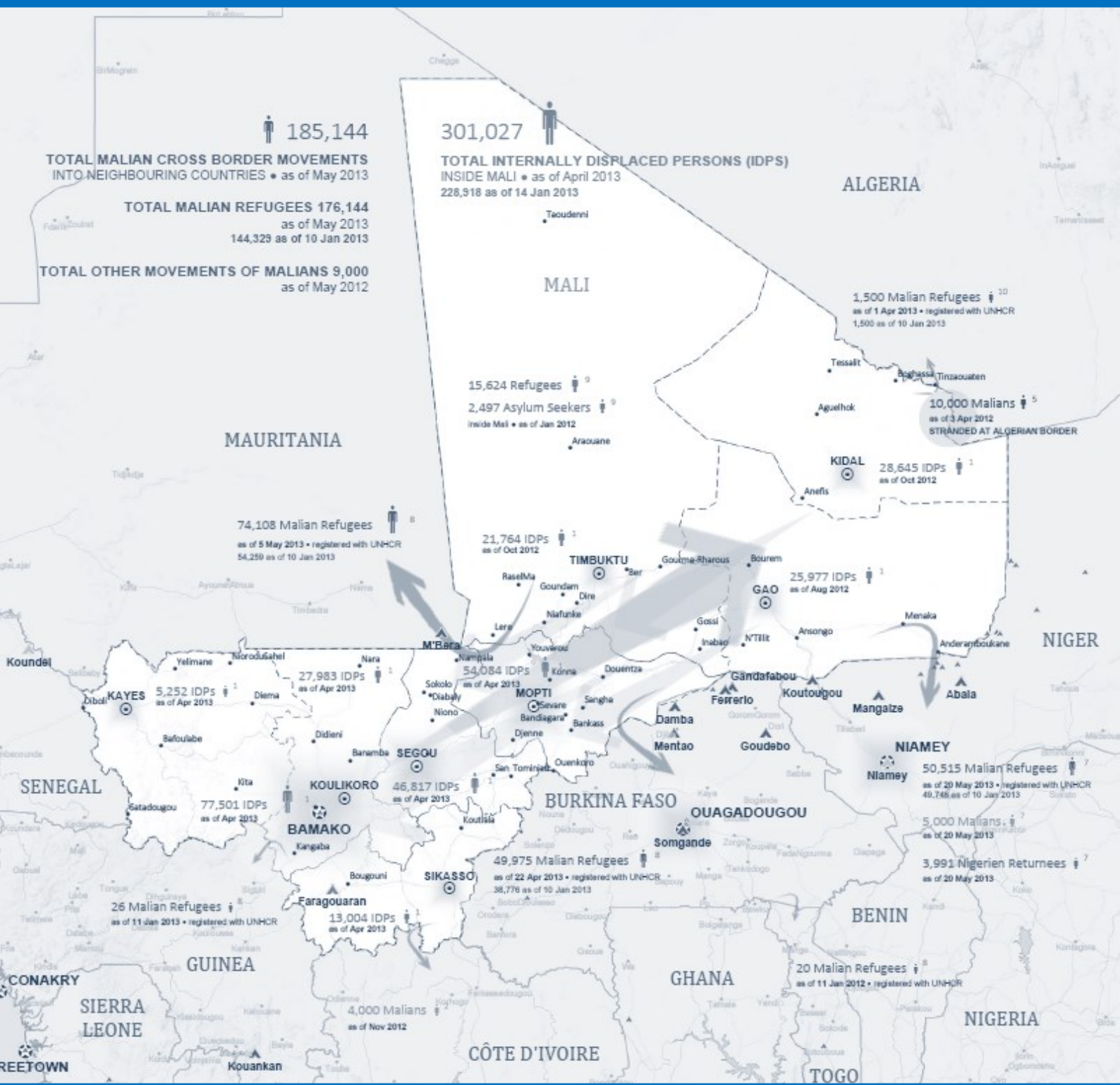




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MALI CRISIS: A MIGRATION PERSPECTIVE

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ACRONYMS

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development	UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
AGIR Sahel	Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative - Sahel	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process	UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
CERPOD	Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Population pour le Développement	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CMP	Commission on Population Movements	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
CNCR	National Commission for Refugees	UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
CRS	Catholic Relief Services	UNOM	United Nations Office for Mali
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
ECHO	European Commission, DG for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection	UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	USDOS	United States Department of State
EPAM	Enquête Emploi Permanente Auprès des Ménages	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network	WFP	World Food Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product		
GNI	Gross National Income		
IDP	Internally Displaced Person		
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre		
IOM	International Organization for Migration		
MINUSMA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission for Mali		
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad		
MPLA	Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad		
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières		
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council		
OCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development		
SAARA	Service d'Aide et Assistance aux Réfugiés et Apatrides		

I

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to broaden policy discussions and research on the Mali crisis through a distinctive analysis of the various patterns of human mobility that have been generated or affected due to the crisis in Mali since January 2012. It does so by drawing upon a range of existing materials and data, bringing them together in one framework focusing on the migration dimensions of the crisis. In line with IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF), recently approved by Member States at the IOM Council in November 2012,¹ this paper uses the "migration crisis" approach to comprehensive-ly analyse the crisis in Mali through a migration lens. This paper expands on IOM report "Mali Migration Crisis at a Glance" from March 2013 (IOM, 2013d). This is intended as a working paper, and may therefore be updated in the coming months.

"MIGRATION CRISIS" APPROACH

IOM uses the term "migration crisis" as a way to refer to and analyse the often large-scale and unpredictable migration flows and mobility patterns caused by conflict or natural disasters. These typically involve significant vulnerabilities for individuals and affected communities and generate acute and longer-term migration management challenges. A migration crisis may be slow in onset, can have natural or man-made causes and can take place internally or across borders. By capturing patterns of human mobility in their full complexity and revealing a more nuanced picture of the vulnerabilities and conditions that emerge in the context of different forms of involuntary movement, a migration crisis analysis allows policymakers to develop an integrated response to the crisis, including humanitarian, migration management, transition and recovery, peace and security, and development concerns.

Mali has been in a state of turmoil since the beginning of 2012, fuelled by the armed conflict and on-going insecurity in Mali, which has prompted a significant migration crisis. The conflict started in January 2012 with renewed fighting in northern Mali between Tuareg secessionist and radical Islamist groups on one side and government forces on the other, leading to a military coup d'état in March 2012. This crisis has had far-reaching impacts on a region already challenged by other crises such as recent acute food insecurity

and malnutrition in 2012 (due to a drought in 2011, high food prices and low agricultural production) and the chronic nature of food insecurity, malnutrition and erosion of resilience in the region (UN, 2013b). In addition, the crisis in Libya in 2011 and the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire in 2010 have both had wide-ranging impacts on the region. All of this has resulted in growing insecurity and complex migratory flows characterized by increasing levels of internal displacement, refugee movements, and the disruption of existing migration patterns in the country.

In order to construct a comprehensive picture of human mobility flows and patterns in and around Mali, this paper will:

- PART I** Provide a snapshot of the migration environment in Mali prior to January 2012, highlighting migration drivers as well as patterns and trends such as increasing urbanization and food insecurity, circular migration including pastoralist movements, transit migration through Mali, and the large Malian diaspora.
- PART II** Take a closer look at the crisis from January 2012 until today, exploring the complex internal and external mobility consequences of the conflict, burdens on the displaced and host communities, and challenges that restrict or hinder movement and return, as well as the current humanitarian response and issues regarding the post-crisis transition and stabilization in Mali.
- PART III** Identify relevant recommendations for dealing with the different migration-related issues within Mali and the region, including an approach that includes humanitarian aid as well as transition and recovery support; strengthened information collection and management; planning for durable solutions for those displaced; supporting stabilization and transition; investing in the peace process; and addressing migration and border management.

¹ The MCOF document (MC/2355) was approved through Resolution 1243 at the IOM Council in November 2012 (IOM, 2012a; IOM, 2012b).

1

PART I: MIGRATION TRENDS AND FLOWS IN MALI PRIOR TO JANUARY 2012

Mali has a long history of emigration, and has also become an important transit point for migratory flows within the region and beyond. The country is characterized by migration trends that range from cultural practices that promote migration as a rite of passage for young men, to circular and seasonal

migration including pastoral and nomadic movements. This section will examine different aspects of internal and cross-border migration patterns in Mali prior to the crisis that began in January 2012.



MIGRATION DRIVERS IN MALI

Factors that drive migration in Mali include interrelated economic and environmental pressures, as well as the impact of recent conflicts in the region:

Economic factors: Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, with 43.6% of its population below the national poverty line (World Bank, 2013). Poverty levels are particularly high in rural areas, where the majority of migrants originate from. Unemployment in Mali was 9.6% in 2011 and 15.4% for those aged 15-39, which can be attributed to high population growth (3.6% a year), low economic growth, migration out of rural areas, and lack of training and education possibilities (African Economic Outlook, 2012). In addition, the post-2010 election crisis in Cote d'Ivoire and the 2011 Libya crisis contributed to increased prices in oil and food, further straining the resources of local populations. These economic factors have led to both internal and external migration of Malians, whose remittances help to support local economies, meet the needs of families, and sometimes provide capital to set up small enterprises.

