UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

ICVA
A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALONG THE WESTERN AFRICA ATLANTIC ROUTE

Availability and Gaps

May 2026

© UNHCR/Ébano Stories

Content

Executive summary 3

Country Chapters 7

1. Burkina Faso 7

Kadiogo 8
The Greater Western Region: Guiriko, Tannounyan, Djoro 8
Northern Corridor: Liptako, Soum, Yaadga, Sourou and Bankui 9
Kuilse Region 10
The Greater Eastern Region: Goulmou, Tapoa, Sirba, Nakambé 10
The Southern Region: Nazinon and Nando 11
Burkina Faso: Table of available services by region and category 11

2. Mali 12

Bamako Region 13
Western Corridor: Kayes and Nioro 13
Southern Corridor: Sikasso, Koutiala 14
Central Corridor: Mopti, Bandiagara, Douentza, San and Segou 14
Eastern Corridor: Gao and Ménaka 15
Northern corridor: Timbuktu, Taoudenni and Kidal 16
Mali: Table of available services by region and category 17

3. Mauritania 18

Nouakchott 20
Nouadhibou 21
Mauritania. Table of available services by region and category 22

4. Morocco 23

Oriental region, including Oujda and Nador 24
Rabat Sale Kenitra region and the Greater Casablanca area 24
Khouribga region- Béni Mellal 25
Souss-Massa region- Agadir 26
The Northern region: Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima 27
Morocco: Table of available services by region and category 28

5. Niger 29

Agadez Region 30
Niamey Region 31
Tahoua Region 32
Zinder Region 32
Diffa Region 33
Central and Southern Regions: Tillabéri, Dosso and Maradi 33
Niger. Table of available services by region and category 34

Executive summary

In recent years, the Western Africa Atlantic Route has become one of the most visible and deadly mixed movement corridors in the world. Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants travel from inland regions of the Sahel and other regions through border towns, mining areas and coastal cities before attempting perilous sea crossings toward the Canary Islands and beyond. Journeys are rarely linear, and people often move with limited access to assistance or protection at the moments and locations where risks materialize.

Against this backdrop, this mapping exercise examines what protection and assistance services are available on the ground and where gaps remain. The analysis covers Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Morocco, countries of origin, asylum, transit, and destination along the route, and focuses on nine categories of protection and assistance services that reflect the first four pillars of the route-based approach. These include identification and outreach, access to asylum procedures, shelter, legal assistance, health care and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), gender-based violence (GBV) support, child protection, services for victims of trafficking (VoT), and other protection and assistance relevant support such as socio-economic inclusion.

Across all five countries, the mapping confirms that important efforts are already underway. National and local authorities, United Nations agencies, NGOs and international organizations, faith-based actors, grass-root initiatives and refugee and community-led organizations have established protection responses in some of the most challenging environments along the route. In Mauritania, for example, Nouakchott and Nouadhibou host a relatively diverse range of services across most protection categories, including a Community Protection Network that supported more than 1,200 individuals with immediate needs in 2025 and new partnerships with women-led organizations and an organization of persons with disabilities to run safe shelters for women at risk, reflecting sustained investment in urban protection systems. In Morocco, the mapping highlights a diversified service presence in key urban and route-linked hubs, including Tangier, Oujda, Casablanca and Rabat. In Niger, the cities of Agadez and Niamey are key hubs for protection and assistance along the route. They host a broad set of services across the main protection categories, including identification and awareness-raising, asylum services, shelter, health and MHPSS, legal aid, GBV and child-protection support, assistance for victims of trafficking and socio-economic inclusion. In Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou and regional capitals such as Kaya, Ouahigouya and Bobo-Dioulasso have become critical localities for protection and assistance in a context of severe insecurity. These efforts save lives, reduce immediate harm and create alternatives to dangerous onward journeys for those who are identified and able to access services.

At the same time, the mapping reveals structural gaps with direct consequences for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in mixed and onward movement flows.

The first gap concerns where services are located. Protection and assistance remain heavily concentrated in capitals and major towns, while many border areas, inland mixed movement hubs and coastal departure points have few or no clearly mapped protection services. In Mali, border-adjacent localities along routes linking Gao, the central corridor and Timbuktu to Niger, Burkina Faso and Mauritania have far fewer specialized services than the main regional capitals. In Niger, initial reception and movement points such as Assamaka, Arlit and Dirkou, where expulsions are frequent, show a much thinner service presence than Agadez city. In Burkina Faso, northern

and eastern border belts such as Liptako, Soum and the greater east have almost no mapped services beyond a handful of towns. The absence of mapping in some of these locations reflects both a lack of operational presence and the difficulty of safely identifying and documenting local initiatives in areas where humanitarian access is severely restricted.

A second gap concerns the type and continuity of services available. In many locations, emergency and event-driven responses are more developed than sustained protection, assistance and solutions. Systems exist to respond to shipwrecks, disembarkations and expulsions: people rescued at sea or returned across borders may receive immediate shelter, basic assistance and medical care. However, longer-term assistance, such as medium-term shelter, documentation and legal support, structured child-protection and GBV case management, or specialized assistance for victims of trafficking, are less consistently available, particularly outside major urban centers. In practice, this means that protection and assistance services along the route are uneven: there is relatively stronger short-term humanitarian response capacity, but weaker continuity of protection to help people access protection and rights in a timely manner and consider safer options rather than resorting to further dangerous journeys.

A third gap relates to the accessibility of services. Even where specialized services exist, they are often centralized and limited in capacity. In capitals and large hubs, a small number of actors may carry most of the responsibility for specialized protection functions. People identified in border areas, remote locations or small coastal towns may only be able to access these services if they are formally referred and able to travel long distances to a capital city or a regional hub, which is not always feasible or safe. This distance between where identification occurs and where specialized services are available can interrupt referral pathways and delay access to asylum procedures, legal safeguards and targeted protection support. When services are accessible closer to where people are, they can help meet immediate needs, provide reliable information and offer realistic options, so that people are not compelled to undertake further dangerous journeys or resort to coping strategies that expose them to additional harm.

Security and access constraints further shape this picture. In parts of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso in particular, movements take place through areas affected by conflict and violence, including the presence of non-State armed groups, terrorist groups and improvised explosive devices. In these areas, both service delivery and data collection are constrained. The mapping shows very limited or no specialized protection services in some of these corridors, even though mixed movement monitoring confirms repeated violations of rights, expulsions, documentation gaps and other abuses reported by people on the move. The absence of mapped services in such locations reflects not only the lack of operational presence due to insecurity, but also the difficulty of safely identifying and documenting local initiatives and support mechanisms that may exist.

The findings also highlight the fragility and time-bound nature of the protection footprint. Many services captured in the mapping are project-based and dependent on short-term funding and access. In some countries, services have already been discontinued due to resource or security constraints, and several actors have indicated that, without additional support, activities may have to be reduced or re-prioritized in the coming months. This makes it harder to maintain continuity in existing hubs, expand into underserved locations or progressively transfer protection and assistance services to national systems.

Taken together, these findings have direct implications for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants along the Western Africa Atlantic Route, as well as for the ability of States and humanitarian actors

to provide coordinated and predictable protection responses. People move along the route and are exposed to risks at different stages of their journeys; when they arrive in a town, border post or coastal area with urgent needs, they should be able to access life-saving assistance and protection services where they are. When such services are available locally, they not only respond to immediate needs but can also support people to exercise their rights and make informed choices without having to resort to further dangerous journeys. Today, this is not consistently the case. People passing through some high-risk locations may encounter little or no accessible shelter, legal safeguards, medical and psychosocial care, or specialized protection and assistance services, even while other locations along the route benefit from stronger service ecosystems.

Addressing these imbalances will require sustained, multi-country and multi-year engagement. Predictable and flexible funding will be essential to support local actors, including authorities, in strengthening identification and outreach closer to where people move and where risks emerge; expanding access to asylum procedures for those in need of international protection and legal assistance beyond capital cities; and developing more comprehensive protection, assistance and solutions response along the route, including through multi-purpose hubs and community-based structures that bring services closer to border, transit and departure points.

The route-based approach provides a framework for organizing this collective effort, not as an end in itself, but as a way to ensure that protection, assistance and solutions are available where people actually move and where risks materialize. By bringing together data from Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, this report and the accompanying dashboard provide a shared evidence base to guide that effort. They help identify where services can be reinforced, where new investments are needed, and where security and access constraints require adapted strategies. The mapping will be updated regularly and does not claim to be comprehensive. Rather, it is intended as a living tool to support States, humanitarian actors, communities and other stakeholders in strengthening the response along the Western Africa Atlantic Route, reducing exposure to harm, expanding safe and dignified options where people are and offering safer alternatives to dangerous journeys.

Map of Mixed Movement Context within West Africa and Atlantic Route; Source: [Routes Monitor]

Note on data coverage: *The figures presented in this report reflect services mapped and validated through available data sources at the time of analysis. Some service providers and activities may not be fully represented. The totals should therefore be interpreted as indicative of mapped service availability, rather than exhaustive figures.*

Country Chapters

1. Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso: Western Africa Atlantic Route Highlight; Source: Routes Monitor

The mapping of protection services in Burkina Faso shows a high concentration of services in the capital, regional capitals and urban centers, while border areas and key locations along mixed-movement routes remain significantly underserved. Across the ten regions captured in the mapping, Kadiogo, Guiriko, Tannounyan, Djoro, Liptako, Goulmou, Yaadga, Bankui, Nakambé and Kuilsé, a total of 56 services that are currently operational are recorded.

The **56 active services** cover all nine standard service categories, but with an uneven distribution. Legal assistance and access to asylum procedures are the most represented categories, followed by identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, GBV services and services for victims of trafficking. Health and MHPSS services remain limited and are concentrated in only a small number of locations.

Across several regions, particularly in the north, east and along border areas, high levels of insecurity, displacement and restricted humanitarian access constrain the presence of protection and assistance actors. These constraints are further compounded by resource limitations affecting the ability of actors to maintain or expand their operational footprint beyond major urban centres.

