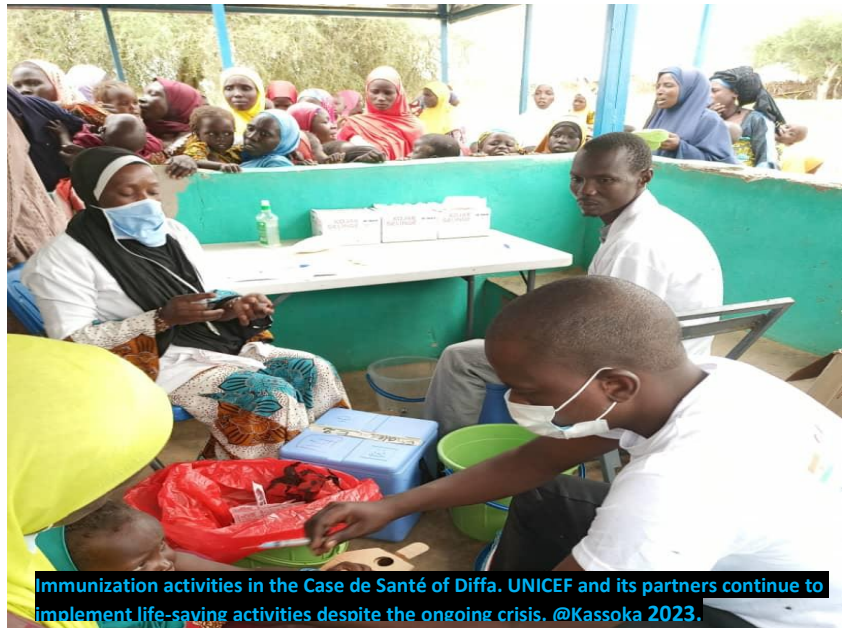


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Flash update # 02

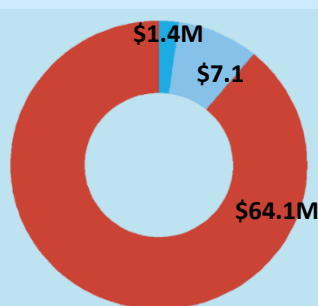
21 August 2023



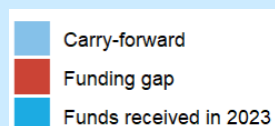
Humanitarian Update

- On 16 August 2023, tensions intensified between the Sonrai and Fulani ethnic groups in several municipalities of the Tillabéri region, leading to inter-communal clashes. The violence resulted in the tragic loss of around 40 civilian lives. This situation led to spontaneous population movements to the municipalities of Ayorou, Bankilare, and Tillabéri. On the same day, more than 37 civilians were killed in an attack by armed assailants in Darey-daye, Tillabéri region.
- The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator has requested a waiver from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), aiming to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian supplies currently held up at Niger's borders. This step is essential to ensure access to essential services, including life-saving treatment of child malnutrition.
- Niger's borders remain closed until further notice. The closure of the border affects the delivery pipeline of essential supplies, including the immunization cold chain, life-saving essential medicine, and Therapeutic Food products (such as RUTF and therapeutic milk).
- In 2023, Niger recorded its second-highest level of severe food insecurity since 2014, with 3.3 million people affected, according to an analysis by WFP. This alarming situation is likely to be further exacerbated by the ongoing crisis due to food price inflation, import/export challenges, and lost livelihoods and remittances, affecting 7.3 million people including 1.5 million children.

Funding Requirements



HAC appeal 2023:
72.6M



Coordination, preparedness, and response strategies

- The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AOR) actors are developing messages to be disseminated within the community to prevent family separation and the recruitment of children. These risks have been identified as potential consequences of sanctions against Niger.
- In collaboration with the Protection Cluster, the Child Protection AOR developed key messages about protection threats resulting from sanctions and funding restrictions and shared them with donors and ECOWAS.
- Additionally, an analysis of likely scenarios found that 639,860 children (90 per cent of the target) have not yet benefited from interventions under the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and that about 64,000 will require assistance if ECOWAS sanctions remain in place for the next three months. The financial resource requirements are estimated at ranging from US\$ 4,901,050 to US\$ 6,683,514.
- Education Cluster activities are proceeding normally. In collaboration with the European Union, a high-level sectoral meeting will be organized to review recent developments, including the impact of the recent crisis on sector financing.
- UNICEF continues to implement its programme through a variety of modalities, including direct implementation and partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, youth and women's associations, and traditional and religious leaders to ensure that critical humanitarian assistance reaches the most affected and vulnerable children.

