



Q3-Q4 2018



QUARTERLY REGIONAL REPORT

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

**Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)
July — December 2018**

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The DTM Quarterly Regional Report is produced and published every 3 months to consolidate and present summary updates and highlights of regional population mobility situation. The report looks into internal displacement, intraregional cross-border movements, as well as interregional flows.

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Cover Photo: Jamal and Ahmed, two Ethiopian migrants, travelling across the border into Djibouti ©IOM (August 2017)/Muse Mohammed

POPULATION MOBILITY OVERVIEW

Mobility in West and Central Africa is characterized by three major patterns.

Intra-regional labour migration forms the **first** mobility pattern. Flows linked to labour migration mostly follow the region's main transport axis connecting Senegal to Chad through Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, a result of the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) principle of free movement of persons, which allows nationals from the Community to travel freely between its member countries. During the reporting period, intra-regional flows, which are the main mobility pattern observed by IOM Flow Monitoring teams in the region, have remained relatively unchanged from those observed in the first six months of the year. An analysis of the Flow Monitoring Registry data from July to December 2018 shows that 80 per cent of all flows observed are internal to the region, a ten per cent decrease compared to the period January-June 2018. Similar trends can be observed in the United Nations Global Migration Database provided by UNDESA (2017).

The **second** mobility pattern is made up of **interregional flows between West and Central Africa and North Africa**; specifically, between Mali, Niger and Chad, and Algeria and Libya for the most part, and to a lesser extent Mauritania, Morocco¹ and Tunisia. Over the reporting period, Mali and Niger recorded opposite trends: while IOM DTM teams

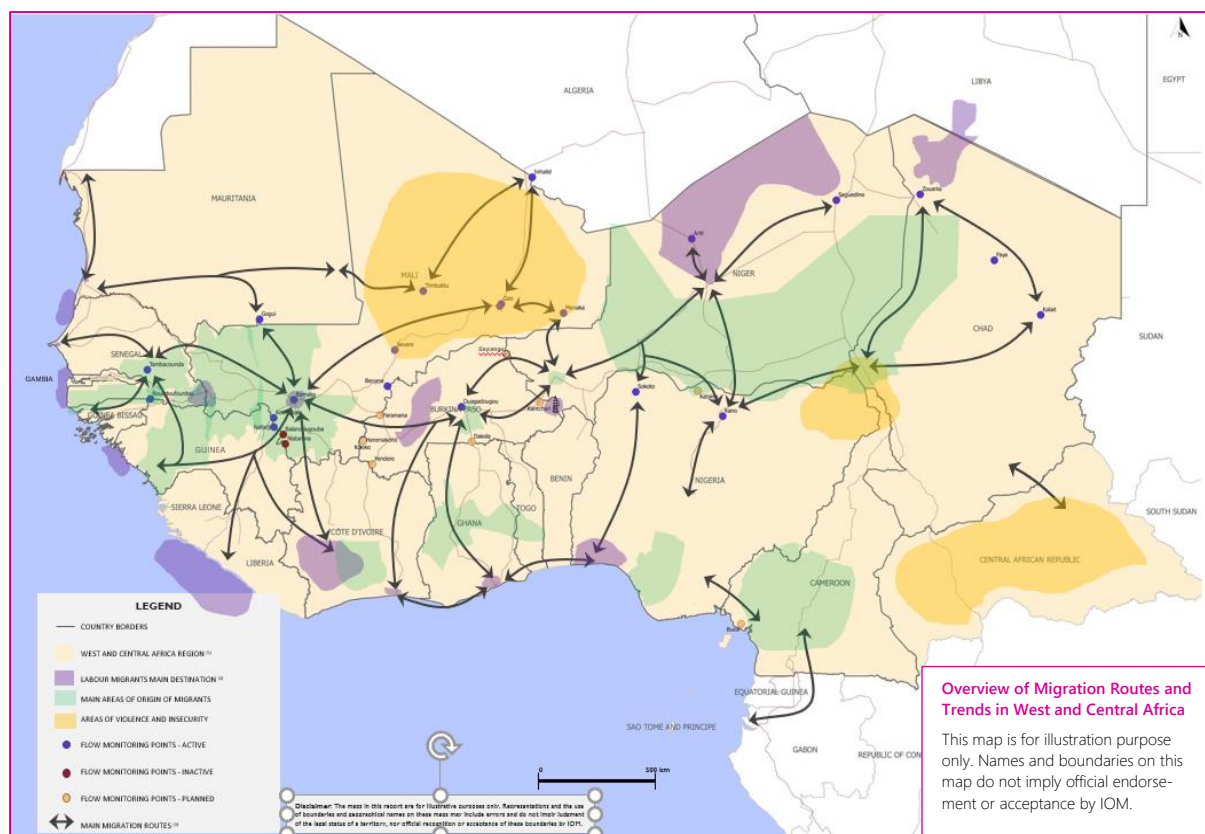
observed a sharp upsurge in flows from Algeria to Niger, flows from Algeria to Mali dropped by 44 per cent over the same period. Flows originating from Mali to Algeria decreased by 8 per cent, while the number of individuals travelling from Niger to Algeria increased after a sharp reduction in the first half of the year. The year 2018 saw a multiplication of outbound migration routes known as bypass routes, allowing a greater number of migrants to circumvent controls and travel to Algeria and possibly accounting for the observed increase. The most significant change was the increased share of Malian nationals amongst migrant populations: as of December 2018, 30 per cent of migrants travelling to and from Algeria and Libya were Malian nationals. The second half of 2018 also saw a significant increase (of 14%) in flows from Mali to Mauritania.

The **third** pattern defines **intra-regional forced internal displacement flows** in the Lake Chad Basin Region. Over 4.3 million persons are directly affected, composed of more than 2.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), 1.5 million returnees (IDPs returned to their location of habitual residence), 175,000 returnees from abroad, and 224,000 refugees in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.

¹ Movements to Morocco greatly increased over the reporting period, but

travel to Morocco is primarily carried out by air, and not captured by DTM Flow

Monitoring Points, which exclusively capture travel by land.



INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Internal displacement in countries across the region grew significantly in the last two quarters of 2018, with several situations witnessing an escalation in violence and hostilities as well as a worsening of security conditions.

