



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Mali Situation Update

No 17 | 1 April 2013

This update provides a snapshot of UNHCR's and its partners' response to the displacement of Malians in Mali itself and into Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. The refugee response is led by UNHCR and is undertaken in coordination with the host governments. More detailed operational information can be found on:

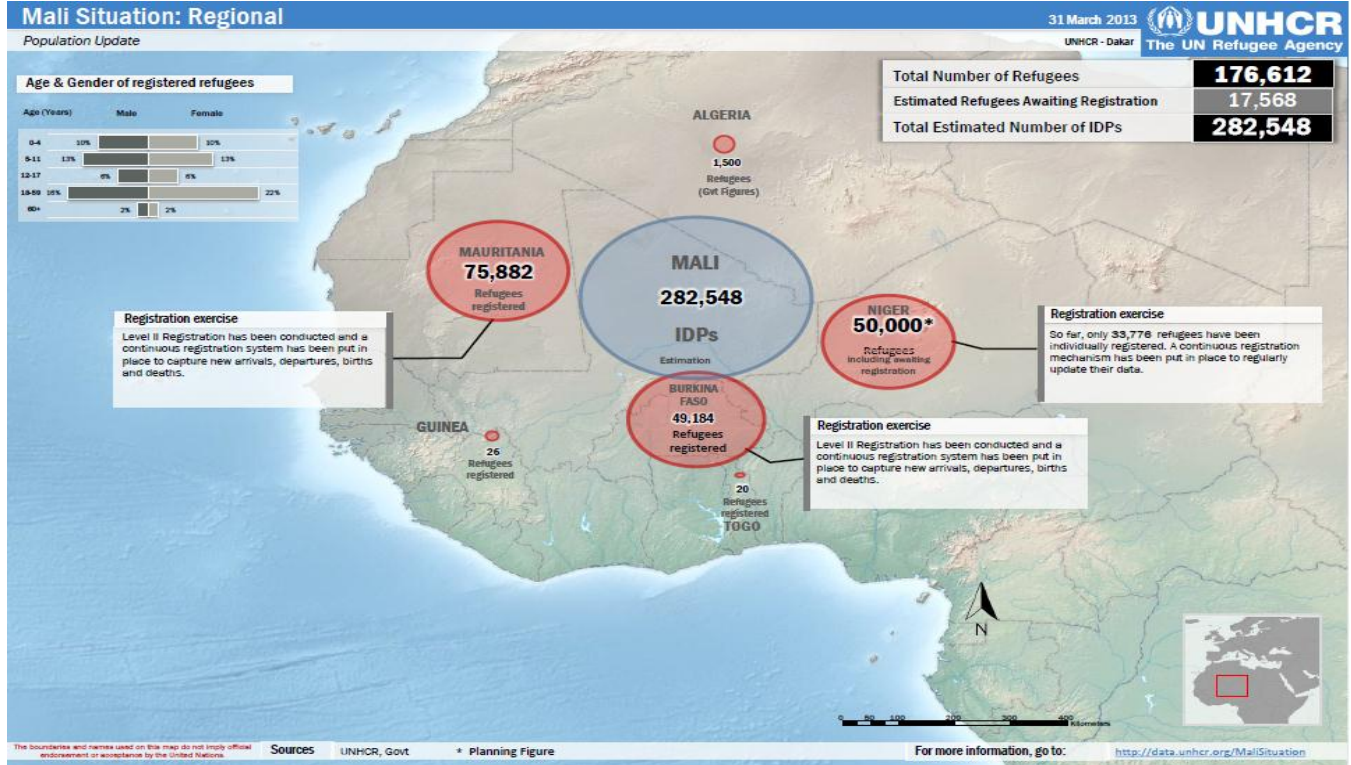
**UNHCR web portal for the Mali situation: <http://data.unhcr.org/MaliSituation/regional.php>

**Mali emergency page: <http://www.unhcr.org/emergency/50597c616-5093d81bc.html>

**UNHCR public website: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4f79a77e6.html>

People of Concern

(As of 31 March 2013)



