



Migration Profile

MADAGASCAR

A. Executive Summary

The Republic of Madagascar gained its independence in 1960. It is located on an island in the Indian Ocean, 400 km away from Mozambique, and has a total surface area of 587,041 sq. km. 71% of the land on the island is used for agriculture, 21.5% for forest, and 7.4% for other purposesⁱ. Most of the population lives on the eastern side of the island, and clusters of communities can be found in the central highlands and eastern coastline. Due to Madagascar's isolation, 90% of its flora and fauna are indigenous and are not found anywhere else in the worldⁱⁱ.

Madagascar has a population of 28.9 million people and its largest age group is in the 24-54 age bracket (30.8% of the total population). The next biggest age group is between 15 and 24, which accounts for an additional 20.6%ⁱⁱⁱ. This shows that the Malagasy population is largely made up of young people, indicating the availability of a large labour force. However, 3.4% of them are unemployed^{iv} and the majority leave school prematurely to assist their families financially.

Due to Madagascar's abundance of natural resources, since 2016 it has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world^v. The main food crop is rice. In 2013, Madagascar signed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU) to facilitate trade and investment relations. The agreement was ratified in 2013 and amended in 2020^{vi}. Madagascar is the second largest garment exporter in sub-Saharan Africa and the client-base includes mostly European and American brands. In Europe 33.2% of the exports were sent to Germany, 7.5% to France, 4.7% to Spain, and 3.3% to the Netherlands. These exports are the primary source of income for the country. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the textile industry was hit really hard and resulted in employees being laid off and seeking alternative job opportunities, as factories had to close^{vii}.

In Madagascar, child trafficking is widespread and usually affects rural areas. Victims are often forced into sex or labour trafficking to get money or resources to survive^{viii}. Even though the country promulgated an anti-trafficking law in 2014, no legal provisions have been made for foreign trafficked victims, and most of Madagascar's asylum and refugee processes are handled

externally by UNHCR. The most active organisation in Madagascar assisting migrants is the Salesian Missions.

B. Country Profile

I. Basic Information

Madagascar is an island country located in the Indian Ocean, off the southeast coast of Africa. It has a total surface area of 587,041 sq. km. The population in 2022 was a little over 28.9 million people^{ix}. The currency used is known as Malagasy Ariary (MGA) and the official languages are Malagasy (99.9%), French (23.6%), English (8.2%), and others (0.6%)^x. In recent years, the country has experienced different political crises, but is steadily improving; however, there are still many developmental challenges^{xi}. The birth rate is 4.11 births per woman, which is putting an enormous strain on the country. The economy has not been growing, and health care and education standards are poor. Most of the population lives on the eastern half of the island, while clusters can be found in the central highlands, as well as on the eastern coastline. Religions practiced in Madagascar are Christianity (41%), Indigenous (52%), and Islam (7%)^{xii}. Most Malagasy are multi-ethnic, including Malayo-Indonesian, Cotiers (mixed African, Malayo-Indonesian, and Arab ancestry), French, Indian, Creole, Comoran^{xiii}.

In 2019, the Madagascar's Human Development Index (HDI) ranked 164 out of 189, and more than 70% of Madagascans lived in poverty. In 2020, the population was 27.7 million, and 40.1% was under 15 years old^{xiv}. Because the education standard in Madagascar is poor, a large number of children often leave school to seek employment to assist their families to survive^{xv}.

II. International and Internal Migrants

The 2022 net migration rate for Madagascar is recorded as -0.052 per 1,000 people, which is a 3.7% decline from the year before^{xvi}.

In 2020, Madagascar had 127 refugees who were successfully granted asylum, which is a 12.39% annual increase^{xvii}. In 2019 Madagascar had 108 asylum seekers and 44 refugees, with the most common countries of origin being Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia.

The United Nations reported that Madagascar received 35,600 international migrants at mid-year 2020, mainly from Comoros, France, China and India^{xviii}. 20.5% were under the age of 19, 17.3% were 65 years or older, and 43% of these migrants were female^{xix}. In 2020, migrants made up 0.1% of the Madagascan population.

Rural-rural migration is the main form of migration in Madagascar. Malagasy citizens often seasonally migrate to agricultural regions, for example Alaotra and Marovoay, in search of employment, as 70% of Malagasy citizens work in agriculture.^{xx} Even though this migration

pattern contributes to increased agricultural production and livelihood, unsustainable agricultural practices have often caused environmental issues for the agricultural communities^{xxi}.

