



UNHCR staff monitors the return of Malian refugees to Fatouma in Mopti region on 19 October. © UNHCR Mali

KEY FIGURES

4,701

returnees registered by the *Direction Nationale du Développement Social* (DNDS).

629

returned refugees and host community members in Timbuktu and Gao were sensitized on SGBV and social cohesion issues.

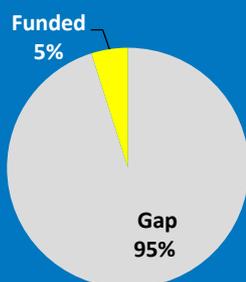
100%

of traditional shelters targeted to assist returned refugees, IDPs, IDP returnees and host community members in the regions of Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu have been completed.

FUNDING

USD 49.2 million

requested for the operation

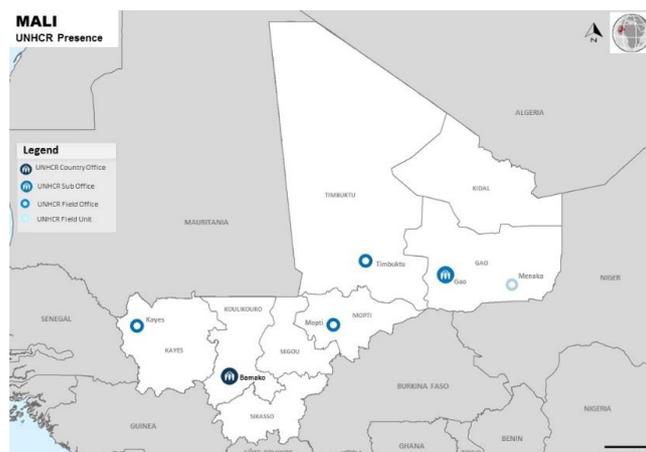


PRIORITIES

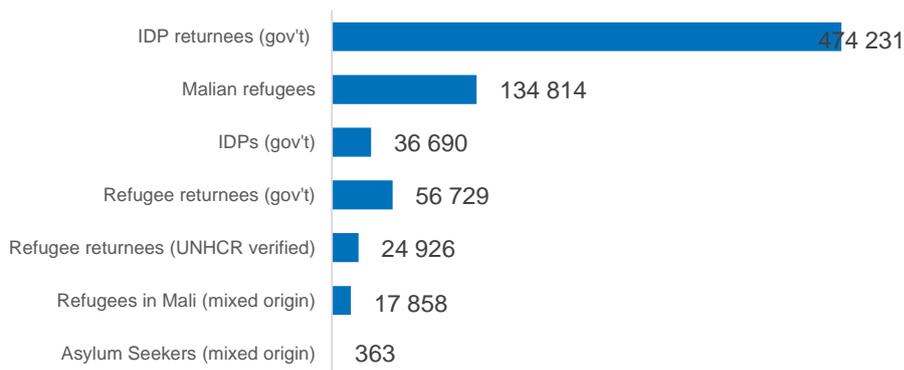
- 850 Malian IDP returnee households targeted to receive adequate and durable shelter
- 6,000 Malian refugee returnees targeted to receive a one-time cash-based assistance
- 2,500 Mauritanian refugees and local community members targeted to receive improved access to potable water
- 1,000 refugee children targeted to receive educational support

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNHCR's partner, Association Malienne pour la Survie du Sahel (AMSS), identified 92 protection incidents among forcibly displaced and host community members in the regions of Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu. Gao recorded the highest number of incidents with extortion representing the majority of incidents.
- UNHCR, in partnership with Mercy Corps, is carrying out the identification and registration of 1,445 Malian returned refugees eligible for a one-time cash-based assistance in the regions of Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu. Since January 2016, some 6,500 returned refugees have benefitted from cash assistance to access basic needs and reintegrate with dignity.
- Three refugee students in Mali have been selected to receive DAFI higher education scholarship from the Government of Germany. The three recipients are refugees from Congo, Central African Republic and Ivory Coast. For the first time, recipients will be able to pursue their studies in Mali.



