

Maradi area hosts more than 70 000 refugees and 23 000 IDPS

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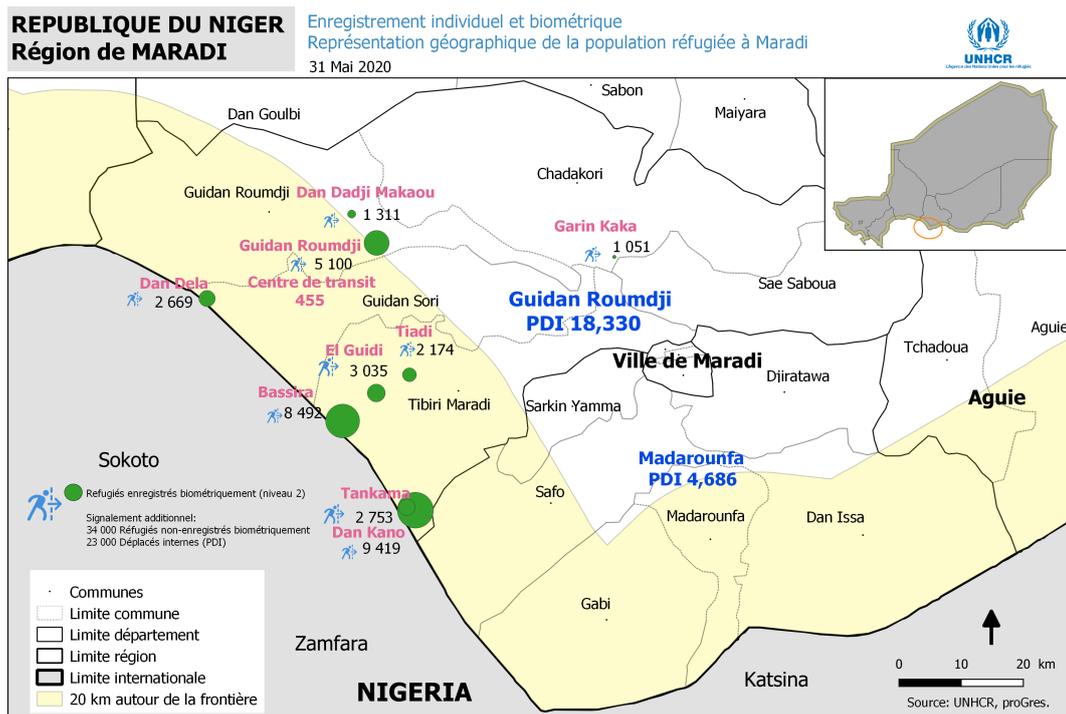
Context

Since September 2018, criminal groups killings, looting and kidnappings in Nigeria's North-Western states has forced tens of thousands of people to seek refuge in Maradi region, Niger. After a n influx of 23 000 new arrivals in April only, arrivals in May went on to a slower pace. The total number Nigerian refugees in the area now exceeds 70 000. In addition, repeated incursions of non-state armed groups in Niger have triggered the internal displacement of over 23,000 people. For now, the Covid-19 pandemic situation seems under control with only 11 confirmed cases and four deaths.

In September 2019, UNHCR opened a sub-office in Maradi to coordinate registration, protection, education, health, housing and access to WASH services. A key feature of the UNHCR response in Maradi is the relocation of refugees to villages of opportunity away from the border, to ensure their safety and ease the pressure on host populations in the border areas. This also contributes to the development of rural areas lacking of basic infrastructures. A new campaign of relocation has started in May. The objective is now to relocate 15 000 refugees by the end of August.

Population Statistics

As of 31 May, UNHCR and the government (National Eligibility Commission, CNE) had carried out the biometric registration of 36,469 refugees (9,959 households), 67% of whom were minors, 23% women and 10% men. In addition, **the number of refugees who have not been biometrically registered in the area now reaches 34,000**, mostly due to a massive influx of 23,000 persons in April. The number of Internally displaced people (IDPs) has also surge since late March, reaching 23 016 people as of 31 May



