



# WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2025

## ADVOCACY STATEMENT

### Standing in Solidarity with Displaced Children and Families in West Africa

Across West and Central Africa, more than **12.7 million** people are displaced due to conflict, violence, and the impacts of climate change (UNHCR, 2024). Among them are children who no longer have access to education, mothers giving birth far from any clinic, and entire families navigating hunger, homelessness, and fear. On **World Refugee Day**, we stand with them in recognition of their struggle and in defense of their dignity.

This regional crisis continues to deepen. The Central Sahel remains one of the world's fastest-growing displacement emergencies. The war in Sudan, now in its second year, has displaced over **9 million** people, with over **1 million** seeking refuge in neighboring countries such as **Chad**, which now hosts nearly half of all refugees in the region (OCHA, May 2025).

This is no longer a series of national emergencies. It is a regional protection crisis, with far-reaching humanitarian and development consequences.

A **multi-country assessment** conducted by World Vision in 2024, covering Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and the Central African Republic, found alarming trends among displaced communities:



**82%**

of families surveyed reported moderate to severe hunger.



**49%**

observed psychosocial distress among children, including sleep disorders and social withdrawal.



**89%**

of households had no regular access to healthcare.

- Early and forced child marriage, school dropout, and risky coping strategies—such as child labor and begging—were reported across nearly all displacement sites.

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Children, especially girls, face disproportionate risks. Their right to safety, to learn, to be children these are increasingly out of reach. Yet even amid crisis, communities have stepped forward with compassion. Host families across Niger, Chad, and Burkina Faso continue to share what little they have. Local faith leaders have opened mosques, churches, and community spaces to shelter displaced families. Community health workers, most unpaid, are delivering care in hard-to-reach areas. These acts of solidarity, though rarely documented, are real and essential.

They reflect a truth we must all act on: those closest to the crisis are often doing the most to respond and they deserve greater support. Global solidarity must match local compassion.

At World Vision, we work alongside these communities and local partners to provide child protection, education, water and sanitation, and psychosocial support to displaced children and their families. But the scale of need now far exceeds available resources.

Despite growing needs, humanitarian funding continues to fall short. The 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Central Sahel, for instance, was only **35% funded** by the end of the year (OCHA FTS, Dec 2024). Sudan's crisis remains among the most neglected in terms of international attention and aid. In Chad, which now hosts over **1 million Sudanese refugees**, only **28%** of the 2025 response plan had been funded as of May (UNHCR & OCHA, 2025).

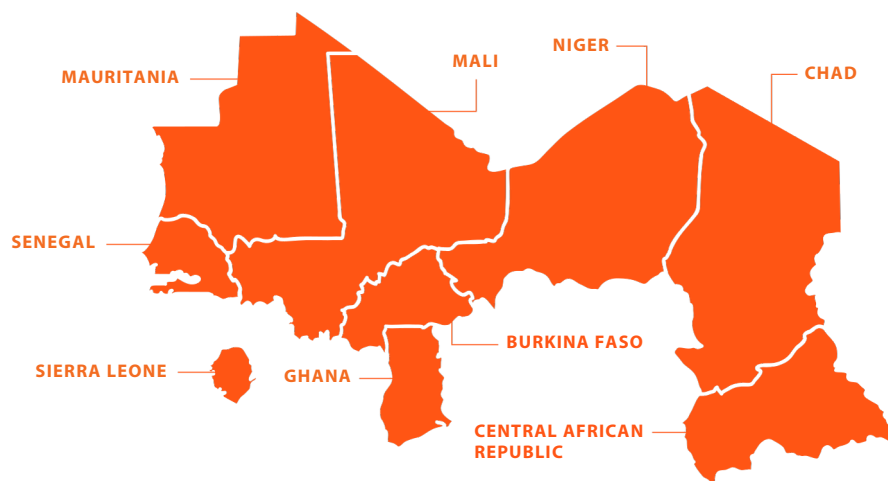
We therefore call on donors, governments, and humanitarian actors to:

- **Scale up flexible, multi-year funding** to meet urgent needs and support long-term solutions.
- **Prioritize the rights of displaced children**, especially in education, protection, and psychosocial care.
- **Strengthen the role of local and national organizations**, including faith-based actors, who are leading frontline responses.
- **Support durable solutions**, including safe voluntary returns, local integration, and resettlement for refugees with no prospect of return.
- **Ensure the crisis remains visible** in global policy and humanitarian discourse, and is resourced accordingly.

Above all, we urge the international community to stop treating displacement as temporary. Most refugees and IDPs in the region have been in limbo for years, with no clear pathway home. The longer they remain without rights, services, or status, the more their future and the region's stability is at risk.

This World Refugee Day, we reaffirm that displaced people can be great contributors to society, and are full holders of human rights. They deserve more than our empathy; they deserve our action.

Their courage must be met with commitment. Their resilience with resources. Their humanity with justice.



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