UNHCR 2013 Budget for the Mali Situation: Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger (in million USD)

Operation	Refugee Programme	IDP Projects	Total
Burkina Faso	32.7		32.7
Mauritania	26.3		26.3
Niger	52.9		52.9
Mali		27.6	27.6
Senegal Regional Office	4.5		4.5
Total	114.7	27.6	144

Contributions Received for the Mali Situation in 2013 in USD (as of 26 March 2013)

Belgium	1,293,661
Canada	1,492,537
CERF	2,178,453
Japan	30,500,000
Private Donors	490,968
Saudi Arabia	2,000,000
Spain	1,356,852
Switzerland	2,103,049
UN Programme on HIV/AIDS	58,000
United Kingdom	4,815,409
Total	46,288,929

In addition, UNHCR has received USD 7.4 m from the USA for its annual 2013 programme in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS

- As of 31 March 2013, the total number of Malian refugees in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger and Togo is **176,612 individuals**. The estimated number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Mali as a result of the crisis as of 20 March is **282,548 individuals** according to the Commission of Population Movements. The current number of Malian refugees and IDPs is **459,160 individuals**.
- In Niger, new arrival figures reached an estimated **10,000 individuals** since the start of the military intervention in Mali on 11 January as a new refugee influx of an estimated **5,590 Malians** arrived in Mentes and Midal with most of them arriving during the last week of March.
- In Burkina Faso, UNHCR, *Médecins du Monde Spain* (MDM Spain) and the health/nutrition authorities have started some interventions aimed at decreasing the **prevalence of acute malnutrition** in Goudebo camp.
- In Mauritania, the authorities and UNHCR have launched preparations for the **biometric enrolment** of Malian refugees as part of a nationwide programme.
- UNHCR's total financial requirements for the Mali Situation for 2013 stand at **USD 144 million** for the existing refugee and IDP operations in Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and Mali.
- **UNHCR is grateful to donors who have thus far committed pledges amounting to USD 46.3 million to respond to this crisis. UNHCR and its partners are appealing for urgent financial support from donors for the Malian displaced as the amount raised represents only 32.1% of the budget at this point.**

MALI

Security Update

The security situation deteriorated sharply in the city of Timbuktu during the last ten days of March, with two insurgent attacks taking place for the first time since French and Malian forces recaptured the city in January. Until those two attacks, Timbuktu had been calm since the insurgents were driven out of the city, with some local officials and IDPs returning to the city. The two attacks in Timbuktu as well as others in Gao and the presence of insurgents in Tenenkou and Youwarou in Mopti region, raised serious concerns about the overall security in the north. According to local sources, the Tenenkou Prefet, who had returned to the city to resume duties, was forced to leave after receiving death threats.

Population movements between the South and North and vice-versa continued to be observed, but it could not be immediately determined if the attacks in Timbuktu had led to a new wave of displacement. Reliable statistics about returns are extremely difficult to obtain, especially since it is not known whether current returns are temporary or permanent. The Protection Cluster, under the lead of UNHCR, met on 27 March to continue developing a common position on returns. UNHCR and the other humanitarian agencies currently consider that security and other conditions to allow safe and dignified returns are far from being met. As a result, they have agreed not to provide assistance, for the moment, to those who wish to return or to aid those who have made it back to their home areas.

Protection Response

IDP Statistics: On 20 March, the Commission for Population Movements reported **282,548 individuals** as **internally displaced** in Mali. The increase from 260,665 the previous month was due in part to arrivals in 2012 that were not registered until then, as well as to new arrivals in 2013. The enlargement of the registration zones in the Mopti region by the International Organisation for Migration also contributed to the increase.

UNHCR Missions: From 18 to 20 March, UNHCR organized missions to Segou, San, Sebare and Mopti with the objective, to assess the security situation and to meet with local authorities, IDPs and partners operating in those locations. In Segou, it was observed that the number of IDPs had increased due to new registrations. According to the Social Development Services, there were 36,045 IDPs in Segou compared with 34,829 in February, with the majority from Timbuktu region. The majority of IDPs interviewed by the mission in the four places said **they would like to return** to their areas of origin **but lacked funds** to do so with some asking for

assistance once they return as they have **lost their property and employment**. Some IDPs also said that they preferred to wait until **peace and security** were fully restored.

