

Refugees and asylum seekers in Agadez

November 2020

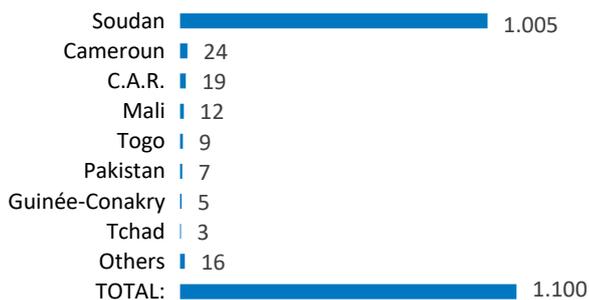
Niger has become **a major hub for mixed movements** northwards to Libya, Algeria and the Mediterranean while witnessing an increasing number of people fleeing Libya or being deported from Algeria on Nigerien territory.

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

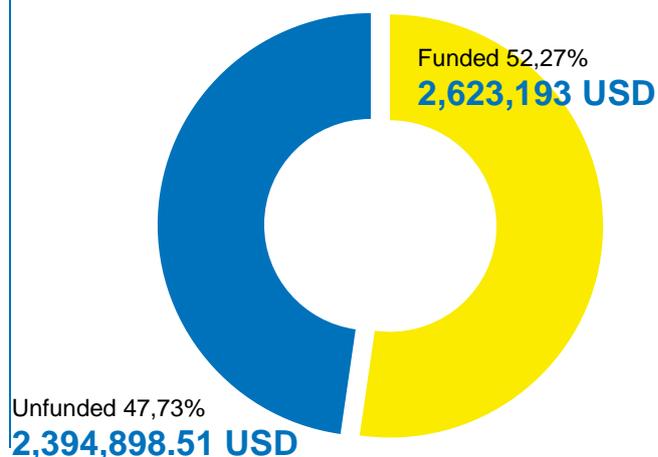


* ProGres biometrically registered refugees at the date of 30 October 2020

FUNDING (AS OF OCTOBER 2020)

USD 5.018.091,51 million

requested for the Mixed Movements (Agadez) situation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

19 National Staff

3 International Staff

Offices:

1 Sub Office in Agadez



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 30 October 2020, 1,100 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.

61% of PoCs have asylum-seeker status, while 39% of them are already provided with refugee status, in Niger or elsewhere. 4% are unaccompanied and separated children (39 UASCs), some have reportedly been the victim of exploitation, torture and human trafficking 24% have specific needs (261 PoCs). 282 PoCs, the most vulnerable, are currently hosted in 5 guesthouses in Agadez by UNHCR where they receive immediate protection and assistance, while other 773 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, 983 RSD cases have been treated by our staff:
 - As of 11 November 2020, 361 cases have been transferred to the CNE for adjudication during the next CNE session. 42 new cases will be transferred to the CNE during the third week of November.
 - 98 cases/120 individuals have not started the RSD process yet.
 - Since 2017, 585 cases have been adjudicated in first instance by the CNE. Among these 585 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 June 2020, with the support of the RDPP-NA III, a one-week comprehensive training session on RSD standards and procedures has been dedicated to 33 members of the first instance eligibility body in Dosso (22-26 June). From 12 to 14 August 2020, the CNE held its second 2020 session in Niamey and adjudicated 71 cases from Agadez. Over these cases, 65 have been granted refugee status, 3 were rejected and 3 remain on hold. These last 3 cases, along with 372 cases from Agadez, will be adjudicated during the next CNE session planned on 23-30 November. The last 2020 CNE session will also be held on 8-10 December in order to adjudicate the 42 cases planned to be transferred late November.
- 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. Since January 01st 2020, 18.697 persons have been expelled by Algeria, 11.759 of them (61%) being Niger citizens. UNHCR helps those amongst the expelled in need of international protection.

Education

- Implementing partner INTERSOS has provided assistance to 16 minors, hosted within the Guesthouses in Agadez, to be enrolled in the local Public School for the season 2020-2021
- 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.
- Implementing partner COOPI is working on the launch of an education activity for young adults and adults, namely a language course of Houssa, English and Informatics for 60 PoCs hosted within the Guesthouses in Agadez.

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. 978 medical consultations, 51 medical referrals to public health structures, 605 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 (October 2020) Implementing partner MEDU has identified 18 SGBV cases, providing 83 clinical consultations, and taking in charge 6 medical cases and 7 psychological cases.
- During the last period (October 2020) Implementing partner COOPI has provided 40 sessions of art therapy, 24 sessions of music and dance, 178 sessions of ludic activities (card games, checkers, music, sport, etc), 49 sessions on personal hygiene, 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 (October 2020) UNHCR, through its partners, has provides necessary meals for the entire PoC population, namely an average number of 3.191 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 Center with the needed water supply.
- A Water Tracking system is in place to the Humanitarian Centre providing 30 m³/person/day
- 10 RHUs (housing units) have been delivered to be installed within the Guesthouses to accommodate the remaining PoCs transferred by the Humanitarian Centre
- 23 households have lately received a Kitchen NFI kit during the last month, while the supply and delivery of 547 kitchen NFI kits and 30 additional RHUs is ongoing.
- Several Education-COVID kits are about to be distributed thanks to UNICEF support.
- Several NFI kits (mattresses, blankets, mosquito nets, etc.) have been distributed by the implementing partner APBE to PoCs reinstalling within the Guesthouses in Agadez.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR is working 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).
- 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.

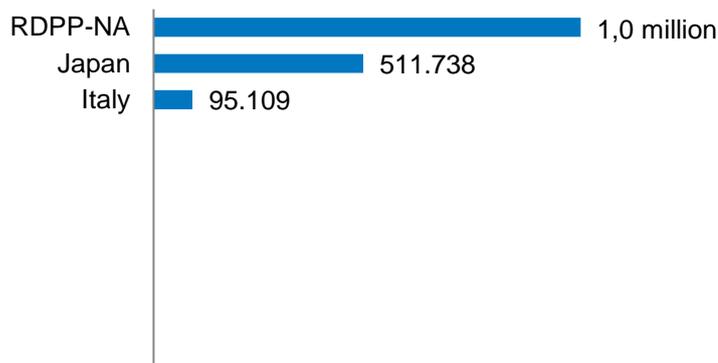
Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

These funds will support the implementation of UNHCR activities in Agadez in 2020 and 2021.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Earmarked contributions for the **Mixed Movements (Agadez)** amount to some **US\$ 1,650 million**.



BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to the Mixed Movements (Agadez) situation

Italy 1.138.166,19 million | Japan 511.738 million |

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors for the **148.4515,43 US\$** unearmarked contributions.
Monaco | Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation | Prosolidar Onlus | Fondo di Beneficenza Intesa San Paolo |

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



EXTERNAL / DONOR RELATIONS

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LINKS

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