IOM estimates that over 100,000 people yearly migrate from rural to urban areas, especially to the capital of Antananarivo, where over half of the country's urban population lives. This results in 60-70% of the informal constructions in the city being in slum-like conditions, contributing to unplanned urbanisation^{xxii}. The urban population in Madagascar is 39.9%^{xxiii}, and internal migration to urban areas is greatly driven by the availability of public services and livelihood^{xxiv}. Most internal migrants come from the Grand Sud area^{xxv} and travel to regions, such as Atsimo-Atsinanana, Upper Matsiatra, Itasy, Vatovavy-Fitovinany, and Androy.

III. Emigration and Skilled Migration

Due to mass and chronic malnutrition, 65% of the Malagasy population lives in mostly rural and poor conditions. The gross domestic product (GDP) for 2020 was \$13,056 million and the debt-to-GDP ratio was 46.02%^{xxvi}. Madagascar had a GDP of \$523 per capita in 2021, which put them in the lower quartile of countries in the world^{xxvii}. They also have a poverty rate of 97.5%. As a result, many Malagasy nationals often seek employment opportunities in neighbouring countries or abroad due to unemployment, lack of resources and environmental changes in Madagascar^{xxviii}. This produces a complex migration pattern both internally and transnationally^{xxix}.

In 2019, 184,762 Malagasy nationals emigrated, and most of them were female. The total number of emigrants made up 0.69% of the 2019 population^{xxx}. The top 5 countries of destination were France, Comoros, Canada, Italy and Belgium^{xxxi}. Malagasy women also moved to China, Lebanon, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to find employment as domestic workers^{xxxii}. Very often they are exploited by recruitment agencies and end up being trafficked. Under Article 42 of Law No. 2003-044 on the Labour Code, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Civil Services and Social Laws (MTEFPLS) now requires migrant workers to provide a contract approval by the relevant Malagasy Embassy for employment located in non-Gulf countries^{xxxiii}. This is done to protect Malagasy nationals from being trafficked. By mid-year 2020, 193,500 Malagasy had emigrated to a different country.

On a general scale, the percentage of migrants from Madagascar is not high (0.69). However, there is no specific data on the number of skilled migrants living abroad. Nonetheless, some skilled migrants and students leave the country and are working in high skilled professions^{xxxiv}. Despite the lack of physicians in Madagascar with a doctor/patient ratio of 0.1812:1,000^{xxxv}, there is still a strong desire for medical students to emigrate and work abroad. For example, in a survey conducted, 49.7% of Malagasy medical students desired to emigrate, study and work abroad^{xxxvi}. The 2021 human flight and brain drain in Africa index indicates that Madagascar is slightly above the world average of 5.25 index points^{xxxvii}.

IV. Forced Migrants (internally displaced, asylum seekers and refugees, climate displaced people)

Madagascar has 5,000 km of coastline and is strategically located opposite the Mozambique Channel. Due to weak controls at entry points, as well as loosely checked borders, many migrants often arrive in Madagascar.

The island also regularly experiences natural disasters, which leads to the forced displacement of its inhabitants^{xxxviii}. These natural disasters include periodic cyclones, droughts and locust infections^{xxxix}. Although Madagascar has volcanoes, none of these have erupted recently^{xl}. During the 2019-2021 rainy seasons, cyclical droughts in the south severely affected the Grand Sud area, and, as a result, 1.6 million Malagasy required humanitarian assistance^{xli}. By January 2021, 69% of the Grand Sud area had been affected by severe droughts^{xlii}, which had left Malagasy nationals in the hardest-hit areas resorting to eating locusts, raw red cactus fruit and wild leaves to prevent starvation. Because of this, many Malagasy have either been displaced or migrated from rural to urban areas to have access to very limited water and basic services^{xliii}.

In February 2022, the eastern part of Madagascar was affected by Cyclone Batsirai which left 92 people dead and 112,000 people facing a humanitarian crises. 7,900 of these victims are currently being cared for in a makeshift shelter site managed by UNICEF^{xliv}. This was the second cyclone that hit the island in the month of February, after Cyclone Ana had produced many damages in the northern parts of the island 2 weeks prior^{xlv}. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reported that during 2020, there were 23,000 new disaster-related displacement movements. This means that a Malagasy national could have been displaced more than once during this time due to multiple natural disasters^{xlvi}.

