



West and Central Africa

Two women, members of the Silué family, pound rice in their compound in Côte d'Ivoire. Thanks to the Women's Legal Aid Association, the Silué family, all formerly undocumented, have started the process of obtaining identity papers.

© UNHCR/Mark Henley

“The West and Central Africa region faces multiple humanitarian and development challenges. This has not stopped its governments and people from showing solidarity with nearly 5 million refugees and internally displaced people. To be sustainable, this solidarity needs to be supported by adequate funding.”

Millicent Mutuli

Director, Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa

KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Delivering protection, assistance and solutions for IDPs

With ongoing crises in the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and Nigeria, as well as increased insecurity in Burkina Faso, more than 3.7 million people are internally displaced across the region. In this challenging context, UNHCR will assume its tri-cluster leadership role, provide direct assistance to IDPs, ensure that protection is placed at the centre of the multi-stakeholder humanitarian response and that solutions are pursued in coordination with all partners, including key development actors.

In line with its new IDP Policy, the Office will aim for a more consistent application of area-based approaches and integrated programming to leverage available opportunities and resources in support of displaced populations as well as their hosts.

Displacement has been so dramatic in Burkina Faso that, as of November 2019, there were 600,000 IDPs—twice as many as originally planned for 2020.

In light of this growing crisis, and to demonstrate how the new UNHCR IDP Policy works, Burkina Faso is one of eight countries selected for a special initiative entailing a stepped-up and sustained operational engagement. The objective is to support, monitor and, ultimately, uphold UNHCR's commitment to robust protection leadership, its coordination responsibilities and delivering protection and solutions to IDPs.

Leading the operationalization of the Global Compact on Refugees

UNHCR will provide staff working in country operations with the support they need to assist governments in implementing the Global Compact. In Chad, UNHCR will foster overall national ownership of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) process launched in 2018, strengthening national policies and systems to coordinate the refugee response and joint advocacy with the authorities.

The new Policy on “UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement”



Throughout the region, “whole-of-society” and “whole-of-government” approaches will be promoted in line with the objectives of the Global Compact to foster refugees’ self-reliance and their inclusion in national development plans, leveraging the support of a broad range of partners from humanitarian and development actors to civil society organisations and the private sector. To ensure this vision becomes a reality, the 2020 operational plans in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal are anchored in clear multi-year, multi-partner strategies with a focus on protection, solutions, inclusion in national health and education systems, as well as strategic partnerships with development actors, civil society and academia.

Facilitating voluntary repatriation in safety and with dignity

The recent signing of a peace agreement with 14 groups in the CAR may lead to spontaneous and facilitated returns to some parts of the country in 2020. While the political and security situation

does not allow promoted and organized repatriation to the rest of the region, some spontaneous returns may take place to relatively stable areas, particularly in north-east Nigeria and some parts of Mali.

Where it is possible to do so in safety and dignity, UNHCR will facilitate the voluntary return of refugees wishing to do so. In 2020, UNHCR plans to support the return of 68,500 refugees to CAR, 60,000 to Nigeria, and 44,000 to Mali. In addition, UNHCR is planning to organize and assist the repatriation of 3,000 Ivorian refugees.

Supporting countries in providing options for local integration

UNHCR will work with partners such as governments, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), development actors and local communities to support refugees’ socioeconomic inclusion and, where possible, their local integration. In 2020, UNHCR plans to secure local integration through naturalization or alternative legal status for more than 23,000 refugees, including

Ivorians in Liberia and Senegalese currently living in Gambia and Guinea Bissau. UNHCR will also support refugees in acquiring residency permits based on ECOWAS provisions, focusing on the 3,000 Togolese refugees in Ghana and Ivorian and Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone.

Technical support for the implementation of strategies for comprehensive durable solutions will be provided to the main UNHCR operations in the region, particularly Cameroon, Chad and Niger, to ensure refugees benefit from the widest range of rights possible in countries of asylum. These include obtaining resident permits, as well as access to naturalization and to land ownership.