Impact by Sector & UNICEF's Response



Nutrition

- At least 30,000 severely wasted children have benefitted from treatment since the onset of the crisis. The continuation of services has been possible thanks to earlier pre-positioning of life-saving supplies to health centres.
- Life-saving supplies for Q4 2023 are already in-country, while UN agencies, including UNICEF, continue to advocate for cross-border transportation of humanitarian supplies to ensure uninterrupted supply availability for activities through Q4 2023 and in 2024. The facilitation of cross-border humanitarian transport is essential to ensure the timely delivery of vital supplies in Niger.
- Nutrition sector partners are waiting for clarifications on government leadership to resume discussions on the implementation of the national SMART nutrition survey.
- Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (INS) show that market prices have soared since 26 July 2023, with rice prices rising by 17.4 per cent and corn by 7.1 per cent.
- Building on existing partnerships with NGOs and developing new ones, UNICEF is restructuring its support for the continued delivery of priority life-saving services (supply delivery, mobile clinics, nutrition screening, etc.) in close collaboration with the health authorities at national, regional and district levels. Decentralized coordination of the nutrition sector will be strengthened through partnership agreements.



Health

- Stocks of medicines and vaccines are still being distributed in the field, and UNICEF continues to monitor vaccine deliveries and to support community health workers (CHWs) to carry out Integrated Community Case Management (ICCM) activities. However, the offshore procurement of medical supplies, particularly medical kits, is being affected by the current situation which may lead to stock-outs in the coming months.
- UNICEF continues to support health emergencies, notably in the Tahoua region, with ongoing vaccination against a measles epidemic that has already affected 17,095 children aged 6 months to 14 years.

- An analysis of the impact of power cuts on the operation of the cold chain, together with a mitigation plan, is currently underway. Tender evaluations for the installation of 109 solar kits in health centres has been completed.
- Due to the recurring power outages caused by sanctions, UNICEF has ordered 11,208 litres of fuel for the Immunization Department to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of the cold chain.



Child Protection

- The current situation continues to have serious consequences for a growing number of children, reducing access to protection services. Abduction, recruitment of children by armed groups, and their use by political actors remain significant protection risks for children in Niger.
- Social mobilization and capacity-building interventions for adolescent girls to eliminate child marriage continue in Maradi and Zinder regions, with 340 new villages reached since mid-August 2023. An estimated 38,484 at-risk adolescent girls aged 10-19 years live in these two regions.
- As part of the improvement of psychosocial support services, the Mental Health Working Group, the Child Protection AOR and UNICEF are working to support the deployment of psychologists and mental health technicians to strengthen social workers teams and develop a practical guide to psychosocial support.



Education

- The start of the 2023-2024 school year is set to take place in a context marked by sanctions and diminishing resources for the sector, which could have a devastating impact on the public education system and increase cost pressure on already vulnerable families. In addition, recurrent flooding increased security incidents, and the current political crisis are causing concerns among communities with regard to the safe return to school, especially in the four most affected regions (Tillabéri, Diffa, Tahoua and Maradi).
- Education supplies for about 306,000 primary and secondary school-age children and their teachers have been ordered and will be distributed during the first week of school, 70 per cent of the cluster caseload.
- UNICEF as the Education Cluster lead, has played a key role to strengthen coordination mechanisms and supported, with other members, the development of a guidance note related to a Safe Back to School campaign with the aim of mobilizing all stakeholders in the education community and donors to maintain education as a top priority despite the current political crisis.



Water, Hygiene and Sanitation

- UNICEF has been working on the WASH emergency preparedness and response plan for the country, based on the critical scenario with the integration of new risk zones, in particular the city of Niamey and the surrounding area, with the aim of reaching 50,000 people.
- UNICEF is finalizing an agreement with the NGOs DEDI, DEMIE and VISION+ to provide emergency WASH services to 350,000 people affected by various crises (mainly insecurity, flooding, and the cholera epidemic) in Tillabéri, Tahoua, Maradi and Zinder regions.
- The ongoing construction of seven multi-village water networks and 11 autonomous water points will improve access to safe drinking water for about 35,000 vulnerable inhabitants (including IDPs and refugees) in the regions of Tahoua, Maradi and Zinder.
- In partnership with the NGO IDELA, UNICEF is working to raise awareness on good hygiene and sanitation practices (including support for the construction and use of household latrines) among approximately 60,000 people of Gueskerou and Bosso municipalities and to distribute critical WASH to about 15 000 people at risk.



