

Overview

Insecurity across central and northern Mali continues to drive displacement toward the Mauritanian border, with 832 refugees arriving this week. Although numbers remained stable, refugees are now taking longer and more dangerous routes as the official Doueinkara crossing has become largely inaccessible due to blockades and armed presence around Léré and Soumpi. Most arrivals are women and children, predominantly from Tuareg communities affected by recent attacks around Soumpi (Cercle of Niafounké), and are reaching Mauritania exhausted and with heightened protection needs. Newly arrived refugees are now settling across an expanded area: 19 villages in the communes of Fassala, Mégve and Adel Bagrou, putting additional pressure on already vulnerable host communities as UNHCR, Government and partners continue registration and urgent assistance.

Key figures



3390

**Refugee arrivals
since 25 October
2025**



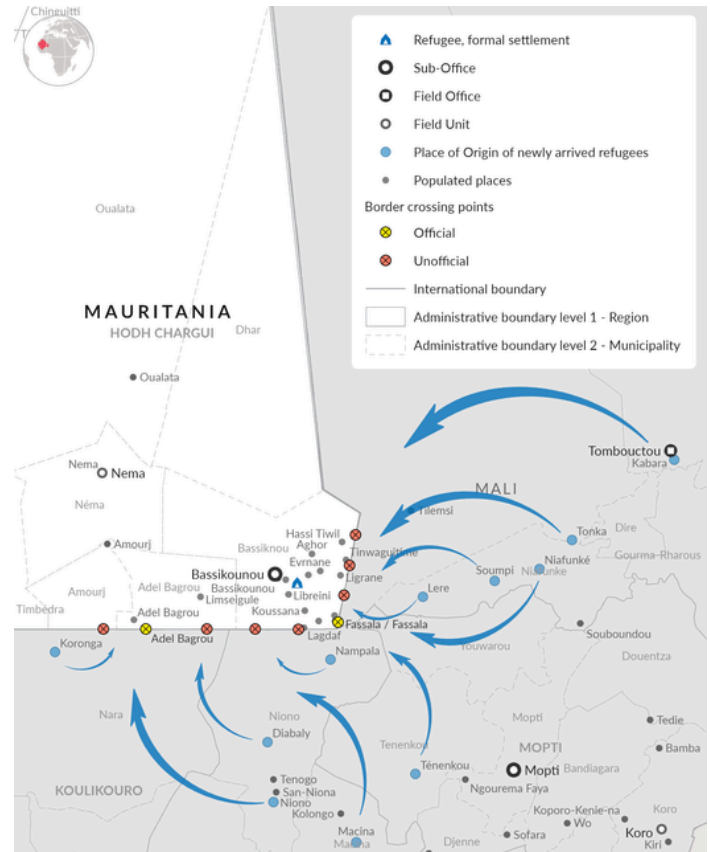
20%

**Adult
women**

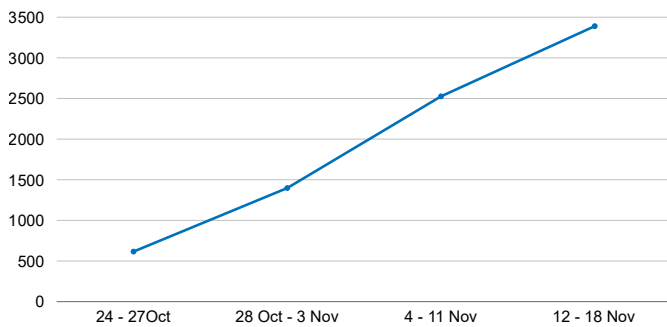


68%

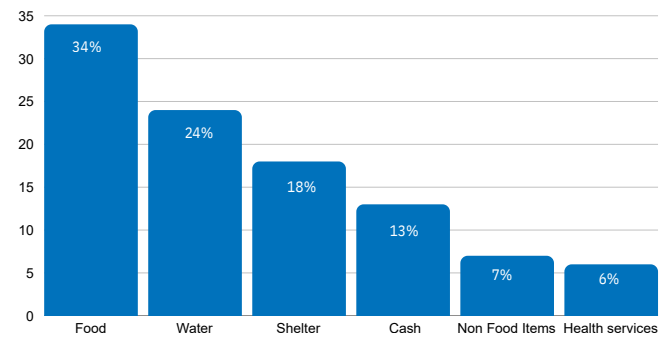
Children



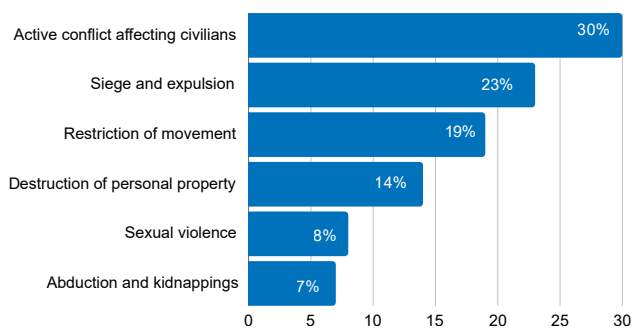
Weekly Refugee Arrivals from Mali



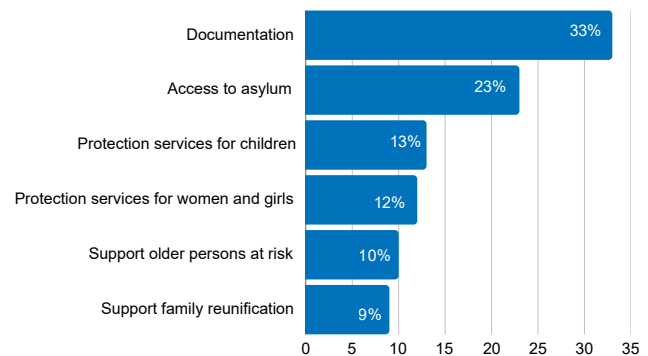
Refugees priority needs



Main protection risks in country of origin



Main protection needs in country of asylum





© UNHCR / Alioun Yerin – Newly arrived refugees sit in their makeshift shelter in Kindjerla, Fassala, Mauritania.

- The situation in Mali continues to deteriorate, driving sustained forced displacement toward Mauritania. Most new refugee arrivals this week originate from Kabara, near Soumpi in the Timbuktu region, where civilians fled following an attack on the Soumpi market attributed to JNIM and subsequent drone strikes reportedly affecting civilians. These developments add to the blockade and violence in Léré, Serinké and Sondage, as well as targeted killings in Tonka, prompting continued outflows from communities in the conflict-affected areas. This week's arrivals were predominantly from Tuareg communities reflecting displacement patterns closely linked to incidents.
- The number of arrivals this week was 832 individuals. Refugees report that the official Doueinkara crossing has become inaccessible due to insecurity and blockades on the road, forcing them to walk long distances through unsafe terrain to avoid armed groups, checkpoints and recent incidents involving strikes on civilian vehicles. Many caution that further displacement is likely, citing escalating pressure by armed actors, including land burning, livestock theft and threats, aimed at compelling communities to flee. Fuel scarcity and high transport costs are limiting access to vehicles, and those who have access reportedly avoid using them due to fear of drone strikes. One mother from Soumpi explained: "We walked until we reached the north of Soumpi; taking a car earlier would have been too dangerous." As a result, many new arrivals reach Mauritania exhausted, with children and older persons often in need of immediate assistance.
