

Niger

December 2022

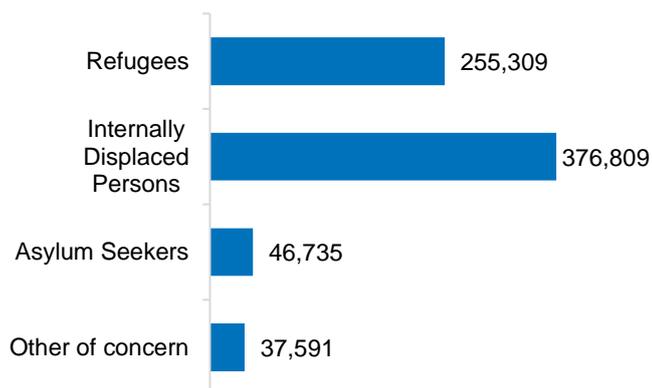
The municipality of Tera and the *Directorate of Civil Status*, with the support of UNHCR and its partners, are continuing the initial registration of **asylum seekers from Burkina Faso, who have arrived in Tera since** early November. As of 31 December 2022, a total of 1,711 households (9,449 individuals) have been registered.

6 December, an official ceremony took place to inaugurate a **water extension, which connects the water system of Agadez to the humanitarian center and neighbouring communities**, to guarantee that refugees at the Humanitarian Center and Nigeriens have adequate access to drinking water.

Since 2017, a total of **5,096 refugees have left Niger to third countries through resettlement** or through complementary pathways. This number comprises of 3,526 persons, who have been evacuated from Libya through the **Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)** and 1,570 refugees that have been registered in the national asylum system in Niger.

POPULATION OF CONCERN AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2022

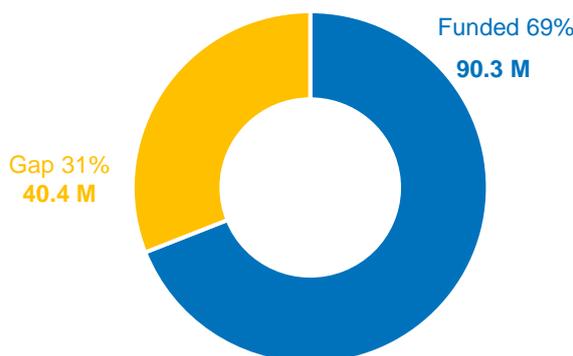
In Niger, there are **255,309** refugees, **46,735** asylum seekers, **376,809** internally displaced people, **37,591** other people of concern, such as returnees. Total number of persons of concern to UNHCR in Niger stands at **716,444**.



FUNDING AS OF 29 DECEMBER 2022

USD 130,7 M

Requested for UNHCR Niger operation in 2022



Nigerian women at the 'Village of Opportunity' of Chadakori © UNHCR / Romain Pichon Sintes

Operational context

Despite various conflicts in the region, **Niger has always kept its borders open**, and is currently hosting **255,309 refugees and asylum seekers**, with 69% coming from **Nigeria**, **21 % from Mali**, **5 % from Burkina Faso**, and **5% from other countries**. Furthermore, there are more than **380,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** and Nigerien returnees (*who have stayed outside the country for more than 10 years and who have recently returned to Niger*). UNHCR's work in Niger focuses on the **protection, assistance, and solutions** for those populations, with particular attention to women, children and persons with specific needs, which is guided by a **community-based approach**. UNHCR also supports the Nigerien authorities in the search for **durable solutions** for displaced communities in Niger.

The key pillars of the UNHCR strategy in Niger:

- **Ensure institutional resilience** through capacity development and support to the authorities (locally elected and administrative authorities) in the framework of the Niger decentralisation process.
- **Strengthen the out of camp policy** around the urbanisation program through sustainable interventions and dynamic partnerships including with the World Bank.
- Ensure a coordinated and high-quality **protection response** and maintain an **emergency response capacity**.

Tillabéri region

Since 2012, UNHCR and the Government of Niger have worked towards the **integration of Malian refugees into the country and to find alternatives to camps in the Tillabéri region, which is in line with the 'out of camps' strategy by the Government of Niger**. With the support of development actors, Malian refugees and host communities have access to land, housing, and livelihood opportunities, while national health, education and water infrastructures are being reinforced. To **further strengthen peaceful co-existence between the different populations**, UNHCR brings together the different populations through 'common areas', such as village stores, cattle feeding areas, as well as through various mixed community committees.

