



**RDH**  
IOM REGIONAL DATA HUB  
West and Central Africa

# Regional Data Hub 2023 | INFOSHEET

IOM Regional Office for West and Central Africa

Established in 2019, the Regional Data Hub (RDH) for West and Central Africa (WCA) aims to support evidence-based, strategic and policy-level discussion on migration through a combination of initiatives. The RDH was further strengthened in response to the recommendation presented in the first IOM Migration Data Strategy (MDS).

The Regional Migration Data Hub coordinates and supports data initiatives in the West and Central Africa region, improving the accessibility, availability, frequency of updates, and quality of mobility data. This enables evidence-based program development and policy formulation.

The work of the RDH is structured along three pillars that reflect the objectives identified in the MDS, and it aims to **promote evidence-based, strategic and policy discussion on migration through the collection, analysis, compilation and dissemination of migration data and thematic research.**

## REGIONAL DATA HUB



### OBJECTIVE 1

**Strengthen the global evidence base on migration:** The regional hub works to strengthen IOM information management and research capacity across the region, while promoting data and information sharing and increased access through its information products and its regional geoportal.



### OBJECTIVE 2

**Develop capacity of states and other relevant partners to enhance the migration evidence base:** Provide technical support and capacity development to national governments and data producing bodies in the region for the improvement of official statistics, in line or for the development of national migration data strategies, in collaboration with national and regional observatories and statistics offices.



### OBJECTIVE 3

**Ensure more evidence-based IOM and UN-wide programming, operations, policy advice and communications:** It supports mainstreaming data as underpinning the work of IOM and other partners and governments in the region and ensure that data features prominently in programming and policy development.



## STRENGTHEN THE GLOBAL EVIDENCE BASE ON MIGRATION

IOM seeks to effectively leverage its role as a key contributor in the international community's efforts to broaden and strengthen the evidence base on the movement of people at the regional level. IOM pursues this objective by increasing the availability of and access to migration data and its quality gender and diversity-sensitive analysis. In WCA, the Regional Data Hub supports three main primary data sources: the Displacement Tracking Matrix, the Missing Migrant Project and the Migrant Management Operational Systems Application.



### DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX

The **Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)** is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. It is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of displaced populations, whether on site or en-route. Key workstreams supporting stronger evidence on migration are:

#### INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

The DTM gathers and analyses data to provide a better understanding of internal displacement in the region in order to inform humanitarian response, decision making and policy making to the benefit of Internally Displaced Persons and other affected populations.

#### MIGRATION FLOWS

In WCA, DTM collects data on the flows, profiles, experiences, needs and vulnerabilities of migrants throughout the region. DTM has been collecting data since 2016 at key transit points in the region to monitor regional mobility trends and conducts assessments on profiles of migrants.

#### MIGRANT'S PRESENCE

The aim of the Migrant's Presence (MP) is to study a specific population in a specific geographical zone. It aims to better understand migrants' profiles (including demographic, nationality, socioeconomic), living conditions, access to services and primary needs as well as their relations with the host community.

### FLOW MONITORING (FM)



#### Flow Monitoring Registry

Collects information at key strategic high-mobility transit locations to quantify population flows transiting through selected Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) as well as understand the origin, destination, means of transport and motivation of flows.



#### Flow Monitoring Survey

Collects detailed information on the demographic characteristics, socioeconomic profile, migration experiences, conditions and needs of travellers and mobile populations. May be adapted to include indicators on additional topics (health screening, counter-trafficking)



FM can be fully adapted to include indicators on additional topics:

Missing Migrants module: allowing for the documentation of the death and disappearance of migrants during their journey.

Counter-trafficking module: allowing for the self-identification of victims of forced labour and trafficking in the region. Enumerators are trained in proper referral mechanisms and are thus also able to appropriately refer these individuals to needed services and assistance.

Migration, environment and climate change module: allowing to capture the impact of climate change on the migratory drive of migrants.

### MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (MECC)

The RDH and the MECC unit work together with the goal of identifying areas facing climate risks and areas that could be better positioned for long-term, sustainable growth for local communities affected by climate change. This partnership has allowed us to: (1) reinforce the SMI with a 4th pillar on resilience to climate change and catastrophes; (2) Pilot a module related to the identification of drivers of migration related to climate change in flow monitoring surveys; (3) Enhance the Emergency Tracking Tool (ETT) by building a database of climate related events (floods, bush fires, etc.) that lead to the displacement of individuals; (4) Perform needs assessments for displaced individuals due to heavy floods that systematically hit the WCA region during each rainy season.

### REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

In 2023, **Flow Monitoring** is implemented in **seven countries** (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Guinea, Mali and Niger), with 50 Flow Monitoring Points activated in these countries.

Reports, datasets and methodologies are accessible online: [migration.iom.int](https://migration.iom.int)

## INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

In West and Central Africa, DTM deploys, since 2012, several tools which provide regular, reliable, modular, adaptable and sectoral data on **internal forced displacement**. These tools enable IOM to gather, analyze interpret and disseminate information on displacement numbers, trends and dynamics, profiles and needs, in order to inform humanitarian response, decision-making and policy-making to the benefit of Internally Displaced Persons and other affected populations.

### DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX TOOLS DEPLOYED IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNAL FORCED DISPLACEMENT

#### MOBILITY TRACKING

The Mobility Tracking tool monitors displacement dynamics, collecting data on the number, location, type, profile and multisectoral living conditions and needs of displaced populations. MT is implemented on a regular basis to track the evolution of displacement situations and is adapted to fit the requirements of particular contexts.

#### SOLUTIONS AND MOBILITY INDEX

The Solutions and Mobility Index offers a simple, comparable, robust score (0-100) of the stability of living conditions in displacement affected localities. It features 4 pillars: safety, access to services and livelihoods, social cohesion and resilience to climate change and catastrophes. The SMI identifies pockets of stability and conditions conducive for durable solutions.

#### EMERGENCY TRACKING

The Emergency Tracking Tool (ETT) collects immediate information on sudden displacement related events. Deployed 24h to 48h after such events that trigger population movements, the ETT collects information on the numbers, profiles and urgent needs of displaced populations, so as to inform immediate humanitarian response.

#### HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

DTM carries out surveys at the household level, harnessing a better understanding of intentions of displaced households (Return Intention Surveys), displacement conditions and sectoral needs of displaced people (Multisectoral Needs Assessment, MSNA) and durable solutions to internal displacement (Durable Solutions Survey).

### REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

In West and Central Africa, DTM implements **Mobility Tracking, Village Assessment Surveys, Multisectoral Needs Assessments, the Solutions and Mobility Index, Emergency Tracking Tool, Intention Surveys, Biometric Registration and Durable Solutions Surveys in seven countries** (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Niger and Nigeria).

Reports, datasets and methodologies are accessible online: [displacement.iom.int](https://displacement.iom.int)

### TRANSHUMANCE

Cross-border transhumance is a major herding practice in West and Central Africa. An important economic activity and a driver of regional development, transhumance has in the past decades been subject to significant upheavals. Climatic variability, demographic pressure, growing competition over scarcer resources, political volatility and insecurity have deeply affected transhumance routes, patterns and flows. IOM, through DTM **Transhumance Tracking Tool (TTT)**, works with the Réseau Bilateral Maroubé (RBM), a large regional transhumant herders' network, to provide strong and reliable data on transhumance in the region.

The TTT's aim is to bolster the capacity of regional, national and local actors involved in the management of transhumance to contribute to a more accurate and fine-grained understanding of transhumance flows, and to prevent and mitigate conflicts associated with transhumance mobility. Since 2019, in West and Central Africa, the Regional Data Hub supports the implementation of the TTT by ensuring quality collection and compilation of mapping, flow monitoring, early warning systems and individual surveys data.

### TAILORED, LOCAL, ADAPTABLE AND EVENT-BASED DATA ON TRANSHUMANCE

#### TAILORED

The Transhumance Tracking Tool is divided into 4 components: mapping of routes, transhumance tracking, early warning system and individual surveys. Data are collected following the transhumance calendar and dashboards are generated to share key data and highlights. These reports support advocacy efforts and decision-making processes.

