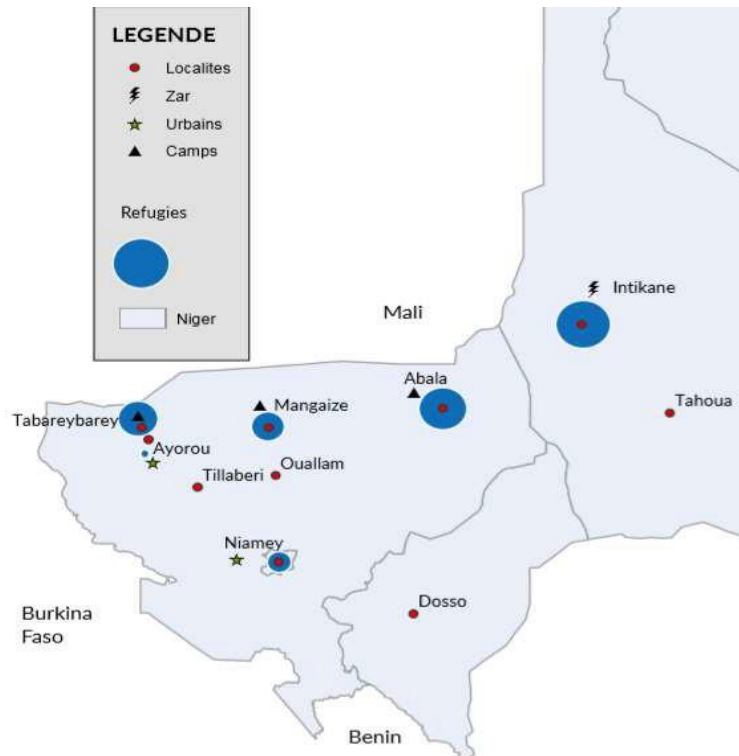


Tillabéri and Tahoua regions – Malian refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

May 2020

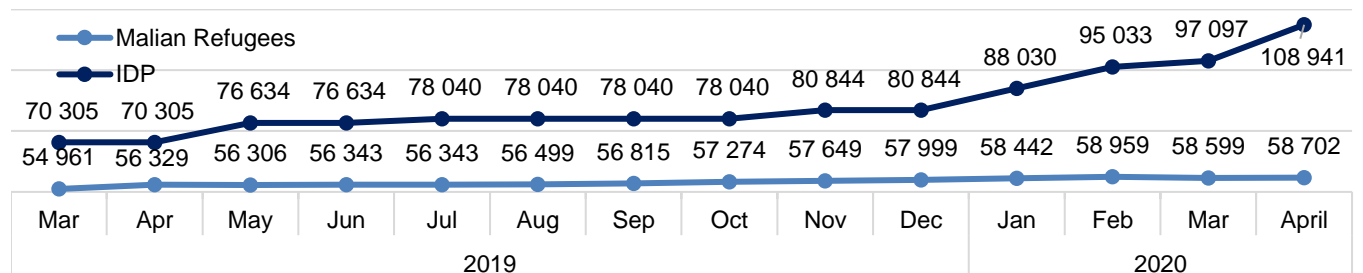


Niger has been hosting Malian refugees since the outbreak of the conflict in northern Mali in 2012. As of 29 February 2020, UNHCR Niger has registered **58,702¹ Malian refugees** in its biometric database. They are living in 3 areas in the Tillabéri region (Ayerou, Ouallam, Abala), in a refugee hosting area for nomadic refugees in the Tahoua region and in the capital Niamey.

The gradual decrease of the security situation has caused the **internal displacement of 108,941 persons** in the same regions with rising numbers every day.

Finally, the presence of armed groups in Burkina Faso has triggered the cross-border displacement of **3,457 Burkinabe** at the least in Tillabéri region and have added to rising numbers of internal displacement.

