Regional Discussion Paper
Focus on the West and Central African Experience

MICIC Regional Consultation on West and Central Africa
Dakar, Senegal, 8-9 December 2015

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**List of Acronyms**

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCEDES</td>
<td>Alliance chrétienne pour la coopération économique et le développement social</td>
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<td>AD-KOUL</td>
<td>Nigerien NGO : Development – Progress.</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>CEDEAO</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>CEMAC</td>
<td>Central African Economic and Monetary Community</td>
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<td>CNARR</td>
<td>Commission National pour l’Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés</td>
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<td>CONASUR</td>
<td>Conseil National de Secours d’Urgence et de Réhabilitation</td>
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<td>CORLI</td>
<td>Collectif des rapatriés de la Libye et de la Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<tr>
<td>DNDS</td>
<td>Direction Nationale du Développement Social</td>
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<td>DNPEF</td>
<td>Direction Nationale de la Promotion de l’Enfant et de la Femme</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
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<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department</td>
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<td>ECOWARN</td>
<td>ECOWAS Warning and Response Network</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FCFA</td>
<td>West and Central African Franc</td>
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<td>ICMPD</td>
<td>International Centre for Migration Policy Development</td>
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<td>INED</td>
<td>French National Institute for Demographic Studies</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>IRC</td>
<td>International Rescue Committee</td>
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<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>KAIPTC</td>
<td>Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre</td>
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<td>MARAC</td>
<td>Mécanisme d’alerte rapide d’Afrique centrale</td>
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<td>MICIC</td>
<td>Migrants in Countries in Crisis</td>
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<td>MIEUX</td>
<td>Migration EU eXpertise</td>
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<td>MNLA</td>
<td>National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad</td>
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<td>MTM</td>
<td>Mediterranean Transit Migration</td>
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<td>NADMO</td>
<td>National Disaster Management Organisation</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OMC</td>
<td>Observation and Monitoring Centre</td>
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<td>PICUM</td>
<td>Platform for International Co-operation on Undocumented Migrants</td>
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<td>ROCARE</td>
<td>Educational Research Centre for West and Central Africa</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UEMOA</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<td>WANEP</td>
<td>West Africa Network for Peacebuilding</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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**Context**

This regional discussion paper is an annex to the general background paper of the “Migrants in Countries in Crisis” Initiative (MICIC) of February 2015. The latter provides the background, goals and scope of the Initiative. As a supplement, six regional discussion papers are produced to analyse relevant issues for the MICIC Initiative in Asia, Eastern Europe, Central and West Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Latin America, and East and South Africa.

This document provides the basis for discussion at the Regional Consultation for West and Central Africa, to be held in Dakar on 8 and 9 December 2015. It provides an overview of the migratory context in the region in light of the MICIC Initiative (Section 1) and highlights practices implemented by States and other stakeholders to assist and protect migrants caught in countries experiencing natural disasters or conflicts (Section 2).

In the context of the MICIC Initiative, the term ‘migrant’ is defined broadly to include all non-nationals/non-citizens present in the country experiencing a conflict or natural disaster, and who do not benefit from international protection as refugees. The Initiative applies neither to nationals or citizens who are in their home country when that country experiences crises, nor to migrants in situations of personal crisis.

The countries covered by this document and regional consultation are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Togo.

**Section 1 – Overview of the Regional Migratory Context**

This section firstly describes the trends, patterns and drivers of migration from and to Central and West Africa. Secondly, it summarises the legal frameworks related to migration in these regions. Thirdly, it provides an overview of recent crises and current risks, particularly focussing on aspects relevant to the MICIC Initiative in these regions. Fourthly, it discusses the case of migrants who are more vulnerable in the region and in countries in crisis.

1. **Main Trends, Patterns and Drivers of Migration in and from West and Central Africa**

West Africa and Central Africa are both regions of origin and destination, as well as regions of transit. The African continent is often perceived as an area of mass movement of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, caused by poverty, violent conflict and natural disasters.

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1. This regional consultation is the third in a series of six; it follows the Consultation for South, East and South East Asia, held in Manila in March 2015, and the Consultation for East Europe and Central Asia held in Brussels in June 2015.

2. Frequently Asked Questions About the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative, Section 2, 8 May 2014.

3. The MICIC Initiative focusses on two types of crises whose magnitude demands a significant humanitarian response by the authorities of the country experiencing the crisis, by countries of origin and/or by the international community: (i) natural disasters; and (ii) conflicts. Health issues are not included in the scope. However, given the importance of its impacts, the Ebola crisis cannot be fully ignored, and is thus included in some of the analysis. More information on the scope of the Initiative is available at: [http://micicinitiative.iom.int/](http://micicinitiative.iom.int/).
However, numbers show that Africa is not a continent of mass displacement and migration. On the one hand, according to UNHCR official data, refugees represent only 14% of the people who left their country of origin in Africa in 2011. On the other hand, according to analyses of the World Bank Global Bilateral Migration Database that focuses on migrants, it appears that Africa is actually, along with Asia, the continent with the weakest emigration and immigration rates in the world. West and Central Africa tend to have not only a relatively low intensity of emigration, but also generally a low intensity of immigration.

Only 0.5% of people born in Central or West Africa have migrated and live outside Africa. The proportion of those who have migrated within Africa is a bit higher: it concerns 1.1% of people born in Central Africa, and 2.2% of those born in West Africa. Although this data is available for the year 2000 only, it is unlikely that these numbers have increased substantially. Between 1960 and 2000, migration from Central and West Africa outside the African continent has increased very slightly. Migration from West Africa within the continent has remained stable, and migration from Central Africa within Africa has dramatically decreased (see the figures in annex 1).

The majority of West and Central African migrants move within Africa. Migration outside Africa is low and intra-regional migration is high. In 2013, 77% and 71% respectively of the migrants from each of these regions live in Africa, while approximatively one quarter of the migrants from these regions (23% from West Africa and 25% from Central Africa) are in the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In 2013, the major country of origin for West African migrants in Africa was by far Burkina Faso (followed by Côte d’Ivoire and Mali). The main country of origin for people from Central Africa who migrated within Africa was DRC (followed by Chad and the Central African Republic).

