



ISSUE BRIEF

NIGER: Trafficking in persons

March 2023

This intelligence product is an Issue Brief, designed to provide assessments about the nature and extent of trafficking in persons in Niger (the issue). It is not a country-level threat assessment for Niger or a threat assessment for any of the groups (criminal elements or terrorist organisations) referenced in this product.

NIGER: Trafficking in persons

Key judgements

Niger is an origin, transit, and destination country for trafficking in persons in West Africa due to its geographic position at the centre of trans-Saharan migratory and trade routes; poor socio-economic conditions; and instability created by spill over from conflicts along its borders.

Victims of human trafficking identified in Niger are most likely to be women from West African countries trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution.

Both organised and opportunistic criminal elements are most likely to be trafficking in persons within and through Niger. However, Islamic terrorist/militant groups operating along Niger's southern border are also involved in human trafficking for recruitment purposes and probably also to generate revenue for their operations.

- Niger is an origin, transit, and destination country for trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, in West Africa. Although the Nigerien Government and international organisations acknowledge trafficking in persons as a serious problem for the country, human trafficking activity is almost certainly underreported.
 - Data on trafficking in persons within Niger, and human trafficking involving Nigeriens abroad, is limited and where data is available it is often conflated with data on migrant smuggling.ⁱ For definitions of trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling see [Appendix A](#).
 - Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Nigerien Government investigated 33 individuals suspected of trafficking in persons, prosecuting 21 alleged traffickers and convicting eight traffickers. Where the purpose of trafficking was identified in these investigations, sexual exploitation was the most common purpose followed by forced labour.ⁱⁱ
 - In the same 12-month period, the Nigerien Government also reported identifying 52 victims of human trafficking and recorded an additional 75 trafficking victims identified by an international organisation. The Government also reported assisting 114 victims in its trafficking-specific shelter in Zinder. Most of these victims were women from Nigeria who had been exploited in sex trafficking.ⁱⁱⁱ

Drivers for human trafficking

Geography

- Niger sits at the crossroads of numerous trade routes and migration flows that transit the Sahara, and it acts as a key corridor connecting West Africans to Europe, the Middle East and the rest of the African continent.^{ivv} However, the Nigerien Government is unable to maintain and secure its borders and large swathes of its territory remain essentially ungoverned. This allows the illicit movement of people and goods across Niger's territory and borders to go largely unchecked, including on well-known routes.
 - The degree of movement across Niger and its borders is difficult to quantify as mobility flows involve legal migration, irregular migration, migrant smuggling, and human trafficking.^{vi}
- While traditional migratory routes used to transit West Africa towards North Africa and Europe – such as those between Niger and Libya – are still popular with migrants, smugglers and traffickers migratory routes are diversifying.^{vii}
 - Smugglers and traffickers have continued to adapt to law enforcement measures in north and north-eastern Niger, taking to smaller and more remote routes rather than the main route (via Agadez, Dirkou and Madama) to Libya. According to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, as of mid-2022 new and existing routes between Niger, Mali and Algeria that connected through to Europe were possibly also growing in importance.^{viiiix}

Poverty

- Poverty and lack of economic opportunity are primary driving factors of human trafficking in Niger. Most trafficking victims identified in Niger are experiencing economic hardship.^{xxi}
 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) categorises Niger as a low human development country, ranking it 189 out of 191 countries on the Human Development Index.^{xii}
- Food insecurity, a booming youth population, a decrease in available cultivatable land and limited alternative livelihood options have caused an increase in the internal, regional, and transcontinental migration of Nigeriens seeking to earn an income to support themselves and/or their family.^{xiii/xiv/xv}
 - Niger's predominately agricultural and mining based economy is highly vulnerable to external shocks like climate change, changing food prices, and conflict.^{xvi}
 - Niger has experienced chronic food shortages since the early 1970s. More recent global grain shortages due to the war in Ukraine have further exacerbated food insecurity in the region, according to the Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner.^{xvii}
 - As of 2022, Niger had one of the highest population growth rates in the world at 3.8 percent, as well as the highest fertility rate with an average of 7.6 children per woman.^{xviii}

Corruption

- Public sector corruption in Niger is perceived to be higher than the global average. Official complicity in human trafficking is likely to be common in Niger, particularly among border officials, law enforcement officers and judicial office holders.