Environmental factors: In recent years, chronic droughts throughout the Sahel region have led to large movements of people on a regular basis, either

permanently or seasonally. Mostly recently, severe drought in 2011 generated acute food insecurity across the Sahel region, leading to a significant decline in agricultural production in Mali. Since the Malian economy is mainly based on agriculture, environmental changes can have significant impacts on livelihoods, particularly in the rural areas. For example, substantial outward migration from Mali occurred following severe droughts in 1973 and 1984, which together caused 40% of the population in the most affected areas (mostly men) to migrate. Of these, 70% migrated out of Mali, which inevitably had repercussions on the agricultural sector due to the depleted labour force (Ballo, 2009). At the same time, the financial support of migrants may have helped to mitigate the negative impacts of these droughts (IRIN, 2006).

Conflicts and disputes: The Sahel has experienced a significant number of conflicts in the post-colonial era, from large-scale wars to small-scale disputes between communities or localized fighting. When Mali gained independence in 1960, the North was united with the largely darker-skinned African south. Since then, government power has been concentrated in the hands of ethnic groups from the South, who allegedly neglected the northern populations and exploited the resources of northern regions. This has led to aggravated tensions between the South and the North of Mali (Blair, 2013). Conflicts in neighbouring countries that receive large number of Malian migrants can prompt their return, as seen in the recent war in Libya that led to the return of an estimated 30,000 Malians (UNSC, 2012).² This conflict also led to the proliferation of arms in the region and the freezing of Libyan investments in West Africa, which inevitably affected prices of commodities and local economies (UNSC, 2012). In addition, cross-border migration can also be a source of tension between transhumant livestock breeders and inhabitants in pastoral areas (UNEP, 2011).

² In 2011, IOM assisted in the return of over 212,000 migrants from Libya to Sub-Saharan Africa, including 11,248 Malians (IOM, 2012a; IOM, 2011b).

1. Internal Migration³ Trends: Increased urbanization and food insecurity

Bamako and other urban areas were the major destination points for internal migrants, with an increasing trend towards urbanization in Mali in the years before the outbreak of the conflict in 2012 (World Bank, 2013). In 2011, 35% of the Malian population lived in urban areas (UNDESA, 2011). The most important migration flows were towards Bamako; in 2004, 33% of the city's population were migrants (Ballo, 2009). The proportion of the urban population is expected to rise to over 60% of the total population by 2024 (World Bank, 2013). Before the conflict, Malians migrated internally mainly in order to live closer to their family members and to pursue professional and educational opportunities. According to the 2004 Survey on Permanent Employment of Households (*Enquête Emploi Permanente Auprès des Ménages*, EPAM) carried out in Bamako as well as in other urban centres, women were most likely to migrate for family reunification whereas men were more likely to migrate internally for studies or professional reasons (Ballo, 2009). In the rural areas, migration was predominantly for family reunification purposes. There are also notable patterns of internal movements of children, as many children are commonly placed in foster families to continue their education and vocational training, which can put some of them at increased risk of exploitation and violence (IOM internal documents).

Internal migration patterns have historically and culturally been more seasonal and of short duration based on the economic possibilities offered by the cities, and the opportunity to diversify skills and incomes and thus also adapt to the climatic difficulties in the region. However, over the past few years, this traditional and seasonal migration has been replaced by a more permanent rural to urban migration of farmers, herders and fishermen (UNEP, 2011). This urbanization trend was fostered also by the larger context of severe food insecurity across the Sahel region, which by 2011 had developed into an acute crisis with pockets of famine. While difficult to fully assess in the current context, this food crisis has clearly influenced mobility patterns. Pastoralists groups have been particularly affected given their dependence on livestock, impacting in particular on their health and nutrition status in a context of limited access to basic health care. Farmers in the Sahel region have also experienced the stark impact of the drought cycle on their livelihoods and their resilience. Mobility induced by the drought towards urban centres has placed additional pressure on the infrastructure and services available in urban areas.

At the same time, it is important to note that there were also strong rural to rural migration tendencies in Mali, given its largely agricultural economy. Internal migration flows vary from one region to another based on the type of poverty (savings, income levels, living conditions or opportunities available), while the seasonal migration patterns from one region to another also vary according to the different agricultural activities in each region. For example, entire

families have reportedly moved from traditionally cotton-producing areas (Koutiala and Yorosso circles) experiencing reduced availability of pastures for livestock and increasing land disputes, to other agricultural areas that have been more recently developed (Yanfolila and Kolondieba circles) (Ballo, 2009).

Mali at a Glance

Population	15,370,000 (2010)
Population growth	3.6% per year (2011)
Land area	1,240,192 sq. km
Population density	10.5 per sq. km (2009)
Major cities	Bamako, Ségou, Mopti, Kayes, Sikasso, Koulikoro, Timbuktu, Gao
Urban population	34.9% (2011)
Urban annual growth rate	5.0% per year (2005-2010)
Major ethnic groups	Bambara and Malinké (48.8%), Peulh (Fulhani) (11%), Senoufo and Minianka (9.6%), Soninké (7%), Songhai (7%), Tuareg and Maure (5%), Dogon (4.4%), Bozo (2.8%), Diawara (1%), and Xaasongaxango (Khassonke) (1%)
Religion	Around 90% of Malians practice Islam, 6% traditional beliefs, and 4% Catholic or Protestant Christianity
Median age	16.3 (2010)
Life expectancy at birth	51.9 (2012)
GDP	10.59 billion USD (2011)
GNI per capita (Atlas method) ⁴	610 USD (2011)
Human Development Index	175 out of 187 (2011)
Unemployment	9.6%, and 15.4% for 15-39 year olds (2011)
Border countries	Mauritania, Algeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal

Sources: African Economic Outlook, 2012; Minority Rights Group International, 2007; UN Data, 2013; UNDESA, 2011; UNDESA, 2012; World Bank, 2013; ECHO, 2013

³ Internal migration is "a movement of people from one area of a country to another area of the same country for the purpose or with the effect of establishing a new residence. This migration may be temporary or permanent. Internal migrants move but remain within their country of origin (e.g. rural to urban migration)" (IOM, 2011a, p. 51).

⁴ The Atlas conversion factor reduces the impact of exchange rate fluctuations in the cross-country comparison of national incomes for the Gross National Income (GNI).

2. Circular Migration:⁵ Important and complex flows including pastoralist movements

The high level of outward and inward movements between Mali and neighbouring western African countries, in particular Côte d'Ivoire, reflects the importance of circular migration for the Malian population. In the delta region of Mali, one third of the rural workforce migrates during the dry seasons from the rural areas to the cities, as highlighted above but also outside of Mali in search of employment (UNEP, 2011). Traditionally, seasonal labour migration from the arid parts of Mali includes labour migration to plantations and mines in Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. The seasonal and circular migration has long been considered a positive adaptation strategy to climate variability in the region, including pastoralists and nomadic groups who move in search of better land, pastures, or water (Ballo, 2009). Approximately 500,000 Tuaregs and other pastoralist groups in Mali, such as Soninke, Maure and Peuls, move along traditional routes from the North to the South of Mali, as well as towards coastal countries and western Africa (UNEP, 2011). These processes have been facilitated by the ease of travel between ECOWAS countries due to the lack of a visa requirement for the citizens of its member states (Ballo, 2009). While difficult to fully assess in the current context, the current food crisis across the Sahel has influenced these circular mobility patterns. Pastoralist groups have been particularly affected given their dependence on livestock, impacting in particular on their health and nutrition status in a context of limited access to basic health care.

3. Migration Routes through Mali: From cross-border movements to smuggling⁶ and trafficking of people⁷

Mali has been an important regional transit point for cross-border movement and trade. The country does not have strict immigration policies, perhaps due to the interest of the Malian government in supporting regional integration and ease of movement throughout the region. Nationals from the 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have the right to enter and reside in Mali without a visa or resident permit for 90 days, as no legislation or regulations governing the acquisition of residence permits in Mali has been put in place. Mali also has several bilateral agreements with other African countries, permitting nationals from those countries to enter its territories without visas.

These immigration policies, combined with its geographical location, have also made Mali an attractive transit point for irregular migrants heading to Europe,⁸ whether crossing the desert into North Africa or travelling via sea routes from Senegal, Mauritania or Libya (Ballo, 2009). These same factors have also unfortunately contributed to the use of Mali as a transit point for illegal trade. Limited capacities for data collection and identification and the porous borders stretching for thousands of kilometres are additional factors that

facilitate both irregular migration⁹ and the illicit flows of goods. Mali is a vast territory with limited State presence in the remote areas of the country. During the 2011 Libya crisis, a large number of small arms and weapons were able to pass unnoticed into neighbouring countries. The outbreak of conflict in Mali can also be partly linked to the possible involvement of Tuareg returnees, who had fought as mercenaries alongside Libyan troops (BBC, 2012; BBC, 2011). Prior to the conflict in Libya, Chadian and Mauritanian authorities had been reinforcing borders and dispatching special military units to track movements, while Mali and Niger had both appealed to the international community for assistance in order to better secure and protect their borders. This situation illustrates the lack of national and regional coordination mechanisms, as well as capacity and tools needed to effectively manage borders, including the flow of large and frequent cross-border movements of undocumented migrant workers (UNSC, 2012).

