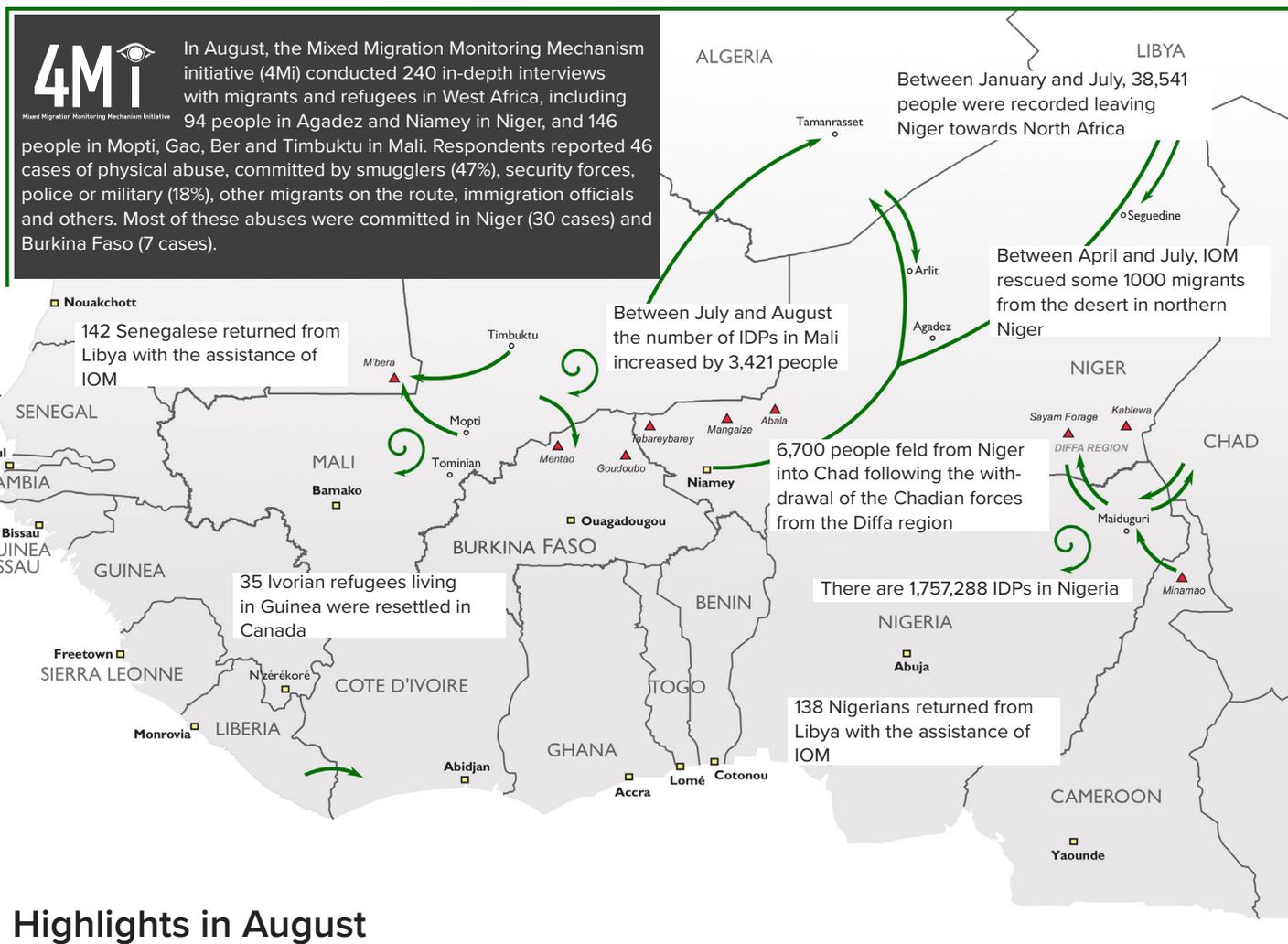**RMMS**
West Africa
Regional Mixed
Migration Secretariat

West Africa
Monthly Mixed Migration Summary

Covering mixed migration events, incidencts, trends and data from the West Africa region. Pease visit our website or sign up to the mailing list here

4Mi
Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative

In August, the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative (4Mi) conducted 240 in-depth interviews with migrants and refugees in West Africa, including 94 people in Agadez and Niamey in Niger, and 146 people in Mopti, Gao, Ber and Timbuktu in Mali. Respondents reported 46 cases of physical abuse, committed by smugglers (47%), security forces, police or military (18%), other migrants on the route, immigration officials and others. Most of these abuses were committed in Niger (30 cases) and Burkina Faso (7 cases).

