

Niger

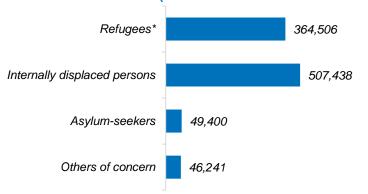
July 2024

In July, UNHCR handed over 150 kits of core relief items to regional authorities of Zinder, to support relieve efforts for victims of recent floods. As of 31 July, about 75,711 people have been affected and 6,868 homes destroyed by these floods caused by torrential rains in eight regions since June, according to the Niger Government.

state armed groups triggered internal displacements of 2,179 in Terra, Tillaberi region, while the number of asylum-seekers from Burkina Faso, rose to 3,904 individuals. UNHCR joined an Inter-Agency assessment mission to the zone hosting the displaced population.

In July, continuing attacks by non- Between 16 to 17 July, UNHCR and its partners distributed kits of core relief and clothing items to 1,067 Nigerian refugees in 10 villages in the Maradi region. The blankets, jerry cans, mosquito nets and sleeping mats distributed will help improve living conditions for the new refugees.

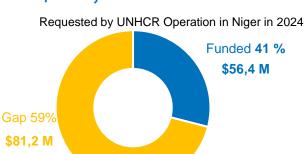
STATISTICS ON REGISTERED FORCIBLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN NIGER (AS OF 31 JULY 2024



* Including non-registered refugees.

FUNDING AS OF 10 JULY 2024

\$137,6 M





UNHCR hands over essential drugs to the Chadakori health centre in Maradi region, to support access to primary healthcare for displaced and host communities. © UNHCR



Operational context

Despite the security, political and economic challenges exacerbated by the July 2023 coup and the imposition of drastic sanctions on Niger, the country continued to host refugees and asylum-seekers from Nigeria (57), Mali (30%), Burkina Faso (9%) and (4%) from other countries. In addition, there are over 507,438 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and some 46,612 other people of concern to UNHCR, including Nigerien returnees who were residing outside the country in areas affected by various conflicts and insecurities, forcing them to flee again.

UNHCR's intervention in Niger is characterized by an approach focused on the provision of protection services, assistance, and solutions for forcibly displaced people. Particular attention is paid to the most vulnerable groups, including women, children, and individuals with special needs. This approach focuses on strengthening community structures.

Despite persistent security challenges, In July 2024, UNHCR operations continued throughout the country, except for areas designated as "military operation zones" by the Niger Government, where humanitarian activities were suspended. UNHCR and other humanitarian actors have continued to advocate with regional authorities for a gradual easing of these measures, to ensure that people in need receive the necessary assistance whenever the security situation allows. This approach has helped to minimize the impact of these restrictions on humanitarian operations, although the security situation remains considerably difficult, especially in the regions of Tillabéri, Tahoua, Diffa and Maradi.

Military operations by Niger's armed forces continued along the borders with Mali, as part of the recent mutual security pact signed by Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. It is feared that these operations, combined with the increased activities of non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in Mali, will provoke further population movements towards the localities of Téra, Abala, Tillia, Tassara and Tchintabaraden in the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions of Niger.

UNHCR remains deeply concerned about the situation of vulnerable individuals in Niger, refugees, internally displaced persons, and host communities affected by the situation. Despite the lifting of ECOWAS sanctions, rising prices and the continued closure of the main access points between Niger and Benin one of the crucial routes for importing essential goods - continue to weaken the overall resilience of the population. Unless significant progress is made in resolving the political crisis, **the humanitarian situation is likely to become alarming**.

Like all UN agencies in Niger, UNHCR has re-established its channels of communication with the government, engaging in discussions with key officials in the Ministries of Interior, Humanitarian Action, and Justice, at both technical and strategic levels. This cooperation is of crucial importance in ensuring the smooth continuity of humanitarian activities, facilitating the free flow of personnel, resources, and finances, and enabling essential tasks such as refugee status determination to be carried out.

Tillabéri region

Context: As of 31 July 2024, the Tillabéri region is home to 302,519 forcibly displaced people, including 223,950 internally displaced people and 41,126 refugees, mainly from Mali, and 37,443 asylum-seekers, mainly from Burkina Faso.

