

Q1 2018



QUARTERLY REGIONAL REPORT

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)
January – March 2018

 displacement.iom.int & flow.iom.int
 dtmsupport@iom.int

International Organization for Migration
April 2018

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.

CONTENTS

- Population Mobility
Overview
- Crisis Highlights and
Mobility Dynamic
- Outlook on Population
Mobility

This report is produced by DTM Regional Support team for West and Central Africa through generous funding support from:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

For feedback, please contact
✉ dtmsupport@iom.int

Permission is required to reproduce any part of this publication. Permission to be freely granted to educational or non-profit organizations.

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed, and the presentation of material within the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

© International Organization for Migration (IOM) April 2017

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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

POPULATION MOBILITY OVERVIEW

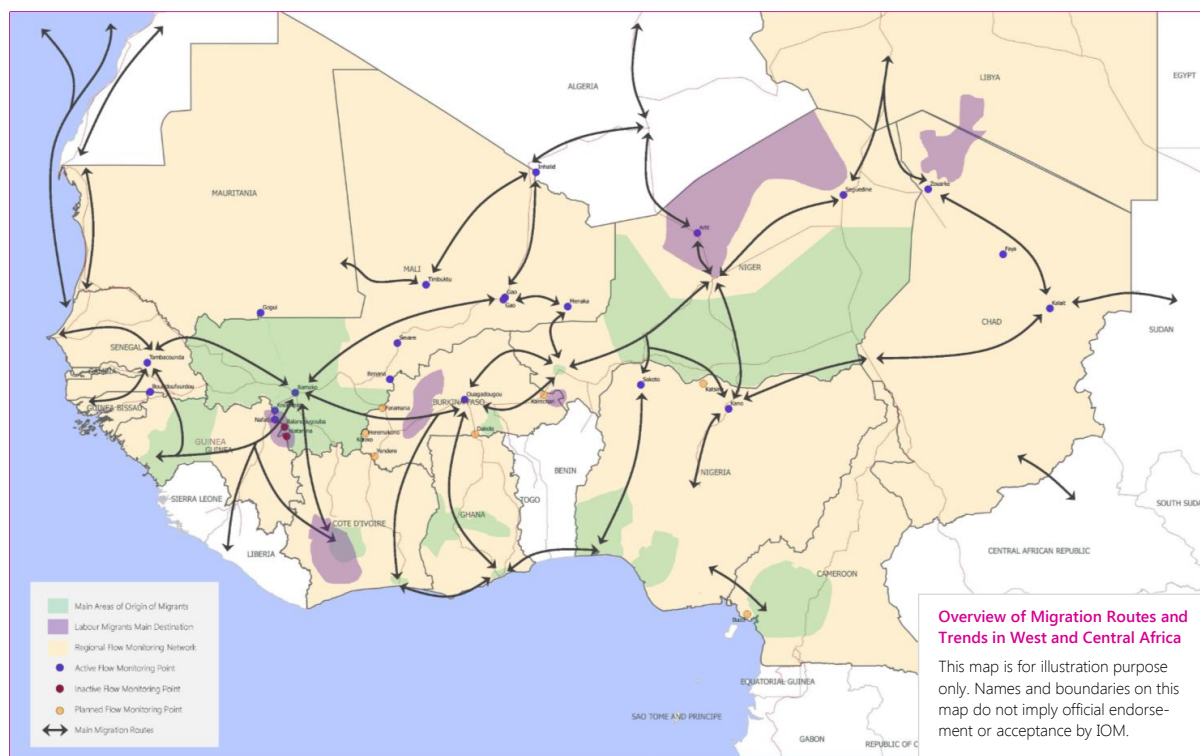
Three major mobility patterns shaped West and Central African flows in the last three months. The **first** is a pattern of **forced internal displacement flows**, mainly as a result of the Lake Chad Basin Crisis. The Crisis directly affecting nearly 4 million persons with more than 2.27 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 1.49 million returns in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger. IOM's DTM implementation is active in all four countries (DTM conducted by IOM Niger consists only in intention surveys, no displacement data is collected) and works alongside government and partners to track and monitor population mobility. In Nigeria and Chad, in addition to providing figures on displacement, IOM DTM is also conducting registration exercises to support direct programming.

Intra-regional labour migration flows form a **second** mobility pattern. These flows mostly follow the main transport axis of the region as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regulations allow nationals from the community to travel freely between those countries. Intra-regional migration, which has remained relatively constant over time, is the main mobility pattern observed by IOM Flow Monitoring teams (nearly 90% of all flows observed are internal to the region).

