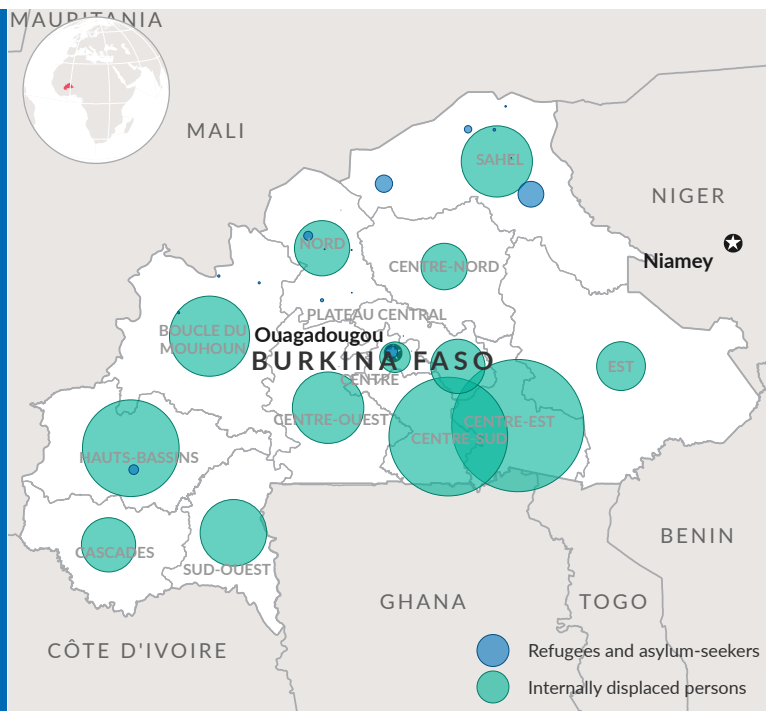


## BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso provides protection to 36,791 refugees and asylum-seekers from more than 12 countries as at 30 June 2023, an increase of 16,925 since 2020. 98 per cent of the refugees are from Mali. During the reporting period, the country was exposed to violent extremism by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) which intertwined with other drivers of conflict. These include intercommunal tensions around access to land and natural resources, climate change, leadership crises within customary chiefdoms and a crisis of state legitimacy due to a lack of governance in certain areas. This has led to an unprecedented protection and humanitarian crisis across the country, resulting in large-scale internal displacement. As of 31 March 2023, there were 2,062, 534 internally displaced persons in Burkina Faso.



### KEY POPULATION DATA (as of 30 June 2023)

**36,230**  
Refugees

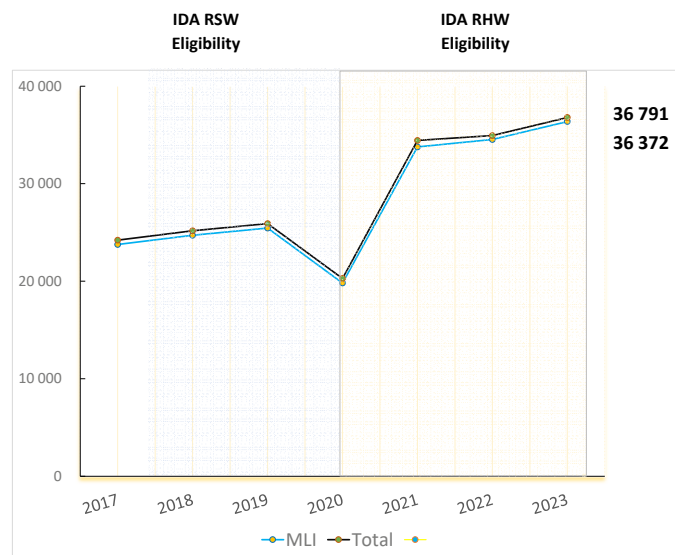
**561**  
Asylum-seekers

**0.1%**  
of the country's population  
(20,505,155 as per 2019 census) are  
refugees and asylum-seekers.

**2,062,534**  
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

74 per cent of refugees live in the Sahel region, followed by the Center and Central Plateau regions (11 per cent), the North and the Boucle de Mouhoun (eight per cent) and the Hauts-Bassins and Center-West (seven per cent), areas that are also heavily impacted by internal displacement. In 2021, security considerations led the authorities to close the Malian refugee camps of Mentao and Goudoubo in the Sahel region. Camp-based refugees mostly relocated to Djibo and Dori towns, which are cities partly blockaded by NSAGs, where the provision of urban socio-economic services is constrained by security concerns. A steadily rising number of urban refugees residing in the capital Ouagadougou and the second most important city Bobo-Dioulasso live mostly in rental accommodation.

