



KEY PRIORITIES

355,000

INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PEOPLE

+7.1 M

PEOPLE IN NEED

High Risk

FOOD INSECURITY

6.8/10

INFORM CLIMATE
CHANGE RISK SCORE

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

Since January 2024, protracted violence and conflict between non-state armed groups (NSAGs) linked to the Islamic State have besieged major towns in northeastern and central Mali (in the Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, San, Ségou, Taoudénit, and Tombouctou regions) (AP 01/05/2024). By 30 April, there were nearly 355,000 IDPs in the country, hosted in camps without adequate services and in host communities (Taqadoumy 27/04/2024; UNHCR accessed 29/05/2024). By February 2024, over 7.1 million people required humanitarian assistance, nearly 3.9 million of whom were children (UNICEF 17/05/2024 and 28/05/2024).

During 2023, more than 72,500 people were displaced in Mali as a result of clashes between rival NSAGs, inter-communal conflicts, and Malian Armed Forces (MAF) operations against NSAGs. The regions of Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, Taoudénit, and Tombouctou were the worst affected (WHO 05/04/2024). Since 2023, NSAG-imposed blockades on major northern towns and supply roads have created starvation-like conditions for communities, prompting some to leave and settle in IDP camps. In the affected regions, prices for basic food items have skyrocketed and markets have been abandoned, with the few that remain open struggling to serve the influx of new arrivals and host communities (FEWS NET 20/03/2024; TNH 12/03/2024; VOA 03/05/2024).

Mali is highly vulnerable to climate change, facing acute challenges from rising temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events (IMF 14/06/2023; Tear Fund 17/11/2023). Mali has an INFORM climate change risk score of 6.8/10, with extremely high scores in several areas: hazard exposure (7.2/10), hazard vulnerability (6.7/10), and lack of coping capacity (6.5/10). These scores are primarily the result of the effects of river floods, drought, epidemics, displacement, and inadequate infrastructure and institutional capacities (INFORM accessed 29/05/2024).

Anticipated scope and scale

Political uncertainty is likely to continue in 2024–25, as the military junta, which seized power through coups in 2020 and 2021, faces two major security threats: Islamist militants and a resurgent conflict in the north. In June 2023, the junta solidified its control through a constitutional referendum and is not expected to organise presidential elections or a transition to a civilian-led government in 2024–25 (EIU accessed 19/05/2024).

The withdrawal of The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2023 is anticipated to worsen insecurity and instability. Consequently, violent clashes between military forces and NSAGs are expected to increase, causing further displacement, especially in northern and central Mali (EIU accessed 19/05/2024).

According to the IPC, areas of Ménaka with some of the worst conflict-affected populations are expected to be facing Famine (IPC Phase 5) levels of food insecurity during the upcoming lean season (May–August). In the southern parts of Gao and Mopti, food insecurity is likely to deteriorate from Stressed (IPC Phase 2) to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from May 2024 onwards (FEWS NET 20/03/2024). Given the substantial decrease in economic activities caused by reduced mobility and the loss of productive assets, households are unable to generate sufficient income to purchase an adequate amount of food from the market. Consequently, the food security situation is likely to deteriorate (FEWS NET 30/04/2024).

Humanitarian constraints

Since January, intermittent violence has hampered humanitarian access, leading to little or no assessment of the needs of both the displaced population and those remaining in affected areas. Information remains scarce and, by 5 June, details on humanitarian needs were still lacking.

In the Ménaka region, humanitarian access is poor and frequently disrupted by security threats along the main road, significantly impeding households' access to essential food supplies (FEWS NET 20/03/2024).

Humanitarian responders usually rely on aircraft to bypass blockades, but flights to Ménaka commune in the Ménaka region have been limited following previous cancellations resulting from difficulties securing the runway after MINUSMA's 2023 withdrawal (TNH 12/03/2024; WFP 28/02/2024).