The Lake Chad Basin Region, Mali and Central African Republic continue to be the main pockets of internal displacement in the region. Other situations of displacement in the South and North-West of Cameroon, in the Tillabéri region of Niger, in the Zouarke region of Chad and in the North of Burkina Faso have

raised increasing concerns and are being monitored.

In the **Lake Chad Basin Region**, the latest displacement figures provided by DTM and other actors amount to a total of 4.54 million IDPs, refugees (both in and out of camps), returnees and third country nationals (TCNs). 81 per cent of the affected population (3,669,298 individuals) are currently located in Nigeria, 10 per cent in Cameroon (452,002 individuals), 6 per cent in Niger (248,887 individuals) and 4 per cent in Chad (176,632 individuals)². More information about internal displacement in the Lake Chad Basin Region is available later on in the report.

In recent months, **Niger** has been impacted by an intensification of attacks by armed groups and inter-ethnic violence in the regions of Tahoua and Tillabéri (along the border with Mali), leading to increased internal displacement in the country. As of 31 December 2018, approximately 53,510 17,758 IDPs (2,537 households) had been displaced since the start of 2018 and registered in the two regions³. The number of IDPs has tripled since July 2018, pointing to the severe deterioration of the security situation in areas bordering Mali.

Since the initial displacements in 2012 resulting from hostilities in the regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, IOM DTM has been actively working on assessing

² DTM West and Central Africa, *Lake Chad Basin Crisis Monthly Dashboard*, 19 January 2019.

³ UNHCR. *Niger: Country Operation Update, December 2018*.

displacement in **Mali** with its mobility tracking exercise. It contributes actively to the *Commission sur les mouvements de populations* (CMP). As of 31 December 2018, 120,298 IDPs have been counted by the CMP⁴ - a doubling of the number of IDPs since July 2018. The majority of new displacements occurred in November and December 2018. This significant increase is a consequence of escalations in ethnic violence, a multiplication of attacks by armed groups and growing hostilities in the last quarter of 2018. The largest share of the total IDP caseload is now located in the regions of regions of Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao and Ménaka. In addition, the CMP reported that as of 31 December 2018, 526,505 persons have been counted as returned IDPs and 69,478 returnees from abroad (mainly Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and Algeria).⁵

The **Central African Republic (CAR)** continues to experience high levels of insecurity and violence among different armed groups in most parts of the country, causing new and protracted displacement. As of 30 June 2018, the *Commission de mouvement des populations* (CMP) reported that there were 640,969 IDPs in the CAR.⁶ This figure includes the results of the recently-published sixth round of DTM⁷.

In addition to displacements related to the Lake Chad Basin region, humanitarian conditions are fast deteriorating in the South-West and North-West regions of **Cameroon**, where insecurity and violence are affecting a reported 4 million people.⁸ According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), as of 31 December 2018, 956 villages were hosting a total of 444,213 IDPs across the affected regions. With the multiplication of armed groups and deployment of the military, the crisis in the North-West and South-West is increasingly shifting into an armed conflict and displacement is expected to grow.

In **Burkina Faso**, security conditions also deteriorated in the final quarter of 2018. OCHA has reported that over 41,000 IDPs had been registered as of 31 December 2018, 2.5 times the number of IDPs identified in June 2018. In November 2018, DTM implemented a profiling exercise in the village of Déou in the Sahel region. This assessment identified 1,600 IDPs in Déou, all of which had fled the town of Koutougou because of insecurity in the region. The majority of IDPs are reported to be in Soum.⁹

In **Chad**, violence flared in the second half of 2018 as clashes pitted government forces and armed groups against each

other in the northern parts of the country bordering Libya¹⁰. This led populations, including migrants working in gold mines, to flee the Zouarke and Tibesti regions. The worsening security conditions have led the authorities to temporarily close major axes, forbid movements in the north of the country and expel workers from gold panning sites. This created chaos and confusion and hampered the movements of populations in the region.¹¹ While the number of displaced persons is currently unknown, DTM will monitor the situation in coming months.

INTRAREGIONAL POPULATION MOBILITY

The Flow Monitoring methodology used to monitor regional migration flows relies on two data collection tools: a registry based on discussions with key informants to capture general migration trends in selected high transit points in the region, and a face-to-face survey conducted with travellers at those high transit points to gather more information about migrant profiles, reasons for movement and intended destinations.

Data gathered from IOM DTM Flow Monitoring Points from July to December 2018 shows that 90 per cent of the 1,100,329 individuals observed in West and Central Africa over the

⁴ CMP Mali – Rapport sur les mouvements de populations (17 January 2019).

⁵ CMP Mali – Rapport sur les mouvements de populations (17 January 2019).

⁶ CMP République Centrafricaine, *Rapport de la Commission Mouvement de populations - Décembre 2018*.

⁷ DTM RCA, *Rapport sur les déplacements 6 (Décembre 2018)*.

⁸ OCHA, *Cameroon: North-West and South-West Situation Report No. 2* (31 December 2018).

⁹ OCHA, *Burkina Faso: Situation des personnes déplacées internes* (January 2019).

¹⁰ ACLED, *Regional Overview- Africa* (15 January 2019).

¹¹ DTM Chad, *Rapport sur la situation migratoire au nord du Tchad 20* (Novembre 2018).

reporting period were travelling internally within the region. Ten per cent of flows were inter-regional, with five per cent entering the region and five per cent exiting the region in the direction of North Africa. Similar results had been observed in the first half of 2018. This is confirmed by UNDESA's Global Migration Database in 2017, which stated that out of seven million registered migrants in West and Central Africa, over 90 per cent had originated from the region. Likewise, UNCTAD's recent report on economic development in Africa mentions that over 89 per cent of international migrant stock in Western Africa originated from within the region.¹²

As evidenced by IOM's Flow Monitoring data, intra-regional population mobility mostly follows the main transport axis of the region as ECOWAS regulations allow nationals from the Community to travel freely between member states. Main routes for the past three months have therefore barely changed. The most important route links Dakar (Senegal) to Agadez (Niger), going through Bamako (Mali), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) and Niamey (Niger). Other relevant migration routes in the region are usually in some way connected to the Dakar-Agadez route. Indeed, the routes between Dakar (Senegal) and Tambacounda (Senegal), Banjul (The Gambia) to Tambacounda, Conakry (Guinea) to Tambacounda, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) to Bamako (Mali), Bamako to Gao (Mali), Abidjan to Ouagadougou

(Burkina Faso), Accra (Ghana) to Ouagadougou, Kano (Nigeria) to Niamey (Niger), and Kano to Agadez are all connected to the Dakar-Agadez axis. This route and its connected tributaries, which did not change significantly in the past six months, are taken by most of the migration flows in the region.

