

Multi-country Office Senegal

October-December 2020

Refugees in all MCO countries have had access to **health assistance and other socio-economic Government measures** to help them cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

UNHCR aid for the Governments, refugees and local host communities **continued** through **awareness-raising on Covid-19**, capacity-building for health structures and direct support.

Contingency plans have been drafted in Guinea and Togo to prepare the ground for population displacement due to the elections in Ivory Coast and Guinea.

KEY STATISTICS

46,063

Refugees (39,380) and asylum-seekers (6,683) are hosted in Benin, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

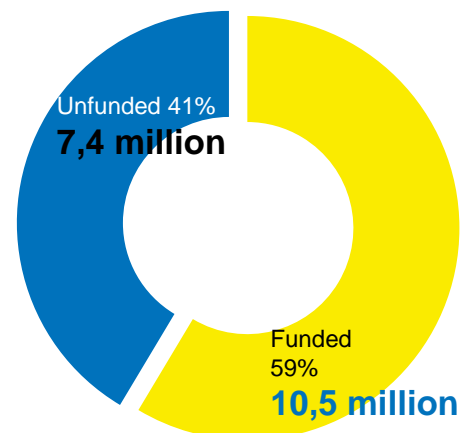
700

Refugee pupils in Senegal received school kits to facilitate their online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic within the framework of UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN COVID-19 MPTF), a joint project between UNHCR, UNESCO, UNICEF and ITU.

FUNDING (AS OF 15 DECEMBER)

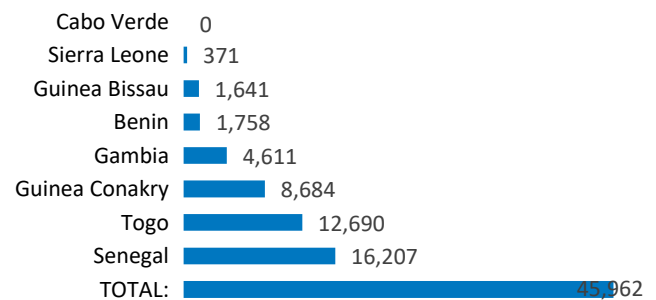
USD 17,9 million

requested for the MCO Senegal operation



POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Host Countries



* Above-mentioned figures include refugees and asylum-seekers.



Meeting between the Guinea-Bissau Minister of External Affairs and Monique Ekoko, MCO Senegal Representative, 27 November.

Operational Context

- Against the backdrop of presidential elections in **Guinea** on 18 October, UNHCR was appointed as the Lead of the Protection Sector to ensure that the contingency plan was operational before the elections. Eventually, no major incidents were noted, and no population displacement took place.
- On 27 November, Monique Ekoko, MCO Senegal Representative visited **Guinea Bissau** and met with the President of the Republic, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Interior, and held meetings with the UN Resident Coordinator, Guinea Bissau UNHCR Staff, the partners: CNRD and Manitese, and the DAFI Students. During the high-level discussions, Monique Ekoko requested to conduct a nationwide census to complete the naturalization process of refugees in Guinea-Bissau. The President of the Republic, Umaro Sissoco Embaló, pledged his support to this initiative. While the last census of refugees in Guinea-Bissau was carried out exclusively in the Cacheu region in the north of the country, the authorities estimate that many refugees are also present in other regions. The new census aims to cover all regions of the country to complete the process of naturalization of refugees.



Sensitizing caravan within the #IBelong campaign against statelessness in Dakar, Senegal, 6 November.

Achievements



IVORY COAST SITUATION

- On 31 October, Cote d'Ivoire held its presidential election against the backdrop of violence before, during, and after the voting. On 3 November, the Independent Electoral Commission declared incumbent President Alassane Ouattara the winner with 94.27% of the votes and a 53.9% participation rate. The Ivorian refugees, who began fleeing in small numbers since September, stated that they feared the escalation of electoral violence. In this context, UNHCR has drafted and approved contingency plans in the countries neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire, including **Guinea and Togo**.
- **In Togo**, the number of arrivals reached 35 Ivorians, all of whom were received by the National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR), UNHCR's government partner. UNHCR drafted a contingency plan, bringing together a variety of stakeholders, such as national authorities (Ministries of Territorial Administration, Security, Social Action), United Nations Agencies (UNAIDS, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF), and civil society organizations (CNDH, ATBEF).
- **In Guinea**, some 380 individuals from more than 125 households have arrived to the districts of Lola and Conakry, all of whom have been residing within the host communities. In line with the contingency plan, UNHCR stepped up its border monitoring activities and established a network between local authorities and communities equipped with phones to alert UNHCR in case of any influx. UNHCR requested the authorities to open a humanitarian corridor and presented its contingency plan to the UNCT.