ALGERIA

LIBYA

Tamanrasset

Between January and July, 38,541 people were recorded leaving Niger towards North Africa

Seguedine

Arlit

Between April and July, IOM rescued some 1000 migrants from the desert in northern Niger

Agadez

NIGER

Sayam Forage   Kablewa

DIFFA REGION

CHAD

Nouakchott

142 Senegalese returned from Libya with the assistance of IOM

Timbuktu

M'bera

Dakar

SENEGAL

Banjul

GAMBIA

Bissau

GUINEA BISSAU

GUINEA

Mopti

Tominian

Mentao

Goudoubo

Tabareybarey

Mangaize

Abala

Between July and August the number of IDPs in Mali increased by 3,421 people

MALI

Bamako

Niamey

Ouagadougou

6,700 people feld from Niger into Chad following the withdrawal of the Chadian forces from the Diffa region

Maiduguri

BURKINA FASO

35 Ivorian refugees living in Guinea were resettled in Canada

BENIN

There are 1,757,288 IDPs in Nigeria

Minamao

Freetown

SIERRA LEONNE

N'zérékoré

COTE D'IVOIRE

TOGO

NIGERIA

Abuja

Monrovia

LIBERIA

GHANA

138 Nigerians returned from Libya with the assistance of IOM

Abidjan

Accra

Lomé   Cotonou

CAMEROON

Yaounde

Highlights in August

• Between February and July 2017, IOM recorded 27,117 refugees and migrants leaving Niger towards North Africa, compared with 221,992 during the same period in 2016. This dramatic decline is largely the result of the increased security in towns along the major route between Niger and Libya. According to IOM, migration routes are currently very diffuse, covering much of the Agadez region in the north of Niger, making identification of migrants, but also the provision of assistance to them, more difficult.

• The Heads of Government of Chad, France, Germany, Italy, Niger, and Spain, along with the Chairman of the Presidential Council of Libya, met in Paris to discuss the latest developments regarding migration between Sub-Saharan and Northern Africa and Europe. The EU countries renewed their mutual commitment to stopping irregular migration flows well ahead of the Mediterranean coast and announced their intention to carry out protection missions to Niger and Chad to explore the possibility of resettling people in need of international protection from along the central Mediterranean route in Europe.

• A number of NGOs temporarily suspended their rescue operations in the Mediterranean sea off the coast of Libya after Libyan authorities publically announced the expansion of the search and rescue zone and restricted the access of humanitarian vessels to international waters off the Libyan coast.

Burkina Faso

Context: In August, an attack on a hotel in Ouagadougou left at least 18 people dead and several people wounded. The attack was strongly condemned by the international community and the Security Council, who commended ongoing efforts to address the transnational dimension of the terrorist threat in the Sahel region.

Migration Related Programming: In August, IOM launched a new project funded by the Italian Development Cooperation and the Belgian Development Cooperation, aiming to address the nexus between youth, employment and migration in central east Burkina Faso. The project aims to promote youth employability and entrepreneurship to reduce irregular migration.

Humanitarian repatriation: In August, IOM assisted four people from Burkina Faso to return home from Libya via a commercial flight.

Malian refugees in Burkina Faso:		Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
	2017	32,017	32,498	32,972	33,056	33,501	33,501	33,501	33,501

UNHCR reports that as of the 31 May, 23,318 refugees were living in two camps in Burkina Faso, as well as 8,800 in villages in the province of Oudalan and Soum and 1,383 in urban areas, mainly Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso.

According to ICRC, following violence in the province of Soum in recent months, nearly 6,000 people have been newly displaced region.

