

Niger



POPULATION OF CONCERN

380,135



* Government of Niger official figures.

** UNHCR figures.

KEY INDICATORS

2,782

Refugees evacuated temporarily from Libya to Niger as part of the ETM (Emergency Transit Mechanism) from November 2017 – April 2019

1,559

Persons profiled by UNHCR in Agadez seeking asylum

70,305

Persons internally displaced in the Tillaberi and Tahoua regions



The urbanization projects in both Tillaberi/Taohua and Diffa, remain a main objective of UNHCR. (April 2019)

Operational Context

The key situations include:

- 1. The Mali situation:** began in 2012 with the outbreak of conflict in northern Mali. The regions of Tillaberi and Tahoua bordering Mali and hosting most of the Malian refugees are increasingly affected by insecurity and terrorism. A State of Emergency was declared in 2017, and extended and further expanded to areas bordering Burkina Faso at the end of 2018. There are currently 56,329 Malian refugees in Niger. The Government of Niger and UNHCR seek to accelerate the socio-economic integration of these refugees and the closure of the camps through urbanization by the end of 2020. An EU Trust Fund supported regional project as well as a GIZ supported project are supporting these efforts at local integration and development in Tillaberi and Tahoua regions.
- 2. The Nigeria situation:** began in 2013, with the arrival of the first Nigerian refugees across the border fleeing Boko Haram. The situation deteriorated with the first attacks on Niger territory in 2015. There are almost 250,000 displaced persons in the region (including 118,868 refugees, 104,288 IDPs, and 25,731 returnees). The majority live in spontaneous sites or with the local population, while UNHCR manages one refugee camp, with over 15,000 people. Since the beginning of 2019, the security situation has further deteriorated in the Diffa region, with secondary movements of around 20,000 people reported within the region at the end of the month of April. In 2018, despite a complex security context, all actors agreed on the need to engage strongly in development oriented interventions. The Government of Niger, UNHCR and the World Bank are working closely in that direction. Additionally, an EU Trust Fund supported project is ongoing in Diffa region, aimed at supporting economic recovery and long term solutions through urbanization and the construction of durable housing.
- 3. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** The displaced population in the Diffa region is extremely mixed, including refugees, IDPs and returnees. However, since the beginning of 2018, the IDP situation in Niger has become more complex with increasing insecurity in the regions of Tillaberi and Tahoua, bordering Mali. In 2018, and into 2019, attacks and insecurity in the area have resulted in the internal displacement of at least 70,305 people. Protection monitoring, advocacy, capacity building and coordinated efforts with humanitarian actors and the Government of Niger are ongoing to ensure an adequate response to the situation. In December 2018, the Government of Niger adopted a national law for the assistance and protection of IDPs based on the Kampala Convention.
- 4. Mixed Movements:** Niger is a major crossroads of migratory movements northwards towards Libya, Algeria and the Mediterranean. These migratory flows constitute mixed movements, including economic migrants as well as persons in need of international protection. In Agadez, UNHCR works to identify asylum seekers within the migratory flows and works with the government, as well as IOM and NGOs, to provide these persons with information and assistance. 1,559 persons, mostly Sudanese, are currently registered by UNHCR in Agadez. 22.5% are minors and 125 are unaccompanied or separated children. The majority are seeking asylum in Niger. The situation has become more complex, with the addition of downward movements from Libya and Algeria. A new Humanitarian Centre was built to accommodate and screen those seeking international protection in the second half of 2018. Over 1,300 asylum seekers are now accommodated at the centre, while the most vulnerable (about 200 people) are supported in 3 guesthouses in the city of Agadez.
- 5. Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM):** This unique programme aims to provide life-saving protection, assistance and long-term solutions to extremely vulnerable refugees trapped in detention in Libya, through temporary evacuation to Niger. The aim is to deliver protection and identify durable solutions, including resettlement for these refugees, who are predominantly Eritrean and Somali. Their profiles mainly include survivors of torture or other forms of violence in the country of origin and/or transit countries (e.g. Libya) and others with compelling protection needs. Many of them are unaccompanied children and women and girls at risk. To date, 2,782 persons have been evacuated to Niger – 1,521 of whom are still in Niamey while the others have already been resettled. With the support of the EU Trust Fund, a new transit centre is being built near Niamey to host the evacuees while they await resettlement to third countries. The first group of evacuated refugees were transferred there on the 4th of March 2019; by the end of April, more than 600 refugees had been transferred to the centre.