In San, the Prefet informed the mission that while many of the estimated 3,040 IDPs would like to return to their areas of origin, those with children attending school said they would wait for the end of the school year before returning.

NIGER

Protection and Assistance

New Arrivals: In March, while Government sources were reporting new arrivals who had fled from places such as Gao, Menaka, Kidal, Inchinanan, Inekar, Tessit, and Ansongo, to the camps and sites - **922 individuals** - because of the ongoing war in northern Mali, feeling of insecurity, and the lack of basic necessities, a **new refugee influx** to **Mentes** and **Midal**, situated 8 km and 28 km respectively from the Mali-Niger border, was taking place. As of 28 March, the number of the new arrivals in the two villages had reached **an estimated 5,592** according to Government and UNHCR sources. The population, mainly women and children, arrived from Kidal and Menaka on foot or on donkeys and stated to have fled because of the **ongoing war** and for fear of **possible reprisals** by the Malian army.

Joint missions of UNHCR, WFP and local authorities to register the new arrivals and distribute food and non-food items to the refugees noted that **water is scarce** and **no health facilities** are available. The most urgent action was to move the refugees from Mentes to Midal, which is more habitable because of a functional well, in order to ensure their safety and provide emergency assistance. As of 31 March, **an estimated 10,000 individuals** had arrived in Niger since the start of the military intervention in Mali in January. Given that the Level 2 Registration for the refugees in Agando and Chinwaren has yet to take place, and that no departures were reported, the planning figure for the Malian refugees in Niger remains 50,000 individuals.



New refugee influx from Mali seeking asylum in the Mentes/Midal, a remote desert location in the north of Niger.
UNHCR/G.P. Menze/March 2013.

Relocation: Preparations are underway for the relocation of **an estimated 17,000 refugees** from Agando and Chinwaren, located at less than 20 km from the Malian border, to the **new hosting area of Intekan**, approximately 80 km further inland, with sufficient capacity to host all the 17,000 refugees and sufficient **grazing land** for their domestic animals. Ten bladders of 10,000-litre capacity each have been installed; a borehole that can provide 40 cubic metres per hour is under renovation and will be a sufficient source of water for the planned refugee as well as the host populations; three cistern trucks of 20 cubic metres are in place to ensure water trucking; and 20 Rub hall tents for the storage of non-food items have been installed. The operation is scheduled to start in April.

Urban refugees: The Malian Embassy has offered its former consulate to UNHCR to operate the new 'One Stop Shop' for urban refugees for a period of six months after which, it will be moved to a new building on a site made available by the city council of Niamey. The '**One Stop Shop**' will gather all services of protection and assistance needed by urban refugees such as registration, documentation, counseling and community services.

Education: To ensure the 49 secondary refugee children from Tabareybarey camp a **daily transportation** to Ayorou Public College, UNICEF, Plan Niger and the *Directeur Régional de l'Education Nationale* (DREN) have provided a school bus that covers a **distance of 9 km** between the camp and Ayorou village.

Community Services: The International Women's Day was celebrated in Abala, Mangaize and Tabareybarey camps as well as in Niamey on 8 March with the active participation of refugees and local authorities. On this occasion, "**Women Spaces**", designed to encourage women refugees to discuss welfare issues, were inaugurated in the three camps.

UNHCR Single Plan: On 14 and 15 March, UNHCR organized a workshop with partners, UN agencies, the Government and refugees to work on the 2014-2015 Single Plan and **define programmatic priorities**. Prior to the workshop, participatory assessments based on age, gender, diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) were held in all camps, sites as well as in Niamey. During the participatory assessments, issues discussed included the need to **improve protection and assistance** in the refugee camps, the creation of a '**One Stop Shop**' in Niamey **for urban refugees**, the need to find **sustainable solutions for Niger returnees** and the reinforcement of the **education programme**.