Many cases of forced displacement are also a result of citizens selling their land to agribusiness, mining and tourism development^{xlvii}. It was also reported that Madagascar had 1,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs) because of conflicts or violence^{xlviii}.

In 2020, there were 313 people of concern to the UN in Madagascar^{xlix}. The most common countries of origin of refugees and asylum seekers are Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia^l. Refugees and asylum seekers are located in urban and rural areas, and they integrate themselves within their communities. The key driver of refugees and asylum seekers from their country of origin is political instability and war.

V. Victims of Human Trafficking

Madagascar has become a significant source country for trafficked victims^{li}. In 2021, the government of Madagascar did not fully meet the minimum standard required to eliminate trafficking, which has been further exacerbated by the economic issues in the country; however, they are making significant strides^{lii}. Trafficking in Madagascar can take the form of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, as well exploitation in the textile and fishing industries^{liii}.

For the last three years, Madagascar has been listed as a Tier 2 country, and over the last year the government has shown increased efforts in its anti-trafficking capacity, despite the restrictions

and impact of COVID-19. These efforts include increased investigation and prosecution of suspected trafficking crimes, repatriating victims of trafficking, establishing a second specialised centre for victims of gender-based violence (GBV) including trafficked victims, and setting up two one-stop centres to aid victims of child sexual exploitation^{liv}. These actions, however, were not in the key areas that would contribute to meet the minimum requirements. In addition, there is the government's lack of defining the official standard operating procedure (SOPs) in identifying trafficking victims and then referring them to the relevant care. The government also did not report any foreign victims of trafficking^{lv}.

Throughout 2021, the government of Madagascar managed to maintain its 2014 anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. Law No. 2014-040 prescribes 2-5 years imprisonment or a fine of 1 million to 10 million Malagasy ariary (MGA) for sex and labour trafficking crimes involving an adult victim, and 5-10 years imprisonment or a 2 million to 20 million MGA fine for sex and labour trafficking crimes involving a child^{lvi}. In comparison, the United States of America considers labour trafficking to be slavery, and the sanction is 20 years to life imprisonment^{lvii}. This is indicative of how weak trafficking sanctions are in Madagascar.

In 2021, the government investigated 24 potential trafficking cases, compared to 16 cases in the previous year. During the year, the government rarely reported on initiating prosecutions or provided updates on ongoing cases. For example, Madagascar's Anti-Corruption Court (PAC) of Antananarivo, which has a transnational trafficking cases mandate, reported sentencing 2 traffickers to six years imprisonment for fraudulently leading Malagasy women to China for exploitation. These statistics are dismal compared to the year prior where 6 convictions had been reported. However, a second PAC branch, established in Mahajanga in 2020, began reporting on investigations and prosecuting child sex trafficking crimes, including child sex tourism. In 2020, the National Office to Combat Human Trafficking (BNLTEH) continued maintaining the national database for the collection of trafficking-related information. However, the different ministries of Madagascar were inconsistent in their contributions to the database, thus making data collection very difficult.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that in March 2020 2,400 Malagasy were stranded abroad, due to the COVID-19 restrictions put in place. After being there for nine months, the Government of Madagascar (GoM), along with IOM, was able to organise the repatriation of 177 Malagasy migrant women from Kuwait^{lviii}. However, in 2021 only 68 women were able to do so^{lix}.

NGOs in Madagascar reported assisting 1,808 victims of trafficking and provided various protective services, which the government did not fund or assist with^{lx}. Throughout Madagascar 22.1% of children between the ages of 5 and 14 are involved in child labour, and often in dire conditions^{lxi}.

VI. National Legal Framework

Madagascar's national law was recently updated from the previous 1992 Constitution and was replaced by a referendum passed on 17 November 2010, that was promulgated 11 December 2010^{lxii}. Madagascar plans to work with transit and destination countries, such as Mauritius, Kuwait, Canada, China and Lebanon, in order to ensure safe and legal labour migration. This will be done through bilateral labour agreements^{lxiii}.

Law No. 62-006 of 6 June 1962 provides all migrants with protection against expulsion from Madagascar; however, it does not explicitly refer to migrants. Despite these legal provisions, Madagascar does not have yet a designated office for migrants. Due to the lack of integrational services for migrants, their primary options are either voluntary return or resettlement^{lxiv}.