Thus, migration within the region is the most likely for West African migrants, as 68% of them live in the region. Intra-regional migration concerns 40% of migrants from Central Africa, who also live in the neighbouring countries in East and Southern Africa. Previous research has also revealed that landlocked Sub-Saharan countries have lower levels of overall emigration and that most emigration is dominated by short-distance migration to nearby countries, because people do not have the resources to migrate to more distant destinations. Moreover, in times of economic or political crisis, migration is much more likely to take place towards neighbouring countries than to Western countries (in Europe and North America), as a study on the evolution of extra- and intracontinental migration and movements from DRC has shown.

The presence of immigrants in West and Central Africa is not high, even if it depends on the countries. On average, 2 % of the total population in West Africa and 1.7 % of the total

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4 UNHCR 2011.
5 Czaika and de Haas 2014.
6 UNHCR 2011.
7 Ibid.
8 Czaika and de Haas forthcoming.
9 Ibid.
10 The World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix reveals that there were 1,617,100 Burkinabe migrants in other African countries in 2013.
11 The World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix reveals that there were 340,900 migrants from DRC in other African countries in 2013.
12 Authors’ calculations using the UN definition of the West African and Central (‘Middle’) African regions and based on the stocks provided by the World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix of 2013.
13 Authors’ calculations using the UN definition of the West African and Central (‘Middle’) African regions and based on the stocks provided by the World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix of 2013.
14 Flahaux and de Haas forthcoming.
15 Flahaux et al. 2013.
population in Central Africa were immigrants in 2013. The major countries of destination for West African migrants are Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria, while Republic of Congo and Cameroon are the first countries of destination for Central African migrants. If we look at the proportion of immigrants in the countries of destination, we also see that Côte d’Ivoire is the country with the highest proportion of immigrants in West Africa (12 % of the total population), particularly from Burkina Faso, which can be explained by their historic ties. In Central Africa, the population of Gabon, which is an immigration country since colonial times, counted 24 % of immigrants in 2013.

West and Central Africa countries experience chronic and extreme poverty, starvation, warfare and environmental degradation, and it is often believed that individuals are forced to move for these reasons. However, there is an increasing literature showing that Sub-Saharan migration is not essentially different from migration elsewhere, and that most people in these regions migrate for family reasons, to work or to study. A recent study of the Great Lakes region, including DRC, argues that, although it would be impossible to deny the importance of conflict as a cause of (forced) migration in the region, it would be “equally wrong to neglect the ongoing, perhaps mundane, social processes that drive mobility, such as the search for an education, a spouse or a better life in the city.”

Migration and population movements are more generally determined by many factors related to individual characteristics and context. The context of countries in crisis influences emigration. A study analysing the case of migration from DRC has highlighted the fact that political and economic crises affect international migration. Firstly, it shows that people from all levels of education are likely to migrate in times of crisis, the most educated being usually more likely to migrate. Secondly, it confirms that improving political conditions in the country since 2002 have indeed contributed to stabilising migration flows.

The situation in the countries of destination may also play a role. In order to assert their national sovereignty, African governments have frequently resorted to deportations. For instance, Adepoju counted 23 mass expulsions of migrants conducted by 16 different African States between 1958 and 1996. The context of destination countries, as it will be highlighted below through some case studies, also has an impact on migrants living there.

Finally, environmental degradation may affect the displacement of migrants in West and Central Africa, mainly to urban centres. Causes and motives for migration are manifold, and the relationship between ecosystem changes and population mobility is complex. The impact of environmental factors on migration is indeed rather indirect, as it is highly dependent on many other political, economic and social factors.

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17 Authors’ calculations using the UN definition of the West African and Central (‘Middle’) African regions and based on the stocks provided by the World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix of 2013.
18 Ibid.
19 Kress 2006.
20 Wali Wali 2010.
21 Immigrants in Gabon are mainly from Cameroon, followed by Mali.
23 Schoumaker et al. 2015; Bakewell and Jónsson 2011.
24 Bakewell and Bonfiglio 2013.
27 Hummel et al. 2012.
28 Gemenne 2011.
2. Relevant Regional Legal Frameworks Governing Migration and Refugee Issues

Although there is no international framework that explicitly and comprehensively enumerates the rights of migrants during crises or the responsibilities for protecting and assisting them, a few regional instruments governing migration and refugee issues are of interest in the context of the MICIC Initiative.

Migration in West and Central Africa, including in the event of a crisis, is facilitated by regional free movement protocols. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) have introduced rules for free movement of nationals between their member states. While free circulation of the population between ECOWAS countries was decided in 1979, CEMAC established the free circulation of the population between its six member countries in May 2015. However, these agreements are poorly implemented or contradicted by the restrictive policies and practices of member states in West Africa and Central Africa. Migrant rights are not always protected, and, as elsewhere in the world, migrants are often made scapegoats, and mass deportations have regularly occurred, particularly in times of economic crisis.

The African Union (AU)’s Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, which has been signed and ratified by the 24 countries covered by this discussion paper, contains a definition of a refugee that is broader than the one in the 1951 Geneva Convention. Article 1.2 encompasses in the definition of the term ‘refugee’ those persons displaced by “events seriously disturbing public order”, which can arguably be interpreted as including conflicts and natural disasters. Moreover, although the AU Convention does not specify how non-nationals in the country for a short period of time, such as transit migrants, would be covered, it does cover those who are forced to leave their place of habitual residence. Thus, with respect to the MICIC Initiative, long-term resident migrants and refugees, who would be forced to leave the country of residence due to conflict and natural disaster, could be considered as covered under the AU Convention.