These irregular migration and smuggling flows have grown since the beginning of the 1990s, using existing illegal contraband routes (for drugs, arms, cigarettes) within the region (Carnegie, 2012). The flourishing flows of both illicit goods and irregular migrants permitted the emergence of carriers specializing in off-road transport and increased the corruption of customs and immigration officials. Competition over the control of smuggling routes and the reported tolerance of some government officials towards criminal activity are seen as factors which have contributed toward the establishment of extremist groups in Mali (Lacher, 2012). Recently, kidnapping has also been a major source of revenue for criminal and terrorist networks within the region. These factors combined have allowed organized crime to wield increasing power and political influence in the country (Carnegie, 2012).

⁵ Circular migration is "the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved, if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labour needs of countries of origin and destination" (IOM, 2011a, p. 19).

⁶ Smuggling is "the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident" (IOM, 2011a, p. 92).

⁷ Trafficking in persons is "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerabilities or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation" (IOM, 2011a, p. 99).

⁸ Mali has conventions with Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Cameroon, and Libya. There are also conventions with France and Spain, although these do not necessarily permit free entry. There are also agreements to remove visa requirements for Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Cameroon, Cuba, Macao, Hong-Kong, Gambia and Chad

⁹ Irregular migration is "movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries" (IOM, 2011a, p. 54).

Consequently, Mali has been increasingly characterized by a high level of human smuggling and trafficking of Malians and other nationalities for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour. The country has been a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. Some of the irregular migrants who travel through the region in hopes of reaching Europe are at risk of being trafficked (Ballo, 2009). While there are no figures available to determine the true breadth of this phenomenon, the limited data gathered by IOM provides some insights. IOM registered 656 Malians as victims of trafficking between 2001 and 2008 (Ballo, 2009). The vast majority (72%) were trafficked internally in the country, while the others were trafficked into neighbouring countries. Sixty four per cent were between the ages of 18-24, and 23.5% were between the ages of 14-17. Women made up 23.6% of the victims (Ballo, 2009).

Some information also exists concerning the nature of the trafficking. Within Mali, women and girls are forced into domestic servitude, agricultural labour, sex trafficking and support in artisanal gold mines. They are also sent to other African cities and subjected to prostitution (Ballo, 2009). Boys, from Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Niger were also found in forced labour and the informal commercial sector in Mali as well as in neighbouring countries, such as in the gold mines in Senegal or Guinea and the cotton or cocoa farms in Cote d'Ivoire (USDOS, 2012). Victims from different ethnic groups are also reportedly subjected to another type of trafficking, involving debt bondage or slavery-related practices that are traditionally embedded into society and that are often passed from one generation to the next, with children of slaves being born into slavery (USDOS, 2012).

4. Foreign Populations in Mali: Centred on regional migration

Prior to January 2012, immigration flows into Mali were relatively minimal. Historically, Mali has received relatively low numbers of labour migrants, mainly from the African continent. Most immigrants in Mali were predominantly from the ECOWAS region, likely influenced by the ease of entry provided by the free movement protocol, with some immigrants from other parts of Africa. In 2005, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimated that the migrant stock represented just 1.4% of the population (Ballo, 2009). The annual growth rate of the immigrant stock during 2000-2005 was 0.2%, according to UNDP figures (Ballo, 2009). In 2010, according to data from the World Bank, the foreign population in Mali was estimated at 162,677 (1.1% of the population) – including 77,549 nationals from Côte d'Ivoire, and 22,365 from Burkina Faso (World Bank, 2011). Immigration to Mali may have been driven by continued economic growth in the country and the increase of direct foreign investments due to tax reforms benefitting certain economic sectors such as mining, the energy sector and public transport before the crisis (Ballo, 2009). However, it is difficult to draw a complete picture of the immigration patterns in Mali

given that very little information exists, and most of it is outdated or is only based on general migration patterns.

According to the National Commission for Refugees (*Commission nationale chargée des réfugiés*, CNCR), the number of refugees¹⁰ and asylum seekers¹¹ in Mali since 2003 had remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 16,000 to 13,000 people (Ballo, 2009). As of January 2012, there were 15,624 refugees and 2,497 asylum seekers in Mali (UNHCR, 2013e). According to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), there were 12,000 registered refugees from Mauritania in Mali, following the 1989 Mauritanian-Senegal war (UNHCR, 2013d). Even though an extensive repatriation programme was not in place, many Mauritanian refugees may have been going back and forth between Mali and Mauritania, living alongside the border as herders and pastoralists (IOM internal documents). Another 2,000 refugees were from Cote d'Ivoire (since the outbreak of civil war in 2002) and 1,000 from Sierra Leone (following internal conflicts in the 1990s).

5. Malians Abroad: A significant diaspora

Mali has a long tradition of emigration. As of 2005, there were nearly 4 million Malians living abroad, which represented the equivalent of one third of the population of the country (Keita, 2009). A number of cultural traditions in Mali promote the migration of young men as a rite of passage, with some even requiring youth to migrate before they are allowed to marry. It is also believed that this time abroad will allow young Malians to build a sense of worth. During his time abroad, the man must be able to save enough to be able to return and settle in Mali, compelling many to remain abroad for some time until they can become economically stable (Ballo, 2009; IRIN, 2006). In a study from 1993, 30.8% of households had at least one family member living abroad. The number of Malian students abroad was also increasing. In 2006, 10% of Malian students in higher education were studying abroad, which was more than double the number from 2000 (from 1,464 to 3,051).

Given the growing importance of the Malian diaspora, the Government established the Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration in 2004. The Ministry estimated that there were nearly 4 million in the diaspora as of 2005, with the majority residing in other African countries (96.5%), and another 2.7% were in Europe (Keita, 2009). In Europe, the

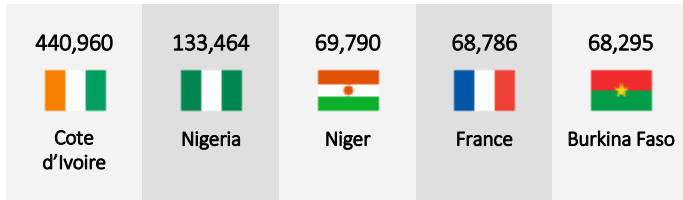
¹⁰ A refugee is "a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (IOM, 2011a, p. 79).

¹¹ An asylum seeker is "a person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any non-national in an irregular or unlawful situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds" (IOM, 2011a, p. 12).

majority of the Malian diaspora resided in France where they made up the most important African diaspora group, with well-organised associations or groups. Overall, however, the vast majority of the diaspora were in Cote d'Ivoire (Vincent, 2013).

Remittances from the diaspora have a significant impact on the Malian economy. In 2007, the Malian diaspora sent home 212 million USD, which accounted for 3.3% of GDP according to the World Bank (Ballo, 2009). The level of remittances grew rapidly in the following years; in 2009, Mali received 405 million USD in remittances from the diaspora (World Bank, 2011). Most remittances are used for individual consumption, whether sent directly to families or indirectly through associations, although some remittances also fund collective projects at the local level (Ballo, 2009). In 2011, remittances fell slightly due in part to general economic problems within countries of residence as well as the situation in Cote d'Ivoire and Libya, where Malians had been residing (African Economic Outlook, 2012). *See text box on Mali and the Libya Crisis.*

Countries with the highest numbers of Malian diaspora



Source: IOM, 2013h¹²

Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Among those Malians abroad, some have applied for refugee status. Prior to the outbreak of conflict in January 2012, the latest figures (as of 2012) indicated that there were 4,295 refugees and 397 asylum seekers from Mali (UNHCR, 2013e). Data from 2007 indicated that most Malian refugees (42.3%) were in France, 22.4% in the United States, 18.7% in Italy, 6% in South Africa and 3% in Malta. Even so, the number of asylum seekers from Mali still remained small. In 2011, Mali ranked 27 out of 40 countries in terms of number of asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2012a).

Irregular and Returning Migrants: With such a large diaspora, return migration to Mali is also an important phenomenon. In recent years, the post-election violence in Cote d'Ivoire and the 2011 conflict in Libya both affected the Malian diaspora. While there had not been massive returns from Cote d'Ivoire, despite the large size of the Malian diaspora in that country, the large-scale return migration from Libya in 2011 had clear consequences, not only in short run but also in the long-term. *See text box on Mali and the Libya Crisis.* Return migration also includes Malians in an irregular immigration status and who voluntarily or through deportation returned back to their country. Between 2002 and 2008, irregular Malians who returned home included 46,151 from various African countries, the large majority of which came from Cote d'Ivoire (40,237), followed by Libya (2,670), Morocco (1,455), Algeria (686), and Angola (632). Large numbers also returned from France (2,174) and Spain (2,572), in addition to 413 from Saudi Arabia, 21 from Israel, 35 from other European

countries, and 35 from the US and Canada (Ballo, 2009). The high number of returns from Morocco, Libya and Algeria likely reflects the role of these countries in supporting EU policies focused on securing the EU's southern Mediterranean border and fighting against irregular migration (IOM, 2013b).

MALI AND THE LIBYA CRISIS

Mali, like many countries in West Africa, was heavily impacted by the 2011 Libyan crisis, which led to increased food prices, insecurity due to a proliferation of arms within the Sahel region and the return of Malian citizens fleeing the violence. Libya's strategy prior to the conflict was to invest heavily in sub-Saharan Africa, and when these investments suddenly ceased as the regime collapsed there was a sharp increase in basic commodity and transportation costs. About 30,000 Malians returned from Libya in 2011, including 11,248 who received return assistance from IOM.