- In 2022, Niger scored 38 on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), ranking it 123 out of 180 countries. The CPI measures the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0-100 where 0 means highly corrupt and 100 means very clean.^{xxix}
- Corrupt government officials may be engaged in both facilitating human trafficking for personal benefit and/or allowing traffickers to operate with impunity. Some of the key factors for this are likely to include: poor government administrative controls, inadequate training, and low salaries for officials.^{xx}
 - Officials across all levels of government are suspected of involvement in and/or deriving benefit from drug, gold, and human trafficking as well as migrant smuggling, according to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.^{xxi}
 - Nigerien officials are reported to have accepted bribes from traffickers; obtained official documentation and provided tipoffs about security force patrols to facilitate the transportation of victims; and perpetrated violence against trafficking victims.^{xxii}
 - Some Nigerien military personnel are also possibly involved in human trafficking. Nigerien peacekeepers were found to have been involved in sexual exploitation with trafficking indicators while on deployment with UN peacekeeping missions in the mid- to late-2010s.^{xxiii}
 - The US Department of State assesses that official complicity in trafficking activities may also be contributing to the low levels of law enforcement action against traffickers in Niger.^{xxiv}

Climate change

- The effects of climate change are likely to be exacerbating existing socio-economic problems in Niger, such as food insecurity and political instability.^{xxv}
 - Niger is already experiencing climate changed-linked weather events – such as droughts, severe floods, and high winds and temperatures – which are impacting its predominately agricultural economy by contributing to insect plagues, crop diseases, desertification, and soil degradation.^{xxvi}
- Marginalised groups in Niger, particularly women and children, are most likely to be impacted by climate induced humanitarian disasters increasing their vulnerability to human trafficking.
 - According to the UN Environment Programme, humanitarian disasters – including natural disasters – increase the risk of human trafficking occurring in the affected area by 20-30 percent.^{xxvii}

Cultural slavery practices

- Although hereditary slavery and caste-based servitude practices are still common in some parts of Niger, human trafficking for the purpose of slavery or practices similar to slavery, and servitude almost certainly occurs as well.
 - According to the US Department of State, hereditary slavery and caste-based servitude is still practiced by some ethnic groups along Niger's southern border and in the Tillaberi and Tahoua regions. Traditional slavery practices are also followed in areas of northern Niger, according to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.^{xxviii}

- There is limited data available on the prevalence of traditional slavery practices; however, some sources estimate the number of persons subjected to these practices could be as high as 800,000.^{xxix}
- Despite slavery being illegal in Niger, traditional slavery practices are often overlooked by local government officials and law enforcement officers.^{xxx} For this reason, it is likely that human trafficking for the purpose of slavery or practices similar to slavery, and servitude are being similarly neglected by Nigerien authorities.
 - Niger criminalised slavery and slavery-like practices in 2003, and in 2010 adopted a law to prevent and fight human trafficking.^{xxxi}

Conflict

- Niger's internal stability continues to be challenged by conflicts in neighbouring countries, with associated violence increasingly spilling over its southern and western borders.
 - The most significant of these conflicts are driven by Islamic terrorist/militant groups: Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham – West Africa (ISIS-WA) and Boko Haram in the Niger-Nigeria-Chad tri-border region; and Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS), Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru) along Niger's south-west borders with Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Nigeria. For background on these groups see [Appendix B](#).
- The erosion of the rule of law, economic collapse and forced displacements in conflict impacted border regions provides ideal conditions for organised and opportunistic criminals to exploit people through human trafficking and for those committing trafficking acts to generally operate with impunity.^{xxxiixxxiii}
 - Conflicts with Islamic terrorist/militant groups in the south-west and south-east border regions have resulted in tens of thousands of refugees and displaced persons being hosted in Niger's Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillaberi regions.^{xxxivxxxv}
 - Rampant banditry along the southern border with Nigeria also contributes to the displacement of people from border communities.^{xxxvi}

Profile of human trafficking victims

- In Niger, marginalised groups most vulnerable to human trafficking include women, children and migrants.