Cote d'Ivoire

Arrivals of Ivoirians in Italy:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total	% Change
2017	839	806	882	1,393	1,737	1,697	551	358	8,263	+ 8%
2016	332	402	807	701	1,444	1,681	1,303	1,006	7,676	

Migrants in countries of crisis: In August, ICMPD published a study entitled, 'Côte d'Ivoire at a Crossroads – Socio-economic Development Implications of Crisis-induced Returns to Burkina Faso, Ghana and Liberia'. The Report, published as part of the four year project 'Migrants in Countries in Crisis: Supporting an Evidence-based Approach for Effective and Cooperative State Action', examines the experiences of nationals of Burkina Faso, Ghana and Liberia during and after the Ivorian crises. The report focuses on key actors who participated in the provision of evacuation, return and reintegration assistance and returnees' re-integration experiences in origin countries.

Ivorian refugees:

	Aug
Liberia	11,986
Ghana	6,656
Guinea	4,521
Togo	2,156
Mali	910
Total in the region	28,330

Source

Repatriation of Ivoiran refugees:

	August	Total 2017
Liberia	433	6,584
Ghana	1	12
Guinea	25	29
Togo	33	58
Mali	184	380

Source

Guinea

Arrivals of Guineans in Italy

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total	% Change
2017	796	1,296	1,076	1,016	1,776	1,799	872	226	8,857	+ 19%
2016	504	259	831	530	1,313	1,818	1,063	1,150	7,468	

Refugees in Guinea: As of 31 August there were 4,577 refugees in Guinea. Between May and July 2017, 35 Ivorian refugees living in Guinea were resettled in Canada. In total 61 refugees (60 Ivoirians and one Liberian) were resettled in Canada from Guinea between January and June 2017.

Humanitarian repatriation: On 3 August, IOM assisted 132 Guineans to return home from Libya, including six unaccompanied children. Later in August, IOM assisted a further 17 people to return home from Libya. IOM has organised seven charter flights from Libya for Guinean migrants so far in 2017.

Liberia

UN Human Rights Office: In August, the UN announced the opening of a UN Human Rights Office in Liberia in 2018. This Office will conduct human rights monitoring and reporting, as well as providing technical assistance to State institutions, the Independent National Commission for Human Rights, civil society and other partners. While acknowledging that Liberia has progressed dramatically since the end of the civil war, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights expressed concern about ongoing human rights issues in Liberia, including FGM and widespread sexual violence.

Mali

Context: In August, interethnic clashes in the Mopti region led to at least 30 deaths. The clashes were a result of an unresolved conflict over land, livestock and access to natural resources.

ACAPS released an update examining the upsurge of violence in Mali and predicting that violence is likely to escalate over the next six months and spread further south to the central region. ACAPS noted that the central regions of Mali are home to some 5.6 million people, compared with 1.7 in the northern regions. This means that a significant rise in violence in the central regions is likely to lead to large-scale displacement, with most people being displaced internally.

According to UNOCHA, general insecurity in central Mali has been on the rise in 2017, and the number of incidents affecting humanitarian access has increased significantly in the first half of 2017. The deployment of mixed patrols in Gao and interim authorities in some parts of the country has not improved the humanitarian space, and humanitarian workers are now affected by violent incidents not only on road axes, but also within city limits.

In August and early September, a number of attacks against MINUSMA took place, including one on 14 August resulting in the death of a peacekeeper and another on 5 September resulting in the deaths of two peacekeepers. On 24 August attackers also fired at a UNHCR vehicle in Timbuktu, injuring two staff members. The Security Council released statements in August reiterating that attacks against peacekeepers may constitute war crimes under international law.

The EU announced that it had authorised stabilisation action in the central regions of Mali, in the Mopti and Segou

governorates. In response to an invitation from the Malian authorities, the European Union (EU) will deploy a team of experts to support Malian national plans and policies, in order to counter the growing insecurity and to re-establish and expand the civilian administration in the central regions. Initially the stabilisation team will consist of 10 people and have a budget of 3.25 million Euros.

Demark announced that it will contribute one million Euros to the new joint G5 Sahel force in order to strengthen its efforts to address terrorism and irregular migration to Europe originating from the Sahel-region. The Institute for Security Studies published a report discussing the challenges and opportunities for the G5 Sahel force and offering a situational analysis of the Liptako-Gourma region.

