

Quarterly Factsheet: Urbanization Project

OCTOBER -
DECEMBER 2018

Overview:

The Urbanization project is an original and innovative project, launched by UNHCR and the European Union Trust Fund in 2017, for a period of 3 years. The project aims to facilitate the transition of operations from humanitarian interventions, towards '**Development**', working on the logic of strengthening the **nexus** between the two.

The project has been developed on the basis of a model which simultaneously ensures legal access to land for housing for refugees, while revitalising the local economy which has been deeply affected by the Boko Haram conflict in the region. The general objective is to create an environment which is favourable to entrepreneurship, to the development of competencies and the creation of employment throughout the region of Diffa.

With a particular focus on the process of decentralization, the project supports the ownership of the locally elected authorities of the process of urban planning including the creation of land parcels, as well as legal land ownership for displaced and host populations. The project also strengthens their capacities in terms of resource mobilisation.

The project contributes to stability in the region, addressing the integration and absorption capacity of the host population, as well as the economic stability and peaceful coexistence.

Overall Targets (by 2020):

- 1) Provide **legal access to land for housing to 6,000** vulnerable displaced and host beneficiary households (land parcels of 200m²);
- 2) **Construct of 4,000 social houses** for the most vulnerable in the region, in 7 communes;
- 3) Ensure access to training and skills in various construction techniques to 2,000 people;
- 4) Support the local authorities in managing urban development;
- 5) Strengthen the public water provision systems in the 7 target communes, supporting the national initiative to expand the public water distributions network.

Key Dates:

- **November 2018:** Visit to the urbanization site of Diffa with the Mayor of Toumour, the next commune of intervention for 2019.
- **November 2018:** Article in 'Le Point Afrique' mentioning the urbanization project : <http://unhcniger.tumblr.com/post/180172710699/un-projet-durbanisation>

Partnerships and Coordination:

The 'Pilot Committee' is under the leadership of the Conseil Regional of Diffa and is responsible for the overall coordination of the project. This committee includes the various communal authorities and Regional Directorates present in Diffa, as well as the locally elected Mayors. It also includes the UNHCR and all partners working on the project.

UNHCR is working with two key implementing partners for this project, CISP and APBE. The microfinance institute ASUSU is involved in facilitating the payment of workers employed through the project.

The complementarity between this intervention and the PARCA project (Project to Support Refugees and Host Community) financed by the World Bank, is strong. This complementarity will ensure activities focusing on economic opportunities and the strengthening of infrastructure.

- **More than 700 jobs** created during the reporting period following trainings at the sites in Diffa, Chetimari and N'Guigmi
- **325 people** have access to the formal economy and financial services thanks to accounts with the microfinance institution ASUSU and the BIA bank since the beginning of the project
- **560 houses** under construction at the Diffa urbanization site (**191** completed)
- **216 houses** under construction at the urbanization site of Chetimari (**108** completed)
- **302 houses** completed at the urbanization site of N'Guigmi

Progress:

Economic opportunities:

On the various sites, there is a keen enthusiasm amongst the population to benefit from the various employment opportunities and trainings. The project cannot respond to the high level of demand. However, around the sites, new activities are also developing, to respond to the needs of the workers (small shops, restaurants, water selling etc.). The local business people are regularly selling to the workers on credit, which is then reimbursed on the day they receive their salary. This is a strong sign of their confidence in the system. A scrap metal workshop have also been developed thanks to the project. Those working in the unit are not directly included in the construction teams benefitting from the project however they have organised themselves into an autonomous unite of 25 youth who work there daily.



Community Mobilisation in Diffa / Chetimari / N'Guigmi

Regular meetings with local leaders and community mobilizers are organized at the 3 sites. Sensitization sessions on the occupation of land parcels and houses, the construction of traditional latrines and social cohesion are organized every month.



Fati (2nd from right) is 33 years old. She is a Nigerian refugees. She currently lives at the Diffa urbanization site, and is awaiting the completion of her new house. "I was forced to flee my village because of Boko Haram. I lost my young baby as we fled...Here I am happy, with my husband and my other children. I have no intention to leave our new home".

Challenges:

- Speeding up the **construction** of houses: The process of the construction of houses in 2018 was significantly delayed. Only 50% of the target for 2018 was achieved. UNHCR has developed a new approach for 2019 based on the logic of "one site - one partner". The number of implementation partners will increase from 2 to 4.
- **Sale of land parcels** which are not used as part of the project (social parcels): the local Mayors of the various communes are facing difficulties in the process of selling the "non-social" parcels. The process of identifying the parcels on the overall plans for the communes requires expertise which are not always available locally. Support will be provided to improve this situation in 2019.



Urbanization sites of Chetimari (left) and N'Guigmi (right)

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(EUTF)

