

# Refugees and asylum seekers in Agadez

January 2021

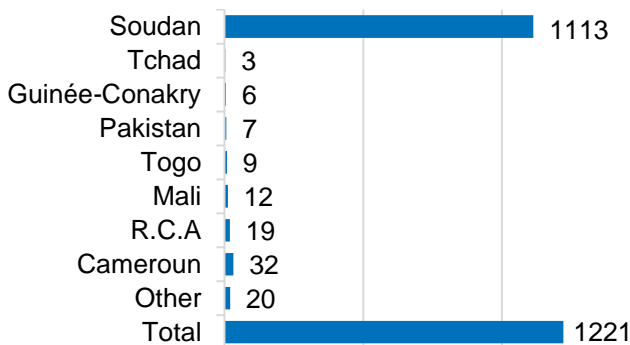
Niger has become **a major hub for mixed movements** northwards to Libya, Algeria and the Mediterranean while witnessing an increasing number of people fleeing Libya or being deported from Algeria on Nigerien territory.

**UNHCR Niger operation has opened a new office in Agadez in 2017**, scaling up its operational capacity to give a response to those in need of international protection within mixed migratory flows.

In response to the complex humanitarian and security situation in Libya, Niger is increasingly turning into an **alternative space for protection**, including for the asylum-seekers and refugees who fail to reach Europe.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Origin Countries



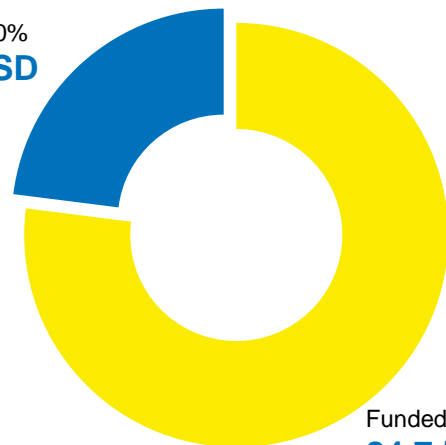
\* ProGres biometrically registered refugees at the date of 31 December 2020

## FUNDING (AS OF 30 DECEMBER 2020)

**USD 108.8 million**

requested for the UNHCR Niger Operation

Unfunded 20%  
**24.11 USD**



Funded 80%  
**84.7 USD**

## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

19 National Staff

3 International Staff

### Offices:

1 Sub Office in Agadez

*Session with PoCs hosted in a Guesthouse about the creation of a Community-based committee to manage Site Pacific Coexistence*



## Operational Context

Niger is situated in **a geopolitically sensitive area linking the Sahara Desert with the Sahel, and West with Central Africa**. The country has become a major hub for mixed movements northwards to Libya, Algeria and the Mediterranean while at the same time witnessing an increasing number of people fleeing Libya or being deported from Algeria on Nigerien territory.

## Operational Strategy

UNHCR's main objective is to ensure that people in need of international protection have access to asylum. Therefore, **UNHCR Niger invests in the structural strengthening of the Nigerien asylum system**. Moreover, UNHCR gives assistance to people under its mandate and aims to find durable solutions, such as resettlement, local integration or voluntary return to the country of origin if the security conditions allow. Complementary legal pathways, such as family reunification, study visa or humanitarian evacuations are also examined.

In **Agadez**, UNHCR continues to invest in strengthening the national Refugee Status Determination (RSD) system through financial and human support, so to enhance its technical capacity to conduct RSD effectively and efficiently.

UNHCR is working closely with the regional authorities to strengthen the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, whose arrivals in Agadez have continued to increase in number since the end of 2017 and are now stabilized but still active. **As of 03 January 2020, 1,221 people, mainly Sudanese nationals, have been identified as in need of international protection**, and registered by UNHCR in Agadez. Among these people, 15% had been previously biometrically registered by UNHCR in another country or disposes of refugee cards issued in other countries, mainly Chad.

33% of PoCs have asylum-seeker status, while 67% of them are already provided with refugee status, in Niger or elsewhere. 20.2% are minors, and 4,77% are unaccompanied and separated children (55 UASCs), some have reportedly been the victim of exploitation, torture and human trafficking 24% have specific needs (273 PoCs). 311 PoCs, the most vulnerable, are currently hosted in 5 guesthouses in Agadez and 38 in private accommodations by UNHCR, where they receive immediate protection and assistance, while other 872 PoCs are hosted in a Humanitarian Centre built in the outskirts of Agadez on a 5ha site managed by UNHCR and partners. In addition, an extension of 15ha not yet serviced has been put at disposal by the Government of Niger in order to extend the site and provide more appropriate shelter solutions to the PoCs.