The municipality of Tera and the *Directorate of Civil Status*, with the support of UNHCR and its partners, are continuing the initial registration of **asylum seekers from Burkina Faso, who have arrived in Tera since** early November. As of 31 December 2022, a total of 1,711 households (9,449 individuals) have been registered. UNHCR, through its partner Action Pour le Bien-Être (APBE), distributed household items and clothing to the newly arrived persons from Burkina Faso.



Distribution of Non-Food Items in Tera to newly arrived asylum seekers from Burkina Faso © UNHCR

Tahoua region

As of 16 December 2022, a total of **21,281 Malians** refugees and asylum seekers as well as **16,431 Nigerian asylum-seekers and 3,465 Nigerien returnees** have been registered in the Tahoua region. With the situation at the border with Mali (Menaka), new arrivals are also reported in Telemces and in Tillia.

On 21 November 2022, UNHCR and its partner CIAUD, launched a mobile court session in Bagaroua in collaboration with the *Regional Directorate of Civil Status, Migration and Refugees*, the Court of Ilela, the mayor of the commune of Bagaroua. This activity is the result of the commitment made by UNHCR in the framework of the **#IBelong campaign to prevent and eradicate the risk of statelessness** in the world by 2024. The purpose of this mobile hearing is to document a total of 1,000 children at risk of statelessness in the department of Bagaroua.

In December, UNHCR and partners received 2,640 people for medical consultations, including 854 refugees, 739 IDPs, and 1,047 members of the host community. More than 4,000 people were reached by sensitization campaigns conducted by UNHCR and its partners ADKOUL and APBE on **child protection, prevention, gender-based violence, protection of people with special needs, and strengthening peaceful coexistence**.

At the end of 2022, a total of 94 teachers from 13 primary and secondary schools in the department of Madaoua were trained on the mitigation of risks of **Gender Based Violence (GBV) and on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and abuse (PSEA)**, learning about the code of conduct, the management of survivors, the role of community structures in the management of GBV cases: Finally, the reporting system was evaluated and updated and GBV and PEAS focal points were appointed in some selected schools.



Participants in the training on GBV prevention and PSEA © UNHCR

On 15 November 2022, **UNHCR, with the support of Education Cannot Wait, distributed school kits** consisting of school bags, a book, and a notebook to 97 refugee- and host community students at the elementary school in Jawalki village. This distribution of kits took place in the presence of the village chief, members of the School Management Committee, UNHCR and ADES.

Diffa region

The Diffa region has been hosting Nigerian refugees fleeing terrorist violence in the northern states of Nigeria since 2013. In the wake of the first attacks on Niger soil in 2015, the situation has dramatically deteriorated. In May 2015, the authorities decided to evacuate the population living in the Niger region of the Lake Chad Islands.

As of 31 December 2022, a total of **235,211 forcibly displaced persons live** in the Diffa region (including **129,835 refugees, 67,817 IDPs, 35,445 returnees, and 2,114 asylum seekers**). Many of these people had been displaced more than once. Most of them stay in spontaneous settlements or with host communities. The refugee population continued to arrive at *Sayam Forage* camp from Nigeria, but also at other host sites in the Diffa region, seeking better humanitarian assistance and security. A total of **32,587 persons** live in the Sayam Forage camp – *the only refugee camp in Niger*.

In December 2022, UNHCR identified **29 new child protection cases**, all of whom received psychosocial support. A total of 1,951 refugees and host community members were sensitized on child protection issues by local protection committees. These sensitization sessions included bushfire prevention, the importance of enrolling children in school, malnutrition, malaria, violence, child abuse, personal hygiene, the effects of drug use, the consequences of begging, and children's rights, among others.

In December, a multi-sectoral assessment mission was conducted by UNHCR in Bosso, following a report of an influx of Nigerian refugees who fled the 19-20 November NSAG attacks on the Malam Fatori military base in Nigeria. *The National Eligibility Commission (CNE)* has registered a total of 1,081 households of 7,142 people who sought refuge in Niger. **UNHCR supports the CNE in the physical** verification of former refugees and the registration of new arrivals in this area. Priority needs identified are **food, shelter/NFI and WASH**.

A total of **3,915 refugees** received medical consultations in November and December at the Sayam Forage health centre. Of these, **118 were placed under observation and 41 were referred** to regional health facilities. A total of 349 women received pre-natal consultations and 95 births were assisted at the Sayam Forage health centre.