The two main areas of emigration to Libya were Kita and Gao, and some Malians (particularly from Kita) saw Libya as a transit point to Europe. The vast majority of Malians (90%) were male between the ages of 20-40 and had only a basic level of education. While most migrants gained valuable skills in Libya (including agriculture, irrigation, modern gardening) these have reportedly not been put to use in Mali. Most Malians who fled Libya left behind the majority of their belongings and savings, and returned home in a vulnerable state, often requiring assistance in order to socio-economically reintegrate in their communities of origin.

Even today, two years after the crisis in Libya, the consequences of the crisis continue to reverberate in Mali and throughout the region. These mass returns put tremendous pressure on families and communities who had depended on remittances from their family members abroad. On average, returnees were remitting about 195 USD a year, resulting in an estimated loss of 5.85 million USD in annual remittances. Communities have not only lost financial support, but must also provide for returnees who have not been able to find jobs or livelihood activities. Many families have reported needing to request food assistance. Many returnees have reported facing humiliation in their communities as they return home without anything to show for their efforts abroad, with many now migrating again to Libya or to other countries.

Sources: IOM, 2013c; 2012e, 2011b; UNSC, 2012; Diombana, 2011

¹² This is based on data from the World Bank as of 2010, compiled from information provided by consulates. Since this data does not take into account the number of Malians residing abroad in an irregular status, the actual figures are likely much higher. For a discussion of this issue, see Ballo (2009).

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PART II: MIGRATION CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRISIS AND RESPONSE IN MALI AND BEYOND

The armed conflict that started in the North of Mali in January 2012 caused a migration crisis of significant size and scope, both within and outside of Mali. Fighting broke out in the North of Mali in January 2012, between Tuareg secessionist and radical Islamist groups on one side and government forces on the other, followed by a military coup d'état in Bamako in March 2012. As a result of the defeat of government forces in the North, insurgents took control of Mali's three northern regions (Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal), occupying the major cities. This led to a large-scale displacement of the population within Mali's three northern regions, towards the central and southern parts of Mali as well as into neighbouring countries. Nearly half a million people were displaced as of the end of April 2013, including 301,027 (62%) internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 185,144 (38%) displaced into neighbouring countries, including 176,144 refugees.

In January 2013, a new phase in the Mali crisis was initiated when international military forces intervened through the deployment of French and Chadian troops, at the request of Malian authorities. This intervention permitted the government to regain control of the cities and surrounding areas, driving the armed groups into the mountainous areas of the North. While the insurgents have been mostly driven out of the urban areas, they are still active in communities within the North and continue to carry out attacks (UNSC, 2013b). Insecurity is reported in areas around Timbuktu such as Ber, Léré, Goundam, and Bintagougou (IOM, 2013a; UNHCR, 2013b), and there are reports of growing ethnic tensions and roaming gangs who raid and attack villages (Christian Aid, 2013). The situation in Mali remains unpredictable as the military intervention persists, and as displacement remains widespread across the country. According to the Commission on Population Movements (CMP), conditions for the return of displaced populations are not yet in place, although some spontaneous returns have been observed.

This conflict also occurs within the broader food insecurity and malnutrition crisis affecting the entire Sahel region, which compounds the impacts of the humanitarian crisis. At the same time, Mali is undergoing a political transition and stabilization process, including preparing for elections that are expected to take place later this year. To support these transitions, on 25 April 2013 the UN Security Council approved the establishment of a peacekeeping mission in Mali (MINUSMA) effective from July 2013, as French troops gradually withdraw from Mali (UNSC, 2013a). Finally, a number of other factors combine to drive mobility patterns in Mali during the crisis, including the economic and environmental context, access to basic services, and security and protection concerns. *See the text box on Migration Drivers.*

The key characteristics of the current migration crisis include large-scale displacements, with patterns of displacement largely corresponding to ethnic similarities. Many darker skinned farmers chose to flee to Mali's southern cities, while refugee groups are mostly composed of pastoralists from Tuareg and other Arabic-speaking groups fleeing into neighbouring countries where the local populations are composed of similar ethnic groups. Given these key differences, distinct but complementary response and recovery strategies are needed for IDPs and refugees. Consequently, these crisis-induced mobility patterns contribute to increased urbanization trends and the disruption of pastoralist, nomadic and seasonal migration routes.

Total Number of Displaced Malians within Mali and in Neighbouring Countries (as of the end of May 2013)

Bamako	77,501 (30.04.2013)
Kayes	5,252 (30.04.2013)
Koulikoro	27,983 (30.04.2013)
Mopti	54,084 (30.04.2013)
Segou	46,817 (30.04.2013)
Sikasso	13,004 (30.04.2013)
Gao	25,977 (Aug 2012)
Timbuktu	21,764 (Oct 2012)
Kidal	28,645 (Oct 2012)
Total IDPs	301,027
Algeria	1,500 (01.04.2013)
Niger	50,515 (20.05.2013)
Burkina Faso	49,975 (22.04.2013)
Mauritania	74,108 (05.05.2013)
Guinea	26 (11.01.2013)
Togo	20 (11.01.2013)
Total Refugees	176,144
Côte d'Ivoire	4,000 (Nov 2012)
Niger	5,000 (20.05.2013)
Total Other Cross Border Movements	9,000
TOTAL	486,171

Sources: CMP, 2013a; UNHCR, 2013a; UNHCR, 2013c; UNHCR, 2013f; IOM internal documents

MIGRATION DRIVERS IN MALI DURING THE CRISIS

A variety of drivers have shaped migration patterns in Mali during the crisis. These factors combine to influence the decision and the ability of affected populations to flee, where they flee to, and whether and when to return to areas of origin.

Food insecurity: The impact of the recent conflict is compounded by the chronic food security crisis affecting the entire Sahel region. The food crisis became acute following severe drought in 2011 and the resulting poor harvests. In 2012, 4.6 million people in Mali were affected by food insecurity and malnutrition. While harvests were reasonable in 2012 in Mali (OCHA, 2013g), the phenomenon of malnutrition is still alarming and families' ability to cope has been crippled by the compounding effects of the conflict. This year, according to WFP, 1.3 million people will be affected by food insecurity in Mali and 585,000 of these will be in the North (OCHA, 2013f). The crisis could worsen throughout Mali if farmers miss another planting season, and the next one started in May. Furthermore, due to negative coping strategies at the start of the crisis, such as selling assets in order to flee, many families, if they decide to do so, will return to very little in their places of origin. The food crisis of 2011-2012 will also have rippling effects in terms of loss of livestock, employment, and reduction of economic activities.

Economic context: Impacts of the crisis were already evident in 2012, when the Malian economy shrunk by 1.5% (Fletcher, 2013). Lack of access continues to pose economic challenges in the North, the Algerian border was closed on 14 January 2013 (an important commercial border for the North), and businesses were shut down as their owners fled. As a result, there is a shortage of basic necessities (flour, milk, oil and sugar) and inflated prices, making most goods unaffordable to the population who remained behind and prompting continued displacement (Jourdain, 2013). The economic situation is dire in many locations such as Kidal, where the population depends heavily on markets (94%) to meet their food needs due to generally poor agricultural conditions (OCHA, 2013f). Given the impacts on agricultural production and livestock herding (OCHA, 2013f), displacement will likely continue in the longer term and will contribute to higher levels of vulnerability within the North.

Basic services: Prior to the crisis, broad segments of society already had rudimentary and often insufficient access to social services, particularly outside of Bamako, a situation exacerbated since 2012 by the crisis (BTI, 2013). As civil servants and health workers fled the conflict, government offices and health centres were

closed and social services were shut down. Some civil servants have since acquired posts in the South, and as of April still had not resumed their posts in the North (IOM internal documents). In the North, the health system virtually collapsed, health centres were looted (MSF, 2013), and prevention programmes were suspended, including child immunization and prenatal care. Limitations regarding access to basic social services such as water, education and health persist because of the continued absence of government officials, the lack of equipment to deliver basic services, and destroyed infrastructure (OCHA, 2013f). In the South, social services have been strained by the large influx of displaced populations. For example, the education of 700,000 children was disrupted across the country (OCHA, 2013g). Most IDP children in the South had access to schools (80%) as of February 2013 (IOM, 2013e), while in the North only 37% of the schools had re-opened as of 8 May (OCHA, 2013c). The lack of social services is also an important deciding factor for return movements. For many displaced Malians, the return of civil servants and the resumption of government services is a precondition for safe return. Many will also base their decision on the school calendar for their children (IOM, 2013e).

Security and protection factors: During the occupation of the North by armed groups, human rights violations have been rampant and women have been subjected to gender based violence. Many acts of sexual violence against women and adolescent girls by armed groups have been reported in the North, and IDP women and children have been sexually exploited or forced into prostitution (UNSC, 2013c). There are also reports of children and adolescents being recruited into rebel armed groups, as well as self-defence militias supporting the government (UNSC, 2013c; Amnesty International, 2012). Following the military intervention in January 2013, there are continued reports of human rights violations and ethnic conflicts due to 'revenge attacks' against members of groups associated with the rebels. Within displaced communities, both in Mali and outside, there are also reported tensions with hosting communities as displacement continues to exert pressure on limited resources. A MINUSMA mission also recently gathered evidence of violations of the human rights of Malian refugees in Niger, to be included in an upcoming report to the UN Security Council (UNSC). Further assessments were planned for Mauritania and Burkina Faso (IOM internal documents).