A **third, inter-regional, set of flows has shown greatest variation in the last three months compared to 2017**. These flows connect Mali, Niger and North African countries (specifically Libya, Algeria and Morocco). IOM DTM teams located in the north of Mali and Niger collected

data on migration movements both arriving to and departing various location assessed (Arlit and Séguédine in Niger, Gao in Mali) in 2017 and 2018. Movements observed between Mali, Niger, Algeria, Libya and Morocco continue but some changes in the volume of flows have been noted in Mali and Niger in comparison to last year. In **Mali**, movements have been stable throughout the last three months (same daily average of 238 individuals arriving at FMPs in Mali in January and March) but are increasing compared to the same period last year (a total 283 arrivals to FMPs in Mali noted in March 2017 compared to 3,605 observed in March 2018). In **Niger**, movements captured by IOM FMPs have increased over the reporting period (daily average of 305 in January and 361 in March) but have decreased compared to the same period last year (13,218 individuals observed in March 2017 and 9,940 in March 2018). In addition, significant returns are noted from Algeria to Niger and Mali. In 2018 alone, IOM teams in Niger reported that more than 6,700 migrants, have been returned from Algeria. Additional returns observed from Mali have been accounted for by IOM teams (IOM Niger (April 2018), *Statistical Summary of Returns from Algeria*).

IOM DTM is active along the main migration routes of the region to capture and report on migration movements (whether they are intraregional or interregional). Flow monitoring activities are ongoing in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Chad to collect data on migration movements



and develop profiles of mobility patterns.

DTM is also active in various countries affected by significant displacements. In Mali, the DTM is a shared responsibility of the government and IOM. In the Central African Republic, IOM is also covering a large area of hard-to-reach regions to support humanitarian assistance, in the course of and for the purpose of which it is collecting data on displacement.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Three main pockets of internal displacement in the region continued for the past three months to include the Lake Chad Basin

Region, Mali and Central African Republic.

In the **Lake Chad Basin Region**, the latest displacement figures provided by DTM and other partners amount to a total of 3.97 million IDPs, refugees (both in and out of camps), returnees and third country nationals (TCNs). 80% of the affected population (3,168,719 individuals) is currently located in Nigeria, while 10% is in Cameroon (398,390 individuals), 6% in Niger (252,305 individuals) and 4% in Chad (147,069 individuals).¹ The escalation of violence in 2014 resulted in mass displacement throughout the area. To better understand the scope of displacement and assess the needs of affected populations, IOM began implementing its DTM programme in **Nigeria** in September 2014, in

collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs). In **Cameroon**, the DTM was established in the Far North Region in November 2015 to gain insight into the movements of IDPs, unregistered refugees and returnees. In **Chad**, the newly launched DTM tracks and monitors the internal population mobility to provide regular overview of the situation in the Lake Chad Basin from the Chad perspective were displacement is caused by violence and hostilities. Finally, in **Niger**, IOM DTM teams are currently implementing profiling questionnaires with the IDPs to better understand the profile, needs and capacities of the population affected by the ongoing hostilities. This exercise complements effort from the

¹ DTM Cameroon (Round 12 – January 2018), DTM Chad (Round 2 – February 2018), DTM Nigeria (Round XXI –

January 2018), Government of Niger (31/10/2017), DREC/MISP/UNHCR Niger (31/10/2017), UNHCR Cameroon

(31/03/2018), CNARR & UNHCR (31/03/2018).

Government of Niger on tracking and monitoring internal displacement in the country.

In **Mali**, since the initial displacement in 2012 due to hostilities in the regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, IOM DTM has been actively working on assessing displacement with its mobility tracking exercise and contributes actively to the *Commission Mouvement de Populations* (CMP). As of 31 March 2018, 50,311 IDPs have been counted by the CMP in Mali. The largest part of the total caseload is now located in the regions of Timbuktu, Ménaka, Gao and Ségou. 55% of total displaced are female, 45% male and more than half (53%) are minors. As per the January 2018 displacement report published by the Government (through the *Direction Nationale du Développement Social*) and IOM, main needs are food (60% of surveyed households), non-food items (12%) and shelter (11%)². In addition, 526,505 persons have been counted as returned IDPs since the start of the crisis in 2012 as well as 64,344 returnees from abroad (mainly Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and Algeria).

In the **Central African Republic (CAR)**, as of 31 March 2018, the *Commission Mouvement de Population* (CMP) estimates the number of the internally displaced population in CAR to be 687,398 individuals.³ IOM DTM teams and partners have been

active since 2013 working alongside the CMP to produce mobility data. Sectarian and inter-communal violence erupted in December 2013 and resulted in internal and cross-border displacement of persons. CAR continues to experience high levels of insecurity and violent conflicts among different armed groups in most parts of the country, which causes new and protracted displacement.

