

Sahel situation *(Tillbéri and Tahoua regions)*

May 2021

The Sahel regions have been hosting some 60,000 **Malian refugees** since 2012. They live in 3 sites in the Tillabéri region and a refugee hosting area in the Tahoua region.

The rapidly deteriorating security context has caused increased **internal displacement flows** with rising numbers every month. To date, some 140,000 IDPs are present in both regions.

The presence of armed groups across the border has caused movements of more than **7,000 citizens from Burkina Faso** into Niger.

KEY INDICATORS

40,000*

Refugees in Niger who will have **access to land** according to the Government's pledge during the Global Refugee Forum.

+50%*

Increase of the number of internally displaced persons since last year.

672

Durable houses built and finalized in the Tillabéri region.

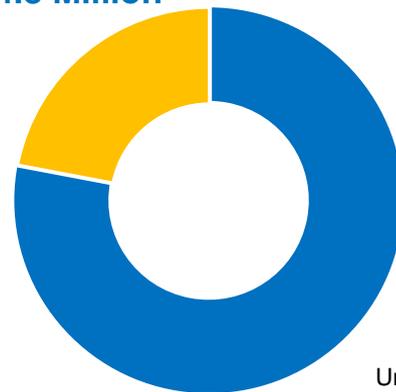
FUNDING (AS OF 4 MAY 2021)

USD 110,5 Million

requested for UNHCR's operations in Niger

Funded 22%

24.8 Million



Unfunded 78%

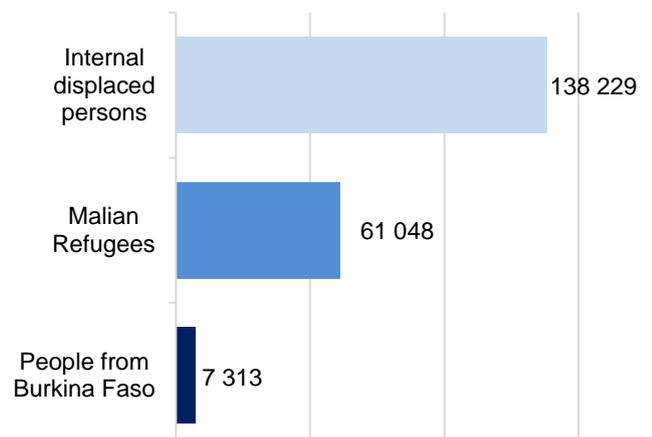
85.7 Million



Malian refugees, internally displaced and host community students attending classes in Ouallam ©UNHCR / Boubacar Younoussa Sidde

POPULATION OF CONCERN IN NIGER'S SAHEL

(UNHCR data, 30th April 2021)



