

Sahel situation *(Tillabery and Tahoua regions)*

February 2021

The Sahel regions have been hosting some 60,000 **Malian refugees** since 2012. They live in 3 sites in the Tillabery region and a refugee hosting area in the Tahoua region.

The rapidly deteriorating security context has caused increased **internal displacement flows** with rising numbers every month. To date, some 140,000 IDPs are present in both regions.

The presence of armed groups across the border has caused movements of a few thousand **citizens from Burkina Faso** into Niger.

KEY INDICATORS

40,000*

Number of refugees in Niger who will have **access to land** according to the Government's pledge during the Global Refugee Forum.

+50%*

Increase of the number of internally displaced persons since last year.

374

Durable houses built and finalized in the Tillabery region

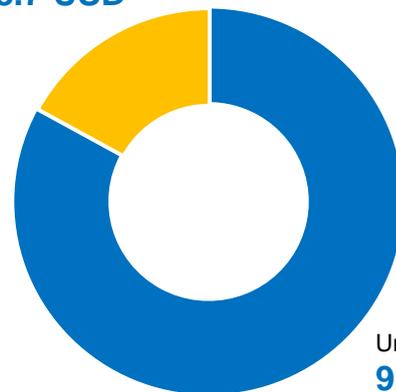
FUNDING (AS OF 2 FEBRUARY 2021)

USD 110,5 M

requested for UNHCR's operations in Niger

Funded 20%

18.7 USD

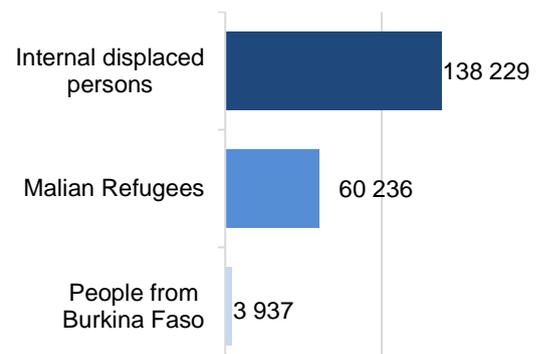


Unfunded 80%
91.8 USD



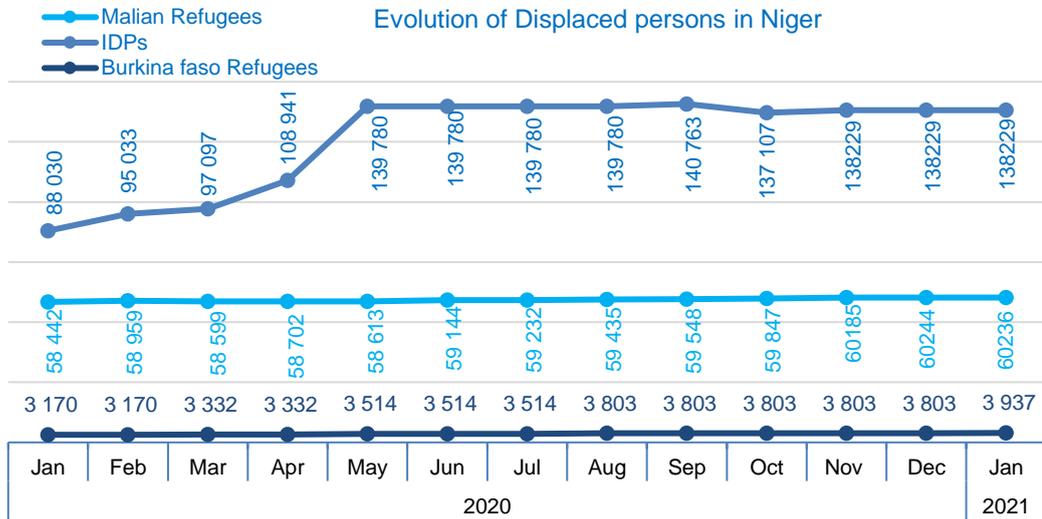
POPULATION OF CONCERN IN NIGER'S SAHEL

(UNHCR data, 31 January 2021)