Population of concern (September 2016)



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

UNHCR continues to operate in a volatile security environment with threat of terrorism, criminality and intercommunity violence affecting humanitarian access in northern and central Mali. In the north, violations of basic human rights are reported and certain local populations continue to lack access to public services, documentation, water, education and food security. Some 134,814 Malian refugees remain in neighbouring countries and 36,690 internally displaced persons in Mali are waiting to see whether conditions in their area of origin improve to enable them to return in safety and dignity. The volatile security environment continues to destabilize local communities, jeopardize the protection of civilians, and prevent forcibly displaced persons from returning to their homes, while further threatening their access to already limited basic social services.

This month saw several positive advancements in the implementation of the Algiers Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. On 14 October, the Malian government designated interim authorities, unanimously welcomed by signatories of the peace agreement. Some new CMA groups as well as civil society organizations in the North questioned the government for its allegedly “non-inclusive” designation of the interim authorities; however, this contestation has remained peaceful so far and has not provoked any aggravation of tensions in the field. However, the potential fragmentation within the former rebel group CMA (*Coordination des mouvements de l’Azawad*) presents risks to the implementation of the Algiers Agreement. The interim authorities are expected to be put in place by early November. As another positive indicator, on 17 October, the regional governor of Kidal presided over a school opening ceremony which was symbolically important as the first official visit since the departure of state authorities in May 2014.

The threat of terrorism remains elevated with recent complex attacks demonstrating that terrorist groups have improved their tactics and have accurate information. In the northern regions, the threats of IED and abduction of Westerners remain high, while the central regions face increasing threats from active extremist armed groups. On 13 October, Malian armed forces were attacked 35 km north-east of Diabaly in central Mali in a complex IED attack killing four soldiers and injuring seven. On 18 October, two rockets exploded near the MINUSMA camp in Gao causing damage to a civilian residence and injuring a young girl. On 20 October, two mortar shellings took place north of the airport in Gao and on the same day, five rockets were launched in Ansongo between the MINUSMA camp and the north of the town causing two civilian injuries. In addition, recent aggravation of terrorist/criminal attacks in northern and western Niger (refugee hosting site of Tazalit on 6 October) and in northern Burkina Faso have reinforced perceptions among host populations of the terrorism threat originating from Mali. This may have negative ramifications for Malian refugees currently in exile. As the implementation of peace accords continues to ramp up, it is estimated that acts of terrorism will intensify in the north and centre of Mali.

Humanitarian actors face constraints with respect to accessing persons of concern in zones of elevated insecurity. The need to uphold humanitarian principles is of utmost importance to counter the shrinking of humanitarian space necessary to conduct life-saving activities. Incorporating protection mainstreaming principles and promoting a meaningful access, safety and dignity for humanitarian aid remains key to humanitarian actors.

Achievements



Protection

Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster in Bamako, Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti are actively supporting partners to coordinate and implement protection activities in the areas of protection of civilians, statelessness, anti-land mines, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence, social cohesion and civil-military coordination. With respect to the protection of civilians, the protection cluster advocated to MINUSMA for a stronger response to protection needs

identified in the protection cluster matrix, including the reinforcement of security along major highways and zones of elevated insecurity in order to improve the protection of civilians and facilitate humanitarian access.