Security Situation

The regions of **Tahoua** and **Tillabéri** continue to be affected by non-state armed groups and inter-ethnic violence resulting in displacement of population in all the departments close to the Mali border. Movements of suspected extremists near the border have been reported, as well as incursions in villages, cattle thefts and market attacks. The situation along the border with Burkina Faso also deteriorated significantly with attacks targeting the defence and security forces (FDS) as well as the civilian population (schools burned, people abducted).

In response to the deterioration of the security situation, the 4 active military operations in the area (Dongo, G5 Sahel, Saki 2, and the joint Dongo / Barkhane operation) have increased their presence and began airborne operations. The State of Emergency, was prolonged for another 3 months in March. Due to the unstable security situation humanitarian workers are being urged to reduce missions/travel throughout the area, however, operations continue. Due to the increasing instability in the North of Burkina Faso, at the end of April 2018, a first group of 78 Burkinabe households (for a total of 446 individuals) arrived in Niger.

In **Tahoua and Maradi regions**, the deterioration of the security situation at the border with Nigeria is resulting in new cross border movements of Nigerians, arriving mostly in Maradi region. The displacements are the result of criminality and unrest in the Nigerian State of Zamfara. Activities of protection monitoring, assessment, and registration are ongoing. It is expected that the numbers of those arriving may increase.

In the **Diffa**, the security situation continued to deteriorate and the State of Emergency, declared since 2015, was extended for another 3 months. On a more positive note, authorities recently lifted the prohibition on fish and pepper commerce – which was stopped 4 years ago due to security reasons and majorly affected the economic situation in the area. Unfortunately, repeated suicide attacks, assaults, and incursions perpetrated by the Boko Haram (BH) during the month of March resulted in the secondary movements of up to 20,000 people within the region, mainly to the Diffa commune, as well as the site of Kindjani in the commune of Gueskerou.

The security situation continued to deteriorate in April. Particularly concerning, on the night of the April 9/10, 4 members of BH infiltrated the town of Diffa and carried out an attack, all wearing suicide vests, and targeting the gendarmes, while on April 26, BH attacked the MSF (Doctors Without Borders) compound in Maine-Soroa. As a result, the return of some refugees from Diffa to Damaska and Maiduguri in Nigeria has also been reported and is being closely monitored.

The security context in the **Agadez** region continues to remain stable, despite an increased in criminality and armed attacks – particularly on the main roads converging in and out of the city of Agadez, often linked to different kind of trafficking.

Key Developments & Achievements

- From the 11th-12th of April, a Tripartite meeting between the Government of Mali, Government of Niger and UNHCR regarding the voluntary repatriation of Malian refugees was organized in Niamey. Due to the fragile security situation in Mali, all ctors confirmed the intention not to promote voluntary repatriation, while continuing to provide assistance to those who choose to return to Mali.



12th Tripartite meeting between the Government of Mali, the Government of Niger and UNHCR (UNHCR, April 2019).

- On April 18, UNHCR welcomed the 23rd ETM flight with 163 people evacuated from Libya. This brings the number of total number of persons evacuated from Libya to 3,466 (2,782 to Niger, 415 to Italy, and 269 to the ETC in Romania). The newly arrived were transferred directly to the ETM centre in Hamdallaye (bringing the total population at the centre to approx 600). Currently Niger is hosting 1,521 evacuees (178 out of which are unaccompanied minors), while 1,248 were already resettled and 359 are pending for departure.
- In the Diffa region, as a result of important secondary movements due to insurgent attacks, UNHCR is working with the authorities and the humanitarian community on a voluntary relocation plan to Sayam Forage refugee camp for 10,000 persons.
- Due to the increasing insecurity in Burkina Faso, a first movement of Burkinabes in the Niger territory (Commune of Makalondi) was registered at the end of the month of April 2019. 78 households of 446 persons arrived in Niger and have been identified.