Update on Achievements

Operational Context

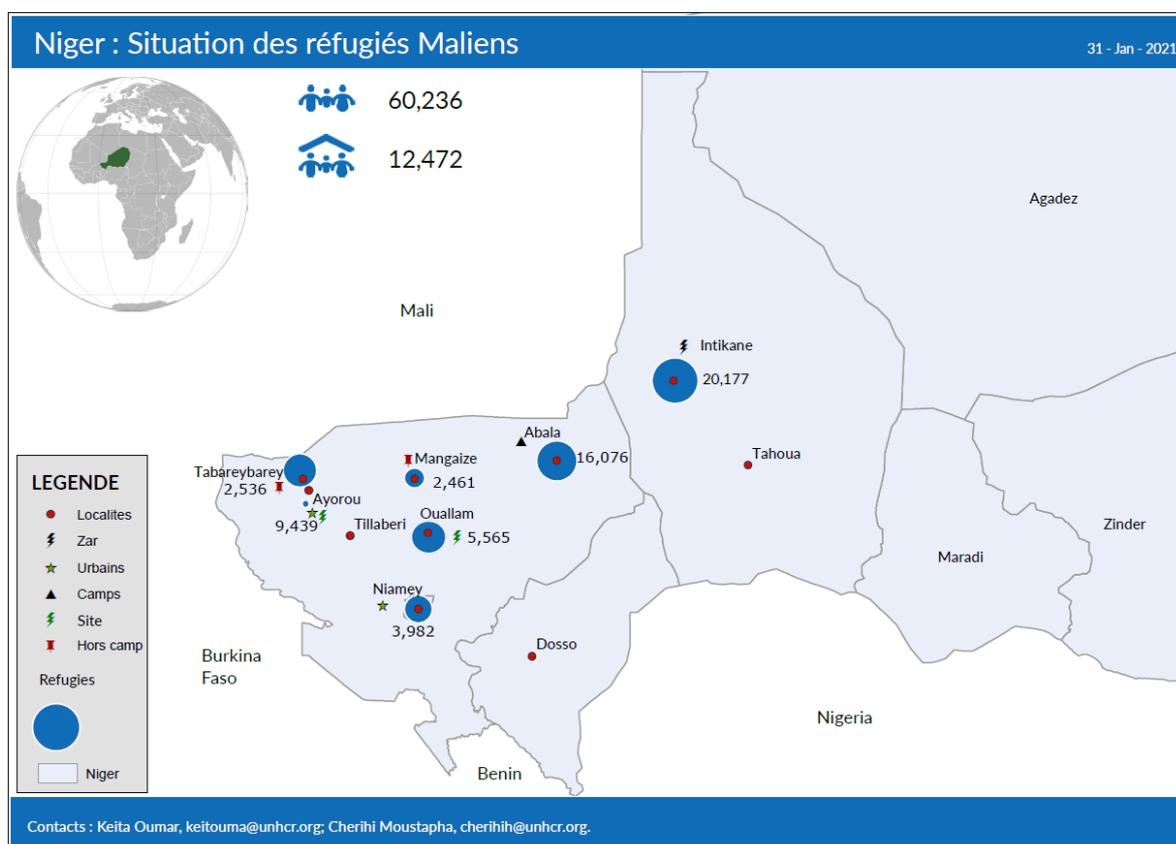


Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are all struggling to cope with numerous militant groups moving between the three countries. The **security situation** in the tri-border region including in the Nigerien regions of Tillabery and Tahoua has sharply deteriorated. This threat is forcing people to flee their homes, and further deprives vulnerable communities of critical basic services as armed groups directly target schools, health centers and other infrastructure. The civilian population is victim of extortion, targeted killings, cattle theft and shop looting and threatened to leave their villages. A state of emergency was first introduced in 2017 and is still in place.

Moreover, the **global sanitary crisis and the measures taken by the Government to limit the propagation of the virus** has heavily impacted on the operational context, delaying assistance, and limiting livelihood opportunities.

Since the beginning of the year 2020, UNHCR Niger has registered refugees from Burkina Faso. Currently the country host 3,937 Burkinabe refugee in the Tillbéri region. However, their number could be more than that due the lack of access humanitarian access as a result of the rise of insurgency in the areas where they set down.

Operational Strategy



The interventions in the Tillabery and Tahoua regions are aligned to **UNHCR's Sahel strategy**, a scaled-up response to the unprecedented violence and displacement crisis in the Sahel. Activities planned pre-COVID 19 will be implemented in line with public health measures imposed because of the pandemic. Key priorities include addressing shelter needs in overcrowded settlements, supporting education in localities with large concentrations of displaced populations, providing effective response to SGBV incidents aggravated by confinement measures, and continuing other protection activities such as registration, documentation and facilitating access to asylum.

The Sahel crisis is monitored by a broad community-based network and analysis is shared with the humanitarian community. Capacity building and coordinated efforts with humanitarian actors are ongoing to ensure an adequate response to the situation. UNHCR has the lead over the national protection cluster. Legislation for assistance and protection to IDPs based on the Kampala Convention is in place.

