



Davycas International

Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control Landscape in Displaced Populations

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Organization's Role and Activities

Davycas International is a Non-Governmental Organization created in 2016 in Burkina Faso, with a headquarter in Ouagadougou, and a Country Office in Niamey, Niger.

Davycas International is made up of a multidisciplinary team and the mission is to provide technical support to the ministries of health of West African countries for the implementation of public health programs.

Davycas' areas of intervention cover :

- (1) Laboratory-centered disease surveillance
- (2) Development of health information systems
- (3) Implementation of field studies and surveys.
- (4) Health Emergencies

Usually, our **interventions cover all populations including displaced population.** In Burkina Faso, the Sahel region is a border region with Mali and Niger, located approximately at 300 KM from Ouagadougou, the main town. Due to the security crisis, Burkina Faso had, in 2022, 2 million internally displaced persons, of which approximately 500,000 people were registered in the Sahel region and nearly 25,000 refugees. This crisis led to the closure of 34% of health centers in the Sahel region and a drop in vaccination coverage at its lowest level. The Sahel region recorded in 2022, the lowest PCV13 vaccination coverage which was 64.7% compared to the national average which was 97.3%. This vaccination campaign covered children aged 9 to 59 months in two of the four health districts in the Sahel region: Dori and Gorom-Gorom, two districts that record just over half of the IDPs in the Sahel region. The vaccination campaign was carried out from February 25 to March 3, 2022.