Improving access to quality education in national education systems

Education is central to refugee self-reliance and to solutions, in both emergency and protracted situations. In 2020-2021, UNHCR will seek to respond to the

education needs of 3 million children of concern in both protracted refugee and IDP hosting areas, as well as in conflict-affected countries in the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahel. Sustainable access to national education systems will be prioritized to increase access to quality learning opportunities for all refugee children and youth as well as the host communities that welcome them, from pre-school to tertiary education.

UNHCR will work with partners to include IDP children in national education systems and hopes to enrol 190,815 refugee students in primary, secondary school and tertiary education scholarships in 2020, with a specific focus on Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria.



Rethinking cash assistance in Côte d’Ivoire

Grants to those seeking support with voluntary repatriation to Côte d’Ivoire are usually provided in cash. The team in Guiglo is experimenting with money transfer methods to improve the efficiency and safety of grant provision. Requiring close collaboration between UNHCR and the private sector, the experiment proposes transferring money by mobile phone, in recognition of widespread mobile phone use among the population of concern. Beyond the benefits of learning lessons on mobile transfer solutions, this project aims to improve digital literacy and the digital and economic inclusion of more vulnerable sections of the community.



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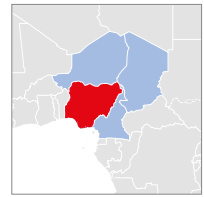


Promising practices: DAFI graduates volunteering in humanitarian and development work

In West Africa, UNHCR and the DAFI programme collaborate with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) agency to place talented DAFI graduates interested in humanitarian and development work into contracted, one-year positions. UNV offers innovative volunteer and human resource solutions to all UN agencies with the aim of contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals. UN Volunteers receive allowances to cover the cost

of living during their appointment. For DAFI graduates, becoming a UNV is a chance to engage in meaningful volunteer opportunities and gain valuable work experience. So far 20 DAFI graduates were employed as UNVs across West and Central Africa and UNHCR will sustain its effort to provide more opportunities to talented refugees throughout the region.

MAJOR SITUATIONS IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA IN 2020

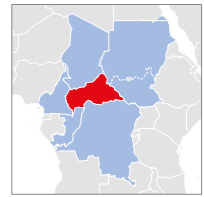


NIGERIA

The security situation throughout the Lake Chad Basin will remain fragile and unpredictable. Conflicts, mainly in border areas of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria will continue to negatively impact the protection environment and jeopardize the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. In Nigeria, UNHCR will focus its response on key return areas for refugees and IDPs and will contribute to the response to protection and shelter needs of IDPs. In Niger, UNHCR will pursue the implementation of the out-of-camp policy through the urbanization programme. It will continue advocating for access to asylum in Cameroon and Chad, while ensuring protection and assistance for refugees, IDPs and vulnerable hosts and aiming at refugees' progressive integration into national systems.

** This figure includes IDPs in Nigeria (1.6 million), Cameroon (219,000), Chad (75,000) and Niger (100,000) as a result of the Nigeria situation.*

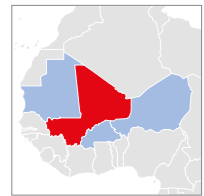
263,000
REFUGEES
2 million*
IDPs IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN
210,000
REFUGEE & IDP RETURNÉES



THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The signing of a peace accord among the 14 armed groups in the CAR is expected to gradually bring peace and stability, even if intermittent security incidents and sporadic conflicts between armed groups are to be expected. The majority of CAR refugees are children (56%) and women (25%). UNHCR's response to the CAR situation includes the planned creation of a support platform to mobilize political commitment and advocacy for prevention, protection, response, inclusion and solutions at sub-regional level. The facilitation of voluntary returns from Cameroon, DRC and Republic of Congo to safe areas in CAR will continue on the basis of Tripartite Agreements signed in 2019. Inside the CAR, partnerships will be sought to build minimum conditions in key areas of refugee and IDP return. In countries of asylum, UNHCR will continue working within the framework of the CRRF and look to actively collaborate with development partners in refugee-hosting areas.