COVID-19

Achievements and Impact

- On 22 October in **Guinea**, UNHCR donated health kits for the Prefectural Directorate of Health in the city of Macenta, which hosts the refugee camp. The donation consisted of thermometers, hydroalcoholic gel, hand washing devices, surgical masks, gloves, protective clothing, soap, and bleach. The Nzérékoré Regional Hospital received a similar donation.
- In **Senegal** during the month of October, the distribution of food as part of the Government's social resilience measures against COVID-19 reached refugees living in Woudourou, Aly woury and Ndioum. Each family received 100kg of rice, 10 liters of oil, 18 pieces of soap, and 10 kg of pasta.
- In October, UNHCR partners in **The Gambia**, GAFNA and GCR, conducted monitoring of refugees' settlement rural areas to assess the protection environment and to reaffirm the dangers of COVID-19 as well as remind of measures put in place to contain its spread.

- In **The Gambia**, as part of the Back to School project, between 17-20 November, UNHCR partner, The Gambia food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA), implemented a training on COVID-19 that targeted schools and community representatives from upper and senior secondary schools. A renowned Gambian Comedy Team 'Kitabu D' delivered a training for 24 participants.
- In **Guinea**, a series of trainings was organized in November by the partner of UNHCR, the Organization for Integrated Community Development of Guinea (ODIC). As part of building the capacities of health structures in the city of Nzérékoré, training sessions took place: on 2-4 November for 20 health workers; on 5-6 November for 15 health workers; on 9-10 November for 20 people. In addition, in November UNHCR and partners organized 5 awareness-raising sessions on COVID-19 in the camp for 67 people between 15 and 60 years old, including 34 women.
- In **Senegal**, as part of the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund in Senegal (UN Covid-19 MPTF), from 12 to 23 November, 18 radio broadcasts were organized in the departments of Matam, Kanel, Bakel, Ranérou, Dagana, and Podor, to raise awareness among refugee students, parents and educational staff, including the host populations, on compliance with barrier measures against Covid-19.
- In **Togo** in November, within the framework of the fight against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp, the total number of PoCs assisted with psychological counseling reached 99 beneficiaries. In addition, during the reporting period, the total number of refugees assisted with medications due to Covid-19 co-morbidities grew to 128 refugees.
- In **Guinea-Bissau**, on 9-13 November UNHCR organized in S. Domingos a sensitization session for 100 teachers and 100 parents on Covid-19 prevention. In addition, between 25 November and 4 December, UNHCR and Manitese delivered in-kind support to 40 villages in the Cacheu Region in terms of basic needs' products and hygienic items, as well as sensitization posters on COVID-19.
- During the reporting period in **Togo**, UNHCR's partner, the Green Village Foundation (GVF), organized awareness-raising sessions on survival sex during the COVID-19 pandemic and the prevention of HIV / AIDS. In addition, within the framework of the fight against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp, UNHCR and partners assisted 125 refugees with psychological counseling. 20 anti-drug peer educators have been trained on awareness raising against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp.
- In December, GAFNA in **The Gambia** has disbursed the second phase of CBI for 57 vulnerable rural and urban refugees within the framework of the COVID -19 response. On 31 December, GAFNA also launched the Manual for Community Engagement on Emergencies as part of COVID -19 Response. Copies of the manual were distributed among the event's participants and partner institutions.
- In **Guinea**, at the end of December UNHCR donated an ambulance to the health authorities of the city of Nzérékoré.