INTRAREGIONAL POPULATION MOBILITY

In comparing movements within the region with movements from the region to other locations, data captured by IOM DTM flow monitoring points in 2017 presents patterns with good correspondence with trends observed in the United Nations Global Migration Database provided by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) latest update (2017). UNDESA shows more than 90% international movements taking place within the region. IOM DTM flow monitoring points captured a similar figure on intraregional population mobility in its review of 2017 data with 95% of the more than 880,000 flows accounted for in the countries of West and Central Africa were internal to the region. UNDESA statistics include movements through other routes and using different means of transportation, but the interesting coincidence in relative trend will be

further examined. The flow monitoring methodology uses two tools (a registry based on discussions with key informants to capture general migration trends in certain high transit points in the region and a face-to-face survey conducted with travellers at those high transit points to capture profiles and intentions).

Based on FMP data, Intraregional population mobility mostly follows the main transport axis of the region as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) regulations allow nationals from the community to travel freely between those countries. Main routes for the past three months have therefore barely changed. The most significant route is the axis between Tambacounda (Senegal) and Agadez (Niger), going through Bamako (Mali) Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) and Niamey (Niger).

Other migration routes of relevance in the region are usually in some way connected to the Tambacounda-Agadez route, whether by merging into it or by branching out of it. Those are the cases for the connections between Dakar (Senegal) and Tambacounda (Senegal), Banjul (The Gambia) and Tambacounda, Conakry (Guinea) and Tambacounda, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and Bamako (Mali), Bamako and Gao (Mali), Abidjan and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Accra (Ghana) and Ouagadougou,

² DTM (2018). Mali — *Rapport De Déplacement* (Janvier 2018). Retrieved from <https://displacement.iom.int/reports/mali-%E2%80%94-rapport-de->

[d%C3%A9placement-janvier-2018?close=true](https://displacement.iom.int/reports/mali-%E2%80%94-rapport-de-2018?close=true)

³ *Commission Mouvement de Population*, Central African Republic, Monthly Dashboard, 31 March 2018. Retrieved

from https://gallery.mailchimp.com/9e62930dcacf29260cf72aa7f9/files/b4049d2d-2ae9-4426-8556-bb89a1ddf7f8/201800418_caf_idps_dashboard_v1.pdf

Kano (Nigeria) and Ouagadougou, Lagos (Nigeria) and Niamey (Niger), and Kano and Agadez (Niger). This main axis, along with its connected routes, represents most of the migration flows in the region and did not change significantly in the past three months.

For example, IOM DTM flow monitoring teams recorded more than 1,600 individuals in Tambacounda moving along the Tambacounda-Bamako axis in the last three months of 2017, and 1,800 individuals in the first Quarter of 2018. IOM DTM in Bamako recorded more than 5,000 individuals moving toward Gao in the last three months of 2017 and 5,100 individuals in the first Quarter of 2018.

Based on the Flow monitoring data collected, the age, sex and nationalities of travellers span a wide range, as do their purposes for travel. In January in Tambacounda, IOM DTM teams observed that 48% of individual flows recorded were short-term movements (market, family visit, etc), 25% of travels were seasonal movements and 20% were long-term economic movements (6 month or more). In Kouremalé (Guinea), at the border with Mali, the flow monitoring is targeting routes and busses where more than 50% of individuals passing this FMP are long-term migrants (both intra and interregional).

The intraregional population movements caused by the **Lake Chad Basin Crisis** are also significant. UNHCR registered more than 206,000 Nigerian refugees living in the surrounding countries.⁴ For the **CAR** crisis, nearly 569,000 Central African refugees living in Chad, Cameroon, and across regional boundaries to Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo have been accounted for⁵. Finally, the volatile situation in **Mali** has led to nearly 137,000 Malian Refugees living in Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso⁶.

INTERREGIONAL POPULATION MOBILITY

During the past three months, interregional population mobility out of the West and Central African region was marked by a large decrease of West and Central African nationals arriving in Europe compared to 2017. 1,500 individuals from Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and Mali arrived in Italy (a decrease of 87% from 11,910 individuals from the same nationalities who arrived in Italy during the same period in 2017). Among the top 10 nationalities arriving to Italy this year, nationals from Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and Mali account for 20% (or 1,269 individuals) of all arrivals. In March 2017, those five nationalities accounted for nearly 50% of all arrivals to Europe. In line with the decreasing proportion of

West and Central African nationals arriving to Europe this year, there has been an overall decrease of arrivals in Italy. However, it should also be noted that arrivals in Spain have increased by more than a third since 2017 (2,426 arrivals as of late March 2017 – 3,345 arrivals as of late March 2018) with approximately 75% arrivals from West and central African countries.