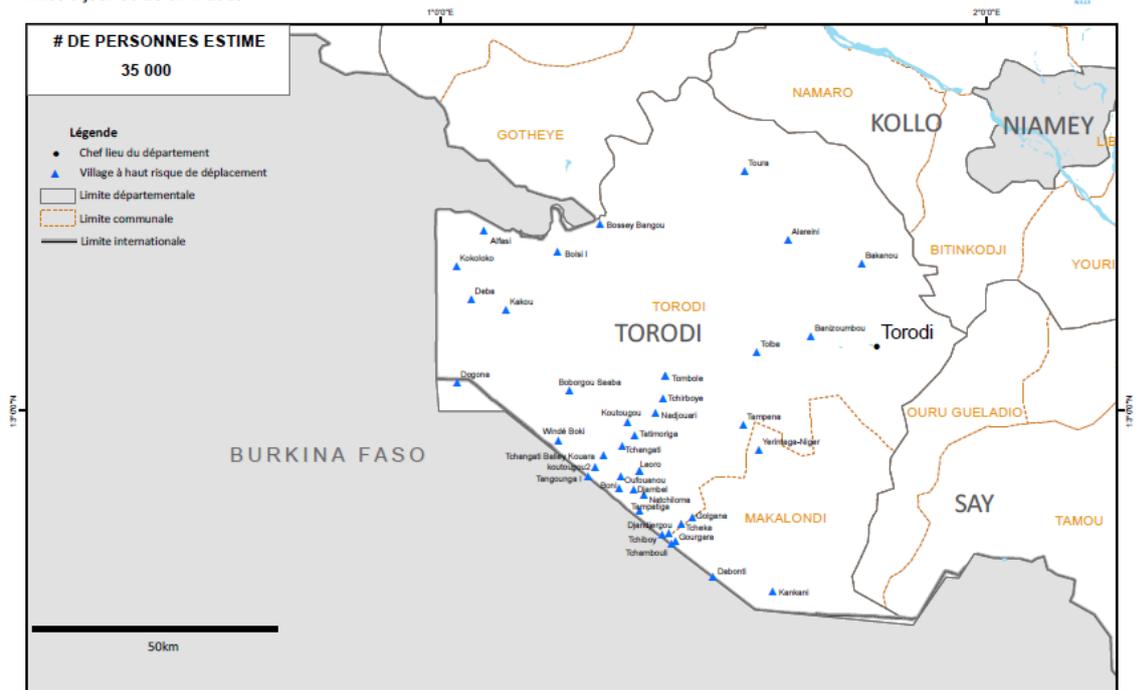


Protection Cluster

- The March 2019 cluster bulletin is available [here](#).
- The March 2019 protection monitoring analysis report for Tillaberi was published [here](#); while the 2019 protection monitoring analysis report for Tahoua is available [here](#).
- More than 70,305 people have been internally displaced in the Tillaberi and Tahoua regions as of the end of March.
- An evaluation of villages at risk of displacement in the communes of Torodi and Makalondi (in the Tillaberi region) resulted in the estimation of 35,000 people at risk in this area, bordering Burkina Faso.

NIGER: VILLAGES A HAUT RISQUE DE MOUVEMENT FRONTALIERS AVEC LE BURKINA FASO

Mise à jour du 25 avril 2019



Les noms et les limites utilisés sur cette carte n'impliquent aucune acceptation ou reconnaissance officielle du Cluster Protection.
Date de création: 25/4/2019 Source: Monitoring de protection Auteur: Cluster Protection Feedback: Valérie Svobodova, svobodov@unhcr.org Nom du fichier: NER_TILLABERI_VILLAGES_BANDE_BFA_AVRIIL_2019

Mali situation

- On April 3 and 10, UNHCR and the National Eligibility Commission (CNE) proceeded with the screening of the newly arrived population in the Abala refugee camp. This operation targeted 104 household of a total of 416 individuals.
- On April 15 and 25, UNHCR and partner ICAHD held workshops on Statelessness for the authorities and partners active in the Tillaberi area.