Since the arrival of Malian refugees in Tillabéri in 2012, UNHCR and the Niger Government have actively collaborated to promote their socio-economic inclusion within host areas and communities, adopting an "out-of-camp" strategy. Thanks to the support of development actors and integration initiatives within local communities, Malian refugees and their hosts have benefited from a diverse range of services, access



to land, housing, and livelihood opportunities. Significant improvements have been made to national infrastructures in the fields of health, education, and water supply.

To foster peaceful coexistence between different communities, UNHCR has facilitated closer ties by establishing "common areas" such as village cereal banks and livestock feed stores, as well as through the creation of various joint community-based committees.



Distribution of CRI kits to Burkinabe asylum seekers in Téra, Tillaberi region. © UNHCR

- In Téra department, 2,179 people (267 households) were displaced from Tokorou village after clashes between non-state armed groups and government forces in Takrouzat and other localities on 25 July. Recurrent attacks by these NSAGs have made humanitarian access to the region increasingly difficult.
- Despite these challenges, UNHCR distributed core relief items to around 470 Burkinabe asylum-seekers, who are amongst the population that has been arriving in Téra since May 2024. The kits included tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, mats, buckets, jerry cans, kitchen utensils, and clothing.
- On 30 July, UNHCR partner ACTED launched a cash distribution exercise in Ayorou and Abala, targeting 300 people with special needs (PSNs), including 150 in Ayorou and 150 in Abala. This assistance, planned over a three-month period, comprises monthly financial support of 40,000 CFA francs (around \$65) per person, covering basic needs and strengthening the protection of these vulnerable populations.
- As part of its efforts to improve hygiene and sanitation conditions, UNHCR's partner, the NGO APBE, completed the construction of 82 family latrines on the Malian refugee site in Abala. These facilities will reduce the practice of open defecation. The official reception took place on 18 July 2024, in the presence of local authorities of Abala.
- To combat against climate change, UNHCR and its partners distributed 400 seedlings and 400 protection baskets to refugees at the Abala site to support reforestation activities. This initiative is part of the national campaign entitled "One household, one tree."



Tahoua region

Context: The Tahoua region hosts refugees from Mali found in the northern part, and in the south, by refugees from Nigeria and Niger nationals previously residing in Mali, forced to flee to their country of origin. As of 31 July 2024, there were 205,655 forcibly displaced people in the Tahoua region, including 114,052 internally displaced people, 81,142 refugees and 10,461 other people, notably returnees.



Due to persistent insecurity along the border, particularly in the Ménaka area of Mali, new refugees have been registered in recent months in the localities of Tchintabaraden, Telemcess and Tillia. In addition, Madaoua department, on the border with Nigeria, continues to receive asylum-seekers from Nigeria (Sokoto State) due to recurrent incursions into border villages by non-state armed groups.

- From 23 to 24 July, as part of the ongoing level II registration of Nigerian refugees, UNHCR and the Commission Nationale d'Éligibilité (CNE) conducted a physical and biometric verification of refugees in the host village of Leymi, located in the Bangui commune(council area), Madaoua department. The aim of the exercise was to update data on births, deaths, family reunifications and separations. As a result, 173 newborns were registered, and 174 refugee certificates were renewed.
- On 30 July, UNHCR facilitated the training of members of the protection sub-working group and case managers from the NGO INTERSOS in the Tahoua region. Participants learned about child protection in emergency situations, child trafficking, gender-based violence (GBV), the functioning of the Best Interest Determination (BID) panel and the risks of statelessness. The training was jointly organized by UNICEF, the ICRC, UNHCR and the Direction régionale de la promotion de la femme et de la protection de l'enfant.
- From 16 to 17 July, UNHCR and its partners distributed kits of core relief items and clothing to 1,067 refugees (175 households) living in 10 villages in the communes of Galma and Azorori. Each household received two tarpaulins, two blankets, three mats, three mosquito nets, three buckets, two jerrycans, a complete kitchen kit, six pieces of soap, and eight complete sets of second-hand clothes. The aim is to improve the refugees' living conditions.