IDA 18 RSW / IDA 19 WHR  
Eligibility: June 2018



## RPRF Policy Dimensions

(as of 30 June 2023)

### 1. Host Communities

#### 1.1 Support for communities in refugee-hosting areas

In December 2022, the Government of Burkina Faso developed a National Recovery Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons and the Host Communities (2023-2027), an initiative led by the Permanent Secretariat of the National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (Conseil National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation, [CONASUR](#)), housed in the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family. The action plan of the strategy was finalized in April 2023. The vision underpinning the strategy is that, by 2027, people affected by the security crisis will be living in peace in safer environments and will have access to basic social services and sustainable livelihoods to strengthen their resilience. The strategy revolves around the following axes: 1) Improvement of access to basic social services and promotion of decent living conditions in return, integration and resettlement areas; 2) Revitalization of the local economy and empowerment of the affected populations, particularly youth and women; 3) Conflict prevention and peace consolidation in areas with high security challenges; 4) Leading the strategy.

UNHCR was able to contribute to the development of this National Strategy which targets all areas throughout the country and includes refugees and asylum seekers as intended target of its objectives. The strategy offers a conducive framework to achieve solutions, and its implementation will be key in the coming years. In 2022, the Sahel Emergency Program (PUS) was extended to new regions to adapt to the expanding displacement crisis. The 2022 annual report of the PUS showed that 35.23 per cent of scheduled activities were executed and 58.12 per cent implemented. The downward trends are due to the security situation and blockages in the execution of some public contracts as a result of the dissolution of some municipal councils.

#### 1.2 Social cohesion

In 2021, the [Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization \(MATD\)](#), as well as the Ministry of National Reconciliation and Social Cohesion (active until January 2022) finalized the National Strategy for Social Cohesion 2021-2025 accompanied by an action plan for the period 2021-2023. The plan takes into account the problem of forced displacement and its consequences in host areas, including tensions related to access to land and natural resources. This work has helped to further guide the support of international development partners on social cohesion issues related in particular to the land issue and access to services in host areas.

In this area, Law 034-2009 on rural land tenure in Burkina Faso as well as agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife law is intended to ensure respect for human dignity, social and economic rights, with regard to access to land, including for vulnerable groups. This legal system is based in part on customary and local mechanisms for managing conflicts and disputes related to land as well as the creation of local bodies such as Village Land Commissions. These mechanisms are not yet operationalized throughout the territory and the land regulations are poorly appropriated by the authorities and local communities who prefer to use informal resolution mechanisms rather than settling disputes in a legal and sustainable way. In addition, mechanisms related to formal justice as well as customary mechanisms suffer from a crisis of confidence and legitimacy on the part of the various users. They are not always seen as inclusive and impartial, especially for displaced communities.

The [National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts \(ONAPREGECC\)](#), through multiple initiatives by technical and financial partners in the field of social cohesion and conflict prevention over the past three years, is in the process of strengthening its position as an instrument of

peace in Burkina Faso. Despite the official creation of the Observatory and its branches by decree, and the existence of action plans, there is little ownership of the mechanisms offered by the observatories, linked to a lack of funding and the non-execution of action plans. The impact of the Observatory is therefore limited; however, it manages locally the settlement of certain disputes, and its conflict monitoring capacities are improving with the support of technical and financial partners.

Finally, [Law 008-2023/ALT](#) on real estate development in Burkina Faso, which has just been adopted, will provide a better framework for the development of urban centres and ensure better land management. This could eventually facilitate the integration of displaced people and reduce tensions in host areas.