- The protection cluster held its monthly meetings in Mopti (25 October), Gao (25 October) and Timbuktu (27 October) and Bamako (3 November). In Timbuktu, the protection cluster discussed the security situation that has been marked by an increase of IED incidents and the circulation of arms that could impact social cohesion and reduce humanitarian access. Similarly in Gao, the participants evoked a degrading security situation with the uncontrolled circulation of arms, tensions among armed groups and delays in the DDR processes as factors linked to the rise in insecurity. The coordinator of the protection cluster requested the systematic sharing of the civil-military programs and patrol plans in order to better coordinate and avoid duplication of humanitarian actions. In Bamako, the protection cluster agreed to host a workshop to update the national protection cluster strategy at the end of November.
- **Voluntary Repatriation:** In October, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 147 Malian refugees from Niger whereby the large majority have been registered in the commune of Anderamboukane in Menaka region. Since January 2016, nearly 6,707 Malian refugees from Burkina Faso, Niger and Mauritania have benefitted from UNHCR's facilitation assistance for their voluntary return to Mali.
- **Tripartite Commissions:** UNHCR participated in two tripartite commission meetings including the 7th Mali-Niger-UNHCR meeting on 13 October in Bamako, Mali and the 4th Mali-Burkina Faso-UNHCR meeting on 27 October in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The meetings provided the opportunity for the respective governments and UNHCR to discuss the protection situation of Malian refugees, the conditions needed to create a more favourable environment for a voluntary return and options for durable solutions.
- **Registration:** In September 2016, the *Direction Nationale du Développement Social* (DNDS) registered 4,701 returnees from Bamako (5), Gao (368), Menaka (555), Mopti (169) Ségou (86), Koulikoro (55) and Timbuktu (3,463).
- **Protection Monitoring:** UNHCR's partner, Association Malienne pour la Survie du Sahel (AMSS), identified 92 protection incidents among forcibly displaced and host community members in the regions of Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu. The region of Gao recorded the highest number of incidents with a large majority of cases relating to extortion. Other incidents were linked to theft, looting, injuries, sexual violence and death threats. Some 14 survivors were referred to Mercy Corps for socio-economic assistance. Since the implementation of the protection monitoring program in June 2016, 538 incidents have been collected.
- **Documentation:** In Kayes region, UNHCR's partner, Stop Sahel, held 18 sensitization sessions on the importance of birth declarations and documentation including birth certificates and naturalization. The sessions reached 471 Mauritanian refugees and host community members with 13 births declared on refugee sites as a result of the sensitization campaign.
- **SGBV:**
 - Nine sensitization sessions on the consequences of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), early marriage and excision reached 250 Mauritanian refugees and host community members in Kayes region. As a result of these sensitization efforts, nine SGBV survivors (five GBV medical complications and four early marriage/excision cases) were identified and received medical attention.
 - In Gao region, UNHCR, through its partner AMSS, held 14 sensitization sessions on SGBV, early marriage and social cohesion, reaching 246 returned refugees and host community members (108 men, 138 women). In Timbuktu region, 11 similar sensitization sessions were carried out



Mauritanian refugees participate in a sensitization session at the Hassidougou refugee site in Kayes region to discuss early/forced marriage and excision. © Stop Sahel

reaching 383 returned refugees and host community members (196 men, 201 women). These sessions helped participants better understand the causes, consequences and methods to prevent SGBV.

- **Persons with specific needs:** Sixteen urban refugees benefited from medical assistance including 14 cases of illness and two protection cases.
- **Cash-based assistance:** UNHCR, in partnership with Mercy Corps, is carrying out the identification and registration of 1,445 Malian returned refugees eligible for a one-time cash-based assistance in the regions of Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu. Since January 2016, cash assistance has already been provided to 6,500 returned refugees in the North. This cash-based assistance is expected to help returned refugees gain access to basic needs with dignity and honor.

Education

- **DAFI Scholarship:** Three refugee students in Mali have been selected to receive DAFI higher education scholarship. The three recipients are refugees from Congo, Central African Republic and Ivory Coast. For the first time, the recipients will be able to pursue their studies in Mali. The students will study at *l'Ecole supérieure des hautes études technologiques et commerciales* (HETEC) in Bamako where they have chosen to specialize marketing (Adha) and accounting and finance (Hawa and Adouramane). Funded by the Federal Government of Germany, this scholarship provides students with an opportunity to advance their professional training to pursue future employment opportunities.