- Refugees continued to enter Mauritania through 2 official and 13 informal crossing points along the Fassala and Mégve border areas. The highest number of crossings have been reported in the regions of Medella, Hassi Lagdel, Hassi Hel Taleb and Hassi Tiwil.
- The Government of Mauritania continues to uphold an open-door policy towards refugees from Mali. The Mauritanian authorities, namely, ANRPTS has deployed their teams to the localities where new arrivals are reported, verifying their presence. Importantly, unlike the initial weeks of the influx, when refugees without documentation risked being turned back at the border, no such cases have been reported.
- The area of refugee settlement continued to expand. Before 12 November, new arrivals were present in roughly seven villages, mainly in the areas of Fassala and Mégve. Over the past week, refugees have been identified in 19 villages across Fassala, Mégve and now Adel Bagrou, significantly increasing the number of hosting locations. Many families still choose settling near informal crossing points or joining relatives already in Mauritania, placing further strain on villages with already limited services.

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- Living conditions for new arrivals are extremely precarious, with urgent needs for shelter, NFIs, and adequate clothing as nighttime temperatures drop. Many families are sleeping without shelter or in overcrowded tents. Water scarcity is emerging as a major concern, with several villages reporting shortages as they struggle to accommodate additional people.
 - Women and children continue to constitute the vast majority of new arrivals, as men are often unable to flee due to blockades, the need to safeguard livestock, or heightened risks along the route. This has resulted in a high number of female-headed households arriving with multiple dependents and almost no resources. A few newly arrived women and adolescent girls told UNHCR field teams that they have had to resort to harmful coping mechanisms, including sale and exchange of sex, to meet immediate needs. While these accounts do not indicate sexual exploitation or abuse, the conditions described significantly heighten vulnerability to SEA. Strengthening community-based protection systems, safe referral pathways, and SEA-prevention measures remains essential to ensure that women, girls and other at-risk individuals can access assistance safely and with dignity.
 - UNHCR and partners continue to carry out registration in Doueinkara and to support urgent protection cases. However, the growing number of refugees settling in villages along the border where access and security remain constrained, limits the ability of teams to reach all new arrivals or deliver assistance in a timely manner. To address these gaps, UNHCR is preparing to deploy staff including mobile registration teams to provide assistance in selected locations in the coming days, while working with local leaders to encourage communities to relocate to safer areas such as Kleive.