3. Selected Crises that have affected Refugees and Migrants’ Movements in/from the Region

Over the past decade, several conflicts and natural disasters have affected people from and in West and Central Africa. These crises have not only affected the citizens of these countries, who could benefit from protection as refugees, but also migrants who are present in these countries. According to the 2015 Fragile States Index, many of the countries in Africa are at high risk of experiencing a conflict or collapse. It is particularly the case of CAR, Chad and DRC in Central Africa, and Guinea and Nigeria in West Africa (see the figure in

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29 Protocol A/P1/5/79 adopted on 29 May 1979 in Dakar, Senegal.
30 Decision of the 12th Ordinary Session of CEMAC Heads of State held in Libreville, Gabon, 5-6 May 2015.
31 Adepoju 2001.
32 A recent article about the implementation of the CEMAC agreement regarding the establishment of free circulation highlights that the visa confusion hinders trade and travel in Central Africa, http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/12/us-africa-central-trade-idUSKBN0OS0FZ20150612.
33 Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014.
34 The African Union was still the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) when the Convention was adopted in 1969; therefore the document is known as the “OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa”. Ratified by 45 member countries (http://bit.ly/1rJOpF).
36 This analysis is provided by the Regional Discussion Paper produced for the MICIC Consultation for North Africa and the Middle East.
annex 2). Among the recent crises in the regions of West and Central Africa or affecting migrants from these regions, seven are particularly relevant for the MICIC Initiative.

3.1. The Ivorian Politico-Military Crisis of 2002-2007

The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire between 2002 and 2007 can be described in ethnic, religious and regional terms, with the southern Government fighting the northern rebels. Due to the opportunities of employment in plantations in rural areas and economic opportunities in cities, Côte d'Ivoire is a major destination country in West Africa. The series of problems impacting the country led to the return of migrants and displacement of refugees to neighbouring countries. In particular, since 1999, many citizens of Burkina Faso have returned to their country of origin. Since 2002, acts of violence against Burkinabe have intensified, and the Ivorian authorities have held people from Burkina Faso responsible for organising and funding the destabilisation of the country. Tens of thousands of citizens from Burkina Faso left the country. However, if a huge number of return migrants was expected in Burkina Faso, the actual returns did not correspond to the expectations of the authorities. Other groups of migrants were also affected by the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire (Malians, Guineans, Beninese, etc.) and left the country. However, many of them did return relatively quickly to Côte d'Ivoire, as they experienced a difficult situation in their country of origin.

3.2. The Crisis in Libya since 2011

With the beginning of the widespread violence in Libya in February 2011, occurring after a popular protest against the Gadhafi regime, many people (about 700,000 according to the estimations in 2012) were forced to flee the country to return to countries of origin. The movements were organised by the countries of origin, by IOM or other regional and international organisations, but also took place spontaneously.

According to estimates by the Government of Chad, about 300,000 Chadians were living and working in Libya at the time of the crisis. When the crisis occurred, they tried to escape by reaching the neighbouring countries of Egypt, Chad, Niger and Tunisia. Most of these migrants were young men who went to Libya to work in the construction sector or agriculture. They used their income to support their families and communities back home in Chad. After living and working in Libya for several years, many families followed to settle there. Therefore, a significant number of children, who returned from Libya with their parents, were born in Libya and had never been to Chad, as their parents had lived in Libya for up to 30 years. When the crisis started, migrants could not claim their salaries, as banks were closed or financial movement was severely restricted. On their way to Chad, many migrants became targets, as they were commonly suspected to be pro-Gadhafi mercenaries. While fleeing the violence, Chadians were thus often subjected to arbitrary violence, humiliation and robbery.

Niger has also recorded many arrivals of returnees on its territory after the crisis. Among them was an important number of migrant workers, who had been settled in Libya for many years, recently recruited pro-Gadhafi mercenaries and previous members of the Islamic legion of Gadhafi. These returns were seen as a constraint for households waiting for remittances, and as a threat for the food crisis and regarding insecurity. In this context, civil society actors have highlighted the necessity for the State to take charge of migrant repatriation.

39 Bredeloup 2006.
40 Ibid.
41 Merabet 2006.
42 In the initial stages, UNHCR was also involved in organising departures as thousands were pursuing the asylum mechanism for assistance and return to countries of origin, although they had no evident refugee claim.
43 Mounkaila 2015.
44 IOM 2012.
45 Mounkaila 2015.
46 Ibid.
3.3 The Conflict in Mali since 2012

The crisis in Mali started in the north of the country, in January 2012, following the occupation of this part of the country by the Tuareg secessionist rebellion of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). It was compounded by the military coup of 22 March 2012 that toppled Malian President Amadou Toumani Touré. Taking advantage of the confusion of the coup created and the disorganisation of the Malian army, rebels took the three cities of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu, located in Northern Mali.

The crisis has affected refugees, and also migrants to a lesser extent. As reported in a background paper prepared by the MTM Secretariat, "As of the end of April 2013, 185,144 people had fled to neighbouring countries, among which 176,144 refugees. The crisis has also led to the return of 5,124 nationals of Niger previously living in the Gao area". The main recipient countries were: Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. Following the French and Chadian interventions in January 2013, the situation in the country has been relatively stable, thus paving the way for voluntary return towards the end of 2013.48

3.4 The Central African Conflict since 2013

The causes of the current conflict in CAR are related to the accumulation of political and economic demands, and have been expressed through several periods of violence since December 2012. The events appeared to take the form of revenge attacks between the Seleka coalition (mainly Muslim) and the anti-Balaka (mainly Christian). Although both groups did not have a religious aim, religion has been used to justify or hide the intensification of the violent attacks.49

The conflict had regional implications, with tens of thousands of displaced persons, including migrants. It has provoked unprecedented forced displacements, mostly to Cameroon and Chad, where migrants from these countries and Chadian refugees have fled for security. In July 2014, it was estimated that almost 150,000 people (Central Africans, Chadians and others) had fled the country to Cameroon.50 In July 2014 as well, Chad had received about 100,000 people, of whom 46% were Chadians migrants returning to their country of origin (52% were from CAR and 2% from other countries). It is important to note that statelessness is a serious consequence of this forced displacement, where many Chadians and other nationals who had been living in CAR for generations, but had no nationality documentation of either CAR or their country of origin, have been stranded in Cameroon and Chad.

In addition to spontaneous returns of the migrant population living in CAR to their country of origin, international and internal displacement of migrants also took place in a context characterised by potential food insecurity.51 Today, once again, CAR is the scene of violent daily confrontations and the situation is still equally complex and unpredictable. However, there is a lack of in-depth studies focussing on the case of migrants affected by this crisis, and little is known on the precise problems faced by migrants in this context.