Malian arrivals in Italy:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total	% Change
2017	282	363	496	738	1,271	1,639	737	427	5,953	n/a
2016	393	400	649	472	960	1,156	992	932	5,954	

Migrant vulnerabilities: According to information collected through the 4Mi project, during August a number of events affecting migrants took place, including an incident in which an armed group attacked a group of migrants outside of Timbuktu. According to 4Mi sources a number of migrants were robbed and sexually assaulted. These incidents highlight the risks for migrants moving through areas of insecurity in northern Mali. According to the latest information from IOM the majority of migrants transiting through Timbuktu in July were Guinean or Malian and most mentioned Italy and Algeria as their intended countries of destination.

Humanitarian repatriation: In August, IOM assisted 145 people to return home to Mali from Libya. Between 14 and 28 August, IOM assisted 555 people to return from Libya to their countries of origin.

Refugees in neighbouring countries:

	Aug
Niger	57,286
Mauritania	51,502
Burkina Faso	33,501
Total in the region	142,289

IDPs in Mali:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	% Change in 2017
2017	36,690	44,762	45,766	58,985	51,961	n/a	55,382	55,382	+ 51%

Deterioration of the security situation in the Kidal region has led to new displacements, with the number of IDPs increasing by 3,421 people to 55,382 between July and August.

Niger

Migrant vulnerabilities: Between April and July 2017, IOM rescued 1000 migrants from the desert in Niger. Search and rescue operations are an integral part of IOM's Migrants Rescue and Assistance project funded by the Government of the Netherlands. In July, IOM conducted a mission in the desert in Northern Niger in order to evaluate the new migration routes that are being utilised in response to increasing controls along the most well-

known routes. IOM hopes the results of the mission will help improve rescues and assistance to migrants on route.

New Registration and Profiling System for Migrants: In August, IOM launched a registration system for migrants in Niger. The system allows IOM to share data collected about migrants' profiles and specific needs between its offices. Among other things, this will allow for a more efficient referral of cases between missions if migrants return home or between IOM's five transit centres in Niger if migrants continue onwards.

Transit migration: Between February and July 2017, IOM recorded 27,117 refugees and migrants leaving Niger towards North Africa, compared with 221,992 during the same period in 2016. This dramatic decline is largely a result of the increased security in towns along the major route between Niger and Libya. According to IOM, migration routes are currently very diffuse, covering much of the Agadez region in the north of Niger, making identification of migrants, but also the provision of assistance to them, more difficult.

Humanitarian repatriation: In August, IOM assisted one person to return home to Niger from Libya. Between 14 and 28 August, IOM assisted 555 people to return from Libya to their countries of origin.

Forced Displacement in Diffa Region: The security situation in South-eastern Niger remains volatile with Boko Harem launching sporadic raids against villages and IDP camps. Between January and August, 48 attacks were recorded in the Diffa region. Around 6,700 people fled from Niger into Chad in late July following after withdrawal of the Chadian forces from the south-eastern Diffa region. According to UNHCR, many of these people fled from Chad 30 years ago and settled in the Diffa region.

	Aug 2017
IDPs	127,299
Refugees	106,146

Nigeria

Context: According to ACAPS, the number of reported suicide bombings between January and August 2017 is higher in each of the five north-eastern states of Nigeria when compared with the same time in 2016, with attacks in Maiduguri having doubled. Amnesty reported that between April and August, suicide bombers killed 381 civilians in the Lake Chad Basin, including an incident in August, where a woman suicide bomber killed 27 people in a market in northeast Nigeria. According to ACAPS this increase is an indication that the ability of Boko Haram to implement and coordinate larger scale attacks has diminished, leading to a change in tactics, from occupation to disruption focused insurgency. According to the Institute of Security Studies, the ('albeit non-linear') decline of Boko Harem means that the AU should step up efforts to encourage regional efforts to counter violent extremism in the Lake Chad Basin.

UNICEF raised grave concerns about the increase in the use of children as human bombs in Nigeria. According to UNICEF, since January 2017, 83 children have been used in this way, most of whom were girls under the age of 15. This is four times the number in 2016, raising concerns of a trend towards the recruitment and exploitation of children by Boko Haram. According to UNICEF, these incidents are also raising suspicions amongst community members of children returned from Boko Haram captivity. According to UNOCHA, more than 60 female suicide bombers were killed in attacks across different locations in Borno state in June and July.

In August, more the 50 soldiers entered a UN base camp in Maiduguri and conducted a search of the compound without authorisation. Humanitarian operations were temporarily suspended leading to apologies from the state government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed regret over the incident and reaffirmed its commitment to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers and the residents of North-Eastern Nigeria.