Regardless of their migration status, all migrants have access to government-funded health care^{lxv}. Article 128 of Law No. 2003-044 in the Labour Code (2004) states that migrant workers have access to health insurance provided by their employers.^{lxvi} Decree No. 69-145 also provides migrants with social protection^{lxvii}. However, there is no law in Madagascar that protects migrants from discrimination^{lxviii}.

International human rights treaties signed and ratified by Madagascar which concern migrants include the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, the Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as well as the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air^{lxix}. Other treaties include the 1949 International Labour Organisation (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), No. 97, the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, as well as the 1975 ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, No. 143.

Regional Conventions signed by Madagascar include the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the 1992 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, as well as the 1998 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human Peoples' Rights^{lxx}.

VII. Main Actors

The State

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for immigration matters, however, it does not provide asylum seekers with protection or assistance, because in Madagascar there is no asylum policy in place^{lxxi}. The Ministry of Population reaches out to repatriated Malagasy victims of trafficking, to find out if they need any support or assistance^{lxxii}. Even though Madagascar's anti-trafficking law requires the government to consider alternatives for foreign victims of trafficking, protection had not been provided to them by the government during this reporting period.

The National Office to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (BNLTEH) established a hotline for citizens to report cases of human trafficking; but these calls were not toll-free. Only five calls were reported to have been received and none of them were related to trafficking^{lxxiii}. In January 2020, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Labour finalised bilateral labour agreements with Comoros, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritius, and Saudi Arabia, but the agreements were not signed^{lxxiv}.

International organisations

In October 2014, the Government of Madagascar and the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) signed a cooperation agreement. This allowed IOM to open a permanent office in the capital, Antananarivo. Since then, IOM has assisted the country by implementing programs related to migration and health, international migration law, migration and the environment, counter-trafficking, border management, forced migration and internal displacement, labour migration, and the mobilisation of the diaspora channelled through the provision of capacity building, advisory, operational support, and technical expertise.^{lxxv}

UNICEF also supported GoM by providing child-protective services, such as the prevention of child trafficking by establishing legal frameworks to ensure that children are safe in their communities and away from potential traffickers. The organisation also provided relief assistance to 75,000 people, including around 37,500 Malagasy after the devastating effects of cyclone Batsirai.^{lxxvi} Although UNHCR has no presence in Madagascar, the Regional Representation for Southern Africa, located in Pretoria, South Africa, provides status determination for all asylum seekers in Madagascar.^{lxxvii}

The UN Development Programme (UNDP), along with IOM, has launched in Madagascar the REAP project, supported by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. The REAP project aims at addressing gender equality and empowering both migrant women or women in migration-related communities in Madagascar.^{lxxviii}

NGOs and Other organisations

WaterAid provided Malagasy residents with water, by installing wells and latrines in drought affected areas. They have also set up in different communities a rice loan system, which residents can monetarily pay back slowly over time. This ensures that families can be fed and has also led to small business development within communities^{lxxix}.

SEED Madagascar works towards alleviating poverty and runs programs that include health education and school construction^{lxxx}. This is important as most youth often leave school early and are either involved in labour or sex trafficking.

Action Against Hunger works to improve food security in Madagascar. It also provides emergency relief, sanitation and clean water access^{lxxxi}. These initiatives also benefit migrants living in communities where such programmes are implemented.

The Catholic Church

Caritas Madagascar has been present on the island since 1959, after a flood affected most of the country. It was a branch of Caritas France and works through local structures, such as the parish, districts and diocese, to assist disadvantaged groups and remote communities affected by natural disasters^{lxxxii}. Caritas Madagascar also provides projects aimed at agricultural development and production, as well as assists with food supplies, emergency aid, health programmes, and post-emergency rehabilitation^{lxxxiii}. The agency achieves this through a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the World Bank, WaterAid and many other local and Caritas linked organisations^{lxxxiv}.

The Order of Malta France has been in Madagascar for over 20 years and works towards alleviating poverty on the island, by also providing health care assistance in the neonatal and maternity department of the Pavillon Sainte-Fleur^{lxxxv}.

The Salesian Missions is one of the most active church organisations in Madagascar. They focus their collective efforts on education for children and youth, by building primary, middle, and high schools across the island, or renovating dilapidated schools to improve the learning environment^{lxxxvi}. They also provide technical and vocational training, respond to disasters and emergencies, provide safe and clean water, improve health services, deliver life-saving meals, build orphanages and shelters for homeless youth, empower girls and women through education, rescue children facing adversity, and improve infrastructure^{lxxxvii}.

March 2022

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