

## 27 000 Nigerian refugees arrived in Maradi Region

MAY 2020

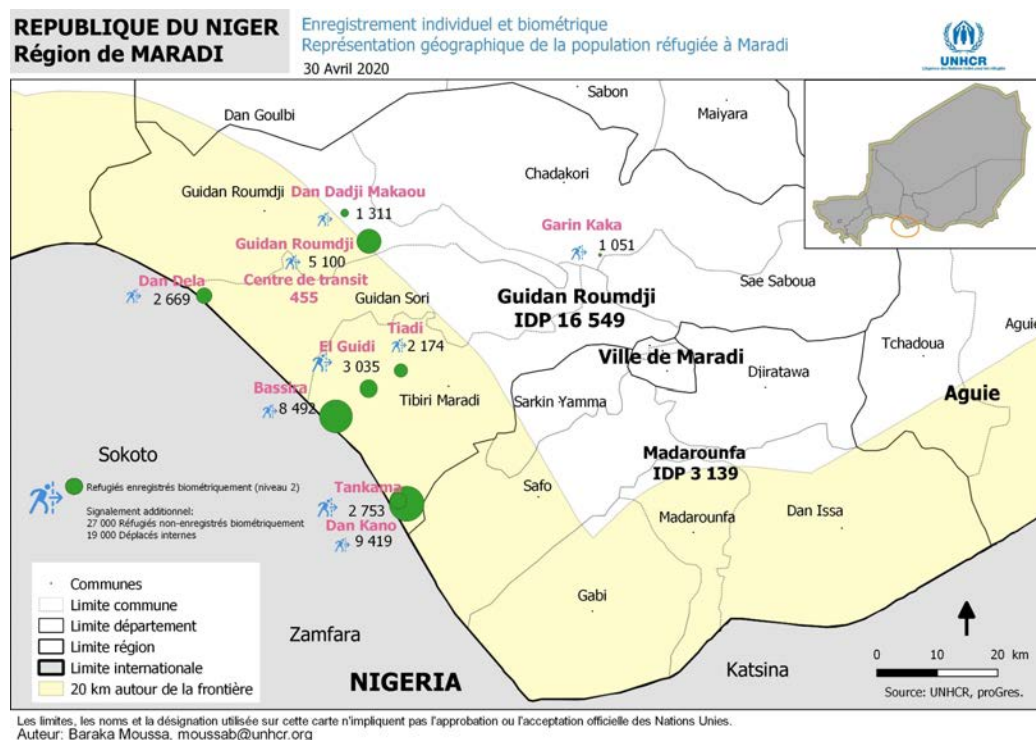
### Context

Since September 2018, non-state armed groups killings, looting and kidnappings in Nigeria's North-Western states has forced thousands of people to seek refuge in Maradi region, Niger. They were 23 000 in April 2020 only. The total number of biometrically registered and unregistered refugees in the region exceeds 63 000. In addition, repeated incursions of non-state armed groups in Niger have triggered the internal displacement of over 19,000 people. Regarding the Covid-19 pandemic situation, the region registered its first death on 7 May 2020. In total, only four cases have been confirmed. Maradi hospital has received its first testing unit.

In September 2019, UNHCR opened a sub-office in Maradi to coordinate registration, protection, education, health, housing and access to WASH services. A key feature of the UNHCR response is the relocation of refugees to villages of opportunity away from the border, to ensure their safety and ease the pressure on host populations. This program also contributes to the development of rural areas which lack basic infrastructure and services, in line with the humanitarian-development nexus.

### Population Statistics

As of April 30, UNHCR and the government (National Eligibility Commission, CNE) had carried out the biometric registration of 36,469 refugees (9,959 households), 67% of whom were minors, 23% women and 10% men. In addition, **the number of unregistered refugees in the region has jumped to 26,953**, due to a massive influx in April. Registration has been stopped since the start of the year 2020 due to a lack of funding. The number of Internally displaced people (IDPs) has also surge since late March, reaching over 19,000 people.