Mobility levels in the region are prone to experience regular fluctuations due to recurrent events, including seasonal agricultural labour demand, religious holidays, or travel related to school and university academic terms. During the second half of the year 2018, the occurrence of the religious holiday of **Eid al-Ahda** in August 2018, the end of the **harvesting season** in October-November 2018 and the start of the so-called '**cold**' season in December 2018 (during which the conditions to cross the desert are less severe) affected both internal and cross-border local movements within the region, as described below.

Reduced movements resulting from the occurrence of Eid al-Ahda on 21 August 2018, during which migrants tend to refrain from travel, were observed in **Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal**. The sale and purchase of goods during market days and petty trade are major factors of mobility in the region: In **Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria and Guinea**, short-term local movements were the primary reason of the movement of travelers, and in

many countries, weekly spikes in the numbers of travellers were observed on days at which markets were being held. These movements often occur cross-border as individuals travel to neighboring countries to sell and buy goods for one or several days before returning home.

Another increasingly significant mobility trend in the West and Central Africa region is the migration of individuals to gold panning sites in **Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal**. Alongside local rural communities, for whom gold mining is an integral and long-standing livelihood opportunity, the migrants dig for gold either in artisanal fashion or as part of larger, quasi-legal operations. While migrant gold miners are primarily young men, a number of women and some children are present as well. Mine workers stem primarily from limited-income agricultural backgrounds and travel to gold mines either seasonally or for a longer term seeking to address economic constraints or accumulate wealth before returning home or settling near the sites to start business or trade ventures. Incidental accounts have also reported that some travellers employ gold panning to save money to pay for their onward migration to North Africa or beyond. The expansion of gold mining activities throughout the region has been accompanied by the arrival of thousands of women, many of them Nigerian, who are trafficked and forced into prostitution, or choose to enter the sex trade voluntarily.

¹² UNCTAD (2018). *Economic Development in Africa Report 2019*.

In recent months, expulsions of migrants from gold mining sites by local authorities have led to a phenomenon known as “reverse rushes”, during which migrants expelled from mines seek other sites at which to search for gold, often driven into illegality. In **Chad**, periodic and significant increases in movements were observed throughout the reporting period, as clashes between armed groups combined with the closure of gold panning sites by government authorities have led local and migrant populations to flee the violence and insecurity¹³. In November and December 2018, the number of individuals travelling through northern Chad dropped significantly as a result of the restriction on movements ordered by local authorities.

In **Niger**, three additional Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs) were set up in September 2018 to better track flows between Niger and Nigeria, while two FMPs were added in Dan Issa and Tahoua to better understand migration routes in southern and central Niger, respectively. Dan Issa and Tahoua are important transit points for Nigerien nationals as well as individuals from other West African countries headed towards North African countries and the Mediterranean. Between October and December 2018, migration flows observed throughout Niger increased significantly (by 52%), a

result reflective of the return of seasonal workers from the harvesting season and increased number of migrants travelling through the desert during the cold season. This travel is often organized by regular convoys, reflected in the peaks in the numbers of travelers observed throughout the quarter.

Mauritania is also an important country of destination and transit for travellers within the region. A Migrants Presence exercise¹⁴ was conducted in December 2018 in the city of Nouadhibou in northern Mauritania. It highlighted the significant presence of migrants from countries in the region with 32,384 migrants living in the ten neighborhoods assessed. The majority of migrants were Senegalese (61%), followed by Malian (14%) and Guinean (13%) nationals. The majority of migrants (84%) came to Nouadhibou for economic reasons (employment offer or lack of economic opportunities in the home country).

While most mobility observed in **Mali** is internal to the country, Mali, as the main hub along the ECOWAS transport/travel axis, also forms an important transit country for migrants in the region. In terms of intra-regional flows, Mali connects individuals traveling between Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Niger and to a lesser extent Benin and Togo.

Similarly to Mali, **Guinea** is a point of departure as well as transit, connecting Mali, Senegal, the Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire and, to a lesser extent, Ghana.

The intra-regional population movements caused by the situation in the **Lake Chad Basin Region** are also significant. UNHCR registered more than 232,465 Nigerian refugees living in the surrounding countries (a four per cent increase from June 2018).¹⁵ In the **CAR**, a total of 589,483 Central African refugees were identified in Chad, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo¹⁶ (a 3% increase since June 2018). Finally, the volatile situation in **Mali** has led to 136,032 Malian refugees living in Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso¹⁷ (a 2% decrease from June 2018).

Displaced populations fleeing conflict and insecurity in neighbouring countries are also seeking refuge in **Niger**. In addition to being impacted by events in the Lake Chad Basin Region, Niger has also been affected by conflict in neighbouring Mali, being host, as of 31 December 2018, to 55,540 Malian refugees who have been displaced since 2012.¹⁸ Between July and December 2018, the number of Malian refugees in Niger has been slowly, but steadily decreasing, with five per cent fewer refugees living in Niger over that period.

¹³ DTM WCA, *Quarterly Migration Report (July-September 2018)* and DTM WCA, *Quarterly Migration Report (October-December 2018)*

¹⁴ DTM Mauritania, *Cartographie et profils des migrants à Nouadhibou (8-30 Novembre 2018)*

¹⁵ UNHCR Data Portal – Nigeria situation (31 December 2018).

¹⁶ UNHCR Data Portal – CAR situation (31 December 2018).

¹⁷ UNHCR Data Portal – Mali Situation (31 December 2018).

¹⁸ UNHCR Data Portal, *Mali Situation*.

INTERREGIONAL POPULATION MOBILITY

Between July and December 2018, interregional population mobility experienced fluctuations along several fronts. The most notable changes observed from the previous quarter were related to the **sharp drop in travel from Mali and Niger to Algeria**. This is a trend which started in late 2017 and has not abated since.