As a result, the availability of services remains uneven, with significant gaps in access to protection and assistance at critical stages of movement, including at border crossing points and in remote areas. At the same time, specific risk environments such as artisanal and small-scale gold mining sites expose refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants to heightened risks of trafficking, exploitation and gender-based violence, yet services addressing these risks remain limited and unevenly distributed.

The mapping reflects what could be identified and verified at the time of the exercise, in a context where insecurity and access constraints limit both service delivery and information gathering. In several regions, local associations or small-scale initiatives may be present but are not captured in the mapping, especially where humanitarian actors have very restricted or no physical access.

In this context, strengthening the presence of basic public services and institutional capacities in border and remote areas remains critical, alongside reinforcing the capacity of local actors who are able to operate in such environments. This is essential to ensure a minimum level of protection actors' presence and access to services in high-risk locations.

Taken together, the mapping highlights a protection response that is present but highly uneven, with significant structural gaps in coverage and access, particularly in border areas and regions most affected by insecurity. For forcibly displaced people in mixed movements and for communities hosting them, this means that where they arrive, and whether they can reach an urban centre, often determines whether they can access asylum procedures, GBV and child protection services, legal assistance or psychosocial support.

Kadiogo

The mapping confirms that protection and assistance services are most densely concentrated in Kadiogo region, in Ouagadougou, the capital and main operational hub. A total of 12 services are recorded in Kadiogo across almost all categories: access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, GBV support, shelter, legal assistance and services for victims of trafficking. Health and MHPSS do not appear as a separate category in the dataset, but Ouagadougou hosts numerous public and private health facilities that are not fully captured in this mapping.

Ouagadougou's central location and relative security mean it functions as a crossroads for mixed movements. Many Burkinabè and other nationals pass through the capital to move westwards along the Western Africa Atlantic Route, southwards towards coastal countries, eastwards towards Niger or northwards towards Mali and onward routes. As the capital, it also hosts the headquarters of many national and international organizations. Recent reductions in humanitarian funding have led some organizations to scale back their field presence and operate out of Ouagadougou.

For people in need of international protection or specialized support, including GBV response, trafficking-related support and legal assistance, this centralization has mixed implications. Those who can reach Ouagadougou and other regional capitals may access a broader range of services.

The Greater Western Region: Guiriko, Tannounyan, Djoro

The greater western region, comprising Guiriko, Tannounyan and Djoro regions, is Burkina Faso's main corridor towards the Western Africa Atlantic Route and neighbouring coastal countries. It

forms the western entry and exit point of the Atlantic route and a key gateway to Côte d'Ivoire as well as Ghana. From Bobo-Dioulasso and Banfora down to border towns such as Niangoloko in Tannounyan region, which borders Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, and Gaoua in Djoro region, which sits close to the borders with Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, many Burkinabè nationals and other nationalities move in both directions in search of safety and economic, educational and social opportunities. As of March 2026, Côte d'Ivoire hosts some 70,000 Burkinabè refugees and asylum seekers, and Ghana hosts around 13,000, as a consequence of the recent insecurity crisis of Burkina Faso.

The mapping records a total of 19 services across the three regions: seven in Guiriko, seven in Tannounyan and five in Djoro. In Guiriko region, services are mainly concentrated in the city of Bobo Dioulasso, the country's second largest city and economic hub, where asylum, identification and outreach, shelter, legal assistance and support for victims of trafficking are available. In Tannounyan region, services cluster around the city of Banfora and the border town of Niangoloko, covering asylum, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, trafficking related support and legal assistance. In Djoro region, services are centred in the city of Gaoua and cover asylum, identification and outreach, support for victims of trafficking and legal assistance.

However, across the three regions, no health and MHPSS services and GBV support are mapped, and child protection is mapped only in Tannounyan region. However, the city of Bobo-Dioulasso hosts numerous public and private health facilities that are not fully captured in this mapping. Trafficking-related services and legal assistance are mapped but are largely concentrated in the regional capitals, with only a small number of services mapped in Niangoloko, all provided by a single local actor.

For refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, this means that those who reach the cities of Bobo-Dioulasso, Banfora or Gaoua can access some protection support, while those intercepted, stranded or moving through smaller border towns and crossing points may encounter few or no dedicated services. Given the importance of this western corridor for mixed movements along the Atlantic route, the lack of decentralized GBV, child-protection, legal and trafficking-specific services at border locations represents a significant protection challenge for refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and host communities in these areas.

Northern Corridor: Liptako, Soum, Yaadga, Sourou and Bankui

The northern corridor, comprising Liptako, Soum, Yaadga, Sourou and Bankui regions, stretches along Burkina Faso's borders with Mali and Niger and has been at the centre of both displacement and mixed movement dynamics. The northern corridor sees many population inflows and outflows to Mali, often involving displaced persons in search for safety. Liptako and Soum regions were among the first parts of the country affected by the presence of terrorist groups and the five regions taken together remain one of the most insecure areas. Humanitarian access to hard-to-reach towns such as Djibo and Nouna is extremely limited. Despite this, some people, including internally displaced persons, refugees and other civilians, manage to move within and across these areas in search of safety, basic services or economic opportunities.

In this context, the mapping shows an extremely thin protection presence along the northern corridor. In Liptako region, only four services are recorded, all located in Dori. These cover access to asylum procedures, shelter and legal assistance. No identification and outreach, child protection, GBV, trafficking-specific or health and MHPSS services are captured for Liptako region. Several

services that previously existed in the broader Sahel belt have been discontinued due to funding limitations and deteriorating security conditions, further reducing the protection footprint.

Further west, in the greater northern region of Yaadga, Sourou and Bankui regions, the pattern is similar. The mapping records five services in Yaadga region, centred in the city of Ouahigouya, and two services in Bankui region, in the city of Dédougou. No services are mapped in Sourou region. In Yaadga, the services include child protection, GBV support, health and MHPSS, legal assistance and access to asylum procedures, providing a modest but diversified protection services for those who can reach the regional capital. In Bankui region, the two services are in identification and outreach and support for victims of trafficking. However, the corridor as a whole remains under-served: refugees and migrants arriving from Mali and Niger or moving within the north often transit through smaller towns and rural areas where no dedicated protection services are mapped. It has also been noted that Burkinabè IDPs sometimes pass through safer routes in Mali to seek safety in a safer part of Burkina Faso, in order to avoid passing through unsafe routes in Burkina Faso.

For refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants along this northern belt, the implications are stark. Protection and assistance, such as identification, access to asylum, psychosocial support, GBV and child protection services, legal assistance and safe shelter, are largely confined to a few towns (Dori, Ouahigouya, Dédougou) and absent from many high risk zones, including Soum and Sourou regions, increasing the exposure of those crossing borders between Mali and Niger, or attempting to move away from conflict affected areas, to exploitation, abuse and repeated displacement. Effective protection and assistance services are insufficient in cities such as Djibo and Nouna as humanitarian access is extremely limited.

Kuilse Region

Kuilse region, formerly Centre Nord, is another area severely impacted by insecurity. It lies just south of the former Sahel region and its regional capital Kaya hosts the largest number of internally displaced persons in Burkina Faso. Kaya remains comparatively secure and has become a major hub for humanitarian actors, including those providing protection and assistance services.

The mapping records 10 protection services in Kuilse region, mostly in Kaya. These are concentrated in four categories: child protection, GBV support, health and MHPSS, and legal assistance, indicating a relatively stronger focus on specific protection needs of IDPs and host communities, including survivors of violence and unaccompanied or separated children. At the same time, there are no mapped services for identification and outreach, access to asylum procedures, shelter or services for victims of trafficking, which may limit early identification of new arrivals, safe-shelter options and responses to trafficking risks in and around the region. Kuilse region does not host a large number of refugees and asylum seekers compared to other regions. The combination of high internal displacement and these service gaps means that the capacities of the actors present are already overstretched and may not be sufficient to prevent onward movements within Burkina Faso or, in some cases, across borders and further along the route.

The Greater Eastern Region: Goulmou, Tapoa, Sirba, Nakambé

The greater eastern region, made up of Goulmou, Tapoa, Sirba and Nakambé regions, is another border area severely impacted by insecurity in recent years and limited access significantly affects

populations and humanitarian operations. It borders Niger and Benin and serves as Burkina Faso's eastern gateway of the Western Africa Atlantic Route.

In the current mapping, services are captured only in Goulmou region, with a total of four services recorded primarily in the cities of Fada-Ngourma and Diabo. These cover access to asylum procedures, shelter and legal assistance. No services are mapped in Tapoa, Nakambé, or Sirba regions, even though these areas form part of the wider eastern border belt and border Niger to the east.

In the current mapping, several categories are not represented among active services in the greater eastern region: no identification and outreach, child protection, trafficking specific support or health and MHPSS services, or GBV services are captured. For people moving through the eastern corridor, whether crossing to or from Niger and Benin or working in and around mining sites, this means there are very few documented and accessible opportunities to be proactively identified, referred or supported.