### 1.3 Environmental management

There have been no substantial changes in environmental legislation over the period with specific implications for refugees. The Ministry of Environment and Energy, and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation merged in 2022. On water access and sanitation, a National Strategy for Water (SNE 2021-2025) was elaborated, with the aim to ensure access to water supply and sanitation services for all. It further recognizes the impact of climate change on the environment and the need for a respectful and integrated management of water resources.

As per the available data of the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, no substantial change in the rate of access to drinking water at the rural levels occurred between 2020 and 2021. A small increase was observed between 2021 (69.5 per cent) and 2022 (69.6 per cent) as a result of expanding investments in the water and sanitation sector. More hydraulics and water infrastructures were constructed all over the rural areas of the 13 regions of the country.

In the Sahel region, where 75 per cent of the refugees are located, the rate of access to drinking water increased from 57.2 per cent in 2020 to 65.2 per cent in 2021, due to a reorientation and an increase of humanitarian and development response in the region.

Despite the increase in access to drinking water, the sector is facing major challenges due to the massive number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the continuing influx of refugees, including the relocation of refugees to the town of Dori. The sector is unable to keep up with needs that are growing faster than the capacity to respond. This situation has created increased pressure on existing water points, which were already insufficient before the crisis.

In terms of environmental management in host areas, many initiatives have been undertaken by humanitarian actors to strengthen displaced and host communities' abilities in agro-ecology, waste transformation and green energy production. These include initiatives to help households adopt better environmental protection practices by using more renewable energies instead of firewood. The capacity of the communities to produce improved stoves and ecological charcoal and to transform waste into useful objects was reinforced. Off-farm agriculture and new agricultural production technologies are being promoted, as well as the creation of green jobs oriented towards energy and waste processing. Providing sufficient energy for cooking and solar energy for individual use and for street lighting considerably reduced gender-based violence and combatted deforestation. However, it remains insufficient to have a lasting impact on these locations and should be further supported with a view to scaling them up.

### 1.4 Preparedness for refugee inflows

No substantial changes were observed since June 2020.

The implementation of the national preparedness framework coordinated by the CONASUR continued to be hampered by limited resources allocated at central level. The emergency fund that was to be created within the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family did not materialize.

During the reporting period, UNHCR continued to financially support the government in the event of influxes of refugees, in particular through support to the National Commission for Refugees (CONAREF), the government body under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mandated to protect and assist refugees. CONAREF was able to open a new branch covering the North region and strengthened its teams in the Sahel region, hence boosting its capacity to systematically register and document all newly arrived refugees and asylum-seekers.

## 2. Regulatory Environment and Governance

### 2.1 Normative framework

There have been no substantial changes since the June 2020, but some revisions are being considered.

A revision of the framework relating to asylum, including the [2008 Law on Refugee Status](#), is underway, and many provisions that do not comply with international standards have been removed from the draft legal framework which will be submitted for national validation. New provisions removed the inadmissibility of asylum applications from refugees in onward movements and now include the transcription of individual Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews, the motivation of RSD decisions and the possibility of assistance of minor asylum-seekers by legal representatives during the RSD procedure.

Although the texts on asylum have not been translated into local languages, UNHCR has supported CONAREF in drawing up a refugee guide to raise awareness among refugees and asylum-seekers. The strategy for disseminating the texts on asylum consists of raising awareness and training various professional social groups (security and administrative authorities, students at professional administrative schools, private structures such as financial and mobile telephone companies and the refugee community).

### 2.2 Security of legal status

Burkina Faso maintained an open-door policy towards individuals seeking asylum. Since 2020, there have been no known cases of unlawful termination of refugee status by cancellation, revocation or cessation, no cases of deportation of recognized refugees on grounds of national security or public order and no cases of refoulement. However, border surveillance continued to not be carried out along the border with Mali and Niger due to insecurity.

### 2.3 Institutional framework for refugee management and coordination

UNHCR continues to strengthen CONAREF's operational capacities with ongoing training for members of the refugee status eligibility and appeals committees and the Permanent Secretariat staff on refugee status determination and aspects of international protection. An MoU on sharing the proGres database was signed on 26 May 2023 between UNHCR and the Government. This has enhanced CONAREF's skills in using the refugee management system (*proGres V4*) to contribute effectively to the registration of asylum seekers and refugees. Interview rooms, meeting international standards, were built in 2022 with UNHCR support.