Women

- Victims of human trafficking identified in Niger are most likely to be women from West African countries trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and/or forced prostitution.
 - According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), of the victims identified in 2021, sexual exploitation, intended sexual exploitation and forced prostitution was the most common purpose of trafficking. Most of these victims were women, 18 years or older, from Nigeria and Niger.^{xxxvii}

- The majority of these women identified they had intended to migrate to destinations outside Niger, including Libya, Algeria and Europe. While some women were exploited in Libya or Algeria, some were held and exploited in Niger. For those exploited in Niger, this usually occurred in *maison closes* (brothels) or known prostitution ghettos in major cities – such as Niamey or Agadez – in the early stages of their migration journey. Victims identified traffickers often held them in trafficking situations by using the excuse that the victim needed to repay the costs incurred by the trafficker in arranging their travel. The traffickers often continued to maintain control over the women by removing their official documentation and phones.^{xxxviii}
- According to the IOM, female victims of trafficking in Niger are also particularly vulnerable to being exploited more than once. For example, women and girls may be kept in major cities for the purpose of forced prostitution before being trafficked to another destination. Women who find themselves freed following sexual exploitation are also at increased risk of further exploitation by human traffickers in Niger.^{xxxix}

Children

- Children are commonly trafficked in Niger for the purpose of forced begging. Victims of forced begging are most likely to be boys from Niger and Nigeria attending Qur'anic schools.
 - In Niger, it is common for parents to entrust children to a third adult, such as a relative or a *marabout* (Qur'anic teacher), to care for them while they gain an education or find work to support their family. Although not a trafficking practice per se, this custom – known locally as *confiage* – can lead to children ending up in trafficking scenarios such as forced begging.^{xli}
 - Some *marabouts* (Qur'anic teachers) exploit *talibés* (students) in their care by forcing them to beg all day and hold boys in these trafficking scenarios by threatening them with punishment such as physical beatings or withholding education.^{xlii}
 - In some communities, begging is traditionally associated with learning how to be humble. This further complicates reporting on instances of forced begging and trafficking involving children.^{xliii xliv}
- Children from across West Africa are also trafficked in and through Niger for the purposes of forced labour, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation.
 - Children trafficked for the purpose of forced labour often end up being exploited in the mining, agricultural and manufacturing sectors of Niger or neighbouring countries.^{xlv}
 - Children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and/or domestic servitude in private homes in Niger and neighbouring countries are most likely to be girls between the ages of 13 and 17.^{xlvi}

Migrants

- Migration and trafficking in persons are closely linked in Niger. Historically, migrants seeking to reach North Africa, the Middle East or Europe have typically engaged the services of *passeurs* (transporters) to assist them in transiting Niger. However, in 2015 the Nigerien Government criminalised migrant smuggling.^{xlvii xlviii}

- In 2015, following pressure from European countries seeking to stem the flow of irregular migration from Africa, the Nigerien Government introduced anti-migrant smuggling legislation.
- By criminalising migrant smuggling the Nigerien Government has forced previously open and undocumented migration activities underground, and in doing so has increased migrants' vulnerability to trafficking scenarios.^{xlix}
 - Enforcement action has been predominantly focused on northern Niger around Agadez, and along the northern borders with Algeria and Libya. The south and west of the country have seen little enforcement action due to Niger's membership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which allows for freedom of cross-border movement for citizens of ECOWAS member states.^{liiii}
 - Impoverished seasonal migrants from Niger – who seek out work in agriculture, mining sites, or urban construction jobs in Algeria and Libya – are now also likely to require the services of *passeurs* (transporters) or smuggling networks to cross Niger's northern borders.^{liiiivlv}
 - Although some migrant smugglers have probably always been involved in human trafficking, *passeurs* (transporters) that had once operated semi-legitimate migrant smuggling businesses may now be more inclined to work with criminal networks, including human trafficking networks, in an effort to maintain their income.^{lvi}
- Over the past five years, Libya and Algeria have also stepped-up counter-migrant smuggling operations. Niger is now regularly subject to influxes of migrants and refugees being repatriated or expelled from its northern neighbours. Migrants are typically dumped across Niger's northern border in the desert with little to no support making them further susceptible to exploitation by traffickers.^{lvii}