The 2016 DAFI scholarship recipients. © UNHCR Mali

- **Primary and Secondary School Assistance:** UNHCR is providing financial assistance to 333 urban refugee children in primary school and 200 urban refugee children in secondary school to support their access to education in Bamako. The parents of the 533 children receiving assistance were sensitized on the importance of registering their children into public schools.
- **Keeping Young Girls in School:** On October 31, UNHCR held a ceremony in the town of Gao to celebrate students achieving academic excellence in order to promote education among young girls. 324 students, of which 234 were young girls, received a symbolic gift to honour their achievement. The project aims to promote the protection of young girls, promote educational excellence and contribute to the fight against gender-based violence.
- **Advocacy:**
 - In the region of Kayes, UNHCR and its partner, Stop Sahel, continue to advocate to the World Food Program and other partners for the inclusion of Mauritanian refugee children in school canteen programs and the installation of boarding options in host communities in order to increase the level of school attendance among refugee children.
 - In the region of Menaka, UNHCR successfully facilitated access to education for returned refugee children who were initially unable to access due to limited financial resources to pay school fees.
 - In the district of Tenenkou of Mopti region which hosts a large number of returned refugees, only three out of ten schools have re-opened. In addition, four nomadic schools most frequented by returnee children in the district of Youwarou have remained closed through the 2015 – 2016 school year. The school closure largely due to insecurity deprives children of their rights to access education. UNHCR is working with partners and the government to monitor the situation and advocate for more favourable conditions to help children return to school.
 - In the region of Timbuktu, 58 schools remain closed, the majority of which are located in zones of return for refugees.



Health

- **Health Insurance:** UNHCR, through its partner ACTED, helped 21 urban refugee households (45 individuals) gain access to more affordable health care services with an aim to improve their health status. In the region of Kayes, 135 Mauritanian refugees and host community members participated in sensitization sessions held by UNHCR's partner, Stop Sahel, on registration procedures to access health care insurance.
- **Pre-Natal Health:** In Kayes region, UNHCR, through its partner Stop Sahel, held sensitization sessions on the advantages of prenatal consultations and contraception in eight sites reaching 248 female participants from the Mauritanian refugee and host community communities. As a follow-up, three prenatal and health consultations were carried out to support 11 female refugees at the Dindinayé site.



Water and Sanitation

- **Water Management Sensitization Sessions**
 - Eight sensitization sessions were carried out at refugee sites around the region of Kayes to inform members of the Mauritanian refugee community and host community on the importance of managing water points and paying water usage fees. Some 178 people participated in the sessions which aim to support the successful maintenance of water points that provide vital access to water for local communities.
 - A sensitization session on the revitalization of water management committees was held in the district of Douentza in Mopti region reaching 146 persons. Additionally, other sensitization sessions on the collection of used water and peaceful coexistence in the district of Mopti reached 265 people. On 25 and 26 October, UNHCR, through its partner Stop Sahel, organized a two-day training session on the sustainability of water structures for 22 members of the water management committees for the districts of Mopti and Douentza. These activities support greater understanding and cooperation between different communities (returned refugees, displaced, host community members) to work together to sustain newly restored and built water points.
- **Hygiene Sensitization Campaign**
 - On the occasion of Global Handwashing Day on 15 October, UNHCR's field office in Mopti organized six sensitization sessions around the restoration of water points and the importance of handwashing as a regular habit. These activities reached 91 people including 30 women and 8 children. In Gao, UNHCR provided 60 cartons of soap to the Direction Régionale de la Santé de Gao to celebrate the occasion.



Shelter and NFIs

Shelter and NFI Cluster

- Members of the shelter cluster in partnership with the *Direction General de la Protection Civile* defined an emergency shelter kit that could be used by cluster members in response to the risk of flooding in certain localities. The kits include NFI and shelter construction items.
- In Gao, the shelter cluster held its monthly meeting to review assistance projects and the challenges linked to the implementation of certain interventions. Members highlighted concerns related to the supply and preparations during the winter period. In order to harmonize intervention kits, actors defined a minimum shelter/NFI kit in line with directives established by the national cluster.

