REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

OVERVIEW - FORCIBLY DISPLACED AND STATELESS PERSONS

MAY 2025

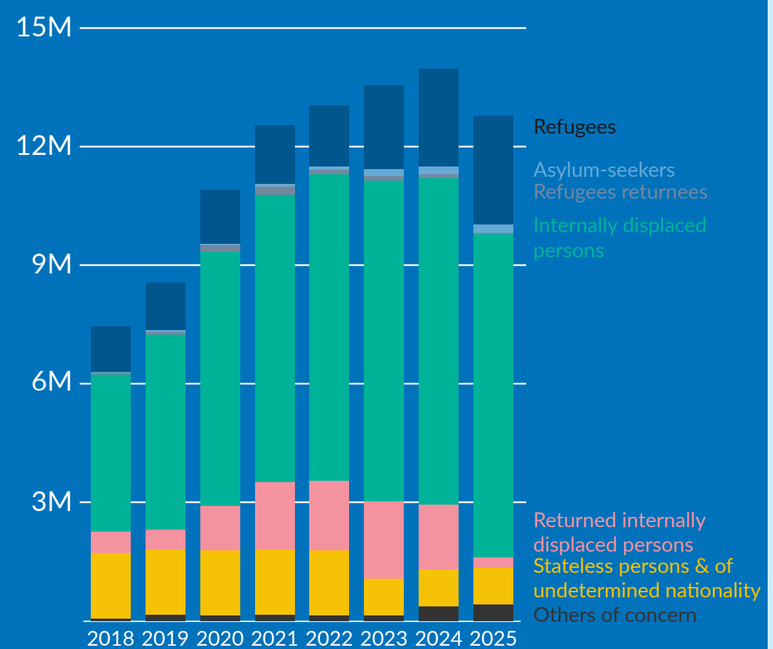
12.8 MILLION

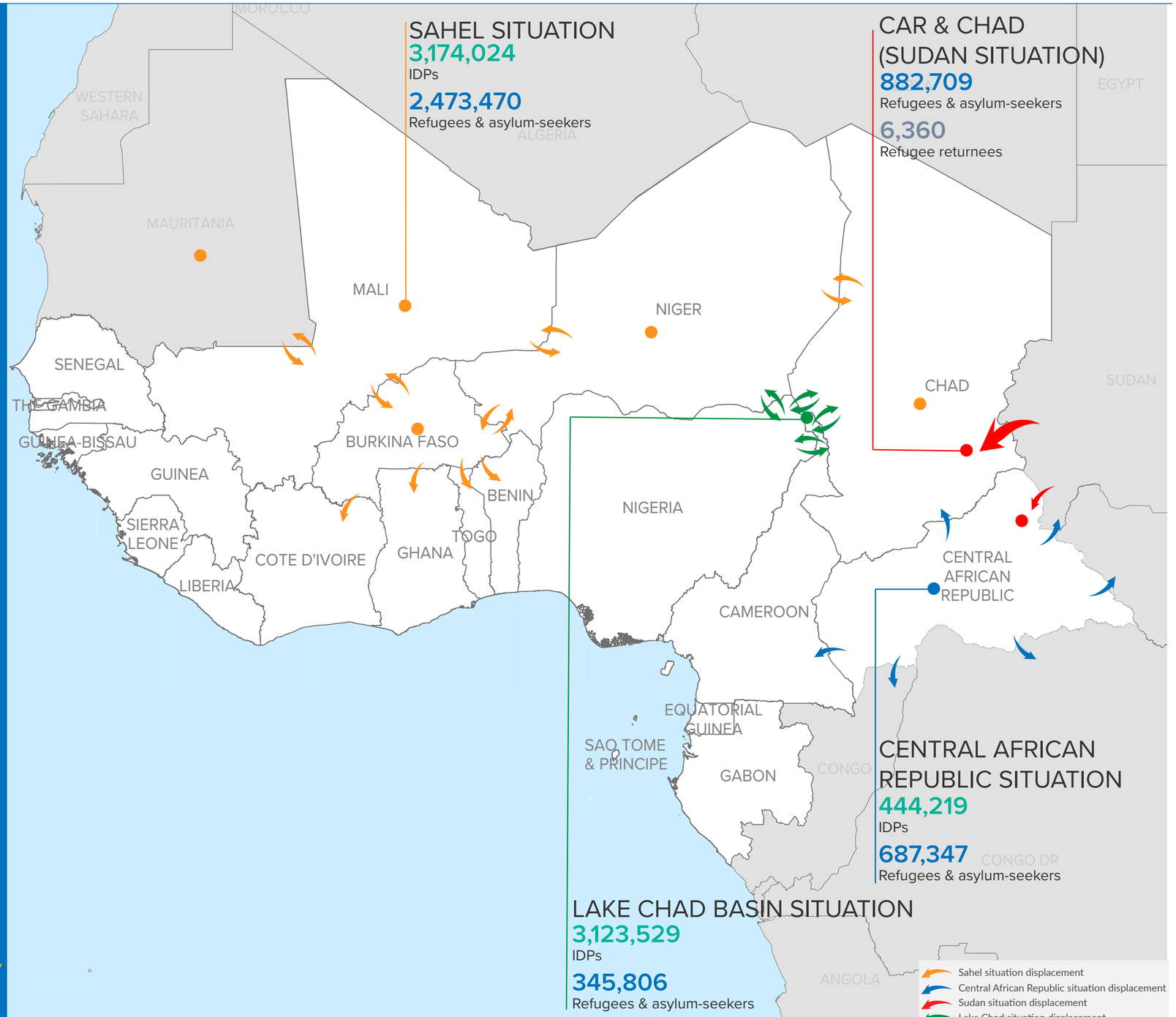
FORCIBLY DISPLACED AND STATELESS PERSONS

