

Sahel situation *(Tillabéri and Tahoua regions)*

March 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 a few thousand **citizens from Burkina Faso** into Niger.

KEY INDICATORS

40,000*

Number of 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.

508

Durable houses built and finalized in the Tillabéri region

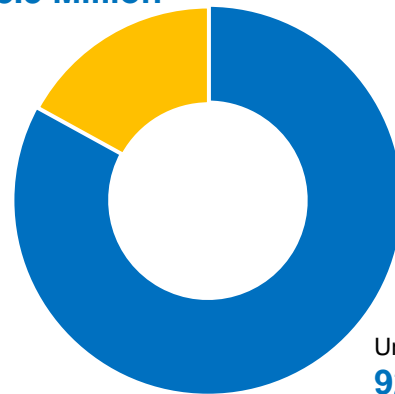
FUNDING (AS OF 2 MARCH 2021)

USD 110,5 Million

requested for UNHCR's operations in Niger

Funded 17%

18.3 Million



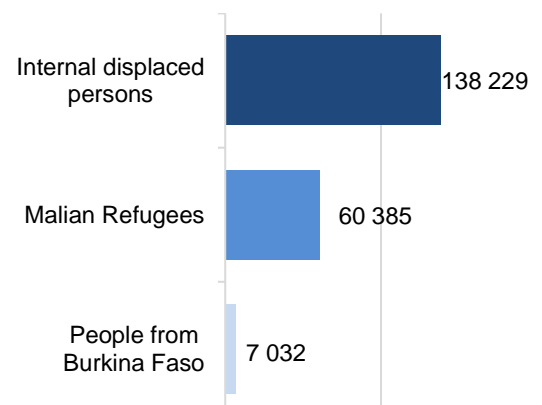
Unfunded 83%

92.2 Million



POPULATION OF CONCERN IN NIGER'S SAHEL

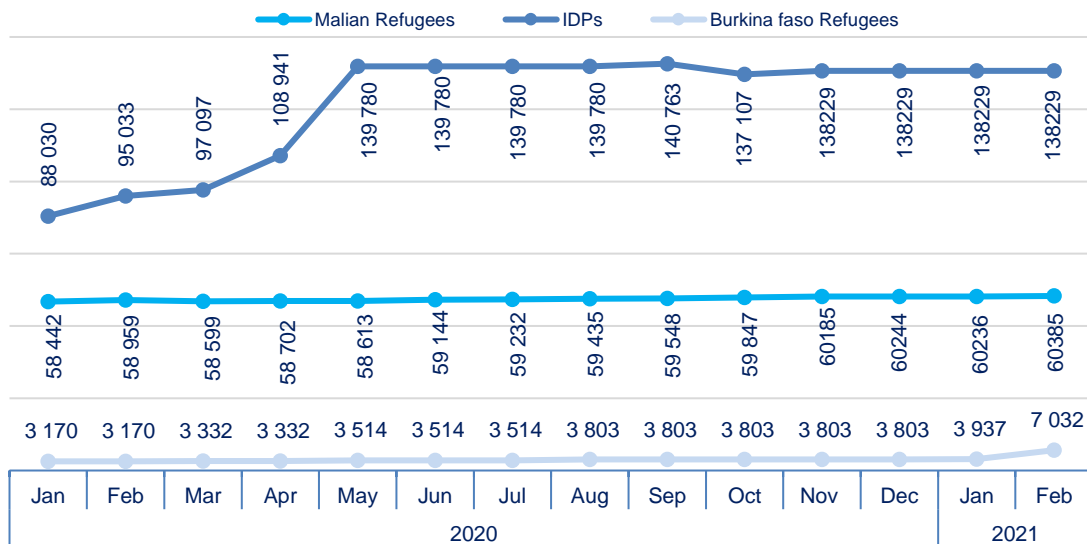
(UNHCR data, 28 February 2021)