Population movement statistiques



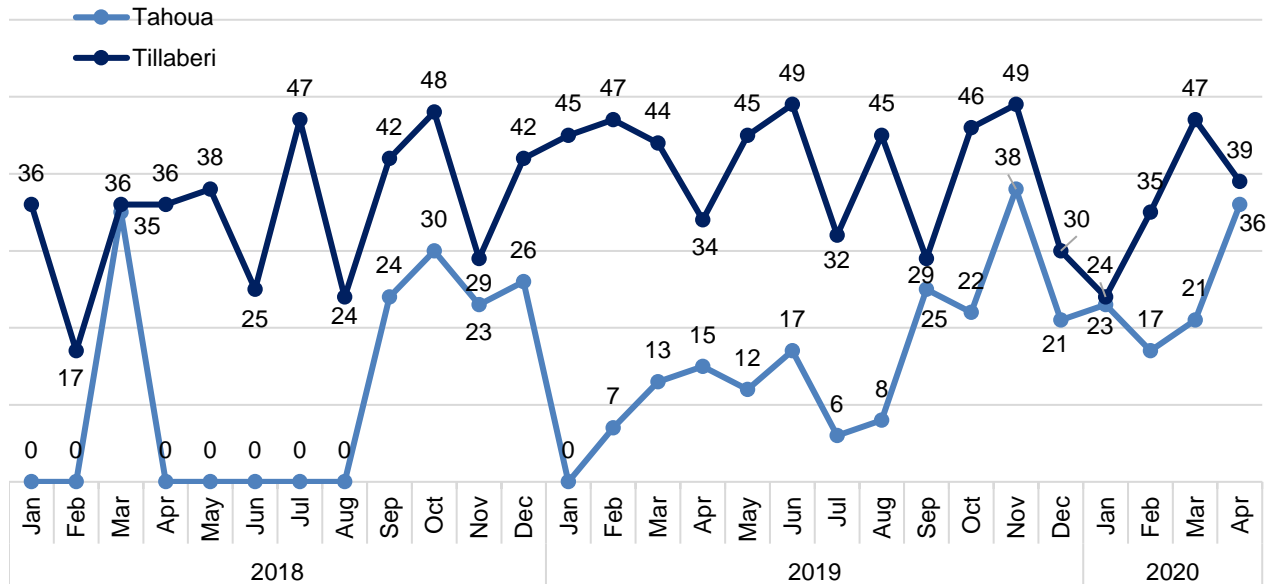
Due to rising insecurity in these areas, at least **5,510 Nigeriens**, mainly women and children, **fled to Mali**. Most of them are settled in the Cercle of Anderamboukane and Menaka.

¹Maliens refugees in Niger can be found in Niamey (4,032); in Ouallam; (5,239); in the camp of Mangaize (2,532); in Intikane (19,992); in Ayerou (11,276) and in Abala (15,647).

Operational strategy and main developments

- Prevention and response to **the global COVID-19 pandemic** is key today. While UNHCR continues to deliver life-saving aid, the organization has set up a strategy focusing on increased coordination with the Government and other stakeholders. Prevention is paramount and carried out through mass awareness raising campaigns and the set-up of hand washing facilities in all refugee hosting areas. Furthermore, UNHCR donates tons of medical supplies and equipment to the Government, including Refugee Housing Units to isolate confirmed cases. An important scale up of medical and WASH (Water Hygiene Sanitation) staff is ongoing.
- Malian refugees are recognized on prima facie basis and enjoy a favorable protection environment with the right to settle where they wish, to access basic social services and the job market.
- 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** that will promote social cohesion, self-reliance and a durable integration into national services systems. All Malian refugee camps have been closed; this was a joint vision of the Government and UNHCR which is being accelerated in the current security context. UNHCR has relocated Malian refugees from the camps of Tabareybarey, Mangaize and Abala to the villages of Ayerou, Ouallam and Abala.
- With the support of the **EU Trust Fund**, UNHCR has set up a positive collaboration and partnerships with the Regional Directorates of Health, Education and Hydraulics, to ensure the inclusion of refugees into national mechanisms. Moreover, an extensive tripartite collaboration has been developed between the **World Bank**, the Government of Niger and UNHCR to render refugees more resilient thanks to improved access to basic public services and support for economic opportunities. With the support of **ILO**, Malian refugees will be included in a market-based livelihood intervention in the area of fish production and waste management.
- With the support of **GIZ**, UNHCR and the Government can give Malian refugees access to land in an urbanized site where Nigerien families will be settled as well. For 4000 vulnerable persons among the refugee and host population, a social house is part of the package.
- A **Tripartite Agreement** between the Governments of Niger, Mali and UNHCR provides a legal framework for voluntary returns. UNHCR assists those who wish to return with a cash grant.
- The IDP crisis is **monitored by a broad community-based network** and analysis is carried out on a regular basis. Capacity building and coordinated efforts with humanitarian actors are ongoing to ensure an adequate response to the situation. National legislation for assistance and protection to IDPs based on the Kampala Convention is in place.

Protection incidents in Tahoua & Tillabéri



Main challenges

- Next to the presence of armed groups, measures imposed as part of the State of Emergency and ongoing military operations, the COVID-19 crisis also has important socioeconomic consequences on populations living in the affected areas. Humanitarian access in refugee hosting areas, especially near the borders with Mali and Burkina Faso, is cumbersome. Cross-border and internal displacement is ongoing.
- Additional support from development partners is needed to complete the urbanization program and to reinforce infrastructure in urbanized areas.

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LINKS

[UNHCR country operation page - Twitter](#)