3.5 The Violence Perpetrated by Boko Haram since 2013

Violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in the north-east of Nigeria has created large-scale displacements within the country, and refugee movements to neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger.52 Boko Haram is an Islamist group that commits attacks in a framework of religious claims. This group has existed since 2002, but attacks have reached a high level of violence since the execution of its leader in 2009 and a mass prison break in September 2010. In a report of 2015, it is stated that Boko Haram’s attacks and abductions

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47 The MTM Dialogue is an informal consultative platform between migration officials in countries in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. More information at: http://www.icmpd.org/MTM.1558.0.html.
48 UNHCR 2014a.
49 IOM 2014.
50 IOM 2014.
51 IOM 2014.
52 UNHCR 2015.
also drove at least 150,000 refugees across the border into Cameroon, Chad and Niger.\textsuperscript{53} In the extreme north of Cameroon, close to the border with Nigeria, the same violence also affects inhabitants in local communities. The violence of Boko Haram has indeed spread over and the group is active not only in Nigeria, but also in Niger (members of ECOWAS), as well as in Cameroon and Chad (members of the Economic Community of Central African States - ECCAS).

It is likely that migrants are also present in the regions where Boko Haram is active, but there is, to the authors' knowledge, no evidence indicating to what extent and how they are affected by these acts of violence.

### 3.6 The Floods in Burkina Faso in 2009-2010 and Nigeria in 2012

The floods in Burkina Faso in 2009 and 2010 affected the northern and central regions, particularly Ouagadougou, the capital city.\textsuperscript{54} The 2009 floods alone affected more than 150,000 people, including migrants and non-migrants.\textsuperscript{55} Some marginalised areas around the capital city were severely impacted. The Government resettled victims of the flood in an area about 20 kilometres away from Ouagadougou.

In 2012, a large part of Nigeria was hit with heavy rains, including Jos and the economic capital of the country, Lagos, where many migrants from neighbouring countries live. These migrants, who sometimes have no legal status, are often relegated to slums, which made them very vulnerable during the floods.

In both cases, there is, to the authors' knowledge, no studies highlighting how these natural disasters affected the migrants present and whether they were supported by the authorities.

### 3.7 Ebola Outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

The spread of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone killed more than 11,000 people up to October 2015.\textsuperscript{56} The outbreak had dramatic consequences on social and economic activities in West Africa, and some borders were closed. In the week up to 25 October, only Guinea had three confirmed cases of Ebola. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared Liberia free of the Ebola virus on 3 September 2015, and Sierra Leone on 7 November 2015.

During 2014, the link between Ebola and migration was particularly focussed on migrants who were considered as vectors of Ebola transmission, migrations in West Africa being seen by the media as a challenge to stopping the spread of Ebola.\textsuperscript{57} The way in which migrants themselves have been affected by the outbreak has received less attention.

### 4. Groups of Migrants who are Particularly Vulnerable in the Region

The nature and scope of the vulnerabilities faced by migrants vary depending on who and where they are. In situations of crisis, migrants often lack personal resources, and support is not always available to assist them in these situations. Unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children, transiting irregular migrants and stateless migrants are particularly vulnerable.\textsuperscript{58} The fact that migrants and refugees move together is another complex reality of the region, and their identification is especially complex although required

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\textsuperscript{53} IDMC 2015.
\textsuperscript{54} Lassailly-Jacob 2015.
\textsuperscript{55} Bonkoungou 2013.
\textsuperscript{56} http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-28755033.
\textsuperscript{58} Migrant women, especially young women, are another particularly vulnerable group in West and Central Africa due to the sexual abuse and other forms of violence, including forced marriages and domestic violence, they can experience throughout their journey.
for differentiated approaches towards the protection, assistance and durable solutions for refugees who are fleeing war, persecution and general violence. It may also be noted that, refugees fleeing to West Africa from other regions in Africa do not receive automatic protection and assistance as refugees who originate from within the region. Tailored measures are required to address the needs of migrants as well. Special attention also has to be paid to cross-border communities experiencing tension after a massive influx of migrants or returning migrants and refugees who are fleeing conflict or natural disasters.

4.1 Unaccompanied and Separated Migrant and Refugee Children

Unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children represent a particularly vulnerable group of children whose number is increasing in West and Central Africa due to conflicts, general violence and natural disasters. As documented by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, they face higher risks of child labour, sexual exploitation and abuse (in particular girls), military recruitment (particularly boys), detention and trafficking. In addition, they are often discriminated against, including in terms of access to territory, asylum procedure, documentation, registration, food, shelter, housing, health services and education.

The assistance and protection provided to unaccompanied and separated migrant and refugee children during crises, irrespective of their nationality or migratory status, is governed by the rights granted to them under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The latter applies to all children, including asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children.

In case of a displaced unaccompanied and separated child, as with all other children, the principle of Article 3 of the Convention of the best interests of the child is a primary consideration for determining short- and long-term solutions.

Article 20 of the Convention states that “1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State. 2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child. 3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child’s upbringing and to the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.”

As underlined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, obligations deriving from the Convention vis-à-vis unaccompanied and separated migrant children also include measures to prevent separation, including the implementation of safeguards in case of evacuation,

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59 A ‘child’, as defined in Article 1 of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, means “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”; “Unaccompanied children (also called unaccompanied minors) are children, as defined in article 1 of the Convention, who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so”; and “Separated children are children, as defined in article 1 of the Convention, who have been separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members”. Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment n°6, Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside Their Country of Origin, CRC/GC/2005/6, 1 September 2005, para. 7 and 8.


