

**KEY FIGURES** (as of 31 Nov. 2020)

>**10.7 million** people of concern in West and Central Africa\*

>**6.3 million** Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

>**1.4 million** refugees

>**1.7 million** stateless persons

>**25,000** asylum seekers

>**1.3 million** returnees

**21 countries** and **4 situations**

**Cameroon situation:**

**61,774** **Cameroonian refugees** in Nigeria.

**711,056** **IDPs** in Cameroon (North-West/South-West Regions estimate).

**Central African Republic situation\*\*:**

**630,715** **Central African refugees** in Cameroon (314,780), the DRC (171,051), Chad (95,023), the Republic of Congo (20,700), Sudan\*\* (26,928) and South Sudan\*\* (2,049).

**630,834** **IDPs** in Central African Republic

**Sahel Situation:**

**851,339** **refugees** in Chad (481,645), Niger (233,180), Mali (47,992) Mauritania\*\* (64,644), and Burkina Faso (20,065).

**1,930,482** **IDPs** in Burkina Faso (1,049,767), Chad (336,124), Mali (287,496) and Niger (257,095).

**Nigeria Situation:**

**301,026** **Nigerian refugees** in Niger (168,081), Cameroon (116,960) and Chad (15,985).

**2,896,548** **IDPs** in Nigeria (2,046,604), Cameroon (297,380), Chad (236,426) and Niger (125,742).

**Cote d'Ivoire Emergency** (as of 1 December 2020):

**24,277** **Ivorian refugees** in Liberia (23,075), Ghana (779), Guinea (387), Togo (36).

*\*Key figures include refugees, internally displaced, stateless persons and returnees.*

*\*\*Figures do not include the latest refugee influx of December 2020 and January 2021.*

*\*\*\*Country not in West and Central Africa*

**REGIONAL OPERATIONAL UPDATE****01 DECEMBER 2020 TO 15 JANUARY 2021****Insecurity in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin**

▪ Insecurity in the **Sahel** and **Lake Chad Basin** regions persists as armed groups continue to attack civilians. On 12 December, an attack killed 34 people and injured hundreds more in the town of Toumour in south-east **Niger**, 14 kilometers from the Nigeria border. In coordination with the local authorities, UNHCR organized emergency shelter, food, water, and health support to the affected communities in this area, which hosts over 20,000 Nigerian refugees, 8,300 IDPs, and 3,600 returnees, still in need of humanitarian assistance. The Diffa region has been hit hard by increasing extremist violence with over 450 acts of killing, kidnapping, sexual and gender-based violence, and other serious incidents reported in the first nine months 2020. Western Niger is also regularly targeted by armed groups and is facing a dire security situation. In December, seven Nigerien soldiers had been killed in an ambush in the Tillabery area and on 2 January 2021, 105 civilians were killed and left 75 wounded in the villages of Tchombangou and Zaroundareye near Niger's border with Mali. In this difficult context, presidential elections were successfully organized in Niger on 22 December and saw the ruling party candidate Mohamed Bazoum lead the first round (second round scheduled on 21 February).

**Displacements from Cote d'Ivoire and Central African Republic**

▪ The political situation in **Cote d'Ivoire** has seen significant improvement in December 2020. As of 30 December, over 24,000 Ivorians who fled Cote d'Ivoire have been pre-registered in **Liberia**, **Ghana**, **Guinea** and **Togo**. In Liberia, which hosts 95 per cent of the new arrivals, UNHCR continues to coordinate with the Liberian health system and local government officials to improve access to medical services for new arrivals and host communities. To mitigate health risks, UNHCR has focused its effort on improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) through the installation of hand pumps, latrines and boreholes in key hosting areas. In a recent UNHCR survey, 70 per cent of Ivorian refugees in Liberia indicated their intention to return home whenever they feel it's safe to do so. UNHCR is also providing assistance to the new Ivorian arrivals in Ghana, Guinea and Togo.

▪ The presidential election in **Central African Republic** organized on 27 December 2020 was marred by a coordinated offensive carried out by rebel groups which disrupted the vote in several parts of the country. As of 15 January 2021, close to 59,000 people were reported to have fled the country in fear of election-related violence to **Cameroon** (4,891), **Chad** (3,632), **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** (50,000) and **Republic of Congo** (195). In addition, some 58,000 people are still displaced inside CAR's affected regions, according to the Population Movement Commissions. In Cameroon, Chad, DRC and the Republic of Congo, UNHCR is working closely with national authorities and humanitarian

partners to support the new arrivals with water, shelter, access to health and adequate sanitation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases. As the situation remains tense, UNHCR also urges governments to continue to facilitate access to asylum despite restrictions on cross-border movements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The facilitation of repatriation of Central African refugees from Cameroon and the DRC, which resumed in November 2020, has now been suspended until the situation in CAR stabilizes and allows for safe and sustainable returns. Nearly a quarter of CAR's population of 4.7 million was forcibly displaced by the end of 2020, including 630,000 refugees in neighboring countries and 630,000 displaced internally.



