NIGER QUARTERLY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

APRIL TO JUNE 2026

In Tillabéri, refugee women and women from the host community are strengthening their skills in groundnut oil extraction and the processing of its by-products. Thank you to #KOICA for supporting the economic empowerment and resilience of local communities. © UNHCR Niger

Operational context

The **second quarter of 2026** was marked by a more constrained operating environment and a widening gap between humanitarian needs and available resources. Non-state armed groups intensified attacks alongside criminality and intercommunal violence. Tillabéri, Diffa and northern Tahoua remained the most affected regions, while attacks in Dosso showed the southward spread of violence. The 18 June events at Diori Hamani International Airport were met with a swift reinforcement of the security apparatus, underscoring the government's sustained vigilance.

Insecurity triggered **displacement** from Dargol, Kokorou, Mainé Soroa and parts of Maradi, contributing to refugee arrivals in Diffa. Early rains accompanied by storms compounded these pressures, killing seven people and affecting 1,476 others. UNHCR strengthened security coordination, adjusted delivery methods in the face of rising needs and shrinking resources and maintained emergency readiness.

The broader context was shaped by State reforms, growing needs in Diffa and Tillabéri, and an evolving diplomatic and development landscape. Administrative reforms would increase the number of regions from eight to 19 and departments from 63 to 82, while the dissolution of nine State bodies may affect local governance and humanitarian coordination. Measures affecting nationality and population screening also raised protection concerns. UNHCR monitored decrees on nationality and the new Penal Code that criminalizes same-sex relations, thus prompting UNHCR to update guidance, reinforce referrals and brief partners.

At the same time, the **protection framework** advanced. A draft asylum ordinance was validated, including provisions on statelessness determination and cessation aligned with the 1951 Convention. Civil registration reforms created a national identification agency and enabled local courts to issue nationality certificates. In Diffa, 1,669 people, mostly children, were identified as being at risk of statelessness. Progress continued towards a Niger–Nigeria–UNHCR tripartite agreement on voluntary return and a consultation mechanism for possible relocations in Diffa.

Humanitarian pressures intensified. As of end-June, Niger hosted 1,051,674 forcibly displaced people, including 455,741 refugees and asylum-seekers, 47,547 others in need of international protection and 548,386 internally displaced people. Nigerian refugees newly arrived in Diffa rose from 6,839 in early April to 16,459 by mid-June, most awaiting biometric registration and 80–90 per cent arriving without identity documents. Tillabéri received 12,795 newly pre-registered asylum-seekers from Burkina Faso. The Diffa emergency response required more than $4.4 million, but funding remained far below needs.

UNHCR continued **coordination**, advocacy and institutional support. It organized a workshop with the Ministry of Population on Internal Displacement, adopted a nine-pillar action plan on accountability and localization, co-led the Protection Cluster retreat and trained protection, police and military actors on international protection. A joint mission with UNDP secured commitments to increase development investment. Despite these efforts, the gap between needs and available assistance continued to widen.

National Activities

During the second quarter of 2026, UNHCR responded to new displacement while strengthening national systems for registration, documentation, asylum, and solutions. The forcibly displaced population increased by 19,560 between end-March and end-June, driven by arrivals in Diffa and Tillabéri and revised internal displacement figures. Diffa faced the largest emergency, with more than 18,410 people fleeing north-eastern Nigeria pre-registered by late June. Nationally, 31 per cent of refugees and asylum-seekers had not completed individual registration, underscoring persistent gaps in access to documentation, protection, and essential services.

Registration and data: UNHCR identified 160,366 people with specific needs, including survivors of gender-based violence, persons with disabilities, older persons at risk, and unaccompanied and separated children; women and girls accounted for 70 per cent of those identified. This data was used to prioritize referrals, target assistance, and inform operational planning. A joint mission estimated that meeting minimum needs for 20,000 Diffa arrivals would require $4.4 million across eight sectors; UNHCR responded by deploying specialists, replacing registration equipment, and introducing biometric checks to reduce duplication. UNHCR also began revising procedures for updating refugee records post-registration to improve data quality and streamline case processing — still ongoing at quarter's end — while backlogs persisted in Diffa, Tahoua, and hard-to-reach areas of Tillabéri.