61 In this context, we can highlight the initiatives taken by several countries, such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Côte d’Ivoire in particular, in terms of protecting migrant children and fighting against child trafficking. Nevertheless, they do not specifically deal with crisis situations. Similarly, between 2008 and 2010, a common regional project was undertaken by a broad group of child protection agencies to study the mobility of children and youth in West and Central Africa; this led to the publication of “Which protection for children involved in mobility in West Africa?”. This collective reflection made it possible to document and analyse the many forms of mobility of children and youth in West Africa. The project was achieved by collating research and taking advantage of shared experiences in four pilot countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Togo).
measures to identify children as being unaccompanied or separated at the earliest possible stage, and measures to ensure access to legal services, and psychological and social support for unaccompanied and separated migrant children.\textsuperscript{62}

\textbf{4.2 Irregular Migrants in Transit}

Sub-Saharan countries are increasingly becoming countries of transit towards Europe, and between West and Central Africa for irregular movements from West and Central Africa. These migrants often find themselves caught in countries experiencing a crisis situation, due to natural disasters, conflicts or violence. Mali and Niger are cases in point.\textsuperscript{63}

In times of crisis, migrant protection needs include protection from traffickers, abusive smugglers and corrupt officials, as well as protection from abuse by employers and slumlords.\textsuperscript{64}

Responses include contacting family members, providing basic social services, registration, food and non-food items’ distribution, health care, psychosocial support, transfer of belongings, and facilitation of travel procedures with the authorities. Issues of concern tragically also include the need for concerted action with regard to those who perish in the vast desert areas, including retrieving bodies, their identification and provision of information to family members.

\textbf{4.3 Statelessness and Migrants}

The UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 28 September 1954 defines a stateless person as “a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”.\textsuperscript{65}

Statelessness and migration are inter-connected as “statelessness is often a consequence and cause of migration: patterns of migration contribute to the creation and prolongation of cases of statelessness while statelessness has a role in driving migration”.\textsuperscript{66}

In 2014, an estimated 750,000 persons at least were stateless in West Africa according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),\textsuperscript{67} many of whom, or whose ancestors, migrated within the region before independence. The United Nations (UN) Refugee Agency also indicates that many people in West and Central Africa are at risk of becoming stateless. Groups that may be at risk of becoming stateless include (i) contemporary migrants; (ii) returned or repatriated migrants; (iii) refugees, asylum seekers and former refugees, and (iv) cross-border pastoralist populations, as these groups may have particular difficulties proving the legal bond to their country of origin.\textsuperscript{68} Lack of safeguards against statelessness in nationality laws, gaps in birth registration,\textsuperscript{69} the lack or

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\textsuperscript{65} Unlike stateless migrants, undocumented migrants still have a legal status in their home countries. The Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) defines undocumented migrants as “those without a residence permit authorising them to regularly stay in their country of destination. They may have been unsuccessful in the asylum procedure, have overstayed their visa or have entered irregularly”; PICUM, \textit{Who are undocumented migrants?}, http://picum.org/en/our-work/who-are-undocumented-migrants/.


\textsuperscript{68} Manby B., \textit{La nationalité, la migration et l’apatridie en Afrique de l’Ouest}, étude pour le compte du HCR et de l’OIM, juin 2015.

\textsuperscript{69} UNHCR underlines that “the lack of a birth certificate is not equivalent to being stateless. However, a birth certificate is fundamentally important as a mean of proving nationality. Without it, the person will likely experience
loss of proof of nationality during time abroad, or the loss of a migrant’s records due to destruction of civil registry during a conflict or a natural disaster, are all factors that contribute to the risk of statelessness.

During emergencies, statelessness can (i) block people’s ability to access basic services; (ii) render people void of protection from abuse; and (iii) make family reunification much harder.

To eradicate the adverse consequences of migrant statelessness, and to prevent future cases of statelessness arising in a migratory context, UNHCR recommends that States establish statelessness determination procedures that lead to a legal status permitting residence, enjoyment of basic human rights and facilitated naturalisation, ensuring universal birth registration and issuance of nationality through to documentation to those with entitlement to it, and ensuring that their nationality laws contain necessary safeguards against statelessness at birth and later in life.  

4.4 Cross-border Communities

Cross-border communities are a common phenomenon in West and Central Africa where the borders were outlined in the XIX\textsuperscript{th} century, without taking into account ethnic groups.

In times of crisis, cross-border communities often have to deal with massive influxes, be it members of the local community or migrants from various origins.

Increases in population can put pressure on local services, resources and employment opportunities, which can create tensions. In addition, families who used to receive remittances might lose a valuable source of income following the return of a family member.

Section 2 – Notable Practices in the Region for Assisting and Protecting Migrants in Countries in Crisis

Section 2 presents a sample of existing practices in the region providing assistance and protection to migrants in countries in crisis, whether as a result of conflict or natural disaster, at the pre-crisis, emergency and post-crisis phases.

1. Pre-crisis Phase

a. Include migrants in regional early warning systems

In ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) was established through the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security in 1999. This system is an observation and monitoring tool for conflict prevention and decision-making. It is designed to capture data collected from the field on the causes and risks of conflicts, paying attention to trans-border cooperation, border management, and refugee and migration issues. All its information is from an open source and accessible for the general public. ECOWARN consists of (i) the Observation and Monitoring Centre (OMC) located within the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja;\textsuperscript{71} (ii) four Zonal Bureaux in Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Liberia that send a daily report to the OMC; and (iii) 15 national monitors and 15 civil society network monitors hired by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) to complement the work of the

many of the same consequences of statelessness, such as difficulty in accessing services, travelling, and obtaining legal employment\textsuperscript{70}; Ibid.

\textsuperscript{70} UNHCR, \textit{Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014-2024}.

\textsuperscript{71} The OMC produces three types of reports: Situation Reports, Incident Reports and Country Profiles.
national monitors.\textsuperscript{72}

Similarly, the Central African Early Warning Mechanism (MARAC - \textit{Mécanisme d'alerte rapide d'Afrique Centrale}) is a mechanism to observe, monitor and prevent crises and conflicts within ECCAS. It is responsible for daily data collection and analysis. MARAC includes a central structure based at the ECCAS headquarters and national bureaux, which involves government agencies, international organisations, civil society organisations and research institutions.

However, the operational capabilities of both ECOWARN and MARAC still have to be developed in order for them to further support the identification of migrants in countries at risk or experiencing a crisis. Their role in this field is currently limited.

\textit{b. Establish an institutional framework to ensure assistance to and protection of nationals abroad – perspective of countries of origin}

In several countries in West and Central Africa,\textsuperscript{73} a Ministry or Secretariat of State for nationals living abroad has been set up. It ensures their protection and the establishment of actions for their return home and their reintegration, especially in crisis situations.

In parallel, in these same countries, High Councils of nationals abroad have been created. These are representative bodies that maintain close relations with associations established in countries of destination. They support the identification of nationals in an emergency situation abroad as well as their protection and assistance, especially when they return to their country of origin.