Briefing session with public criers

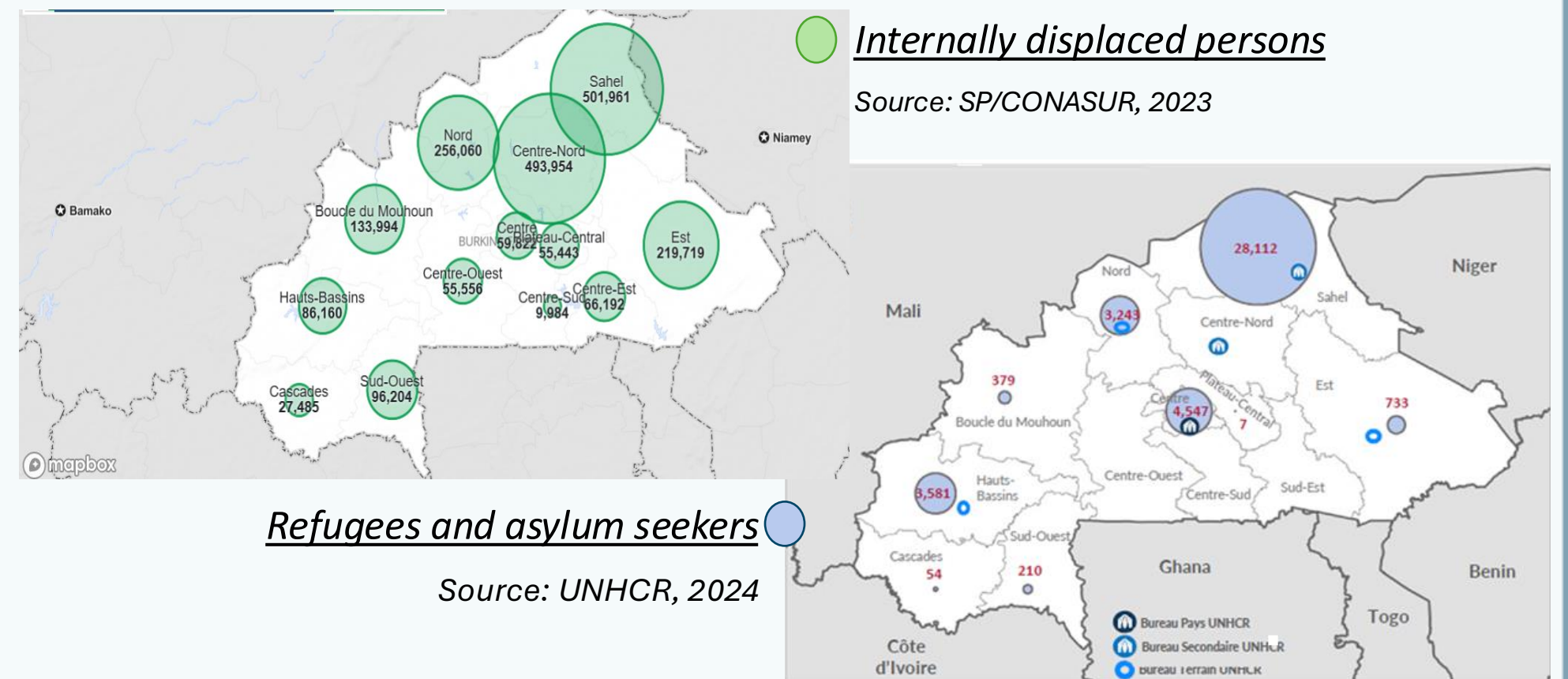


The campaign achieved the following results

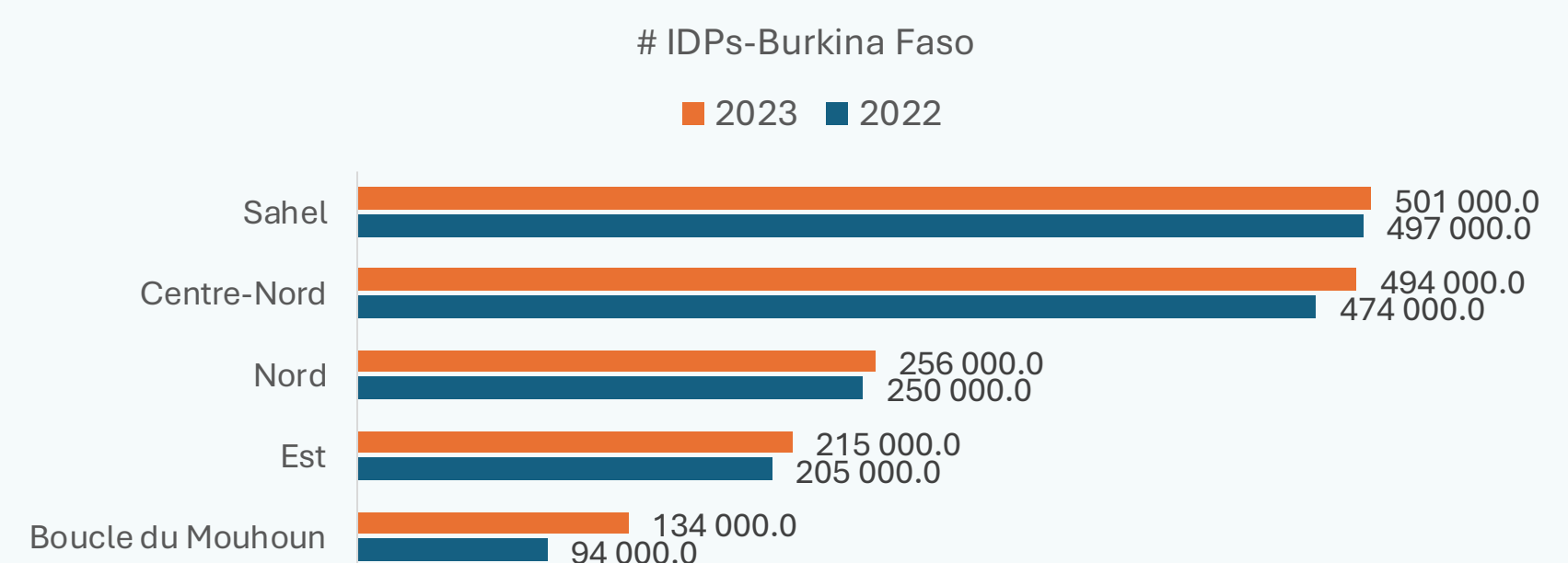
- ❖ 137,308 children aged 9 to 59 months vaccinated out of an expected target of 138,015, representing a coverage rate of 99.5%.
- ❖ 73,040 children aged 9 to 59 months vaccinated with an unknown vaccination status, representing 53.2%;
- ❖ The opinion poll reported that 93% of parents were informed prior to the campaign, that justifies the strong support of the population