522,000
REFUGEES
381,000
INTERNALLY DISPLACED
977,000
REFUGEE & IDP RETURNÉES

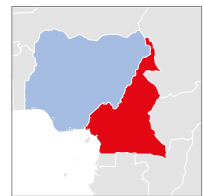


MALI

Instability is expected to persist in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, where security incidents have provoked more displacement and made humanitarian access increasingly difficult in a context where insurgency and counter-insurgency interventions put civilians at risk. UNHCR will support Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger implement the Conclusions of the Regional Protection and Solutions Dialogue on forced displacement in the Sahel, organized by the Government of Mali in September 2019 with UNHCR technical support. Given the situation's dynamics, actors working in the peace-humanitarian-development nexus are critical to helping prevent further displacement, ensure protection and find solutions for displaced populations in the sub-region. In Niger, UNHCR will continue implement its out-of-camp policy through the urbanization programme. In Burkina Faso and Mali, UNHCR will continue provide protection and assistance to people of concern, advocating for the humanitarian response be closely coordinated with more long-term development interventions.

** This figure includes IDPs in Mali (187,000), Burkina Faso (600,000) and West Niger (151,000) as a result of the Mali situation.*

147,000
REFUGEES
938,000*
INTERNALLY DISPLACED
61,500
REFUGEE & IDP RETURNÉES

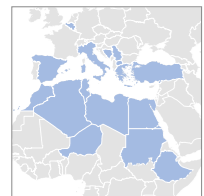


CAMEROON

Violence in the South-West and North-West Regions has driven thousands of Cameroonians into internal displacement or over the border into Nigeria. Internal displacement and refugee outflows are likely to continue into 2020. UNHCR is working with partners to promote livelihood opportunities and strengthen the resilience of Cameroonian refugees and host communities. UNHCR will also play a key role in the IDP response, leading the Protection, NFIs and Shelter Clusters, and preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence and assisting survivors. UNHCR will also support government efforts to provide documentation to IDPs and returning populations.