The first site of significant change in population movements is found in Niger, at the Flow Monitoring Point of Arlit, which reports on population mobility between **Niger and Algeria**. Usually, travellers from Niger to Algeria were transiting through Assamaka (in Niger), and In Guezzam (Algeria) towards Tamanrasset (Algeria). But no reported movement between the two countries occurred during the reporting period.¹⁹

Outgoing flows from **Mali to Algeria** also experienced changes over the last six months, with a decrease of 36 per cent in the number of individuals observed at FMPs situated along the Mali-Algeria axis compared to the first half of 2018. Travellers were mainly observed to be departing from the regions of Gao and Tombouctou towards Bordj and Tamanrasset in Algeria. As with movements from Algeria to Niger, this change coincides with news of stronger security

presence at the border, greater insecurity for migrants travelling towards Algeria due to the presence of armed groups as well as increased repatriations from Algeria.

Cross-border flows between **Niger and Libya** on the other hand experienced important fluctuations over the reporting period. Whereas 25 per cent of travelers intended to travel to Libya in July 2018, this number halved (12 per cent) in October 2018, before increasing back to 19 per cent in December 2018. This decrease has been in line with continuing reports of insecurity in Libya, and ongoing evacuations of migrants towards Niger and to their countries of origin.

This year has seen the emergence of new inter-regional routes, as exemplified by the increase in the number of Ivorian nationals, mostly female, travelling to **Tunisia** by commercial flights. The past two years have also seen the resurgence of formerly popular routes connecting West and Central Africa with **Morocco**. According to Flow Monitoring Surveys conducted between July and December 2018²⁰ in the region, 3 per cent of respondents, nearly half of whom were of Guinean nationality, indicated that their intended final destination was Morocco. The majority indicated that they planned to arrive via Mali or Mauritania, with smaller numbers intending to arrive there by

crossing Algeria. It should however be noted that DTM data may not fully capture the extent of movements to Morocco, most of which are conducted by air and thus not included in DTM Flow Monitoring data.

In contrast to previous years, the **Western Mediterranean Route** has overtaken the Central Mediterranean Route as the most-widely used migration route to Europe. In the second half of 2018, more than half of arrivals to Europe (or 22,014 out of 40,716 arrivals) were recorded in **Spain** along the Western Mediterranean Route. This represents an increase of 18 per cent in the number of arrivals to Spain in comparison to the first half of the year.²¹ West African nationals made up a large majority (65%) of arrivals to Spain, a significant increase from 2017 (during which they represented only 2% of arrivals to Spain), with individuals from Guinea Conakry, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and The Gambia being among the more prominent nationalities.

Dynamics in arrivals to Spain significantly evolved between the first and second halves of the year. Only 16 per cent of migrants and refugees registered arrived in the country between January and June, while the majority arrived in the second half of the year (a total of 54,690, more than the total arrivals recorded since 1999). The most interesting change when looking at the

¹⁹ IOM Niger. *Flow Monitoring Report* (December 2018).

²⁰ It should be noted, that DTM data may not fully capture the extent of movements to Morocco as DTM Flow

Monitoring data does not capture air routes.

²¹ DTM Europe, *Quarterly Regional Report, Q4 2018 (October- December 2018)*

distribution of arrivals in 2017 and 2018, is an increase in arrivals to the Canary Islands. Between July and December 2018, authorities in Spain registered a total of 1,283 arrivals to the Canary Islands. An increase in arrivals to the islands happened in the last quarter of the year, when nearly half (49%) of all registered migrants and refugees (a total of 624 individuals) arrived at the islands²².

Linked to this development, migration movements from **Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau through Mauritania up to Morocco** by land or sea have increasingly been reported in news outlets, along with reports of boats heading to Spain mainland or the Canary Islands, Spain.²³

Another notable development witnessed over the reporting period is the increasing use by migrants of the **Eastern Mediterranean Route**. This Eastern Route was the second most-used route by migrants arriving to Europe, representing 37 per cent of arrivals.

In much smaller numbers, individuals from West and Central Africa have travelled further across the Mediterranean. West African nationals who have arrived in **Italy** through the Central Mediterranean Route have drastically decreased in number in comparison to those who arrived in 2017., in line with all Mediterranean arrivals to Italy. In addition, the nationality breakdown

of migrants and refugees arriving to Europe shifted considerably between 2017 and 2018. In stark contrast to previous years, when they represented four out of the top five nationalities arriving in Italy, no West and Central African nationality group was among the top five nationalities arriving to Italy., compared to 2017, when they represented four out of the top five nationalities arriving to Italy.

This shift in the nationalities registered in Italy can be partially explained by the reduction in departures from Libya in favour of Tunisia, Turkey and Greece. DTM data shows that 55 per cent of migrants and refugees who arrived in Italy in 2018 departed from Libya, 26 percentage points less than the 88 per cent calculated in 2017.

²³ *Al-Jazeera*, "Scored of migrants feared dead in Guinea-Bissau boat mishap",

3 October 2018; *TV5 Monde*, "Sénégal: un bateau de migrants s'échoue à Dakar", 18 August 2018; *Leral.net*, "Un

bateau de migrants échoue au large de Nouadhibou", 19 July 2018.

CRISIS HIGHLIGHTS AND MOBILITY DYNAMIC

LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION

Latest available summary figures and stats

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Cameroon	245,725
DTM Round 16, Nov 2018	
Chad	126,313
DTM Round 6, Dec 2018	
Nigeria	2,026,582
DTM Round 25, Oct 2018	
Niger	104,288
Gov. of Niger, Jun 2018	

Nigerian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

Jul-18	224,334
Aug-18	
Sep-18	
Oct-18	228,432
Nov-18	
Dec-18	229,676

Data source: UNHCR data portal

Returnees (former IDPs)

Cameroon	96,075
DTM Round 16, Nov 2018	
Chad	13,771
DTM Round 6, Dec 2018	
Nigeria	1,518,534
DTM Round 25, Oct 2018	
Niger	N.A.
Gov. of Niger, Oct 2017	

North-eastern Nigeria has been subject to an insurgency of the group Boko Haram since 2009, with the aim of creating an Islamic state enforcing a strict application of Sharia law. The violence raised grave humanitarian concerns since the beginning of 2014 and the crisis spread to

other countries of the Lake Chad Basin in early 2014.