#### LOCAL

IOM works with RBM, a regional transhumant network of local herders' associations representing 11 countries in WCA and a network of 750,000 sentinels. This work provides reliable data to support evidence-based, inclusive policy and decision-making on transhumance.

#### PEACEFUL

IOM utilizes its experience in community stabilization to mobilize local stakeholders around the TTT data through inclusive and participative dialogue platforms. These community-driven platforms contribute to enhanced social cohesion through climate-adapted initiatives favoring more sustainable management of shared resources, environmental rehabilitation, inclusive job creation, and improved access to basic services.

#### EVENT-BASED

The Transhumance Tracking Tool early warning system captures real-time information on events and conflicts related to livestock mobility throughout the region, which is then shared with local governance systems to mitigate tensions before they escalate into violent conflict.

### REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

In 2023, the **Transhumance Tracking Tool** is active in **nine countries** in West and Central Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone).

Reports, datasets and methodologies are accessible online: [displacement.iom.int](https://displacement.iom.int)

**The Missing Migrant Project** is an initiative of IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Center (GMDAC) which works with various government and non-government entities to collect data on cases of death and disappearance of migrants, who disappeared during their journey to a country other than their country of residence. Through this collection, the Regional Data Hub supports the MMP in data compilation, quality, analysis and reporting across the region, with a focus on the risks and consequences of irregular migration.

**REGIONAL/GLOBAL, RELIABLE, REGULAR DATA ON DEATHS & DISAPPEARANCES OF MIGRANTS**
**REGIONAL/GLOBAL**

The Missing Migrants Project currently hosts the only open access database in existence of death and missing records of migrants during the travel process, both in West and Central Africa and worldwide. As such, the MMP is the sole comprehensive database on migrant deaths and disappearances, in a region where migration routes are frequently hazardous, isolated and dangerous.

**RELIABLE**

Reliability of the data collected is guaranteed through a number of safeguards. The Missing Migrants Project gathers information from a variety of sources. For each incident, data is drawn from a combination of sources (such as official documents – including from coastguards and forensic authorities – NGO and media reports, as well as surveys and interviews with migrants). New entries are checked against existing records to ensure that no deaths are double counted. As collecting information is challenging, figures probably underestimate the real dimension of the situation.

**REGULAR**

The Missing Migrants Project collects data on migrant deaths and disappearances on a daily basis. Information gathered from various sources or directly from migrants is shared with the RDH's MMP focal point every day. This ensures that numbers on migrants deaths and disappearances are up-to-date and events leading to the deaths of migrants is instantly recorded in the MMP database.

**Departure  
Area  
Monitoring  
Tool**

In order to better understand departures from the Coasts of West Africa, IOM has developed the Departure Area Monitoring Tool (DAMT). Currently implemented in Senegal and Gambia, this tool allows for the tracking of locations of boat departures to the Canary Islands and/or Cabo Verde from the coasts of West Africa.

**REGIONAL FOOTPRINT**

In 2023, the **Missing Migrants Project** tool is active in **eight countries** in West and Central Africa (Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Gambia) and is supported by IOM missions, several States and Non-Governmental Organizations on data collection.


**MiMOSA**

Reports, datasets and methodologies are accessible online: [missingmigrants.iom.int](https://missingmigrants.iom.int)

In the framework of its operations, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) routinely collects information relating to its programmes and projects, including movement operations such as repatriation, resettlement, voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. All of this administrative data is compiled in a singly database, the Migrant Management Operational System (MiMOSA), which collects data on operational activities across three modules: 1) Movements (which record movement assistance provided); 2) Medical (health records of assisted migrants); and 3) Migrant assistance (records protection, reintegration assistance).

MiMOSA is IOM's institutional tool for managing biographical and demographic information on migrants. It ensures that individual case data is collected and processed in a standardized way so that it can be used in reports, analytical frameworks, research, monitoring & evaluation, and programming.

In West and Central Africa, the Regional Data Hub (RDH) works towards implementing MiMOSA by performing routine checks, updates as well as data analysis at the request of country missions to ensure data quality. Monthly and weekly reports are generated through MiMOSA, providing information on movements of migrants in the WCA region and informing the follow-up of the assistance provided. The Regional Data Hub also provides regular trainings on updates to MiMOSA through webinars and provides recommendations on future improvements.