Distribution of CRI kits and clothing to refugees living in the communes of Galma and Azarori, in the department of Madaoua, Tahoua region. © UNHCR

- From 11 to 13 July, within the framework of environmental protection, UNHCR took part in a joint mission with the Direction de l'Etat Civil des Migrations et des Réfugiés and partner ADKOUL to assess the recovery of degraded land in the host village of Doukou Doukou, located in the Bangui commune, Madaoua department. During this mission, some refugees and members of the host community, reclaimed 20 hectares of degraded land by building 6,260 half-moons in just six days, as part of a cash-for-work program.
- To improve access to primary healthcare, 2,785 refugees and members of host communities benefited from medical consultations, of which 94 critical cases were referred to secondary health centres.



Regarding reproductive health, 197 women received prenatal consultations and 76 deliveries were assisted by qualified birth attendants, helping to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity.

Diffa region

Context: Since 2013, the Diffa region has been home to Nigerian refugees fleeing terrorist violence in the north-eastern states of Nigeria. As of 31 July, **the region was home to 334,381 people in situations of forced displacement**, comprising 169,621 refugees, 119,758 internally displaced people, 35,476 Nigeriens residing in Nigeria and forced to flee to their country of origin, and 9,526 asylum-seekers. Many of these individuals have experienced repeated displacement, and the majority reside in informal settlements or host communities.

Refugees from Nigeria continue to seek safety and better living conditions at the Sayam Forage camp and at other reception sites in the region. The Sayam Forage camp, Niger's only refugee camp, is currently home to 31,174 people.

- UNHCR and other protection actors have continued to carry out activities such as community-based protection, referrals, resettlement interviews, profiling, registration and documentation, identification, and support for individuals living with specific needs, protection of individuals and groups from gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and child protection. UNHCR also continues to provide multi-sectoral assistance to refugees in Sayam Forage camp, such as access to education, health services, drinking water and sanitation, as well as livelihood promotion.
- Through a partnership with Niger's Ministry of Public Health, Population and Social Action and partner APBE, UNHCR is providing primary healthcare assistance, including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, to all forcibly displaced people in the Diffa region. In July, 2,923 refugees benefited from medical consultations, and 20 of them were evacuated to regional hospital facilities.
- Around 7,800 people(comprising 75% of Nigerian refugees) in Bosso, in the Diffa region of Niger, have expressed their intention to voluntarily return to Malam Fatori, Borno State, according to surveys conducted by UNHCR. During a UNHCR mission to Bosso on 30 July, the refugees indicated that, despite a lack of information on current security conditions in their villages of origin, their motivation to return stems from integration challenges in Bosso, including housing problems, frequent evictions, insufficient aid and the absence of durable solutions. The Governor of Borno State who had previously unilaterally organized voluntary returns for Nigerian refugees, visited Diffa in May 2024, but decided to postpone the operation until after the Tabaski feast celebrated in June. UNHCR continues to advocate for a tripartite agreement with Nigeria and Niger to guarantee voluntary refugee returns in safety and dignity.
- A continuous registration exercise took place at the Sayam Forage camp and the Diffa office of the Regional Directorate of Civil Status, Migration, and Refugees (DREC/M-R). A total of 162 individuals, including 49 newborns, were registered. Additionally, 93 refugee certificates were issued, raising the total to 899, while 216 identity cards have been issued since January 2024.
- From 29 to 31 July, the Governor of Hadjer Lamis Province in Chad and President of the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum, Ildjima Abdraman, visited Diffa. She met with local authorities, civil society and humanitarian organizations to discuss cross-border security and the fight against insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin. Discussions also covered the management of ex-Boko Haram fighters. The mission visited Grain Dogo and Elh Mainari to assess stabilization, economic recovery and development projects, as well as UNDP and UNHCR projects such as the construction of hydraform houses. The next Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum will be held in Diffa.



With the support of UNHCR, the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (CNCCAI) organized a workshop on the fight against improvised explosive devices, explosive remnants of war and landmines, from 22 to 25 July 2024 in Diffa. 104 participants from the Zinder and Diffa regions, including state authorities, humanitarian actors and defence and security forces, learned about international instruments ratified by Niger relating to the control of explosive devices, the types of explosive devices, their modes of use, the associated dangers, the right reflexes to adopt, prevention measures and the coordination mechanisms of the protection cluster.



Participants at the training course on combating improvised explosive devices, explosive remnants of war and landmines held in Diffa. © UNHCR

Maradi region

Context: For over four years, the conflict in north-western Nigeria has forced 79,769 Nigerians to flee to the Maradi region. In addition, repeated incursions by armed bandits into Nigerien territory have resulted in the internal displacement of 18,698 people. Armed criminal gangs operate regularly on both sides of the border, mainly targeting farmers and herders, and carrying out kidnappings for ransom. As of 31 July 2024, there were 98,769 forcibly displaced people in the Maradi region.