Overview of Displaced Populations

With the efforts to secure the country, many IDPs are returning to their places of origin and it is estimated that around 1 million IDPs have returned home according to the Government in 2024. There are currently around 1 million IDPs and 40 thousand refugees and asylum seekers.



Among the 13 regions of the country, 5 regions are at risk of security: Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre-Nord, North, East and Sahel. These are border regions with Mali and Niger where terrorist attacks are frequent.



Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control

According to the Ministry of Health, in Burkina Faso, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in women after breast cancer, with more than 1,000 new cases and around 800 deaths each year. Since April 26, 2022, Burkina Faso has introduced officially the vaccine (le Gardasil 4) against the HPV, which causes cervical cancer into the vaccination schedule of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI). This vaccine is offered to the girls aged from 9-14 including those who live with displaced populations.

Many strategies have been developed to immunize thousands of young girls against this disease that are:

- fixed strategy vaccination in health centers,
- Advanced strategy vaccination in schools for school-age girls
- Advanced strategy vaccination in communities for out-of-school girls

There some approaches in the country for providing cervical cancer screening and treatment but not specifically to for displaced populations. There is a civil society organization called COBUCAN that was created to fight cervical cancer. It regularly organizes awareness and cervical cancer screening campaigns for women in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the media.

The country has adopted a national strategy against cervical cancer for the period 2021-2025. It is a global strategy not specific for displaced populations.

Conference organized by COBUCAN with media



Children vaccination



Data Collection Room

This campaign has helped improve the level of vaccination coverage in the Sahel region. In addition, pneumococcal carriage studies conducted before and after the campaign will help determine the impact of the vaccination campaign on the carriage of pneumococcal vaccine serotypes within that population. Data analysis are still ongoing in collaboration with CDC-Atlanta (USA).

The strategy developed during the PCV13 vaccine campaign in 2022 focusing on (i) local volunteer's vaccinators recruitment and trainings, and (ii) sensitization of populations using town criers and community radio broadcast, will be leverage on. This is exactly how the national typhoid fever vaccination campaign has been organized, in January 23rd to 29th, 2025, including in the Sahel region.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded the PCV13 vaccination campaign. A 3-years contract was signed between Davycas and the Gates Foundation. Davycas managed these funds and reported to BMGF.

Barriers to Access and Implementation Among These Populations

Challenges	Solutions
Accessibility by road is very risky due to explosive devices, forced kidnappings and terrorist attacks. Apart from WFP UNHAS flights, there is no private airline to the Sahel region including other security-challenged areas.	Davycas often used military flights or secure military convoys to transport vaccines and samples
Energy difficulties in maintaining the cold chain. The Sahel region regularly faces power outages or power cuts which have a huge impact on the conservation of vaccines.	Davycas has manufactured a solar module and connected it to portable -80°C freezers for the storage of vaccines and samples from carriage studies.
Closure of health centres and difficulties for health workers to access displaced populations living in very remote risk areas.	Volunteer vaccinators were recruited from the population and trained with district health workers to administer the vaccine to these populations. These volunteer vaccinators used motorcycles with small coolers equipped with ice packs and containing the vaccines in order to easily reach the displaced populations to carry out the vaccination.
Absence/loss of vaccination cards or documents indicating vaccination history	Printing new vaccination cards and distributing them to children without vaccination cards during the campaign. Davycas is seeking funding to develop an electronic vaccination system to strengthen vaccination information systems in security-challenged areas