OVERVIEW OF NORTHERN MALI

Given that the North of Mali is sparsely populated, those displaced represent a significant proportion (36%) of the overall population in the North. Though Northern Mali makes up 66% of the total national territory, it was home to only 8.6% of the total population in 2010, estimated at 1.3 million people. The population is mostly rural, with just 8% living in agglomerations of more than 10,000 residents (OECD, n.d.). Only 5% of GDP and 0.5% of tax revenue is generated in the North (Fletcher, 2013).

Tourism was an important economic activity for Mali, and one of the most promising sectors in the North, with national tourism revenues rapidly increasing between 2002 and 2010. In 2007, the sector generated more than 131 million EUR, which is ten times the amount acquired through tourism in 2002 (Lacher, 2012). In 2010, tourists spent 240 million Euros in Mali (OECD, n.d.). However, even before 2012, tourism in the Sahel and Sahara had already nearly collapsed prior to the crisis due to criminal activities and, more notably, the increase in hostage taking in the region (Lacher, 2012). The number of tourists visiting Mali drastically declined from 200,000 in 2011 to only 10,000 in 2012, thus presenting a major loss of income for the Malian population and adding further to the stress on communities (The Guardian, 2013).

The North is also home to many different ethnicities, including lighter-skinned Tuaregs, Songhai, and Fulani (Welsh, 2013). The vast majority of the Tuaregs and other lighter-skinned and Arabic-speaking groups live in the Northern areas (Larson, 2013). There, both intra- and inter-tribal tensions exist, for example between the Tuareg tribes Ifoghas and the Imrad vassals as well as between Tuaregs and Arabic-speaking groups (Boukhars, 2013). Aggravated tensions have also persisted between the North and the South. Ethnic groups from the South, who have held most of the power since Mali achieved independence in 1960, have allegedly neglected the populations in the North and exploited resources in the North (Blair, 2013).

1. Large-Scale Internal Displacement¹³

As of May 2013, 301,027 individuals were internally displaced within Mali (CMP, 2013a). Displacements occurred mostly between March and June 2012, reaching a peak in April 2012 after rebel groups gained control of the cities of Timbuktu and Gao. While there has been some increase in the IDP population since the January 2013 military intervention (72,109),¹⁴ there have not been any massive population movements in

the long-term. As of April 2013, most IDPs reported having fled due to the armed conflict (96%), while the remainder fled due to food insecurity (IOM, 2013b). The economic situation is another prominent factor influencing displacement. Among movements recorded at the flow monitoring points in Bamako and Mopti, 30% reported moving to the South due to the lack of work and livelihood opportunities in the North. An interesting characteristic of displacement in Mali is that 19% of displaced families have reported coming and going from their point of origin (IOM, 2013g). This is often carried out by one member of the household who then checks on other family members, property or livestock, or carries out economic activities, such as agriculture or commerce (IOM, 2012d).

The current IDP total reflects recent registrations carried out in the South between January and April 2013. However, estimates for the North (Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu) remain unchanged since last year as information collection in the northern regions is challenging due to insecurity and the fluid movement of populations. Efforts are on-going between the CMP and partners working in the northern regions to establish a system in which regular information on population movement can be reported. Data tracking and monitoring exercises in Sikasso, Kayes, Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal are currently being planned (CMP, 2013a).

COMMISSION ON POPULATION MOVEMENTS (CMP)

The Commission on Population Movements (CMP) is a Working Group within the Protection Cluster, with government participation and led by IOM. It was established to collect and analyse available information on IDPs and population movements in Mali following the crisis in the North of Mali that began in January 2012. Members of the Commission include the General Directorate of Civil Protection (DGPC) and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Solidarity and the Elderly (MAHSPA), IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, ACTED, NCR, Handicap International, and CRS.

For updated information, please refer to:
mali.humanitarianresponse.info

¹³ Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internally recognized State border” (IOM, 2011a, p. 52).

¹⁴ Figures are gathered from registration activities carried out under IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), which uses a methodology approved by the Commission on Population Movements (CMP). The number of displaced persons registered by the DTM as of April 2013 increased in comparison to previously published results. This increase is mainly due to the fact that IOM has expanded its areas of operations to other parts of the country. At the same time, and in connection with the improvement of the security environment in the North, we can observe a decrease in the number of people moving from their places of origin to settle other parts of Mali.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

From March to June 2012, when most of the new displacements occurred, most of the IDPs came from Timbuktu (56%) and Gao (40%), with very few from Kidal and Mopti (2% each). While movements continued from Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu, there were also increasing numbers coming from Mopti and Ségou as insurgents advanced southward (CMP, 2013d). In April 2013, the majority were still from Timbuktu (51%), followed by the Gao region (36%) and the Mopti region (10%), with minimal numbers from Kidal and Ségou (IOM, 2013b).

Most IDPs have fled to southern regions to escape violence in the North, with the majority in Bamako (26%), followed by Mopti (18%), Ségou (16%), and Koulikoro (9%). Another 4% of IDPs are in Sikasso and 2% are in Kayes. The remaining one-fourth of registered IDPs are displaced within the three Northern regions (Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal), although these figures have not been updated since late 2012 (CMP, 2013a).

Most IDPs have fled to urban areas, complicating their identification and the provision of assistance and protection. It is particularly difficult to identify IDPs in urban areas in the South, as they have not gathered in displacement sites but rather have integrated into families or live in rentals in urban areas where they are less visible for humanitarian support. Of those registered by IOM as of December 2012, most (65%) reported renting a house, 27% lived with host families who were often relatives and 8% stated "other," which included living in collective housing such as community centres (IOM, 2013g). It had previously been estimated, a few months after the conflict broke out, that the vast majority of IDPs (97%) were living with extended family members in the South of Mali (OCHA, 2012). As their displacement situation continues, there have been reports of some IDPs moving away from host families and the urban centres in search of affordable housing in more remote peri-urban neighbourhoods, which concurs with the increasing numbers of IDPs reporting that they are renting rather than staying with host families (IDMC, 2013; Refugees International, 2013).

While the majority of IDPs managed to flee the North, others were unable to flee from those regions due to the security concerns posed by insurgent groups and the limited transportation networks (OCHA, 2013d). Many are still displaced within or near their region of origin, with 9% of the total IDP population is in the Gao district, 10% within Kidal district, and 7% within the district of Timbuktu (figures as of late 2012), including some 10,000 stranded by the closed Algerian border (OCHA, 2013a). It is also expected that many others have been financially incapable of leaving or too vulnerable (elderly or physically incapacitated) to make the journey.

COMPOSITION AND VULNERABILITY

According to the latest data from the CMP, there were 43,084 IDP households containing 301,027 individuals (CMP, 2013a). As of April 2013, the average size of registered households

was 7 people, which is higher than the average family size of 5 to 5.5 persons in the northern regions according to the 2009 census, indicating that IDP households likely include extended or non-family members. The estimated IDP population was 51% women and 49% men, with this distribution nearly identical for all age groups. The majority of IDPs were children under the age of 18 (53%), followed by adults aged 18-64 (44%), and only 2% were more than 65 years old (IOM, 2013b). This is largely similar to demographic data from 2011 for the entire Malian population, although the age groups do not match exactly between the statistics: 47% were under the age of 14 and 7% were over 65 years old (UN Data, 2011).

In general, the situation of IDPs has been marked by security and humanitarian constraints, including lack of access to and limited availability of basic services and supplies such as food, clean water and health care (IDMC, 2013). Of those registered under the DTM, most reported a need for food (79% of households), following by non-food items (9%) and cash (5%).¹⁵ Only 21% of IDPs reported receiving humanitarian assistance (IOM, 2013b), although this varies greatly across and even within regions. IOM and the CMP are currently working with humanitarian partners to analyse and compare this data, and to better map the assistance to displaced persons as CMP partners have agreed on criteria to capture vulnerabilities within the registered IDP population.

The April DTM registrations have reported a total of 26,559 vulnerable individuals (13% of IDP population), which are found in 47.5% of total households. By far the greatest vulnerability among the IDP population involves separated¹⁶ and unaccompanied¹⁷ children (43%), with 11,295 separated children and 675 unaccompanied children. Other vulnerabilities included lactating and pregnant women (24%), persons with a chronic disease (20%), persons with a physical disability (5%), and unaccompanied elderly persons (1%) as well as female headed households (8,675 households) and households headed by a minor (366). IDPs were also economically vulnerable, with 38% of the households reporting no income in their place of displacement, and 29% reporting an irregular income. Of all registered households, 50% reported needing food assistance, while 39% expressed a need for cash assistance. In Bamako and Koulikoro, the majority of households requested monetary assistance, while in Segou and Mopti the majority of households cite food assistance as their primary need (IOM, 2013b).

¹⁵ It is important to note that this reflects the perceptions of IDP households regarding assistance, and they may tend to report more direct and immediate assistance (such as food and cash) as opposed to assistance at the community level (such as for education).

¹⁶ Separated children are "children who are separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other family members" (IOM, 2011a, p. 90).

¹⁷ Unaccompanied children are "persons under the age of majority in a country other than that of their nationality who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other adult who by law or custom is responsible for them" (IOM, 2011a, p. 102).