Profile of human traffickers

Criminal elements

- Both organised and opportunistic criminal elements are most likely to be trafficking in persons within and through Niger. Organised criminal groups involved in human trafficking are more likely to be operating transnationally.^{lviiiix}
 - Most local criminal networks are territorially based and organised around ethnolinguistic groupings.^{lx}
 - According to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime, Latin American and Asian cartels, mafia groups in the Maghreb, and mafia groups linked to African diasporas abroad are involved in human trafficking in West Africa. These actors are also involved in other forms of illicit trafficking in the region, including in arms and drugs.^{lxi}
- The most common entry point to trafficking in Niger is fully or partially deceptive recruitment. Victims are either promised a work opportunity that does not exist or where the promise of employment eventuates are subjected to inhumane working conditions. Recruitment deception is most often conducted by an acquaintance who approaches the victim in a social or work-place setting.^{lxiiixiii}

- According to the IOM, some Christian Nigerian women identified as trafficking victims in Niger reported being connected to criminal networks promising work opportunities through members of their church.^{lxiv}
- Additional acts of trafficking undertaken in Niger by traffickers include transportation, transfer to other traffickers and harbouring victims, for example in a *maison close* (brothel) or locked house with armed guards.^{lxv}
 - Traffickers are reported to use blackmail, physical force, deprivation of liberties, sexual abuse and the withholding of income to maintain victims in trafficking situations. According to the IOM, traffickers may also play on cultural beliefs such as fear of witchcraft and sorcery to threaten and maintain control over victims.^{lxvi}

Nigerian bandits

- Some Nigerian bandit groups operating along the Niger-Nigeria border are probably involved in opportunistic human trafficking, in conjunction with kidnapping-for-ransom, as a means of financing their operations.
 - According to media reporting, tens of thousands of Nigerians are involved with bandit groups in the north-west of Nigeria.^{lxvii}
 - Groups are fluid in nature but follow ethnic and territorial lines typically coalescing around a central leadership figure. The personal preferences of the bandit group's leader are likely to be the determining factor for whether a group participates in human trafficking activities.
 - Some bandit groups could have links to Islamic terrorist/militant groups; however, it is unclear if these links involve any human trafficking acts.
 - Bandit groups are more likely to use force, through kidnapping-for-ransom operations or abductions, as a means of trafficking than other criminal groups in the area. Some groups maintain victims in trafficking situations through forced marriage and slavery, according to media reporting.^{lxviii}

Islamic terrorist/militant groups

- Islamic terrorist/militant groups operating along Niger's southern border regions are involved in the trafficking of Nigerian children and young women. Boys are forcibly recruited by groups to serve as child soldiers in both combat and support roles and young women and girls are abducted or kidnapped for the purposes of forced marriage, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.^{lxixlxxlxxi}
 - According to the US Department of State, Boko Haram, ISIS-WA, ISIS-GS and JNIM are all reported to undertake such activities.^{lxxii}
 - Children performing forced labour as child soldiers are reported to be used by these groups in active fighting as well being employed as human shields, cooks, spies, scouts, messengers, bodyguards, lookouts, and suicide bombers.^{lxxiii lxxiv}
- Islamic terrorist/militant groups are probably also involved in opportunistic human trafficking for financial purposes.^{lxxv}