The Nigerian nationals arriving in Italy, the main nationality of arrival in Italy last year and main West and Central African nationality in 2018, present similar characteristics. Most are young (average age is 24), educated (50% attended at least middle school), male (94%) travelling alone (90% of them) and looking for a better socio-economic situation or safety in Italy or Europe.⁷

Simultaneously, IOM DTM teams in **Niger** working at two main flow monitoring points in Séguédine and Arlit and looking particularly at interregional migration between Niger, Libya and Algeria, have observed a steady decrease of individuals passing through both points with the intention to reach Algeria or Libya (for multiple reasons including measures taken by the government of Niger, more visible difficult journey conditions and repatriations from Algeria). However, this decrease observed at the FMPs may not be capturing reported routes that have

⁴ UNHCR Data Portal – Nigeria situation - <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/nigeriasituation>

⁵ UNHCR Data Portal – CAR situation - <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/car>

⁶ UNHCR Data Portal – Mali Situation - <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/malisituation>

⁷ Flow Monitoring Surveys – Top 5 nationalities interviewed on the eastern and central Mediterranean routes –

February 2018 - http://migration.iom.int/docs/Flow_Monitoring_Surveys_Top_5_Nationalities_2017_.pdf

been gaining relevance passing through Zinder, Diffa or Tahoua.

In **Mali**, the IOM DTM team also monitors the situation in multiple high transit locations between Mali and Algeria (Tombouctou, Gao, Inhalid). Movements to Algeria from Mali are stable (25% of individuals departing Mali were heading to Algeria in March according to the data collection at FMPs, 28% in December 2017)⁸. However, DTM Mali noted a change of trends in the destination announced by individuals interviewed. When approximately 18% of migrants interviewed indicated Libya as their destination in July 2017, only 3% of migrants provided the same answer in February 2018, while a quarter now stated Mauritania as their intended destinations (In July 2017, 8% stated Mauritania).⁹

The relative increase in the number of arrivals to Spain through Morocco coincides with reported changes in movements through Mauritania up to Morocco by land, sea and air. The relevance of these changes will continue to be examined in the following period.

8DTM (2018). Mali — Rapport De Déplacement (Mars 2018). Retrieved from

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Lzw0H0dwkbUn5K-SNiD3vShQ0xjFrvHo/view>

⁹ Ibid

CRISIS HIGHLIGHTS AND MOBILITY DYNAMIC

LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION

Latest available summary figures and stats

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Cameroon	241,030
DTM Round 12, Dec 2017	
Chad	121,325
DTM Round 2, Feb 2018	
Nigeria	1,782,490
DTM Round 21, Feb 2018	
Niger	129,015
Gov. of Niger, Oct 2017	

Nigerian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

Jan-18	205,620
Feb-18	205,811
Mar-18	205,033

Data source: UNHCR data portal

Cross-border returns (to)

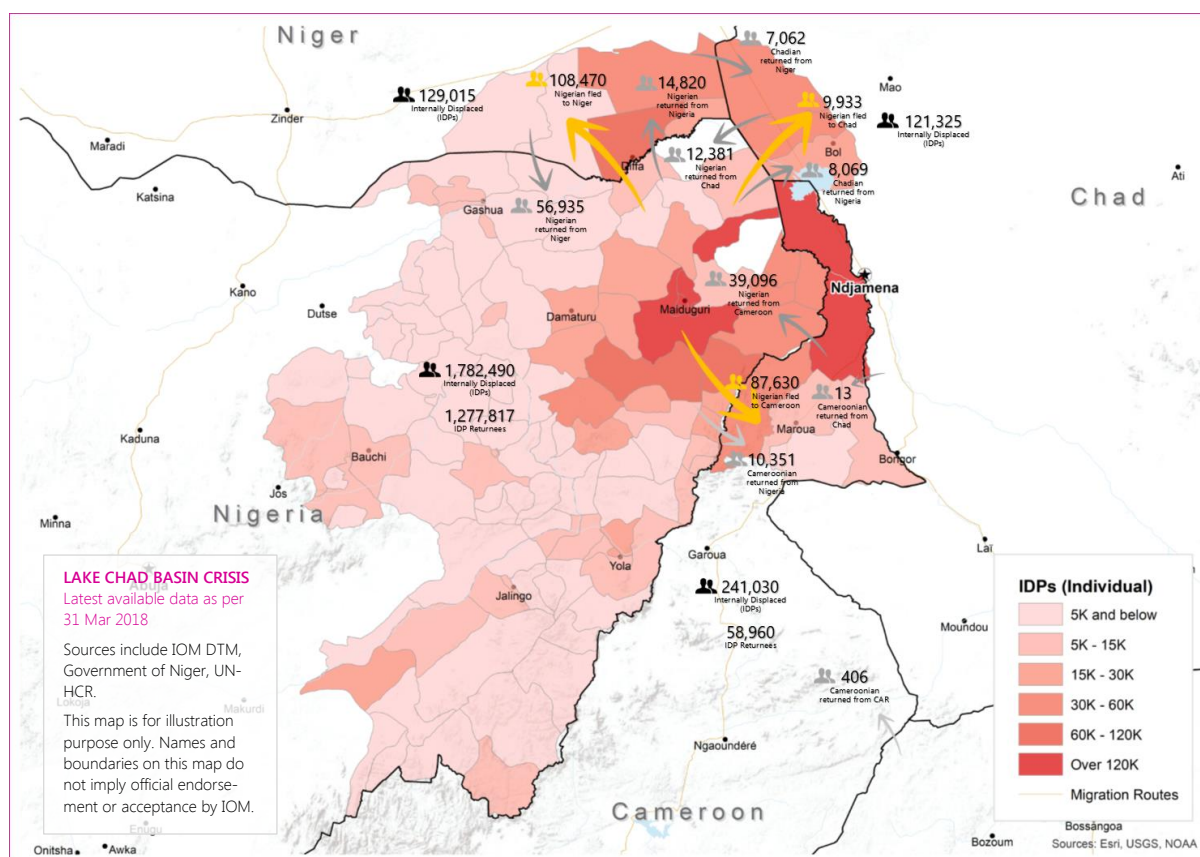
Cameroon	10,770
DTM Round 12, Dec 2017	
Chad	15,131
DTM Round 2, Feb 2018	
Nigeria	108,412
DTM Round 21, Feb 2018	
Niger	14,820
Gov. of Niger, Oct 2017	

