

Niger

Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM)

December 2019

Background

In November 2017, UNHCR established an Emergency Evacuation Transit Mechanism (ETM) in order to evacuate and facilitate the processing of the most vulnerable refugees trapped in detention in Libya, so they can access protection and durable solutions.

UNHCR and the Government of Niger signed a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) in December 2017, temporarily expanding the Niger asylum space to these refugees.

Context

Evacuations

UNHCR Libya identifies vulnerable refugees in need of international protection in detention centers where UNHCR has access. They are screened and their information is shared with UNHCR Niger. Lists for evacuation are established based on vulnerability.

A first evacuation flight took place on the 11th of November 2017. Since then, 25 more evacuation flights have arrived from Libya to Niger, carrying a total of **3,080 refugees and asylum seekers**.

Process in Niger

Once the refugees and asylum seekers arrive in Niger, UNHCR registers them in its biometric database, protects them and provides accommodation, where food, medical care, education, psychosocial support etc. are available. This is done in close cooperation with partner organisations.

Since March 2019, the ETM transit facility in the commune of Hamdallaye, in the Tillabery region (40 km from Niamey) is operational. Today, this new facility hosts up to 1,100 persons. The most vulnerable persons remain in guesthouses in the city of Niamey. Construction and development of leisure facilities in the transit facility are ongoing.

After the initial registration, refugees undergo a refugee status determination (RSD) procedure which is carried out by the government and UNHCR. Moreover, they undergo interviews by UNHCR staff to prepare their resettlement files. These files are then submitted to third countries for consideration. Unaccompanied minors also complete a Best Interests Determination (BID) to seek the most appropriate solution.

Resettlement Missions

Refugees who were already present in Niger and deemed to require resettlement as a solution, are also included in the programme. Some resettlement countries may decide based solely on the file shared with them by UNHCR, and do not necessarily undertake a resettlement mission to Niger. Other countries carry out resettlement missions to interview those under consideration. The results of the interviews are communicated to UNHCR Niger in the weeks following the resettlement mission.

Resettlement & other durable solutions

Once a resettlement file is accepted, IOM is responsible for the transport of the refugees to the resettlement country. Globally, resettlement is one of the three durable solutions pursued by UNHCR, the others include voluntary return or local integration.

When durable solutions are not achievable for all members of the refugee population, **complementary pathways of admission** can help refugees access protection and long-term solutions. UNHCR works with States, civil society, private sector, academia, governmental organizations and refugees to identify, establish and expand complementary pathways for admission to third countries that will meet the continuous international protection needs of refugees. Complementary pathways may include humanitarian admissions programmes, community sponsorship of refugees, humanitarian visas, family reunification, labour mobility schemes or education programs.

Resettlement Pledges & Departures

UNHCR has received a total of **6,351 resettlement pledges** for the Libya-Niger situation from third countries, including 4,411 places specifically for evacuees from Libya and refugees registered in Niger. Countries who have provided pledges include: Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

As of 31 December 2019, **2,310 evacuated refugees have departed from Niger** to resettlement countries.

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LINKS

[Operational portal](#) - [UNHCR country operation page](#) - [Libya-Niger situation factsheet](#) - [Twitter](#)