## Main Activities

### Protection

- UNHCR has established a proactive cooperation with the regional authorities in Agadez and has managed to increase the presence of the competent authorities, notably the General Directorate of Civil Status, Refugees and Migration (DGEC-RM) / Ministry of Interior) responsible for refugee status determination;
- UNHCR, IOM and the Government of Niger have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 on the identification and referral of persons of concern of information and assistance;
- Thanks to the Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa (RDPP-NA), between 2016 and 2019, key actions aimed at strengthening the asylum system in Niger were implemented namely: capacity-building of Government officials on refugee status determination (RSD) standards and procedures, recruitment of 10 eligibility agents trained by UNHCR and embedded in GoN structures, improved capacity to process RSD and finally providing assistance and protection services to PoCs in Agadez. Currently, 1,020 RSD cases have been treated by our staff:
  - As of 31 December 2020, 31 RSD cases have been transferred to the CNE and adjudicated during the last CNE session.
  - 56 new RSD cases are registered in the Progress database of UNHCR while 5 cases approved by the countries of resettlement have been closed.
  - Since 2017, 955 cases have been adjudicated in first instance by the CNE. Among these 955 cases, 41 have lodged an appeal at the CRG which held its first session in February 2020. All cases have been rejected at the CRG level.
  - As of December 2020, the third session of the CNE took place on 23-30 November in Niamey. During this session 370 cases from Agadez have been adjudicated in first instance. Over these 370 cases, 355 have been granted refugee status, 14 have been rejected and one case remains on hold. The last 2020 CNE session planned by the end of December has also been postponed to January 2021 due to the Covid-19 situation in Niger. On 11 December 2020, the Niger authorities took the decision to ban all workshop and meeting until 2021. UNHCR is engaged in cross-border exchange with Chad and Sudan to develop a comprehensive framework for readmission and voluntary repatriation;
- People continue to be expelled from Algeria to Niger. This increases pressure on the region and can have a negative effect on social cohesion. During the year 2020, 22,350 persons have been expelled by Algeria, 13,880 of them (62%) being Niger citizens. UNHCR helps those amongst the expelled in need of international protection. Among the 73,890 persons expelled from Algeria since 2018, 16 were under UNHCR mandate. They have been registered in ProGres database and welcomed in the Humanitarian Center of Agadez where they currently live.

### Education

- Implementing partner INTERSOS continues to provide unformal education assistance to the other minors hosted within the Humanitarian Centre and the other minors under the age of 6, providing several sessions of introduction to mathematics, reading, drawing, motricity and sport activities, etc.
- INTERSOS has donated hand washing kits to 6 primary schools of the city of Agadez where young refugees and asylum seekers are attending classes.

- The partner INTERSOS has also donated a lumpsum of 4400F CFA/child/month to the parents of the 85 children that are attending school in the city of Agadez. The parents are supposed to give 200 FCFA to each child when going to school to cover his primary need and attend classes in a convenient manner.
- The Implementing partner INTERSOS, in collaboration with government bodies, have identified 110 teenagers from the community that will benefit of vocational training. On the other hand, 6 refugees living in the humanitarian center have received their certificates after completion of the vocational training.
- The Implementing partner COOPI has organized 6 adult learning sessions on language, reading, arithmetic's and life competencies for the benefit of 80 refugees and asylum seekers living in the humanitarian center. On the other hand, 102 persons out of the 120 registered for the program learning on English, desktop publishing and Houassa language have participated to the 3 sessions organized on each program.

#### Health & Mental Health

- UNHCR Niger provides first and second medical assistance to all PoCs hosted in Agadez (within the Humanitarian centre as well as in the guesthouses in Agadez) through the partnership with APBE. 1079 medical consultations, 70 medical referrals to public health structures, 760 PoCs instructed through sensitization sessions on COVID-19 and malaria preventive measures, family planning and general hygiene methods have been provided.
- UNHCR Niger provides clinical, mental health and psychosocial support to all PoCs hosted in Agadez (within the Humanitarian centre as well as in the guesthouses in Agadez) through the partnerships with MEDU and COOPI, in addition to an UNHCR staff based in Agadez specialized in MHPSS and Health's follow-up of activities.
- During the last period (December 2020) Implementing partner MEDU has identified 28 SGBV cases, providing 159 clinical consultations, and taking in charge 10 medical cases and 14 psychological cases.
- During the last period (December 2020) Implementing partner COOPI has provided 34 sessions of art therapy, 34 sessions of music and dance, 179 sessions of ludic activities (card games, checkers, music, sport, etc), 54 sessions on personal hygiene, children vaccination, COVID-19 prevention measures and stress personal management.