Update on Achievements

Operational Context

Evolution of Displaced persons in Niger : Jan 2020 - Feb 2021

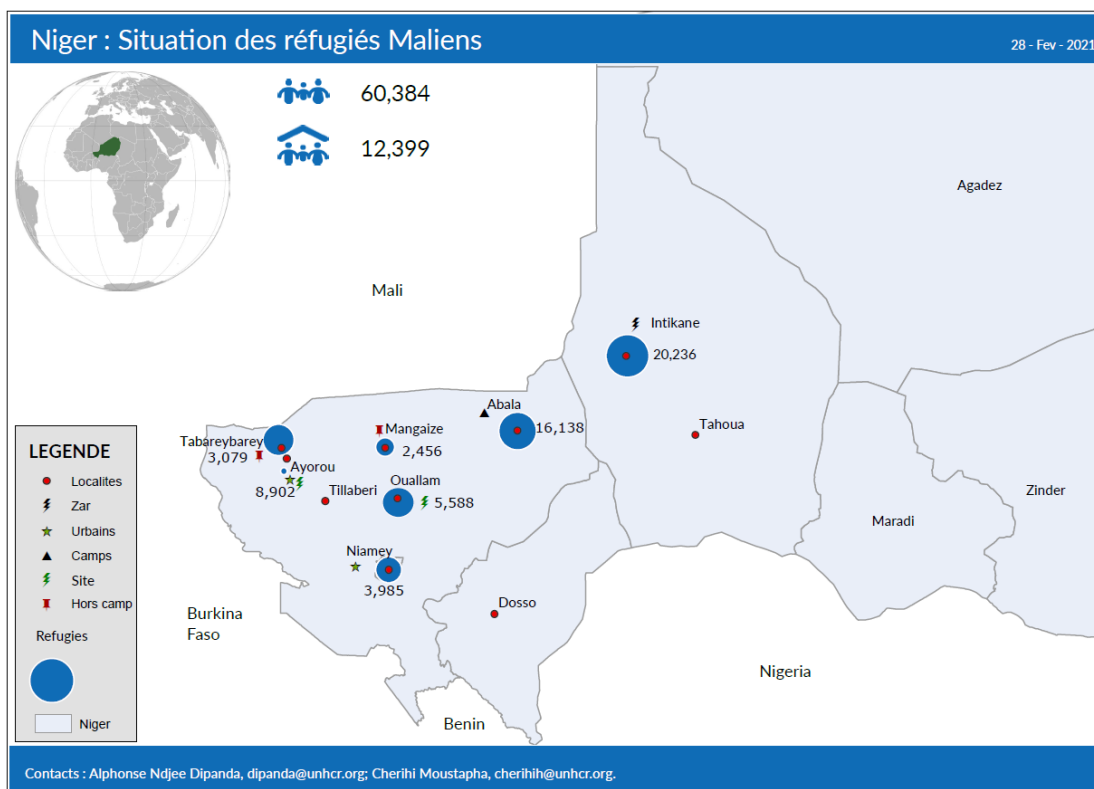


Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are all struggling to cope with numerous militant groups moving between the three countries. The **security situation** in the tri-border region including in the Nigerien regions of Tillabéri and Tahoua has sharply deteriorated. This threat is forcing people to flee their 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 first introduced in 2017 and is still in place.

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

Since the beginning of the year 2020, UNHCR Niger has registered refugees from Burkina Faso. Currently the country host 7,032 Burkinabe refugee in the Tillbéri region. However, their number could be more than that due the lack of humanitarian access because of the rise of insurgency in the areas where they set down.

Operational Strategy



The 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 pre-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 confinement 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 is 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 over 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 and UNHCR and given the deterioration of the protection and security context. They are now 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 produces 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

- Following intercommunity clashes and the rise of insecurity around the Malian border, 15 Nigeriens households of 129 individuals fled their villages to seek refuge and humanitarian assistance in the village of Tarissadet in Tahoua region.
- In the refugee hosting area of Intikane, UNHCR has registered 220 new refugees and updated 434 births in the progress database since the beginning of 2021.