The Southern Region: Nazinon and Nando

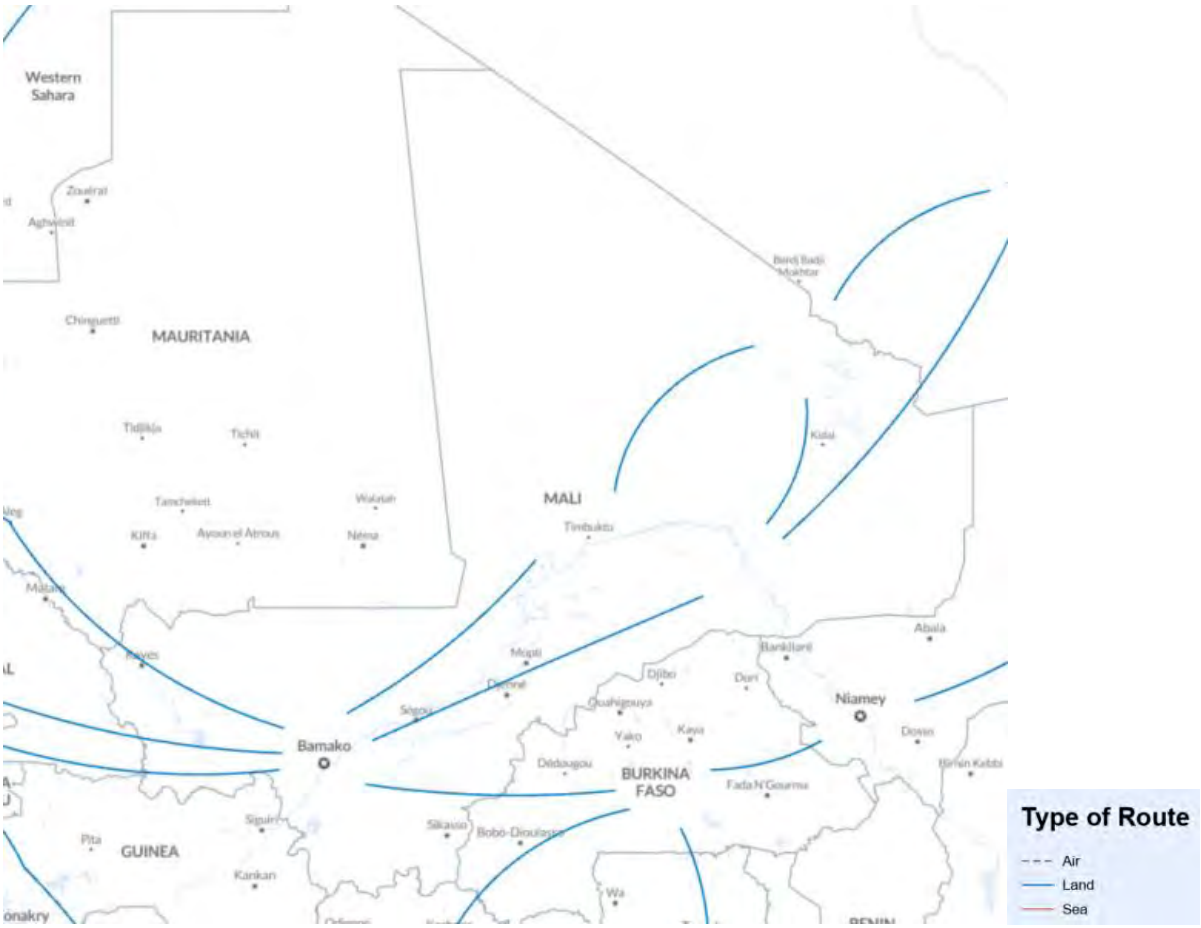
The southern region, regrouping Nazinon and Nando regions, is less affected by insecurity than many other parts of Burkina Faso and borders Ghana to the south. Movements through this corridor are mainly linked to trade, seasonal labour and other livelihood activities. Available information suggests it also plays a role as a corridor for mixed movements.

In the current mapping, no protection services are recorded for Nazinon or Nando regions. This likely reflects a combination of lower operational presence, fewer dedicated protection and assistance interventions and a focus of government and humanitarian efforts on higher-risk regions further north and east.

Burkina Faso: Table of available services by region and category

Region	Access to asylum	Outreach & identification	Child protection services	Shelter	Health & MHPSS	GBV services	VOTs services	Legal assistance	Other services	Total active
Kadiogo	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	2	1	12
Guiriko	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	7
Tannounyan	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	7
Djoro	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5
Liptako	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
Goulmou	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	4
Yaadga	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	5
Bankui	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Kuilse	0	0	2	0	3	3	0	2	0	10
Total	10	7	6	6	4	5	6	11	1	56

2. Mali



Mali: Western Africa Atlantic Route Highlight; Source: Routes Monitor

The 2026 mapping of protection and assistance services in Mali provides a consolidated overview of service availability and geographic distribution across mixed -movement regions under the new administrative division. The dataset captures **268 service entries that are currently operational across 14 regions**, Bamako, Kayes, Nioro, Sikasso, Gao, Ménaka, Mopti, Bandiagara, Douentza, San, Segou, Timbuktu, Taoudenni and Kidal, covering nine service categories: access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, GBV support, health and MHPSS, shelter, legal assistance, services for victims of trafficking (VoTs) and other services, namely socioeconomic interventions.

While the mapping offers a valuable snapshot of actor presence and service coverage, it also reveals pronounced structural gaps. Many services remain project based and dependent on short term funding and access, underlining the fragility and time-bound nature of the protection footprint.

Several actors have indicated that, without additional resources, some activities may have to be reduced or re-programmed in the coming months, which could further affect service availability along key corridors.

Overall, the mapping confirms that protection services are heavily concentrated in regional capitals and a few major hubs, notably Gao (87 services) and Timbuktu (51 services), followed by Bamako and several central towns. Border areas, exit and entry locations and many secondary cities remain thinly covered. While identification and outreach, health and MHPSS, child protection, GBV support and access to asylum procedures are relatively more represented, shelter, support to victims of trafficking and legal assistance remain limited and unevenly distributed. When read alongside information on movement routes and profiles of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in mixed movement flows, this pattern points to structural gaps between where people first experience risks along the routes and where protection services are available.

Bamako Region

In the mapping, all 21 services in Bamako region are located in Bamako city, underlining its role as the national administrative and operational hub for humanitarian, development and civil society actors. The city hosts a relatively broad mix of services, including access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, GBV support, health and MHPSS, shelter, legal assistance and support to victims of trafficking.

This reflects Bamako's function as a centralized node where specialized protection expertise and coordination are concentrated. At the same time, the mapping confirms that such services remain limited in scale compared to overall needs and are not replicated in most secondary towns or border areas. For refugees and asylum seekers in mixed movements, this means that effective access to anti-trafficking, GBV or legal services often depends on referral to Bamako, which is rarely feasible for those stranded in remote locations.

Western Corridor: Kayes and Nioro

The western corridor, encompassing the Kayes and Nioro regions, forms a key mixed movement axis toward Mauritania and Senegal, including onward movements toward Europe. Mixed movement monitoring by UNHCR partner, CIAUD, documents people's exposure to multiple protection incidents prior to or during arrival in this corridor, including arbitrary arrest and detention, threats, torture, psychological violence and denial of basic needs. Many people arrive without civil status documentation due to confiscation, loss or destruction, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation.

The mapping shows that services in Kayes region (15 services) are concentrated in Kayes city and Diboli, with a focus on access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection and health and MHPSS and shelter. There are no mapped GBV support services, support for victims of trafficking or legal assistance in Kayes region. In Nioro region (4 services), all entries are in Nioro town and Gogui and relate to access to asylum, identification and outreach, health and MHPSS and other general support.

Taken together, this portrays a western border corridor where basic identification and asylum functions exist at a few points, but where dedicated GBV, anti-trafficking and legal services are absent from the mapping. Given the documented risks and the role of Diboli and Gogui as key border points, this gap suggests that many people with international protection needs, documentation problems or experiences of abuse may not be able to access specialized support locally and rely instead on referral to Kayes city or Bamako.

> *"Through CIAUD-CANADA, I was listened to and advised. I now know at least where to seek information and who I can contact. My wish is that this kind of awareness-raising continues, and that it is accompanied by other forms of assistance."*
>
> *Woman travelling with four children, interviewed in western Mali, September 2025*

Southern Corridor: Sikasso, Koutiala

The Sikasso region is a major southern transit corridor, linking Mali to Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Movements along this route are associated with protection risks including expulsion, arbitrary arrest and detention, refoulement, trafficking and sequestration, often involving non-State actors.

The mapping records 11 services in Sikasso region, almost entirely in Sikasso city and Koutiala. The service mix includes access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, GBV support and health and MHPSS. However, no shelter, anti-trafficking-specific services, or legal assistance are captured in the region. Importantly, no services are mapped in border and transit locations that feature prominently in mixed movement dynamics.

This configuration signals a context where some general and specialized services are available in urban centers, but the border facing parts of the southern corridor remain effectively uncovered. People facing abuse, exploitation, or trafficking at key route linked locations are unlikely to encounter dedicated protection services where incidents occur and would have to travel to Sikasso or other cities to seek assistance.

Central Corridor: Mopti, Bandiagara, Douentza, San and Segou

The mapping shows a relatively broader presence of protection services in the central corridor compared to several regions, but with a highly uneven geographic distribution. Across Mopti, Bandiagara, Douentza, San and Segou, the mapping captures **58 available services**. These services are primarily concentrated in urban and administrative centers such as Sévaré and nearby localities in Mopti region; Koro in Bandiagara region; the town of Douentza in Douentza region, San and surrounding localities such as Tominian in the San region, and in Segou city and Nampala in Segou region.

By contrast, some municipalities identified as active mixed movement locations through monitoring, including Mondoro, Bankass and Baye, are eitheronly partially covered or not captured at all. This spatial concentration is significant, as mixed movements monitoring conducted by CIAUD in 2025 confirms that movements through the region occur largely through these secondary and border adjacent locations, particularly along axes linking Mopti and Bandiagara to Burkina Faso.

Mapped services in this corridor are largely focused on general protection activities, including identification and outreach, access to asylum procedures, and health and MHPSS, with child protection services and GBV support. However, mixed movements monitoring highlights high levels of vulnerability among refugees, asylum seekers and migrants transiting through the region, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, female headed households and people lacking documentation. In this context, the very limited availability of legal assistance (only one service, in Mopti) and services for victims of trafficking (only recorded in Bandiagara) constitute important gaps, as these services are critical to address risks linked to arbitrary arrest, detention, exploitation and violence reportedly experienced by refugees and migrants prior to and during arrival.