At the Regional Dialogue on Protection and Solutions for Forced Displacement in the Sahel in 2019, the Government of Burkina Faso made political commitments to further improve the institutional framework at national and subnational levels. The start of implementation has been noted, in particular with the ongoing revision of the legal framework relating to asylum.

In 2022 and 2023, CONAREF set up governance structures for refugee communities in towns with a high concentration of refugees in the Sahel region, as well as in Bobo-Dioulasso, Ouahigouya and Ouagadougou.

The aim is to obtain the feedback of refugees on decisions taken by the Government as well as their

participation in the activities of UNHCR and its operational partners. These steering committees are also intended to serve as accountability mechanisms. Language and illiteracy are however real obstacles to their community involvement.

Refugees' access to civil status services is facilitated by CONAREF and the General Directorate for the Modernization of Civil Status (DGMEC) of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Security.

Refugees have been included as intended beneficiaries of the National Recovery Strategy, which addresses durable solutions for forcibly displaced people.

## 2.4 Access to civil registration and documentation

No substantial changes were observed during the period.

The deployment of the iCivil initiative is currently suspended by the Government, through circular 2022-0001/MATDS/SG/DGMEC dated 4 January 2023, while considering other possible solutions for the digitization of birth registration. The reasons set forth for the suspension relate to the impossibility of establishing nationality certificates based on civil status documents issued via the iCivil application, the rejection by the courts of birth certificates established through iCivil application for non-compliance with the law and the mistrust of diplomatic missions with respect to documents produced by the application.

In practice, access to civil documentation tends to be a continuous challenge, due to a lack of knowledge about the value of civil documents and how to obtain them, physical obstacles to access competent authorities as a result of insecurity, and an insufficient presence of civil registrars in areas hugely impacted by the ongoing crisis. In the context of forced displacement, this lack of access to civil status documents is likely to expose the population to the risk of statelessness and to broader protection risks. As part of the humanitarian response, actors on the ground were however able to set up actions to register displaced people through legal clinics and mobile courts, with the help of local authorities and municipal civil status services.

## 2.5 Justice and security

The context of the fight against insecurity and the establishment of transitional regimes has resulted in replacing the constitutional framework with transitional charters, which tend to weaken the judicial power. In addition, insecurity has reduced access to justice with the closure of several high courts, including in host areas.

In practice, although mobile courts are operational in some refugee-hosting areas in the Sahel region, thanks to financial support from UNHCR, UNICEF and UNDP, access to justice has been very limited, or even non-existent since the closure of the High Court (TGI) of Djibo in 2018 and Dori in 2022.

In 2022, UNHCR and the Government developed standard operating procedures for preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) in urban and rural areas hosting refugees. However, there has been no progress as to the development of a sector wide national GBV strategy to complement the 2020-2024 National Gender Strategy and the existing GBV management system.

Despite the lack of notable progress in this area due to a very unstable political and security situation, it is important to note that a reflection on the issue of access to justice is ongoing within the framework of the justice and human rights sector. The framework brings together the technical and financial partners (PTF) and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, with the desire to scale up local justice mechanisms based on the experience of legal clinics and customary justice.

## 3. Economic Opportunities

### 3.1 Freedom of movement

Since 30 March 2023, 8 of the 13 regions of Burkina Faso have been in a state of emergency for security reasons declared by presidential decree and a law authorizing its extension.

Refugees in Burkina Faso continued to be able to choose freely and without restriction to live in urban or rural areas. However, this choice has repercussions on their ability to benefit from humanitarian aid. Restrictions to the freedom of movement have increased since 2019 due to the prevailing insecurity in the Sahel region. This has impacted the ability of refugees to move freely in the north of the country due to the authorities' suspicions that some Malian refugees may be cooperating with armed groups. These restrictive measures have been formally decreed by the authorities including the creation of "zones d'intérêt militaire" on 20 June 2022 by the *Conseil Supérieur de Défense Nationale*. These areas cover the Soum province bordering Mali in the Sahel region and the protected reserves located between Pama and the "W" park in the East region. All human presence and activity are now prohibited in these areas. In addition, other measures such as curfews have been introduced by local authorities in areas facing security challenges.

