

Quarterly Factsheet: « Strengthening the resilience of populations displaced by the instability in Northern Mali »

Overview:

The « Strengthening the Resilience of populations displaced by the instability in Northern Mali » project is a regional project launched by UNHCR and financed by European Union through the EU Trust Fund for Africa, in 2017. The project will last three years (July 2017 – June 2020) and will be implemented in Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. The objective of the project is to strengthen the resilience of the populations forcibly displaced by the instability in Northern Mali, to support the peaceful coexistence between the communities and to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees.

The project will contribute to the reduction of instability and vulnerability, through the creation of socioeconomic opportunities for the displaced populations, as well as the host community, easing local integration of displaced populations. Efforts will also be made to facilitate the reintegration of repatriated refugees in their zone of origin.

In Niger, the project will help to facilitate the socio-economic integration of Malian refugees into Nigerien public services while ensuring support for self-reliance and maintaining social cohesion with host communities.

Overall Targets (by June 2020):

- 1) 3,000 households state that their socioeconomic situation has improved during the course of the intervention;
- 2) 8,000 households are assisted with Cash assistance;
- 3) 3,000 formal or informal activities are created or strengthened;
- 4) 58,035 refugees are completely integrate into the national basic service systems (water, education, health);
- 5) 14 infrastructures and basic social services are strengthened for refugees and host communities;
- 6) 17,048 refugees choose and benefit from assistance for their voluntary repatriation.

Key Dates:

- July 2017 : Beginning of the project
- August 2017 : Establishment of and monitoring of a complaints mechanism regarding targeting
- September 2017: UNHCR select 2 financial service providers in the framework of the cash strategy: Airtel (Mobile Money), and Asusu
- 3 Tripartite Commission meetings held between Niger, Malia and UNHCR (14 September 2017 Bamako; 22 February 2018 Niamey; 28 June 2018 Bamako)
- September 2018: The process of launching the construction of 2 Integrated Health Centres (CSIs) in Ayorou and Abala begin.

Partnerships and Coordination:

In the framework of the implementation of the project, UNHCR works with three implementation partners (APBE, ADES and ADKOUL), as well as the Ministry of Interior through the National Eligibility Commission (CNE).

National authorities, at the central and the local level, play a central role in the implementation of the various interventions, particularly those focused on the integration of the camps and hosting areas into local territories. These activities related to this have been added to the existing local and regional development plans, being implemented under the leadership of the Regional Councils, Regional Technical Directorates and the Communes.

- **10,021** candidates for voluntary repatriation
- **1,848** refugees voluntarily repatriated to Mali
- **19,000** refugees benefitted from sensitization sessions on voluntary repatriation to their zones of origin.
- **2,078 households** have received cash support
- **758** formal or informal activities created
- **2 Integrated Health Centres (CSIs) Type II** under construction in Abala and Ayorou
- CSI in Intikane ZAR has been rehabilitated
- Hydraulic infrastructure is established and rehabilitated in the camp of Abala and at the urbanization site of Ayorou

Future partnerships are being created around the project, including with the World Bank, through financing of the IDA 18 (Project to Support Refugee and Host Communities – PARCA Project), as well as with other UN agencies, international and national NGOs.

Progress: (See key figures)

The Communes have actively participated in the strategy of integration of refugees into the local service systems, and provided land for the construction of health centres and schools, planned for in the framework of the project.

The launch of the rehabilitation and construction of 2 integrated health centres (Type II) has begun:

- **Abala Camp:** The works of preparing the site are complete. The production of bricks for the construction is underway, while the foundation and been laid. The work is ongoing.
- **Ayorou:** The construction of the health centre is underway, and is at the preliminary stage of the production of bricks.

In Intikane refugee hosting area in the region of Tahoua, works to rehabilitate the existing health centre have been completed.



Construction site for the Integrated Health Centre Type II in Abala

More than 10,000 refugees have signed up for support for voluntary repatriation to their country of origin, Mali. On the 30th of September, 1,848 refugees had already departed to Mali since the beginning of the project implementation period.



Candidates for voluntary repatriation receive transport and other support to return, having signed a VRF (Voluntary Repatriation Form)

Work to strengthen hydraulic infrastructure have commenced at the Urbanization site of Ayrou (where 450 households will benefit from social housing), as well as at the camp of Abala, which will benefit both refugee and host populations.



*Hydraulic Infrastructure – Urbanization site,
Ayrou*

Challenges:

One of the challenges noted was the length of time necessary for the negotiation with the local authorities and the Regional Directorates regarding the acquisition of land for the construction of health centres and schools.

The activities of cash and livelihoods will become more important in the coming months; the State of Emergency resulted in the closure of numerous markets, while refugees have seen their socioeconomic development capacities weakened since March 2017. Targeting of food assistance has also had an impact on the vulnerability of some households who are not receiving this assistance as before.

Targeted food assistance and the State of Emergency are two key elements mentioned by refugees during recent focus group discussions, when discussing the question of autonomy of refugees and economic activities.

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(EUTF)