The monitoring further documents frequent exposure to threats and psychological violence by non-State armed actors along movement routes, notably in areas where the mapping does not reflect the presence of specialized protection services. This suggests that, while basic protection and health related services are available in some urban centers, protection service coverage remains misaligned with the geography of movements and the vulnerability profiles observed, leaving gaps in both functional capacity and geographic reach across the central corridor.

Eastern Corridor: Gao and Ménaka

The Gao and Ménaka regions form the core of Mali's eastern mixed movements corridor, linking the country to Niger and Burkina Faso and connecting onward routes toward North Africa and Europe. Mixed movement monitoring conducted by UNHCR partner, CIAUD, in 2025 confirms that Gao is a major transit and border facing hub, characterized by sustained cross-border flows predominantly involving Nigerien and Burkinabè nationals transiting through border entry points, such as Labbezanga and Tessit. Many people report having experienced protection incidents prior to arrival, most commonly threats by non-State armed actors and 'illegal taxation' along routes crossing Niger, Burkina Faso and border areas of Mali. The monitoring also identifies arrivals with specific needs upon arrival, including pregnant and breastfeeding women and female-headed households, alongside widespread documentation gaps.

The mapping shows that Gao region hosts the largest concentration of protection services in Mali, with 87 services recorded. Services are heavily concentrated in Gao city, with additional coverage in communes such as Ansongo, Bourem, Gounzoureye, Sony Aliber, Bamba, Bourra, N'tillit, Anchawadi, Ouatagouna, Talataye, Temera and Tessit. The service mix in Gao is relatively diversified, including identification and outreach, health and MHPSS, child protection and GBV support, as well as shelter, legal assistance and a limited number of services for victims of trafficking. This provides a comparatively broad protection and assistance palette for people who are able to reach urban and semi-urban centres within Gao region.

However, the mapping also reveals that coverage remains thinner in more remote or border-adjacent communes, including those highlighted in monitoring such as Labbezanga, which do not appear in the mapping dataset. While Gao city and a number of communes host a broad range of services, the availability of GBV and support to victims of trafficking remains largely confined to Gao city and a small number of other locations. Individuals identified at or near border entry points may therefore face difficulties accessing specialized support without referral to Gao city or other central towns.

Additionally, the mapping shows a highly centralized protection service presence in the Ménaka region. Thirteen services are recorded, all concentrated in Ménaka town, which hosts a

combination of access to asylum, identification and outreach, child protection, GBV support, health and MHPSS and one "other" service. However, the mapping does not reflect the availability of protection and assistance services in other key mixed-movement border locations such as Andéramboukane, Inékar and Tinabaw, which are important points linking Mali to Niger and Algeria. Movement dynamics in the region are shaped by multiple non-official routes connecting Ménaka to Niger and Algeria, which are used year-round and are associated with the presence of terrorist groups, smugglers and traffickers, further increasing vulnerability to protection risks for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants.

Mixed-movement monitoring conducted by CIAUD in 2025 confirms sustained cross-border movements through Ménaka, predominantly involving Nigerien and Malian nationals, and identifies a high number of people with specific needs, including pregnant and breastfeeding women and female-headed households. Monitoring also highlights widespread documentation gaps among both incoming and outgoing individuals, which further compound existing vulnerabilities and heighten exposure to protection risks. Despite these profiles and vulnerabilities, the mapping does not reflect the availability of key protection functions beyond Ménaka town. Even in Ménaka, legal assistance and trafficking-related services are not visible in the dataset, and GBV and child-protection support remain limited in scale, in a context where many people on the move lack civil status documentation and face significant barriers to accessing protection.

Northern corridor: Timbuktu, Taoudenni and Kidal

The northern corridor, encompassing Timbuktu, Taoudenni and Kidal, connects Mali to Mauritania and Algeria through desert routes and non-official corridors. The routes documented for this corridor indicate sustained movements along segments associated with risks of expulsion, arbitrary arrest and detention, trafficking and extortion involving non-State actors. Mixed movements monitoring conducted by CIAUD in 2025 highlights repeated rights violations reported by people transiting through these areas, as well as documentation gaps that further increase vulnerability to the risk of refoulement and detention.

Within the mapping, Timbuktu region records 51 services, with a strong concentration in Timbuktu town and additional services in communes such as Ber, Tonka, Léré, Gossi, Alafia, Goundam, Diré, Rharous, Douekire, Bambara-Maoudé, Soboundou, Dangha and Hamzakoma. The mapping reflects a range of services, including identification and outreach, health and MHPSS, child protection, GBV support, shelter, legal assistance and one service for victims of trafficking. This suggests a relatively diversified, though still limited, protection and assistance presence in Timbuktu and mapped surrounding communes.

In Taoudenni region (03 services), all mapped services are limited to identification and outreach activities in remote localities such as Agouni, Nibkit Elk and Zouelya. No health and MHPSS, asylum, legal, GBV, child protection, anti-trafficking or shelter services are captured in the mapping, underscoring the extreme scarcity of protection capacity along this desert axis.

In Kidal region (05 services), the mapping shows an extremely limited protection and assistance service presence. Services are recorded only in Kidal city and Inhalid, where a small number of activities related to identification and outreach, access to asylum procedures, health and MHPSS and one trafficking related service are mapped. No services are captured in other key transit and border localities frequently cited in mixed movement monitoring, such as Tinzaouaten, Talhandak

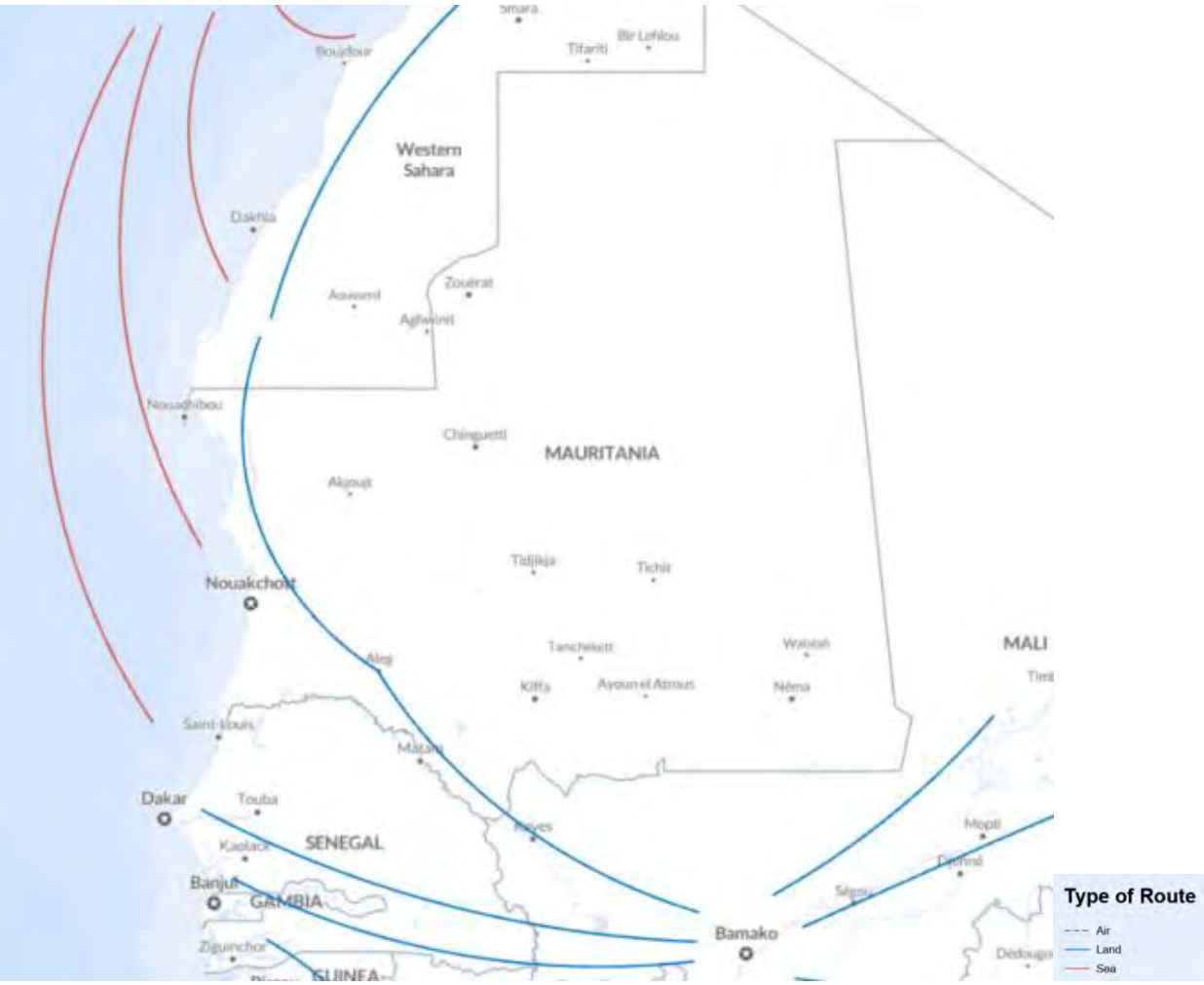
and Tinziska. Even in Kidal city, several categories of protection services, namely GBV response, child protection, shelter and legal assistance, are not visible in the mapping.

Taken together, the mapping portrays a northern corridor where Timbuktu town and a limited number of neighboring communes host a modest but relatively diversified protection presence, while Taoudenni and Kidal remain extremely weakly covered, particularly along key movement corridors where risks are recurrent. For people expelled, victims of trafficking or otherwise exposed to abuse in remote northern locations, access to specialized protection services is therefore highly limited. As a result, individuals with protection needs are often required to move towards Timbuktu or further south in order to seek assistance.