Refugee representatives in Niger together with UNHCR representation after the 2014 - 2015 Single Plan workshop in Niamey, Niger. UNHCR/C. Arnaud /March 2013.

Health/Nutrition: A survey conducted by UNHCR and WFP from 28 January to 13 February in the camps shows that the nutrition situation has greatly improved since August 2012 when the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) was over 15% and of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) over 3% for children aged from 6 to 59 months in all three refugee camps. The prevalence of **GAM** is now **9%** and that of **SAM** is **1.6%**. UNHCR has been working closely with UNICEF, WFP and partners, on **blanket and wet feeding programmes** in order to prevent the deterioration of the nutritional status.

However, the improving nutritional situation in the camps in Niger can only be maintained if the problem is understood and addressed in its complexity: various studies have shown that refugee households are **selling up to 20% of their food rations** to obtain other important commodities such as **condiments and firewood** in an already barren landscape. Many refugees, like their local Niger hosts, **are indebted to local traders**. Hence, UNHCR, WFP and other partners are **piloting new approaches**: in April for the first time, refugees in Mangaize camp will receive **cash vouchers of USD 12 per person per month** to buy food in the market. In another one-month pilot scheme, 300 refugee households in Abala camp will receive cooking stoves that run on **gas, coal, or kerosene**. In yet another area, an estimated 17,000 refugees will be relocated by UNHCR and Niger authorities to Intekan, a **newly opened pasture area with their livestock**, thereby **preserving their livelihoods and household economies**.

Shelter: UNHCR and shelter partners are working to **improve shelters** which can withstand the Sahelian climate for the refugees. Accordingly, Red Cross Luxembourg has procured **1,000 shelter kits** designed to **reduce the effects of heat** and is organizing training on shelter construction and rehabilitation for refugee volunteers in Mangaize and Abala camps.

Donor Relations: On 19 March, Mr Luis Mendez, the Regional Refugee Coordinator (Dakar) of BPRM visited Mangaize camp and met with refugees and Niger returnees to discuss their situation. The next day, Mr Mendez, went to Ayorou and Tabareybarey camp on a joint UNHCR/WFP/UNICEF visit. The mission visited the camp facilities and ongoing activities such as the wet feeding programme and met with refugees as well as partners.

BURKINA FASO

Protection and Assistance

New Arrivals: In March, **1,714 individuals** arrived in Burkina Faso from Douentza, Hombori, Gourma-Rharous, Gossi, Inadiatafane, Indaki and Timbuktu. The new arrivals, mainly women, children, and elderly persons, stated the reasons for the flight as **insecurity** as well as **arbitrary arrests** and human rights abuses allegedly committed by the Malian army. Some refugees said that the murder of a man from Inadiatafane in Boni allegedly by Malian soldiers triggered the flight of 140 persons (38 families) from Inadiatafane to Burkina Faso. As of 31 March, an estimated **9,046 individuals** had arrived in Burkina Faso since the start of the military intervention in Mali.

Intention to Return to Mali: UNHCR conducted a survey on the intention to return to Mali in Sag-nioniogo camp on 18 March. The findings showed that both ethnic groups in the camp, the Tuaregs and the Songhai/Dogons **do not intend to return soon** to Mali because of **reported ethnic tensions** in northern Mali as well as **the lack of peace** between the north and the south. The survey will also be conducted in the other camps.

Relocation: The relocation of refugees from unsafe locations to two camps in the Sahel Region, namely Goudoubo and Mentao camps, continued in March. On 23 March, Damba camp was closed when 292 individuals (114 households) were relocated from the camp, situated 40 km from the Malian border, to Mentao camp, situated 95 km from the border. Since the operation began in October 2012, a total of **11,351 refugees** (3,621 households) have been relocated further inland from camps close to the Burkina Faso - Mali border.