**Migrant Management Operational System Application (MiMOSA)**
**A single database**

All the individuals assisted by IOM in their return and reintegration have their cases managed through a case management system that collects/processes data according to a standardized data model which allows unique cases to be tracked across different countries.

**User-friendly**

MiMOSA makes it possible to immediately and concurrently manage and register a large numbers of cases, enabling a high workflow while making case management swift and efficient.

**Enhance reporting**

Data is used at the programmatic, national, regional, and headquarters levels for reporting, analytics, research, monitoring and evaluation, smarter programming (e.g., regional migrant profile of returnees)

**Research oriented**

Partners can easily make use of the data collected through MiMOSA for research or analytical purposes, providing a function to MiMOSA data beyond operational and programmatic use.

**REGIONAL FOOTPRINT**

In 2023, **MiMOSA** is used in **seventeen countries** in West and Central Africa. Between 2017 and 2022, IOM has organized the return of 163,259 nationals of West and Central African countries. The migrants assisted in their return were mainly from Mali, Guinea, Nigeria, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire. This trend has remained unchanged since 2021. Niger remains the top host country since 2019, followed by Libya and Morocco.



## OBJECTIVE 2

### DEVELOP CAPACITY OF STATES AND OTHER RELEVANT PARTNERS TO ENHANCE THE MIGRATION EVIDENCE BASE

In collaboration with relevant partners, IOM undertakes comprehensive capacity development activities to enhance collection, analysis and use of quality migration data. These efforts help address country-specific needs for migration data to inform national policy and action. IOM combines delivery of technical support with facilitation of cooperation within and among States as well as support relevant capacity-development initiatives led by others. In WCA, the Regional Data Hub supports two main workstreams: Capacity Building and Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations.

**Capacity building:** The unit has trained government representatives from several National Civil Protection Agencies on emergency and early response tools, allowing partners to have access to key figures and information on needs of displaced individuals after the onset of an event. This was recently the case in early 2023 with the Coastal States of Benin, Togo and Ghana as the crisis in the central Sahel expanded to bordering countries. The RDH has also succeeded in having national statistical agencies – as is the case in Mali - take over data collection for the DTM, ensuring the sustainability and viability of projects.

**Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSO):** IOM RDH works alongside various CSOs in West and Central Africa. These partnerships with the civil society aimed at raising awareness of CSOs on the importance of strong evidenced-based programs and building the capacities to ensure data ownership and sustainability. Currently, the RDH support the largest transhumant herder association in WCA (Réseau Bilital Maroobé) in the roll out of the transhumance tracking tool (see objective 1).



## OBJECTIVE 3

### ENSURE EVIDENCE BASED IOM AND UN WIDE PROGRAMMING, OPERATIONS, POLICY AND COMMUNICATION

Beyond internal data collection sources, the RDH develops data collection partnerships with national (governments and statistical offices), regional (AU, ECOWAS, ECCAS), and global (UN agencies (GRANIT), Mixed Migration Centre, World Bank) partners. Through these partnerships, IOM collaborates with field actors who, through their networks, skills, and presence, have themselves collected IOM's data (as in the case of RBM) or shared data for holistic and multidimensional analyses of specific situations (as in the case of GRANIT).

**Research partnerships:** The RDH has developed research partnerships with Princeton, Harvard, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID), Columbia University, the German Aerospace Center, the Immigration Policy Lab, and the World Bank. Currently we are working with the London School of Economics (LSE), with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS).

**Inter-Agency Work:** Together with OCHA and REACH, IOM co-leads the Regional Inter-Sectoral Analysis Group (GRANIT), an inter-organizational regional initiative providing multidimensional and intersectoral cross-analysis of humanitarian crises, focusing on the spillover of the central Sahel crisis into the Coastal Countries. Furthermore, the RDH coordinates and monitors an initiative led by the Expert Group on Refugee, Displaced, and Stateless Persons Statistics (EGRiSS) for the identification of gaps in the implementation of International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (IRIS) in WCA.