UNHCR's response in Maradi is to help refugees who so wish to relocate to a safer distance from the border, while providing assistance to host communities to relieve the pressure resulting from the strong presence. Sites have been set up in neighboring villages, offering various services to refugees and host communities, including enhanced access to water, healthcare, education and protection services. These settlements have been designated Villages of Opportunity (VO). There are three of these VOs in the

Maradi region, located near the villages of Chadakori, Dan Dadji Makaou and Garin Kaka.

In late July, UNHCR held two workshops on international protection, asylum laws, and the 2018 Law on internally displaced persons, among other topics. The sessions, targeting administrative, security, and customs officials in Guidan Roumdji, were conducted with CNE/DREC-MR, CIAUD, UNICEF, and OCHA. Participants included Niger's security forces, local government representatives, and traditional leaders.



Participants posing with the Governor of Maradi at the training launch. © UNHCR





- UNHCR also organised a workshop in Maradi and Zinder for judicial, civil registry and child protection services. The workshop aimed to promote best practices for ensuring children without parental references gain access to civil status and nationality documents in Niger. The 45 participants included the presidents and public prosecutors of the Maradi and Zinder high courts, vice-presidents, court judges, juvenile judges, and regional child protection officials.
- On 29-30 July, UNHCR gave out 150 CRI kits to authorities in the Zinder region, to support government relief efforts for flood victims in Tirmini. According to the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster management, by the end of July, torrential rains in Zinder had affected 15,881 people including 18 deaths.
- To strengthen the coordination of the response to forced displacement, on 25 July, UNHCR's partner NRC distributed 70 gas cylinders to Nigerian refugee families recently relocated to the Chadakori village

of opportunity in the Maradi region. The refugees also received two-burner stoves. Prior to this distribution, UNHCR and NRC raised awareness amongst women, on the efficient management of energy-saving cooking materials, thus reducing dependence on community wood and mitigating potential conflicts with local communities.

On 11 July, UNHCR partner APBE provided support in the form of essential drugs to the three
integrated health centres (CSI) in the opportunity villages of Chadakori, Garin Kaka and Dan Dadji
Makaou, as part of its efforts to improve access to healthcare for refugees and host communities.

Agadez

UNHCR

Context: Niger continues to record mixed movements including migratory flows heading for the Mediterranean and Europe, as well as people fleeing Libya or expelled from Algeria. In July 2024, forced population movements towards the Agadez region continued, putting enormous pressure on the resources of host communities, particularly in the border town of Assamaka, which continues to receive migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees alike. As of 31 July 2024, some 2,970 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered at the humanitarian center and in the Agadez crossing points. In addition, the Assamaka border region welcomed around 3,591 Malian refugees between June 2023 and July 2024, while official and unofficial convoys of people expelled from Algeria or arriving spontaneously brought in over 45,000 individuals between January 2023 and July 2024.



The repeal of the 2015 law against migrant smuggling by the Niger Government in November 2023, has raised concerns about the increase in population movements to Agadez towards North Africa and



Europe via the central Mediterranean route. UNHCR's objective is to ensure that people in need of international protection involved in these mixed movements have access to protection, asylum, and humanitarian assistance.

- Following violent clashes between the Malian armed forces and suspected criminals near the Algerian border, more than 6,000 people, mainly Nigeriens as well as a few Chadians and Nigerians, fled the gold-panning sites in Mali to Assamaka, in the Agadez region, at the end of July.
- From 11 to 16 July, UNHCR, in collaboration with its partners and regional authorities, carried out the second distribution of food vouchers at the Agadez Humanitarian Center. Vouchers worth a total of 62,128,000 CFA francs (\$103,214) were distributed to 1,613 people, including 200 vulnerable host community members, while the rest were refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Through a partnership with the Ministry of Public Health, UNHCR and its partner APBE provide primary healthcare assistance, including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, to all forcibly displaced people in the Agadez region. In July, 1,217 refugees and 936 members of the host community benefited from medical consultations at the humanitarian center and the Toudou integrated health center in Agadez, while 720 Malian refugees received consultations in Assamaka. A further 53 were evacuated to regional hospitals.

