

UNHCR operation in Niger

May 2014 Factsheet



Operational Context

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The crisis in northern Mali since 2012 has forced some **50,000** Malians into exile into Niger. It has also led to the return of **6,000** Niger nationals previously living in Mali. Most refugees live in the three camps established in Tillabéri region in 2012, namely: Abala, Mangaize and Tabareybarey. In 2013, in an attempt to adapt to the **specific needs of nomadic refugees**, two “refugee hosting areas” were established in **Intikane and Tazalit** in Tahoua region. These are vast areas where nomadic Malian refugees can settle freely with their livestock enabling them to live according to their traditional and pastoral way of life with grazing land for their animals. Following the presidential elections in July-August 2013 and a gradual improvement of the security situation in northern Mali, a back-and-forth movement between Niger and the areas of origin in Mali has been observed. Some refugees have also requested UNHCR for return assistance. Even though the **situation in northern Mali does not yet call for the promotion of organized massive returns**, UNHCR has offered individual assistance and since November 2013 has facilitated the return of some 6,000 refugees to Mali. On 3 May 2014, a **Tripartite Agreement between Mali, Niger and UNHCR** was signed for the **voluntary repatriation** of refugees. However, as a result of the May incidents in northern Mali, UNHCR has suspended the facilitation of the repatriation process till further notice.

Since the declaration of a state of emergency in May 2013 in Adamawa, Yobe and Borno states in northern Nigeria, more than **50,000 displaced persons** (Nigerian refugees, Niger nationals) have fled Nigeria and sought refuge in the Diffa region, south-east of Niger. The local population has generously received the persons fleeing violence in Nigeria by hosting them in their families and communities. UNHCR, in coordination with partners, provides protection and humanitarian assistance through a **community-based approach**. The out-of-camp program in Diffa focuses on strengthening the **resilience** of the affected population and the local communities hosting them.

Persons of concern by country of origin (31 May 2014)

	MALI	NIGERIA
	Level 2 + continuous registration + on-going biometrics	Estimation based on 2013 Govt census of the displaced and on-going monitoring
Refugees	48,201	15,000
Nationals of Niger	5,925	35,000
Total	54,126	50,000

Malian refugees by site

OUALLAM (6,654)	TILLIA	Intikane (Zone d'accueil)	10,692
	TASSARA	Tazalite (Zone d'accueil)	1,818
		Mangaize (Camp)	5,843
		Banibangou (Site)	482
		Chinegodrar (Site)	329
ABALA (14,153)		Abala (Camp)	12,840
		Tigzefan (Site)	795
		Miel (Site)	488
AYOROU (7,945)		Kizamou (Site)	30
		Tabareybarey (Camp)	7,544
		Ayorou ville	388
		Koutougou (Site)	13
	NIAMEY	(Urban)	6,939



Distribution of basic relief items to Nigerian refugees on Lake Chad Islands:
April 2014 ©UNHCR

Working with the Government

- *Commission Nationale d'Eligibilité (CNE) : protection and security*

Working with partners

UNHCR coordinates humanitarian assistance to refugees with various partners:

- *Action pour le Bien Etre (APBE): Health and nutrition for Tazalit Refugee area*
- *ADKOUL: multi-sectorial management of Tazalit*
- *Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement (ACTED) : camp management in all three camps of Tillabéri, information in Diffa*
- *Afrique Secours Assistance (ASA): Child protection, SGBV and persons with specific needs, in all three camps of Tillabéri*
- *Akarass : site management (Intikane, Tahoua)*
- *Cadev: urban refugee program (health and education)*
- *International Rescue Committee: site management (Tazalit), protection*
- *Niger Red Cross and Luxembourg Red Cross: shelter programme*
- *Qatari Red Crescent: health program*
- *Save the Children: urban refugee program (protection)*

Other partners : HELP, Humanitaires Sans Frontières, Oxfam, OCHA, Plan Niger, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO.