Mali: Table of available services by region and category

Region	Access to asylum procedures	Identification and outreach	Child protection services	Shelter	Health & MHPSS	GBV services	Services for VOTs	Legal assistance	Other Services	Total
Bamako	2	3	6	4	1	2	2	1	0	21
Bandiagara	3	2	1	0	0	3	2	0	1	12
Douentza	1	1	2	0	4	3	0	0	0	11
Gao	2	9	16	4	26	9	1	11	9	87
Kayes	4	5	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	15
Kidal	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5
Mopti	2	2	2	1	3	5	0	1	0	16
Ménaka	3	2	3	0	3	1	0	0	1	13
Nioro	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
San	2	4	4	0	0	4	0	0	1	15
Segou	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4
Sikasso	2	2	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	11
Taoudenni	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Timbuktu	2	25	4	1	13	4	1	1	0	51
Total	25	62	44	12	57	34	7	14	13	268

3. Mauritania



Mauritaniai: Western Africa Atlantic Route Highlight; Source: Routes Monitor

The updated 2026 mapping confirms that Mauritania continues to host a relatively diversified ecosystem of actors providing protection and assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants along the Western Africa Atlantic Route. The mapping captures **69 available services across two main regions**: Nouakchott and Dakhlet-Nouadhibou. These services are concentrated in in the two primary urban and coastal mixed movement hubs, Nouakchott and Nouadhibou.

Across these two urban centres, the mapping captures coverage across most of the nine standard service categories, including to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, health care and MHPSS, GBV support, legal assistance and other services, related to basic assistance and socio-economic inclusion.

identification and outreach, access to asylum procedures, shelter, legal assistance, healthcare and MHPSS, GBV services, child protection and a range of other services related to basic assistance and socio-economic inclusion. GBV support and child protection are the most represented categories, with 18 services each, followed by health care and MHPSS and legal assistance. By contrast, access to asylum procedures, shelter and services for victims of trafficking are much more limited to absent in the mapping.

Nouakchott and Nouadhibou host a broad range of actors, including UNHCR, Red Cross and Red Crescent, UNICEF, specialized GBV and child protection organizations, legal aid actors, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations. In parallel, the Community Protection Network in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou has grown to include around 45 members, many of them small community-based organizations who have become an important entry point for identification, referral and immediate support for people in need of protection along the route. This has allowed referral pathways to become more predictable in coastal areas, particularly once individuals are identified and connected to existing protection networks.

In addition to its role as a country of asylum and destination, Mauritania plays a central operational role along the Atlantic route as a location for maritime departures, search and rescue operations and disembarkations. In 2025, Nouadhibou and Nouakchott capacity to respond to disembarkation incidents was further strengthened through a *Ministerial Decree that regulates Standard Operating Procedures for the Disembarkation and Care of Migrants*, clarifying roles and responsibilities of key actors and granting UNHCR, IOM and OHCHR access to disembarked persons throughout the process. The Decree also provides the establishment of Temporary Reception Centres for Foreigners (CATEs) in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, managed by the Direction of Security with the support of the Mauritanian Red Crescent.

These dynamics have shaped the configuration of protection services in coastal urban centres, where systems have progressively evolved to respond to shipwrecks, disembarkations and immediate humanitarian needs. While this has supported the development of an increasingly effective emergency response capacity, the broader protection architecture remains more limited when it comes to sustained, medium-term support.

Across the country, the mapping also highlights important opportunities to further strengthen Mauritania's protection and assistance architecture. Temporary shelter capacity remains limited and largely oriented toward disembarkation processes, with a focus on identifying and referring people with international protection needs. At the same time, mobile and outreach missions conducted by UNHCR and partners continue to play a critical role in ensuring that services reach remote and hard-to-access areas, reducing reliance on urban centres and helping to decentralize access to assistance. Dedicated services for victims of trafficking are gradually expanding, although they remain embedded within broader GBV, child protection mechanisms. Access to asylum procedures and legal support is functional but continues to depend on a small number of providers, underscoring the value of mobile teams and periodic field deployments to bridge geographic gaps. Many existing services are project-funded and time-bound, underlining the importance of more sustainable, longer-term investments to ensure continuity, maintain gains, and support national ownership.

Overall, the mapping reaffirms Mauritania's dual role along the Atlantic route, both as a country of asylum, particularly for Malian refugees, and as a key transit and destination context for migrants working in sectors such as fishing and informal labor. The current service landscape reflects this complexity: while important protection and assistance capacities exist in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, there is a clear opportunity to reinforce systematic, sustained protection and inclusion services in mixed-movement areas. Strengthening these components, combined with continued outreach missions beyond major towns, will help ensure that protection is accessible, predictable, and closer to the communities who need it most.

Nouakchott

In Nouakchott, the mapping, recording 37 available services, confirms the capital's central role as Mauritania's primary protection and coordination hub, as well as a key mixed-movement node along the Atlantic route. The concentration of protection and multi-sector services reflects both the scale of movements through the city and the long-standing investment of national authorities, UN agencies, partners, and community protection networks in building a functional urban protection ecosystem.

The strongest mapped categories are child protection and GBV support, with **10 services each**, followed by legal assistance, identification and outreach, other support, health care and MHPSS, shelter and access to asylum procedures. This breadth of services provides an important basis for referrals for people who are identified and able to access the capital's protection network.

Identification and outreach remain an important entry point in Nouakchott. UNHCR, the Mauritanian Red Crescent, CIAUD Canada, and national NGOs rely on a combination of community focal points, hotlines, WhatsApp and mobile teams, including engagement within police brigades, to identify people with international protection needs and migrants in vulnerable situations. The use of diversified digital communication and accountability to affected people tools, which has strengthened early detection and referrals within the urban context. At the same time, these channels remain primarily capital-based, reflecting the broader centralization of protection functions in Nouakchott.

Once individuals are identified, access to asylum procedures is relatively clear and predictable. This pathway functions well for those who reach Nouakchott and are connected to existing networks, while access remains more challenging for individuals intercepted or rescued elsewhere or unable to travel to the capital, underlining the importance of continued investment in outreach, including through digital means and remote methodologies.

Shelter and basic assistance in Nouakchott operate largely through targeted, case-based arrangements. UNHCR-supported emergency shelters for women and children, and NGO-run safe spaces for GBV and trafficking-related cases, complemented by food and NFI assistance linked to specific projects and partnerships. This approach allows for tailored responses to emergency acute cases. However, its dependence on short project cycles and specific profiles, underlines the importance of more predictable, longer-term funding to build a sustained, route-sensitive shelter system for people in transit or stranded in the city.

Legal assistance represents another area of relative strength in terms of expertise, but with structurally limited capacity. A number of specialized actors, such as El Insaniya, Association Mauritanienne des droits de l'Homme, Association des Femmes Cheffes de Famille, Association

Mauritanienne pour la Santé de la Mère et de l'Enfants and others provide support linked to documentation, legal counselling, detention-related issues, and refoulement risks. The concentration of this expertise ensures consistency and professionalism, while also highlights the continued reliance on a narrow set of providers to meet growing and increasingly complex needs, specifically for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants outside Nouakchott.

GBV and child protection services are well embedded within the urban protection architecture, with multi-purpose hubs, and specialized GBV and Child Protection units providing structured entry points for survivors and children at risk. Support for victims of trafficking remains largely integrated within GBV, child protection rather than delivered through standalone programming, reflecting a broader trend toward integrated responses rather than dedicated trafficking-specific services.

Nouadhibou

The mapping confirms Nouadhibou's role as a frontline mixed movement hub along the Western Africa Atlantic Route, particularly in relation to maritime departures search and rescue operations and disembarkations. Over time, this role has driven the development of a protection architecture that is especially well adapted to emergency response scenarios, with a strong focus on search and rescue operations at sea and immediate post-rescue assistance.

The mapping records 32 available services in Dakhlet-Nouadhibou, concentrated in Nouadhibou city. Services are distributed across most standard categories, including access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, health care and MHPSS, GBV support, legal assistance and other support. The strongest mapped categories are child protection and GBV support, with eight services each, followed by health care and MHPSS and identification and outreach.

Identification and outreach in Nouadhibou are closely linked to disembarkation events and to migration control measures, including documentation checks. Survivors of shipwrecks, and disembarked individuals are screened jointly by UNHCR, IOM, and the National Instance against Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling in the Temporary Reception Centres for Foreigners (CATEs). Through these processes, persons with potential international protection needs and migrants in vulnerable situations are identified and, where appropriate, referred onward to specialized organizations. At the same time, outreach to refugees and migrants arriving by land or residing in the city for longer periods remains more ad hoc, reflecting the event-driven nature of the current identification model. Strengthening complementary outreach modalities beyond disembarkation and documentation contexts could help broaden early identification and reduce the risk of individuals remaining outside formal referral chains.

Healthcare and MHPSS services are relatively well represented in Nouadhibou compared with several other service categories. The mapping captures health and psychosocial support provided through actors such as the French Red Cross, the Mauritanian Red Crescent, MSF, Caritas, AFMLS and SOS Pairs Educateurs, etc. Additionally, UNHCR and partners provide health care at the reception centers/ multi-purpose hubs in Nouadhibou, with referrals to public and partner supported hospitals, and, when needed, evacuation to Nouakchott for more complex cases. However, there are still fewer structured pathways for longer-term psychosocial support for refugees and migrants who settle temporarily or remain in the city.

Legal assistance, regularization support and documentation services are present in Nouadhibou but remain relatively small-scale and project-based. GBV and child protection services delivered through hospital-based units and NGO social workers constitute an important component of the local protection architecture, particularly for identified cases. Support to victims of trafficking has been strengthened through the Community Protection Network and a small number of specialized partners in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. However, the overall assistance remains embedded within broader GBV, child protection and AVRR mechanism, with limited dedicated capacity.

Shelter remains limited in Nouadhibou, with temporary shelters supported by UNHCR through agreements with women-led organizations. These arrangements play a critical role in emergency situations, including post disembarkation, but offer limited continuity for individuals who remain in Nouadhibou.