As part of its activities **to prevent the risk of statelessness**, UNHCR and its partners issued 3,164 substitute birth certificates to 694 women, 721 men, 996 girls, and 753 boys living in various sites in the Diffa region. These include Sayam Forage Camp, Goudoumaria, Mainé Soroa, Guidan Kadji, Bosso, Fiego, Ambouram Ali among other sites.

Maradi region

For more than two years, conflict in north-western Nigeria **has forced more than 80,000 Nigerians** to flee to the Maradi region in Niger. In addition, repeated intrusions of armed bandits on the Nigerien territory have triggered internal displacement of around 26,000 people. Armed criminal gangs operate regularly on both sides of the border mainly targeting farmers and breeders and conduct kidnapping with the objective of ransom.

During the emergency in 2019, the overall strategic direction of **UNHCR's response in Maradi has been to relocate refugee communities away from the border to ensure their safety**, while at the same time, easing the pressure from the host communities. Subsequently, sites have been built in nearby rural villages and services were reinforced for both, the refugee - as well as the host communities, such as access to water, health services, education, and protection assistance. Those sites were titled '*Opportunity Villages*'.

at the moment there are three of them in the Maradi region, in the villages of Chadakori, Dan Dadji Makaou and Garin Kaka

In November and December 2022, UNHCR and partners identified and documented **87 child protection cases, and a total of 11,936 children received psychosocial support** in child-friendly spaces in the three *Opportunity Villages* and in the Tiadi, Elguidi, and Dan Kano sites in the department of Guidan Roundji. More than 2,478 children were sensitized on child protection issues, such as early/forced marriage, school attendance, and personal hygiene.



Awareness raising session at the 'village of opportunity' of Chadakori © UNHCR / Roomain Pichon-Sintes

In December, **UNHCR's health partners received a total of 4,475 people for medical consultations** (2,511 refugees and 1,964 members of the host community), at the health centers in the villages of opportunities. Out of these, 2,857 suffered from malaria; 71 cases were hospitalized, and 60 critical cases were referred to hospitals in Maradi. A total of 262 women received prenatal consultations and 120 deliveries were assisted.

UNHCR's partners APBE (Action Pour le Bien-Être) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) identified **77 cases of sexual and gender-based violence**. Survivors received psychosocial support and were referred to appropriate services. Awareness-raising activities on sexual and gender-based violence issues and available services were conducted in the three *Opportunity Villages*.

UNHCR's partner APBE conducted **sensitization campaigns on** attending health centers, respecting the rights of neighbors, hygiene, the use of Insecticide treated mosquito nets, cholera prevention measures, management of water points, and hygiene. These activities reached 12,266 women and 11,768 men in the *Opportunity Villages* of Chadakori, Dan Dadji Makaou and Garin Kaka.

Agadez

Niger is a hub for mixed movements northwards to Libya, Algeria, and the Mediterranean, while at the same time witnessing people fleeing Libya or being expelled from Algeria to Niger. **These migratory flows constitute mixed movements, including economic migrants as well as persons in need of international protection.** UNHCR's main objective is to ensure that the latter have access to protection, receive assistance and have access to asylum.

Therefore, UNHCR Niger invests in **the structural strengthening of the Nigerien asylum system** and implements **all the needed activities to support and assist beneficiaries in the region.** Moreover, UNHCR assists people under its mandate and aims to find durable solutions, such as **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 explored.

On 6 December, an official ceremony took place to inaugurate a **water extension, which connects the water system of Agadez to the humanitarian center and neighbouring communities,** to guarantee that refugees at the Humanitarian Center and Nigeriens have access to drinking water.



UNHCR Representative and members of the local authorities of Agadez during the official ceremony of the handover of the water extension system © UNHCR / Jean Sebastien Josset

With the support of IOM, NGO partners, and the Government of Niger, UNHCR identifies asylum seekers within the migratory flows and provide them with adequate information and tailored assistance. As of 31 December, UNHCR and its partners have identified and biometrically registered **2,627 individuals** in need of international protection. The most vulnerable are currently hosted in **five guesthouses in Agadez** where they benefit from a protection response and assistance, while the others are hosted in the **Humanitarian Centre** built in the outskirts of the city.

In December 2022, UNHCR facilitated access to **primary and secondary health care** through the Toudou health center. A total of 1,443 refugees and 477 members of the host community were seen for medical consultations, including 53 serious cases. The latter were referred to the regional hospital and the mother and child health center in Agadez. The Toudou health center also provided reproductive health services and management of child malnutrition.