These measures are all justified by the authorities on security grounds, leading to significant changes in people's day-to-day life and livelihoods. Indeed, the restrictions of movement hinders refugees' access to basic services such as health centres, schools or markets. As a majority of refugees and hosts are agro-pastoralists, they face difficulties in accessing certain markets notably in Dori and Djibo towns. This has impacted the price of the commodities and the capacity of people to buy and sell. The consequences of the limitations on economic opportunities, particularly for those who depend largely on informal work or agriculture for their livelihoods, are considerable, reducing their income and increasing their economic vulnerability.

### 3.2 Right to work and rights at work

Although the national legal framework ([Constitution](#), [2008 Law on Refugee Status](#), and Labour code) provides everyone the right to work without discrimination, the nationals of Burkina Faso have greater access to employment opportunities than foreigners, including equally qualified refugees in urban areas. Therefore, most refugees continue to work in the informal sector, and some with NGOs and other humanitarian actors.

Due to the variable climate and the aridity of the soils, agriculture in the areas hosting the majority of refugees in the Sahel (Djibo, Dori, Ouahigouya) is relatively challenging. These areas have limited natural resources, experience recurrent droughts and are isolated from settlements, which means employment opportunities are scarce. The pressure on natural resources and the natural disasters associated with the deteriorating security situation have a negative impact on the means of subsistence and the general socio-economic environment of all refugees, displaced persons and the communities hosting them. These conditions undermine efforts to support refugee self-reliance and their inclusion in local and national development plans.

The country's security situation is having a serious impact on fragile livelihoods and people's ability to support themselves and is calling into question already weak basic social services. A significant proportion of Burkinabe nationals who used to derive their income from agriculture, trade and livestock now live either from petty trade or day labour and lack steady revenues after having been displaced. They tend to experience pressure on livelihoods and a lack of economic opportunities in overcrowded towns.

In practice, traditional master-servant relationships continue to be observed in some refugee populations, relationships that meet the definition of "forced labour" by the International Labor Organization in the sense that wages are generally withheld. Information collected via protection monitoring and participatory



assessments show that such practice still exists among certain groups of refugees, but sensitizations carried out in recent years has led to a decrease of these occurrences. This practice is illegal under the [Constitution](#) and other instruments.

### 3.3 Land, housing, and property rights

Since 2020, there has been no substantial change to the land, housing and property rights landscape and the right for refugees to acquire land has been preserved. The two major laws governing land management are the Rural Land Tenure Law ([Loi N 034-2009/AN portant Régime Foncier Rural](#)), and [the Agrarian and Land Reorganization Law \(Loi N 034-2012/AN portant Réorganisation Agraire et Foncière\)](#). These laws helped formalize land management by introducing land property documents. More recently, on 20 June 2023, the authorities adopted [Law 008-2023/ALT of 20 June 2023](#) on property development, which contributes to the fight against the grabbing of urban and semi-urban land by private property developers and prohibits land development by the latter.

Since the closure of Goudoubo camp in 2021, all refugees in Burkina Faso now live in non-camp settings, either in urban or semi-urban areas, or in remote areas that are difficult for humanitarian actors and state actors to access. Some refugees rent houses or pieces of land from the host community, but often without any formal lease agreements and documents. These refugees are hence at a high risk of eviction and other protection risks. Some were able to use their savings to acquire land in undeveloped areas and build houses in towns like Dori, Ouagadougou and Bobo. Some have benefited from land loans for livestock, agriculture and market gardening.

Agricultural production (plant and animal) is the main activity and major source of income for at least 85 per cent of the population. However, agricultural land is threatened by progressive environmental degradation. One third of the national territory (9,234,500 hectares of land) is already affected, according to the Ministry of Environment. Every year, such degradation hits between 105,000 and 360,000 hectares. Although in force, the land laws are still insufficiently applied by the authorities and are largely unknown to the Burkinabè in general and refugees in particular. Before the introduction of the relevant land tenure laws, land in Burkina Faso was managed through traditional practices, which is still in force today. The parallel systems of formal and traditional practices bring additional challenges to access land.