\textit{c. Set up a coordinating structure to assist and protect migrants in times of crisis – perspective of countries of destination}

In Mali, the inter-agency management system for information regarding the protection of children, which includes the \textit{Direction Nationale du Développement Social} (DNDS), the \textit{Direction Nationale de la Promotion de l'Enfant et de la Femme} (DNPEF), Samu Social, IOM and UNICEF, aims to identify, document, assist and follow up on children affected by crisis, including unaccompanied migrant minors.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{d. Strengthen institutional capabilities to assist and protect migrants in times of crisis}

In 2013, IOM, UNICEF, the \textit{International Rescue Committee} (IRC) and Samu Social organised a training programme for 22 officials from the DNDS and the DNPEF on how to protect children in emergency situations, including unaccompanied minor migrants. The training included localisation and family reunification in emergency situations, psychosocial aid, communicating with children following exposure to violence, protection of data and confidentiality.\textsuperscript{75}

At the end of October 2015, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) organised a regional workshop on migration in the context of environmental degradation and climate change in Lomé in the framework of the EU-ICMPD Joint Initiative \textit{Migration EU eXpertise} (MIEUX).\textsuperscript{76} The question of the assistance and protection of migrants in crisis situations was raised during the discussions. This workshop was held in

\textsuperscript{72} See below under “Ensure cooperation between State and non-State actors”.

\textsuperscript{73} The countries in question are Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal.

\textsuperscript{74} IOM, \textit{Malian officials train to better protect children caught up in crisis}, 16.08.2013, \url{http://www.iom.int/news/malian-officials-train-better-protect-children-caught-crisis}.

\textsuperscript{75} IOM, \textit{Malian officials train to better protect children caught up in crisis}, 16.08.2013, \url{http://www.iom.int/news/malian-officials-train-better-protect-children-caught-crisis}.

\textsuperscript{76} MIEUX is a joint initiative of the EU and ICMPD which aims to strengthen the capacities of partner countries in the management of all areas of migration. For more information: \url{http://www.icmpd.org/our-work/capacity-building/multi-thematic-programmes/mieux-ii/}.
collaboration with the Nansen Initiative.\textsuperscript{77} National training sessions in Benin, Guinea and Togo, the three countries who had asked for MIEUX technical assistance, will be organised in 2016 to discuss these aspects in greater depth.

\textbf{e. Strengthen capabilities in the area of reinsertion and social cohesion in regions of origin}

Strengthening capabilities of governments in the area of migrant returnee reinsertion after a crisis is also a priority for IOM, ICMPD and other international organisations. The goal is to promote social cohesion in the repatriated host regions. In Togo, capacity building programmes put the emphasis on reintegrating Togolese repatriated from Ghana and Benin.\textsuperscript{78} In October 2014, ICMPD organised a workshop in the context of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process) technical assistance on strengthening capabilities for Nigerien authorities on the theme of reinsertion of people who have returned after a crisis.\textsuperscript{79} This workshop led to the identification of the key elements of a national strategy for reinsertion of returnees in Niger.

\textbf{f. Ensure cooperation between State and non-State actors}

\textbf{ECOWAS} has a unique and sustainable approach towards the collaboration with civil society organisations for implementation of its early warning mechanism – ECOWARN – through its partnership with a networking organisation – the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). The latter, which is based in Accra, is composed of 12 national networks and over 450 member organisations, including migrant organisations.\textsuperscript{80} Strong cooperation is maintained between the four ECOWARN zonal bureau officers and coordinators – who are based in Banjul, Cotonou, Monrovia and Ouagadougou – and WANEP. In addition, ECOWAS created a liaison office within the ECOWAS secretariat in Abuja, which provides civil society access to governments and decision-makers through ECOWAS. In 2007, ECOWAS and WANEP produced assessments, as well as a region-specific training manual, for the field officers responsible for collecting data.\textsuperscript{81}

\section{2. Emergency Phase}

\textbf{a. Organise pre-evacuation arrangements}

In 2010-2011, IOM supported the organisation of practical aspects – such as transportation – of evacuations from Côte d’Ivoire of the limited number of migrants whose return was not spontaneous, and had posted staff in Mali and Mauritania to accompany the convoys. The \textbf{WHO} and the \textbf{World Food Programme} (WFP) also supported these evacuations by setting up medical inspections before departure, giving vaccines for yellow fever and by supplying high-energy biscuits to migrants making the journey.\textsuperscript{82}

\textbf{b. Organise the evacuation of migrants}

Exactly one year after the beginning of the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, more than 200,000

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{77} The goal of The Nansen Initiative is to improve the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. For more information: \url{www.nanseninitiative.org}.
  \item \textsuperscript{78} In 2009, the Togolese benefited from a programme of re-integration supported by institutions of the UN, the European Union (EU) and the Togolese High Commission for repatriation and humanitarian action; UNHCR, 2009. \textit{Op. Cit.}
  \item \textsuperscript{79} For more information: \url{http://www.processusderabat.net/web/index.php/support-projects-activities/the-rabat-process-technical-assistance-organises-a-workshop-on-reintegration-in-niger}.
  \item \textsuperscript{80} Such as "Association Le Tocsin" in Burkina Faso which aims at strengthening links between Burkinabe abroad, and supports the integration of returned migrants and refugees.
  \item \textsuperscript{82} IOM, \textit{Evacuation of Mauritanian Migrants from Côte d’Ivoire Goes Ahead Despite Surge in Violence}, 18.03.2011, \url{http://www.iom.int/news/evacuation-mauritanian-migrants-cote-divoire-goes-ahead-despite-surge-violence}
\end{itemize}

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migrants from Burkina Faso had already fled the country. Some benefited from the official campaign for repatriation led by the Conseil National de Secours d’Urgence et de Réhabilitation (CONASUR) of Burkina, Operation Bayiri. In Reception and transit centres were established to identify and take a census of migrants and provide them with shelter, food rations and emergency medical care, including vaccinations, for up to three days before returning to the village they came from.