- JNIM and Boko Haram have also undertaken kidnap-for-ransom operations as a way to generate revenue. It is unclear if these groups traffic, rather than kill, kidnap victims if ransoms are not paid.^{lxxvi}
- According to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime, Malian Islamic terrorist/militant groups are likely to have a “stronghold” on some smuggling routes in Niger. This possibly means groups such as JNIM and ISIS-GS benefit from protection money paid by smugglers and traffickers using routes in west or south-west Niger within or adjacent to their area of operations.^{lxxvii}^{lxxviii}

Intelligence base. This intelligence product is based on open-source reporting only. It draws on information and data published by governments, academia, think tanks, non-government organisations, international organisations and the media between 2019 and 2023.

Data on human trafficking in Niger is limited and, where available, is often combined with immigration and commercial sex-related offenses. Data limitations make understanding trends in acts, means, and purpose of trafficking; profiles of victims and traffickers; and the geographic scope of trafficking particularly challenging. Information on the capabilities and intent of Islamic terrorist/militant groups and Nigerian bandits with regards to trafficking is also limited, making understanding the exact nature of their involvement and/or identification of key elements within these groups who may be participating in human trafficking difficult to ascertain.

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- ⁱⁱ “An IOM perspective on human trafficking in Niger: Profiles, patterns, progress”, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2022), accessed 27 February 2023, https://niger.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11221/files/documents/an-iom-perspective-on-human-trafficking-in-niger_2.pdf
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- ⁱⁱⁱ “2022 Trafficking in Persons Report: Niger”, US Department of State.
- ^{iv} “Global Organized Crime Index: Niger”, Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime (GIATC) (2022), accessed 27 February 2023, https://ocindex.net/assets/downloads/english/ocindex_profile_niger.pdf
- ^v “An IOM perspective on human trafficking in Niger: Profiles, patterns, progress”, IOM.
- ^{vi} Mark Micallef and Matt Herbert, “Fragile States and Resilient Criminal Ecosystems: Human smuggling and trafficking trends in North Africa and the Shael”, Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime (GIATC) (2022), accessed 27 February 2023, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Human-smuggling-and-trafficking-ecosystems-Overview.pdf>
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- ^{viii} Micallef and Herbert, “Fragile States and Resilient Criminal Ecosystems: Human smuggling and trafficking trends in North Africa and the Shael”.

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- xiii Micallef and Herbert, "Fragile States and Resilient Criminal Ecosystems: Human smuggling and trafficking trends in North Africa and the Shael".
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- xvii "Advancing a rights-based approach to climate change resilience and migration in the Sahel", Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner (OHCHR) (2022), accessed 27 February 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Climate-Change-migration-Sahel-report.pdf>
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^{lxxiii} “I have nothing left except myself: The worsening impact on children of conflict in the Tillabéri region of Niger”, Amnesty International (2021), accessed 6 March 2023,

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^{lxxvi} Eleanor Beevor, “JNIM in Burkina Faso: A strategic criminal actor”, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GIATOC) (2022), accessed 6 March 2023, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Burkina-Faso-JNIM-29-Aug-web.pdf>

^{lxxvii} Beevor, “JNIM in Burkina Faso: A strategic criminal actor”.

^{lxxviii} “Global Organized Crime Index: Niger”, GIATC.

Definitions

Trafficking in persons or human trafficking. According to the legal definition set out by the central international framework to prevent and combat human trafficking – the *2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* – trafficking in persons involves act, means and purpose. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) explains the act, means and purpose of trafficking as:

- The act of trafficking refers to action through which the trafficker introduces or maintains the victim in a trafficking scenario. Acts of trafficking include recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.
- The means of trafficking describes how the act is perpetrated, meaning the techniques or methods used to attract and maintain the victim in the trafficking scenario. Means include threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud and deception, abuse of power or a situation of vulnerability, giving payment or benefits to a third person in control of the victim. These different means all involve the absence of free and informed consent by the victim.
- The purpose of trafficking refers to the objective of the trafficking, which can include several forms of exploitation such as sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, forced begging, forced recruitment in armed forces or involvement in criminal gangs, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, and organ harvesting – as well as a combination of different forms of exploitation.