**PROTECTION****Achievements and Impact**

- In **Benin**, UNHCR partners participated on 20-24 October in a meeting aiming to draft the legal framework on the status of refugees and stateless persons. In addition, on 22 October, UNHCR partners participated in the awareness-raising training on the asylum application procedures in Benin organized by Amnesty International in collaboration with the CNR.
- On 16-17 November, UNHCR in **Guinea-Bissau** carried out a refreshment training on child protection. Participants included the Magistrates, journalists, civil society, the UNHCR partner Manitese, and other stakeholders.
- With the upsurge in irregular migration in **Senegal**, UNHCR met on 20 November with the General Directorate of Support to Senegalese Abroad aiming to reaffirm UNHCR's commitment to assist the Government, strengthen cooperation and communication in the context of identification and referral of people likely to fall under UNHCR's mandate. Among the series of irregular departures was a canoe that exploded on 23 October sailing in the direction of the Canary Islands. Out of 200 people carried by the boat, 51 people were rescued and taken to the naval base according to the Senegalese army. More than a hundred people have disappeared.
- In **Togo**, on 10-12 November UNHCR organized a training workshop on refugee status determination (RSD) for the members of the Appeals Commission (CR), new members of the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) as well as new eligibility officers of the National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR). Providing legal assistance to asylum seekers appealing the decision and providing interpretation services were among participants' recommendations.
- In **Togo**, after 3 minors were reported missing in the Avepozo camp and found at the Benin-Niger border, UNHCR assisted them to bring them back to their families, making sure they can continue their education. Two psychologists provided psychological support for 16 refugees.

**STATELESSNESS**

- In the Bafata Region in **Guinea-Bissau**, from 19 to 23 October, UNHCR organized jointly with the Ministry of Justice and UNICEF, a registration of children aged from 0 to 7 at risk of statelessness.
- Between 19-20 and 21-22 October, UNHCR held two workshops on statelessness in Bissau, **Guinea-Bissau**, for a total of 60 participants from notaries offices, the Justice Ministry, the Interior Ministry (Direction of Migration and CNRD), the UNHCR partner Manitese, civil society organisations, and journalists. In addition, in October-November, UNHCR in collaboration with UNICEF organized in the Islands a registration exercise for children aged between 0 and 7 at risk of statelessness. In the Region of Bafata, 1449 children were registered.

- **In Guinea-Bissau**, to celebrate the #Ibelong campaign, on 6 November UNHCR participated in a TV debate about statelessness together with the focal point on statelessness from the Ministry of Justice and a UNHCR expert on statelessness.
- **In Senegal**, within the framework of the #Ibelong campaign, UNHCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and its partner, the National Committee for the Management of Returnees and Displaced Persons (CNRRPD), as well as the civil society organizations, organized two activities, namely on 4 November a caravan in Dakar with artists of the group Bidew Bou Bess, aiming to engage the general public for the fight against statelessness. In addition, on 6 November, a webinar was organized under the theme "Raising awareness of the commitments made by states to eradicate statelessness by 2024". The webinar saw the participation of about 50 representatives of the Government, United Nations Agencies, Journalists, civil society organizations, refugees and others.
- **In Togo**, as part of the celebration of the 6th anniversary of the #Ibelong campaign, UNHCR organized a series of activities including a poetry competition and a conference debate. Taking place on 5 November, under the theme: "2024, a world without stateless persons", the conference helped to raise awareness among the participants, who included Togolese authorities, members of civil society, university professors and the members of the National Commission for the fight against statelessness. Through video clips broadcasted via social media, Togolese well-known personalities, civil society, and United Nations Agencies supported the campaign and helped raise awareness on statelessness.
- **In Senegal**, from 12 to 20 November, UNHCR partner the African Office for Development and Cooperation (OFADEC) organized in Kanel, Bakel, Orkadiere, Matam, Golaya, Ndioum, and the Richard-Toll valley, 7 sensitization radio programs on statelessness and how to fight against statelessness. In addition, 7 focus groups were organized with civil status officers, community relays, teachers, heads of refugee sites, village / district heads in Fanaye, Golaya Ourosogui, Kanel, Orkadiere and Gabou, bringing together around twenty stakeholders for each meeting.
- In **Senegal** in December, 300 cases of refugees born in Senegal without a birth certificate were collected and transmitted to the authorities. While due to the COVID-19 context all mobile court hearings are suspended, UNHCR advocated with the President of the Court of Matam to expedite the case.
- In December, the **Sierra Leone** Minister of Internal Affairs signed and adopted the National Action Plan (NAP) on Statelessness. In addition, the statelessness focal point, MCO Senegal, during a mission to Sierra Leone conducted a training on the participatory approach used during assessments. The participants included Parliamentarians, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), CI-SL, Human Right Commission and CSOs on Statelessness.
- On 31 December in **Guinea** has started a TV campaign on the channels of the Radio-Television Guinea (RTG), which for one month will broadcast a TV spot made by UNHCR on birth registration to tackle statelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**EDUCATION****Achievements and Impact**