North-eastern Nigeria has been subject to an insurgency of the group Boko Haram since 2009, with the violence causing a humanitarian crisis since the beginning of 2014. The group was founded by the Muslim cleric Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State (North-eastern Nigeria), with the aim of creating an Islamic state with a strict application of the Sharia law. 2009 marked a shift in Boko Haram's

strategy, involving carrying out attacks on police stations and government buildings in Maiduguri. This resulted in the deaths of an important number of Boko Haram militants, including its leader. The group intensified its campaign and has been conducting an increased number of attacks under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau. The escalation of violence between all parties in 2014 resulted in mass displacement throughout north-eastern Nigeria, and both violence and subsequent displacement expanded to Cameroon, Chad and Niger. This allowed Boko Haram to gain control over large swathes of territory and to declare a caliphate in areas under its control in August 2014. As of January 2015, it was estimated that Boko Haram controlled a territory of 20,000 square miles (or 51,800 square kilometres). In March 2015, Boko Haram pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and became the Islamic State in West Africa. National and Multinational Joint Task Force military operations resulted in a significant loss of territory for Boko Haram, whose militants continue to carry out attacks, and subsequent displacement, in the four affected countries.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Based on figures obtained during data collection activities between October 2017 and February 2018, there are an estimated 2,273,860 individuals internally displaced in the four countries. The overwhelming majority of IDPs are in Nigeria (1,782,490 individuals or 78% of the displaced caseload in the Lake Chad Basin), followed by Cameroon (241,030



individuals or 11%), Niger (129,015 individuals or 6%), and Chad (121,325 individuals or 5%). The State of Borno alone in Nigeria hosts 60% of all individuals displaced internally by the crisis.

The vast majority of IDPs in the four affected countries were displaced by the ongoing conflict with Non-State Armed Groups (95%), while the remaining individuals were displaced by intercommunal clashes (4%) and natural disasters (1%). In Niger and Chad, most IDPs identified were displaced by the conflict, but in Cameroon and Nigeria IDPs displaced by either natural disaster or intercommunal clashes were also identified.¹⁰

While nearly 2.3 million persons remain internally displaced in the four affected countries, significant returns of IDPs have been identified. A total of 1,336,777 returnees have already returned to their areas of origin. Similar to internal displacement, the overwhelming majority of returnees are found in Nigeria (an estimated 1,277,817 or 96% of recorded returnees in the region). Remaining returnees are in Cameroon (58,960 individuals). Information on returnees remains unavailable for Chad and Niger, although the Chad DTM has recently extended its coverage to return locations with the aim of filling this gap.

The number of returns has continuously increased since the implementation of DTM return assessments and are explained by the advances made by security forces, as well as potential returns linked to economic and food security reasons (agriculture). Some returns are likely to have been motivated by the limited availability of basic services, of livelihood opportunities, and of assistance during displacement. Returnees, limited in resources, oftentimes return home to their area of origin where their houses and belongings have been damaged or stolen. Significant assistance is likely needed to ensure the durable reintegration of these populations as well as their access to basic services.

¹⁰ DTM Cameroon (Round 12 – January 2018), DTM Chad (Round 2 – February 2018), DTM Nigeria (Round XXI –

January 2018), Government of Niger (31/10/2017).

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 nearly 2.3 million IDPs, an increase in returns is a trend requiring attention.