With the closure of Ferrerio (on 19 January), Gandafabou (on 5 February) and Gountoure Gnegne (on 15 February), Burkina Faso now has three camps, namely, **Goudoubo, Mentao and Sag-nioniogo** camps and **three spontaneous sites** of Dibissi, Deou, and Tin-Hedja hosting Malian refugees. Plans are underway to relocate the estimated 6,700 refugees from the spontaneous sites to Goudoubo or Mentao camps. From 20 to 23 March, UNHCR and CONAREF undertook joint missions, accompanied by the security authorities in Dori, to the three sites to sensitize and inform the refugees of plans to relocate them.

Child Protection: In March, UNHCR, Plan Burkina collaborated with the Ministry of Social Action and National Solidarity to raise awareness of the refugee community on child protection issues including the **importance of education**.

Clothes Assistance: In responding to one aspect of the **basic needs of refugee children**, UNHCR, in collaboration with its partners, Save the Children (International), *Terre des Hommes*, *Fondation pour le développement communautaire* (FDC), *Association Nodde Nooto* (A2N) and IEDA Relief Burkina distributed different types of **clothing to 2,000 refugee children** of whom 906 girls in Goudoubo camp in March. The clothes assistance will cover a total of 6,000 children in the camp.

Literacy Courses: In Goudoubo, both the **refugees** in the camp and the **host population** are **responding favourably** to the literacy courses organized by FDC and A2N in Tamasheq and Fulfulde languages. A rapid increase in the number of students taking the courses has been noted from **554 students** in 14 centres in January to **1,200 students** in 26 centres as at the end of March. Out of the 26 centres, four are located in the **local villages** with **173 students** participating in the courses.



Malian refugees in a literacy class in Goudoubo camp, Burkina Faso. UNHCR/A. Romeo/March 2013.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management: From 27 to 29 March, UNHCR organized a Camp Coordination and Camp Management workshop for 29 participants from UNHCR, CONAREF, IEDA Relief, the Burkina Faso Red Cross, and *Terre des Hommes* and the National Students Association for Child Protection in order to **reinforce their capacity to manage camp issues**. The workshop focused on topics such as roles and responsibilities in camp management and coordination, principles and approaches, information management, and UNHCR Code of Conduct.

Peaceful Coexistence: *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières* (VSF), in collaboration with its partner *Association Nodde Nooto*, has created five **host population-refugee committees** for the peaceful resolution of land and cattle-related conflicts in Oudalan and Soum provinces. The partner is planning to create some of the committees in the Seno province where Goudoubo camp is located.

Still on peaceful coexistence, UNHCR also organized a workshop on 26 March for refugee leaders in Goudoubo camp to discuss issues aimed at **promoting peaceful coexistence** between refugees and members of host communities as well as the active participation of refugees in camp activities.

WASH: In Mentao camp, water supply per person per day was above 20 litres in March. In Goudoubo camp water supply decreased from above 20 litres to 16 litres due to the dry season and some technical problem encountered. In response, UNHCR and Oxfam provided short-term interventions including water-trucking while two broken down boreholes out of the three in the camp were being fixed. In Sag-nioniogo camp, where it remained 8.5 litres, the Luxembourg Red Cross finished the repair of a borehole at the end of March that will help increase water supply.

Ten refugees were trained by the French Red Cross to organise community outreach activities for **sanitation and hygiene promotion** in Sag-nioniogo camp.

Health: In March, UNHCR and health partners continued to raise awareness on **safe pregnancy and delivery** especially in Mentao camp, where 51% out of 86 births have been non-assisted births since the beginning of the year. Incentives like mosquito nets and baby kits are being provided to new mothers in efforts to motivate others to access antenatal services as well as to deliver in health centres.

During the month there were **10,625 medical consultations**. Out of these, 41.6% were respiratory infections, 10.5% were malaria cases and 8.4% were parasitic infections.

There has been a total of **103 cases of measles** recorded between **week 1 and 13** (January to March) in the camps. Of these, **20 cases** were detected in **March**. Immunization against measles for newcomers and routine immunization continued in the camps.