- In October, in **The Gambia**, GAFNA, the UNHCR partner, and the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education launched the back to Senior Secondary School Education project. Its implementation started by providing 120 handwashing buckets accompanied with assorted detergents and by organizing a fumigation of classrooms and schools.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 12-14 October, the UNHCR Field Office organized trainings to improve literacy among girls living in São-Domingos and Ingore aiming to create and dynamize girls' clubs for alphabetization and non-formal education.
- The UNHCR **Senegal** Field Office in coordination with the German Embassy, the Ministry of Higher Education, OFADEC, CARITAS and the Refugee Committee held on 19 October the DAFI scholarships committee for the academic year 2020-2021. Based on the results of the 2019-2020 academic year, out of a total of 37 scholarship holders, 7 students were recommended for the renewal of the scholarship, and 13 students left the program after having received their graduation diplomas (license). Another scholarship renewal commission was organized on 27 November, when a total of 95 scholarships comprising vocational training, secondary education and DAFI scholarships for higher education have received a favourable opinion.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 15 October, following an earlier evaluation of the living conditions of certain DAFI students, the UNHCR donated furniture to help two DAFI students living in precarious conditions.
- In **Benin** on 21 November, an awareness session on the COVID-19 pandemic was organized by DAFI students as part of the DAFI CLUB activities.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 16-17 November, a training was organized on online education for 40 teachers in S. Domingos. On 19-20 November, a similar training was organized in Bissau, also for 40 teachers.
- In **Sierra Leone**, within the secondary school education initiative, trainings and payments of cash grants were organized in November for 100 secondary school students, 12 refugee teachers, 15 students' out of school, 40 refugee women. A symbolic ceremony was organized to transfer cash grants to students in the presence of the regional authorities.
- In **The Gambia**, the DAFI Student Club under the guidance of GAFNA undertook a one-day caravan sensitization tour of four upper and senior secondary schools in rural communities, where the majority of refugee children are enrolled. Activities included talks on the spread and control of COVID-19 and interactive discussions. The aim of the event was to clarify some of the myths around COVID-19 existing in the communities.
- In **The Gambia** in November-December, UNHCR partner, GAFNA, delivered 75 sets of desks and chairs to the Upper and Senior Secondary Schools in rural refugee host communities. In addition, students received 5,000 protective masks.

- In **Benin** on 21-23 December, UNHCR partners carried out awareness-raising sessions for nearly 600 students in 10 secondary schools housing refugee students on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, on 16 December, 117 refugee students received their school kits.
- In **The Gambia** on 22 December, UNHCR partner, GAFNA delivered and distributed teaching materials comprising dictionaries, maps, posters, sets of boxes, white boards, pens, pencils erasers, exercise books, chalk, crayons, etc. to seven upper and senior secondary schools in Kombo East and the Foni Districts.
- In December in **Senegal**, within the framework of the MPTF project, the UNHCR Field Office Senegal delivered 700 tablets to refugee students in primary and secondary schools in Podor (500) and Dakar (200).



HEALTH, WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

- In **Togo** from 12 to 15 October, UNHCR organized 3 awareness-raising sessions, two in Lomé and one at the Avépozo camp, on the fight against survival sex.
- During November, UNHCR partner In **The Gambia** the Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA), constructed for the Sibanor Upper and Senior Secondary School water facilities, including a borehole with solarized system and community well. In addition, on 18 December, GAFNA distributed 152 handwashing buckets and assorted detergents, 300 sets of cleansing/disinfectant materials, and 5,000 reusable facemasks to 30 schools of all categories in refugee hosts communities. In addition, 120 handwashing buckets with assorted detergents were supplied to six senior secondary schools, where classrooms and other school spaces were fumigated.
- In **Guinea-Bissau**, on 22 December, 20 refugee families in Bissau received from UNHCR basic needs items and hygienic products.
- In **Guinea**, UNHCR partner, ODIC, distributed cash for 37 families of 211 individuals as part of activities against COVID-19 aiming to start producing soap and face masks by the project beneficiaries.
- In December, in **Guinea**, ODIC distributed CBI for 508 refugee women and girls to help them purchase hygiene kits.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Achievements and Impact

- In **Guinea**, the partner of UNHCR, BRISR, carried out in October two awareness-raising sessions in the Kouankan 2 camp and in urban areas of Nzérékoré. Being an area at risk of clashes between communities, these sessions were an opportunity to encourage participants in peaceful living together. In addition, a

meeting was organized with the prefectural authorities to seek their help to promote peaceful coexistence between the communities.

