



CRS MALI’S EMERGENCY RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM ADDRESSES URGENT IDP NEEDS AMID CONTINUED INSECURITY

Insecurity in Kidal Region continues to trigger population displacement. On 16 September, several violent confrontations occurred in the Inatachdayt Commune, sparking a new flow of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into the neighboring regions of Gao and Menaka. Regional authorities issued immediate alerts regarding the urgent needs of IDPs, but humanitarian access is challenged by armed groups’ confrontations in Menaka and the rising presence of radical groups in Gao.

CONTEXT

In Menaka, insecurity grows further complex as the Government of Mali and signatory armed groups of the peace accord struggle to guarantee people’s safety. Banditry is on the rise, particularly along main roads with targeting including NGO vehicles. Civil society organizations, NGOs, local authorities and community leaders have attempted to reduce crime, but to no avail. In addition to the growing presence of armed groups, NGOs’ evacuation plans are challenged by poor roads, lack of availability of humanitarian flights, and weak communication networks rendering their access to the most vulnerable restricted outside of Menaka Ville.

Despite the security force presence in the towns of Gao and Bamba in the Gao Region, numerous security incidents have taken place since August. Robberies, attacks against MINUSMA, and confrontations between armed groups have occurred in Bourem, Gabero, Gao, N’tilit and Ouatagouna. The two zones most affected by the arrival of IDPs, Gao and Bourem, fall along the Gao-Bamba Road where several NGOs have been the victims of armed hold-ups.

RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

In July 2016, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) launched the USAID/OFDA-funded *Kisili Project*, formalizing its emergency rapid response mechanism throughout Mali. With the aim of strengthening information sharing post-crises to support timely lifesaving responses, the project team uses Information and Communication Technologies for Emergencies (ICT4E) to conduct rapid needs assessments and share reports with the humanitarian community in Mali.

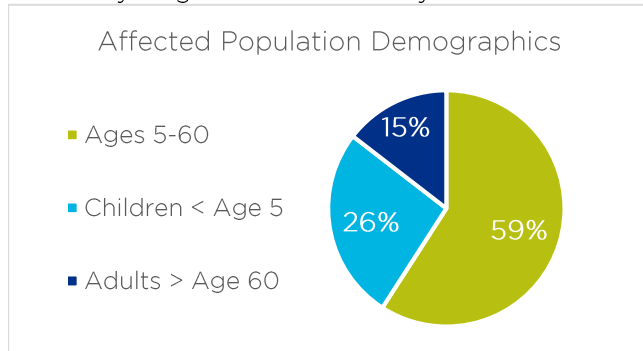
After receiving regional authorities’ alerts following the first wave of displacement out of Kidal on 16 September, CRS deployed assessment teams to evaluate the urgent needs of IDPs and host families in Northeastern Mali. Between September and November 2016, CRS has produced five unique assessment reports for different IDP communities in Gao and Menaka (available for download [here](#)). Despite security constraints, CRS was able to reach vulnerable IDPs together with its local partners, NGO Tassaght in Menaka and NGO Crade in Gao, as well as coordination with local divisions of the Social Development Directorate. While conducting key informant interviews and focus groups discussions, assessment teams simultaneously registered vulnerable households with uniquely barcoded ID cards to expedite interventions. In total, 1,652 IDP households (HHs) fleeing violence from Kidal have been identified by CRS and its partners as requiring humanitarian assistance.



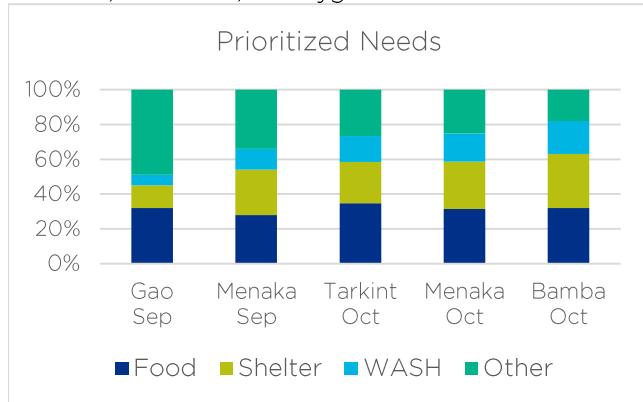
| Region / Commune | Date | # of HHs |
|------------------|--------|----------|
| Gao / Gao | 4 Sep | 383 |
| Menaka / Menaka | 10 Sep | 202 |
| Gao / Tarkint | 8 Oct | 408 |
| Menaka / Menaka | 18 Oct | 459 |
| Gao / Bamba | 24 Oct | 200 |

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Across the five IDP communities assessed in Gao and Menaka, a significant portion of affected individuals included young children and elderly:



Household surveys revealed families' immediate concerns regarding food security, shelter, and access to water, sanitation, and hygiene:



Protection concerns were also stated during focus group discussions as the communities' displacement increases their risk of experiencing robbery and gender-based violence. Communities noted an increase in intercommunity tension sparked by the 20 November elections. While schools have remained open in all communes in Gao except Talaye, protection concerns have contributed to higher teacher absenteeism. Fear of heightened water scarcity is particularly high in District IV and Gao Ville where the arrival of IDPs exacerbates already weak sanitation and hygiene conditions.

CRS' RESPONSE

Both assessments conducted in September were followed by CRS support. 381 households in Gao and 202 households in Menaka received cash assistance, with an average of US\$93, to address their families' unique immediate household and shelter needs. In total, US\$38,084 was transferred by local traders reaching 1,264 women and 597 men. Both communities' immediate food needs were covered by the Social Development Directorate in addition to household items kits distributed by the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Crade Staff register an IDP and her family using ICT4E in the Tarkint Commune in Gao. Source: Crade Staff, 6 October 2016

After gap analyses were conducted, the results of CRS' two most recent IDP assessments were shared to inform the interventions of other humanitarian actors present in Bamba and Menaka Ville.

1,861

DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED EMERGENCY CASH ASSISTANCE FROM CRS AFTER FLEEING VIOLENCE IN KIDAL

NEXT STEPS

Following the rapid needs assessment conducted in the Tarkint Commune in Gao, CRS and Crade have prepared an essential non-food item distribution to include blankets, buckets, water storage containers, bedding and mosquito nets, soap, and kitchenware. In consultation with OCHA and the commune Mayor, the distribution was scheduled after the 20 November elections to ensure the safety of IDPs and staff. This response will complement the Social Development Directorate and Oxfam's distributions of food and non-food items.

In response to a crisis alert received from the Social Development Directorate in Mopti Region, CRS deployed a team to the Douentza Commune between 16-17 November. An assessment of the returnee community's needs following severe flooding will be available soon on the [Kisili Website](#).

While the CRS *Kisili Project* serves to provide needs assessment information so humanitarian actors can launch timely lifesaving activities, these actors are often unable to respond due to a severe lack of funding. Without an end in sight to insecurity in Northeastern Mali, financial support is needed so people fleeing violence can address their immediate needs.

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