Protection

- In Tillabéri, UNHCR has conducted 4 awareness raising sessions on GBV issues such as child marriage, physical and emotional violence, denial of resources and the consequences of forced and early marriage. These sensitization efforts have reached 353 persons in Ayorou, Ouallam and Abala. In Tahoua, UNHCR has identified 66 cases of GBV. The survivors have been sensitized on GBV prevention and services available.
- UNHCR and its partners APBE and CIAUD have identified 177 case of child protection in Tahoua region. They were referred either to the health centers or the school's authorities for their registration to school.
- UNHCR has identified 97 cases of children at risk of statelessness in the Tahoua region. They were referred to the mayor of Tillia and Tassara for establishment of birth certificates.
- In Tillabéri region, in February, UNHCR and its partner have identified 162 persons living with specific needs. They were documented and referred to partners. The main identified need is health response.
- Through sensitization on reproductive health, UNHCR and community structures have reached 345 persons among the displaced persons living in Ouallam and Abala and 458 in the refugee hosting area of Intikane.

Education



Primary school student in Ouallam © UNHCR / Boubacar Siddo

- Education Cannot Wait (ECW) approved a US\$1,000,000 budget to UNHCR for education activities as a response for displaced children in the Sahel regions. These funds will enable UNHCR to build classrooms, to offer educational material to teachers and to displaced children and to train teachers and school committees on child protection, GBV, inclusion and psychosocial support.
- UNHCR continues to advocate for the increasing of the schooling rates of girls and boys, including those living with disabilities in the refugee hosting area of Intikane.
- In February, UNHCR has identified 97 child protection cases in Tillabéri. The main identified vulnerabilities are the risk of not attending school and child exploitation. They were referred to school authorities for their registration to school and the parents were sensitized on the importance of education.
- UNHCR has reached out 501 persons during awareness raising sessions on the importance of education in the Tillabéri region.

Natural resources

- At Abala the displaced population has collected 34.04m³ or 1779.35 kg of solid waste. The waste was sent to the landfill and waste recovery site. In addition, the members of the environment committee and the community relays organized three public health sessions at the refugee site in Abala.

Shelter

- The construction of 1,050 social houses is ongoing in the Tillabéri region. 508 houses are finalized in Abala (312), in Ouallam (161) and in Ayorou (35). 1,231 persons got employed by the project among which 25% are female.
- As of end February 2021, UNHCR and its partners distributed plots to 377 households in the Tillabéri region including 213 in Abala, 154 in Ouallam and 10 in Ayorou.
- At the refugee site of Intikane, UNHCR has constructed and finalized 260 semi-permanent houses while 15 are under construction. Moreover, UNHCR has rehabilitated 99 latrines.
- In Ouallam and Mangaizé, UNHCR has distributed 114 emergency shelter kits and 144 kits with basic relief items such as mosquito nets, mats, cooking sets, etc. to the newly arrived internally displaced persons following the attack against the villages of Tchomabangou and Zaroumdarey earlier this year.

WASH

- Sensitizations on prevention against the spread of the 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. 1,700 persons were reached in the Tahoua region.

Livelihood

- In Niger, Tuareg refugees participate in the MADE51 project by creating various handicrafts from cowhide. This is the opportunity to engage with refugee artisans in the Sahel region, and to establish market connections for their work, is made possible in part by the European Union, which has supported the expansion of UNHCR's work with Malian refugees through MADE51.



Fatouma a Malian refugee making handicrafts in Niamey © UNHCR / Boubacar Siddo

Working in partnership

For UNHCR forced displacement requires a [comprehensive approach to development](#) and should be considered a development, poverty reduction and climate issue. Including forcibly displaced and their hosts in development interventions is key for the transition out of poverty of the country and to boosting resilience. UNHCR interventions target not only refugees and IDPs, but also 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 and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. This approach is at the core of UNHCR's OUT OF CAMP strategy and is operationalized through ongoing collaborations with the World Bank Group, the German development agency (GIZ) and the European Union (EUTF) and the ILO. With the idea of deepening its role of convener, UNHCR is also looking into strengthening relationship with private sector actors as they are a crucial partner for boosting economic growth and job creation.

In order to lend support to [protection clusters](#) 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 | Central Emergency Response Fund | Education Cannot Wait | European Union | Germany | Italy | Monaco | Spain

Other softly earmarked contributions²

Germany 9.2 million

Iceland | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions³

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 | Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Spain 13.3 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million

Algeria | America | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxemburg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Portugal | Republic of Korea | 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

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