RETURN MOVEMENTS AND INTENTIONS

A return intention survey carried out by IOM in February 2013 had indicated that returns to areas of origin were likely by the end of the year - security situation permitting (IOM, 2013d). In the survey, 93% of IDPs indicated that they wanted to return to their place of origin, with the majority (62%) stating that they would base their final decision on the security situation (IOM, 2013e). Although mass returns have not occurred due to the prevailing security situation in areas of origin, as of April 2013 the majority of IDPs (95%) continued to express their desire to return. For 76%, the decision to return will depend on improved safety conditions, while 11% give priority to the improvement of economic conditions. Another 3% reported that an improvement in the food situation is the primary need (IOM, 2013b). Among the spontaneous returnees to the North recorded at flow monitoring points established by IOM in Bamako and Mopti, the lack of social services in the South is cited as the principal factor motivating the decision to return to the North, while others are apparently motivated by security improvements in certain northern areas (IOM, 2013a). The protocol for the upcoming elections may also be a factor influencing return, since it has been uncertain whether IDPs will be able to vote from their area of displacement. Also, most of those who have indicated that they want to stay in the South are people who have been directly affected by violence – victims of rape, amputations or torture (IOM internal documents).

Movements to the North also include those who are returning temporarily in order to assess local conditions or to maintain and repair their houses in advance of the rainy season. Shelter are an important factor to be taken into account in the context of return movements. Even though the majority (92%) of those surveyed in February wished to return to their former house, many respondents (30%) indicated that their habitat had been damaged or destroyed, likely due, in addition to destruction related to the fighting, to the temporary neglect of houses made of mud (*banco*) that normally require regular maintenance. Many houses will likely require repair work, given that only 7% indicated that they intended to build a new home or live with relatives. It is also important to keep in mind that many IDPs, having sold their assets in order to flee, do not have the means to return should they want to (IOM, 2013d).

The CMP does not encourage return since the conditions are not yet in place to support mass return movements. Some spontaneous returns have been observed, even as further displacement continued. There were reports of free buses being advertised through the radio (Radio Aadar Koima) for Gao residents wanting to return home (Jourdain, 2013). It was also reported that buses and food were provided for free by some politicians, in preparation for the elections later this year (IOM internal documents).

2. Cross-Border Flows and Impact on Neighbouring Countries and Beyond

As of the end of May 2013, at least 185,144 Malians had fled to neighbouring countries, including 176,144 registered as refugees with UNHCR. Most refugees were in Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso (174,598), with a few in Guinea (26) and Togo (20) (UNHCR, 2013c). In Niger, another 5,000 Malians were living in spontaneous sites near the border, in Mentés and Midal (UNHCR, 2013a). An estimated 1,500 Malian refugees had fled to Algeria, according to UNHCR (2013d), and an additional 4,000 Malians were reported fleeing into Cote d'Ivoire (IOM internal documents). Cross-border displacements continue today, although the number of new displacements remains relatively low since the January 2013 military intervention (UNHCR, 2013g).

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

The majority of refugees are pastoralists from Tuareg or Maure ethnic groups, and were thus more drawn to neighbouring countries rather than to Southern Mali given the broadly similar livelihood and environmental conditions in the neighbouring countries (ECHO, 2013). The destination of Malian refugees in neighbouring countries was chosen based on a) the proximity and accessibility from their respective region of origin in Mali, b) similar ethnic background (for instance, Malian pastoralists who sought refuge in Hodh el Charghi, Mauritania share some ethnic roots with the Mauritanian pastoralists from that region), and c) presence of Malian diaspora communities in countries of the region (for instance, in Burkina Faso) (IRIN, 2012b; IOM internal documents). The majority of refugees are women and children, as the men stayed behind to take care of family properties (UNHCR, 2013h; IOM internal documents).

The largest concentration of registered refugees has been near the border with Mali, in either makeshift camps or official ones. In order to decrease the risk of tensions at the border linked to waves of incoming refugees, UNHCR has worked with governments to relocate these populations to official camps that are often further inland (UNHCR, 2012b) – for instance, in Niger from spontaneous sites along the borders in Tillabery and Tajoua Regions to official camps in Abala, Mangazie, Ayorou and Intekan (IOM internal documents), in Burkina Faso from Damba and Gandafabou settlements and spontaneous sites to official camps like Mentao or Goudébo and in Mauritania from Fassala transit centre to Mbéra refugee camp. Some Malians who fled into neighbouring countries also settled in urban centres, as for example in Mauritania, where an estimated 15,000 Malians reportedly moved to Nouakchott as of 9 January 2013 (IRIN, 2013d).

NEEDS AND IMPACTS

According to UNHCR, the needs of the refugees remain great and are not fully met. For example, 80% of the refugee children are not receiving primary education (UN, 2013b) due to the fact that the schools around the camps are insufficient and government schools are too far away. The refugee popu-

lations have also had significant impacts on local host communities. Given the food crisis within most of these countries, the influx of refugees or returnees (such as Nigeriens who had been residing in Mali) who sometimes bring livestock has weakened already fragile communities, by putting additional pressure on natural and economic resources and leading to an exhaustion of coping mechanisms among host communities (UN, 2013b). In Niger, the interrupted food trade with Mali also contributes to the food insecurity and malnutrition. Furthermore, there is a risk of inter-community tensions due to the existing food insecurity crisis and the impact on social services, highlighting the importance of ensuring that humanitarian support balances the needs of host populations and the refugees (IOM internal documents).

The following information is available per country:

Mauritania: As of May 2013, there were 74,108 Malian refugees in Mauritania (UNHCR, 2013c). As of February, 1,500 refugees were crossing into Mauritania on average each week (UNHCR, 2013g). This large flow of refugees has had an impact in the southeast of the country, where the refugees are located (IOM, 2013f), exacerbating the environmental pressures on the local eco-system and on the economic sustainability of the local population (IOM internal documents). The livestock brought by some refugees could create further degrade of the pastoral lands and may force local herders to move earlier than expected to find other pastures (FEWSNET, 2013). In addition, Mauritanian herders who have traditionally crossed into Mali with their herds can no longer do so (IOM internal documents). Primary needs within the camp include shelter support, water and sanitation and health, as residents receive insufficient water and there are too few latrines to service the population which could lead to risk of disease. In addition, out of the 12,000 Mauritanian refugees registered by UNHCR in Mali, about 8,000 have expressed the wish to return (UNHCR, 2013d).

Niger: Niger had received 50,515 Malian refugees, according to the most recent figures from May 2013 (UNHCR, 2013c). Another 5,000 Malians were estimated to be living in spontaneous sites near the border (UNHCR, 2013a). Refugees are mostly in the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions, which are highly vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition (UNHCR, 2013c). Refugee numbers have continued to increase this year. Since the start of the military intervention in Mali in January 2013, 10,000 new arrivals of Malian refugees were reported in Tahoua region, where water is scarce and no health facilities are available (UNHCR, 2013f). In addition to Malian refugees, 3,991 Nigeriens who had been living in Mali have also crossed back into Niger (UNHCR, 2013a) As of February 2013, since food stocks were not locally

available and could not be replenished from Mali, there were concerns that the region could face problems (IOM, 2013f). While there have been recent improvements in the nutrition situation in refugee camps, additional water and sanitation facilities are needed and shelters need to be improved. Currently, the refugees in Niger do not consider it safe enough for them to return to Mali (IOM internal documents).

Burkina Faso: There were 49,975 Malian refugees in Burkina Faso as of the end of April 2013 (UNHCR, 2013c). Refugees have stated that they are not yet considering return as they do not think it is safe enough (IOM internal documents). As in Niger and Mauritania, more financial support is required to meet the needs of the refugees (UNHCR, 2013h). Local populations remain vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition, and with the rainy season arriving they are at risk of the expected yearly floods (IOM internal documents).

Guinea and Togo: The number of refugees in Guinea (26) and Togo (20) remained very minimal as of January 2013 (UNHCR, 2013c).

Algeria: Although the border with Mali has been officially closed since 14 January 2013 (Oxfam, 2013a), some Malians have still been crossing into Algeria to seek refuge. As of April 2013, UNHCR reported that there were 1,500 Malian refugees in Algeria (UNHCR, 2013f). Those entering Algeria in January 2013 were mostly women and children, who went to places such as Timayawen or Tinzawaten where they rented homes (UNHCR, 2013i).

Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire: There have been no reports of Malians entering Senegal, and only limited numbers have been reported in Cote d'Ivoire. Contingency plans have been put together for a multisectoral response in the case of an influx (IOM internal documents). Based on a joint assessment undertaken by IOM, UNHCR and the Service to Assist Refugees and Stateless People (*Service d'Aide et Assistance aux Réfugiés et Apatrides*, SAARA) in November 2012, about 4,000 Malians had crossed the border into Cote d'Ivoire as a result of the conflict. All of these were staying with family members and in host communities, and there was no request for asylum or refugee status. Since then, it appears that most of them have been returning to Mali as the security situation improves (IOM internal documents).

Countries beyond the region: So far, there have not been significant flows of Malians into countries beyond the region. Europe and the United States have not registered large influxes of Malians seeking asylum

since the conflict. Both Switzerland and France removed Mali from the list of “safe” countries at the end of 2012, thus allowing Malians to apply for asylum (Forum Refugies, 2012; Slate Afrique, 2012). In 2012, 2,531 Malians applied for asylum in Europe, a low figure in comparison to asylum-seekers from other countries. Mali ranked 35th out of 44 in industrialised countries that received asylum seekers in 2012, a significant reduction in rank as compared to 2011 when it was 27 out of 40. Mali was among the top 10 countries of origin of asylum seekers only in Italy (9th) and Spain (6th) (UNHCR, 2012a).