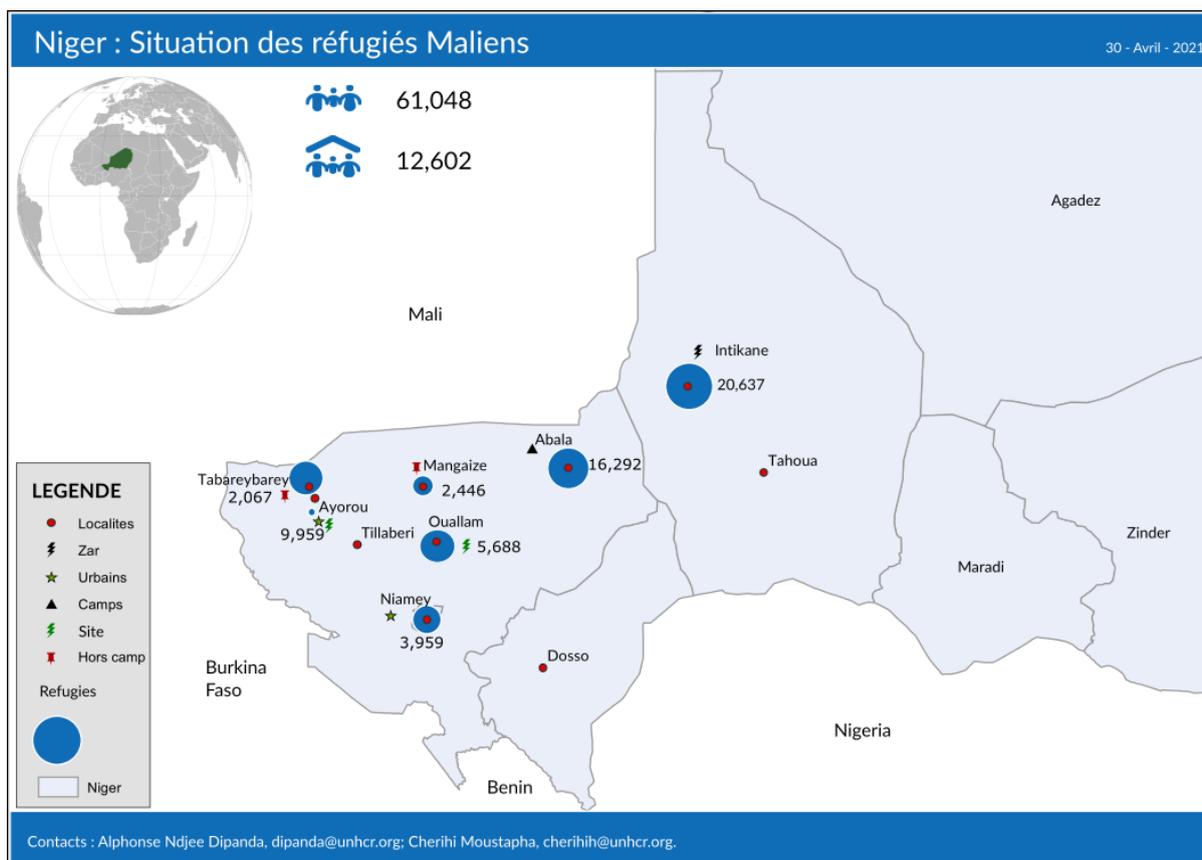
Update on Achievements

Operational Context

Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are all struggling to cope with numerous militant groups moving between the three countries. The **security situation** in the tri-border region including in the Nigerien regions of Tillabéri and Tahoua has sharply deteriorated. This threat is forcing people to flee their homes, and further deprives vulnerable communities of critical basic services as armed groups directly target schools, health centers and other infrastructure. The civilian population is victim of extortion, targeted killings, cattle theft and shop looting and threatened to leave their villages. A state of emergency was declared in 2017 and is still in place.

Moreover, the **global sanitary crisis and the measures taken by the Government of Niger to limit the propagation of the virus** has heavily impacted on the operational context, delaying assistance, and limiting livelihood opportunities.

UNHCR Niger has registered refugees from Burkina Faso since the beginning of 2020. As of today, the country hosts 7,032 Burkinabe refugee in the Tillabéri region. However, their number could be higher due the lack of humanitarian access because of the rise of insecurity the areas where they are settled.



Operational Strategy

Interventions in the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions are aligned to **UNHCR's Sahel strategy**, a scaled-up response to the unprecedented violence and displacement crisis in the Sahel. Activities planned before the spread of the COVID-19 will be implemented in line with public health measures imposed because of the pandemic. Key priorities include addressing shelter needs in overcrowded settlements, supporting education in localities with large concentrations of displaced populations, providing effective response to SGBV incidents aggravated by lockdown measures, and continuing other protection activities such as registration, documentation and facilitating access to asylum.

The Sahel crisis is monitored by a broad community-based network and analysis are shared with the humanitarian community. Capacity building and coordinated efforts with humanitarian actors are ongoing to ensure an adequate response to the situation. UNHCR has the Lead of the national protection cluster. Legislation for assistance and protection to IDPs based on the Kampala Convention is in place.

After almost 8 years of presence in Niger, UNHCR and the Government of Niger give priority to **medium- and long-term solutions for Malian refugees** with a view to promote social cohesion, self-reliance and a durable integration into national services and systems. All Malian refugee camps have been closed in 2020 in line with the joint vision of the Government of Niger and UNHCR and given the deterioration of the protection and security context. They are settled in sites in the villages of Ayerou, Ouallam and Abala. Supported by major donors such as **GIZ and EUTF**, UNHCR gives Malian refugees access to land and housing, creates jobs, and includes them into national systems.

A **tripartite collaboration** has been developed amongst the **World Bank, the Government of Niger, and UNHCR** to improve access to basic public services and further support for economic opportunities. With the support of **ILO, PBF and Spain**, Malian refugees benefit from livelihood interventions.

Achievements

The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs produce a wide range of reports, evaluations, and infographics on the humanitarian situation in Niger. All documents can be consulted here:

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/niger>

Security and displacement

- UNHCR and its partners continue to implement **protection monitoring activities** in the Tahoua and Tillabéri regions. In April, a total of 189 protection incidents were recorded respectively in Tahoua (126) and Tillabéri (63). Cases included: murders and assassinations; theft of livestock, money, and seeds; physical and sexual assaults; burning; death threats; kidnappings; collection of zakat in cash or in kind from villagers by non-state armed groups; and arbitrary arrests by defense and security forces.
- The resurgence of attacks by armed groups and violence against civilians in the Tahoua region has caused significant population displacement. As a result, 221 households of 845 individuals from Nigerien villages bordering Mali found refuge in the refugee hosting area of Intikane, while 136 households of 521 individuals from villages

and hamlets in the Tillia department found refuge in Tillia. In addition, 27 households of 119 people from the village of Chinewarene fled to the village of Tamalet in Mali.