Humanitarian repatriation: In August, 138 Nigerians returned home from Libya with the assistance of IOM. Between January and 21 August 2017, IOM has assisted 6,946 people to return home from Libya to countries around the world.

Arrivals of Nigerians in Italy:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total	% Change
2017	483	1,204	1,472	2,094	4,033	4,832	2,199	305	16,622	- 26%
2016	905	713	1,797	896	2,921	4,660	6,695	3,742	22,329	

Refugees in neighbouring countries:

	Aug 2017
Chad	9,969
Niger	106,146
Cameroon	90,581
Total	206,696

IDPs in Nigeria:

	Jan	March	May	June	August	% Change in 2017
2017	1,899,830	1,832,743	1,884,331	1,825,321	1,757,288	- 7.5%

Insurgency remains the leading cause of internal displacement across five of the six-north eastern state of Niger. The expectation is the state of Taraba, where 75% of IDPs were displaced by community clashes. In five of the six north-eastern states, 90% of IDPS are living in host communities, with the exception of Borno State, which hosts the highest number of IDPs in Nigeria (1,373,564) and where 46% of displaced people live in camps.

Returnees: The number of returns from Cameroon to Banki reduced significantly in the month of August, with only 84 people recorded returning from Minawao Refugee Camp in Cameroon. According to UNHCR, this could be as a result of agreements made during the Tripartite Commission discussions in early August at which parties committed to ensuring the proper management of returns in a joint communiqué. On 15 August, 218 refugee returnees from the Bagame community in Cameroon arrived in the Nigerian border town of Ngalla.

Senegal

Arrivals of Senegalese in Italy:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Total	% Change
2017	4 31	7 84	700	640	1380	899	532	139	4,920	- 12%
2016	493	406	762	324	580	1482	951	886	5,584	

Humanitarian repatriation: In August, 142 Senegalese returned home from Libya with the assistance of IOM. Between January and 21 August 2017, IOM has assisted 6,946 people to return home from Libya to countries around the world.

Other Regional Information

Addressing the Challenge of Migration and Asylum in Europe: In August, the Heads of Government of Chad, France, Germany, Italy, Niger, and Spain, along with the Chairman of the Presidential Council of Libya met in Paris to discuss the latest developments regarding migration between Sub-Saharan and Northern Africa and Europe. The EU countries renewed their mutual commitment to stopping irregular migration flows well ahead of the Mediterranean coast.

In a statement the EU governments agreed to support an increased presence of State structures in the northern part of Niger and Chad, to step up security measures and measures combating human, drug and arms trafficking, including through support to the G5 Sahel joint force. The EU governments also announced their intention to support to the EUCAP Sahel Niger mission in support of Niger's security and defence forces, particularly in border areas, in addition to the management of migration flows through the Southern border of the country. Finally, the EU states announced their intention to carry out protection missions to Niger and Chad to explore the possibility of resettling people in need of international protection in Europe from along the central Mediterranean route.

Migration in the Mediterranean: In August, MSF, Save the Children and Sea Eye temporarily suspended their rescue operations in the Mediterranean sea off the coast of Libya after Libyan authorities publically announced the expansion of its search and rescue zone and restricted the access to humanitarian vessels into the international waters off the Libya coast. According to MSF, they suspended their rescue operations after receiving warnings from the Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) about the security risks associated with the threats publicly issued by the Libyan Coast Guard against humanitarian search and rescue (SAR) vessels operating in international waters. According to Save the Children, the suspension was in response to the Libyan authorities increasing their search and rescue zone from 12 to 70 nautical miles from their shoreline.

Sea arrivals to Europe: In August, 3,914 migrants and refugees arrived in Italy by way of the central Mediterranean route, a significant decreased compared with the 21,294 people who arrived in August 2016. Arrivals to Italy have slowed in July and August 2017 when compared to the same time last year, with overall arrivals between January and August 2017 having dropped by 14% when compared with the same time in 2016. UNHCR suggests that, while various factors may have contributed to these reductions, the increased engagement by the Libya Coast Guard to prevent departures may be having an impact. Particularly significant is the decline in the number of Nigerians arriving in Italy between January and August in 2017 when compared with 2016, with Nigerian arrivals having dropped by 26%.