While militants continued to carry out sporadic attacks throughout 2017 and 2018 in the four affected countries, fewer attacks were perpetrated and the volume of displacement significantly decreased, generating relative stabilization of the situation and talks of lasting peace, in particular in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Ahead of national elections in February 2019, Boko Haram escalated its campaign of violence in late 2018, launching a series of attacks on villages as well as military bases and retaking previously lost territory, which led to significant displacement throughout Northeastern Nigeria.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Based on figures obtained during data collection activities between July and December 2018, internally displaced persons represent 55 per cent (an estimated 2,502,908 individuals) of the entire mobile population²⁴ identified in the four countries. The overwhelming majority of IDPs are in Nigeria (2,026,602 individuals, or 81% of IDPs displaced by the crisis), followed by Cameroon (245,725 individuals, or 10%), Chad (126,313 individuals, or 5%), and Niger (104,288 individuals, or 4%); The Nigerian State of Borno alone hosts 59 per cent of all individuals displaced internally by the crisis²⁵.

The vast majority of IDPs in the four affected countries were

²⁴ This refers to the mobile population tracked by DTM, which includes IDPs,

former IDPs, returnees from abroad, refugees and third country nationals

²⁵ DTM Nigeria (Round 25 – October 2018)

displaced by the ongoing conflict with Non-State Armed Groups (2,314,338 individuals, or 92%), while the remaining individuals were displaced by intercommunal clashes (167,176 individuals, or 7%), and natural disasters (21,414 individuals, or less than 1%). Notably, the percentage of IDPs displaced by conflict decreased by three per cent (down from 95 per cent) since June 2018. At the same time, the share of IDPs displaced by communal conflict grew by three per cent. In Niger and Chad, all IDPs identified were displaced by the conflict, but in Cameroon and Nigeria IDPs were also displaced by either natural disaster or intercommunal clashes.²⁶

Between June and December 2018, the number of IDPs grew by 4 per cent, continued attacks and clashes that indicate that the crisis is still ongoing. Nevertheless, while nearly 2.5 million persons remain internally displaced in the four affected countries, the share of IDPs amongst displaced populations subsided from 56 per cent to 55 per cent since June 2018, while the share of former IDP returnees grew from 35 per cent to 36 per cent, pointing to the growing returns of internally displaced populations affected by the crisis. Indeed, a total of 1,629,551 former IDPs have already returned to their areas of origin; this represents 108,374 more returnees than in June 2018. Similar to internal

displacement, the overwhelming majority of former IDPs are found in Nigeria (an estimated 1,518,534 or 93% of recorded former IDPs in the region). Remaining former IDPs are in Cameroon (96,075 individuals) and Chad (14,942 individuals). Information on former IDPs remains unavailable for Niger. The increasing number of returns are primarily motivated by the advances made by security forces and increased security in areas of origin, as well as linked to economic and food security reasons.

Across all three countries, humanitarian assistance and available services in displacement sites as well as return locations are diminishing, pushing both IDPs to leave their displacement location and returnees to search for livelihood opportunities and basic services elsewhere. Former IDPs, limited in resources, oftentimes return home to their area of origin where their houses and belongings have been damaged or stolen. This phenomenon is exemplified by the results of the Return Intention Survey conducted in Cameroon, which found that a growing share of IDPs (42%, a 10% increase since June 2018) wish to leave their current displacement site because of the lack of services on site. Similarly, the number of former IDP returnees in Chad decreased by 37 per cent between June and December 2018, a change, which while seemingly

contradicting the trend of increased returns is explained by the fact that returnees are leaving their current locations in search of livelihood opportunities and aid. Significant assistance is thus likely needed to ensure the durable reintegration of these populations as well as their access to basic services.

Displacement dynamics are complex in the Lake Chad Basin, characterized by multiple displacements, pendular movements, and simultaneous displacement and returns in the same areas. While the general displacement trend remains the same with over 2.5 million IDPs, an increase in returns is a major trend requiring attention.

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

Cross-border movements represent an estimated 417,348 individuals (230,462 refugees, 185,265 returned migrants and refugees, and 1,621 TCNs)²⁷. These combined movements represent a mere nine per cent of all movements identified, highlighting the primary internal nature of displacement in the Lake Chad Basin.

In addition, refugee movements represent 55 per cent of all cross-border movements, while returns represent 45 per cent and TNCs less than one per cent. As with internal displacement trends, the share of refugees has

²⁶ DTM Cameroon (Round 16 – November 2018), DTM Chad (Round 6 – December 2018), DTM Nigeria (Round 25 – October 2018), Government of Niger (30/11/2018), UNHCR / Government / CNARR Cameroon (31/12/2018), UNHCR

/ Government / CNARR Chad (31/12/2018).

²⁷ DTM Cameroon (Round 16 – November 2018), DTM Chad (Round 6 – December 2018), DTM Nigeria (Round 25 – October 2018), Government of Niger

(30/11/2018), UNHCR / Government / CNARR Cameroon (31/12/2018), UNHCR / Government / CNARR Chad (31/12/2018).

slightly decreased since June 2018 (by 1%), while the proportion of returnees grew by one per cent in that same period.

Refugees: A total of 230,549 Nigerian refugees have been identified in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. All identified refugees displaced by the ongoing conflict in Lake Chad Basin are Nigerian nationals. Main countries of asylum are Niger (118,781 individuals, or 52% of refugees), Cameroon (100,371 individuals, or 44%), and Chad (11,371 individuals, or 4%). The numbers of Nigerian refugees remained relatively stable in the past three years, hovering between 205,000 and 226,000 individuals. A tripartite agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees living in Cameroon was signed by the Governments of Nigeria, Cameroon and UNHCR in March 2017. The operationalization of this agreement is likely to result in a decrease in the number of refugees living in Cameroon and the subsequent increase of returned refugees to North-eastern Nigeria.