## Progress and Achievements

- The attack on the village of Gangara in Sokoto State, Nigeria, which left 22 people dead on April 1<sup>st</sup>, is the main cause of the displacement of 22 908 refugees to villages of the communes of Guidan Roumdji and Guidan Sori. Following several missions in the host villages, **two joint-missions led by UNHCR Deputy Representative** along with regional and national authorities were deployed to the field on May 6 and 8, to assess the situation. The new arrivals are in dire need of water, food, healthcare, shelter and clothing.
- The UNHCR, authorities and partners prepare for **the voluntary relocation of an estimated 7 000 new arrivals** to the villages of opportunity by the end of June. The extension Garin Kaka and Dan Dadji Makaou sites and the operationalization of the Chadakori site have begun. A total of 2,781 refugees have already been relocated since the beginning of the process in October 2019.
- The number of reported IDPs is now over 19,000, mostly due the increase (over 8,000 people displaced) in Guidan Sory commune at the end of April. The increase activity of the security forces along the border in Madarounfa department drove a thousand IDPs to return home. However, **the situation remains critical**, as humanitarian actors have little presence in host villages. ACF partner has provided IDPs with non-food item and shelters in Garin Wali, Inkoureygaouy and Moulleh villages. A protection working group dedicated to IDPs was set up. Registration by the NGO partners CIAUD and ANTD with the coordination of the Ministry of Humanitarian affairs is ongoing but slowed by Covid-19 necessary protection measures.
- **UNHCR has provided 30 Refugee Housing Units (RHU)** to the regional authorities to accommodate Covid-19 patients in isolation. A location was identified to accommodate intensive care and medical services of the COVID isolated cases and visited by the Deputy Representative and the Governor. The UNHCR contribution together with other UN Agencies will be channeled through the existing Regional Response COVID mechanisms. UNHCR and NGO partner APBE delivered hygiene, disinfection, protection (masks and gloves) and diagnostic (laser thermometers) equipment to the Covid-19 Pandemic Control Regional Committee.
- UNHCR organized a mission to **Dan Issa border crossing** to sensitize border control officers on Covid-19 protection measures, for themselves as well as for new arrivals.
- In the villages of opportunity, **21 door-to-door awareness sessions** on the Covid-19 pandemic were conducted, reaching 2,302 people: 1,327 refugees and 975 members of host communities. Two refugees housing units were set up in Garin Kaka and two more in Dan Dadji Makaou for isolation and management of potential Covid-19 patients.
- UNHCR organized sensitization **activities on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and Covid-19 prevention** in host villages and villages of opportunity, both door-to-door and group sessions, have reached 11,248 individuals. CIAUD partner conducted sensitization on various topics including peaceful coexistence, protection of children, SGBV and Covid-19 prevention reaching 6,771 people. ANTD partner also conducted sensitization activities on protection and Covid-19 prevention, reaching 1,798 refugees and IDPs.



*“It is much better here than in the first place I arrived: we have water, food, healthcare.” Nigerian refugee Aisha Ibrahim relocated from Dan Kano to the ‘village of opportunity’ of Garin Kaka two months ago.*

## Main Challenges

- The security situation remains volatile:** Attacks by non-state armed groups are relentless, as the attack on the village of Gangara in Nigeria on 1 April further demonstrated. Preparation for population displacements is made more difficult by the lack of information on the humanitarian situation and dynamics across the border. In addition, increasing incursions armed groups into Niger have also led to significant population movements.
- The Covid-19 pandemic affects critical activities:** Discussions with regional authorities are ongoing in order to resume registration and relocation of refugees as soon as possible in compliance with protection measures.
- Financial resources remain insufficient:** In 2020, UNHCR and the other actors responding to the Maradi situation require 33,6 million USD. The response plan for 2020 is about to be finalized. Concurrent needs in other Nigerien areas struggling with insecurity, namely Diffa, Tillaberi and Tahoua, further strain humanitarian actors' financial resources and hence their capacity to respond.

## External / Donors Relations

### Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2019 & 2020

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[LINKS : HERE](#)

## ANNEX

### Operational presence of humanitarian actors in Maradi: April 2020

	Area	Partners
	Shelter & Infrastructures	NRC, APBE
	Livelihood	APBE
	Pacific coexistence	DRC
	WASH	WORLD VISION
	Formal education	NRC
	Environment	APBE
	Health and mental health	APBE
	Community mobilization	APBE
	Protection (Overall & Children)	CIAUD, ANTD, DRC, SAVE THE CHILDREN, NRC