In the Tombouctou region, aid programmes for recently displaced people have been disrupted by insecurity, leaving humanitarian responders unable to travel to the area. A siege imposed in Lere town to restrict the movement of mercenaries and soldiers is likely to indirectly affect the movement of humanitarian workers in the region (TNH 12/03/2024; IRC 02/02/2024; UN 28/08/2023).

Although local agreements have enabled blockades to be lifted in certain towns, humanitarian workers remain uncertain about a return to normalcy. This uncertainty stems from concerns that some blockade enforcers reside in host communities and may not adhere to agreed terms (TNH 12/03/2024).

CRISIS IMPACTS

Displacement

The latest figures from the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix show that more than 50,000 people were displaced in Mali between February–March 2024 (IOM 09/05/2024).

By 30 April, there were nearly 355,000 IDPs across Mali, around 57% of whom were women and 43% children (UNHCR accessed 29/05/2024; Govt. Mali 02/02/2024). As of October 2022, the number of IDPs was over 440,000, which is approximately 19% more than as of April 2024. This decrease is caused by security improvements in some areas, which have allowed IDPs, still living in extreme conditions, to return to their homes in the centre and north of the country, but many obstacles remain, preventing them from finding lasting solutions (APA news 22/05/2023, UNHCR accessed 29/05/2024). By December 2023, over 12,800 households in Ségou and San regions were accommodating over 47,700 IDPs, including more than 27,600 women and girls and nearly 20,100 men and boys (Protection Cluster 16/05/2024). During 2023, more than 72,500 people were forced to flee their homes in Mali as a consequence of violent conflict between rival NSAGs, conflict between communities, and MAF military operations against NSAGs. Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, Taoudénit, and Tombouctou were the most severely affected regions (WHO 05/04/2024).

Table 1. IDPs across Mali by December 2023

REGIONS	NUMBER OF IDPS
Mopti	88,947
Ménaka	57,931
Tombouctou	43,683
Bandiagara	42,208
Gao	36,354
Ségou	35,852
Kidal	12,857
San	11,882
Douentza	6,145
Koulikoro	3,814

REGIONS	NUMBER OF IDPS
Bamako	3,462
Sikasso	2,986
Taoudénit	2,899
Koutiala	2,064
Diolila	1,504
Kita	917
Bougouni	720
Kayes	514

Source: ACAPS using data from Govt. Mali (02/02/2024)

By 7 June, there was still no updated, publicly available information on IDPs across Mali's regions.

Protection

2024 has seen a notable increase in protection incidents in Mali, with a growing number of civilians targeted. Protection responders documented a surge of over 500% in the frequency of incidents in January 2024 as compared to January 2023 (ECHO 23/04/2024).

Women and children are the most vulnerable to protection risks, particularly in the Gao, Kidal, Ménaka, Mopti, Ségou, Taoudénit, and Tombouctou regions, where extremist groups are most prevalent. In 2024, the protection situation worsened as NSAG and military operations caused instability in remote villages (Protection Cluster 16/05/2024).

In January 2024, an al-Qaeda-linked Islamist NSAG killed 32 civilians in central Mali, including three children, and burnt over 350 homes, forcing 2,000 villagers to flee. An ethnic militia in central Mali also killed at least 13 civilians (including two children), abducted 24 others, and looted property and livestock (HRW 08/05/2024).

Cultural conservatism, characterised by forced marriage and female genital mutilation, in the Ségou and San regions has increased women and girls' vulnerability to protection risks. By May 2024, 1,297 protection incidents against women and girls had been reported, up from 1,155 in 2023. While the number of cases appears relatively low, this is only because poor information sharing, lack of strategic planning, and weak reporting and monitoring mechanisms has led to underreporting (Protection Cluster 16/05/2024).

In the Ménaka region, traumatic conflict-related injuries – including gunshot wounds, stab wounds, and injuries from improvised explosive devices – accounted for around 50% of interventions in 2023, with women and children being the primary victims (MSF 17/05/2024).