### Key UNHCR Activities

*Families arrive in Ndu village in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after fleeing Bangassou town in the Central African Republic. © UNHCR DRC/Ghislaine Nentobo*

- On 7 December, UNHCR **Burkina Faso** began the relocation of refugees to Goudoubo camp in the country's north-east from the nearby town of Dori. In March 2020, a series of violent attacks and ultimatums by armed extremists forced over 9,000 Malian refugees to abandon the site, some 5,000 of them opting to return home to Mali where UNHCR assisted them on arrival. Those who stayed in Burkina Faso settled in the Djibo area, living in difficult conditions amongst local communities and a growing IDP population. Planned by UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CONAREF), in coordination with humanitarian partners and representatives of the refugee community, this relocation exercise was preceded by a rehabilitation of Goudoubo camp. In addition to the construction of 1,500 shelters, UNHCR and partners have improved water and sanitation systems, rehabilitated various public infrastructures and community buildings, refurbished and restocked a health clinic, and primary and secondary schools are ready to reopen and welcome students. Refugees are also receiving support towards resuming an economic activity and achieve self-reliance. Some have already started reopening small businesses, including grocery and butcher shops, and 130 families were provided with 10 goats each. A total of 500 families, including 440 from the refugee and 60 from the host communities, will be supported as part of this livelihood initiatives. As of end of December 2020, over 3,000 Malian refugees moved back into Burkina Faso's Goudoubo refugee camp and relocations are continuing with a total of over 5,000 refugees expected to be back in the camp by the end of the exercise.
- In **Nigeria**, the north-western states of Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara continue to face violence and armed banditry, the most recent incident being the abduction (claimed by Boko Haram) in early December of at least 300 schoolboys in Kankara Local Government Area. Since 2019, this dire insecurity has forced over 70,000 Nigerians to seek refuge in the Maradi region of **Niger** where over 17,000 people have also been internally displaced by the recurring raids of Nigerian criminal groups across the border. In this volatile context, UNHCR pursues its effort to relocate the refugees to the villages Dan Dadji Makaou, Garin Kaka and Chadakori away

from the border, to ensure their effective protection and ease the pressure on host populations of the border area. As of 15 of December, 10,447 refugees have been relocated out of the 12,000 planned for 2020. The assistance provided by UNHCR and its partners also targets the host populations of these traditionally underserved areas, where basic infrastructure and public services are lacking.



Relocation of refugees is ongoing in Goudoubo camp near Djibo, in the North-East of Burkina Faso © UNHCR Burkina Faso / Moussa Bougma

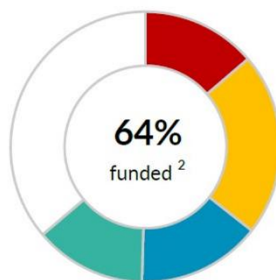
- In **Chad**, the Minister of National Education and Civic Promotion validated the [Refugee Education Strategy 2030](#) on 27 November 2020.

Resulting from a collaboration initiated in 2019 between the Ministry, UNHCR, national technical and financial partners, as well as the refugee and host communities, the Refugee Education Strategy will strengthen the equitable inclusion of refugee, stateless, internally displaced, asylum-seeker and returnee children in the national education system, as pledged by the Chadian Government during the Global Refugee Forum in 2019. In addition, on 23 December 2020, Chad has adopted its first-ever asylum law in line with the pledge the country made during the 2019 Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. In line with the international standards enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees, this new legal framework will enhance protection for the nearly 480,000 refugees and asylum-seekers currently hosted in the country. It provides them officially with freedom of movement, the right to work and access to healthcare, education, and justice. With more than 915,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, and Chadian returnees, Chad is one of the largest host countries in Africa.