Returnees from abroad: A total of 186,022 returned migrants and refugees have been identified across Nigeria (124,162 individuals), Chad (26,298 individuals), Niger (25,731 individuals) and Cameroon (9,831 individuals). This represents a six per cent increase in returnees from abroad since June 2018 (up from 175,226). Countries of origin of those returnees are: Niger (76,450 individuals), Cameroon (50,279 individuals), Nigeria

(41,660 individuals), Chad (29,971 individuals) and the Central African Republic (430 individuals). These returnees include former refugees as well as individuals who had migrated for various reasons that include economic and education purposes, to find grazing land, to find a spouse, or to settle with family.

DISPLACEMENT AND MOBILITY DATA

The DTM is implemented in all four countries affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis: Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Niger.²⁸ Specifically, DTM covers the six most affected states in Nigeria (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe), the Far North region in Cameroon, and the Lac region in Chad. The only country not covered by a DTM mobility exercise in the framework of this crisis is Niger, where displacement figures for the Diffa region are provided by the Government (in Diffa, DTM conducts surveys with IDPs).

DTM activities in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria include Mobility Tracking, through which IOM collects displacement-related data from Key Informants during assessments in all affected areas. This component is complemented by registration exercises in Chad and Nigeria, and household interviews in Cameroon. In addition, Nigeria DTM also includes an Emergency Tracking Tool (ETT) aimed at identifying new displacement as well as its triggers, data which is then compiled in a weekly update. Finally,

both Nigeria and Chad implement the Flow Monitoring component aimed at identifying migration trends.

While basic displacement information is available for the Diffa region of Niger, the lack of DTM activities in this area complicates the regional analysis for this crisis, with core indicators being available for the other three countries only.

In light of the evolving context of the Lake Chad Basin Crisis, as well as the significant and constantly increasing proportion of returns, IOM is currently in the process of piloting DTM assessments incorporating a Humanitarian-Development Nexus component.

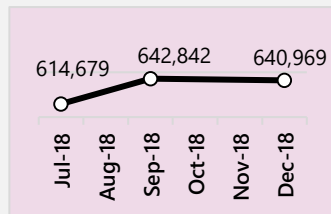
A multitude of actors collect displacement-related information in the four affected countries. For example, the crisis resulted in cross-border displacement (refugees), for which data is collected and made available by UNCHR in partnership with the relevant governments. Other initiatives implemented in the region include the inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism which aims at, among other things, implementing an early warning system to respond to population displacement.

²⁸ Only return intention surveys are conducted in Niger.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

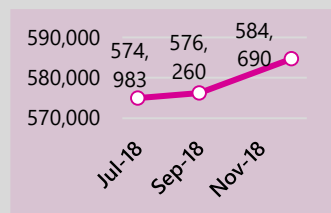
Latest available summary figures and stats

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)



Data source: CMP Monthly Update

Central African Refugees in Neighbouring Countries



Data source: UNHCR data portal

The Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced continuous volatility and recurring violent clashes since its independence in 1960. However, the most recent crisis in 2013, involving predominantly Muslim rebel groups, the Seleka, and primarily Christian anti-Balaka armed groups, has developed into an extremely complex protracted state of permanent insecurity and fragility.

The escalation in violence led to the deployment of a French military force (Operation Sangaris) to restore peace. Despite the announcement by France, on 30

October 2016, of the end of Operation Sangaris and successful elections in late 2016, the conflict continues to affect large swathes of the CAR, with Non-State Armed Groups controlling most of the CAR territory and the Government having limited control outside of Bangui.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

As of 31 December 2018, the CMP estimates that the CAR hosted an estimated 640,969 internally displaced persons (IDPs). This represents an increase of 32,941 IDPs (or 5%) since June 2018. Sixty-five per cent of IDPs were thought to be living with host families, while 35 per cent resided in IDP sites and other collective settings.²⁹ Violence and displacement have reached most of the country's territory and IDPs have been identified in each of the country's 17 administrative divisions. The *préfectures* hosting the largest numbers of IDPs were Ouaka (110,118), Haute-Kotto (105,065), and the Commune autonome of Bangui (85,431). Together, they experienced most of the violence observed and currently host almost half (47%) of IDPs in the country. In the latter half of 2018, these areas, in addition to Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou, were the site of inter-communal clashes as well as intense fighting related to the conflict³⁰. Causes of internal displacement in the CAR remain armed conflicts (68%, up from 58% in June 2018) and inter-

community clashes (25%, down from 36% in June 2018).

In light of continued tensions and clashes, it is expected that displacement, within and outside the CAR, will remain at high levels in the foreseeable future.

Alongside the resurgence in violence observed in some parts of the country, other regions of CAR have become increasingly stable, leading to high numbers of returns to these regions. This overall trend, which first started in 2016, was further confirmed during the reporting period, with the increase in the number of returnees of 20% from July to December 2018. The *préfecture* of Ouham-Pende alone hosted almost half (49%) of returnees in the country³¹.

The CAR is characterized by a lack of data on the return of IDPs. While several actors collect data on former IDPs, including the DTM, there is no coordinated system to inform humanitarian and government actors on the magnitude of returns mostly due to the difficult access of humanitarian partners in certain regions.

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

After a significant decrease in the number of refugees in mid-2017, the past year has seen the number of refugees increasing. As of 31 December 2018, a total of 584,690 Central African nationals have found refuge in neighbouring countries. This represents a

²⁹ CMP République Centrafricaine. *Rapport de la Commission sur les mouvements de populations (Décembre 2018)*.

³⁰ DTM CAR (Round 5- September 2018).

³¹ CMP République Centrafricaine. *Rapport de la Commission sur les mouvements de populations (Décembre 2018)*.

two per cent increase since June 2018 and corroborates the impact of renewed violent clashes on displacement, both within and outside the CAR. Refugees from CAR currently reside primarily in Cameroon (274,688 individuals), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (172,011 individuals) and Chad (102,086 individuals).³² Notable trends observed in the latter half of 2018 include a six per cent increase in the number of refugees in Cameroon, as well as a two per cent decrease in the number of refugees living in the DRC, a result of growing instability in border regions of the DRC which has forced refugees to flee and return to CAR.

The high number of both IDPs and refugees thus remains alarming. As of 30 June, an estimated 27 per cent (1,225,659 individuals) of the Central African population³³ is either internally displaced or has found refuge in a neighbouring country. An estimated 1,225,659 Central African nationals were displaced within and outside the Central African Republic, out of a total estimated Central African population of 4,659,080 (World Bank 2017 estimate³⁴). This means that an estimated 27 per cent of the Central African population is either internally displaced or has found refuge in a neighbouring country. Factors and risks causing displacement remain prevalent and displacements show little sign of abating in the near future.

