

KEY FIGURES

+7,000
REGISTERED REFUGEES
FROM BURKINA FASO

+13,200
TOTAL REFUGEES IN
COTE D'IOVIRE

59%
TOTAL REFUGEES FROM
BURKINA FASO ARE
CHILDREN

6.6/10
LACK OF COPING
CAPACITY ON THE
INFORM RISK INDEX

FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

- The Government of Cote d'Ivoire
- UN agencies (UNHCR)

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

Insecurity and attacks from non-state armed groups in Burkina Faso have reportedly forced entire villages to flee, with many crossing the border into neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire to seek safety (UN 04/02/2023; RFI 05/02/2023; UNHCR 06/03/2023). According to the National Security Council of Côte d'Ivoire, as at 2 February, roughly 8,700 people from Burkina Faso had newly sought refuge in the country, mainly in the towns of Kong and Ouangolodougou of Tchologo region and Téhini town of Buonkani region (Burkina24 02/03/2023; Afrik Soir 15/02/2023; Linfodrome 02/03/2023). Although it is not clear when the "influx" started, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire had planned an assessment of the situation between 22 February and 1 March (Linfodrome 24/02/2023).

As at 6 March, Cote d'Ivoire hosted an estimated 13,214 refugees (2,489 households), of whom around 7,053 were registered refugees from Burkina Faso (UNHCR 06/03/2023). Around 59% of the refugee population from Burkina Faso in Côte d'Ivoire are children and 29% have specific needs, including people with disabilities, serious medical conditions, and older people (UNHCR 06/03/2023). The majority of displaced people from Burkina Faso in Côte d'Ivoire, were reportedly located in Tchologo region, which is along the border with Burkina Faso, mainly in the towns of Sikolo, Kong, Ferkéssédougou, Ouangolodougou, Diawala, Kaouara, Niellé, Toumoukoro, and M'Bengué.

According to UNHCR, some Ivorian households are sheltering up to 30 Burkinabé refugees, creating concerns of overcrowding and a deterioration of sanitation conditions (UN 04/02/2023). There are significant information gaps regarding humanitarian needs of the displaced population and host communities. Currently, the country is experiencing the dry season which has affected important crops and livelihoods for host community (Reuters 13/02/2023; Africa news 12/11/2022).

Though Côte d'Ivoire's hazard and exposure is scored at 2.5 out of 10 in the INFORM Risk Index, it has a vulnerability of 5.6 out of 10 and lack of coping capacity at 6.6 out of 10 (INFORM accessed 14/03/2023). It has a score of 5.4 out of 10 for vulnerable groups, with the majority being classed as "uprooted people".

ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

- The forested areas of Cote d'Ivoire along the border with Burkina Faso can provide safe spots for hiding, training and recruiting for armed groups, and increase protection risks among the bordering communities in Cote d'Ivoire. Adolescents and young adults are likely to be exposed to forced recruitment (Le Monde 24/01/2023; KAS 2020).
- France has promised over 2 million in military support, however, during its recent visit to Africa, the government of France has declared a reduction of the French army and possible support (Agencee Cofin 23/02/2023; Le Matinel 21/02/2023; Africa News 03/03/2023). This is likely to affect Cote d'Ivoire and its response to armed groups.
- Displacement is likely to continue, and the oncoming rainy season (which normally occurs from June to October) is likely to increase sectoral needs of the refugees such as shelter, health and food security (Climate knowledge part 2021; VOA news 23/03/2022).

HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

- There are information gaps regarding humanitarian access to the affected population.
- Côte d'Ivoire's land borders had only been reopened in mid-February 2023, after they had been closed since March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Africa News 16/02/2023). People on the move during the border closures have been using clandestine transit routes, which can challenge humanitarian access to affected people as well as expose affected people to protection risks such as exploitation (RTI 16/02/2023; Channelstv 17/02/2023).
- There is heightened risk of insecurity, connected to armed groups and militias from Burkina Faso and Mali, in the border regions of Côte d'Ivoire which may impact humanitarian access to the affected people (GoC 10/03/2023).
- There is a lack of up-to-date baseline information on the affected areas of Tchologo. Drivers of the crisis.



DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

Conflict and political instability in Burkina Faso

Conflict in neighbouring country, Burkina Faso, has been a significant driver of displacement into Côte d'Ivoire. As at 5 February, an estimated 1.9 million people have been forced to flee their homes because of extremist violence in the country (UNHCR 05/02/23; Shelterbox accessed 14/03/2023).

Several non-state armed groups, affiliated to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, are present and active in Burkina Faso, resulting in the country being a hotspot of armed group violence in the Central Sahel region since 2019 (ACSS 26/09/2022; Shelterbox accessed 14/03/2023). On 17 February, the Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) launched an attack on the military forces in Tin Ediar village of d'Oursi department. This has been reported as the deadliest attack on the government forces of Burkina Faso since the beginning of the crisis in 2015, with around 130 reported deaths (ACLEDD 03/03/2023). Additionally, Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) also conducted an attack on a joint force of gendarmerie and the Volunteers for the Defense of the Homeland (VDP) in Namentenga province (ACLEDD 03/03/2023).

Political instability is a key driver of conflict in Burkina Faso. In 2022 alone, there were two military coups in the country (Al Jazeera 30/09/2022 and 05/10/2022). Since President Traoré came into power in late September 2022, the VDP have been central in Burkina Faso's counterinsurgency strategy. This resulted in JNIM fighters to escalate attacks against the VDP and military forces, along with civilian communities that are perceived to be allies of the VDP and the State (ACLEDD 03/03/2023). As a result, civilians have been forced to leave their homes and assets behind to seek safety (UNHCR 06/03/2023).

The INFORM index measures a "very high" risk for Burkina Faso, with a score of 7.1 out of 10 for hazard and exposure, to mainly conflict, while its vulnerability and lack of coping capacity is scored 7.7 and 6.4 out of 10, respectively (INFORM accessed 14/03/2023).

Insecurity in the border areas of Côte d'Ivoire

There has been an increase in insecurity along the border towns with Burkina Faso and Mali, where armed extremist groups have been active for many years. Tchogolo and Bounkani are among five regions to which travel is often advised against due to heightened risk of insecurity from armed groups and militias (GoC 10/03/2023; Smartraveller 15/03/2023).

Tougbo town in Bounkani region, has been attacked by jihadists twice, in 2020 and 2021. The town has also been reported to host an estimated 7,000 Burkinabé refugees in addition to its population of 20,000, as at 4 February (UN 04/02/2023). This has put additional pressure on the livelihoods and resources of the residents in affected areas and created social tensions among refugee and host community populations, resulting in almost 300 Ivorians leaving their village (RFI 23/01/2022).

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Poverty

In 2018, around 2.55 million people were impacted by extreme poverty in Côte d'Ivoire, which is close to 10% of the total population of 27.5 million (UNDP 03/2022; WB accessed 14/03/2023). Poverty is notably concentrated in rural areas of Côte d'Ivoire. Tchologo region is one of five regions with the highest prevalence of extreme poverty, at 22.8%, where 82.5% of people live in rural areas and 91.7% rely on agriculture as their main source of income (UNDP 03/2022). Tchologo has the third highest poverty rate in the country, with almost 63% of people experiencing poverty.