Food security and livelihoods

Insecurity and NSAG-imposed blockades of main roads have led to significant disruptions to the movement of people and goods in Mali's central and northern regions, reducing income from economic activities, hindering market operations, and limiting households' physical access to selling livestock and purchasing supplies. Consequently, by March 2024, households in the southern parts of the Gao, Kayes, Koulikoro, and Ségou regions were experiencing IPC 2 and IPC 3 levels of food insecurity. In response, households are resorting to atypical migration, in-kind or cash borrowing, cutting non-food expenditures, and opting for the cheapest available food (FEWS NET 20/03/2024). Given early stock depletion, high food prices, and livelihood decline, poor households in the Gao and Mopti regions have less access to food during the lean season (FEWS NET 30/04/2024).

As a result of food shortages, food prices in Ménaka remain over 150% above the five-year average, despite a slight drop in April. Reduced mobility and the loss of productive assets have reduced economic activity, preventing households from earning enough to buy food (FEWS NET 30/04/2024). In March 2024, Ménaka was the most food insecure region in Mali, facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of food insecurity (FEWS NET 20/03/2024). Physical and economic barriers to food markets meant that a small percentage of households in the Ménaka region, especially in inaccessible areas, were experiencing IPC 5 (FEWS NET 30/04/2024). Since August 2023, various NSAGs have imposed blockade-like conditions, obstructing the main supply routes, in multiple cities in the Gao, Ménaka, and Tombouctou regions (UNICEF 11/12/2023). In the town of Ménaka, the blockade lasted for four months, while in the city of Tombouctou, the blockade still remained in place by 1 May, with the lack of availability driving up food prices. According to city authorities, displaced people have been going from house to house asking for food for their families (AP 01/05/2024; Save the Children 01/05/2024).

Humanitarian organisations' limited movement means that IDPs and refugees residing in camps may face challenges accessing adequate nutrition, heightening their vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition.

NSAG blockades of northern towns and roads have resulted in livelihood losses, as traders are unable to restock. Although blockades in Ménaka have been lifted, their impacts can remain long after, as planting seasons may have been missed and livestock stolen during prolonged sieges, disrupting people's income sources for years to come (TNH 12/03/2024).

Between February–March 2024, 47% of the 54,000 displaced people said that they moved in search of employment and livelihoods (IOM 09/05/2024).

Health and WASH

In 2024, violent incidents between the MAF and NSAGs have left many communities without access to healthcare. In one instance, in Niono town in Ségou region, violent conflict between the MAF and NSAGs prevented people from seeking healthcare services (MSF 17/05/2024).

In the Ménaka region, there has been an increase in patients seeking treatment for conflict-related injuries, as the living conditions of displaced and low-income households have aggravated health problems. By April 2024, the Ménaka commune was struggling with increased incidences of acute respiratory infections, acute malnutrition and its complications, diarrhoeal diseases, malaria, dermatitis, and chronic conditions such as high blood pressure (WHO 05/04/2024).

The WASH situation in Mali is dire. By January 2023, approximately 3.2 million people, nearly 17% of the population, lacked access to clean water (OCHA 03/01/2023; WFP accessed 29/05/2024). By May 2024, 11.2 million people, nearly 59% of the population, did not have access to proper toilet facilities – i.e. those enabling the sanitary disposal of bodily waste (WaterAid accessed 29/05/2024; WFP accessed 29/05/2024; Universal Design accessed 03/06/2024).

The significant influx of IDPs since February 2019 is likely straining essential services, such as WASH, and increasing the risk of disease outbreaks, such as dengue and measles. From the start of 2024 to 28 May, 271 cases of measles had been confirmed (UNICEF 28/05/2024). Between August 2023 and March 2024, there were also 1,163 confirmed cases of dengue (IFRC 02/04/2024).