Progress and Achievements

- The vast majority of Nigerian Refugees live in more than 100 host villages, scattered in a 20-kilometre deep strip along the border. Nigerian criminal groups make regular incursions into this strip. In order to ensure the safety of the refugees, UNHCR, in collaboration with the authorities and its humanitarian partners, has just started a vast relocation campaign outside the unstable border area. By the end of August, 15,000 refugees are expected to be transferred to the villages of opportunity. **During the last week of May and the first week of June, 3,948 people have already been relocated.** Today, a total of 6,825 refugees live in the villages of opportunity. In total, 711 Refugee Housing Units (RHU) have been built in the opportunity villages of Garin Kaka and Dan Dadji Makaou to host freshly relocated refugees



Nigerian refugees on their way to villages of opportunity 90% of them are women and children

- On 6 and 11 June, **strong winds damaged 411 Refugees Housing Units** (320 in Dan Dadji Makaou and 92 in Garin Kaka). A total of 36 refugees were injured, four of them seriously. The reconstruction works, including protection measures, are under way. As a result, the relocation operations have been temporarily interrupted.
- The 3,948 refugees who have been relocated went through a medical screening to prevent Covid-19 contamination and identify medical needs.. In total, **231 pathologies and 94 cases of child malnutrition have been diagnosed.** In addition, 110 breastfeeding and 37 pregnant women have been identified.
- On 26 May, a joint mission of UNHCR offices of Maradi and Tahoua visited the village of Bangui, located on the Nigerian border, department of Madaoua, region of Tahoua. Following clashes between farmers and herders in the nearby Nigerian area of Sabon Birni which left at least six dead, on 22 May, **7489 refugees arrived in Bangui and neighboring villages.** UNHCR teams conducted a first evaluation of the needs. The department of Madaoua is coordinating an appeal for the humanitarian response.
- **The number of IDPs has reached 23 000 compared to 19 000 last month.** UNHCR's partner ANTD reports a critical situation for 8889 IDPs in the village of Kanwa, located only three kilometers away from the border in the commune of Guidan Sori. UNHCR has delivered a training of trainers on the registration of IDPs with the following partners: Action humanitaire, ANTD et CIAUD.
- UNHCR, with partners CIAUD and ANTD organized sensitization campaigns on a wide range of topics including **Covid-19 and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)**, reaching 2571 persons of concerns and members of host communities during the month of May.
- In the opportunity village of Garin Kaka, **73 refugees and members of host community took part in a series of training dedicated to soap making.** In total, 1313 pieces of soap, 763 litres of liquid soap and 400 litres of bleach have been produced. The output should be sold, empowering the community and strengthening its self-reliance.
- **The first physical inter-agency meeting in weeks** was organised in UNHCR office on 27 May. Representatives from PAM, UNICEF, OMS, OCHA, FAO and UNHCR attended.

Main Challenges

- **The security situation remains volatile:** Attacks by criminal groups are relentless, as the massacre of Sabon Birni (70 people killed in Sokoto State on 27 May) further demonstrated. In addition, continued incursions by armed groups into Niger have also led to significant internal displacements.
- **A rainy season marked by destructives weather events:** On 6 and 11 June, strong winds destroyed or damaged 411 Refugees Housing Units in the villages of opportunity. A meteorologist of the African Center for Meteorological Applications for Development explains that the 2020 rainy season is marked by powerful weather events.
- **Financial resources remain insufficient:** In 2020, UNHCR and the other actors responding to the Nigerian refugee's situation in Niger require 68 million USD to cover both Diffa and Maradi Regions. Concurrent needs in other Nigerian areas further strain humanitarian actors' financial resources and hence their capacity to respond.
- **The legal status of the refugees:** Discussions are ongoing with the Interior Ministry to secure a *prima facie* recognition for the Nigerian refugees in Maradi region.

External / Donors Relations

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2020

Japan (1,200,000 \$) | Italy (1,102,535.83 \$) | UN Central Emergency Response Fund (2,117,826 \$) | United States of America

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LINKS : [HERE](#)

ANNEX

Operational presence of humanitarian actors in Maradi: April 2020

	Area	Partners
	Shelter & Infrastructures	NRC, APBE
	Livelihood	APBE
	Pacific coexistence	DRC
	WASH	WORLD VISION
	Formal education	NRC
	Environment	APBE
	Health and mental health	APBE
	Community mobilization	APBE
	Protection (Overall & Children)	CIAUD, ANTD, DRC, SAVE THE CHILDREN, NRC