RETURN MOVEMENTS AND INTENTIONS

Most refugees do not yet consider it safe to return, although some Malian refugees have reported that they wish to return home and there are some reports of refugees returning to Mali. Still, while figures are not available, it appears that there are far less refugees returning than IDPs (IOM internal documents), which can be partly due to the ethnic composition of the refugee population. As for IDPs, the return of Malian refugees is not encouraged since conditions are not yet in place to support mass return movements. Additional protection concerns are raised by the fact that most Malian refugees are Tuareg and Maure pastoralists, ethnic groups which are, often wrongly, widely associated with the rebel groups. During 2012, some Tuaregs that fled the conflict stayed within Mali, but as tensions increased, they tended to flee to neighbouring countries, such as refugee camps in Mauritania or Niger (Blair, 2013). Some armed groups, such as Ganda Koy, the leader of the Songhai militia, have used the conflict to publicly blame them for supporting MNLA rebels, in an attempt to weaken Tuaregs. Since the military intervention in January 2013, there have been reports of human rights violations and ethnic conflicts due to ‘revenge attacks’ against Tuaregs and other light-skinned Northerners that are perceived to be associated with the rebels, leading to further displacements and presenting challenges for the return of refugees.

3. Other Crisis-affected Mobility Patterns and Flows

In addition to displacing large populations of Malians internally and into neighbouring countries, the conflict has significantly impacted a variety of mobility patterns and flows.

Pastoralists and nomadic migration flows: Pastoralists and nomadic groups have clearly been affected by the conflict, with insecurity causing these groups to disperse throughout the North of Mali as well as across borders (IRIN, 2013a). The majority of refugees are in fact pastoralists from Tuareg or Maure ethnic groups. Many more have been internally displaced within Mali’s northern regions, although it is difficult to determine to what degree given the lack of access. There are also reports of nomadic settlements outside of Bamako (IOM internal documents). This large-scale displacement has

impacted traditional movements and livelihoods. For instance, the conflict has caused pastoralists to abandon their usual migratory routes and not return to pastoral lands north of the Niger River (IRIN, 2012a). Many have also had to abandon their traditional tents due to fighting (OCHA, 2013e), leaving many without shelter. Insurgents would take livestock at will during the occupation, and now pastoralists do not have enough money to feed their remaining livestock. Since they cannot afford to keep them, many have been forced to give away or sell their livestock at a very low price. This situation will have negative and potentially irreversible effects on their livelihoods, and may lead to permanent migration flows to urban areas (IRIN, 2013a).

Circular migration flows: Very little information exists pertaining to the impacts of the crisis on regular circular migration flows, such as between Cote d’Ivoire and Mali. It would appear that labour migration flows to Guinea of Malians from the South to Guinea, where they work in gold mines in Northern Guinea, have continued uninterrupted during the conflict (IOM internal documents). In Senegal, while no official figures exist, it is possible that migration flows have decreased, particularly as there has been a decrease in commercial flows between the two countries (IOM internal documents). Within Mali, it appears that there has been a reversal in circular migration flows between the North and South. According to IDP interviews, in the past men would travel south for economic reasons, leaving their families in the North. After they were displaced, these trends were reversed: as their entire families moved south, the men now travel north to check on property and assets (IOM internal documents).

Urbanisation: The conflict has further increased the trend of urbanisation, with many of those internally displaced fleeing towards urban centres in Mali, where they are likely to stay for now and may remain permanently if the conditions for return do not improve. Given that a high percentage of IDPs are in the cities, this puts additional pressure on the infrastructure and services available both for the local population and the newly arrived. Urbanization trends can also be seen in the neighbouring countries where Malian refugees are fleeing. For instance, as mentioned previously in the case of Mauritania and Guinea, many Malians escaping the conflict have moved directly into cities (Nouakchott and Conakry) instead of staying at the border in refugee camps. Additionally, as the arrival of refugees puts pressure on limited resources in host communities, many local populations may also follow this trend of moving to cities. In Mauritania, the government is asking for increased support for the local population, in order to avoid mass displacement towards the urban centres (IOM internal documents).

Irregular and transit migration flows: Mali has been an important country for irregular and transit migration, although it is unclear how these migration patterns have been affected by the conflict, or how they may be affected as the situation progresses in the North. Some degree of irregular migration reportedly continues. For instance, Malians and other

migrants continue to transit through Niger to cross the Libyan border (IOM internal documents). The current crisis has heightened public awareness within the region of the risk of terrorism and further insecurity. This general concern has given some governments the public support to send troops to Mali (for example, Burkina Faso and Senegal). In addition, Guinea has reinforced its borders with Mali, while Algeria has closed its border. Furthermore, the instability of the Sahel region could also lead to an intensification of illicit migration flows and drug smuggling into the Mediterranean, as well as potential threats of insurgent attacks in that region (Melly, 2013).

Victims of Trafficking: Currently no information exists on changes in human trafficking in Mali or the region due to the conflict, although some reports have indicated that children are now at a higher risk of being trafficked, due to the hasty departure of families fleeing the crisis, the abandonment of property and children separated from the head of household or other family members (IOM internal documents).

4. Response to the Crisis in Mali and Beyond

Humanitarian needs and support from international actors: Humanitarian access has slowly improved since the end of January 2013, following the military intervention and improved access to the North of Mali, allowing humanitarian actors to scale up activities and better assess the situation. Still, while access to the North has improved, this is primarily in the urban areas and security cannot be guaranteed outside the cities. Access in the North was also impeded due to the insecurity and the breakdown of commercial transport systems during the conflict. Public bus transportation has since resumed between Bamako and Gao, and boats have started to serve the cities of Mopti and Timbuktu (UNHCR, 2013g). However, landmines and improvised explosive devices along these routes make access risky both for civilians as well as for humanitarian actors (UNSC, 2013c; IDMC, 2013).

Humanitarian assistance has been an important factor in supporting the displaced, since many still do not receive sufficient services given that social services throughout the country have been overwhelmed or have shut down completely (MSF, 2013; IOM internal documents). While the North may have borne the brunt of the occupation and experienced a major breakdown of services, the South is now hosting 224,641 displaced persons, and chronic food insecurity and malnutrition are affecting the entire Sahel region. Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu are often affected each year by cholera epidemics (between June and September), and the recent migration flows could bring increased risk of spreading the epidemic this year. Taking into account this reality, the humanitarian appeal for funding, the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Mali, includes the following priority needs throughout the country: food security; nutrition; water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH); and protection (UN, 2013c).

Even in areas where access is unhindered (such as in the South), support to IDPs and host communities is often hampered by a serious lack of funding and capacity (IDMC, 2013). The CAP for Mali is only 30% funded thus far (OCHA, 2013b). The Mali CAP is also linked to other country CAPs throughout the region (Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger and Mauritania) through the Sahel Regional Strategy 2013, in order to cohesively address needs stemming from the food crisis and the Mali conflict, and these are also only 29% funded (OCHA, 2013b). The CAPs and the Sahel Strategy are frequently updated to reflect changes in the situation, and the Mali CAP will be updated this month (May 2013). The UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel Region, which is expected to soon be presented to the UN Security Council, will also provide a framework that encompasses governance, security, humanitarian, human rights and development (UN, 2013a).

Support from the diaspora: The Malian diaspora has also played a role in mitigating both the humanitarian and political effects of the crisis. The Malian diaspora has been notably active in France, where they advocated for the international military intervention (Keller, 2013). They supported the establishment of schools and raising donations through a group called *Collectif des Maliens de France*. On 7 April 2012, “the March for the Peace and Unity of Mali” was organized in Paris to raise awareness about the on-going crisis in Mali. At the beginning of the conflict, the diaspora also played a role in trying to explain the ethnic make-up of Mali, clarifying that there are many ethnic groups in the North other than the Tuareg. The diaspora has also worked on awareness-raising within Tuareg populations and on addressing many of the issues in the North that are not Tuareg-specific, including underdevelopment, poverty and conflict resolution. According to the Ambassador of Mali to France, there is strong inter-Malian solidarity among the entire Malian diaspora and such events have also been taking place in other parts of the world (OECD, 2012). For instance, donations from the Malian diaspora in Burundi, Equatorial Guinea and Senegal were given to the government for distribution. According to the government, financial contributions were also provided by diaspora groups to support military actions (Government of Mali, 2013a).

Support from governments and the private sector: The Government of Mali received donations from Algeria, China, Morocco and Turkey to assist the displaced populations. Some support also came from the private sector, including Moneygram, SOPAM Energy Mali, and the water and juice company Kirene. These donations often consisted of food packs and water that were distributed to displaced populations in the North (Government of Mali, 2013a; IOM internal documents). Governments in the region, the African Union and ECOWAS are heavily involved in discussions concerning the situation in Mali, although the security and political aspects of the crisis are at the forefront of these dialogues.

5. Post-Crisis Transition and Stabilization

While humanitarian needs continue, the country is also faced with the challenges of political transition and stabilization. The country is preparing for elections, expected to take place later this year, and the United Nations Office for Mali (UNOM) has established offices to support the political process (Feltman, 2013). In the past, there have been relatively frequent uprisings including by the *Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l’Azawad* (MPLA) in 1990 and then in 2000, indicating that the current situation is not an isolated event and that there is a need to identify durable solutions for peace.