- Shelter Assistance:** UNHCR, through its partners Luxembourg Red Cross in Timbuktu and Stop Sahel in Gao and Mopti, have completed 100% of traditional shelters and 97% of mud shelters to support IDPs, returned refugees, IDP returnees and vulnerable host community members in northern Mali. Shelter assistance is vital to restoring personal security, self-sufficiency and dignity of persons forced to flee or left vulnerable due to the conflict. The breakdown of shelter assistance by region is as follows:



UNHCR staff inspects traditional shelter built in the commune of Gao. © UNHCR Mali

Shelter Type	Regions		
	Timbuktu	Gao	Mopti
Mud Shelter (# completed/ % of target)	209 (95%)	130 (100%)	96 (96%)
Traditional Shelter (# completed/ % of target)	180 (100%)	120 (100%)	100 (100%)

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Promoting Income-Generating Activities:** UNHCR, through its partner Mercy Corps, is supporting refugee returnees and host community members in northern Mali to receive assistance for their income-generating activities in view of promoting a smooth reintegration and peaceful coexistence in their host communities.
 - In Menaka region, 41 women including four of whom are SGBV survivors from the communes of Menaka and Anderamboukane, received the first portion of financial assistance to support their income generating projects. 32 returned refugee women received seed kits to support their agricultural activities in addition to three women’s associations receiving seed kits and field equipment to support the revitalization of local communities. Vouchers to support vegetable gardening activities were also distributed to four associations in Gao (2) and Gossi (2) in advance of the agricultural season. In addition, 32 returned refugee and host community members who received goats and billy goats received training on animal fattening techniques.
 - In Timbuktu region, 16 vulnerable women affiliated with a village level savings and credit association received 16 goats and 2 billy goat to support their livelihood activities. Since the beginning of the project, 96 women have benefited from 96 goats and 12 billy goats. These activities play a vital role in strengthening social cohesion among groups of returned refugees and host community women who work together to carry out livelihood activities. In addition, 15 agricultural groups benefitted from agricultural inputs and materials to support their farming activities.



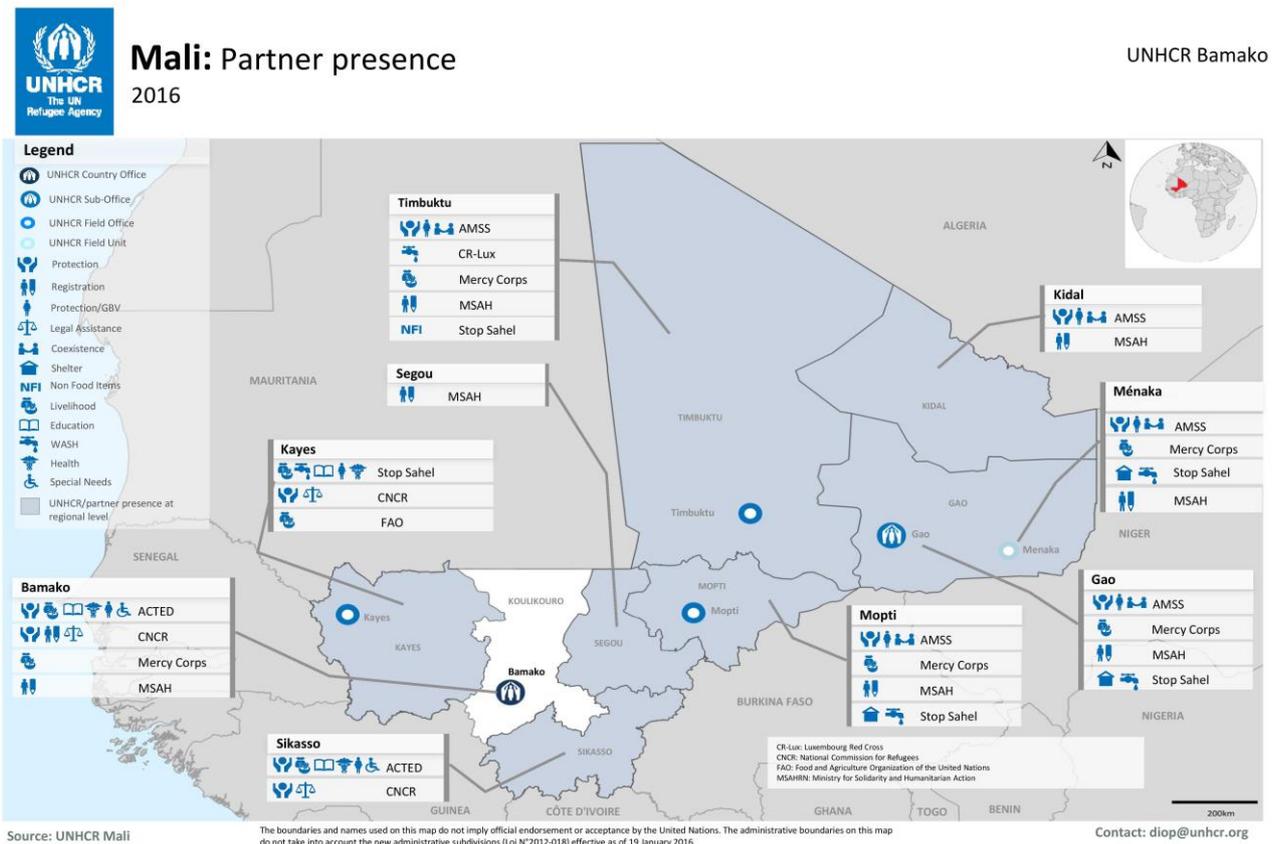
UNHCR’s partner, Mercy Corps, distributes income-generating assistance to support livelihood activities of women in Timbuktu region. © UNHCR Mali