The number of people arriving in Spain has more than doubled between January and August 2017 compared with the same period in 2016, from 7,200 to 15,300.

Internal Displacement in 2017: According to IDMC, between January and June 2017, 4,9 million people were newly internally displaced due to conflict and violence, with a further 4.5 million people displaced by disasters. In West Africa, significant new displacements due to conflict and violence in the first six months of 2017 included 162,000 people internally displaced in Gambia and 142,000 in Nigeria. The Africa Centre for Strategic Studies published an info-graphic in August, highlighting the displacement crisis in Africa, with 20 million people registered as displaced across the continent. 75% of the displaced are from five countries; DRC, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan and two-thirds of the displaced population are internally displaced.

Children on the Move in Italy: Between January and August 2017, 13,227 unaccompanied and separated children arrived in Italy by sea, most commonly from Guinea (1,736), Cote d'Ivoire (1,381), and Gambia (1,337).

Migrant deaths: Between January and August 2017, 2,543 migrants and refugees died of went missing in the Mediterranean Sea, including 151 people in August.

News, Reports, Books

Stephanie Maher (2017) 'Historicising 'Irregular' Migration from Senegal to Europe' Anti-Trafficking Review, Issue 9 pp. 77-91

This article aims to disrupt contemporary narratives that frame migrants as desperate travellers who fall victim of exploitative syndicated trafficking cartels on their clandestine journeys to Europe. It look back at the histories of regional and international mobility that continue to shape population movements out of Senegal today. It argues that contemporary framings of migration between Africa and Europe fails to appreciate how contemporary movements both within and outside of West Africa are informed by interrelated political genealogies that tie Europe to Africa in mutually dialectic ways.

REACH (2017) 'Youth on the Move: Investigating decision-making, migration trajectories and expectations of young people on the way to Italy' Research Report.

This research report, produced in collaboration with the Mixed Migration Platform and the Mixed Migration Hub, explores decision-making and preparedness levels of young people who have recently arrived in Italy from Libya, as well as the mechanisms shaping their migration trajectories, and their expectations on the way to Europe. Based on interviews with young people from West and East Africa and the Middle East in Italy, the report shows that in many cases, the decision to move to Italy was undertaken months, or even years, after the first decision to leave a country of origin. The report also argues that people from West Africa lacked economic resources when compared with those from East Africa and the Middle East, and that this left them more vulnerable to exploitation when working along the way.

Sarah Deardorff Miller (2017) 'UNHCR as a Surrogate State: Protracted Refugee Situations' Routledge.

This book examines the role of UNHCR as a surrogate state in protected refugee situations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, to explore how and under what circumstances the Agency takes on surrogacy and what effect this has on its ability to improve protection for refugees.

Aurelian Tobie (2017) 'A Fresh Perspective on Security Concerns Among Malian Civil Society' SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security

This SIPRI Insights Paper presents the preliminary findings of a research project, conducted by SIPRI and the Malian National Coalition of Civil Society for Peace and the Fight Against the Proliferation of Light Weapons (CONASCIPAL), on the perceptions of insecurity amongst 105 Malian civil society actors. The paper describes how Malian civil society actors define security and looks at their perceptions of the range of responses to date—local, national and international.

Mixed Migration Platform (2017) 'How Powerful is Policy: the role of policy in shaping migrant decision-making' Feature Article

This article seeks to explore the impact that policy-making has upon the decision making of refugees and migrants prior to leaving home. Through a brief literature review of existing information on the topic, the article provides a short overview of the role of policy in shaping migration decisions.

The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) West Africa is an independent unit hosted by the Danish Refugee Council which aims to enhance the protection of people on the move in mixed migration flows in West Africa, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. RMMS West Africa distributes this summary to agencies, academic institutions, donors, embassies, journalists, government officials, international and multinational organisations and related non-government organisations. Data is sourced from a wide variety of collaborators, partners, international and local organisations, media outlets and individuals in the region. RMMS West Africa makes independent editorial decisions as to what sections and what data is included in this summary.

If you would like more information about RMMS West Africa please visit our website at www.westafrica.regionalmms.org

*The term migrant/refugee is used to cover all those involved in mixed migration flows (including asylum seekers, trafficked persons, economic migrants, refugees). If the caseload mentioned refers only to refugees or asylum seekers or trafficked persons it will be clearly stated.