The decrease is due to an update of data collected in 2025 on IDP returnees.

Refugees	2.8 M
Asylum-seekers*	0.2 M
Refugees returnees	18,749
Internally displaced persons	8.2 M
Returned IDPs**	0.3 M
Stateless persons & of undetermined nationality	0.9 M
Others of concern	0.4 M

Populations trends 2018 - 2025





Source : Geographic data: UNCS. Population statistics: UNHCR Monthly Statistical Reports or latest available, IDP statistics from OCHA, IOM.

* The number of refugees returnees is cumulative from January 2025 to current month.

**The number of returned IDPs is cumulative from January 2025 to date for the Central African Republic (CAR), and covers the past three years for Mali. Figures for returned IDPs in Cameroon are excluded this month due to data unavailability.

The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

For more information, please contact rbwcadima@unhcr.org

REGIONAL BUREAU FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

OVERVIEW - FORCIBLY DISPLACED AND STATELESS PERSONS

MAY 2025

12.8 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED & STATELESS PERSONS

UNHCR protects and assists forcibly displaced and stateless persons across the West and Central African region, including refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugee and IDP returnees, stateless and of undetermined nationality persons. Protection and assistance are extended to additional groups, based on humanitarian and other special grounds.

3.0 MILLION REFUGEES & ASYLUM-SEEKERS

19K REFUGEES RETURNEES in 2025

8.2 MILLION INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

0.3 MILLION RETURNED INTERNALLY DISPLACED

0.9 MILLION STATELESS & OF UNDETERMINED NATIONALITY

0.4 MILLION OTHERS OF CONCERN

The current number of 3.0 million refugees and asylum seekers represents a significant increase of 13% from the number reported at the same period in 2024, mainly as a result of the ongoing crisis in Sudan and the deteriorating security situation in the Sahel, which has led thousands of persons to leave their country in search for safety and protection.

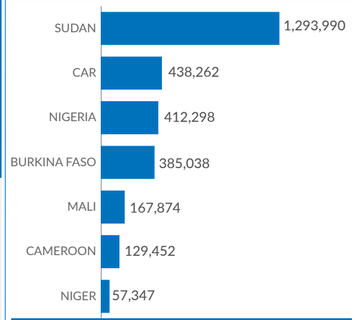
The largest hosting refugee country in the region is Chad with 48% of the total population, followed by Cameroon with 14%. Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Nigeria are the main countries of origin, together accounting for 72% of the region's refugee population.

The unregistered population is around 692,131 refugees and asylum-seekers in the region.