** OCHA figure. Government estimate: 152,000 people*

60,000
REFUGEES
420,000*
INTERNALLY DISPLACED

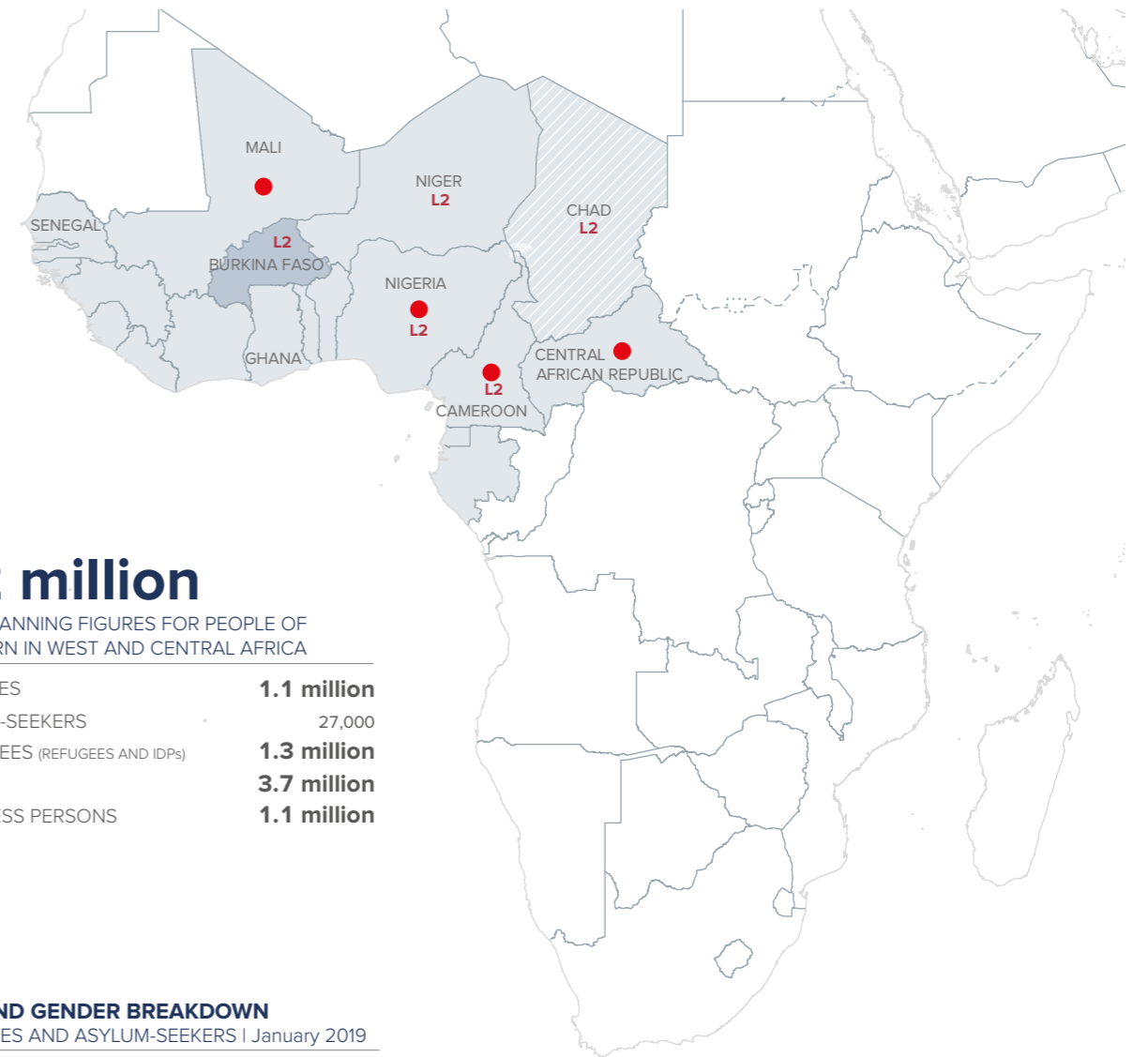


MEDITERRANEAN ROUTES

Reducing protection risks for refugees and asylum-seekers caught in migratory movements across the region remains a priority. In nearly all countries where UNHCR is present in the region, the Office has launched campaigns warning of the dangers of attempting the Mediterranean routes. UNHCR will also continue supporting people of concern who are evacuated from Libya, including finding lasting solutions to their plight. The Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) provides lifesaving protection, assistance and long-term solutions to extremely vulnerable refugees trapped in detention in Libya through temporary evacuation to Niger. The mechanism is a critical piece of the response as it will receive refugees and asylum-seekers—many of whom are likely to be unaccompanied children—evacuated out of detention in Libya and have suffered torture and inhuman treatment. The ETM will provide survivors with basic assistance as well as psychological and social support while solutions are worked out. These will include resettlement, voluntary repatriation or family reunification, where appropriate and feasible.

2,500
EVACUATIONS FROM LIBYA TO NIGER

With insurgencies and military interventions in Mali and Nigeria, mounting violence and social unrest in Burkina Faso and Cameroon, and structural instability and the growing threat of violent extremism in a number of countries, the overall trend in West and Central Africa in 2020-2021 is of deteriorating security and increased forced displacement.



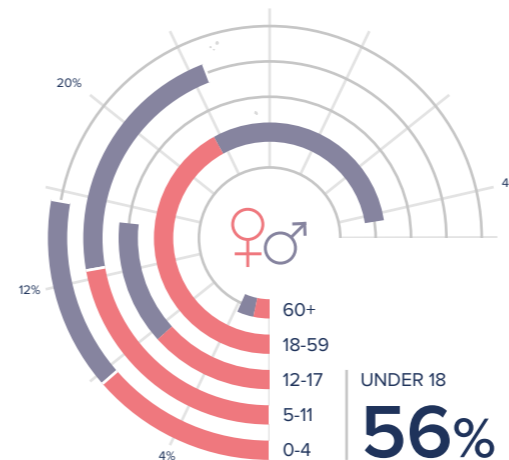
7.2 million

2020 PLANNING FIGURES FOR PEOPLE OF CONCERN IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

REFUGEES	1.1 million
ASYLUM-SEEKERS	27,000
RETURNEES (REFUGEES AND IDPs)	1.3 million
IDPs	3.7 million
STATELESS PERSONS	1.1 million

AGE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS | January 2019



● Situation
 ▨ CRRF country
 ▨ IDP initiative
 L2 Level of emergency

IMPLICATIONS OF UNDERFUNDING

As humanitarian challenges increase, addressing the needs of a growing number of people of concern requires sustained and predictable funding, with the Emergency Transit Mechanism in Niger providing a good example of what can be done with timely and sufficient funding. UNHCR is expanding its partnerships—particularly with key development actors such as the World Bank, the African Development Bank, or the *Agence Française de Développement*—to build the resilience of refugees and the communities hosting them. However, a lack of funding will limit the Office’s ability to meet the protection needs of refugees and the displaced, including those of some of the most vulnerable groups thereby jeopardizing humanitarian responses to the CAR, Mali and Nigeria situations.