In March 2011, in the context of the crises in Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, Niger launched a national programme to facilitate the management of Nigerien flows fleeing these conflicts. Niger evacuated about 125,000 nationals from Libya and repatriated them in their region of origin. To do so, the Government paid about FCFA 10 million to private transport companies (Air transport, Nijma Transport and Sonitrav). In 2011, over 18,000 Ghanaian migrant workers were evacuated from Libya by the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO), the government agency responsible for disaster response, and IOM.

In the context of the crisis in Mali in 2012, UNHCR organised the voluntary repatriation by aeroplane of hundreds of Ivorian refugees living in Bamako. These Ivorians had found refuge in the refugee camps in Mali following violence in 2010-2011.

At the beginning of the crisis in CAR in 2014, the Ministry for Malians of the Exterior organised the repatriation of more than 2,000 nationals and their families. Starting in January 2014, IOM assisted the evacuation of many migrants caught up in the crisis. IOM received requests for this assistance from Chad, DRC, Mali, Niger and Sudan. Most of these governments had already organised evacuations but needed additional resources, particularly in terms of logistics and means of transportation, to handle numerous requests for repatriation.

By January 2014, the Government of Chad had operated 61 flights from Bangui to N’Djamena. By the end of December 2014, in order to accelerate evacuations, the Government of Chad sent 20 military vehicles and set up nine transit centres in N’Djamena as temporary shelters for returnees.

c. **Involve consular posts in migrant assistance and migrant evacuation operations as one of the first responders**

18,000 Malian migrants in Côte d’Ivoire registered with the Malian Embassy when the crisis broke out so that they could organise their voluntary repatriation.

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87 In addition, 11 flights have been operated by IOM.

88 UNHCR & al., Chad Response Plan: Emergency Assistance to Returnees from CAR, 2014.

89 It is important to note that, in the case of asylum seekers and refugees who have fled persecution/conflict/ general violence from their countries of origin, they cannot seek consular support and, in keeping with the principle of non-refoulment, cannot be returned to their country of origin.

In the context of the post-electoral violence in Côte d’Ivoire in December 2010 to April 2011, the Mauritanian Embassy supported the evacuation by bus of more than 2,200 of its citizens.  

During the crisis in Libya, Ghana established three liaison posts that were managed by consular staff in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia to support evacuations. The posts processed travel documents, provided medical care and coordinated flight arrangements.

d. **Enable migrants to transit**

During the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, between September 2002 and July 2003, Ghana authorised more than 55,000 migrants from Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to cross Ghanaian territory in order to reach their country of origin.

e. **Ensure coordination at all levels**

The Ghanaian Government created an “Evacuation Task Force” in February 2011 “to coordinate and undertake the urgent evacuation” of Ghanaian nationals from Libya. The Task Force consisted of several state institutions and collaborated with Ghana’s Missions abroad, IOM and UNHCR.

In Niger, a four-level structure was established in 2011 to coordinate and monitor the situation of returnees from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, both with regard to their immediate humanitarian needs and reinsertion. The structure is composed of an ad hoc interministerial committee, as well as regional, departmental and municipal committees.

### 3. Post-crisis Phase

**a. Provide immediate assistance to returnees**

Following the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, the Nigerien Committee coordinating and monitoring the situation of returnees implemented an FCFA 15 billion programme to provide immediate assistance to returnees. This programme included: (i) emergency food supply for three months for 105,000 returnees; (ii) seeds to be distributed to 50,000 returnees to start crops; (iii) distribution of small ruminants to 15,000 returnees in rural areas; and (iv) cash transfers to 100,000 returnees of up to FCFA 25,000 per person per month over four months to start income-generating activities and integrate themselves into the local economy.

The Government of Ghana provided funds to returnees from Libya for the internal journeys to hometowns.
Chadian returnees affected by the crisis in CAR were welcomed and registered by the Commission National pour l’Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés (CNARR) with the support of UNHCR. The Chadian Government, with the support of NGOs and UNHCR, also organised the transfer, stay and settlement of refugees and Chadian returnees in different sites. While IOM played a role in the support and assistance of non-Chadians to their country of residence in West Africa, the Chadian authorities were active in supporting these populations on Chadian territory.

IOM has worked in cooperation with several countries, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal to provide immediate assistance to migrants evacuated from CAR as soon as they returned to their country of origin. IOM greeted migrants at ports of entry in their countries of origin, assisted as far as their transportation to their final destination, and equipped migrants with kits to handle their immediate needs. Finally, about 60,000 Nigerien migrants returning from Libya benefited from the immediate assistance of WHO through its medical centres in Agadez, Assamaka and Dirkou, which were strengthened in terms of equipment and supplies to deal with the massive number of returns.

b. Raise awareness about the needs and rights of returning migrants

Through public statements, conferences and concerts, civil society organisations pushed the authorities of Niger to take responsibility in supporting returning migrants from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya. In Niamey, the Collectif des rapatriés de la Libye et de la Côte d’Ivoire (CORLI) was established by returning migrants to protect their rights. In Chad, a national solidarity campaign called “Gift of the Heart” (Don du Coeur) was initiated in January 2014 by the President and coordinated by the Ministère de l’action sociale et de la famille to raise funds to assist returnees from CAR.

c. Create local and national structures to identify returning migrants and support their reinsertion

Municipal committees have been established by the Government of Niger to support the reception and reinsertion of returning migrants (see under “Ensure coordination at national level and with international stakeholders” during the emergency phase). These committees were composed of a large number of members so as to have an inclusive approach. In the case of the Tchintabaraden municipality, the committee, created in June 2011, was composed of 78 members, including 26 return migrants. These committees had to identify the returnees. Censuses of returnees from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya were indeed conducted as a prerequisite before implementing reinsertion activities by municipal committees. To do so, municipal committees primarily resorted to local leaders. Departmental committees had the responsibility to establish the final list of returnees. Several limitations were reported, in particular the practice to inflate figures to allow non-returnees to benefit from financial support.