Education

Children's right to inclusive and quality education in Mali is severely limited by the current situation (UNICEF 02/10/2023). By April 2024, 1,788 schools had been closed across the country, affecting over 536,000 students and 10,700 teachers. The worst situation is in the Mopti region, where 828 schools were closed (UNICEF 28/05/2024). Children who are able to attend school still experience psychological consequences as a result of witnessing the violence of the conflict, with negative impacts on their ability to concentrate and study effectively (NRC 07/09/2023). In Mali in 2020, the literacy rate among people aged 15 and above was 30.8%. In 2010, this percentage was more or less equivalent, 31.1%, indicating that the situation neither improved nor deteriorated (WB accessed 29/05/2024).

DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

Armed conflict and insurgency

The transfer of former MINUSMA bases to the MAF in December 2023 heightened tensions with NSAGs in northern Mali, particularly those affiliated with the Permanent Strategic Framework for Peace, Security, and Development (UN 22/03/2024). This transition has aggravated conflicts, especially in the Kidal region and along the Algerian border.

Throughout 2023, Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin intensified its attacks on civilians and security forces in the Koulikoro, Mopti, and Ségou regions. Similarly, the Islamic State Sahel Province extremist group increased its assaults on civilians, security forces, and pro-government armed groups in the Ménaka region. These attacks involved looting, infrastructure destruction, atrocities against civilians, and blockades of key supply routes, severely disrupting economic activities for affected people. As a result, many people have been forced to relocate to more secure locations (FEWS NET 20/03/2024; UN News 31/12/2023).

After severing ties with France in 2020, Mali's junta aligned with Russia and launched a military offensive against separatist groups in the NSAG-controlled territory of Azawad with the help of a Russian private military company, the Wagner Group (PMC Wagner) (The Citizen 19/05/2024). In December 2021, PMC Wagner began its operation in Mali to strengthen the junta's domestic political position and fight its opponents. PMC Wagner is providing Malian politicians with a 'regime survival package', which helps to prevent a coup, in exchange for finances and access to strategically significant natural resources (CSIS 02/02/2022; BBC 20/02/2024). Since its introduction in December 2021, PMC Wagner has deployed 1,000 foreign fighters to Mali and hosted 15 outposts, including former French bases. Since December 2023, the MAF – under control of the junta and PMC Wagner – have engaged in counterinsurgency operations in Mali's central and northern regions, resulting in the unlawful killing and summary execution of several dozen civilians (CSIS 02/02/2022; HRW 28/03/2024).

Climate-related hazards

Climate-related hazards, such as drought and seasonal floods, are also causing displacement in Mali (USAID 30/04/2024). Climate-related issues have a significant impact on the food security situation, resulting in rising food and fuel prices, causing acute hunger in West and Central Africa (WFP 12/12/2023). Mali is a landlocked country that often experiences river flooding as a result of its geographical features and weather conditions (IFRC 02/02/2024). Specifically, the country is characterised by a dry tropical climate, with high variability between dry and wet

seasons (IFRC 21/09/2020). Floods, in particular, devastate infrastructure, result in significant economic damage, and impede efforts to establish more resilient lives and livelihoods (UNDP accessed 31/05/2024).

Although flood events occur more frequently than drought, the cumulative impact of drought events is greater. Specifically, the drought return period is estimated at three years, while for flooding the return period is two years (Neya et al. 01/03/2024). In Mali, drought aggravates the scarcity of resources, particularly water and fertile land, forcing people to move to other areas to survive (IRC 14/02/2024). Drought poses a significant risk to the livelihoods of farmers and herders, leading to an increase in poverty and decrease in purchasing power for accessing essential services and items (IRC 14/02/2024). Droughts also affect the livestock sector, a crucial economic sector in Mali. It is estimated that droughts cause a yearly decrease of USD 9.5 million in crop revenues, significantly affecting lower-income Malian farmers (WB 26/07/2023).

The latest flooding in Mali, which occurred in June 2023, killed 15 people and affected approximately 300 households in the six communes of Bamako's capital district, flooding streets, damaging buildings, and sending cars floating down the streets (CGTN Africa 16/06/2023). The drought of 2021 resulted in a 10.5% decline in cereal production, threatening the livelihoods of more than three million people. Many market gardens in Mali were deserted, resulting in a decrease in land available for cattle grazing (ICRC 16/11/2022).

