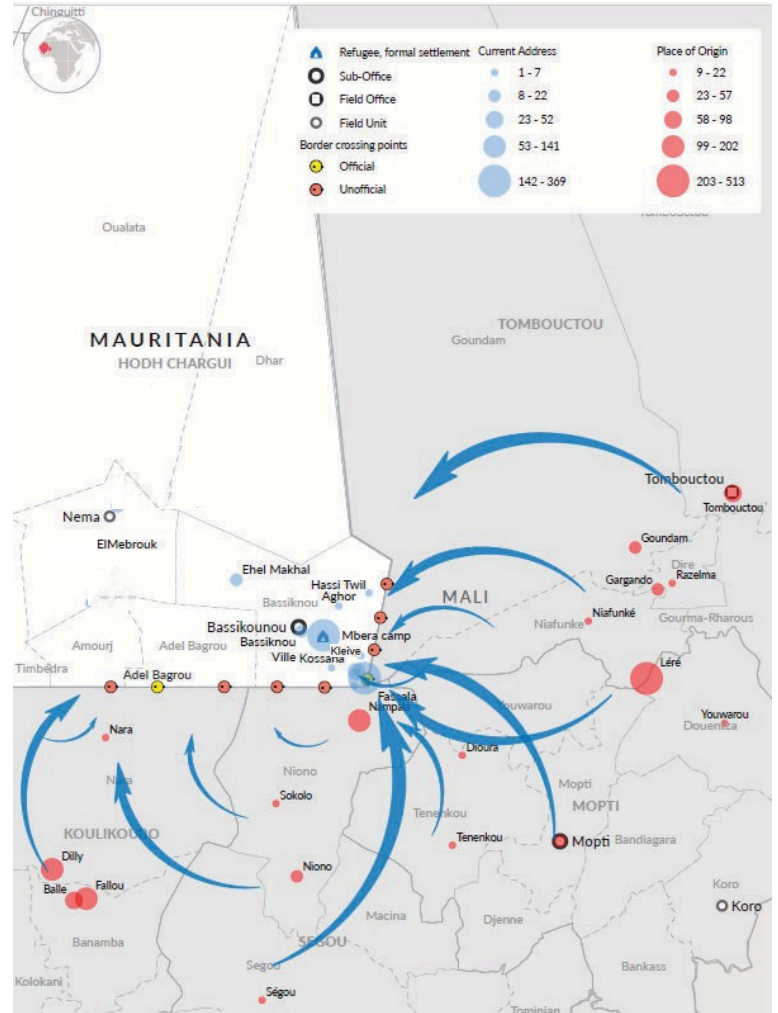


Overview

The situation in central and northern Mali remains highly volatile, driving continued displacement toward Mauritania. This week, 335 newly arrived refugees were identified along the Fassala–Mégve border areas, bringing the total number of people reached since 24 October to 3,774. Most new arrivals are women and children, many of whom first displaced to insecure towns such as Léré, Nampala and Niono before continuing onward as conditions deteriorated. Refugees continue to use informal and increasingly dangerous routes, as insecurity, drone strikes and lack of transport make movement extremely difficult.

Newly arrived families are settling across an expanding number of villages, placing additional pressure on already overstretched host communities. UNHCR and partners are scaling up registration, both at the fixed site in Douéinkara and through mobile teams, and providing urgent assistance while working with authorities and local actors to address growing protection and basic needs in the Hodh Chargui.



