

# NRC's operations in Mali

## Humanitarian overview

Mali continues to face a complex and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian context, shaped by persistent insecurity, political uncertainty, and climate-related shocks. Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have intensified their presence and operations across central and northern regions, while expanding towards the south. This escalation resulted in widespread displacement, with over 414,000 people, predominantly women and children, forced to flee their homes (DTM, September 2025). The deliberate targeting of key supply routes by armed actors further disrupted access to fuel and essential goods, exacerbating economic hardship, increasing operational costs, and significantly constraining humanitarian access. Violence intensified on 25 April 2026, when coordinated attacks led by NSAGs targeted military positions and strategic locations across multiple regions of Mali.

Basic services remain severely disrupted. As of November 2025, over 2,300 schools were closed, affecting approximately 694,200 children and exposing them to heightened protection risks, including child labour, early marriage, and recruitment into armed groups. Food insecurity continues to worsen, with an estimated 1.6 million people projected to face crisis or emergency levels in 2026 (Cadre Harmonisé, November 2025). Protection risks remain high with over 43,000 human rights violations documented between January and October 2025 (HNRP 2026). Access to water and sanitation services is critically low, with more than 3 million people in need of WASH assistance (HNRP 2026). Humanitarian access constraints persist as a major challenge: 814 access incidents were recorded in 2025 (OCHA), a 41% increase on 2024, limiting the ability to reach the most vulnerable populations, while growing bureaucratic and administrative impediments are further hindering the timely and effective delivery of assistance.

These challenges are compounded by climate-related shocks, including recurrent droughts and flooding, which undermine livelihoods and increase competition over scarce resources. Mali also continues to host a growing number of refugees, over 167,000 (HNRP 2026), primarily from Burkina Faso, placing additional pressure on already fragile host communities. Despite escalating needs, the humanitarian response remains critically underfunded, with only 26% of the Humanitarian Response Plan financed in 2025 and a similar trend recorded in 2026, where just 16% of the appeal has been covered as of April.



Photo: Aissatou Traore/NRC

## Our core activities



Education



Information, counselling  
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Livelihoods  
and food security



Protection  
from violence



Shelter  
and settlements



Water, sanitation  
and hygiene (WASH)

### NRC Mali

Established	2013
Mobile staff	9
Resident staff	135

## Our areas of operation

- Bamako (country office)
- Gao
- Timbuktu
- Mopti
- Ménaka



## Our activities in detail

NRC Mali strives to provide lifesaving and longer-term assistance to displacement-affected people, including those forced to flee and the most vulnerable among those who remain.

In this highly constrained environment, we work to deliver principled, integrated, and adaptive assistance in hard-to-reach areas to populations with the most severe needs. Across central and northern Mali, NRC contributes to tangible improvements in access to essential services, protection outcomes, and household resilience, reaching over **132,487 individuals in 2025** through an integrated, multisectoral response combining education, protection, legal assistance, food security and livelihoods, shelter, and WASH interventions

We advocate for the international community to increase engagement in Mali, focusing not only on security, but also on humanitarian access and the needs of those affected by conflict.



**35,497 people reached in 2025** ▼

## Education

In 2025, an estimated 2,314 schools were closed and about 694,200 children were deprived of their education in Mali.

In such a constrained environment, NRC works together with local communities, parents, and education authorities to provide quality education to children and youth affected by displacement and conflict.

Our education teams:

- provide catch-up classes for out-of-school children, giving them opportunities to reintegrate into the formal education system
- support community-based learning in areas where no schools are functional
- provide vocational trainings for vulnerable youth, enabling them to earn a living
- support the formal education system through teacher training, distribution of school materials, and strengthening the governance of education at the local level



21,401 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

We provide legal assistance to conflict-affected people through services in central and northern Mali. By deploying mobile teams, we extend our assistance to additional areas where critical needs are identified. Specifically, we:

- help people obtain civil documentation, such as identity cards and birth certificates, enabling adults to access basic services, and children to enrol in schools and have a legal identity
- provide training to local authorities on the needs and rights of internally displaced people (IDPs), while also supporting them with registers and basic office supplies to facilitate the issuance of civil documentation
- support IDPs and returnees to access their land and property rights, including assistance for those who lost their documentation or whose claims to land are contested



43,332 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Livelihoods and food security

In the regions most affected by displacement and compromised food security, our teams:

- provide vulnerable households with multipurpose cash assistance to enable them to meet food and other basic needs
- build stores in vulnerable communities and supply them with grain
- help people earn a living and rebuild their future through income-generating opportunities like community gardens, and village savings and loan associations



6,080 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Protection from violence

Conflicts between communities have contributed to exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in Mali. They generally stem from small disputes related to land ownership and the sharing of natural resources, which have become scarce due to climatic effects and conflict-related restrictions on population movements in remote areas. Recent developments have further deteriorated the situation and increased protection needs. In such a complex environment, our teams:

- prevent and resolve intercommunal conflicts by facilitating a neutral restoration of communication
- organise regular training sessions for local actors involved in conflict resolution
- ensure regular monitoring of action plans agreed by the parties to a conflict following mediation
- conduct rapid protection assessments and respond to the specific needs of the most vulnerable people
- implement plans for the reduction of protection risks and enable a community protective environment



21,198 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Shelter and settlements

NRC's team strives to provide vulnerable displaced populations with safer and more dignified living conditions. In particular, we:

- provide emergency and transitional housing to IDPs and vulnerable host community members
- deliver emergency assistance to people affected by displacement through the distribution of essential household items
- promote an integrated programming approach by constructing and rehabilitating schools, classrooms, and WASH facilities in areas where we deliver education activities, ensuring children have access to safe learning environments



45,866 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Across Mali, our WASH teams:

- design, construct, and manage water and sanitation infrastructures within communities and at schools
- raise awareness among students and communities on adequate hygiene practices
- construct and rehabilitate small-scale water systems supporting agriculture and livestock activities

27,332 people reached in 2025 ▼

## Rapid response mechanism (RRM)

As the RRM lead agency in Mali, NRC contributes to addressing the most urgent needs of populations affected by sudden shocks, such as displacement due to violence

and conflict. Following multisector rapid assessments to identify needs, NRC provides immediate relief assistance before regular humanitarian programming takes over for the next steps.

## Our donors

### We are grateful for the generous support from our donors:

- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
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- Government of Liechtenstein
- EQUINOR
- Regional Humanitarian Fund for West and Central Africa (FHRAOC)

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