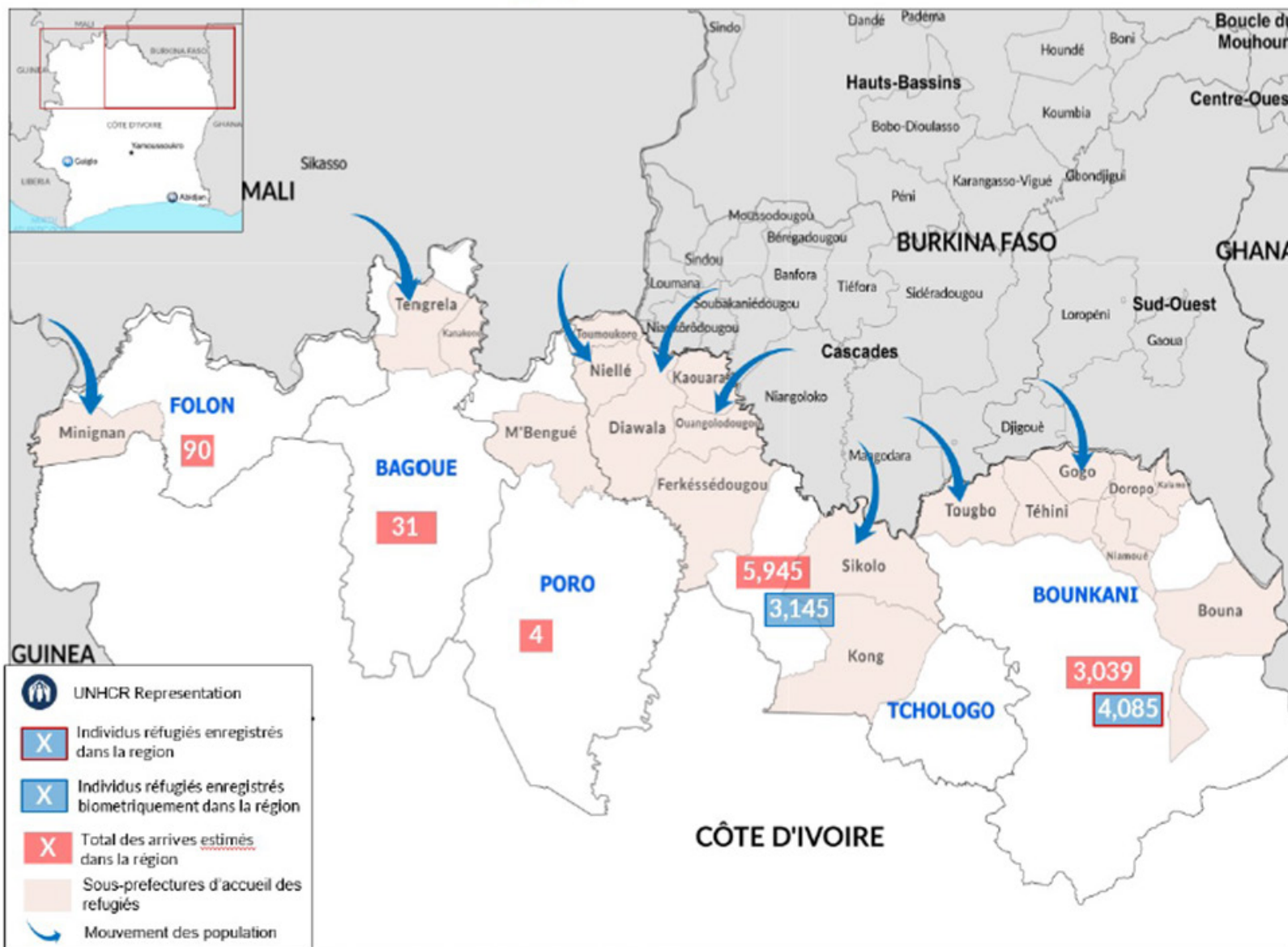
Though there has been a decrease in violence since the post-election conflict in 2010, economic inequality is a root cause of tensions in Côte d'Ivoire, which may be aggravated by the situation of displaced people in the country and in the event of future elections (IRC accessed 14/03/2023). An "influx" of displaced people may create further competition over income-generating opportunities and resources for people in Tchologo region.

Presence of communal militias

Dozo communal militias are present in several areas in the north of the country, supporting the army in the fight against non-state armed groups. In Tchologo region, they hold checkpoints in coordination with the defense and security forces. The Dozos are accused of abuses against herding communities, perceived as supporters of armed groups. There are reports of herders being denied access to certain resources, exacerbating community tensions in the region (VOA 05/04/2022; 11/04/2022; IFRI 11/02/2022).

SITUATION OF DISPLACEMENT INTO CÔTE D'IVOIRE, AS AT 6 MARCH

Cartographie de la situation



(*) Les données sont exclusivement celles des personnes enregistrées biométriquement. Les limites et les noms indiqués et les désignations utilisées sur cette carte n'impliquent pas l'approbation ou l'acceptation officielle des Nations Unies.