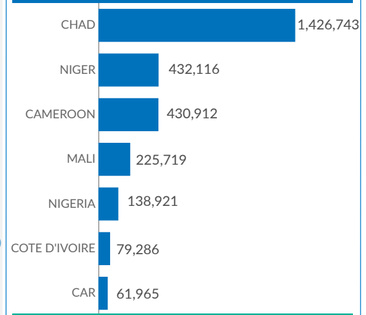
Internally displaced persons represent the vast majority of the forcibly displaced population in the West and Central Africa region. Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Cameroon respectively host 44%, 25% and 12% of the total IDP population.

West Africa hosts over 931,073 persons who are stateless or of undetermined nationality, reported mainly in Côte d'Ivoire and Cabo Verde. Millions of people are reported to be at risk of statelessness across the region.

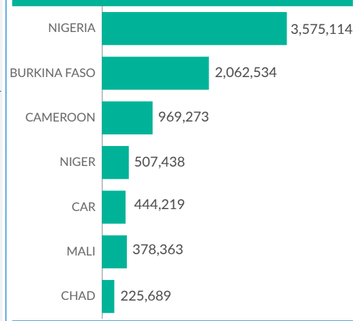
MAIN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



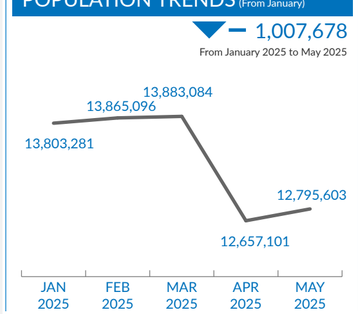
MAIN COUNTRIES OF ASYLUM

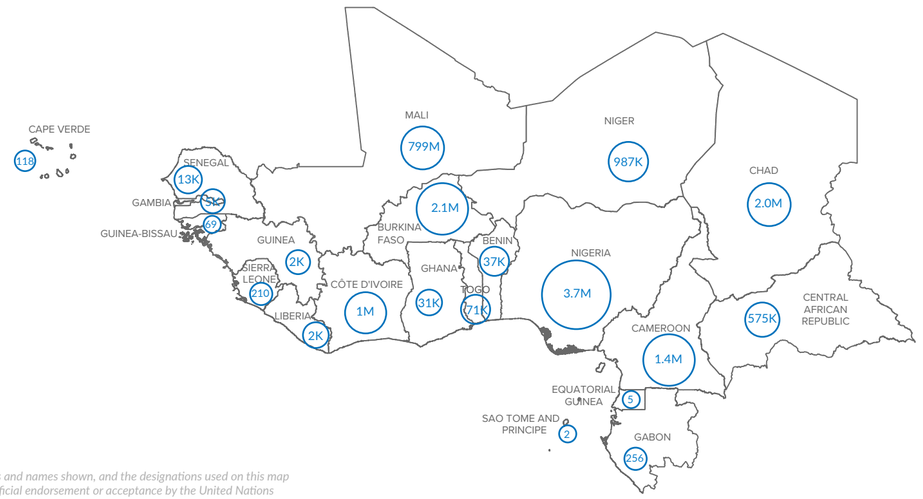


INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT



POPULATION TRENDS (From January)





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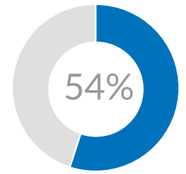
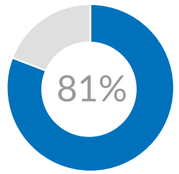
	REFUGEES	ASYLUM SEEKERS	REF. RETURNEES	IDPs	RETURNED IDP	STATELESS	OTHERS	TOTAL
BENIN	16,231	11,656		8,785				36,672
BURKINA FASO	40,286	1,459		2,062,534				2,104,279
CAMEROON	412,479	18,433		969,273			844	1,401,029
CAPE VERDE		3				115		118
CENTRAL AFRICAN REP.	53,638	8,327	3,209	444,219	65,219			574,612
CHAD	1,418,181	8,562		225,689			368,421***	2,020,853
COTE D'IVOIRE	2,376	76,910				930,958	94	1,010,338
GABON	170	77					9	256
GAMBIA	4,056	488						4,544
GHANA	18,236	12,608						30,844
GUINEA	2,174	176						2,350
GUINEA BISSAU	32	37						69
GUINEA EQUATORIAL	4	1						5
LIBERIA	1,172	691						1,863
MALI	225,417	302	574	378,363	194,236			798,892
NIGER	390,457	41,659		507,438			47,270	986,824
NIGERIA	108,464	30,457	23,482	3,575,114				3,737,517
SAO TOME & PRINCIPE		2						2
SENEGAL	11,897	1,460						13,357
SIERRA LEONE							210	210
TOGO	51,328	9,470		10,171				70,969
GRAND TOTAL	2,756,598	222,778	27,265	8,181,586	259,455**	931,073	416,848	12,795,603