On 23 June 2021, the Government adopted a national housing and urban development strategy 2021-2025. It highlights the strong urban growth, a rapid expansion of informal settlements, non-compliance with the guidelines set out in planning documents by organizations and individuals, poor land management and pressure on land as main threats to urban development. However, it did not directly take into account the issue of forced displacement, despite a desire to improve urban planning and inclusion. With the ongoing internal displacement crisis, cities are indeed doubling, sometimes tripling, in population, rendering access to natural resources, including land, increasingly competitive.

An update of the 2021-2023 Strategy's Action Plan is expected for 2023-2026, which will certainly be an opportunity for greater consideration of urban issues related to the protracted displacement situation.

So far, no urban refugees have been able to access public or social housing schemes.

### 3.4 Financial and administrative services

There have been no substantial changes to the applicable framework and the existing practice.

Refugees continue to access and frequently use money transfer and mobile banking services on the same basis as nationals. However, due to a lack of knowledge of refugees' rights and documentation by some financial institutions, refugees sometimes face challenges accessing these various services. Information and sensitization actions of the said institutions are carried out by CONAREF.

Since 1 January 2023, the Governor of the Sahel Region declared a ban on monetary transfers in the Sahel on security grounds, which put a significant constraint on financial transactions.

The use of banking and financial systems went down from 39 per cent in 2019 to 35.75 per cent. This drop is due to security issues combined with technical problems. This rate represents the proportion of the population using the banking system, the post office, the Treasury and microfinance structures. Burkina Faso currently has 16 banks, four financial institutions and 164 decentralized financial structures offering a range of financial services.

The process of recognizing education diplomas as well as driving licenses obtained abroad remains the same as reported in the previous period.

In terms of skills development, young refugees are granted access to technical and vocational training within state schools. However, the current infrastructure falls short of accommodating for the significant influx of learners, leaving many refugees with limited options. Consequently, an increasing number of refugees are compelled to seek education at private institutions, where high tuition fees present a significant challenge.

## 4. Access to National Public Services

### 4.1 Education

Refugees have continued to enjoy equal access to all levels of the national education system, including primary, secondary and tertiary, under the same conditions as nationals. This encompasses not only the absence of discrimination in terms of tuition fees but also the equitable provision of benefits.

From 2021 to mid 2023, there have been notable improvements in policies pertaining to the education of internally displaced students and refugees. The Government took proactive steps, leveraging the redesign of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) to incorporate refugee status into the student's unique identification number.

While there has been progress in refugee education since 2021, the deterioration of the security situation generated a huge impact on refugees in terms of school enrolment, retention, access, and quality education, and a significant disparity with national enrollment rates. Refugees' enrollment in 2022 stood at 39 per cent for primary education, 6 per cent for secondary education, and 2 per cent for higher education, in contrast to 85.8 per cent, 45.2 per cent and 9 per cent at national level, respectively. According to the technical secretariat for education in emergencies, as of May 2023, more than 6,000 schools were reportedly closed in the country, affecting 1,041,681 students. In the Sahel region, 1,058 schools were closed impacting 127,262 learners, including refugee students.

Refugees have become progressively integrated into the national education system, thanks to the enrollment in public schools and their inclusion in strategic documents (*Dispositif opérationnel de prise en charge des élèves et apprenant(e)s déplacé(e)s internes et des élèves réfugiés(e)s*). This specific system aims at enhancing the education system. The shift in approach was favored by the closure of refugee camps and relocation of refugees to safer areas.

While progress has been made, challenges persist, notably the constrained capacity of education infrastructures and the need for full integration of refugees into the national education management information system (EMIS). In this regard, the educational facilities in the Sahel, North, Centre and Hauts Bassins regions desperately need to be strengthened. Simultaneously, workshops are being conducted in collaboration with CONAREF, the Ministry of Education and other pertinent organizations in these regions, aimed at advocating for the comprehensive assimilation of refugees into the public schools and EMIS. These concerted efforts necessitate a multifaceted approach to address the existing issues and pave the way for a more inclusive and effective education system.



## 4.2 Health care

While the legal framework applicable to refugees benefiting from the national health care system has remained the same, the context marked by widespread insecurity poses considerable challenges in terms of access to primary and mental health care, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, the elderly and people living with chronic illnesses.