- In Gao region, 102 vouchers have been distributed to support 10 womens’ associations in the communes of Gao (70 vouchers), Menaka (20) and Anderamboukane (12) in order to support their access to agricultural equipment and seeds for vegetable gardens. Each voucher is valued at 50,000 CFA (approx. \$84 USD).

■ **Self-Reliance:**

- In Kayes region, UNHCR’s partner, Stop Sahel, installed solar powered battery recharger stations in nine refugee sites that are managed jointly by a committee of Mauritanian refugees and host community members. Given that most households do not have access to electricity, these stations offer community members the opportunity to recharge their phones for a small fee. The money earned at the stations is then invested towards other community initiatives.
- In Bamako, 21 refugees benefited from income-generating assistance received basic business management training organized by ACTED to strengthen their management capacities.

Working in partnership

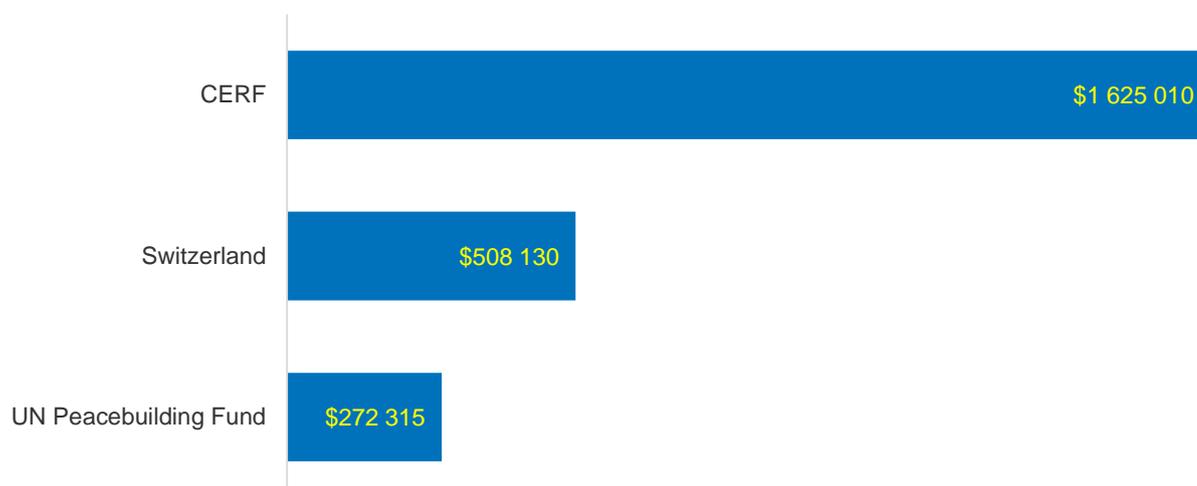


FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to **USD 2,405,455**.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors that have contributed to this operation.