On 9 December 2022, UNHCR and its partner APBE initiated a radio debate on **"Access to Justice" on Radio Alternative**, bringing together civil society and human rights defence actors, the press, youth associations, women's rights activists, and refugees. It was an opportunity for women to raise issues around divorce, child custody, inheritance rights and to know the opportunities that exist whose services are free.

Hamdallaye / ETM

As of 31 December, and since the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) launched in 2017, a total of **5,096 refugees had left Niger to third countries under resettlement or through complementary ways.**

This number comprises of 3,526 persons, who have been evacuated from Libya through the **ETM** and 1,570 refugees that have been registered in the national asylum system in Niger.



On 1 November, UNHCR Niger received 174 asylum seekers, who have been evacuated from Libya via ETM to Niger. © UNHCR

In December, **UNHCR Niger and the EU Delegation in Niger have signed the extension of the ETM contribution agreement**, titled *'Providing Protection through Durable Solutions for persons of concern evacuated from Libya in the Emergency Transit Mechanism in 2022-2024'*.

Out of **4,063 evacuees from Libya** to Niger since November 2017, **636 evacuees** are still in Niamey, at the site of Hamdallaye, of whom 38 refugees are awaiting departure and 270 are awaiting interviews and decisions by third countries.

On 12 November 2022, an **African Union delegation**, led by the Ambassador of the Comoros Islands, visited Hamdallaye to better understand the ETM program and to exchange with the refugee community, partners, and UNHCR. Particular emphasis was placed on the respect of the law and regulations of the host country, coexistence and living conditions at the site.

Urban refugees in Niamey

As of 31 December 2022, Niamey hosts a total of **4,770 refugees and 1,008 asylum-seekers**. 88% (4,204) of refugees in Niamey are from Mali. Under Nigerien law, Malians who are victims of the armed conflict in northern Mali are **recognized on a prima facie basis** while other nationalities undergo the regular governmental procedure of refugee status determination (RSD).

The urban setting of Niamey prompted UNHCR to bring together the partners involved in the implementation of interventions aimed at the protection and assistance of urban refugees and asylum seekers in one physical structure, called the **Guichet Unique (One-Stop-Shop)**.

The latter has the advantage of reducing costs and allows for an integrated approach, as well as better coordination of the interventions of the different partners. At the same time, UNHCR and partners regularly conduct home visits and monitors the well-being of beneficiaries in the five communes of Niamey. UNHCR manages several temporary housing facilities (cases de passage) in cooperation with partners organizations to ensure adequate protection for persons with specific vulnerabilities. To ensure inclusiveness and accountability, UNHCR and the Government of Niger regularly cooperate and **support the Central Refugee Committee of Niamey**, comprised of refugee leaders from the various communities.

The humanitarian community in Niger joins the Government of Niger in **celebrating 10 years since the entry into force of the Kampala Convention** for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons. In 2012, Niger was among the first 15 states to ratify this treaty.

On 2 December, UNHCR participated in the official launch of the **National Child Protection Committee under the chairmanship of the Minister for Women Empowerment and Child Protection**. Hereby, the decree from 19 July this year, outlining the creation, composition and functioning of the Child Protection Committees (CPE) was signed. UNHCR and partners will ensure that children of concern to UNHCR will be included in the work and response of the Committees.

A total of 35 complaints were received in November and December 2022 through the Niamey one-stop shop's, including 14 complaints from Niamey, 14 from Ouallam, five from Agadez and two from Hamdallaye. Most of the complaints are related to the renewal of expired refugee certificates, taking appointments for the reimbursement of prescriptions and medical procedures, requesting information on the asylum application procedure, following up on requests for food aid and to accommodation.

Partnership

UNHCR is leading the Protection Cluster in Niger, which – together with all Protection partners – steers and coordinates the protection actors' interventions towards IDPs, to ensure a coherent protection response in the country. The Cluster also shares information amongst all relevant partners, bridges identified gaps, and ensures the strategic direction of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

UNHCR interventions aim to move towards economic integration and social inclusion of displaced communities. This approach is fully endorsed by the Government of Niger and is aligned with the **Global Compact for Refugee (GCR) and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus** and is aligned with the joint Government of Niger and **UNHCR 'out of camp' policy**. UNHCR aims at strengthening relationships with donors, national and international non-governmental organizations, private sector, academia, and the media. The office also works with other government bodies, national and international implementing and operational partners. Lastly, UNHCR Niger works closely with the *Direction Générale de l'Etat Civil et des Réfugiés* (DGEC-R) to ensure adequate international protection.

Special thanks to donors who contributed to UNHCR Niger operation in 2022

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