Asylum and refugee status determination (RSD): Staffing shortages, interpretation constraints, and reduced funding drove growing case backlogs, longer processing times, and delayed asylum decisions, limiting access to rights and services and risking confidence in the national RSD system. UNHCR supported the National Eligibility Commission (CNE), prepared a digitalization concept, revised the asylum roadmap, and trained commission members and screening agents to strengthen and modernize the system. UNHCR also advocated for continued, consistent prima facie recognition for Malian refugees while exploring its extension to eligible Burkina Faso arrivals. The first eligibility session of 2026, held on 29–30 June, reviewed 30 applications (29 positive, one negative). The backlog stood at 813 cases by end-June —715 in Agadez and 98 in Niamey — underscoring the need for sustained support.

Legal identity and statelessness: On 22 April, the Government adopted reforms to modernize civil registration through biometric systems, a new National Identification Agency, and decentralized nationality certification to lower courts; the legislative framework is in place, with only the implementation decree remaining. These reforms should reduce administrative and geographic barriers to documentation for displaced, rural, and at-risk populations. UNHCR-supported mobile courts and documentation campaigns enabled 200 at-risk children in Niamey to obtain birth judgments, with 400 more in Niamey and 2,879 in Diffa remaining priorities. Discussions with the Minister of Justice advanced protection and statelessness initiatives: Niger's accession to the Global Alliance to End Statelessness remains under consideration, the Government reaffirmed commitment to ratifying the AU Protocol on the Right to a Nationality, with further discussion expected at a regional event in The Gambia in October 2026, and progress continued toward a new National Action Plan on Statelessness and a Government–UNHCR MOU.

Solutions: By 29 June, 269 refugees had departed for resettlement (241 to Canada, 27 to Italy, one to New Zealand), including 22 via the Emergency Transit Mechanism — up sharply from 126 departures by end-March, with 143 in the second quarter of the year alone. Canadian quota case submissions reached 97 per cent of the 2026 target by mid-year. One refugee departed to Canada via family reunification under complementary pathways, while education-pathway and language-preparation information is being consolidated with sector teams. UNHCR supported finalization of the Niger–Nigeria–UNHCR Tripartite Agreement on voluntary repatriation and conducted an intentions survey of 5,209 refugees in Diffa, generating evidence for safe, voluntary, and dignified returns.

The transfer of the Hamdallaye ETM site advanced through the Technical Handover Committee, which met on 9 April under the Director of Migration and Refugees; the handover action plan was updated, a joint DGECM-R/UNHCR/partner inventory of site infrastructure was completed and reported to the Committee, and a draft handover memorandum was shared for review. Separately, a prolonged sit-in at the Niamey One-Stop Shop by Hamdallaye residents seeking resettlement was resolved through group counselling and targeted communication, reducing demonstrations and improving understanding of resettlement procedures.

Coordination, localization and accountability: Protection coordination strengthened through enhanced Government co-leadership and tighter integration of child protection, GBV, and mine action, reducing fragmentation and improving joint analysis and planning. A mapping exercise identified 1,199 community-based organizations and 56 refugee-led organizations nationwide, providing a foundation for localization, stronger referral pathways, and greater participation of local and refugee-led actors. Community engagement and accountability mechanisms — consultations, feedback channels, outreach — informed advocacy and programme adjustments on registration, assistance, and service access, while refugee-led organizations expanded their role in outreach, monitoring, and referrals.

A nine-pillar plan for Accountability to Affected Persons (AAP), Localization and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) was adopted, prioritizing stronger feedback and complaint mechanisms, greater refugee-led and local organization participation in decision-making, and improved community awareness of PSEA reporting channels, to be implemented jointly by the AAP/Localization Working Group, Government, UN agencies, and NGO partners with tracked indicators. Capacity-building reached 40 protection actors and supported the inclusion of refugee protection in the National Police Academy curriculum, complemented by World Refugee Day activities, a national moot court competition, and training of Youth Peace Ambassadors to promote protection and social cohesion.

Regional Operations

Agadez

- In Agadez, UNHCR combined immediate protection with longer-term planning for the Humanitarian Centre and services along major movement routes. In April, UNHCR relocated 38 asylum-seekers to the Centre within one day after they were evicted from an informal site, preventing homelessness, family separation and possible refoulement.
- Engagement with residents improved through a complaints committee established in April. UNHCR agreed with the regional urban planning authorities to integrate the Centre's 26 hectares into the town development plan, supporting its gradual transformation into an urban neighbourhood. The Sultan of Aïr also made three hectares available for agricultural activities under a ten-year arrangement.
- A joint UNHCR–UNDP mission in June secured commitments for development investment, local authority support and the route-based approach. Construction of the one-stop shops reached 95 per cent in Agadez and was completed in Dirkou.
- By mid-May, UNHCR had identified more than 200 people in need of international protection along the northern routes, with Assamaka the main entry point. Coordination with UNHCR in Algeria, the International Organization for Migration and national authorities enabled people expelled from Algeria to reach Agadez and access asylum procedures.
- Monthly assistance included food vouchers for between 376 and 389 people, hygiene and dignity items, livelihood equipment and information on naturalization. World Refugee Day activities promoted dialogue, community responsibility and peaceful coexistence. The deaths of 49 Nigerien travellers near the borders with Mali and Algeria in June highlighted the severe risks facing people on these routes.