#### Food Security and Nutrition

- UNHCR Niger in Agadez provides PoCs within the Humanitarian centre as well as in the guesthouses with 3 meals per day. Specific dietary needs are taken in charge and followed-up by the implementing partners COOPI and APBE.
- During the last period (December 2020) UNHCR, through its partners, has provides necessary meals for the entire PoC population, namely an average number of 3.223 meals per day.

#### Water, Sanitation, Shelter and NFIs

- UNHCR has constructed a Humanitarian Center built several kilometers outside of Agadez. This facility was equipped with over 330 refugee housing units, WASH and latrines system, community spaces and offices for staff working on the site. Due to a massive fire occurred last January 2020, the 80% of housing units has been destroyed or damaged. UNHCR has immediately reacted relocating the most vulnerable households in guesthouses while rebuilding many housing units for the PoCs still hosted in the Humanitarian Center. Currently, UNHCR has relocated all

the remaining vulnerable households within 5 guesthouses in the city of Agadez in order to restart the construction of new durable and semi-permanent structures and to implement a project to build a permanent pipeline that will provide the Humanitarian Centre with the needed water supply.

- A Water Tracking system is in place to the Humanitarian Centre providing 30 m<sup>3</sup>/person/day
- 30 new RHUs (housing units) and 25 new semi-permanent housing units will be installed to the Humanitarian Centre in the upcoming weeks.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with the partner COOPI and UNICEF, have distributed 292 NFI kits to 178 boys and 114 girls. These kits included winter clothes, blankets, mats, mosquito nets and plastic basins, hygiene products (toothpaste, brush, soap, etc).

#### **Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance**

- UNHCR continues to work on the implementation of the new Food Strategy within the Humanitarian Centre, following the Action Plan UNHCR/APBE/DRECM and according to PoCs requests and needs, in order to allow PoCs to directly manage their food preparation through CBI (cash-based Intervention). 4 communitarian new kitchen will be soon finalized thanks to the RDPP-NA funds.
- UNHCR has reestablished several refugee engagement committees, such as Child Protection and Site Pacific Coexistence, within the Humanitarian Centre after the interruption due to the past months' difficulties, as well as others have been established within the Guesthouses in Agadez.

#### **Durable Solutions**

- UNHCR Niger promotes access to solutions (asylum, readmission, repatriation, regularization of stay) for the different groups identified in the mixed movements.
- UNHCR Niger guarantee the follow-up of all cases of PoCs proposed for Resettlement or other Complementary Pathways in third countries: Preparation of dossiers, eligibility procedures, request of laissez-passer to the Government for PoCs on departure, transfer to Niamey pre-departure, medical screening procedures, etc.

## **External / Donor Relations**

**Special thanks to the donors who have participated to UNHCR's response in Agadez**  
Italy | Monaco | RDPP NA | Fondazione Prosolidar Onlus | Fondo di Beneficenza Intesa San Paolo | Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation

#### **Donors who have contributed to UNHCR's response in Niger<sup>1</sup>**

United States of America 25.5 M | European Union 13 M | Germany 5.1 M | Japan 4.7 M | CERF 4.4M | Italy 3.5 M | African Development Bank 2.6 M | France 1.2 M | Unilver (UK) 1 M | Spain 0.6 M | Luxembourg 0.4 M | Fondazione Prosolidar Onlus 0.3 M | International Humanitarian and Charity Organization 0.3 M | Intesa San Paolo 0.2 M | Monaco 0.07 M | Canada 0.04 M | Other private donors 0.1M

#### **Other softly earmarked contributions<sup>2</sup>**

Germany 78.8 M | United States of America 61.8 M | United Kingdom 24.8 M | Denmark 14.6 M | Private donors Australia 12.8 M | Canada 10.2 M | Private donors USA 8.7 M | Private donors Germany 8 M | Private donors | France 4.7 M | Japan 4.5 M Spain 3.4 M |

Ireland 3.3 M | Sweden 3 M | Private donors United Kingdom 2.6 M | Private donors Republic of Korea 2.5 M | Japan 2.1 M | Private donors Lebanon 2.1 M

Holy See | Iceland | Jersey | Liechtenstein | Luxembourg | Morocco | Norway | Private donors

### Unearmarked contributions<sup>3</sup>

Sweden 88.2 M | Private donors Spain 73.5 M | United Kingdom 45.7 M | Norway 41.4 M | Private donors Republic of Korea 37.5 M | Netherlands 36.1 M | Denmark 34.6 M | Private donors Japan 31.6 M | Germany 25.9 M | Japan 23.8 M | Private donors Italy 17.6 M | Switzerland 16.4 M | Private donors Sweden 14.2 M | France 14 M | Private donors USA 10.8 M | Italy 10.6 M

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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.

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



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