Nigeria situation

- At the beginning of the month of April, a joint mission UNHCR – GoN was carried out to Diffa to assess the situation after important secondary movements at the end of March. A second cross border joint mission, involving two SRSGs, including the SRSG for West Africa, Mr. Chambas, was held at the end of the month. The aim was to assess the situation with regards to the Boko Haram incursions, threat and response.
- Following the important secondary movements of around 20,000 people in the Diffa region in the month of March, involving both refugees and local population, the Protection Cluster mobilised partners to provide psychological support to the newly displaced, as well as ensuring response for survivors of SGBV, identification of persons with specific needs. A needs assessment mission was also conducted. Several interviews held with different groups of affected people underlined the general sense of threat and fear.

IDP situation

- On April 23, a sensitization session was organized on “non-discrimination and the denial of resources among the displaced women in the site of Tondikiwindi”. During the discussion, the participants (19 girls, 7 boys, 47 women, and 3 men) stressed how important it is to maintain peaceful coexistence and to continue to consolidate the relationships between different ethnic groups at the site, especially as discrimination was indicated as a possible reason behind their displacement.

Mixed Movements situation

- On April 25, UNHCR Deputy Representative went on a joint mission to Agadez with the General Director of Civil Status, Refugees, and Migration. The objective of the mission was to jointly find solutions to accelerate the ongoing refugee status determination process of asylum seekers in Agadez.



Joint UNHCR - CNE mission to Agadez, (UNHCR April 2019).

- On April 17, a mission from the Sudanese Embassy in Niger paid a visit to the UNHCR Office in Agadez. The visit was the occasion to discuss several issues, including the current security situation in Sudan.
- On April 5, a verification exercise was conducted among the Nigerian population in one of the Agadez ghettos. It concluded that 19 families (of a total of 66 individuals) had departed their countries mainly for economic reasons. While on April 8, UNHCR and IOM began a first joint profiling exercise of the Malian population deported from Algeria and hosted in the IOM transit centre in Agadez. Results will be available shortly.
- On March 22, 4 refugees from Sudan were successfully voluntarily readmitted into Chad, their first country of asylum. This brings the total number of readmissions of Sudanese nationals to Chad to 10, while 1 was readmitted to Benin, 1 to Cameroon, with another 9 cases ongoing.

Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)

- On April 15, UNHCR Representative attended the Core Group meeting of resettlement countries, held in Paris. This was particularly pertinent with regards to the current situation in Libya, the urgent need to evacuate vulnerable refugees from Libya, but also the advocacy to speed up the resettlement process from Niger, where the ETM reception facilities have reached full capacity.
- UNHCR and its partners continued monitoring and follow up activities both at the ETM centre and in the guesthouses in Niamey. Particularly relevant were the actions undertaken in order to identify and assist the SGBV survivors and individuals with specific needs. Medical and psychological counselling was also offered. Sport activities are also to begin soon in the ETM centre at Hamdallaye. Taekwondo is already underway.
- To date, 2,782 people have been evacuated from Libya to Niger and a total of 1,248 individuals have departed for resettlement to Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, The United Kingdom and The United States.

 **EDUCATION****Mali situation**

- UNHCR's partner ICAHD completed a sensitization campaign throughout the first trimester, aimed at increasing school enrolment amongst Malian refugees in both the Tillaberi and Tahoua regions. Over 1,800 students were enrolled.

Nigeria situation

- During the month of April, a 2 day training for educational advisers was organised by the Regional Directorate of Primary Education. The workshop was attended by 30 teachers from 5 different communes (Chétimari, Bosso, Mainé Soroa, Kablewa, Diffa). As regards to secondary education, 72 students enrolled for the 2019 end-of-year exams.

Mixed Movement situation

- In April, UNHCR's partner INTERSOS launched its activities in support of the education of unaccompanied children (UACs) in Agadez. Among the actions to be followed up in the weeks to come: the construction of two classrooms in the Humanitarian Centre with the support of the local community; a sensitization campaign on the importance of education for the UACs.

 **HEALTH****Mali situation**

- The construction works for the Health Center Type II (CSI – *Centre Sanitaire Intégré*) in the urbanized site of Ayorou are almost finalized. The centre will be opened to both the refugee and the local community in the coming weeks.