Mixed-Movement

Between January and June 2026, UNHCR recorded approximately 97,000 people through mixed movements monitoring activities in the Agadez region of Niger, a key transit corridor for populations moving towards North Africa. The movements primarily involved men (87%) and adults, while women and children represented a smaller but consistent proportion of those monitored. Among these individuals, 261 persons were identified as being in need of international protection.

Between January and June 2026, mixed movements recorded in the Agadez region were concentrated mainly along the Algeria corridor (49%) and the Libya corridor (43 per cent). While movements along the Algeria corridor remained overwhelmingly male-dominated, the Libya corridor displayed a more diverse demographic profile, with a higher proportion of women and children, suggesting greater protection vulnerabilities. The Mali corridor, accounting for 8 per cent of recorded movements, remained comparatively limited in volume and was composed almost entirely of men.

Nigerien and Nigerian nationals constituted the largest groups transiting through the region, followed by nationals of Chad, Mali, Sudan, and Guinea. Monthly data showed a gradual increase in arrivals during the first half of 2026, rising from approximately 7,200 individuals in January to more than 9,300 in June. Departures, after peaking at the beginning of the year, stabilized at between 7,000 and 9,000 individuals per month.

These trends confirm the central role of Agadez as one of the main mixed movement hubs in West Africa and highlight the continued need for protection monitoring, humanitarian assistance, and coordinated responses along key migration routes.

Route-Based Approach

Between April and June 2026, UNHCR Niger strengthened the implementation of the Route-Based Approach (RBA) through awareness-raising, capacity-building, and coordination initiatives. Key achievements included the organization of a national moot court competition on asylum law, statelessness, and mixed movements, and a public conference at the National School for Non-Commissioned Officers (ENSOA) in Agadez focusing on refugee protection and the prevention of statelessness. UNHCR also supported the training of 30 officials from the Ministry of Population on the protection of internally displaced persons, durable solutions, mixed movements, statelessness, referral mechanisms, as well as the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) and Accountability to Affected Populations approaches. Finally, the launch of construction works for a third One-Stop Shop (Guichet-Unique) in Tchintabaraden, Tahoua region, marked an important milestone – these Guichets Uniques (GU) will improve access for people on the move to integrated information, referral, orientation, and protection services provided by authorities and humanitarian actors along strategic migration corridors in Niger. Note that two GUs have been completed in Agadez and Dirkou in the Agadez region.

Diffa

Recurrent Boko Haram attacks on Damasak and surrounding areas in Borno State, Nigeria – including a major assault on 3 April 2026 and a further attack on 29–30 June in which armed elements warned civilians to leave the town – have driven continued forced displacement into the Diffa region. Between 4 April and 6 July 2026, 18,410 refugees (3,511 households) were identified in Diffa city (Ari Guirguidi site, 73 per cent) and Mainé Soroa (27 per cent). Arrivals are ongoing and the movement is unlikely to be short-term or preventive. Children represent 30 per cent of arrivals and women 40 per cent; 9 per cent are people with specific needs. Level 1 registration has been completed by the CNE; Level 2 registration is pending.

Needs:

- **Shelter**: some 60 per cent of households sleep in the open; the remainder are hosted in severely overcrowded conditions or in makeshift shelters, exposing women and girls to heightened GBV risks.
- **Food**: only 837 of 3,511 households have received WFP distributions; others rely on the solidarity of an already vulnerable refugee community. Rapid food or cash assistance is critical.
- **Essential Items**: nearly all households fled without belongings and arrived with nothing. They are in dire need of relief items such as blankets, buckets and solar lamps.
- **Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** a cholera outbreak in Borno State, Nigeria has reached the border area, with five suspected cases identified in Diffa (29 June–3 July) and under treatment; water, latrines and handwashing facilities remain insufficient.
- **Protection:** over 70 per cent of arrivals lack identity documents, restricting freedom of movement; 20 separated children, some 40 traumatised children, over 100 persons with disabilities and 1,100 children out of school require targeted support.

Response:

- **Government leadership:** the authorities allocated the Ari Guirguidi site (renewed to September 2026) and established the consultation framework for the relocation of forcibly displaced communities (CCR/CDF) on 5 May 2026.
- **UNHCR:** 1,000 essential items kits (710 Diffa, 290 Mainé Soroa), 500 dignity kits and clothing distributed; protection monitoring, GBV response and child protection delivered with partner CIAUD; multisectoral and protection assessments conducted with the authorities and OCHA.

- **Partners:** IRC provided 685 shelter kits and a borehole, with 132 kits and 47 latrines planned for Mainé Soroa; MSF delivers water, sanitation and comprehensive health care; WFP completed three food distributions; ACF covers health and nutrition; Concern supports education; Caritas, Help and local actors provided food and livestock.
- **Coordination:** joint Government–humanitarian missions and regular inter-agency coordination are in place to avoid duplication and harmonise the response.

Gaps and Priorities:

- Deliver emergency shelter and dispatch 1,000 additional essential items kits, dignity kits and emergency shelter kits without delay.
- Launch Level 2 registration in Diffa and Level 1 in Mainé Soroa by 15 July 2026 to unlock documentation, vulnerability screening and solutions.
- Mobilise rapid food or cash assistance for unserved households and reinforce water trucking at both sites.
- Finalise the Diffa contingency plan and preposition emergency stocks to ensure a 48-hour response capacity for further arrivals.
- Scale up psychosocial support, emergency education and assistance for persons with specific needs.
- The response remains severely underfunded. Without immediate additional resources, the gap between rising needs and available assistance will continue to widen as arrivals from Nigeria persist.

Maradi

- In Maradi, UNHCR combined emergency preparedness, registration, protection advocacy and economic inclusion. When local authorities ordered refugees to leave Sanguerawa within 72 hours following community tensions, UNHCR's intervention secured the suspension of the measure. UNHCR then supported affected families and dialogue between communities.
- New movements increased in June. Violence in Nigeria displaced 191 people (84 households) to Guidan Karé, while 370 former refugees returned Niger within one week.
- A land-access workshop secured 255 hectares for refugee and internally displaced farmers. Of 140 vocational trainees assessed, 127 successfully completed their programmes. Clothing distributions reached more than 8,000 refugee, displaced and host-community households.
- Continuous registration expanded through the villages of opportunity, registering 360 people and producing 538 attestations by late June. Partnerships with the Norwegian Refugee Council, Good Neighbors and the regional technical education authorities strengthened protection and vocational training. 23 refugee-led organizations also responded to the 2026 call for partnership proposals.
- Protection mechanisms responded to serious cases of gender-based violence within 72 hours through medical, psychosocial and judicial services. Nevertheless, suspended food assistance contributed to school absenteeism, while 32 people with specific needs could not be referred in May because suitable partners were unavailable.

Tahoua

- Tahoua focused on registration, documentation, emergency assistance and the transition towards nationally managed services. Arrivals from Nigeria reached 3,013 people (427 households), mainly in Bangui commune. The region hosted 80,475 refugees, 10,597 returnees and 65,892 IDPs, while approximately 52,805 people awaited registration.
- In June, UNHCR agreed with refugee and civil registration authorities to resume continuous registration through seven centres in Bangui and Sabon Guida. UNHCR supplied computer equipment to civil registration services in Bangui and Bagaroua. Identification of people at risk of statelessness also increased, and around 350 people attended the regional launch of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness in Tchintabaraden.
- UNHCR distributed 3,000 dignity kits and 84 emergency shelter kits in four villages. Food vouchers continued, although funding limited the assistance to three months. Development-oriented activities included a market garden supporting 60 farmers, four child-friendly spaces and training for 40 teachers serving 2,221 pupils, including 759 refugee children. Refugees represented 40 per cent of candidates for the primary school leaving examination in Bangui commune.
- In Madaoua, UNHCR began planning with Médecins Sans Frontières for the transfer of health services in an area hosting about 34,000 refugees. The process highlighted the need to strengthen national health capacity before humanitarian actors reduce their presence.

Tillabéri

- Tillabéri sustained the operation's broadest geographic response. In April, UNHCR distributed shelter and clothing items to 12,795 newly pre-registered asylum-seekers (1,739 households) from Burkina Faso, in Téra. Remaining supplies supported vulnerable host families and 310 persons with disabilities.
- UNHCR monitored more than 3,500 Burkinabè asylum-seekers awaiting pre-registration in hard-to-reach areas and over 1,700 newly displaced households in Torodi, Gothèye, Dargol and Abala. UNHCR also followed Malian arrivals in Ayorou and raised concerns about reports that some families may have faced pressure to return.
- Protection services addressed family separation, school exclusion, child marriage, gender-based violence and lack of civil documentation. In June, teams identified 470 children at risk, including 458 who needed birth certificates. UNHCR provided equipment to social protection and civil registration services in Ayorou and Say, handed over a multipurpose hall in Téra and transferred the site for a new community centre to local authorities and the implementing partner.
- Multipurpose cash assistance reached 1,650 vulnerable households in Ouallam, Téra and Torodi. The planned distribution in Tamou remained pending approval. Livelihood support included training for 200 market gardeners, land preparation for 150 producers and vocational training for 40 young people from Ouallam, Abala and Ayorou. Preparations also began to train 68 people in groundnut processing.
- Health services recorded between 590 and 696 general consultations each reporting week, alongside prenatal care, referrals, deliveries and mental health support. A multidisciplinary mission to Abala nevertheless identified persistent gaps in medicines, water, shelter and education.

Gaps and priorities

The response entered the third quarter with growing needs and limited resources.

UNHCR's priorities are to:

- Complete biometric registration and documentation in Diffa, Tahoua and hard-to-reach parts of Tillabéri;
- Expand water, shelter, health and reception capacity for new arrivals in Diffa;
- Address reductions in food assistance and improve communication with affected communities;
- Increase access to birth registration and nationality documents;
- Protect the voluntary nature of relocation and return processes;
- Include refugees and internally displaced people in national health, education, agriculture, employment and social protection programmes;
- Complete one-stop shops and strengthen services along major routes; and
- Mobilize additional resources for the Diffa emergency, the route-based approach and the transition to nationally led services.

Without additional funding, registration backlogs, reduced food assistance and pressure on basic services will continue to limit protection and solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless people.

Sectoral Achievements (Q2 2026)

Sector	Key Achievements (Nationwide)
Protection & Asylum	**30 individuals** supported to obtain civil status, identity or legal status documentation. **50 individuals** received legal assistance. **10,000 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **7,500 IDPs** received protection services. **480 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **620 IDPs** were consulted through Participatory Assessments. **400 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **710 IDPs** used UNHCR-supported feedback and response mechanisms. **10 sites** have a coordination mechanism in place and functional. **30 cases** received Status Determination decisions in accordance with international standards.
Child Protection	**308 refugees and asylum-seekers and 214 IDPs (children and caregivers) received child protection services.**
Gender-Based Violence (GBV)	**179 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **61 IDPs** benefitted from specialized GBV programmes.
Basic Needs / Cash Assistance	**1,149 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **920 IDPs** received cash assistance.
Essential Items	**56,007 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **86 IDPs** received non-food items.

Sector	Key Achievements (Nationwide)
Shelter	**818 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **107 IDPs** received shelter and housing assistance. **One infrastructure facility was** constructed or rehabilitated.
Health	**30,696 individual consultations** delivered through UNHCR-supported health care services. **4,220 consultations** delivered through UNHCR-supported mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.
Education	**38,834 refugees and asylum-seekers** benefited from education programming.
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	**63,000 people** were provided with access to water and/or sanitation services. **57,204 household toilets/latrines** were constructed.
Livelihoods & Economic Inclusion	**3,970 refugees and asylum-seekers** and **32 host community members** benefitted from livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions.
Durable Solutions	**3,000 refugees and asylum-seekers** received counselling and/or information on voluntary repatriation.

Story from the field

(1) *Adama Hassan, 53, is a mother of seven and a Nigerian refugee living at the Djori Kolo site in Diffa. Thanks to the profits from her condiment business, she has started a small livestock-rearing activity with four goats and can now provide for her family financially. She expresses her gratitude to UNHCR for helping her regain her dignity, independence and hope. © UNHCR Niger*

(2) *"It has brought us together as a community. We take care of our families and help each other financially."*
In Ouallam, Ousseinatou and other refugee and Nigerien women produce groundnut oil with support from UNHCR.
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(3) *Meeting with newly arrived refugees in Ari Guirguidi. Ongoing insecurity in Nigeria continues to force people to seek refuge in the Diffa region. By May 2026, more than 14,000 people had been registered, mainly in Ari Guirguidi and Maïné-Soroa. These repeated displacements show the urgent need for long-term solutions. Ari Guirguidi, Diffa, 2026. © UNHCR Niger*

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