A decisive step in the political process occurred in January 2013, when the Government of Mali adopted a road map for the transition. This road map highlights the humanitarian needs of displaced populations and refugees, and the need to ensure the facilitation of return once conditions are in place to support such returns. The Durable Recovery Plan for Mali 2013-2014 (Government of Mali, 2013b), established in April 2013, provides a clear picture of the way forward for the transition phase. The recovery plan makes reference to

displaced populations and refugees and to ensuring that their needs are met, while also focusing significant attention on the return and reintegration process.

The UN Security Council recently established a United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which will become effective on 1 July 2013. Its mandate will encompass supporting the transitional authorities of Mali to re-establish government administration, as well as supporting efforts to rebuild the Malian security sector, stabilize key population centres, restore state authority, deter threats and take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements (UNSC, 2013a).

In order to come up with a long-term solution to the chronic crisis in the Sahel and to better prepare communities for future crises, the “resilience agenda” has been put forward with the intention of addressing both humanitarian and development objectives. While discussions are still on-going regarding how to put resilience into practice, the EU launched the “Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative – Sahel” (AGIR Sahel) in June 2012 to move this resilience agenda forward.



3

PART III: RECOMMENDATIONS

To overcome the current crisis, Mali needs to address a wide variety of challenges simultaneously, including, amongst others, launching a political process that is genuinely participatory and promotes reconciliation and peace, re-establishing the provision of basic public services in the North and improving their delivery in the South, kick-starting economic development and modernizing the agricultural sector, and reforming the security services. Addressing all aspects of human mobility related to the crisis in an integrated manner is one of those challenges, and one that is directly linked to sustainable peace, the improvement of stability and human security, and the promotion of humanitarian protection and assistance. Concretely, IOM recommends the following areas for attention, support and assistance:

1. Ensure a Two-Pronged Approach: Humanitarian assistance and protection as well as support for transition and recovery

The relative calm brought by the international military intervention has rightly shifted attention to what needs to be done to put Mali firmly on the path towards sustainable peace and economic development. The Malian transitional government has clearly indicated that it needs support from the international community in order to move the country forward and implement an ambitious Durable Recovery Plan for Mali 2013-2014, which provides a comprehensive overview of the many challenges Mali needs to tackle in the coming months with a particular focus on the need for economic development.

At the same time as preparing for the longer-term transitional and recovery needs in both the North and the South of the country, the Malian transitional Government and the international community need to ensure that the immediate life-saving needs of the displaced and other crisis-affected persons are being met through smart and efficient humanitarian assistance. If done well, it can also serve to reduce pressures on communities and avoid increased tensions and unrest during the transition period. The most vulnerable populations have urgent needs such as for food, shelter, health care, education and livelihood support. Interventions should aim to reduce aid dependency and protect these vulnerable populations from abuses including gender-based violence, human trafficking and the recruitment of children by armed groups. It is important that strategies and activities to support displaced populations take into account the predominantly urban nature of displacement in Mali.

This two-pronged approach likely needs to continue into the

foreseeable future. The most likely scenario today is that displacements will become protracted due to the continuation of low-level conflict and insecurity in the North, the time it will take for basic services such as health and education to become more widely available in the areas of displacement, and constraints imposed by the agricultural cycle on displaced populations that depend on farming for their livelihood. The fact that communities and local authorities in the North need to be ready for the return and reintegration of both refugee and IDP populations further increases the challenge in this respect. Such protracted displacement would require continued provision of support and assistance to the most vulnerable populations.

2. Strengthen Information Collection and Management

In order to better plan activities along the spectrum of humanitarian aid to recovery and transition support, it is essential to further invest in tracking population movements; monitoring and assessing the needs and intentions of IDPs and returnees, as well as the needs of host communities in areas of displacement and return; monitoring protection concerns; and profiling migrants along with their intended movements. In addition, expanding the monitoring of cross-border and internal population flows is recommended to capture any spontaneous returns of refugees and IDPs. In parallel, the CMP will need further financial support in order to increase its capacity in information management.

3. Establish a Regional Approach to the Migration Crisis Affecting Mali

Due to the large number of people displaced across the region, the porous nature of the borders throughout the Sahel, the important trade routes and cross-border activities that support the regional economy (including illegal trade), and finally the migration (including trafficking) and transhumance routes, it is essential to establish a regional approach to the migration crisis affecting Mali. In particular, this implies the development of complementary and consistent approaches to address the issues of refugees and IDPs, while recognizing the important differences between the IDP and refugee populations.

Moreover, the food insecurity crisis that affects the entire Sahel region also requires a better integration of mobility within humanitarian and transitional approaches in Mali and within the broader context of the regional resilience agenda. Additional information is needed to fully address the impacts

of the current crisis in Mali on regional mobility patterns and migrant groups such as the pastoralists and seasonal migrants, and to further understand how the crisis has worsened pre-existing harmful migration dynamics, such as the smuggling and trafficking of people. Such efforts would also assist in assessing the impact that the crisis has had on trafficking and smuggling operations, which in turn may support the development of medium- to long-term strategies of prevention and assistance to victims of smuggling or trafficking.

4. Support Stabilization and Transition Activities as an Immediate Strategic Goal inside Mali

It is essential that the strategy of the international community includes community-based stabilization initiatives, as these are critical to help prevent the occurrence of further grievances that could potentially fuel another conflict and limit the power of various spoilers. As long as return cannot be encouraged, the main objective must be to mitigate and address the root causes of conflict (for instance, through community dialogues, peace dividends distribution, or improving access to basic social services and economic opportunities). At the same time, community stabilization activities should be prioritized as these will lay the foundation for enabling the return of displaced populations, and can further contribute to reducing the potential for additional displacement and/or secondary displacement among spontaneous returnees. In this context, it is vital that relationships and trust are built between local populations and local authorities in the North. Rapid support to the rehabilitation of community infrastructure and the re-establishment of basic services and government presence in the North can also contribute to the broader resilience agenda set forward by the international community.

5. Plan for Durable Solutions, Including Return and Reintegration Activities, in a Careful and Strategic Manner

Although the volume, pace and nature of returns will continue to be contingent primarily (but not exclusively) on the security situation, longer-term stability will depend on three key variables: the availability of basic services in communities in the North, livelihood opportunities, and increased confidence in the government. As long as the conditions for return are not in place, the humanitarian community will not promote return, although efforts must still be made to support spontaneous returns through the provision of humanitarian assistance en route.

Once conditions for return are met from a security and humanitarian perspective, urgent efforts should be made to support the return and reintegration of displaced populations in their communities of origin. This initiative should be encompassed within a larger durable solution strategy for the displaced, which takes the development strategy into account and includes all relevant stakeholders. This would include

initiatives related to access to basic social services including shelter and non-food items delivery, education, health, and water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) activities. This strategy should be in place for returning migrants, including refugees and IDPs, with balanced support to both groups as well as to host communities in order to avoid potential tensions.

6. Invest in Building Peace and an Open Democratic Process

Given the growing tensions within communities faced with displacement, as well as the historical tensions and inequalities between the North and South, it is essential to also facilitate the peace-building, conflict mitigation and confidence-building process – between different ethnic communities, as well as between the entire population and the government institutions and their partners. The establishment on 30 March 2013 of the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation is a positive and crucial step forward taken by the Government. Efforts are needed to ensure that it is used effectively and seen as a legitimate process by all relevant parties.

In addition, a number of emerging priorities must be addressed in order to promote peace:

Elections: In the context of the consolidation of the democratic process, an urgent effort is recommended to enable disenfranchised, displaced populations to register and vote in the July 2013 presidential elections, in order to encourage people to regain trust in the Government and to obtain confidence in democracy.

Vulnerable Youth and Ex-combatants: A national peacebuilding process and security sector reform through governance, disarmament, reintegration and targeted livelihood support for disaffected and/or vulnerable youth and ex-combatants will also be required – with a special focus on demobilizing and reintegrating child soldiers back into their communities. This area will need a complete framework formed by inter-Ministerial Circulars and measures of the 1612 Resolution of the UN Security Council in coordination with the integrated UN mission.

Malian Diaspora: The Malian Diaspora has played an important role during the conflict by advocating for the intervention. The diaspora can be a key stakeholder in moving forward and stabilising the situation in Mali, and this should be capitalised on. Peace building, reconciliation and development activities should include the diaspora to tap into their skills and networks at the national and community levels and promote durable peace even beyond the country's borders.

7. Address Migration and Border Management in Mali and in the Region from a Security Perspective, and Complement with Livelihood and Income-Generation Support for Border Communities

The propagation of arms in the region from the previous conflict in Libya, together with the lack of control of those arms and weapons coming into the region, enabled the outbreak of the conflict in January 2012. Some governments, including in countries neighbouring Mali, have already made requests for support and have developed national integrated programmes related to Security Sector Reform (SSR). It is crucial to implement these programmes in order to establish adequate mechanisms to control and secure national borders across the Sahel: to address transnational organized crime, to build government capacity to organize disarmament programmes, to provide protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable migrants and to combat money laundering and financing of

criminal groups. Since cross-border illegal activities flourish in the context of weak governance, it is also important to invest in alternative livelihoods and income-generating opportunities for marginalised border communities, whose members are currently engaged activities such as the cross-border trafficking of weapons and people. At the same time, policies must also accommodate the cross-border migration patterns of pastoralist and nomadic groups, so as not to hinder their movement and negatively impact on their livelihood.

"Do no harm" approach: All activities should incorporate the needs of both the displaced and host communities to reduce the risk of tension over limited resources in a context of food insecurity that could be perceived as ethnic discrimination.





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