- UNHCR continue its biometrical registration of refugees in Tahoua and Tillabéri regions. Thus, **12 new households of 27 persons** were registered in Abala and Ayorou in the Tillabéri region; 8 households of 37 persons, as well as 31 births and three deaths, were registered in the refugee hosting area of Intikane.
- UNHCR **reissued 156 refugee certificates** in Abala and Ouallam. In addition, the national commission on eligibility for refugee status (DREC) issued **164 declaratory birth certificates** to parents following the mobile court hearing conducted in Tahoua region during the year 2020; 43 of the 164 beneficiary children were refugees born in Niger. In addition, **59 children at risk of statelessness** were registered by the DREC in Intikane and 14 in Abala.

Protection

- UNHCR and its partners identified **147 new cases of SGBV** in the Tahoua region and 35 in the Tillabéri region. All cases received psychosocial support and documentation. The cases that require more appropriate care were referred to the various partners and care structures. To prevent SGBV, UNHCR and its partners conducted awareness sessions on the risks and consequences of SGBV, the referral mechanism, as well as the available care services, reaching more than 1,000 people in Tillabéri and Tahoua regions.
- In April 2021, UNHCR and its partners **identified more than 500 child protection cases** in Tahoua and Tillabéri regions. Most of them in IDP sites. The utmost vulnerabilities encountered by children were lack of access to education, illness, abuse, and exploitation, among others. In addition, more than 1,200 people have been sensitized on child protection issues identified.
- On April 21, 2021, the partner CIAUD Canada in partnership with the departmental directorate for the promotion of women and child protection of Bagaroua in the Tahoua region conducted a training for members of the municipal structures of Bagaroua and Tebaram. The training focused on the role and responsibility of the committees, the difficulties encountered and solutions. At the end of this training, the partner CIAUD provided the committees with computers and office equipment.
- UNHCR and its partners have identified and documented more than **800 persons living with special needs** among the newly displaced people caused by the upsurge of attacks against civilians in Tahoua and Tillabéri regions since the beginning of 2021. These individuals received direct assistance or were referred to partners for appropriate care. They have also been prioritized for food, NFI, emergency shelter, and cash grants distributions.
- UNHCR and its partners organized several sensitization sessions on peaceful coexistence that reached approximately 1,500 persons in Tillia, Tassara, Abala, Ayorou and Ouallam.

Education

- UNHCR continues to advocate for increasing schooling rates of girls and boys, including those living with disabilities in the refugee hosting area of Intikane and the

sites hosting refugees and internally displaced persons in Tillabéri region.

Health

- In April 2021; 2,407 people benefited from medical consultations at the health center managed by UNHCR partner APBE at the Intikane refugee hosting area; among whom 317 were hospitalised while 4 extremely critical cases were referred the regional hospital of Tahoua.
- In Ouallam, the partner COM DEV set up 6 monitoring committees, each composed of 30 members. All committee members have been trained on Covid-19 prevention measures that they will in turn pass on to their community.

Shelter and Non-Food Items

- UNHCR has distributed **611 emergency shelter kits** to new displaced households in Tillabéri. The kit consists of 6 sleeping mats, 15 5-metre wooden sticks, 15 4-metre wooden sticks, 4 forks, 2 tarpaulins of 4 by 5 meters, and a roll of rope. Thus, 375 kits were distributed in Mangaize, 186 in Ouallam and 50 in Tondikiwindi.
- Following assessments conducted under the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), UNHCR partners APBE distributed 150 non-food items to new arrivals in Tilia-East, while ACF distributed 267 items to those in Intarakmatt.
- UNHCR distributed **non-food items** composed of sleeping mats, kitchen kits, and soap to 124 refugee households and 408 IDP households in Ouallam. In the Tahoua region, the partners APBE and ACF distributed **184 emergency shelter kits** to IDPs in Tilia-East and 267 in Intarakmatt.
- UNHCR assisted 923 households through **provision of emergency shelter kits** and 2006 households with CRIs kits (refugees / IDPs) in Ouallam and Tilia.
- As of the end of April 2021, the construction of **1,230 social houses** was ongoing of which 672 have been completed in the Tillabéri region, more specifically 446 in Abala, 188 in Ouallam and 38 in Ayourou. Some 2,350,000 bricks have been produced so far. Since the start the project, 3,358 persons have been employed in brick production and another 792 persons in house construction.
- The German ambassador in Niger visited the Ouallam site to assess the progress of the construction of social houses funded by GIZ. The houses will be handed over to the most vulnerable refugees and community members.