DISPLACEMENT AND MOBILITY DATA

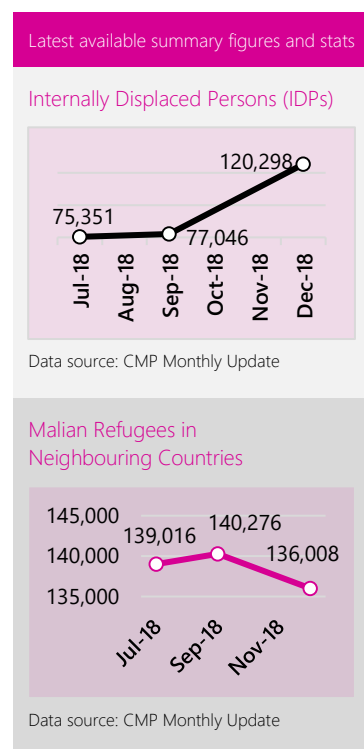
There is no unified nationwide system to track displacement in the Central African Republic. Instead, several actors, including DTM, collect data on the number of displaced populations separately. The *Commission sur les mouvements de populations* (CMP) provides official government figures on nationwide displacement.

While multiple actors collect displacement-related data, the mandated entity charged with compiling and validating displacement information is the Population Movement Commission (CMP). Data compiled comes from various sources, including: DTM, The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), UNHCR, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), local NGOs, etc. While the CMP is vital in providing overall numbers of IDPs, the lack of a unified system collecting data using the same methodology on the entire territory poses methodological issues as well as limitations in terms of analysis of the crisis and guiding the overall action of humanitarian actors. Further, while there is some data being collected on returns by DTM, no system to track the total number of returns in the country is in place.

In addition, the continued complex security situation further complicates access and operations of humanitarian actors,

including DTM assessments. Logistical constraints remain significant, specifically regarding transportation and telecommunications, which hamper the successful implementation of data collection exercises.

MALI



Since 2012, Mali has been affected by a civil crisis that has led to many deaths and the internal displacement of more than 500,000 persons, while thousands more have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Over the past six years, thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned, leaving an estimated 60,000 persons still displaced in various communities throughout the country. Isolated

³² UNHCR, Operational Portal – Refugee Situation <https://data2.unhcr.org/fr/situations/car>

³³ out of a total estimated Central African population of 4,659,080 (World Bank IBRD/IDA, 2017)

but fatal inter-communal and inter-tribal violence continues to lead to new displacements with associated humanitarian and longer-term needs.

The crisis currently affecting Mali started in January 2012, when the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) launched an armed campaign against the Malian government. The aim of the movement was to attain independence or greater autonomy for northern Mali. In March 2012, a coup d'état created a political and leadership vacuum which resulted in significant gain of territory by the MNLA. The MNLA was backed by other Non-State Armed Groups, including Islamist groups such as Ansar Dine.

After years of conflict (with vast swathes of territory being taken by the MNLA as well as Islamist groups and then retaken by an international coalition, intestine fighting and growing intercommunal tensions), a ceasefire agreement was signed on 19 February 2015 in Algiers between the Government of Mali and northern rebels. This was followed by the signature of a peace agreement in Bamako on 15 April 2015, officially ending the conflict. Despite the peace agreement, Mali continues to face frequent attacks by Non-State Armed Groups.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

At the beginning of the crisis in 2012, the number of IDPs continuously increased to reach a peak in June 2013 (353,455 IDPs). Following this peak, the number of IDPs significantly decreased until April 2015 (43,101 IDPs). This was followed by an increase in May 2015 (102,666 IDPs) and a subsequent decrease to hit the lowest mark of 33,042 IDPs in December 2016. Displacement levels have since been fluctuating, although a steady increase in displacement has been witnessed since January 2018. Indeed, over the course of 2018, the number of IDPs has tripled, from 38,172 IDPs to 120,298 IDPs. The increase is mainly due to the deterioration of the security situation and increased violence.

As of 31 December 2018, 120,298 IDPs have been counted by the *Commission sur les Mouvements de Populations* (CMP) in Mali.³⁵ The largest part of the total IDP caseload is now located in the regions of Mopti (56,495), Timbuktu (20,524), Gao (18,395) and Ménaka (12,543). Since June 2018, the IDP contingent in Mali nearly doubled in size (increase of 92%). While the number of IDPs grew gradually between July and October 2018 (from 75,351 individuals to 80,302), in line with a trend observed since January 2018, the growth in the number of IDPs suddenly accelerated in November and December 2018 following the deterioration of security conditions in the central regions of the country, increasing by 40,000

individuals in just two months. Sikasso, Koulikoro and Mopti witnessed significantly greater levels of violence over that period³⁶.

In addition, the CMP reported as of 31 December 2018 that 526,505 persons have been counted as returned IDPs since the start of hostilities in 2012.³⁷ The high number of returnees, which has not changed since June 2018, highlights the importance of this trend and the need for reintegration and community-based assistance.

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

Cross-border movements represent an estimated 205,486 individuals (136,008 refugees, and 69,478 repatriated migrants and refugees). These combined cross-border movements, which were stable between July and December 2018, represent only 26 per cent of all movements identified, highlighting the primarily internal nature of displacement in Mali.

Refugees: A total of 136,008 Malian refugees have been identified in Burkina Faso (24,686 individuals or 18%), Mauritania (55,782 individuals or 41%), and Niger (55,540 individuals or 41%). The refugee caseload has been relatively stable over the year 2018, fluctuating between 130,000 and 145,000 individuals.

Repatriates/Returnees from abroad: 69,478 returnees from abroad, mainly Burkina Faso

³⁵ CMP Mali – Rapport sur les mouvements de populations (17 January 2019).

³⁶ DND/DTM Mali – Rapport de situation n°21 (24 December 2018).

³⁷ CMP Mali – Rapport sur les mouvements de populations (17 January 2019).