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Regional instability and cross-border displacement

The escalation of extremism and instability in the Liptako-Gourma region, which includes Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, has heightened the threat of violent extremism to the stability of the region as a whole.

Declining international support for combatting 'terrorism' and weakening regional leadership has created an opportunity for the proliferation of violent extremism. Groups such as Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, and Islamic State West African Province have exploited the situation, using countries in the Sahel region (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria) as bases from which to launch indiscriminate attacks against both government forces and civilians, resulting in cross-border displacement (CFR 14/02/2024; CSIS 02/02/2022). By February 2024, around three million people had been displaced, including over 2.6 million IDPs (87% of the displaced population) and over 388,400 refugees in Liptako-Gourma (IOM 15/03/2024).

Refugees in Mali

In March 2024, 78% of displaced people in Mali were from its bordering countries, including Burkina Faso (68%), Guinea-Conakry (5%), Ivory Coast (3%), Niger (2%), Senegal (1%), and Mauritania (less than 1%) (IOM 09/05/2024).

Of the 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers recorded between February–March, 46% reported having lost their identification documents and 26% had their documents confiscated. Without these crucial documents, refugees and asylum seekers are more susceptible to exploitation, as identification can be required to access employment opportunities and essential government services (IOM 09/05/2024).

Poverty

Poverty is significant in Mali, particularly in its central and northern areas, where insecurity is prevalent. Approximately 45% of Mali's population lives below the poverty threshold. High poverty rates may be attributable to the fact that Mali has been struggling with a multifaceted humanitarian crisis, compounded by factors such as poor agricultural yields and restricted access to farms as a result of security concerns since 2012 (Care International 03/11/2021; WB 24/05/2022; WB accessed 19/05/2024).

Political instability in Mali

In August 2020, Colonel Assimi Goita launched a coup against elected President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. After weeks of mass protests over perceived corruption, and Keita's failure to end Mali's armed rebellion, an 18-month interim government was formed with Goita serving as vice president (AJ 07/06/2021). In May 2021, Goita launched a second coup, citing sabotage of the country's transition by its caretaker government – headed by President Bah Ndaw and Prime Minister Moctar Ouane – and installing himself as interim president (BBC 25/05/2021).

Since assuming power, the military junta has consistently targeted freedom of speech, detained numerous civil society leaders, and escalated human rights abuses during military operations (BTI 2024). Although elections were initially scheduled for February 2024, the junta cancelled them indefinitely in September 2023, citing the need for more technical preparations. Subsequently, after suspending all political party activities in early April, the junta imposed a media ban on 11 April, prohibiting coverage and publication of political activities (Africa News 02/05/2024). This media ban is quite vague, however, meaning that it remains unclear whether reporting on other critical issues affecting the country – such as violence in the north and the continuing humanitarian crisis – is allowed, potentially affecting the response to those most in need (Africa News 02/05/2024; DW 12/04/2024).

FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

Throughout 2023, humanitarian responders faced increasing risk of being caught in crossfire, explosive devices, vehicle hold-ups, excessive measures and controls, abduction and temporary detention, intimidation, and aid diversion (OCHA 26/02/2024). By 7 June, there was still no indication that the situation had improved.

On 27 May, the Central Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund allocated USD 11 million to the rapid response for Malians and refugees in Mali facing food and nutritional insecurity (OCHA 28/05/2024).