Germany Ambassador H.E Nicolai, Nicolas Hermann conducted a mission to Ouallam to see the evolution of construction of social houses financed by GIZ. ©UNHCR / Boubacar Younoussa Sidde

- In the Intikane refugee hosting area, UNHCR and its partners officially handed over 285 semi-durable houses, 3 classrooms, 2 shower-latrines blocks and a water fountain for the new Intikane secondary school. These infrastructures were executed respectively by the partners ADKOUL and ADES. Thus, 270 houses were handed over to the neediest refugee households while 15 others were handed over to vulnerable households from the host community in order to reinforce peaceful coexistence.
- In addition, the WFP, through its partner APBE, distributed food to internally displaced households. Thus 224 households were served in Tilla-East and 83 in Tagalalte.

WASH

- Sensitizations on prevention against the spread of Covid-19 have reached more than 2,500 individuals on the refugee sites of Abala and Ouallam, as well as the IDP sites of Ayorou, Gotheye, Bankilaré and Torodi. 2,000 persons were reached in the Tahoua region.

LIVELIHOOD

- UNHCR partner ACTED conducted cash assistance vulnerable internally displaced households in Ouallam. 114 households was assisted with cash grant of 16,000 XOF each and the consortium Kungui Fondo and ADA assisted 100 households with an amount of 45,000 XOF each.

NATURAL RESSOURCES

- As part of the implementation of **the joint UNHCR/ILO project**, training sessions were conducted in April for 700 beneficiaries in Ayorou. The first 10-days training session focused on the construction of fishponds for 20 participants, including 10 refugees and 10 members of the host community.



UNHCR Deputy representative and technical UNHCR staffs in Niger conducted a mission to the integrated farm of Ouallam. ©UNHCR / Boubacar Younoussa Sidlo

Working in partnerships

UNHCR interventions have long been targeting refugees, IDPs and host communities who live in same conditions of high vulnerability -- with a view to move towards economic integration and social inclusion. This approach of inclusion and development is fully endorsed by the Government of Niger and aligned with the Global Compact for Refugee (GCR) and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. This approach is at the core of the joint Government of Niger and UNHCR's **OUT OF CAMP vision** and it's operationalization through ongoing collaborations with the World Bank Group (WBG), the German development agency (GIZ), the European Union (EUTF) and the ILO amongst other UN agencies. With the idea of deepening its role of GCR convener, UNHCR is also looking into strengthening relationships with private sector actors as they are a crucial partner for boosting economic growth and job creation.

Increasing collaboration with International and National NGOs with a comparative advantage on delivering economic inclusion programs on the ground, including through livelihood initiatives is also at the core of the strategic approach to development solutions of the GCR, the Government of Niger, and UNHCR Niger.

In order to lend support to **protection cluster** at national level in terms of advocacy, facilitate coordination between countries and regional IASC, providing visibility through data driven analysis, and serving as a platform for information sharing and best practices, the Regional Bureau in Dakar has initiated bilateral and multilateral consultations with key stakeholders including donors to revitalize the Regional Protection Working Group (RPWG). A task force composed of UNICEF, UNFPA, OCHA, UNWOMEN, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR and SOS has been established to draft the strategy as well as the ToRs which are being commented on and will be further adopted. Through the Regional Protection Working Group, appropriate support will be provided to the protection crisis in the Sahel.

Financial Information

Special thanks to the donors who have participated to UNHCR's response in the Sahel regions

Central Emergency Response Fund | Education Cannot Wait | European Union | Germany | Spain

Donors who have contributed to UNHCR's response in Niger¹

African Development Bank | Canada | Central Emergency Response Fund | Education Cannot Wait | European Union | Germany | Italy | Monaco | Spain | United States of America | Other Private Donors

Other softly earmarked contributions²

United States of America 12.2 million | Germany 9.2 million | Canada 8.5 million | Iceland | Malta | Norway | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions³

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 | Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 26 million | Private donors Spain 21.5 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 10.8 million

Algeria | America | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Luxemburg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Portugal | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private Donors

1. Contributions to Niger are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.
2. Due to their earmarking at the region or sub-region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for Niger. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.
3. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contribution \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

External / Donor Relations

Contacts

Ms. Marlies CARDOEN, External Relations Officer, cardoen@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 80 06 81 49

Ms. Gloria Ramazani, Associate External Relations Officer, ramazang@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 80 06 81 83

Moustapha Djibrilla, External Relation Associate, djibrill@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 80 09 61 41

LINKS

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