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

Cross-border movements represent an estimated 355,846 individuals (206,033 refugees, 149,133 returned migrants and refugees, and 680 Third Country Nationals).¹¹ These combined movements represent a mere 9% of all movements identified, highlighting the primary internal nature of displacement in the Lake Chad Basin.

In addition, refugee movements represent 58% of all cross-border movements, while returns represent 42% and Third Country nationals less than 1%.

Refugees: Refugees identified and caused by the ongoing conflict in Lake Chad Basin are Nigerian nationals. Main countries of asylum are Niger (108,470 individuals), Cameroon (87,630 individuals), and Chad (9,933 individuals). The numbers of Nigerian refugees remained relatively stable since June 2017, hovering around 205,000 to 210,000 individuals. A tripartite agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees living in

Cameroon was signed by the Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon and UNHCR in March 2017. As per this agreement, the facilitation of voluntary returns is contingent on security and the restoration of basic services; first returns are expected to occur this quarter with a group of 4,000 Nigerian refugees returning to Adamawa State. 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: A total of 149,133 returned migrants and refugees have been identified in Nigeria (108,412 individuals or 73%), Chad (15,131 individuals or 10%), Niger (14,820 individuals or 10%) and Cameroon (10,770 individuals or 7%). Countries of origin of those returns are: Niger (63,997 individuals or 43%), Cameroon (39,096 individuals or 26%), Nigeria (33,240 individuals or 22%), Chad (12,394 individuals or 8%) and the Central African Republic (406 individuals or <1%). These returnees include former refugees as well as individuals who had migrated for various reasons including for economic and education purposes, to find grazing land, to find a spouse, and to settle with family.

DISPLACEMENT AND MOBILITY DATA

The DTM is implemented in three of the four countries

affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis: Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria. Specifically, the 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 survey activities with IDPs).

DTM activities in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria use the Mobility Tracking tool, through which IOM collects displacement-related data from Key Informants through assessments in all affected areas. This component is complemented by registration exercises in Chad and Nigeria, and household interviews in Cameroon. In addition, the 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 IOM's regional analysis for this crisis, with core indicators being available for the other three countries only.

¹¹ DTM Cameroon (Round 12 – January 2018), DTM Chad (Round 2 – February 2018), DTM Nigeria (Round XXI –

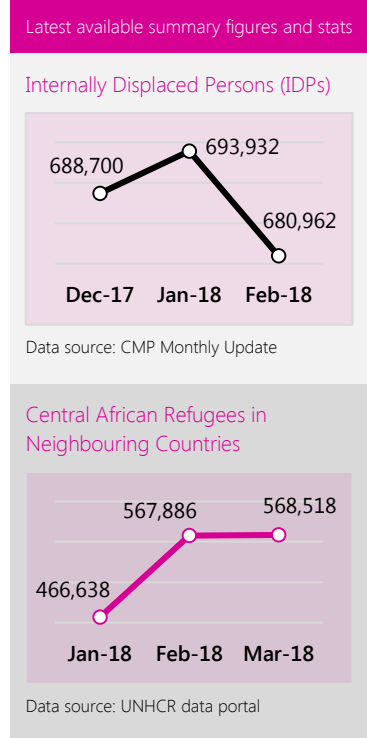
January 2018), Government of Niger (31/10/2017), DREC/MISP/UNHCR Niger (31/10/2017), UNHCR Cameroon

(31/03/2018), CNARR & UNHCR (31/03/2018).

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 others, implementing an early warning system to respond to population displacement.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