CSI Type II, Ayorou, Tillaberi region, built with the support of the EUTF. (UNHCR, April 2019)

 **SHELTER AND NFIS****Nigeria situation**

- Follow up activities were held in order to assess the impact of the security situation and the secondary movements registered at the end of March, on the urbanization project, particularly in the Diffa commune, where many of those newly displaced were reported to have settled. Despite the deterioration of the situation in the region, mobilization and construction activities are continuing in both Diffa and Chetimari communes, while construction in the commune of N'Guigmi has been finalized.

 **ACCESS TO ENERGY****Nigeria situation**

- A monitoring assessment mission was conducted in the Sayam Forage camp and at the site of Kinchandi to assess the impact of the consumption of wood, in order to better understand and respond to the households' needs. Follow up activities will be undertaken in order to respond to the needs in terms of domestic energy.


COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE
Mali situation

- UNHCR and partners held a sensitization session on the importance of good and sustainable management of the natural resources in the Abala area. The discussion included all relevant groups involved in the life of the camp, such as the communal and traditional authorities, the camp leaders and women's group, as well as representation of the services' providers and the partners. This is particularly important in the context of peaceful coexistence with the local population.



- On April 23, UNHCR partner ADES held a meeting in Ouallam with the members of the farmers' bureau and the leaders of the refugees to discuss capacity-building in dairy processing and marketing, and in livestock breeding techniques. Newly arrived refugees will be integrated into ongoing programmes, aimed at enhancing the livelihoods and self-reliance of refugees.

Nigeria situation

- Activities in support of the vegetable growing and fish breeding continued in the month of April in the Sayam Forage refugee camp. The fish, which are held in 52 ponds which are maintained by the refugees, are currently under heavy feeding, in order to enhance their growth.

Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)

- An IT training was organized and offered to a group of 200 youth refugees evacuated from Libya through the ETM. The refugees were aged between 16 and 21 years old. The classes started in March and continued until mid-April. The beneficiaries, divided according to their IT knowledge level, took classes in Windows, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The trainings were carried out by UNHCR partner DEDI.



Refugees evacuated from Libya to Niger as part of the ETM, participate in IT training course in Niamey, Niger (UNHCR, April 2019).

Key challenges

Mali situation

- Increasing insecurity, due mostly to armed attacks and ethnic tensions, and a resulting lack of humanitarian access continues to pose the biggest challenge in the area of the country bordering Mali and Burkina Faso.

Nigeria situation

- In the Diffa region, killings, lootings and kidnappings are becoming more frequent, creating tensions and fears among the local community. With the resurgence of attacks, particularly against civilians, in the months of March and April, further secondary movements may continue and pose a challenge in terms of security and protection for the population.

IDP situation

- The massive increase in the magnitude of internal displacement in Tillaberi and Tahoua, increasing to over 70,305 IDPs in April, is creating significant protection challenges and is underfunded. Regular access remains the main issue, while military operations in the area are increasing. New cross border movements into Niger are anticipated.

Mixed Movements

- In the Agadez region, UNHCR must continue strengthening cross border coordination in order to support refugees coming from the bordering countries. Work must continue to provide adequate protection to persons of concern in the humanitarian centre as well as in the guesthouses.

Emergency Transit Mechanism

- For those refugees evacuated from Libya, the main challenge remains to improve the fluidity of the process of departures for resettlement, in order to free more refugees from the Libyan detention centres.

UNHCR Presence in Niger

Staff: a total of 327 national and international staff (*this includes consultants and affiliate workforce*)

Offices: 1 Head Office Niamey, 2 Sub-Offices Diffa and Agadez; 2 Field Offices Tillaberi and Tahoua; 2 Field Units Abala and Ouallam.

Partners

Government of Niger, ADES, ADKOUL, AIRD, ANCSB, ANTD, APBE, CARE, CDR, CIAUD, CISP, COOPI, DEDI, DRC, FRC, HI, ICHAD, INTERSOS, MEDU, SDO, SFCG.

CONTACTS

Giulia Raffaelli, Associate External Relations Officer, raffaell@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 80 06 81 51

Louise Donovan, Associate Public Information Officer, donovan@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 92 18 34 73

Benoit Moreno, External Relations Officer, morenob@unhcr.org, Tel: +227 92 19 24 17

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