Overall, Nouadhibou has a relatively strong mapped service footprint for GBV, child protection, health/MHPSS and outreach, reflecting its frontline role along the Atlantic route. However, the response remains less developed for legal assistance, shelter and trafficking-specific support. Strengthening these functions, while maintaining community-based outreach and emergency response capacity, would help align the local protection system with the full range of mixed-movement trajectories observed in Nouadhibou.

Mauritania: Table of available services by region and category

Region	Access to asylum procedures	Outreach and identification	Child protection	Shelter	Health care and MHPSS	GBV support services	Services for VOTs	Legal Assistance	Other services	Total
Nouakchott	1	3	10	1	2	10	0	7	3	37
Dakhlet-Nouadhibou	1	4	8	1	6	8	0	1	3	32
Total	2	7	18	2	8	18	0	8	6	69

4. Morocco

Morocco: Western Africa Atlantic Route Highlight; Source: Routes Monitor

Morocco is a country of origin, transit and destination for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in mixed and onward movements. Due to its geographical location, it remains a key country along routes toward Europe, including through the Atlantic toward the Canary Islands, the Mediterranean Sea and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. People on the move transit through, or temporarily reside in, several urban and border locations, including Rabat and Casablanca in the north-west, Oujda and Nador in the north-east, Tangier, Assilah and Tetouan in the north, Fez and Meknes in the north-central region, and Beni Mellal-Khenifra in central Morocco. Southern areas, particularly Agadir, Tan Tan, are also witnessing an increased presence of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. During their journeys, individuals may be exposed to exploitation, physical violence, trafficking and other protection risks.

The diversity of routes, profiles and places of stay reinforces the need for services to be available not only in traditional hubs, but also in emerging areas of settlement, transit and onward movement.

The updated 2026 mapping of protection and assistance services in Morocco captures **92 available services, across eight regions**: Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima, Oriental, Casablanca Settat, Rabat Sale Kenitra, Marrakech Safi, Fez Meknes, Beni Mellal Khenifra and Souss Massa. The largest concentrations are found in Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima, Oriental, Casablanca Settat and Rabat Sale Kenitra, reflecting the importance of northern border areas, eastern entry points and major urban hubs in Morocco's mixed movement dynamics.

The mapping shows a geographically broad but uneven service landscape. Health care and MHPSS is the most represented category, followed by identification and outreach, GBV support services, child protection and shelter. By contrast, access to asylum procedures, legal assistance and services for victims of trafficking are much more limited in the mapping.

The mapping also records 23 services as no longer available, affecting several core categories, including identification and outreach, health and MHPSS, shelter, GBV support, child protection, legal assistance and other support. This underlines the fragility of the protection footprint, particularly in locations where needs are increasing and where public services and humanitarian actors are already under pressure.

Oriental region, including Oujda and Nador

The Oriental region, particularly Oujda and Nador, remains one of the most important areas in Morocco's mixed movement landscape. Mixed movement monitoring, conducted by UNHCR partner Moroccan Organisation of Human Rights (OMDH), indicates that newly arrived individuals including Sudanese, Malian, Chadian, Guinean, Cameroonian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Somalian, and Nigerian nationals. Entry points vary depending on profiles and nationalities. People from West and Central Africa and East and Horn of Africa countries often transit through areas such as Zwiya, Sidi Yahya and Touissit toward Oujda and Nador. Sudanese and Chadian nationals are reported to enter more frequently through the southern part of the Oriental region, including Figuig, Bouarfa, Bounan and Aïn Chaïr, before continuing toward Errachidia and onward to Casablanca and Rabat.

The mapping records 18 available services in the Oriental region, concentrated mainly in Oujda and, to a lesser extent, Nador. Oujda accounts for the majority of mapped services, including access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, shelter, health care and MHPSS, GBV support, child protection and other support. Nador has a more limited service presence, focused mainly on identification and outreach, access to asylum procedure, health and MHPSS and shelter.

However, this service presence remains fragile and incomplete. Legal assistance and services for victims of trafficking are not reflected among mapped services in the region, and child protection remains limited. This is significant given the protection risks observed along eastern and south-eastern entry corridors, including violence, exploitation, trafficking risks and the reported continued arrival of unaccompanied or separated children. The dataset also records discontinued services in the region, including identification and outreach and health and MHPSS, which may further reduce continuity of support in a high-mobility area.

This situation is compounded by the regular arrival of people on the move in situations of acute vulnerability, capacity constraints within public services and the high cost of some forms of assistance. Together, these factors reduce the impact of existing mechanisms and underline the need to maintain and strengthen service continuity in Oujda, Nador and other key entry points in the region.

Rabat Sale Kenitra region and the Greater Casablanca area

Mixed movement monitoring shows that Rabat and Casablanca host large numbers of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. People move to these cities to initiate or follow up on asylum procedures, access services, seek employment opportunities or connect with community and

family networks. The length of stay in Rabat and Casablanca appears to be increasing, reflecting the concentration of services and livelihood opportunities, as well as the role of these cities as points from which some people may consider onward movement toward Europe.

The mapping records 30 available services across Rabat Sale Kenitra and Casablanca Settat. These services are entirely concentrated in the two main urban centres: 17 services in Casablanca and 13 services in Rabat. No mapped services are reflected in other cities or localities within these two regions, which confirms the highly urban character of the protection and assistance response.

This concentration creates both an important opportunity and a clear limitation. On the one hand, Rabat and Casablanca offer the broadest and most diversified service environment in Morocco and can serve as key referral and coordination hubs. Casablanca has mapped services across access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, health care and MHPSS, GBV support, legal assistance and other services. Rabat also hosts a diversified set of services, including access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, health care and MHPSS, legal assistance and other support.

On the other hand, the centralization of specialized services in Rabat and Casablanca means that access often depends on whether people can physically reach these cities. For refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants located in border areas, secondary cities or emerging transit and settlement locations, referral to Rabat or Casablanca may not always be feasible. This is particularly relevant for people without documentation, those in street situations or those affected by forced relocation.

Important functional gaps also remain within the two urban hubs themselves. Services for victims of trafficking are not reflected among mapped available services in either region. GBV support is mapped in Casablanca but not in Rabat. Legal assistance is present but limited, with one mapped service in each city. Shelter is also limited, with one mapped service in Casablanca and two in Rabat, despite the presence of people in street situations or precarious housing.

The dataset further records discontinued services in both regions, particularly in Casablanca, affecting identification and outreach, health and MHPSS, shelter, GBV support and legal assistance. In Rabat, reduction of services affect shelter, and identification and outreach. This places additional pressure on the services that remain operational and highlights the need to stabilize and sustain existing urban protection systems. Strengthening Rabat and Casablanca as referral and coordination hubs, while also improving links with emerging locations outside these cities, could help make the response more predictable and route-sensitive.

Khouribga region- Béni Mellal

The 2026 mapping of protection service provision reveals an overall limited and weakly specialized coverage in the Béni Mellal–Khénifra region. With only six protection services identified, the available offer is extremely limited and lacks diversity. Interventions primarily focus on identification and health services, and to a lesser extent on legal assistance and family links. The complete absence of shelter services, child protection, gender-based violence (GBV) response, or anti-trafficking services highlights a significant structural gap, further exacerbated by the suspension of some existing services. This situation is particularly critical in a context where access to services is already constrained by geographic and institutional barriers.

Field monitoring in 2026 indicates that Beni Mellal Khenifra has gradually become a transit and temporary stay area for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, including people forcibly relocated from larger coastal and border cities.

The length of stay in Beni Mellal varies but is often marked by precariousness. Limited economic opportunities, particularly for people without documentation or clear legal status, mean that the region is rarely perceived as a destination. Rather, it often functions as a place of temporary stay, where people attempt to rebuild minimal livelihoods before continuing toward other cities such as Casablanca, Rabat or Agadir. This situation is compounded by the region's relative geographic isolation and limited infrastructure adapted to the needs of vulnerable people, increasing exposure to begging, exploitation or unsafe onward movement.

The mapping records only four available services in Beni Mellal Khenifra, all concentrated in Beni Mellal city. These services are limited to identification and outreach, health care and MHPSS and other support. No available services are mapped in other locations in the region.

This limited service footprint creates significant functional gaps. No available services are currently reflected for access to asylum procedures, shelter, child protection, GBV response, services for victims of trafficking or legal assistance. This is particularly concerning in a context where people may arrive with limited information, limited resources and heightened exposure to exploitation or onward movement.

At the same time, the presence of identification and outreach services provides an important entry point. If strengthened and linked to referral pathways with larger hubs such as Casablanca, Rabat and Agadir, these services could help improve early identification, information provision and referral for people with protection needs and other vulnerabilities. However, the dataset also records discontinued services in Beni Mellal Khenifra, including identification and outreach, health and MHPSS and GBV support, mainly due to funding and human resource constraints. This further weakens an already limited protection footprint and underlines the need to stabilize basic services while expanding access to specialized protection support.

Souss-Massa region- Agadir

Souss Massa, particularly Agadir, occupies a specific position within mobility dynamics in Morocco, functioning both as an economic hub and as a transit or temporary stay area for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. Information from mixed movement monitoring indicates that the presence of refugees and migrants is largely linked to employment opportunities in agriculture and, to a lesser extent, fishing, tourism and the informal economy. Some people travel deliberately to Agadir, while others arrive following secondary movements or forced relocation from other regions of the country.

Agadir is also perceived by some groups as a possible stage for onward movement along the Atlantic route toward the Canary Islands. Some people remain in Agadir and surrounding areas for longer periods because informal work is available, but this often means living with precarious jobs, insecure housing and limited access to protection services. People without clear administrative status, single women, survivors of violence, children and people in precarious housing situations remain exposed to exploitation, abuse and onward movement.

The mapping records only five available services in Souss Massa, all concentrated in Agadir city. These include identification and outreach, health care and MHPSS, one service for victims of trafficking and one other support service. Access to asylum procedure has been initiated with providing asylum information, while (pre) registration services are under development. No available services are currently mapped for shelter, child protection, GBV response or legal assistance.