It is important to note, trafficking in persons does not require movement of persons over an international border, it can occur within a country or require no movement at all.

Migrant smuggling. Migrant or human smuggling requires the criminalisation of the illegal entry, transit, or residence of migrants (by land, sea, or air) into a country of which the person is national or permanent resident by a person or group for the purposes of a financial or material benefit. This includes acts such as producing, procuring, providing, or possessing fraudulent travel or identity documents when committed for the purpose of enabling the smuggling of migrants.

According to the IOM, migrant smuggling may turn into human trafficking when an element of exploitation is involved.

Source: *“An IOM perspective on human trafficking in Niger: Profiles, patterns, progress”*, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2022), accessed 27 February 2023,

https://niger.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11221/files/documents/an-iom-perspective-on-human-trafficking-in-niger_2.pdf

Background – terrorist groups

Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham – West Africa (ISIS-WA). Established in 2016 following a factional split from Boko Haram. In the same year, pledged allegiance to ISIS. Seeks to replace regional governments with an Islamic state and implement ISIS's strict interpretation of sharia law. Primarily operates in the north-east of Nigeria but is also known to conduct operations in other regions of Nigeria (including around the capital, Abuja) and in the greater Lake Chad region (south-eastern Niger, northern Cameroon, and areas of Chad around Lake Chad). Known to have clashed with Boko Haram. As of 2022, has reportedly outstripped Boko Haram in size and capacity and is estimated to have between 4,000 and 5,000 active fighters.

Boko Haram. Established in 2002. Seeks to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria based on Islamic law. Primarily operates in the north-east of Nigeria but is also known to conduct operations in the north-west of Nigeria, south-eastern Niger, northern Cameroon, and areas of Chad around Lake Chad and the capital, N'Djamena. Known to have clashed with ISIS-WA. Following the death of leader Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekau in May 2021, many of the group's fighters reportedly defected to ISIS-WA or surrendered to security forces. As of 2022, current size and capacity is unknown.

Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru). Established in 2012 following a factional split from Boko Haram. In 2022 pledged loyalty to al-Qa'ida elements operating in the Sahel region. Seeks to defend Muslims throughout Africa, eliminate Western influence in Nigeria and establish an Islamic state in Nigeria. Primarily operates in the north-west, north-central regions of Nigeria and the Nigeria-Niger-Benin tri-border area. Known to have operated with armed gangs in north-west Nigeria and has reportedly taken part in al-Qa'ida linked operations in the Sahel region. As of 2022, current size and capacity is unknown.

Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM). Established in 2017 when the Mali branch of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Murabitoun, Ansar al-Dine, and the Macina Liberation Front agreed to work together as a coalition. The self-described official al-Qa'ida branch of Mali has pledged allegiance to al-Qa'ida. Seeks to unite all terrorist groups in the region, expel Western forces and eliminate Western influence in the region, and establish an Islamic state centred on Mali. Primarily operates in Mali but is also known to conduct operations in south-west Niger and north-east Burkina Faso. Known to have clashed with Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS). Known to have received support from operational and financial support from AQIM. As of 2021, is estimated to have approximately 2,000 active fighters.

Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS). Established in 2015 following a factional split from al-Murabitoun. Pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2016. Seeks to replace regional governments with an Islamic state. Primarily operates in Mali-Niger border regions but is also known to conduct operations in Burkina Faso and north Benin. Is known to have clashed with JNIM. As of 2022, is estimated to have between 400 and 1,000 active fighters.

Sources: "Counter Terrorism Guide", Office of the Director of National Intelligence (2023), accessed 27 February 2023, <https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos.html>; "The World Factbook", Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2023), accessed 27 February 2023, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/references/terrorist-organizations/>