In Nigeria, many cases of domestic violence, forced marriages and a high rate of teenage pregnancy among Cameroonian refugees could have been prevented if enough funding was available in 2019 to offer refugee families more food and shelter, better health and education assistance, and livelihood opportunities. In the three north-eastern states worst-affected—Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe—IDPs face many of the same predicaments but the humanitarian community lacks the resources to adequately respond to their massive needs. Underfunding would also endanger UNHCR’s leadership in the coordination of the Protection, Camp Coordination

and Camp Management, and Shelter and Non-Food Items Clusters. A lack of funding would also prevent UNHCR from using its presence to protect people of concern and monitor their circumstances, and from continuing to strengthen national response mechanisms by building the capacity of local partners and government counterparts.

In northern Cameroon, where many Nigerian refugees are sheltering, limited funding has affected the protection of women and girls in Minawao camp, where UNHCR was forced to restrict the distribution of dignity kits to less than 50% of women and girls. The quality and standard of assistance is undermined by inadequate funding, starting with self-reliance initiatives and energy provision, which will be some of the first interventions to be scaled back in cases of underfunding. In 2020, it is critical that the Cameroon operation be able to provide core relief items, including dignity kits for women and girls, to some 16,000 refugee households as well as a targeted number of people in host communities.

In the CAR, UNHCR will need adequate resources to seize the potential opportunities for durable solutions brought by the new peace prospects, considering the large number of refugees hosted in countries of asylum. In Mali, given the trend in declining funding a further reduction would make it impossible for UNHCR to sustain its leadership role in coordination and implement necessary protection interventions for people of concern.

BUDGETS FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | USD

OPERATION	2019	PILLAR 1 PILLAR 2 PILLAR 3 PILLAR 4				TOTAL	2021
	Current budget (as of 30 June 2019)	Refugee programmes	Stateless programmes	Reintegration projects	IDP projects		
Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa ¹	2,665,000	11,297,936				11,297,936	10,033,124
Regional activities for West and Central Africa ¹		4,000,000				4,000,000	4,000,000
Burkina Faso	30,251,251	21,971,173	379,848		11,319,863	33,670,883	30,737,374
Cameroon Multi-Country Office ²	90,889,210	66,090,148	861,229		22,735,188	89,686,565	86,773,243
Central African Republic	42,600,001	13,321,190	841,245	16,853,566	10,992,934	42,008,936	42,017,034
Chad	130,384,013	127,767,671	909,076		2,089,454	130,766,201	128,154,019
Côte d'Ivoire	19,597,833	3,708,204	9,275,860	2,975,895		15,959,959	16,759,959
Ghana	7,158,992	6,926,506				6,926,506	6,746,890
Liberia	11,041,618	11,365,050				11,365,050	9,238,125
Mali	17,432,250	8,629,013		7,317,523	2,198,009	18,144,545	18,458,193
Niger	75,971,916	63,719,184	967,348		16,357,454	81,043,986	81,648,252
Nigeria	93,065,236	37,940,501		20,062,665	35,348,346	93,351,512	90,791,033
Senegal Multi-Country Office ³	30,709,061	15,834,663	1,646,864			17,481,527	18,384,536
TOTAL	551,766,380	392,571,239	14,881,470	47,209,649	101,041,249	555,703,607	543,741,781

¹ Regional Bureau and regional activities cover the whole West and Central Africa region.
² Coordinates activities in Cameroon and Gabon and also covers Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome Principe.
³ Coordinates activities in Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Senegal and Togo and also covers Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia and Sierra Leone.