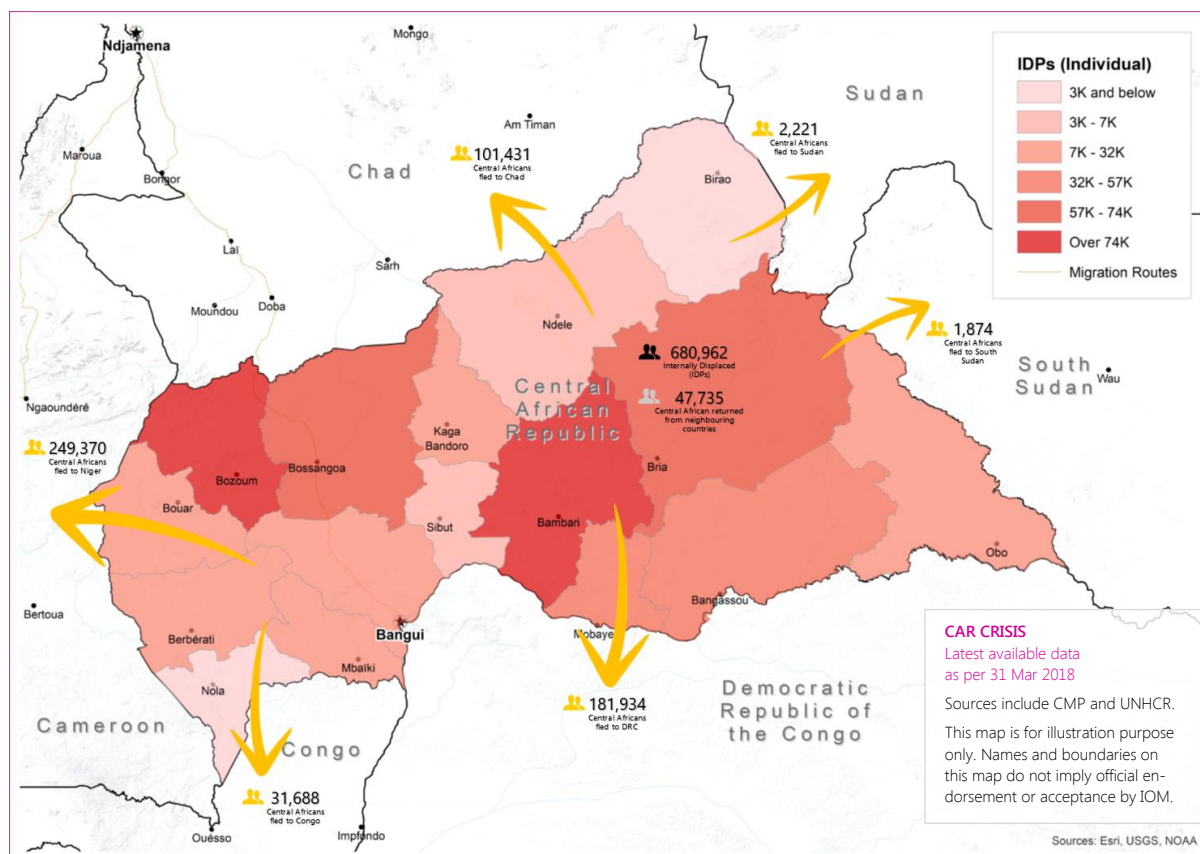
The Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced a continuous situation of volatility and recurring violent clashes since its independence in 1960. However, the most recent crisis in 2013 has developed into an extremely complex protracted state of permanent insecurity and fragility. In late 2012, predominantly Muslim rebel groups that would later become the Seleka started capturing main towns in the Northern part of the Central African Republic and descending towards the country capital, Bangui. In reaction to the conflict, predominantly Christian Anti-Balaka armed groups were created, adding to the complexity of the crisis. A ceasefire was signed on 11 January 2013 but was broken as early as 23 January 2013. Hostilities between Seleka and Anti-balaka groups resurged and resulted in the seizure of Bangui by

the Seleka rebels on 24 March 2013. Elected president François Bozize was ousted by Seleka leader Michel Djotodia who declared himself president (later appointed Head of State of the Transition). Reports of abuses committed by Seleka militias led to their dissolution by Djotodia in September 2013. Opposition by Anti-balaka militias culminated in coordinated attacks on the Muslim community of Bangui on 5 December 2013.

The escalation in violence led to the deployment of a French military force (Operation Sangaris) to restore peace. President Djotodia resigned on 10 January 2014, and Catherine Samba-Panza was elected as interim president on 20 January 2014. Despite the resignation of Djotodia and election of a new President, the conflict continued between ex-Seleka and Anti-balaka militias, with the Government having limited control outside of Bangui. On February 2016, Faustin-Archange Touadera was elected President and sworn into office on 30 March 2016. On 30 October 2016, France announced the end of Operation Sangaris. Despite the successful elections in late 2016, the conflict continues to affect large swathes of the Central African Republic, with Non-State Armed Groups controlling most of the Central African territory.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

As of 31 March 2018, the Central African Republic hosts an estimated 687,398 internally displaced persons (IDPs). 61% of IDPs live in host families (417,094 individuals), while 39% live in camps and camp-like settings



(268,304 individuals), and less than 1% in other settings (2,000 individuals). Causes of internal displacement in the Central African Republic remain inter-community conflicts and clashes. IDPs have been identified in each of the 16 prefectures and the autonomous commune of Bangui. While IDPs are virtually found on the entire Central African territory, more than half of them are in four Prefectures: Ouaka (119,293 individuals or 17%), Ouham Pende (97,502 or 14%), Ouham (91,853 or 13%), and Bangui (85 431 or 12%).

A relative return to stability in the first half of 2016 facilitated the returns of IDPs and resulted in the lowest number of IDPs in July 2016 (383,314 individuals). However, ensuing resurgence of violence resulted in an upsurge in the number of IDPs, hitting the 600,000 mark in July 2017. This

increasing trend has not abated since. In light of the recent renewed widespread violent clashes that erupted following clashes in Bangui’s PK5 neighbourhood and which spread to several cities of the country, including Bangassou, Bangui, Kaga-Bandoro, and Ndele, it is expected that displacement, both within and outside the Central African Republic, will continue to increase in the foreseeable future.