In Chad, a Task Force composed of humanitarian stakeholders and the Ministry of Social Affairs was created in January 2014. This Task Force, supported by UNHCR, aims to develop an emergency response plan to support the immediate needs of returning refugees

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99 République du Tchad 2015.  
101 République du Tchad 2015.  
105 UNHCR, 2014b.  
107 Ibid.  
from CAR upon their arrival. Responses focus on seven key sectors: i) health, ii) nutrition, iii) food security, iv) water, sanitation and hygiene, v) protection (including child protection), vi) camp coordination, and vii) camp management and shelter.

d. Develop reinsertion programmes for returning migrants

In 2003, the Ministère de l’Agriculture, de l’Hydraulique et des Ressources Halieutiques of Burkina Faso launched an FCFA 3 million programme to support the socio-economic reinsertion of returnees from Côte d’Ivoire. This programme aimed to use returnee knowledge in rural areas to boost agricultural, halieutic and forest production, while supporting their reinsertion and allowing them to earn incomes.109 In Burkina Faso, civil society organisations also supported the reinsertion of returning migrants from Côte d’Ivoire. In Bobo-Dioulasso, the Alliance chrétienne pour la coopération économique et le développement social (ACCEDES) ran a reinsertion programme, which supported over 1,000 returnees. The programme included the provision of food supply and clothes, and the implementation of development activities, such as the creation of income-generating activities. Small loans (from FCFA 50,000 to 150,000) have also been granted. Reimbursed money was used to provide school supplies to children whose parents had returned.110

In Niger, the ad hoc inter-ministerial committee, created to coordinate and monitor the situation of returning migrants from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, implemented an FCFA 25 billion project to support over 250,000 returnees.111 This programme consisted of three components: (i) support to the settlement of migrants and their families; (ii) creation of economic opportunities; and (iii) creation of conditions to ensure food security. This programme aimed to fund projects in sensitive municipalities selected based on (i) their level of vulnerability as established by the “Système d’Alerte Précoce”; (ii) the number of returnees in the municipality; and (iii) the security situation. About 100 municipalities have benefited from this support. Grants supported a wide range of activities, including microcredits for migrant associations, the purchase of food for livestock that was distributed by food banks, the purchase of kits and seeds to support local agriculture, and the training and monitoring of management committees. Financial support from municipalities was only granted to migrant associations, a practice which migrants criticised due to the fact that creating such an association is a cumbersome and costly process.

International organisations and UN agencies also financially supported the reinsertion of returnees from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya in Niger. Oxfam financed Money against work operations through the local NGO AD KOUL. About 500 households that had to support the return of family members benefited. In 2012, the WFP financed Food for work operations implemented by Africare in municipalities judged as vulnerable after the 2010 crop season. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) financed the purchase of livestock that was distributed by AD-KOUL to households hosting returnees.112

In Ghana, the “Libyan Returnees Reintegration Assistance Project” sponsored by IOM and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted a needs assessment of 100 returnees from Libya in the Brong Ahafo region in 2011. The returnees were equipped with working tools and agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and seeds to help them start businesses. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided funding for the expansion of the scheme to the Northern region of Ghana. The subsequent project known as the “Emergency Reintegration Assistance for Ghanaian Migrants Affected by the 2011 Libyan Crisis” was implemented by IOM and NADMO. This project had three components, namely: (i) provision of health insurance and psycho-social counselling; (ii) entrepreneurial

110 Ibid.
111 In practice, only FCFA one billion was spent; Mounkaïla H., 2015.
112 Mounkaïla H., 2015.
training; and (iii) study on the capacities preparedness of migrant-sending communities to cope with sudden disasters.

e. **Support education of returning migrants**

In Burkina Faso, UNICEF provided 15,000 returning children with school supplies through CONASUR in 2003.¹¹³ Schools were also provided with equipment and supplies to cope with the increased number of children. UNICEF also trained 130 teachers in peace education and conflict management. In addition, the UN agency supported adult literacy, especially returning women, in partnership with the Yelen association of Bobo.

**Plan International** also supported returned children’s education in Burkina Faso.¹¹⁴ The NGO also provided school supplies and funds for school canteens. Additionally, canteens, which are a defining aspect to attract returning children to school, received financial support from WFP.

f. **Provide support for communities hosting returning migrants**

Assistance to the host population is also necessary because of the increased pressure on its natural resources, basic services and means of existence. In 2011 and 2012, IOM conducted a programme in this regard in the communities welcoming Chadians who fled Libya. Assistance was given to 90,000 Chadians who returned, as well as nationals from a third country who fled with them, and to the host communities.¹¹⁵

**Conclusion**

The mixed migratory flows in West and Central Africa are made up of people of various profiles. They include long-term migrants with their families, circular migrants in cross-border areas, unaccompanied and separated migrant children, regular and irregular migrant workers, as well as migrants who are victims of traffickers and smugglers. Stateless persons, refugees and asylum-seekers also form part of the mixed migratory movements in West and Central Africa. This plurality must be taken into account when developing response and coordination mechanisms to assist and protect migrants in countries experiencing conflict or natural disasters.

In West or Central Africa, there are policies and mechanisms used in crisis management to deal with conflicts and natural catastrophes. They recommend strategies of prevention and reduction of risk, for emergencies and post-emergencies. However, most of these instruments are focussed on the population in general, and do not pay particular attention to migrants present in the country.

Moreover, while refugee populations are usually registered, and information in their regard is available to governments, they have very limited knowledge of the number and profile of migrants that reside in their territory or transit through it, as well as the number of their nationals living in other countries. These gaps are a major handicap for taking into account migrants in countries in crisis.

When it comes to evacuating migrants during emergencies, West and Central African countries have extensive experience and have mobilised their consular services throughout the continent several times in such situations over the past years. The experience of countries and other key stakeholders in the region in terms of offering immediate support

¹¹⁵ ECHO-funded project “Humanitarian support to Chadian returnees and third country nationals who fled Libya”, IOM, April 2011-March 2012.
upon return, and developing reinsertion programmes for returnees in the aftermath of a crisis, should also be underlined. Practices in these fields are promising and provide a good basis to build upon in the future to better address the needs of migrants at emergency and post-crisis phases.
Annexes


Source: Global Bilateral Migration Database, see Flahaux and de Haas, forthcoming
2. Africa in the 2015 Fragile States Index.

Source: http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/map/2015heatmap.png
3. 2014 Map on Mixed Migration Routes

Source: Interactive Map on Migration (i-Map), http://www.imap-migration.org/index.php?id=470
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