Nutritional Survey: a SMART-SENS nutritional survey was organized by UNHCR, WFP, and the Burkina Faso health authorities in Mentao, Goudoubo and Sag-nioniogo camps as well as in Dibissi site between 18 February and 10 March with the preliminary results showing a high prevalence of anaemia among women and children in all the camps and a nutrition emergency in Goudoubo camp, with prevalence of **GAM** of **24.5%** and the prevalence of **SAM** of **5.3%**. The World Health Organization (WHO) threshold for an emergency situation is 15%. The **most likely causes** of those high rates include a lack of dietary diversity, poor infant and young child feeding as well as poor hygiene practices. An **in-depth causal analysis** - primarily around knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviour - will be carried out in the coming weeks by Save the Children in order to design the appropriate interventions to help improve the situation.

In the meantime, UNHCR, *Médecins du Monde* (MDM Spain) and the health/nutrition authorities have started **door-to-door screening** of all children aged 6 to 59 months in Goudoubo camp and are referring the severely and moderately malnourished to the health centre for treatment. UNHCR, WFP and partners, are preparing to organise **blanket feeding** for all children aged 6 to 23 months.

As part of long-term measures, UNHCR and partners will develop community-based strategies such as training refugee outreach agents and early detection and prevention mechanisms to help address the malnutrition problem.

Food Assistance: In March, 34,550 refugees received food assistance provided by WFP. The food basket, based on 2,100 kilocalories per day, was composed of cereals, legumes, cooking oil, corn soya blend (CSB) and salt.

Livelihoods: As part of efforts to help refugees **maintain their livelihoods** as well as **preserve animal and public health**, *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières* (VSF) has vaccinated **40,217 animals** belonging to refugees in Mentao camp and those relocated from Damba camp against diseases, such as pasteurellosis. The number represents approximately 74% of the 54,448 animals identified in January. The vaccination exercise has also started in Goudoubo camp.



Some refugee girls undertaking training in cloth dyeing techniques in Goudoubo Camp, Burkina Faso. UNHCR/A. Romeo/March 2013.

To provide refugee youth with skills for **income generating activities**, Save the Children is organizing training in **cloth dyeing techniques** and **soap making** for **40 refugee youth** of whom 27 girls, in Goudoubo camp. In Mentao and Sag-nioniogo camps, UNHCR is yet to identify an implementing partner for that programme.

Energy-Saving Stoves: The Monaco Red Cross (operational partnership) distributed **698 Roundé energy-saving stoves** to refugee households in Sag-nioniogo camp for cooking purposes. The **host community** of Sag-nioniogo received **253 stoves**.

Environment: A report on **Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment**, organized in March to determine the impact of the presence of the refugees in the hosting areas, has provided relevant information on environmental issues of the refugee hosting areas, and has identified the likely environmental impacts related to the presence of the refugees and their large numbers of livestock. A workshop to validate the report has been scheduled in April.

MAURITANIA

New Arrivals: In March, **3,010 new arrivals** were registered in Mbera camp. The new arrivals were mostly women, children and elderly coming from Léré, Goundam, Niafunké and Timbuktu. The refugees said they fled because they feared the military confrontations in Mali and possible reprisals against specific ethnic groups. Since the military intervention started in Mali, an estimated **21,636 individuals** have arrived in Mbera camp and have been individually registered.

Biometric Enrolment of Refugees: the Mauritanian authorities and UNHCR have launched preparations for the biometric enrolment of Malian refugees in Mbera camp which is part of the nationwide biometric enrolment implemented by the National Agency for Population Registry and Secured Documents (ANRPTS). UNHCR and the ANRPTS have organized an awareness session with refugee community leaders to explain the objective and the methodology of the exercise.

Education: In March, the humanitarian organizations involved in the area of education, UNICEF, UNHCR and Intersos, observed that out of 5,954 primary school children enrolled, only 3,689 (**61%**) attended school. Hence, they held a meeting with teachers and refugee parents to discuss the issue of **low attendance** at school. Some of the causes of the problem highlighted during the meeting were the **lack of adequate school facilities** and the **weak involvement of refugee parents** in the education of children. The parents suggested the organization of **school feeding programme** to encourage attendance. UNHCR and the education partners will work with the refugee community in order to improve school attendance.