The deteriorating security situation has severely affected the functioning of the healthcare system, with more than 3.5 million people deprived of healthcare, 710 health facilities (almost 40 per cent) closed and/or operating at minimum capacity, and 34 ambulances withdrawn and/or burnt down, according to a July 2023 Ministry of Health report. This situation has prevented the referral and evacuation of many patients awaiting higher-level care.

The country is also facing chronic food and nutritional insecurity, with a particularly worrying situation in blockaded and inaccessible areas. Acute malnutrition endangers the lives of more than 1.3 million children under the age of 5, as well as pregnant and breast-feeding women.

In 2023, more than 500 vulnerable and chronically ill refugees benefited from membership of mutual health insurance schemes in the Centre, Hauts-Bassins and North regions. In the Sahel, care is provided through payment of services to health districts.

The implementation of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC), which focuses on primary care, has progressed since June 2020 despite several challenges. As part of this, the Government initiated several actions in 2022 including increasing the budget allocated to the health sector, estimated at 13.22 per cent of the national budget, passing subsidy and free healthcare measures for vulnerable people, increasing the number of health workers, creating specialty centers and transforming Health and Social Promotion Centers (CSPS) into medical centers. Despite these efforts, human resources and infrastructure challenges hamper progress.

## 4.3 Social protection

The rights of refugees to access public assistance services, including social protection, have been preserved in law but significantly challenged by the security situation.

A [National Social Protection Strategy \(NSPP\) 2023-2027](#) is currently in preparation to succeed the 2013-2022 NSPP, supported by the EU and a 20-member committee which includes the most relevant ministries, such as the SP-CNPS (*Secrétariat permanent du Conseil national de la Protection sociale*), CONASUR, the ST-RSU (*Secrétariat technique du Registre social unique*), as well as UN agencies (FAO, WFP, UNICEF), the EU and the World Bank. The objective of this strategy is to build a modern and adapted social protection system that strengthens social security and covers populations, particularly those vulnerable to various risks. It also aims at increasing the proportion of IDPs voluntarily returned, integrated or relocated to at least 50 per cent by 2027.

The Government is also working on the deployment of the Single Social Register (RSU) of poor and vulnerable people and households to set-up a consensual, reliable and neutral database. In 2012, the RSU initiative was strengthened with the creation of a Technical Secretariat, attached to the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family. This Secretariat is responsible for implementing the Register currently being piloted in two regions, and only in rural and stable areas. Its scaling up in urban areas will begin in October 2023. The RSU will be updated every five years and will collect data from 1.4 million households, corresponding to poor households, or 40 per cent of the population. A RSU Task Force has been set up to facilitate communication with the various players involved (WB, EU and UNHCR among others).

More than 210,440 poor households are potentially currently targeted for registration in the RSU database, including IDPs, although their high mobility is a challenge. It is anticipated that the Register should be practically operational by December 2023 as well as the health coverage of vulnerable groups. In theory, the program does distinguish between vulnerable Burkinabè and refugees and UNHCR identified more than a thousand refugee households likely to be integrated into the RSU. Currently, no refugee is integrated. Discussions are underway with the RSU technical secretariat to define the implementation modalities to cover refugees and IDPs throughout the territory.

As of end June 2023, nearly 200 mutual health insurance companies have emerged, reimbursing basic primary healthcare at 70-80 per cent. Thanks to these mutual health insurance companies, more than 500 refugees and host families benefit from health care in the public health facilities. These vulnerable refugees were identified through household surveys and home visits. In spite of the low financial capacity of mutual societies to reimburse care and the lack of coordination within health facilities, it is expected that at least 30 per cent of refugees and vulnerable host families will be covered by 2025.

The Social Safety Nets Project (PFS) are implemented through the food security component and the economic inclusion component. The main difficulty encountered is the delay in the project implementation which has prevented some targeted refugees from receiving a cash payment. The ban on monetary transfers in the Sahel region put on hold the cash transfers that were carried out by several actors involved in the cash sector under the lead of the Ministry of Humanitarian action. As a result, some livelihood activities had to be suspended. This situation has further exacerbated the vulnerability of the refugee population in this area, leading to movements to other localities.