This creates a significant mismatch between the region's growing relevance in mixed movement dynamics and the limited protection service footprint. The absence of mapped shelter and legal assistance is particularly important given the challenges people face in accessing safe accommodation, regularizing their stay or understanding their rights and options. The lack of mapped GBV and child protection services also limits the availability of specialized support for children and those exposed to violence, exploitation or abuse.

The service gap is especially visible beyond Agadir city, in areas with a growing presence of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, such as Khmiss Aït Amira, Belfaa and Biogra. These areas attract people because of livelihood opportunities, but the mapping does not show a corresponding protection service presence. As a result, people may remain in these locations with limited access to information, legal support, safe accommodation or specialized protection services.

At the same time, the presence of outreach, health/MHPSS and trafficking-related support in Agadir provides an entry point that could be built upon. Strengthening referral links between Agadir, surrounding localities and larger protection hubs, while expanding basic protection and specialized services in Souss Massa, would help make the response more coherent in a region that is increasingly relevant to the Atlantic route.

The Northern region: Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima

Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima remains one of the main regions hosting refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in Morocco. Its proximity to Europe, the Strait of Gibraltar and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla makes it central to onward movement dynamics. The region continues to host newly arrived individuals and people staying for longer periods, including some who may attempt onward movement toward Spain, despite reinforced security measures.

The mapping records 20 available services in Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima, making it the largest regional concentration in the current dataset. Services are concentrated mainly in Tangier, which accounts for the majority of mapped services, followed by Tetouan and one service in Assilah. No available services are reflected in Al Hoceima in the current mapping. This shows that, even within a region with a relatively strong service footprint, coverage remains concentrated in a few urban centres.

Tangier has the most diversified service profile in the region, with mapped services covering access to asylum procedures, identification and outreach, child protection, shelter, health care and MHPSS, GBV support, services for victims of trafficking and other support. Tetouan has a more limited but still relevant service presence, including child protection, shelter, health and MHPSS, services for victims of trafficking and other support. Assilah is reflected only through one service for victims of trafficking.

This concentration reflects the role of Tangier as the main protection and coordination hub in the north, while Tetouan and Assilah provide more limited entry points. For people who can reach

Tangier, the service landscape is broader than in most other northern locations. However, people located outside Tangier, including those in smaller towns, informal sites or areas affected by enforcement measures, may face difficulties accessing specialized services in a timely manner.

Important functional gaps remain. Legal assistance is not reflected among mapped available services in the region. Shelter is present but limited, with only two mapped services across the region. Although GBV, child protection, health and MHPSS and trafficking-related services are available, they remain concentrated mainly in Tangier and, to a lesser extent, Tetouan. This is significant given the nature of protection risks in the region, including violence, exploitation, family separation, and specific mental health and psychosocial support needs following protection incidents or prolonged precarious living conditions.

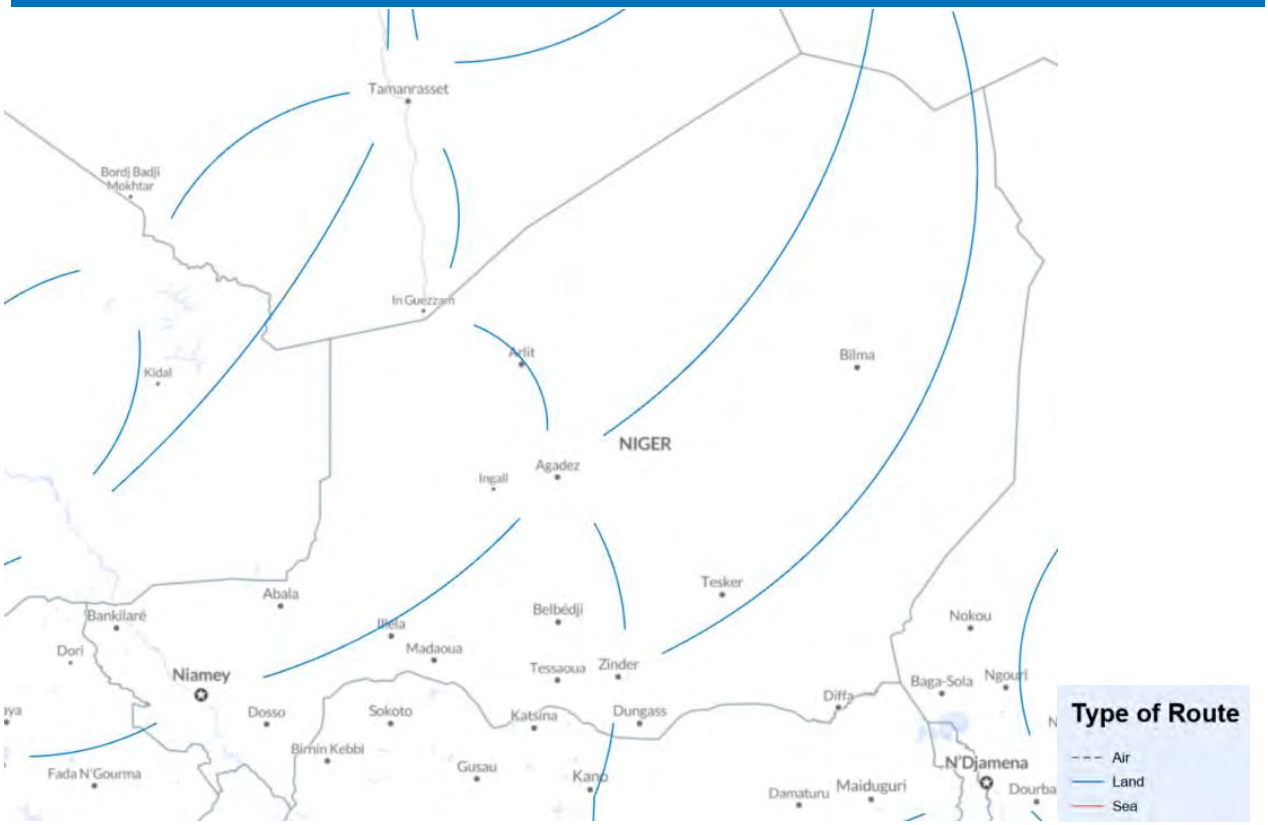
The dataset also records two discontinued services in Tangier, affecting identification and outreach and health and MHPSS, due to project closure and funding constraints. This may place additional pressure on the services that remain operational and highlight the need to sustain the existing protection footprint in the north while improving links between Tangier, Tetouan, Assilah and other locations where people on the move are present.

Overall, Tangier, Tetouan Al Hoceima has one of the strongest mapped service footprints in Morocco. However, the response remains geographically concentrated and does not fully match the complexity associated with northern route dynamics, particularly for people outside the main urban service hubs.

Morocco: Table of available services by region and category

Region	Access to asylum procedures	Outreach and identification	Child protection services	Shelter	Health care and MHPSS	GBV support services	Services for VoTs	Legal assistance	Other services	Total
Beni Mellal Khenifra	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
Casablanca Settat	1	3	2	1	5	2	0	1	2	17
Fez Meknes	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	5
Marrakech Safi	0	1	1	0	4	2	0	1	1	10
Oriental	2	5	1	3	4	2	0	0	1	18
Rabat Sale Kenitra	1	1	3	2	4	0	0	1	1	13
Souss Massa	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	4
Tangier Tetouan Al Hoceima	1	3	3	2	4	2	3	0	2	20
Total	6	16	10	8	24	11	4	3	10	92

5. Niger



Niger: Western Africa Atlantic Route Highlight; Source: Routes Monitor

Across Niger, the mapping of protection and assistance services captures **362 available service entries across eight regions**, Agadez, Niamey, Tahoua, Zinder, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi and Tillabéri. The mapping shows that protection services are present across a wide geographic area, including regions affected by displacement, cross-border movements and insecurity. At the same time, their distribution remains uneven both geographically and across service categories.

The largest shares of services fall under child protection, GBV support, healthcare and MHPSS, and outreach and identification, indicating a comparatively strong presence of protection services, particularly in areas related to identification and direct support. By contrast, access to asylum procedures, legal assistance, shelter and services for victims of trafficking remain comparatively limited. The mapping underscores a structural imbalance between community-based and life-saving services on one hand, and procedural or specialized protection services on the other, including asylum access, legal assistance, shelter and trafficking-specific support, which are essential to ensure access to rights and durable solutions.

While Agadez remains a central hub linking movements toward Libya and Algeria, it also connects to onward routes toward Mali and the Atlantic corridor. The mapping reflects a protection presence beyond this northbound axis, with services also observed in regions associated with cross-border mobility and displacement dynamics, including Diffa and Tillabéri, as well as inland corridors such as Tahoua, Maradi and Dosso.

At the same time, a clear mismatch remains between key transit and reception points and the availability of services, particularly at border locations. In northern entry and transit points such as Assamaka Arlit and Dirkou, where cross-border movements, including returns and movements following expulsion practices are frequently reported, services remain limited mainly to outreach and health and MHPSS. Border and first-entry points represent the most critical protection gap, as they are the locations where risks of refoulement, trafficking, family separation and exposure to violence are high, yet where specialized protection services remain least available. Specialized services, including legal assistance, GBV response, child protection, trafficking-related support, shelter and access to asylum, are largely limited or absent in several of these locations, reducing early identification and referral capacity.

Regional totals also mask uneven local coverage, with services concentrated in specific towns rather than consistently available across all mixed-movement locations. Several areas identified as relevant to mixed movements, such as Matameye and Tanout, are not reflected in the mapping. Additionally, the mapping does not fully capture service quality or operational capacity, which remain critical factors in effective protection delivery.

Taken together, the mapping portrays a protection response that is geographically present but uneven in coverage and structurally limited in its ability to provide early identification and access to specialized protection services, particularly at border reception points and along mixed-movement corridors where early intervention is most critical.