Key achievements

MALI SITUATION

- **Voluntary repatriation suspended:** In response to the upsurge of violence in northern Mali, UNHCR, has since May 22, 2014 suspended the facilitated repatriation of Malian refugees hosted in Niger. The repatriation facility was initiated in November 2013 in response to requests from refugees who wished to benefit from the support of UNHCR to return to Mali.
- **UNHCR Representation (Seat Agreement):** On May 8, 2014, the Republic of Niger and UNHCR signed an agreement formalizing the establishment of the UNHCR representation in Niamey-Niger. The agreement also reinforces the relationship between the two parties while specifying their respective rights and obligations. Niger's minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and the Diaspora, Mohamed Bazoum and the UNHCR's Representative Karl Steinacker signed for Niger and UNHCR respectively.
- **Health, WASH & Shelter:** UNHCR and ECHO carried out a mission to the Tabareybarey refugee camp on May 10, 2014. The team visited the Health Centre, and water treatment station at Ayorou which serves refugees and the local host communities. They also visited the wet-feeding distribution Centre. During the reporting period, 5500 Polycotton canvasses were dispatched and distributed in the different camps. So far, the distribution is completed in Mangaize (camp 850 sheets), and is ongoing in other camps. The canvas is a new type of shelter material more durable and adapted to the environment to address overheating issues typical to the Sahel climate.
- **Education:** On May 21, 2014, UNHCR was awarded a testimonial of satisfaction from the administrative head of Ouallam Prefecture and the President of the Management Committee of Communal schools for its support to the schools in Mangaize refugee camp and in Ouallam. Malian refugees attend these schools. The award came as a welcome booster to UNHCR which uses education and other interventions for community outreach and as a leverage for peaceful coexistence among refugees and the local communities.
- **Reintegration:** An agreement was signed between UNHCR and the World-Bank funded Social Safety Net Cell to support 933 households of 6000 Niger citizens who fled Mali in 2012 and who are currently living in the refugee camps with the Malians. Surveys to identify the areas of origin of these so-called returnees and awareness campaigns have already been conducted to allow for their socio-economic integration back in their country.

NIGERIA SITUATION (DIFFA)

- **Volatile security context:** As a result of several security incidents in the course of the month, UN has temporarily suspended their movement to the field in Diffa. Influx rate from Nigeria has continued at a pace of 700-1000 arrivals per week and UNHCR and partners are scaling their response to meet the needs of the increasing caseload.
- **Registration:** UNHCR and the authorities will begin a general registration in June targeting Nigerian refugees, Niger returnees and host families in the affected areas. The registration aims at recording, verifying, and updating information on people of concern to UNHCR and creating a database so that they can be protected and UNHCR can ultimately find durable solutions.
- **Donors Briefing:** On May 29, 2014, UNHCR briefed its donors on its operation in Niger. The meeting presented UNHCR's two-pronged strategy in Diffa which focuses first on delivering life-saving activities to respond to the immediate refugee and forced displacement crisis, and second, to invest in durable solutions in this out-of-camp context. The dual track approach in Diffa includes Fast Track projects relating to food aid, protection, shelter, health, NFIs with the objective to protect, save lives and maintain stability. Slow Track projects seek to increase coping mechanisms in the longer-term with a stronger focus on the maintenance and reinforcement of a favorable protection environment, the promotion of resilience and economic self-reliance, and the social integration of the displaced. UNHCR reached out to development partners to ensure coordination and inclusion within the development plans of the region.

Donors for Niger in 2014

Japan, United States of America, UN Program on HIV/AIDS, Denmark.

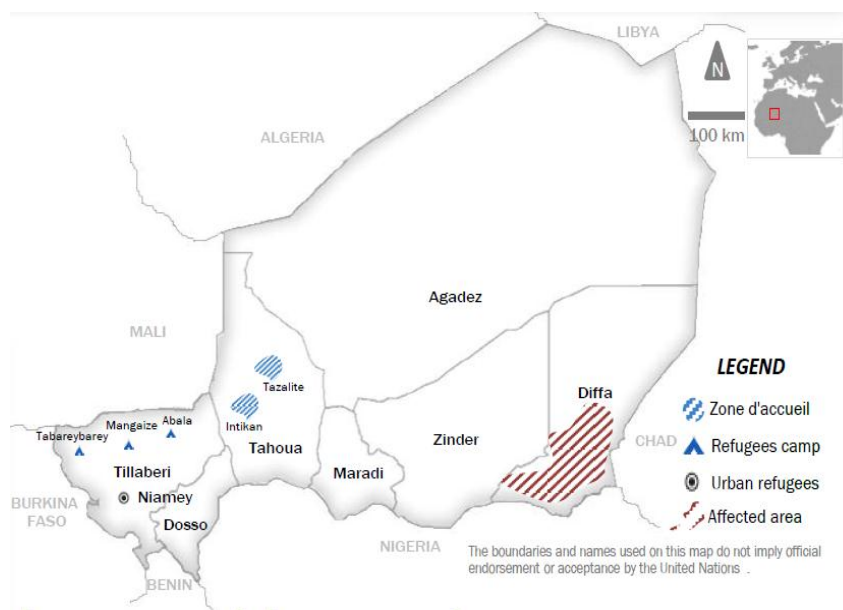
Donors for Malian Refugees (regional level)

DFID, Japan, Spanish private donors, Private donors in Japan, Switzerland, the United States of America, UN Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Funding situation (in million USD, as of 30 May)

Ex-Com approved budget	Funding received to date	Funding level
41,533, 971	14, 125,665	29%

Refugee camps/sites in Niger



UNHCR staff: 79 National staff, 34 international staff, including 4 United Nations Volunteers.

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Information Web Portal: <http://data.unhcr.org/SahelSituation/country.php?id=157>

UNHCR Niger blog: <http://www.unhcniger.tumblr.com>