Community Services: The International Women's Day was celebrated in the camp on 8 March. Refugee women, men and children as well as representatives of UN agencies and partners participated in the event, which was celebrated with traditional music and dances.

Health/Nutrition: In March, a total of **13,135 medical consultations** were recorded in the refugee camp, with the main prevalent diseases as respiratory diseases (upper: 19.49%, lower: 27.19%), diarrheas (12.52 %) and malaria (2.88 %).

A summary note on the results of the SMART nutritional survey conducted in January 2013 in Mbera camp by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNICEF and WFP was shared with all the partners involved in the multi-sectorial response to the situation of Malian refugees. The results of this survey reveal that the prevalence of **GAM** in the camp is **13.1%** against 20% in July 2012 and that of **SAM** is **3.1%** against 6% in July 2012. While these results show a decreasing trend in the prevalence of malnutrition in the camp, the levels of acute malnutrition remain of concern and represent a critical nutrition crisis and thus needs further improvement and close follow-up. Hence, apart from the normal treatment and prevention activities such as distribution of nutritional supplements to infants and young children, measles vaccination campaign and awareness activities, UNHCR and partners have reinforced the follow-up of defaulters of the nutrition programme. In addition, non-food items such as soap, blankets and hygiene kits are distributed to the malnourished in the nutritional rehabilitation centres to encourage more malnourished refugees to seek treatment.

The World Health Organisation, WHO donated USD 50,000 worth of **essential medicines** to the local health authorities to support the **access of primary health** care by the local and refugee populations.

Food Assistance: In March, 73,862 individuals collected their food rations provided by WFP and distributed by UNHCR through its implementing partner, CSA. The food basket was composed of rice, vegetable oil, beans and CSB plus, and provided 2,156 kilocalories per person per day.

Non Food Items (NFI) Assistance: UNHCR and humanitarian actors operational in the camp continued to respond to the basic needs of refugees in Mbera camp. UNHCR distributed three pieces of **soap** of 200 grams each **to all refugees** to cover a period of two-and-a-half months. While the Turkish NGO IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation distributed **clothes, shoes and buckets** to **1,272 elderly persons** and **1,010 refugee students** as well as **food and NFI assistance** to **268 other refugees** with specific needs, the Mauritanian NGO Alkhyr provided food and NFI assistance to **50 refugees** with disabilities. SOS Desert and Intersos also distributed **blankets** to **120 orphans** in the camp schools.

Livelihoods: On 28 March 2013, ACF Spain launched **cash grant activities** for **720 lactating and pregnant women** to enable them to start an **income generating activity**. Each woman received 19,000 MRO (approximately **USD 67**). The awareness campaign which accompanied the launch of this project resulted in an increase of the number of antenatal consultations and the rate of birth deliveries in medical facilities in the camp, 94.4% in March 2013 against 42% in the year 2012.

Donor Relations: The Regional Refugee Coordinator (Dakar) of BPRM and the Acting West Africa Regional Director of Food for Peace, USAID, conducted a joint mission in Mauritania from 25 to 28 March. The delegation visited Mbera camp on 27 March and expressed their satisfaction with the food distribution mechanism that has been put in place jointly by WFP and UNHCR.

UNHCR PRESENCE

Burkina Faso	(Offices) Ouagadougou, Dori, Djibo, Bobo Dioulasso (Camps)* Mentao, Goudoubo, Sag-nioniongo
Mali	(Offices) Bamako, Kayes, Mopti (IDP site) Mopti
Mauritania	(Offices) Nouakchott, Bassikounou Camp - Mbera
Niger	(Offices) Niamey, Abala, Mangaize, Ayorou (Camps) Tabareybarey, Mangaize, Abala (Official sites)* Agando and Chinwaren

* Apart from the official camps and sites, some refugees are living in spontaneous settlements.

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