REFUGEE & ASYLUM-SEEKERS POPULATION PROFILE

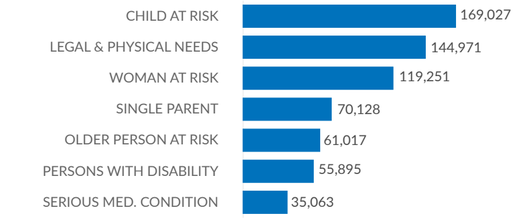
CHILDREN



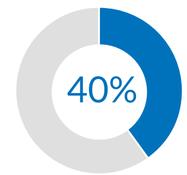
WOMEN & CHILDREN



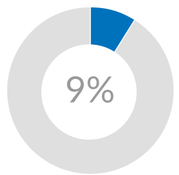
REFUGEES WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS



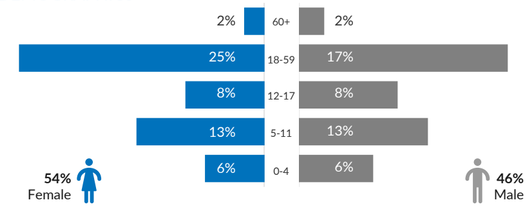
REFUGEES IN CAMPS



REFUGEES IN MAIN URBAN AREAS

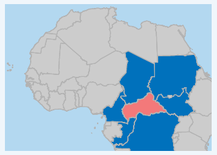


DEMOGRAPHICS



MAJOR AREAS OF DISPLACEMENT

CAR SITUATION

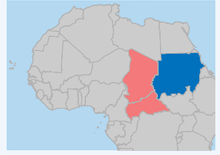


687,347 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

444,219 INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The figures reported reflect the number of refugees from the Central African Republic in neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan) and of the IDPs within the Central African Republic.

CAR & CHAD (SUDAN SITUATION)

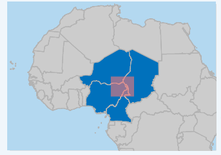


882,709 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

6,360 REFUGEE RETURNEES

The figures reported reflect the number of Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers that arrived in the CAR and in Chad since the beginning of the current crisis in Sudan, in April 2023.

LAKE CHAD BASIN

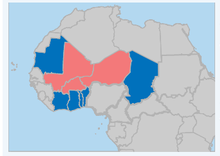


345,806 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

3,123,529 INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The figures reported reflect the total number of IDPs and refugees in the Lake Chad Basin area, across Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria.

SAHEL SITUATION



2,473,470 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

3,174,024 INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The figures reported reflect the number of IDPs in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Niger, as well as refugees dispersed throughout the Sahel region. They also include the number of refugees from the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) and in the neighbouring coastal countries of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo.

* The number of refugees returnees is cumulative from January 2025 to current month

** The number of returned IDPs is cumulative from January 2025 to date for the Central African Republic (CAR), and covers the past three years for Mali. Figures for returned IDPs in Cameroon are excluded this month due to data unavailability.

*** The number of Others of concern in CHAD is the returned from abroad (Niger, CAR and Sudan), at risk of statelessness

Creation date: 15.06.2025, Sources: Geographic data: UNCS. Population statistics: UNHCR Monthly Statistical Reports or latest available, IDP statistics from OCHA, IOM. Statistics should be considered provisional and subject to change. For more information, please contact UNHCR RBWCA DIMA <rbwcadima@unhcr.org>