However, as of this writing, the Central African Republic is characterized by a lack of data on the return of IDPs. While several actors collect data on former IDPs, including the DTM, no unified nationwide system is implemented to inform humanitarian and government actors on the magnitude of returns mostly due to the difficult access of humanitarian partners in certain regions.

Renewed violent clashes will likely lead to a continued increase in the number of IDPs in the coming months, as highlighted by the recent influx of an estimated 65,000 IDPs in the town of Paoua following violent clashes in the Ouham-Pendé Prefecture.

CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENTS

As of 31 March 2018, a total of 568,752 Central African nationals have found refuge in neighbouring countries. This population currently resides in Cameroon (249,370 individuals), DR Congo (182,168 individuals), Chad (101,431 individuals), the Republic of the Congo (31,688 individuals), Sudan (2,221 individuals) and South Sudan (1,874

individuals).¹² The peak in refugee numbers was reached in September 2015, when nearly 691,000 Central African refugees lived in neighbouring countries. While a significant decrease in the number of refugees occurred in mid-2017, the past two months have seen a renewed increase in the number of refugees. The figures for refugees increased from 466,638 individuals as of 31 January 2018 to 568,752 individuals as of 31 March 2018. This highlights and corroborates the impact of renewed violent clashes on displacement, both within and outside the Central African Republic.

In addition, the UNHCR identified a total of 47,735 returned refugees in 2017. This relatively low number highlights the continued lack of favourable conditions that could facilitate returns. The recent violent clashes and an increase in refugee numbers may further prevent returns in the near future.

The high number of both IDPs and refugees thus remains alarming. As of 31 March, an estimated 1,256,150 Central African nationals were displaced within and outside the Central African Republic. The latest estimation by the World Bank (2016) provides a number of 4,594,621 individuals for the Central African population. This means that an estimated 27% of the Central African population is either internally displaced or found refuge in a neighbouring country. This high proportion shows that,

despite a perceived return to a relatively safer situation, factors and risks causing displacement to remain important and are likely to result in increased displacement in the coming months.

DISPLACEMENT AND MOBILITY DATA

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 unique system collecting the same data according to the same methodology on the entire territory poses methodological issues as well as limitations in terms of analysis of the crisis and orientations guiding the overall action of humanitarian actors.

In addition, as abovementioned, recent renewed widespread violent clashes erupted following clashes in Bangui's PK5 and spread in several cities of the territory. It is expected that the security situation will continue to deteriorate in the coming weeks and further complicate access and operations of humanitarian actors, including DTM assessments. In addition, logistical constraints remain significant,

specifically in terms of transportation and telecommunications, which hampers the successful implementation of data collection exercises. Logistical constraints are expected to further worsen with the upcoming rainy season. Finally, in light of this deteriorating security situation, displacement within and outside the Central African Republic is expected to continue to increase in the foreseeable future.

¹² UNHCR, Operational Portal – Refugee Situation <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/nigeriasituation>

OUTLOOK ON POPULATION MOBILITY

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

Internal displacement in Mali has remained fairly stable in the past few months. Internal displacement in the Lake Chad Basin slightly and steadily decrease in Nigeria while returns increased. DTM teams in Nigeria are currently working on further data collection and analysis on returns and will be able to soon provide a more complete picture of returns. In CAR, the situation is more erratic and additional displacements are expected due to the ongoing violence in the regions. IOM CAR DTM is monitoring displacement with partners and already reported an additional 61.000 IDPs in four regions (Ouham-Pende, Nana-Gribizi, Bamingui-Bangoran and Mbo-mou).

Interregional migration movements to North Africa and Europe are constantly adapting to a changing context, with difficulties in Niger and Libya potentially less attractive for migrants. IOM DTM teams across the region but also in North Africa and Europe are working on monitoring possible changes. Finally, the April to June periods in 2016 and 2017 had seen sharp increases in the number of crossings from Libya to Italy which were probably due to favourable weather conditions. A reflection on whether similar trends could be noticeable in flow monitoring points is taking place ahead of the following quarter.

The few events that might impact the intraregional migration movements are all recurrent

movements. For instance, with the start of Ramadan, commercial and trade exchange is likely to increase in the region and will consequently result in an increase of intraregional flows as well. The start of the rainy season will also generate usual transhumant movements across the region.

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, Mali, and Nigeria with additional rounds expected in all these countries. Additional data collection in Niger on the displaced population in Diffa is also expected during the next three months. In addition, government officials in multiple countries (Niger, Togo, Liberia, Mali, and Senegal) in the region will be trained on data collection in displacement situations.

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

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