- In the second semester of 2020, UNHCR has supported the Government of **Guinea-Bissau** by funding the construction of two office buildings, one in Ingore (Sector Court House) and another one in Sao Domingos (Integrated Security Office), in addition to constructing a primary school for some 60 children in the village of Djobel in the Cacheu Region.
- Also in **Guinea-Bissau** in October, UNHCR delivered equipment for two secondary schools in Sao Domingos. The donation included computers, printers, headsets, furniture materials, one-year internet subscription, and solar panels. Teachers and education technicians benefitted from trainings on distance-learning. On 26-30 October, UNHCR sensitized some 400 students on Covid-19 in total from both schools.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Achievements and Impact

- In **Togo** in October, 10 refugees participated in the training organized by the Togolese Association for Family Welfare on techniques and creation of income-generating activities.
- In **The Gambia**, during a monitoring field visit in mid-October, GAFNA confirmed that due to heavy rain and floods, four houses of refugees collapsed. Refugees were supported by the UNHCR COVID-19 additional funding.
- On 21 October, UNHCR partners in **Benin** held a working session with the national employment agency as part of the strengthening of the partnership to find internships for DAFI students at the end of their university studies cycle.
- In **Sierra Leone** in November, as part of the income support for locally integrated refugees, a refresher training on business management as well as the payment of the second phase cash were accomplished. 253 beneficiaries were assisted.
- In **Togo** in November, 27 beneficiaries of various professional trainings, including 14 women, attended two training sessions in management, accounting, marketing, finances, and income management. UNHCR also selected 6 new beneficiaries, including 2 women, to be enrolled in agro-pastoral training at the Songhai Center in Porto Novo in Benin.
- In **Togo**, also in November, UNHCR provided food kits and protective equipment assistance via mobile money transfers to 211 asylum seekers from 156 households.
- In **Togo**, UNHCR met with the Chairman and the Executive Director of the Board of Directors of the Patronage to discuss the inclusion of PoCs into their activities through training, immersion courses and a partnership agreement with UNHCR.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 3-13 November, UNHCR partner, Manitese, distributed in-kind support to persons with specific needs and monitored the activities in the villages.

- In November in **The Gambia**, GAFNA coordinated a training for 15 rural and urban refugee farmers on poultry management, processing and preservation. The training was facilitated by the Poultry Unit of the Department of Livestock Services. At the end of the training, farmers received some 700 chicks, and relevant equipment to start their poultry projects.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- In **Togo** between 19-23 October, two voluntary return convoys were organized: 12 Ivorian refugees, including 2 women, as well as 4 Central Africans, including 2 women, were repatriated in safety and dignity.
- In **Senegal** in December, 220 files including from Podor (120) and Matam (100) were collected from refugees interested in naturalization by Decree.
- In **Togo**, between 10 and 19 December, UNHCR carried out a joint mission with CNAR / Directorate of Nationality in the north of the country (Plaine de Mô and Dankpen prefectures) to help refugees fill applications for the Togolese nationality under the right of soil. More than 160 eligible refugees were identified.

Working in partnership

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to MCO Senegal operations as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with earmarked, broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

United States of America: USD 1,700,000
European Union: USD 202,231
UN Covid-19 MPTF: USD 183,967
UN Programme on HIV/AIDS : USD 15,000
Other private donors: USD 275

External / Donor Relations

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Abbreviations

CNAR	National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (Togo)
CNR	National Refugee Commission (Benin)
CNRD	National Commission for Refugees (Guinea-Bissau)
CNRRPD	National Committee for the Management of Returnees and Displaced Persons (Senegal)
DAFI	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
GAFNA	Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (The Gambia)
GCR	Gambia Commission for Refugees (The Gambia)
GVF	Green Village Foundation
MCO	Multi-Country Office
NaCSA	National Commission for Social Action (Sierra Leone)
ODIC	Organization for Integrated Community Development of Guinea (Guinea)
UN COVID-19 MPTF	United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund in Senegal