*"Chad is one of the pioneers in terms of inclusion of refugees in the national education system and a world reference"*  
**Mr. Papa Kysma Sylla**  
 UNHCR Chad Representative

## Funding Situation

**\$665.0 million**  
UNHCR's financial requirements 2020 <sup>1</sup>



**WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA**  
as of 15 December 2020

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

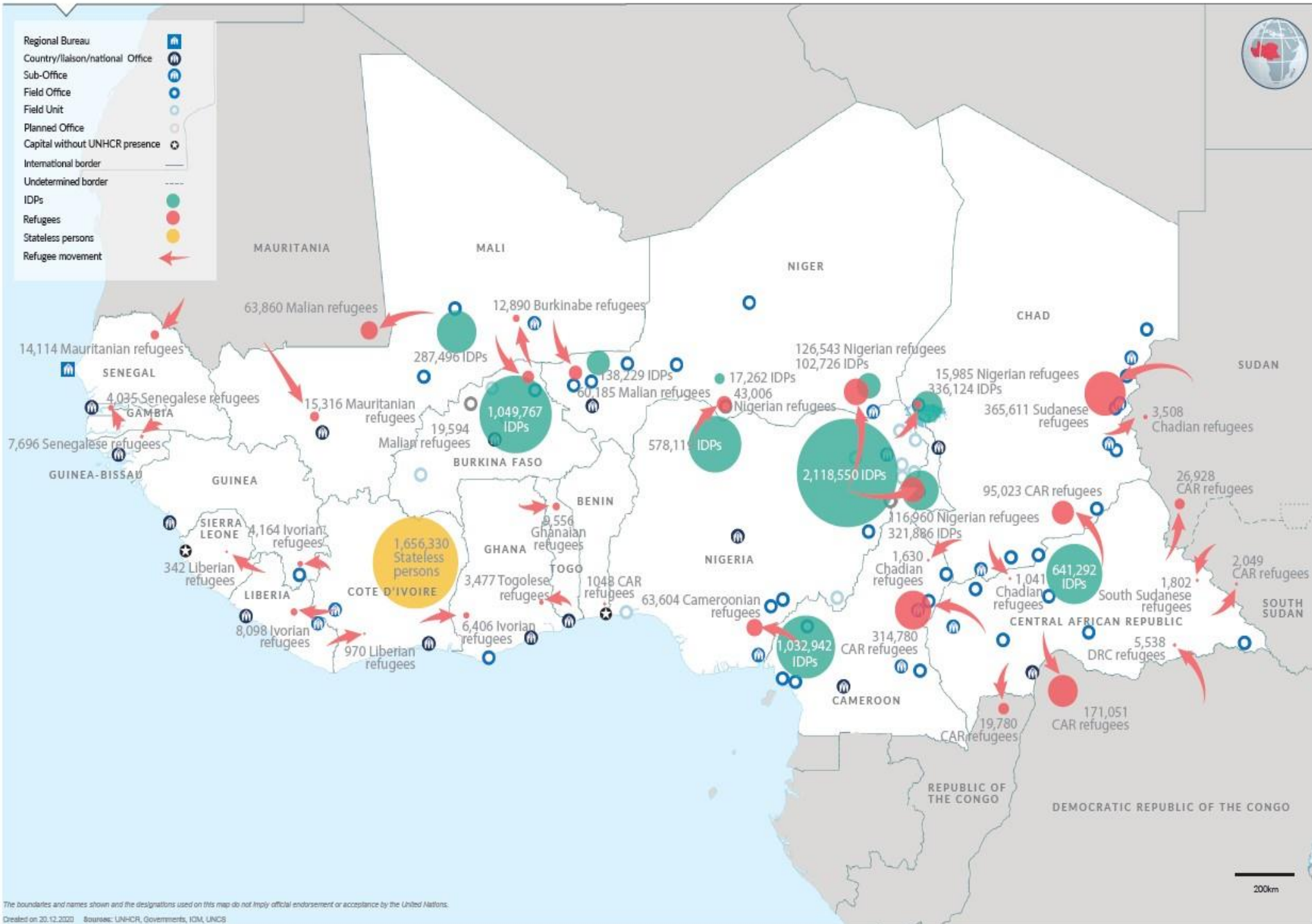
### CONTACTS

**Regional Bureau for West & Central Africa**

**Romain Desclous**, Senior Communication Officer: [desclous@unhcr.org](mailto:desclous@unhcr.org), Tel: +221 78 639 6385

**Antoine Sfeir**, Regional Reporting Officer: [sfeira@unhcr.org](mailto:sfeira@unhcr.org), Tel: +221 77 332 58 57

Twitter : [@UNHCRWestAfrica](#) – Facebook : [UNHCR West & Central Africa](#)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
Created on 20.12.2020 Sources: UNHCR, Governments, IOM, UNCS