While the WFP cash transfers satisfy mainly the food security needs, other essential needs such as NFIs and shelters are financed and implemented by UNHCR and its partners. In 2022, approximately 320 refugee households were supported in the construction of their semi-durable shelters.

### 4.4 Protection for vulnerable groups

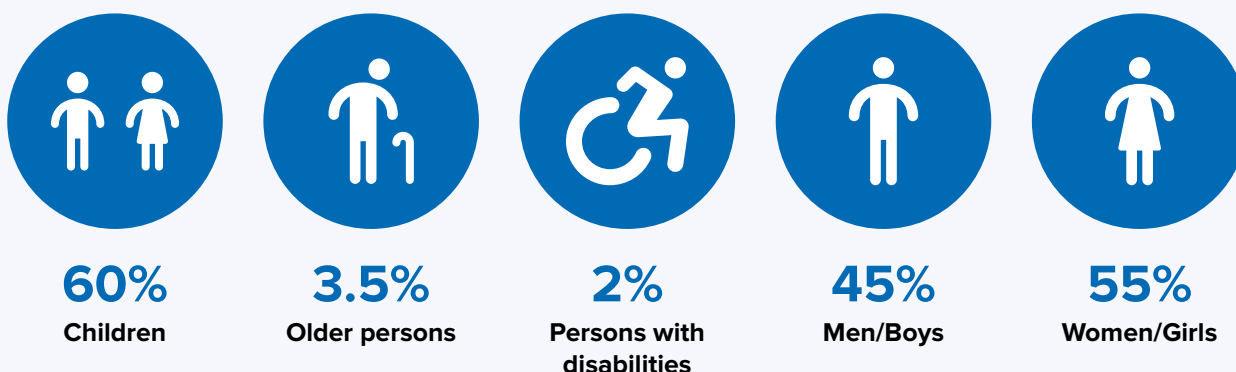
The legal framework applicable to the protection of vulnerable persons has remained the same. It continues to rely on the [Law on Human Trafficking and Similar Practices](#), the [2009 National Gender Policy](#) and its action plan, the [Law No. 061-2015/CNT on prevention, repression and reparation of the Violence Against Women and Girls](#), and the [2018 Criminal Code](#) with its specific chapter on gender based violence (GBV) offences against women and girls. However, there are no specific mechanisms yet for assistance or protection of LGTBIQ+ persons or male survivors. In reality, there is a growing anti-LGTBIQ+ sentiment, as they are perceived by some as the reason behind the security crisis. Some civil society organizations are calling for the penalization of homosexuality.

The implementation of the related policies from the authorities remains weak for the entire population and even more so for refugees. UNHCR and humanitarian partners continue to lead GBV prevention and response activities.

Amidst prevailing insecurity and increased forced displacement, women and girls continue to be exposed to serious GBV risks and incidents remain widespread. There is, however, a lack of quantitative data to correlate these trends.

## 5. Cross Sectors

Characteristics of registered refugees and asylum-seekers in total refugee population  
as of 30 June 2023



### 5.1 Gender

The Burkinabè Government has demonstrated commitments in favor of gender equality in developing several plans, programmes and strategies to promote women's rights. The National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES 2016–2020) notably integrates gender as a determining factor in reducing inequalities.

However, gender considerations can generally be improved in all policy sub-dimensions. The four priority areas that are most consequential in terms of socioeconomic development are as follows:

- a. **Social cohesion:** The meaningful participation of women in institutional and community-based leadership structures that go, beyond their formal inclusion, remains limited.
- b. **Justice and security:** Access to GBV survivor especially, domestic violence and female genital mutilation is limited.
- c. **Education and vocational training:** There is a need to address the drastic drop in girls' attendance in secondary and postgraduate education and to empower women, especially those heading households.
- d. **Health care:** There is a need to improve sexual and reproductive health services.

### 5.2 Social inclusion

With the continuing deterioration of the country's security situation, and the consequent massive internal displacement, Burkina Faso is facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Against this backdrop, the question of refugees is sometimes left behind. Below are four key sub-dimensions where differences between policies and their implementation are the most consequential in terms of socio-economic development for refugees and host communities:

- a. **Access to civil registration and documentation.**
- b. **Right to work and rights at work.**
- c. **Land, housing and property rights.**
- d. **Healthcare.**