Niamey

Context: As of 31 July 2024, Niamey was home to some 5,210 refugees and 557 asylum-seekers. The majority, 89%, come from Mali. In accordance with Niger legislation, Malian victims of the conflict in northern Mali benefit from prima facie recognition, while people of other nationalities follow the government's regular refugee status determination (RSD) procedure.

Given the urban context of Niamey, UNHCR has brought together partners involved in implementing protection and assistance interventions for urban refugees and asylum-seekers under a physical structure known as the "One-Stop Shop". This approach serves to reduce costs, enable integrated operations, and enhance coordination of services provided by different partners. Refugees and asylum-seekers receive assistance and guidance on documentation, along with information about various forms of support such as medical care, psychological aid, and education. The centre also operates a "hotline" that refugees can call toll-free for queries, assistance advice, or complaint filing.

At the same time, UNHCR and its partners carry out regular home visits and monitor the well-being of refugees and asylum-seekers in Niamey. **UNHCR runs several temporary guest houses in cooperation**

with partners, to ensure adequate protection for people with specific vulnerabilities. To ensure inclusion and accountability, UNHCR and the Niger Government regularly cooperate and support the Niamey Central Refugee Committee, made up of refugee leaders elected by their peers.

As part of its commitment to the protection of children, UNHCR carried out socio-recreational activities in the guest houses in Niamey and at the Hamdallaye transit center, benefiting 389 children (210 boys and 179 girls). These activities comprising intellectual games, motor skills and dexterity, were aimed at enhancing their psychomotor and intellectual capacities.



Recreational activities at the ETM Hamdallaye transit center. ©UNHCR



Resettlement

Since their creation, the Emergency Transit Mechanisms (ETM) in Niger and Rwanda have ensured safe transit for almost 6,500 vulnerable people registered by UNHCR in Libya. These ETMs aim to identify durable solutions such as resettlement and other complementary legal avenues, thanks to EU financial support and resettlement commitments from EU member states and other donors.

- Since January 2024, 640 people (367 Niger-registered refugees and 273 evacuees from Libya) have been resettled from Niger.
- As of 31 July, 280 evacuees were remaining in Niger, 49 of whom are awaiting interviews or decisions from resettlement countries. 86 are awaiting departure for Canada, and one for France. The remaining 145 are to be processed by the resettlement and refugee status determination units.
- UNHCR and its partners continued to provide essential services to the evacuees at the Hamdallaye centre and to members of the host community, including health care, water, and sanitation.

Partnerships

UNHCR oversees the coordination of the Protection Cluster in Niger, which, in collaboration with all protection partners, guides and harmonizes interventions towards internally displaced individuals, ensuring a coherent response across the country. The Cluster also shares information with all relevant partners, addresses identified gaps, and provides strategic direction for the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

UNHCR interventions aim to progress towards economic integration and social inclusion of displaced communities. This approach is fully supported by the Government of Niger and aligns with the Global Compact on Refugees and the Humanitarian-Development and Peace Nexus, and with the Niger Government's out-of-camp policy. UNHCR seeks to enhance relationships with donors, national and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, universities, and media outlets. The office also collaborates with other government bodies, operational and implementation partners both nationally and internationally. UNHCR Niger works closely with the Directorate General of Civil Status and Refugees (DGEC-R), the main counterpart of UNHCR, to ensure adequate international protection for all refugees and asylum-seekers present in Niger.

On 25 July, Niger's Head of State, Brigadier General Abdourahamane Tiani, met with UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed during her working visit to Niger. Ms. Mohammed highlighted two

key aims of her visit: addressing regional crises and securing ongoing investment for Niger's sustainable development goals. She expressed satisfaction with the visit, gaining insight into the government's priorities and vision. Ms. Mohamed also stressed the international community's anticipation of a return to democratic order and the need to support Niger's development. During her visit, she also met with the Prime Minister, the Humanitarian Country Team, religious leaders, and women's groups.



The UN Deputy Secretary-General received by the President of the CNSP on 25 July 2024 at the Presidential Palace in Niamey. © Presidency of Niger



Special thanks to donors who contributed to UNUNHCR Niger operation 2024.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PERSONNES RELEVANT DE LA COMPÉTENCE DU HCR

31 Juillet 2024

