitors, protection assistants and Defense and Security Forces in Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao by the partner CIAUD-Canada on different themes.



UNHCR and IOM working session

[Chad](#)



Discussions between a CRT agent and evictees at the Ounianga site in July

- In the framework of protection monitoring and mixed migration (MM) data collection, the Chadian Red Cross community workers interviewed 2,470 people in mixed movements at the 74 main entry and exit sites throughout the country. 58% of the persons questioned were of Chadian nationality and 42% of various nationalities from sub-Saharan Africa. 43% of respondents want to go to Libya.

- Registration of 650 people on secondary movements between Chad and

CAR in the southern zone by Chadian Red Cross protection monitors, while the borders between the two countries are officially closed.

- Red Cross assessment mission of the situation of persons expelled from Libya (321 persons in May and 126 in July).

[Senegal](#)



Joint assessment mission to the St. Louis Entry Points: UNHCR, IOM and WHO Representatives

- Two joint missions were conducted by WHO, IOM and UNHCR in the Saint-Louis and Ziguinchor regions in collaboration with the medical staff as part of the support to the Government in the epidemiological surveillance of the borders,

- Screening of 87 trafficked persons to assess their protection needs. They have been referred to IOM after assessment to establish if they are of concern to UNHCR with international protection need.

[Central African Republic](#)

- UNHCR has undertaken a joint mission with government partners in CAR to assess the situation in the village of Toko Kota where 3,000 refugees from DRC have arrived

[Forthcoming](#)

[Niger](#)

Agadez Region:

- Relocation of recognized refugees to Niamey.

Burkina Faso

- The reproduction of the manual for the dissemination of the referral mechanism in 4 languages;
- The launch of the campaign to disseminate the national referral mechanism for people on the move at the community level;
- Financing of micro-projects for 25 young people at risk of irregular migration in the Sahel Region.

Guinea

- Joint mission (UNHCR/IOM/CNISR) to train key actors at the entry and transit points of the Prefectures of Forécariah, Boké and Koundara
- Training on international protection in the context of mixed movements of state actors, civil society and the UN in Conakry;
- Establishment of an agreement with an NGO for a legal clinic for refugees and asylum seekers;

Senegal

- Capacity-building for the network of migration journalists on international protection and mixed movements (October)
- Capacity building of civil society on international protection and mixed movements (November)

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