After almost 8 years of presence in Niger, UNHCR and the Government of Niger give priority to **medium- and long-term solutions for Malian refugees** with a view to promote social cohesion, self-reliance and a durable integration into national services and systems. All Malian refugee camps have been closed in 2020 in line with the joint vision of the Government and UNHCR and given the deterioration of the protection and security context. They are now settled in sites in the villages of Ayerou, Ouallam and Abala. Supported by major donors such as **GIZ and EUTF**, UNHCR gives Malian refugees access to land and housing, creates jobs, and includes them into national systems.

A strong **tripartite collaboration** has been developed amongst the **World Bank, the Government of Niger, and UNHCR** to improve access to basic public services and further support for economic opportunities. With the support of **ILO, PBF and Spain**, Malian refugees benefit from livelihood interventions.

Achievements

The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs produces a wide range of reports, evaluations, and infographics on the humanitarian situation in Niger. All documents can be consulted here: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/niger>

Security and displacement

- Following inter community clashes and the rise of insecurity in the area surrounding the Malian border 311 households of 1 845 individuals fled their villages to seek refuge in the refugee site of Intikane and the villages of Tazelit.

Protection

- In Tillabery, UNHCR has conducted 7 awareness raising sessions on SGBV issues such as child marriage, physical and emotional violence, denial of resources and the consequences of forced and early marriage. These sensitization efforts have reached 282 persons in Ouallam and Abala.
- UNHCR has conducted a working session with Burkina Faso nationals in mission in Gotheye. They have discussed on ways and means to minimize SGBV risks and have conducted an awareness raising of persons working at the gold mines where a lot of girls and women are exposed to SGBV risks. Hence many women living at the gold mines are widows with dependent children.
- In Tahoua, UNHCR has proceeded to the renewal of 2 814 refuge attestation, 1 413 refuge identity cards and updated 2057.
- Among the 322 child protection cases identified in Tahoua in January 2021, 266 have received direct assistance and 56 were followed up.
- UNHCR has identified 91 cases of children at risk of statelessness in the Tahoua region. The cases have referred to the mayor of Tillia and Tassara for establishment of birth certificates.
- UNHCR has also identified 89 cases of children with specific needs at the IDP site of Chinwarene and Tagalate. All cases have benefited of psychosocial aid.
- UNHCR has followed up 8 child protection cases and referred 3 cases to the health center of Ouallam for their admission in the malnutrition retrieval unit. In the Tillbéri region, UNHCR has identified 14 news cases of persons living with specific needs, 10 of them has been referred to the health center of Ayerou, Ouallam and Abala for reproductive health services.
- In Tahoua region, during the month of January 2021, UNHCR and its partner has identified 624 persons living with specific needs. These cases have been documented and referred to the appropriate partner for their needs which are mostly health responses. 99 refugees among the persons living with specific needs have received a food assistance. Each person has received 75 kg of rice, 25 kg of semolina, 10 liters of cooking oil and 30 pieces of soap. Some other 160 children living with specific needs have received the same assistance.

Education



Primary school girls in Ouallam © UNHCR / Boubacar Siddo

- UNHCR has reached out 446 persons on topics such as maintaining children at the school and the importance of education in the Tillabery region.
- Through a sensitization on reproductive health, UNHCR with the support of community structures has reached 200 persons among the displaced persons living in Ouallam and Abala.
- In the Tahoua region, UNHCR has identified 300 cases of children at risk of being unschooled and referred them to the school authorities of Tillia and Tassara for their registration.
- At the refugee hosting area of Intikane, schools have resumed on 4 January 2021, however many teachers did not go to their duty station due to fear of attacked by the insurgents. As a result, the schools of Assagaygay, Agando, Indirsan, Chinzigan, Tabalot, Bakoret, Eknewane, Amalloul Indistan and Midal have not yet resumed.
- The partner ADES has finalized the construction of 3 classrooms and 3 blocks of latrines in Ouallam.



School latrines built in Ouallam, Tillabery Region © UNHCR / Boubacar Siddo

WASH

- Sensitizations on prevention against the spread of Covid-19 has reached more than 1500 individuals on the refugee sites of Abala and Ouallam as well as the IDP sites of Ayerou, Gotheye, Bankilaré and Torodi while 1200 persons were reached in Tahoua region.
- During the month of January 2021, UNHCR has supplied 2346 m³ of drinkable water in Abala and 2346 m³ in Ouallam.