(24,850), Niger (19,988), Mauritania (16,810), and Algeria (7,819)³⁸ have been identified. The number of returnees from abroad has steadily increased since July 2013 to reach its peak in December 2018. Since June 2018, the number of returnees from abroad has increased by three per cent, indicating continued returns to the country.

DISPLACEMENT AND MOBILITY DATA

In **Mali**, since the initial displacements in 2012 due to hostilities in the regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, IOM DTM has been working on assessing displacement with its mobility tracking exercise and actively contributes to the CMP.

DTM is active in all ten regions of Mali since 2012, through its Mobility Tracking tool collecting information on displacement and return trends. After implementation by IOM, DTM methodology and data collection and analysis tools were handed over to the Government of Mali in November 2014. In addition, the registration of returnees from abroad was handed from the UNHCR to the *Direction Nationale du Développement Social* (DNDS) in April 2015. This allowed the DNDS to centralize and to better harmonize data collection on mobile persons.

While multiple actors collect displacement related data, the mandated entity charged with compiling and validating displacement information is the

CMP. Commission members include: General Direction for Civil Protection, DNDS, IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, ACTED, NRC, DRC, Handicap International, Solidarités International, and CRS.

The situation in Mali remains volatile, with frequent attacks by Non-State Armed Groups, especially in the northern part of the country. This is likely to keep internal displacement at high levels in the foreseeable future.

Lastly, limited funding is available for the implementation of DTM since December 2017, resulting in the DNDS' limited capacity to conduct verifications and updates when it receives reports of population movements. Such reports are currently mostly received for the center of the country (Mopti, Ségou) as well as Ménaka and other locations of Northern Mali.

³⁸ CMP Mali – Rapport sur les mouvements de populations (17 January 2019).

OUTLOOK ON POPULATION MOBILITY

Population mobility trends in West and Central Africa are unlikely to drastically change in the next three months.

With security conditions deteriorating and violence increasing in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad, displacement levels are expected to rise over the first quarter of 2019.

In **Mali**, the intensification of ethnic violence and attacks by extremist groups in December 2018 has already led to significant increases in displacement in the country, which are expected to rise further in early 2019.

Burkina Faso has also witnessed a stark increase of insecurity in December 2018, and as of 31 December 2018, over 40,000 were said to have been internally displaced. While insecurity has been confined to the Nord and Sahel regions, the displacement situation is likely to worsen should the conflict and levels of communal and religious violence escalate in the coming months.

While internal displacement in the **Lake Chad Basin** is expected to continue to decline, elections planned for February 2019 may lead Non-State Armed Groups to increased levels of violence ahead, during and after the vote. In addition, displacement is expected to continue as armed groups carry out random and sporadic attacks in the affected countries. Meanwhile, returns of formerly displaced IDPs are expected to continue.

In **Niger**, continued violence in regions bordering Mali (Tahoua and Tillabéri) are expected to cause further displacement.

In **CAR**, the situation remains hard to predict, and displacements are likely to continue due to ongoing violence in the country, in particular Mbomou and Basse-Kotto. Levels of return are expected to remain stable or possibly grow, thanks to the further stabilization of some of the country's *préfectures* (most notably Ouham-Pendé).

The humanitarian situation in the South-West and North-West regions of **Cameroon** is expected to continue, with the risk of increasing internal and cross-border displacements into Nigeria. IOM DTM teams are planning further assessments which will provide more updated information over the coming months on the numbers, locations and needs of those displaced.

With the growing presence of extremist groups in the region, there is a possibility that other countries, in particular **Benin**, and **Togo**, will be affected by violence and displacement.

The events that might impact the intra-regional migration movements are recurrent movements related to seasonal labour, religious holidays, or academic term dates. After the significant fluctuations observed in the second half of 2018, coinciding with the occurrence of religious holidays, school leave and seasonal migration, intraregional migration flows are expected to stabilize in early 2019.

Interregional migration to North Africa is constantly adapting to a changing context, with Libya becoming less attractive for migrants in contrast to increased movements to Morocco. Cross-

border movements between Algeria and Mali or Niger may continue to experience some fluctuation, depending on the evolution of policy developments along the border during this time. For instance, the Niger government has indicated that it would send migrants returned by Algerian authorities to the border between Niger and Algeria.

However, as Libya, Algeria and Morocco continue to be important countries of destination for West and Central African nationals migrating for various economic reasons (employment opportunities or lack of economic opportunities in the home country), it is unlikely that cross-border movements in this direction will stop completely, even with such changes in policy and security context. It is likely, however, that routes taken by migrants to arrive there will be longer and more perilous.

IOM DTM teams across the region but also in North Africa and Europe are working on monitoring these changes and adapting existing tools to capture these movements.

DATA INITIATIVES

IOM DTM in West and Central Africa continues to expand its activities both on the mobility tracking of internal displacement and on the monitoring of intra and interregional migration movements.

Mobility Tracking exercises will continue in Chad, CAR, Cameroon, and Nigeria with additional rounds expected in all these countries. In the next few months, additional data

collection in Niger on the displaced population in Diffa is expected, along with data collection in the South-West and North-West regions of Cameroon. Assessments of certain areas will also be conducted by IOM Niger at the border regions with Mali (Tillabéri). In addition, government officials in multiple countries in the region will be trained on data collection in displacement situations.

Given the severity of displacements experienced by Burkina Faso in December 2018, efforts have been undertaken to set up DTM activities in the country, with the goal to provide a better understanding of displacement in the country and to closely monitor any evolution in the situation. Discussions are underway to establish Baseline Assessments in the country.

Flow monitoring activities will continue to be refined by adjusting the location of existing points in Senegal and Guinea to better reflect mobility patterns. DTM teams will also be working on refining the flow monitoring survey activities (surveys on a sample of migrants passing through FMPs) to obtain a better understanding of the travelers' profiles.

After a successful first round in December, the Migrants Presence exercise in Nouadhibou (Mauritania) will undergo a second round. In addition, the Transhumance Tracking Tool (TTT), intended to monitor movements of transhumance, will also be activated in Mauritania in early 2019.

Transhumance tracking activities are also expected to begin in

Chad, CAR and Burkina Faso in the coming months.

With the ongoing EUTF, DFID, PRM and Dutch-funded projects, IOM Regional Office in West and Central Africa continue their efforts to improve data quality and analysis.



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency