

THE APPLICATION OF SPHERE STANDARDS BY THE UNHCR TO NOMADIC LIFESTYLE IN THE REFUGEE HOSTING AREA OF INTIKANE - NIGER



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	iv
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE OPERATION	1
1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE HOSTING AREA OF INTIKANE	2
2. METHODOLOGY	3
3. CHARACTERISTICS OF TUAREGS	4
3.1 WHO ARE THE TUAREGS?	4
3.2 ON WHAT IS BASED THEIR ECONOMIC SYSTEM	5
3.4 THEIR SOCIAL STRATIFICATION	5
3.5 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN TUAREG SOCIETY	6
4. THE SPHERE PROJECT, HUMANITARIAN CHARTER AND MINIMUM STANDARDS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION	7
4.1 THE ORIGINS AND OBJECTIVES	7
4.2 THE 2 ESSENTIAL CONVENTIONS OF THE SPHERE PROJECT	7
4.3 THE DEFINITION OF ESSENTIAL STANDARDS, MINIMUM STANDARDS, KEY ACTIONS AND KEY INDICATORS	7
5. THE APPLICATION OF THE SPHERE STANDARDS IN THE HOSTING AREA OF INTIKANE	9
5.1 MINIMUM STANDARDS IN THE SECTORS OF WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION	9
5.2 THE MINIMUM STANDARDS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION	16
5.3. MINIMUM STANDARDS ON SHELTER, HABITAT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS	18
5.5 THE MINIMUM STANDARDS ON HEALTH ACTION	22
5.6 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION	23
6. CONCLUSION	26
7. BILBIOGRAPHY	27

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
ZAI	Refugee hosting area of Intikane
NFI	Non Food Item
PBS	People with special needs
DREP	Regional Directorate of Primary Education (Tahoua)
XOF	CFA Franc
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
IRC	International Rescue committee
HSF	Humanitaires Sans Frontières/Humanitarians Without Border

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE OPERATION

The conflict in Mali which erupted in January 2012 led to a massive exodus of thousands of people to neighboring countries including Niger, which counts 50,000¹ Malian refugees. Among these refugees the Tuareg / Tamachek ethnic group is the largest in comparison to others (Arabic, Bambara, Bobo, Dogon, Hausa, Malinke, Peul, Sarakole / Soninke / marka, Sonrai). In accordance with its mandate, the Office of the United Nations for Refugees (UNHCR) has implemented protection and assistance measures to these refugees who have the distinction of being mobile and having agro-pastoral activities.

In order to face up with this exodus, several refugee camps (Abala Mangaize, Tabareybarey) were created in addition to two others which are spontaneous camps: Agando and Chinouarene. For safety reasons, in particular, given their proximity to the Malian border where fighting was still raging between rebel groups and Malian forces and French army, the UNHCR decided to transfer the refugees from these two camps to the hosting area of Intikane (ZAI). The hosting area is located in the Tahoua region and covers an area of approximately 276 ha with a density of 25 persons / ha². Intikane has the distinction of not being a camp, but a Hosting Area, which is an experimental concept implemented by UNHCR in Niger, in order to adapt to the sociocultural and economic specificities of nomadic refugees. In Intikane unlike in a camp, people live dispersed and have the choice to move wherever they want within the perimeters covered by the area.

Approximately 6944³ nomadic people live in this area who are 994% Tuareg ethnic group and whose main economic activity is pastoral livestock breeding (mainly cows, sheep, goats, horses, camels, sheep and donkeys) which live in the ends of the area.

In all its missions, the UNHCR implements standards of humanitarian assistance in various areas of intervention (water and sanitation, health, nutrition, shelter / NFI, education) to protect and assist people concerned by its mandate. In the case of ZAI, it became evident that due to the nomadic and agro-pastoral specificity of the Tuareg people, the implementation of Sphere standards poses challenges which leads to this interrogation: *Are the Sphere standards applicable in the Hosting area of Intikane? And if so, what provisions can further improve and assess the progress of assistance provided in the best compliance to nomadic lifestyle?*

¹<http://data.unhcr.org/SahelSituation/region.php?id=67&country=501> (Page consultée le 12 novembre 2013)

² Enquête rapide sur assainissement et hygiène à Intikane, ONG Adkoul, UNHCR, International Rescue Committee, 15-16 juin 2013

³ UNHCR, « Intikane hosting area », (UNHCR Niger octobre 2013)

⁴ Ibid

At first, this report will analyze the characteristics of Malian Tuaregs to better understand the culture of the population in Intikane. Then, the methodology used in the research will be presented. Finally, follows up will be made on the application of Sphere standards in ZAI.

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE HOSTING AREA OF INTIKANE

The ZAI is located in the Sahelian belt of Niger, on the edge of the desert. It is watered for a period of approximately three months of the year (late June to early September) but in recent years, rainfall was at random. However it is worth noting the presence of some areas of storm water retention (ponds) around which are organized breeding activities and subsistence agriculture organized by nomads of the area. During periods of drought, a concentration of pastoral activities is organized around permanent ponds, boreholes and wells created by the government. These pastoral wells were set up following a coverage program that targets a network of 40 km apart. Unlike water, hay, a cattle feed is abundant in the area, especially when moving eastward along frequently traveled routes. The settled populations of Telemces and Tilia periodically collect hay for commercial purposes⁵.

⁵ Ketawa Djemissi, « Aménagement de la zone d'accueil des réfugiés », (UNHCR Niger, 19 mars 2013)

2. METHODOLOGY

To conduct this research, I visited the ZAI several times for observation and interviews with refugees, UNHCR partners and colleagues in the office of Tahoua. In a first survey, I conducted meetings in each neighborhood of Intikane with community leaders, partners and refugees who have provided me information on the level of assistance provided by UNHCR to be compared with the Sphere standards. I carried out another site visit and conducted focus groups with men, women, the elderly, and people with disabilities, girls and boys during my stay with the refugees. This has enabled a better understanding of their way of life in the ZAI while considering the effectiveness and implementation of Sphere standards in a hosting area and in which live an agro-pastoral nomadic population.

The methodology used to conduct this study combined various methods of qualitative data collection and consisted of:

- Visits of observation
- Interviews with key partners including UNHCR informants and office colleagues in Tahoua
- Meetings in each Intikane neighborhood with community leaders
- Analysis of a study on the demographic, economic and socio-cultural profile of Malian refugees in Niger
- Consultation of scientific articles on the Tuareg Culture

These qualitative data helped me to better explore the issues of ZAI while trying to provide solutions.

For development, for each sector, I compared the key Sphere standards and indicators (key actions for the sector of education) to the situation in the ZAI in order to demonstrate the effectiveness or not of their impacts in the form of recommendations.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF TUAREGS

3.1 WHO ARE THE TUAREGS?

The word Tuareg was given by Arabs and means: "abandoned by God" and depending on the regions Tuaregs have different names. In Niger and Mali they are called "Kel Tamachek", i.e. those who speak the language tamachek which is of Berber origin. In Algeria, the Tuareg are called Imuhagh means freemen⁶.

The Tuareg are a nomadic people descended from the Berbers of North Africa and are about 1 to 1.5 million⁷, their traditional habitat covers nearly 2.5 million km²⁸ in desert or semi-desert areas of central Sahara and the borders of Sahel region. Moreover, they live together with the Fulani ethnic group.

The current political boundaries of the following countries share their territories: Algeria, Libya, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The number of Tuareg varies, according to the estimates from 1 to 3 million people with the majority (about 85%) located in Mali (representing 10% of the population) and Niger (20% of the population)⁹. Furthermore, while moving, they live in remote areas, "Tuareg are in the most arid area, the least populated, often the most difficult to access, they are almost always far from the political capital"¹⁰.

In Mali, the marginalization of the Tuareg people at the historical, economic and political level, is part of the three factors of crisis in the north of the country: the end of the caravan transport which was an economic source for the Tuareg tribes during the French colonization, the severe droughts of 1973-1984 which destroyed the traditional way of life of many nomadic clans and the marginalization of northern Mali by the government after independence in 1960 in which investment still remains very low¹¹. This long lasting marginalization is one of the reasons for the recent war in Mali.

⁶ Laurent, Ribadeau Dumas. 2013. André Bourgeot sur la longue histoire des Touaregs. En ligne. <http://geopolis.francetvinfo.fr/andre-bourgeot-sur-la-longue-histoire-des-touaregs-12099> (page consultée le 14 novembre 2013)

⁷ A profile of a Tuareg population to facilitate the identification of possible protection concerns during displacement. UNHCR Niger (Protection Department) (2013)

⁸ France. Groupe International de Travail pour les Peuples Autochtones. Touaregs. En ligne <http://www.gitpa.org/Peuple%20GITPA%20500/gitpa500-4-TOUAREGfiche.pdf> (page consultée le 14 novembre 2013)

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Bernus, Edmond. 1992. Être Touareg au Mali. En ligne http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/pleins_textes_7/divers2/36891.pdf (page consultée le 14 novembre 2013)

¹¹ Sperl, Stefan. 2000. International refugee aid and social change in northern Mali. School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

3.2 ON WHAT IS BASED THEIR ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Tuareg economic system is based on the breeding of camels, sheep, goats and cattle which allows them to have milk and means of transportation¹². This breeding associated with their lifestyle is or more specifically defined by the concept of pastoral nomadism: "Use of land through livestock based on a wandering life in search of pasture"¹³.

In addition, the Tuareg economic system is influenced by their location. In fact, their economy, whether exclusively pastoral and caravanian or agro-pastoral, varies depending on the region where they live¹⁴.

3.3 THEIR EATING HABITS

For the Tuareg herders, milk and millet are the two staple foods¹⁵. In fact, milk is very important in the Tuareg feed. "Milk in a pastoral society plays an essential role: it nourishes refreshes and heals"¹⁶. In addition, the camel milk is the most popular and appreciated because it does not curdle, as the milk of cow, sheep or goat and because it cannot be transformed into butter or cheese it is eaten fresh¹⁷.

Millet purchased with the sedentary is prepared as porridge or paste. It occupies an important place in the diet, especially during dry periods when cattle produce less milk. However millet and milk go together in the Tuareg diet, as one of their proverbs says: *"Nothing better to remain young as a millet porridge accompanied by milk, a nice light tunic, a beautiful camel saddle"*¹⁸. The meat is also consumed, but on exceptional occasions (religious holidays, births, weddings, VIPs guests); consumption of wild fruits is also practiced.

3.4 THEIR SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The Tuareg society is composed of several groups, each with a status. A worrying category for this study is that of Bellah who are the servants and slaves of the Tuareg and are often dark skin Tuaregs.

¹² Maman Saley, « Le cas du Niger : les touareg du passé au futur », *Civilisations* .En ligne. <http://civilisations.revues.org/1568#text> (page consultée le 1 décembre 2013)

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Bernus, Edmond. 1992. Être Touareg au Mali. En ligne http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/pleins_textes_7/divers2/36891.pdf (page consultée le 14 novembre 2013)

¹⁵ Bernus Edmond. 1980. Famines et sécheresses chez les Touaregs Sahéliens, les nourritures de substitution. En ligne. http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/pleins_textes_5/b_fdi_08-09/10012.pdf (page consultée le 1 décembre 2013)

¹⁶ Bernus Edmond. 2002. Laits Touaregs Usages et symboles . En ligne. http://www.mondeberbere.com/culture/bernus/touaregs_lait.pdf (page consultée le 1 décembre 2013)

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Bernus Edmond. 1980. Famines et sécheresses chez les Touaregs Sahéliens, les nourritures de substitution. En ligne. http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/pleins_textes_5/b_fdi_08-09/10012.pdf (page consultée le 1 décembre 2013)

There is a noble class, dependent groups, religious leaders, merchants and Iklans or Bellah. In addition, it is not acceptable for a Touareg of a lower social status to show his/her face to a Tuareg of a higher social status¹⁹. In addition, the stratification is quite complicated, because in each tribe or clan, there are different castes.

3.5 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN TUAREG SOCIETY

Tuareg women have a unique and special place in the society: "Tuareg society is matriarchal and widely matrilineal. A code of conduct has been established to preserve the Tuareg women's rights, "Asshak". This code refers to property rights, inheritance, premarital and post marital behavior and education"²⁰. In addition, they are involved in the processing of milk, butter making, preparation of animal skins, clothes, collecting firewood and water²¹. After wedding, the Tuareg women acquire ownership of the tent (which is usually built by a woman) and all its contents even when divorce, they keep all the couple's property.

All these characteristics of Tuareg show that they are individuals who have a traditional way of life and an intrinsic culture that are to be sufficiently taken into account by the UNHCR in its mission to assist and protect refugees of ZAI.

¹⁹ A profile of a Tuareg population to facilitate the identification of possible protection concerns during displacement. UNHCR Niger (Protection Department) (2013)

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

4. THE SPHERE PROJECT, HUMANITARIAN CHARTER AND MINIMUM STANDARDS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

4.1 THE ORIGINS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sphere Project was established in 1997²² by a group of humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the UNHCR and the International Movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent in order to improve the quality of their actions when responding to humanitarian disasters and be held to account. Previously, there were no defined standards and all humanitarian actors were involved according to their own criteria, which undermine the effectiveness of their interventions.

4.2 THE 2 ESSENTIAL CONVENTIONS OF THE SPHERE PROJECT²³

The implementation of Sphere standards is governed by two important aspects for people concerned:

- *People affected by a disaster or armed conflict have the right to live in dignity and therefore receive the support they need*
- *Everything possible must be done to alleviate human suffering resulting from a disaster or armed conflict.*

4.3 THE DEFINITION OF ESSENTIAL STANDARDS, MINIMUM STANDARDS, KEY ACTIONS AND KEY INDICATORS

The Sphere Project makes the following distinctions²⁴:

The essential standards: are qualitative and specify the level to be attained during a humanitarian intervention.

Minimum standards: are also qualitative in nature, they specify the minimum levels to be attained in a humanitarian intervention.

The key actions: are suggested to reach the minimum standard.

Key indicators: serve as "signals" to indicate whether or not a standard has been reached.

The essential standards and minimum standards cover four groups of activities:

Water supply and sanitation and hygiene promotion

Food security and nutrition

²² <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/qu-est-ce-que-le-projet-sphere/> (page consultée le 16 novembre 2013)

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

Shelter, habitats and Non Food Items (NFIs)

Health Action

The education sector is not covered by the Sphere Project (for now being integrated with other activities) and to study the issue of humanitarian standards in education in the ZAI, the author is based on the standards of the INEE (International Network for Education in Emergencies).

INEE is a network of more than 10,000 individual members living and working in more than 170 countries. The INEE members are practitioners working for national and international NGOs, UN agencies, Ministries of Education and members of governments, donors, students, teachers and researchers working in the field of education in emergencies²⁵.

²⁵<http://www.ineesite.org/fr/qui-sommes-nous> (page consultée le 16 novembre 2013)

5. THE APPLICATION OF THE SPHERE STANDARDS IN THE HOSTING AREA OF INTIKANE

5.1 MINIMUM STANDARDS IN THE SECTORS OF WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROMOTION

A) Standard 1 on water supply: access to water and in quantity

All people have safe and equitable access to water in sufficient quantity to meet the needs in terms of drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene. The public water points are located close enough to the households to allow them to use the minimum amount of water required ²⁶

Key indicators

The average amount of water used for drinking, cooking of food and personal hygiene in a household is at least 15 liters per person and per day

The maximum distance from any household item to the nearest water point is 500 meters

The measures taken by UNHCR

In ZAI, UNHCR and its partner AKARASS have put in place bladders (Fig. 1) with a capacity of 10,000 liters which are refueled every day in the 4 districts of the region.



Fig. 1

The situation with regard to the UNHCR's provisions

Despite the ZAI's access at about 99.5%²⁷, to a source of drinking water, boreholes / taps, a survey indicated an assessment of the amount of water available to 69.4%²⁸ and in our interviews with refugees, they said they needed 10 to 30 minutes walking to get water. According to them, the bladders are remote and not sufficient enough.

For the indicator of 15L of water per day, it applies in part to the population of Intikane. Indeed, **this indicator does not include water consumption by animals**, despite the establishment of a borehole for livestock by the UNHCR located 7km from the ZAI. Also, it is noted that in the ZAI, the population is nomadic and

²⁶ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard1-sur-l-approvisionnement-en-eau-acces-a-l-eau-et-quantite/> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

²⁷ Seke Kouassi de Syg, « Enquête sur le profil démographique, économique et socioculturel des réfugiés maliens au Niger » Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) Yaoundé, Cameroun, 2013

²⁸ Ibid

composed largely of farmers/pastors for whom livestock represent everything. For example, the owners of cattle see their livestock as part of their entire family. "Losing an animal is like losing a child," according to a refugee interviewed.

For water consumption by animals (large and small ruminants), we analyzed and crosschecked the 3 following data: water consumption with big owners of cattle, water consumption at the household level with some small ruminants and water consumption of households having no cattle.

a) Water consumption among big owners of cattle

All cattle owners do not live with their cattle in the ZAI. Some moved to 3-5 km out of the area with their herds, others live in the area, but their animals are in the bush with a breeder, the eldest son or a family member. According to these interviewees (20 in total) consumption for each member of the family varies between 8 and 10 liters per day including needs for drinking, food preparation, tea and others.

At the level of animals, per capita consumption is as follows:

Donkeys: 20 L of water per day during cold period and 25-30 L per hot period.

Camels: They can spend 4-5 days without drinking at the borehole. They need 5-6 X 20 L per day.

The cows: at this level there is a distinction between those of Fulani and Tuareg. For the Fulani, they need 5-6 X 20 L every other day (for the Fulani population who send graze their cows).

As for the Tuareg, the need is 4-5 X 20 L per day. It is also noted that their herds return each evening (cows and camels) around the camp and they leave their small ruminants grazing).

The small ruminants (sheep, goats): 10 L per day during cold and 15-20 L in hot period. These consumptions range from 5 to 10 L either in hot or cold period

b) Households with a few small ruminants

These people live in the hosting area with their animals, close to their homes. The livestock is generally composed of carts donkeys, sheep and goats. Poultry is rare in Intikane and found only in two households. In addition, unlike the large big owners who do not live in the ZAI, small owners say they use water for bathing.

For the calculation of consumption at this level, 10 households were interviewed. They consume 12 liters per day per person.

c) The water consumption of households with no cattle

Those interviewed say they use 15 liters per day per person. This consumption includes drinking, making tea, cooking, washing and laundry.

In conclusion, for the 15 liters of water per day, we can say that the Sphere standard is valid for human consumption with people who do not have animals, those with 2-5 heads of small ruminants and big cattle owners.

However, the **consumption varies depending on the possession of animals or not, hence the need to review this indicator depending on whether or not a person possesses an animal.** Also, the critical problem for these populations has to do with the distance of water points and the lack of jerry cans in sufficient numbers.

The indicator of 500 meters to the water point is geometrically variable in the ZAI. Indeed, the refugees are dispersed from each others and are not grouped as in a camp. Sometimes they even change the location of their shelters. Those who are close to the water sources have no problem with the distance, contrawise many are afar.

During the interviews with refugees and observations at water points, the author noted that people come from a distance to fetch water either with their donkeys (fig. 1), on which they carry the water bottles, or with manual carts (fig. 2), or children who drag water bottles with a rope (fig. 3).



People with the means to carry water from the bladder to their tents do not consider the distance as a barrier, however not everyone has in the ZAI animals go to fetch water (20 %²⁹). The author realized during his talks with some refugees, that among them there are those who pay 50 CFA (XOF) the water bottle to carts owners to fetch water for them, and often these are people with special needs (blind, disabled, widow with young children).

²⁹ Ibid

Recommendations

In order to cope with the problem of water supply, two solutions are recommended that can be implemented and met the consent of the refugees:

1) Provide 10 manual carts per neighborhood to be managed by designated persons (vote) by the locals. These people in exchange for using the carts for their own needs will bring water to people who cannot move to fetch it. For the western area, which is high, focus should be made on carts pulled by donkeys given that it is a sloping area and it is not obvious, for having myself experienced it, to push a cart filled with water cans in these conditions.

2) Increase the density of the water bladder. It is clear that grouping per affinity is made at the neighborhood level and around bladders. In fact, despite the proximity of a water source, some refugees refuse to go, therefore advocacy work needs to be done in this regard.

B) Standard 3: on water supply: Facilities

People affected by disaster have adequate facilities to collect, store and use sufficient water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene, and drinking water should remain safe until consumption³⁰

Key indicators

- ❖ Each household has at least two clean water containers with a capacity of 10-20 liters, one being used for storage and other for transport.
- ❖ Containers for the collection and storage of water are provided with a neck or a cover in the case of buckets and other without risk storage containers, in order to ensure the safety and handling.

The measures taken by the UNHCR

There has been a distribution of NFI (Non Food Item / Non-food) in November by UNHCR. During this distribution, 10 L water bottles and buckets have been distributed to only 1,408 households of refugees.

³⁰ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard3-sur-l-alimentation-et-l-eau-installations/> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

The situation with regard to the UNHCR measures

In ZAI, the lack of jerry cans reached 97.0³¹ % in terms of the percentage of unmet needs and would be correlated by refugees to the lack of available water.

At water points and households, containers of 10 L (Fig. 1) provided by UNHCR are not used and are practically nonexistent in the ZAI. Refugees at Intikane use 20 L cans (Fig. 2) which are much stronger (often cans are dragged on the ground by a rope); the distance from the habitat to the water point also plays a role and they prefer to return home with the maximum amount, which limits the back and forth for supplies. Moreover, ZAI is in an arid and desert environment where temperatures can reach 50 degrees which contribute to the deterioration of the plastic cans distributed by UNHCR.

The 20L cans used by the population in Intikane cost 500 CFA at the town market of Tahoua (distance de 130 km from Intikane) and thus buying them locally would be cheaper for UNHCR instead of ordering from an external provider. In the determination of the number of Jerry cans, must be taken into account the size of families which have on average 6 members in the ZAI.



Recommendations

Following these observations, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Increase the storage capacity of the cans distributed because of the problem of distance between population and water sources
- 2) Select the most resistant jerry cans suitable to the mode of transport used and the high temperatures
- 3) Promote local supply of jerry cans, which will benefit the UNHCR's costs and better meet the needs of the inhabitants of the ZAI.

³¹ Seke Kouassi de Syg, « Enquête sur le profil démographique, économique et socioculturel des réfugiés maliens au Niger » Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) Yaoundé, Cameroun, 2013

C) Standard 2: on excreta disposal: appropriate and sufficient toilets

Those affected by disaster have a sufficient number of suitable and acceptable toilets, sufficiently close to their homes so they can be accessed quickly and safely at any time of day or night³²

Key indicators

- ❖ The toilets are designed, constructed and located to meet the following conditions:
 - They are designed to be safely used by all segments of the population, including children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with disabilities.
 - They are located so as to minimize the risks to the safety of users, especially women and girls at any time of day or night.
 - They provide a degree of privacy that meets users' standards
 - Twenty people maximum are to use each toilet
 - Lockable toilet from inside and separated for women and men are available in public places
 - The toilets are located more than 50 meters from habitats

The measures taken by UNHCR

UNHCR and its partner AKARASS set up first aid latrines (Fig. 1) which are criticized by refugees (the population of Intikane does not normally use latrines) because not only they emit obnoxious odors, but also fill up quickly, do not preserve the intimacy and are sensitive to wind. Moreover, in the Tuareg culture, it is not acceptable to be viewed by family members or encounter someone while going to the latrines.



1)

³² <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard2-sur-l-evacuation-des-excrements-des-toilettes-appropriees-et-en-nombre-suffisant/> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

The Tuareg is a population that has a habit of defecating in the nature, but during my fieldwork, while questioning the elderly, women, boys and girls, the population of the ZAI has made it clear to the author that they wanted permanent latrines as Agando and Chinouarene.

These toilets have the advantage of preserving their privacy (we do not say it enough, in the Tuareg culture; it is unthinkable to go to the toilet in the eyes of his entourage). They would also ensure that men and women do not meet and vice-versa, or when a man is in a latrine, a woman washing in the shower next latrine. The choice between permanent toilets and the establishment of a defined area for defecation and for safety concerns as well as the use of biodegradable powder to cover the defecation was offered and immediately refused.

In ZAI, the Tuareg population is ready to use latrines, which is a significant step forward, especially as everything indicates that refugees from ZAI are there for the long term despite the signs of political stabilization and security in Mali.

On the issue of latrines adds those of the showers, because they have the same type of construction and are often side by side and have the same disadvantages. For showers and latrines, women explained that they can only bath during the night or early morning around 4am; because the plastic sheet covering the latrines and shower threatens to detach by the wind while they are inside. In addition, sometimes there are snakes and insects. Moreover, there are risks of SGBVA (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence) for girls as well as environmental risk because very often the water is not drained and stagnates (Fig. 2). As a result, refugees have built their own showers (Fig. 3), but without waste water drainage system, whereby the risk of disease and contamination of soils.

2)



3)



Recommendations

In order to meet the standard 2 on excreta disposal, the author recommends:

- 1) The establishment of permanent latrines and separate showers for men and women in larger quantities because presently the number of latrines in the ZAI is insufficient (114 in total), especially as the populations of Intikane have been there for some time.
- 2) The UNHCR and its partner AKARASS must urgently install the permanent latrines at school. School has begun and it is found that children defecate near the classrooms. Annex 3 on the drainage (Sphere manual) could be implemented: *1 latrine toilet / 30 girls, 1 latrine toilets for 60 boys*³³.
- 3) The UNHCR can also designate in each neighborhood responsible for showers and toilets who will sensitize users to maintain them clean for the next person after each passage in the facilities. Moreover, it is necessary to think of people with special needs and therefore establish in each neighborhood a community service that could take care of these people.

5.2 THE MINIMUM STANDARDS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

A. Standard 3: on food security - Livelihoods: access to the markets

*The safe access for people affected by a disaster to markets products and services as producers, consumers and traders is protected and promoted*³⁴

Key indicators

- ❖ Interventions are designed to support the recovery of the market, either directly or by encouraging local trade through cash distribution programs and / or vouchers
- ❖ All target populations enjoy a safe and unrestricted access to goods, services and systems on the market during the program

The measures taken by UNHCR

The UNHCR has facilitated the establishment of a market at Intikane (Fig 1, 2, 3, 4). Some traders are among the refugee or returned population of Intikane, the populations of Telemces and other surrounding markets.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard3-sur-la-securite-alimentaire-moyens-de-subsistance-acces-aux-marches/> (page consulte le 2 décembre 2013)



The UNHCR has fulfilled the standard by establishing a market in Intikane which can be further developed while allowing better response to specific dietary needs of the Tuareg. This is a population that consumes milk, dates, tea, meat and these are the foods that I found mainly on the market stalls in Intikane.

During a focus group with Tuareg refugees, concerning the assessment of WFP distributions, they declared that they like the rice (food they do not want to be taken away from them).

In ZAI, 87%³⁵ of the refugees sell part of the food they are distributed to buy other food items, which is not a new phenomenon UNHCR and WFP are facing in their missions worldwide.

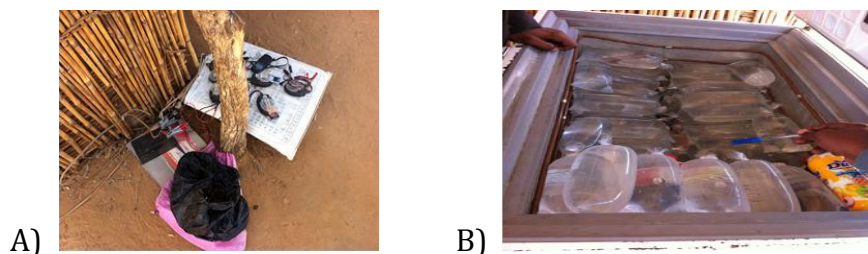
Recommendations

In order to develop the full potential of the market of Intikane this is packed with some ingenuity such as charging cell phones with solar panels (Fig. 1), and the presence of a freezer (Fig. 2):

1) The UNHCR could implement the cash voucher which is already implemented in the camp of Mangaizé; it would allow refugees to choose the products they want to consume given their food specificities. In addition, it could benefit the local Ekinawan population (which already has the borehole for the animals) and some traders in the

³⁵ Seke Kouassi de Syg, « Enquête sur le profil démographique, économique et socioculturel des réfugiés maliens au Niger » Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) Yaoundé, Cameroun, 2013

town of Tahoua that have the capacity to meet, in terms of volume and supply, the food needs of the population of the ZAI. Regarding the people with special needs, a system of community cart that can take them to the market should be put in place.



2) Another complementary action to the cash voucher is to provide small ruminants (sheep, goats) to poor families i.e. in culture Tuareg, those who do not have animals (International Relief targeted these families within the ZAI). This would allow these families to have milk, cheese, meat and develop a breeding. People with livestock have dairy foods.

5.3. MINIMUM STANDARDS ON SHELTER, HABITAT AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

A) Standard 3: on shelter and habitat: covered living spaces

The populations affected by a disaster have sufficient covered living space to ensure thermal comfort, ventilation and protection against the rigors of the climate and to ensure respect for the privacy, security and health, while allowing exercising basic family life activities and subsistence activities³⁶.

Key indicators

- ❖ All persons affected by the disaster have initially a minimum covered area of 3.5 m² per person
- ❖ All shelter solutions and all materials meet the recognized technical and performance standards and are culturally acceptable

³⁶ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard3-sur-les-abris-et-l-habitat-espaces-de-vie-couverts/>
(page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

The measures taken by UNHCR

The UNHCR and its partner Luxembourg Red Cross distributed tents and plastic sheet shaded fabrics to reduce interior heat. Relief aailed 1,200 shelters for the refugees in Intikane; for the Red Cross, 500 shelters in total were distributed and constructed. In ZAI, 840 shelters, of which 200 built and 640 distributed. A stock of 110 shelters is still available on the site.

The quantity of shelter in Intikane is considered insufficient and of medium and bad quality, 45%³⁷ and 49.9%³⁸ by the refugees. Thus, the UNHCR does not completely fulfill the Sphere standard on shelters. Firstly, **the key indicator of 3.5 m² per person does not apply to the population of the ZAI because on the one hand the households consist on average of 6 people.** During the distribution, the UNHCR and Luxembourg Red Cross have not sufficiently taken into account the disparity in household and provided 1 shelter kit per family. Often in the same family, there are blended families and sometimes in-laws do not want to be in the same tent as the spouses of their children and from the age of 15-16 years old, especially boys, children must have their own tents and not be in the same tent as their parents. **It should also be considered that in the Tuareg population, there may be several households within the same household.**

Concerning the quality of shelters, women who, in Tuareg culture are those who pitch tents, commented that the tents provided by UNHCR were not appropriate for several reasons:

The tents are made of plastic sheet and given the high temperatures, it's hot in the tents even if they are open on both sides and when there is wind the noise scares away nearby animals.

The plastic sheet is only efficient on cold and rainy seasons to retain water (July-September). Plastic sheet shelters are indeed efficient in Congo as an example and not in the desert of Niger.

As for the temperature problem in the tents, the UNHCR and the Luxembourg Red Cross provided canvas shade to put on tents (Fig.1) but it only attenuates the heat. In addition, to be installed, there must be a small space between the canvas and the roof of the tent and should not be placed directly on the plastic sheet (Fig. 1). In case of wind, as is often the case in ZAI, canvas shade tears (Fig. 2).

³⁷ Seke Kouassi de Syg, « Enquête sur le profil démographique, économique et socioculturel des réfugiés maliens au Niger » Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) Yaoundé, Cameroun, 2013

³⁸ Ibid



1)



2)

Recommendations

- 1) For the distribution of shelter, the UNHCR should consult each household regardless of the number of households in the same family
- 2) The UNHCR could sensitize refugees on placing the canvas over the cover and remove it in case of wind.
- 3) The UNHCR may provide sheet shelters made of waterproof fabrics as is the case in this photo (Fig. 3). This shelter is a better match to the type of shelters of the Tuareg and during multiple interviews the people of the ZAI insisted on this point.



3)

- 4) To better meet the standard on shelters, the UNHCR should as much as possible provide adequate shelters for this population and not standard shelters.
- 5) The UNHCR could provide the people of the ZAI with the materials with which they used to build their shelters: wood, headboard, sorghum stalks and fabric sheet fabric. It would be an economical solution for UNHCR and could involve the local market in the supply of raw materials that would be used in the manufacture of tents. Agreements could be made with local merchants to provide the rope, wood, fabric, etc.

B) Standard 3: on Food items: kitchen wares and cutlery

The populations affected by disasters have access to culturally appropriate items to prepare and store food, as well as for cooking, eating and drinking³⁹.

Key indicators

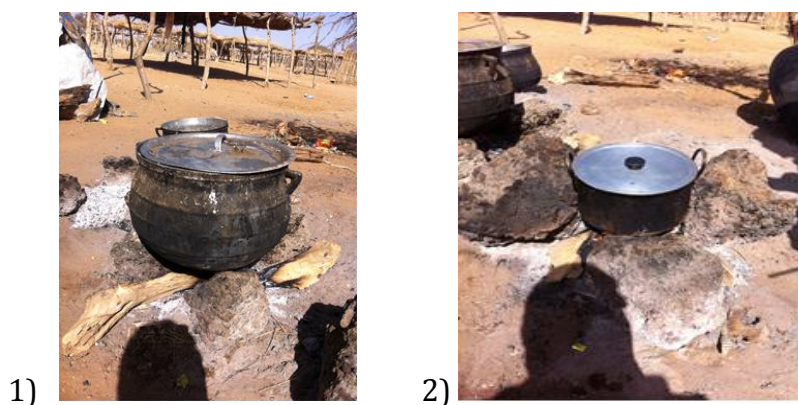
- ❖ Each household or group of four to five people has two family sized pots fitted with handles and lids, a basin for preparing or serving food, a kitchen knife and two serving spoons.
- ❖ All persons affected by the disaster have at their disposal a plate, spoon or other cutlery and a mug or cup.

The measures taken by UNHCR

The UNHCR distributed kitchenware in December 2013. These items were found unsuitable by refugees who use firewood for cooking. Also, according to refugees, cooking pots are considered too small and not durable.

Recommendations

1) In order to meet the standard of food items, the **UNHCR should provide pots that are culturally appropriate to refugees of ZAI**. During my observations and discussions with the women, I realized that they used traditional pots (Fig. 1) which are more resistant and of greater capacity than the one of the UNHCR (Fig. 2).



2. In addition, in the development of the market of Intikane, the UNHCR could implement the cash voucher for NFI.

³⁹ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard3-sur-les-articles-non-alimentaires-ustensiles-de-cuisine-et-couverts/> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

5.5 THE MINIMUM STANDARDS ON HEALTH ACTION

A) 1 Standard on health systems: provision of health services

Members of the population affected by disaster have equal access to safe, effective and quality health services that are standardized and follow accepted guidelines and protocols⁴⁰..

Indicators

Medical facilities are sufficient to meet the basic health needs of the entire population affected by the disaster:

- ❖ A basic health unit / 10 000
- ❖ A health center / 50 000
- ❖ A district hospital or a rural hospital / 250 000
- ❖ More 10 patient or maternity beds
- ❖ The rate of utilization of medical facilities are of 2 to 4 new consultations / person / year in the affected population and more than one consultation / person / year in rural and dispersed populations

The measures taken by UNHCR

The UNHCR has established a hospital in ZAI, it is centralized, but the refugees do not go to the hospital due to lack of confidence in modern medicine. Furthermore, the ambulance which is often shuttling between ZAI and Intikane is not always available. Finally, there is no veterinary or ophthalmologist.

Recommendations

1) As a first recommendation to be integrated into the activities of Livelihood, **it is the consideration of animals, because the population in the ZAI is a population composed of pastors for whom livestock is the first priority well before human life.** The UNHCR should establish a standard for the animals, as an example: *Each animal must be vaccinated in accordance with the standards of vaccinations taking into account the periods.*

As key indicators: *All the newly born animals and those present in the area should be vaccinated in a short time.*

All animals must have a vaccination and an identification number.

⁴⁰ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/fr/standard1-sur-les-systemes-de-sante-fourriture-des-services-de-sante/> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

A permanent veterinary center in Intikane composed of a veterinarian and a veterinary nurse should be put in place.

2) With regard to the problem of distance to the medical center, which is not a concern from the perspective of refugees from ZAI, it must be taken into account. The UNHCR could set up in each neighborhood of Intikane a system of cart and communication under the guidance of leaders (1 man and 1 woman) chosen by the people and in case of problems will communicate directly with the hospital's staff, sending either the cart or ambulance to avoid wasting time traveling to the hospital to call for help. Concerning the ambulance, it must be permanent in ZAI and not commute with Tahoua. It is primarily intended for the needs of the people of ZAI and the UNHCR should be able to evacuate a person by ambulance from ZAI at any time. For the routing of patients to the hospital, priority would be given to women in the ambulance for privacy issues (cultural).

3) An ophthalmologist must be present in Intikane because among vulnerable people, visual impairment is the most dominant

4) Concerning the lack of confidence in modern medicine, emphasis must be put on raising awareness through pictures, cartoons drawn by children in schools (e.g. during health classes) on medicine from community networks that could help change the idea that refugees have of modern medicine

5.6 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION

A) Standard 1: Access and Learning Environment: Equal access

All people have access to relevant and quality education opportunities⁴¹

Key actions

- ❖ The structures and learning sites are accessible to all
- ❖ Sufficient resources are available to ensure continuity, equity and quality of educational activities
- ❖ Through education and training, the local communities are more and more involved to ensure the rights of all children, youth and adult to relevant and quality education (see guidance note)

⁴¹<http://www.ineesite.org/en/minimum-standards/handbook> (page consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

The measures taken by UNHCR

A school was created in partnership with UNICEF, IRC, HSF and DREP. The school began on November 8, 2013 and there are more students than expected, the number of children continues to grow (700-800). However, in the interviews with the refugees and through observation, the author noted that a large number of children were not in school. In addition, there is a low rate of school attendance of children aged 7-15 years, 11.6%⁴² and the main reasons are⁴³: housework or helping parents 36.2%, keeping of animals / pasture 13.8%, lack of teachers 12.5%, disability of children 3% and the distance to school 2.1%.

Firstly, talking with parents, students and teachers, the author realized that there is a problem of school dropout, many students come to school and go home at break time and never return. They often go to fetch food, do housework etc.

Recommendations

1) In order to address the problem of school dropouts, **the UNHCR should establish a system of school canteen, though WFP lunch is already included in the distribution**, it would keep children in school and prevent them from returning home. In addition, at a meeting on the subject with UNICEF, they were interested in setting up a system of snack during the afternoon. As supplement to these actions, there could be the establishment of a system of carts in each neighborhood that would take the children to school. Parents must be sensitized on the need to send their children to school and there may be a committee of parents, to be involved.

2) To help children with disabilities, there may be assistance to best meet their needs.

3) For the care of animals, this is devoted to the Bellah children, but under the supervision of the eldest son of the owner of the livestock. In detail, the livestock is monitored by the Fulani herders and the Bellah children doing housework (mount the camp, prepare tea, cooking) and it is a kind of education for them so that they learn to graze animals. It is certain that for cultural reasons that persist, the UNHCR will eradicate this phenomenon, but measures of sensitization should be put in place so that there is less Bellah children missing school.

4) for the issues of social stratification that are present in the school, the UNHCR could develop education courses for Human rights for 15-30 min on respect for one's neighbor, plays that would be performed by children and based on tales and stories that deal with Tuareg opening to one another.

⁴² Seke Kouassi de Syg, « Enquête sur le profil démographique, économique et socioculturel des réfugiés maliens au Niger » Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD) Yaoundé, Cameroun, 2013

⁴³ Ibid

B) Standard 1 on teachers and other education personnel: Recruitment and Selection

A sufficient number of teachers and other education personnel member are recruited through a participatory and transparent process, based on selection criteria that take into account diversity and equity⁴⁴.

Key actions

- ❖ The number of teachers and other education personnel recruited and deployed is sufficient to avoid having too packed classrooms
- ❖ Measures taken by the UNHCR
- ❖ The UNHCR and DREP recruited teachers in insufficient number and those recruited have no means of travel to get to Intikane. The teachers living in Telemces borrow motorbikes from relatives as means of transport.

Recommendations

It is necessary to recruit more teachers and consider creating a guest house for them in Ekinawan in order to reduce the distance and have a vehicle that can carry them up to the school.

⁴⁴ [http://www.ineesite.org/en/minimum-standards/handbook\(page](http://www.ineesite.org/en/minimum-standards/handbook(page) (consultée le 2 décembre 2013)

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the application of Sphere standards in ZAI is applicable in some sectors and not in others, and given the specificities of the Hosting area and its nomadic and agro-pastoral populations, innovative solutions are necessary.

For the standards on the water and sanitation sector: water consumption by animals must be taken into account, the average consumption of 15 liters of water per day is also well maintained both with big livestock owners, households with small ruminants and those with no animals.

For water supply, the distance problem arises for people who do not have animals and the people with special needs; cart solution could solve this problem and the UNHCR should provide 20-25 L containers to the residents of the ZAI. Permanent latrines should be established as the population of the ZAI supports this initiative.

In terms of food, the UNHCR fulfills the Sphere standard, but it can be strengthened, in particular through the development of the market of Intikane.

The Standards of shelter and NFI are not met and must take into account the cultural specificities of the population by providing adequate items to their environment and their way of life.

For the health sector, the distance problem is most relevant at the level of compliance with standards, but the ambulance and the system of neighborhood carts can help solve the problem.

Finally, the standards of education are also concerned by the problem of distance and especially food, because children cannot eat lunch at school; therefore, the establishment of a canteen and a system of carts for collecting children are essential to keep them in school.

The population of the ZAI is gradually getting sedentarized, but wants to keep its nomadic and agro-pastoral lifestyle. The concept of ZAI addresses both aspects, but at the Sphere standards level, the UNHCR can and must succeed in a way to adapt them to the people of ZAI.

We will finish by this sentence of the Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Karl Steinacker that summarizes the challenges of the UNHCR in relation to the implementation of the ZAR: *This is a laboratory, and it is too early to claim a victory. But we think frankly speaking that The Many trade-offs are worthwhile because, most importantly, this is what people want.*

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