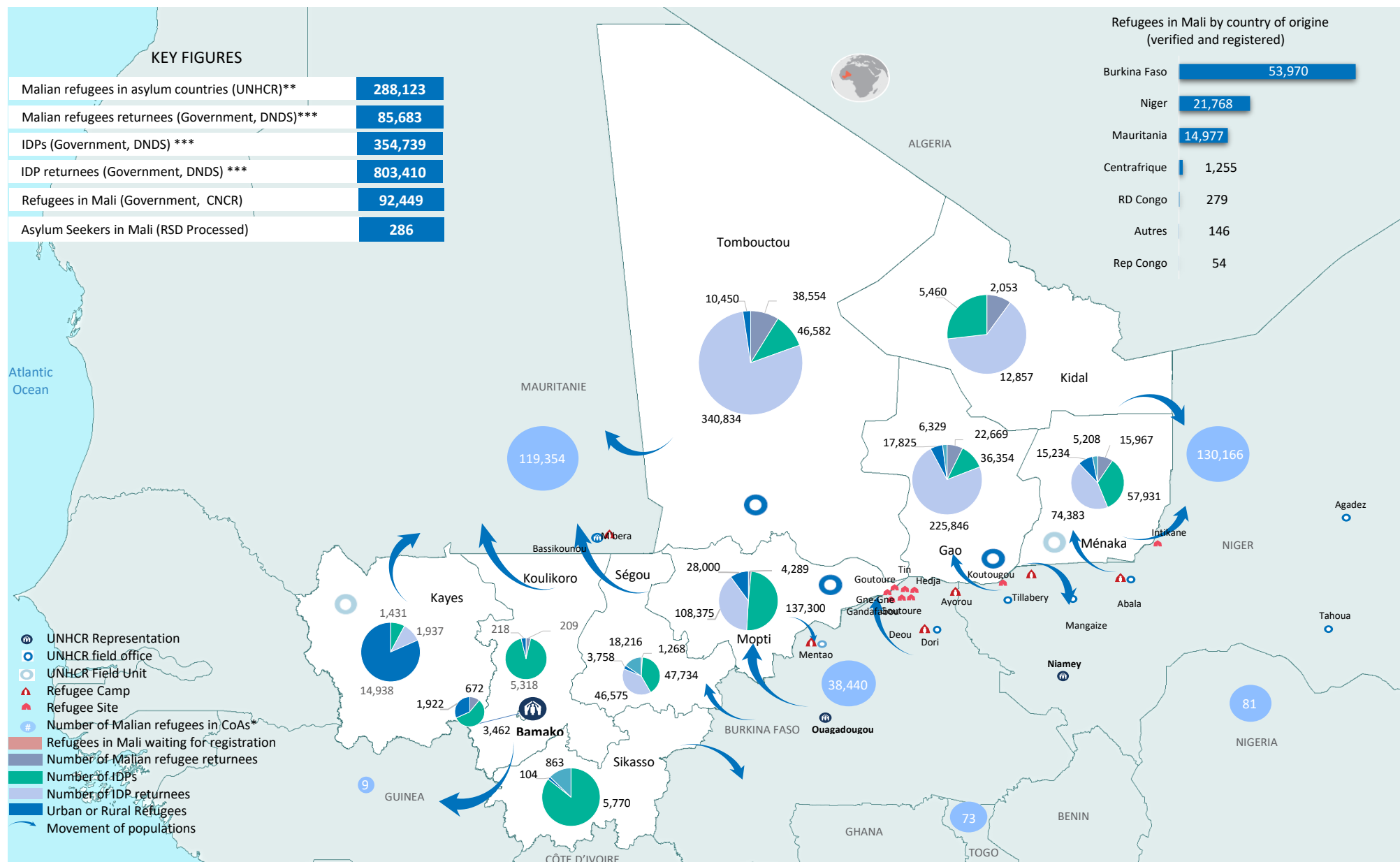
By 31 May, Mali's humanitarian appeal had received USD 102.3 million, nearly 15% of the USD 701.6 million needed (OCHA accessed 31/05/2024).

In May 2024, UNICEF requested USD 135.5 million to address children and women's humanitarian needs in Mali. By 28 May, approximately 8% of the total appeal had been funded (UNICEF 28/05/2024).

By 31 March, 155 humanitarian responders were present and providing humanitarian assistance throughout Mali (OCHA 31/03/2024).

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MAP 1. IDPS AND REFUGEES IN MALI, UNTIL 30 APRIL 2024



Source: UNHCR (09/05/2024)