Funding received in USD



We would like to extend a special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016 including: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America and Private Donors Spain.

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ANNEXES

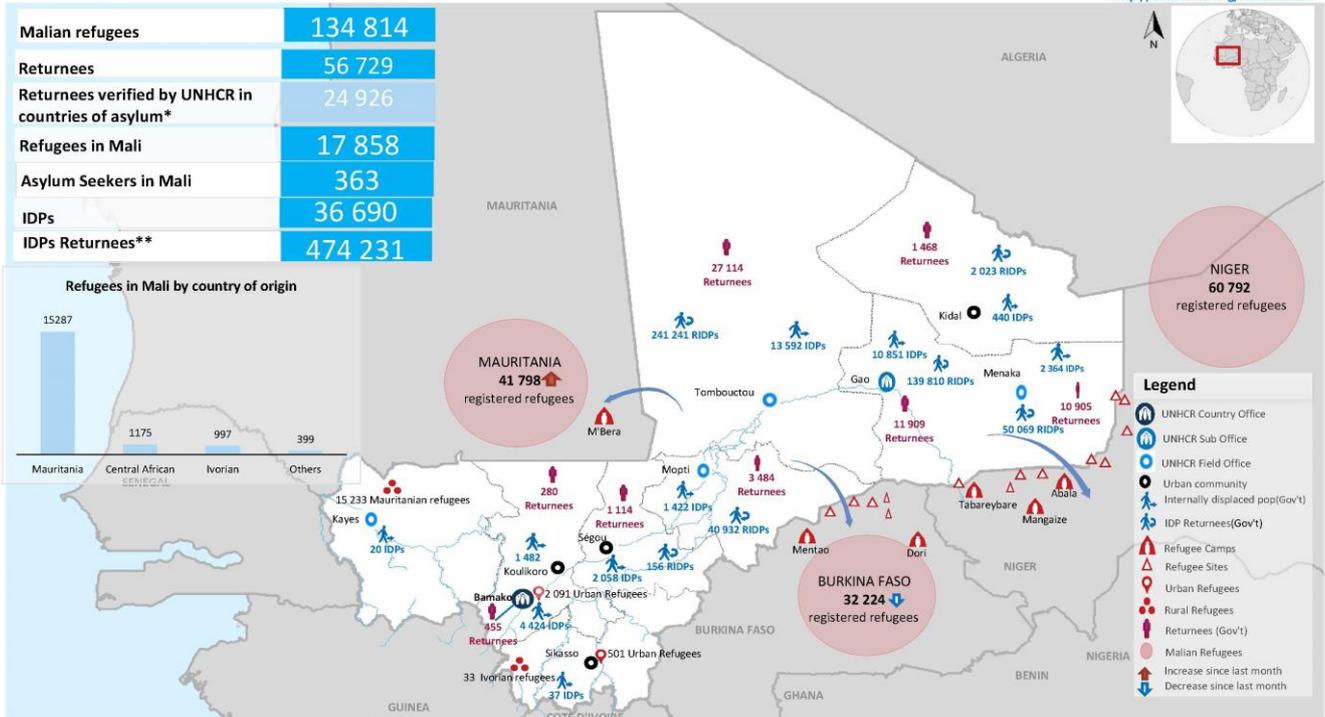
Mali situation map



Mali: Refugees, returnees and Internally displaced populations

30 September 2016

<http://data.unhcr.org/malisituation>



* Figures from NIGER dated as of August 2016
 ** Figures from IDPs Returnees dated as of August 2016

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Malian refugees and returnees verified (Sources: UNHCR)

Refugees in Mali (Sources: Government of Mali, CNCR)

Malian Returnees and IDPs (Sources: Government of Mali, DNDS)

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