Key figures



3774

Refugees arrived since 24th October



20%

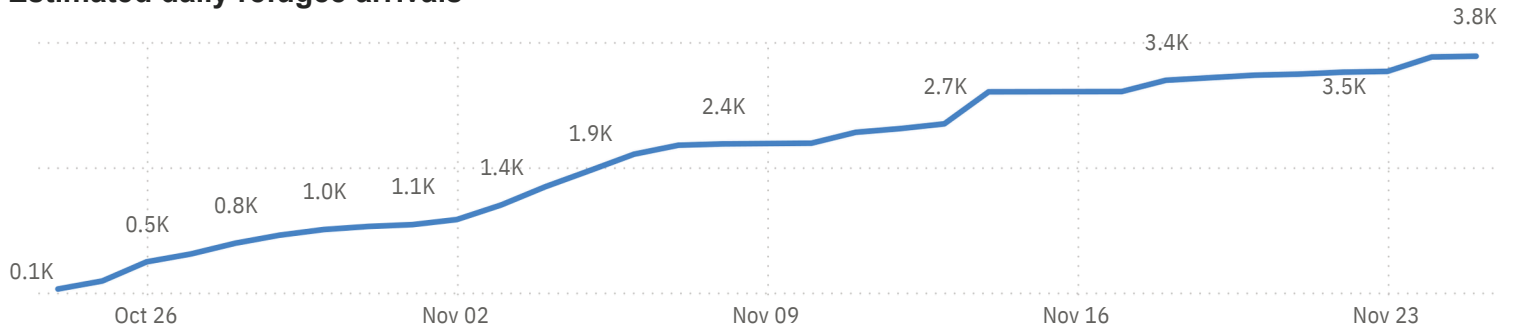
Adult women



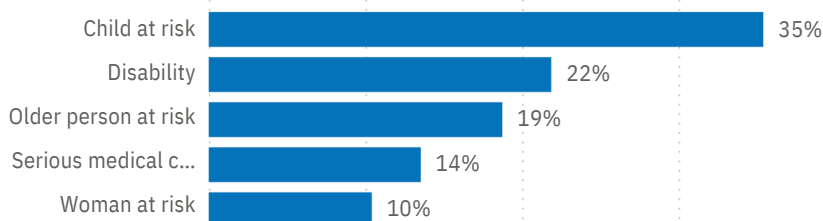
68%

Children

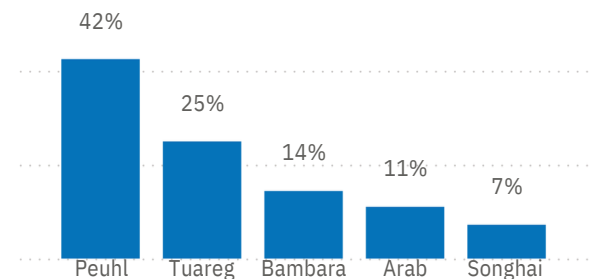
Estimated daily refugee arrivals



Vulnerabilities



Ethnicity





© UNHCR/Omar Doukali – Newly arrived refugees from central Mali travel on an overloaded pick-up truck after crossing into Mauritania, near Kindjerla in the commune of Fassala.

The security situation in central and northern Mali remains highly volatile, with violence, blockades and severe disruption of essential services in areas such as Léré, Soumpi, Goundam and Tonka. Assessments shared by UNHCR Mali and partners indicate that these same locations are now receiving significant numbers of internally displaced families fleeing surrounding villages, despite themselves being directly affected by insecurity. As local absorption capacity is rapidly exhausted, these areas appear to function increasingly as temporary stops rather than viable places of refuge.

This aligns with the information reported by refugees newly registered in Mauritania, confirming that displacement often begins internally before progressing toward the border. As conditions in these communities continue to deteriorate, onward movement through established informal routes toward Fassala and Mégve is expected to persist, sustaining pressure on Mauritanian host villages and overstretched basic services.

This week, UNHCR and partners identified 335 newly arrived refugees, bringing the total number of people reached since 24 October to 3774. The weekly caseload remains predominantly composed of women and children, who continue to represent the vast majority of those fleeing the escalating insecurity in Mali. The figures presented this week therefore represent only the refugees UNHCR and partners were able to reach, not the full scale of displacement into the Hodh Chargui. In addition to the fixed registration site in Douéinkara, UNHCR and ANRPTS have launched mobile registration to reach refugees scattered across surrounding villages.

[See Media coverage by France24 from the Fassala border-crossing area, a town located 5 km from the Malian border and currently hosting more than 70% of newly arrived refugees.](#)



A high proportion of those registered present heightened protection risks, including children at risk (among them child spouses and separated or unaccompanied children), women at risk, older persons with limited self-care capacity, persons with disabilities and individuals with serious medical conditions. Registration also confirms that almost half of refugees originate from Léré (around 48%), followed by Nampala (about 17%), Niono and Tombouctou (around 6% each) and Mopti (about 4%), all areas already affected by insecurity and internal displacement in Mali.

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Movement into Mauritania is becoming increasingly difficult as families flee areas affected by drone strikes, armed confrontations and the near-total absence of safe transport options. UNHCR field teams were repeatedly told this week that available vehicles are extremely limited, and that men fear being targeted or intercepted along the way, forcing families to prioritise the evacuation of women and children and other vulnerable profiles whenever a single seat becomes available.

One 20-year-old woman explained that only one adult from her extended family could travel, adding: “They chose me because someone had to take the children. I left with my three, my sister’s four, and my cousin’s three. The others stayed behind.” She reached Mauritania with ten children in her care. This reflects a continuing trend first reported last week, with monitoring teams again identifying a significant number of unaccompanied and separated children, female-headed households and individuals without documentation or belongings.

UNHCR and partners are mobilizing to support newly arrived refugees, but the scale of needs is so extensive that traditional vulnerability targeting is no longer possible. Field teams report that every household presents urgent needs: families are arriving without shelter, bedding, clothing or basic items, and many are sleeping in the open or under makeshift coverings as night temperatures continue to drop. Psychosocial distress is widespread, and while UNHCR and partners are providing psychosocial support, urgent protection follow-up and NFI distributions, the limited resources available in Hodh Chargui make it extremely challenging to cover the breadth of needs.



©/BBC Capture from the BBC report in which Ahmed shared his testimony.

[Ahmed, a shopkeeper from Nampala, said to BBC, his life changed the day members of foreign non-state armed groups stormed into his store.](#)

[They accused his employer of collaborating with jihadists, tied Ahmed’s hands, and forced him into a vehicle that took him to a military base. There, three fighters belonging to these foreign non-state armed groups tortured him. “The experience haunts me. It gives me nightmares”, he said.](#)