Livelihood

- During the second half of 2020, with the support of the Spanish Cooperation, UNHCR and ADES have negotiated and obtained 6,54 ha of land in the municipality of Ouallam, home to over 5,000 Malian refugees. They set up sites for small irrigation production. As the site requires hydro agricultural installations to allow a good vegetable production, UNHCR and ADES set up 2 boreholes equipped with solar pumps, 2 water towers and 18 vessels as well as a water distribution system. Moreover, UNHCR has equipped the site with a nursery. The main crops grown are potatoes, moringa, pumpkin, tomato, onion, salad, watermelon, zucchini, gombo and carrots.
- So far, 331 households (30% host households, 70% refugee households) adhered to the site. They benefited from a kit containing seedlings of the above-mentioned crops and agricultural tools such as communal wheelbarrows, watering cans, spades, shovels, rakes, ...
- From July to December 2020, UNHCR and ADES have supported farmer committee's in the 4 target areas of the project. 190 persons in Ayerou, 347 in Abala and 112 in Ouallam were supported with a kit containing 4 female goats / sheep and 1 male goat / sheep. A total number of 649 persons have received support which will not only generate income but also improve the quality of food in refugee and host households.
- UNHCR has supported a group of 14 refugees for the set-up of a transformation unit of dairy products in the refugee hosting area of Intikane. 14 persons have been trained on transformation of milk into cheese, yoghurt and butter as well as the purification of water. They were equipped with kits for transformation (sieves, thermos flasks, 2 solar-powered fridges, clothing, ...). This training allowed them to start up a small business.



Shelter

- At the end of January 2021, UNHCR and its partners have given land plots to 377 households in Tillbéri region.
- 895 constructions of social houses are ongoing of which 374 have been built in the Tillbéri region, more specifically 114 in Ouallam, 35 in Ayerou and 225 in Abala. In total 1,843,342 bricks have been produced.
- The project has employed 1231 in brick production and another 504 persons in house construction, of which 25% are female.



Figure 1 A Malian refugee woman working in the brick production site of Ouallam © UNHCR / Boubacar Sidde

- At the refugee site of Intikane, UNHCR has constructed 126 semi-permanent houses while the construction of 159 is ongoing. Moreover, UNHCR has rehabilitated 99 latrines.
- In Abala, UNHCR has distributed 230 shelter kits for the new arrivals, including 150 refugees and 80 IDPs.

Working in partnership

For UNHCR forced displacement requires a [comprehensive approach to development](#) and should be considered a development, poverty reduction and climate issue. Including forcibly displaced and their hosts in development interventions is key for the transition out of poverty of the country and to boosting resilience. UNHCR interventions target not only refugees and IDPs, but also host communities who live in same conditions of high vulnerability -- with a view to move towards economic integration and social inclusion. This approach of inclusion and development is fully endorsed by the Government of Niger and aligned with the Global Compact for Refugee and the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. This approach is at the core of UNHCR's OUT OF CAMP strategy and is operationalized through ongoing collaborations with the World Bank Group, the German development agency (GIZ) and the European Union (EUTF) and the ILO. With the idea of deepening its role of convener, UNHCR is also looking into strengthening relationship with private sector actors as they are a crucial partner for boosting economic growth and job creation. In order to lend support to [protection clusters](#) at national level in terms of advocacy, facilitate coordination between countries and regional IASC, providing visibility through data driven analysis, and serving as a platform for information sharing and best practices, the Regional Bureau in Dakar has initiated bilateral and multilateral consultations with key stakeholders including donors to revitalize the Regional Protection Working Group (RPWG). A task force composed of UNICEF,

UNFPA, OCHA, UNWOMEN, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR and SOS has been established to draft the strategy as well as the TORs which are being commented on and will be further adopted. Through the Regional Protection Working Group, appropriate support will be provided to the protection crisis in the Sahel.

Financial Information

Special thanks to the donors who have participated to UNHCR's response in the Sahel regions
CERF | European Union | Germany | Spain

Donors who have contributed to UNHCR's response in Niger¹

African Development Bank | Central Emergency Response Fund | European Union | Germany | Italy | Monaco | Spain

Other softly earmarked contributions²

Germany 9.2 million

Iceland | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions³

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 | Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million

Algeria | America | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxemburg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private Donors

1. Contributions to Niger are shown by the earmarking modality as defined in the Grand Bargain.

2. Due to their earmarking at the region or sub-region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for Niger. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.

3. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contribution \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

External / Donor Relations

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