Agadez Region

The Agadez region is Niger's main hub for mixed movements and a central crossroads along the Mediterranean route, linking movements toward Algeria, Libya, and Mali as well as connected to the Atlantic corridor. It channels both large-scale returns and cross-border movements, including movements following expulsion practices from neighboring countries, as well as significant departures northwards. In 2025, more than 200,000 movements of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants were recorded along the routes passing through Agadez, including a significant number of deportations from neighboring countries and over 100,000 departures toward Libya, Algeria, and Mali.

Mixed-movement monitoring in 2025 confirms that Nigeriens constitute the majority of people on the move, alongside significant numbers of Nigerians, Malians, Burkinabè, Sudanese and others with international protection needs. Movements are predominantly composed of young men but include a notable proportion of women and children. Arlit and Assamaka together account for the majority of individuals identified as having international protection needs in mixed movements in 2025, while the city of Agadez and Dirkou show smaller yet still significant proportions.

The mapping records 44 services across five locations, Agadez city, Arlit, Dirkou, Assamaka and Bilma. Agadez city hosts the largest concentration, followed by Arlit, while Assamaka and Dirkou record only a limited number of services. The services identified include outreach and

identification, health and MHPSS, GBV support, child protection, access to asylum procedures, shelter, legal assistance and services for victims of trafficking. Given its strategic role as the main entry and exit corridor, Agadez represents the most critical area for scaling up protection-sensitive interventions, particularly at initial entry points such as Assamaka and Dirkou.

The city of Agadez hosts the most diversified protection service ecosystem in the region, reflecting its role as an operational hub for national authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs. The mapping shows relatively availability of identification and awareness-raising activities, health and MHPSS services, limited shelter, GBV support, child protection, access to asylum procedures, legal assistance, as well as anti-trafficking services, Ongoing efforts to establish multi-purpose hubs in Agadez and Dirkou and a protection house in Agadez, are expected to strengthen service provision for refugees and asylum seekers in the region.

Service availability decreases significantly along the region's main transit and border points. UNHCR mission, joined by IOM, in September 2025 highlighted that monitoring and reception capacity at initial entry points such as Assamaka remain limited, despite the scale of arrivals and returns. 2025 monitoring data further indicate that individuals identified as having international protection needs in these areas present complex and diverse profiles, including risks of statelessness, the presence of unaccompanied or separated children, medical needs and other specific vulnerabilities. This underscores the need for early screening, counselling, documentation support and referral capacity at entry and exit points, rather than relying predominantly on services available in the city of Agadez.

While the presence of outreach and health and MHPSS services in Arlit, Assamaka and Dirkou is positive, these remain very limited compared to the scale and complexity of movements. The absence of decentralized asylum services, legal assistance, GBV support, shelter, child protection and trafficking-related services in Assamaka and Dirkou increases the risk that vulnerable individuals remain unidentified and unsupported, particularly at border reception points where protection needs first emerge.

Taken together, the mapping portrays the Agadez region as hosting one of the most strategic protection responses along Niger's mixed-movement routes, yet one that remains highly concentrated in the city of Agadez and insufficiently extended to critical transit and reception points. The early stages of arrival along the route, particularly in Arlit, Assamaka and Dirkou, remain only partially covered, even though this is where vulnerabilities are often most acute and where timely identification and access to services can have the greatest protective impact.

Niamey Region

The mapping shows a relatively limited but diversified protection service presence in Niamey, with 18 services captured exclusively in the capital city. Niamey plays a critical role as the main access point to national-level protection mechanisms, including asylum procedures, legal assistance and civil documentation, making it a key node in the protection continuum.

As Niger's administrative and institutional centre, Niamey functions as an important node in mixed movements, including as a point of departure toward Agadez and as a location where refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants may seek documentation, protection counselling, or access to services. The mapping records a relatively diversified portfolio of services, including access to asylum procedures, outreach and identification, shelter, health care and MHPSS, legal assistance

and services for victims of trafficking, alongside other activities such as education support and livelihoods or civil documentation assistance. However, the concentration of all mapped services in the capital reinforces the wider pattern of centralization of specialized protection services.

Tahoua Region

Tahoua region, particularly Tahoua city, Tchintabaraden, Birni-N'Konni, Madaoua and Abalak, lies along important mixed-movement corridors connecting internal mobility, seasonal and labor migration, and cross-border movements of refugees and migrants toward and from Mali and Nigeria. These dynamics expose refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to a range of protection risks, including trafficking, labor exploitation and violence, while also placing pressure on local services.

The mapping records 53 services across multiple locations, including Tahoua, Tchintabaraden, Birni-N'Konni, Madaoua, Abalak and surrounding localities. Services are primarily concentrated in child protection, GBV support, outreach and identification, and health and MHPSS, indicating a relatively strong presence of protection activities focused on direct support and engagement. The recent establishment of asylum services in Tchintabaradem and Madaoua is a positive development, alongside asylum-related services in Tahoua cit. However, their limited geographic coverage constrains access for individuals moving through secondary corridors. At the same time, shelter, legal assistance and support to victims of trafficking remain very limited. The largest concentration of services is observed in Tchintabaraden and Tahoua city, while other key locations such as Birni-N'Konni and Abalak show more limited coverage.

Ongoing efforts to strengthen service delivery in key locations, including the establishment of multi-purpose hubs, particularly in Tchintabaraden, are expected to improve coverage and coordination. However, ensuring that services are both geographically accessible and functionally comprehensive will remain critical to address protection risks along this segment of the route.

Zinder Region

Zinder and its surrounding localities, including Matameye and Tanout, are identified as important mixed-movement areas. They serve as inland connection points between Niger's eastern regions, northern Nigeria and other parts of the Sahel, with onward movements continuing toward Agadez. These locations host both forcibly displaced populations and migrants moving for livelihood opportunities.

The mapping records only 5 services in the region, all located in Zinder city. These services fall under access to asylum procedures, child protection, GBV support, services for victims of trafficking, and legal assistance. No services related to outreach and identification, shelter, or health and MHPSS are reflected. The absence of outreach and identification activities is particularly significant, as it limits the ability to detect protection needs at an early stage, especially in a region characterized by mobility.

In addition, no services are reflected in key surrounding localities such as Matameye and Tanout, which contrasts sharply with the region's role in mixed movements and the range of expected needs, particularly for women, children, unaccompanied and separated children, and individuals at risk of trafficking. Strengthening the availability of protection and assistance opportunities in these locations will be essential to ensure faster identification of protection needs and timely response along the route.

Diffa Region

Diffa is one of the regions with the largest concentration of protection services in Niger, with 140 services recorded across multiple locations, including Diffa, Chetimari, N'guigmi, Mainé-Soroa, Bosso, Kablewa, Gueskerou and surrounding localities.

The mapping reflects a broad range of services, particularly in health and MHPSS, child protection, GBV support, outreach and identification, legal assistance and other services, alongside smaller numbers of shelter, asylum-related and trafficking-related services. At the same time, the distribution of services remains uneven across locations, with a concentration in key operational centres such as Diffa city and some communes. This suggests that, despite the overall scale of the response, access to services may vary considerably depending on location, particularly outside main operational hubs.

Central and Southern Regions: Tillabéri, Dosso and Maradi

Across Tillabéri, Dosso and Maradi, the mapping points to a broad protection footprint in quantitative terms, but highlights functional gaps and uneven coverage within regions, particularly outside main operational centres. These regions play an increasing role as secondary corridors in mixed movements and require strengthened continuity of protection and assistance services beyond primary transit hubs.

Tillabéri region records 58 services across multiple localities, with strong representation in child protection, GBV support and outreach and access to asylim procedures. Health and MHPSS, shelter, legal assistance and trafficking-related support are also present but remain more limited. In key locations along the Atlantic route, notably Ayorou, Ouallam and Abala, which host significant number of refugees, asylum seekers and other persons on the move, services provided by the National Commission for Eligibility for the Status of Refugees help support access to asylum, alongside child protection services, GBV support, and other services.

Efforts are underway to consolidate and reinforce multi-purpose hubs in these locations, with a view of their gradual handover to the authorities. By providing access to protection services, information, counselling and referral closer to where people are located, these hubs may support earlier identification of protection needs and serve as entry points for solutions, helping people obtain support where they are rather than having to move onward in search of assistance.

In Dosso, a total of 20 services are recorded across several locations, including Dosso, Birni N'Gaouré, Gaya and Dogon Doutchi. Services are primarily concentrated in child protection, GBV support, assistance to victims of trafficking and legal assistance, with one asylum-related service. No outreach, shelter or health and MHPSS services are reflected, indicating a narrow and specialized service profile.

Similarly, in Maradi, the mapping records 24 services across multiple locations, including Maradi, Madarounfa, Guidan Roumdji and Dan Issa. Services are concentrated in child protection, GBV support, legal assistance, and other support activities. A small number of services related to outreach, asylum access and trafficking are reflected, while shelter and health and MHPSS services are not captured.

Niger: Table of available services by region and category

Region	Access to asylum procedures	Outreach and identification	Child protection services	Shelter	Health care and MHPSS	GBV support services	Services for VoTs	Legal assistance	Other services	Total
Agadez	2	14	3	2	12	7	2	1	1	44
Niamey	2	4	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	18
Tahoua	3	11	15	2	7	13	1	1	0	53
Zinder	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	5
Diffa	2	11	27	4	42	22	1	11	20	140
Dosso	1	0	7	0	0	7	1	4	0	20
Maradi	2	1	9	0	0	5	1	3	3	24
Tillabéri	6	10	19	1	3	11	1	1	6	58
Total	19	51	82	11	66	67	10	25	31	362

Contacts

UNHCR, Asylum and Migration Section, Division of International Protection and Solutions

ams-dips@unhcr.org
Subscribe to our newsletter
Access the Route-Based Approach website

ICVA, A Global Network for Principled and Effective Humanitarian Action, Forced Displacement Team

forceddisplacement@icvanetwork.org
https://www.icvanetwork.org/