Social Protection

- In the current context, there is a risk of losing momentum in scaling up adaptive social protection to fight poverty, build resilience and respond to increasingly complex crises. Efforts to develop dynamic social registers', integrate displaced populations into social protection systems, implement innovative social protection financing strategies and strengthen the role of social protection in addressing the determinants of food insecurity could be undermined.
- UNICEF is planning to provide drought cash assistance to 27,000 households in 18 targeted municipalities through direct implementation modalities with NGOs and civil society implementing partners.



Social and Behaviour Change

- Lengthy power cuts and internet network instability have slowed community radio activities and the dissemination of life-saving messages about basic social services. A decline in participants for radio talk shows and interactive programmes, as well as the suspension of funding from key donors, has hindered large-scale community and youth engagement interventions.

- Current interventions include: (1) the organization of community forums on flood management for 89 women leaders in municipalities most affected by the floods in Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua, Dosso and Tillabéri regions; (2) a national media communication campaign on malaria and measles epidemics, as well as the promotion of vaccination, nutrition, and child protection through a partnership with a consortium of 172 community and private radio stations; (3) nationwide social mobilization and community-based interventions for malaria chemoprevention; and (4) strengthening of social listening and feedback collection in Diffa, Maradi, Dosso, Tillabéri, Agadez and Tahoua regions through online and offline platforms, community radio stations and community platforms led by 1,850 monitoring committees, 1,700 listening clubs and more than 800 young volunteers.



Essential Household Items

- As the Technical Coordinator of the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) in Niger, UNICEF continues to actively support key partners such as ACF, ACTED, DRC, and IRC. In this regard, 8,000 kits of essential non-food household items (NFIs) along with 8,000 hygiene kits have been provided to these stakeholders, to address the needs of nearly 56,000 displaced individuals, including over 30,000 children.
- Since mid-July 2023, over 50,000 individuals have been affected by the floods in Maradi, Tahoua, Tillabéri and Zinder regions according to the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management (MAH/GC). UNICEF is currently transferring 4,000 kits of essential household items (NFIs) and 4,000 hygiene kits to the affected areas, to address the needs of nearly 28,000 people. These distributions will be carried out in collaboration with the Directorate of Humanitarian Relief of the MAH/GC.

Updates from the Field Offices

Agadez region

- The political crisis is increasing the vulnerability of children in the Agadez region, which is already grappling with a migration crisis, risks of flooding and epidemics, and limited humanitarian access. Several development programmes have been suspended and markets are starting to run out of necessities.
- UNICEF maintains a presence in the Agadez region through its field office to meet the humanitarian and development needs of the most vulnerable populations. In Assamaka,

1,200 international migrants and 818 Malian refugees (including 443 children) expelled from Algeria continue to benefit from appropriate health, nutrition, and WASH services.

- Through the NGO INTERSOS, UNICEF is preparing a multisectoral emergency programme to ensure the provision of education and protection services for refugee and asylum-seeking children (in partnership with UNHCR) as well as migrant children in the cities of Agadez and Arlit.
- Through NGOs Red Cross and Comdev, UNICEF continues to build the capacity of health structures and community organizations to prevent and manage malnutrition and promote vaccination.

Diffa region

- UNICEF continues to support the Diffa region to address both the humanitarian needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Nigerian refugees, as well as development needs through service delivery systems for children and their families.
- Despite the ongoing challenges, UNICEF has sustained operational activities to protect and aid vulnerable populations, especially children.
- Online birth registration was launched in Goudoumaria and Foulatari municipalities, reaching 321 children (170 girls) aged 0-2 months.
- Youth empowerment: Three youth-led entrepreneurship initiatives are underway in Diffa, Kindjandi, and Maine Soroa, covering 2,000 adolescents and youth, including 900 girls, from both host and internally displaced populations.
- Emergency preparedness: A regional response plan has been developed to address the risks of flooding and additional population displacement due to increased insecurity caused by a deterioration of the political situation or armed clashes.
- A local partner capacity assessment was conducted as part of the development of Humanitarian Programme Document which is currently being prepared to support the implementation of emergency activities in the field.

Tahoua region

- UNICEF continues to support the Tahoua region which has been affected by floods that increase the vulnerability of the population. As Technical Coordinator of the RRM, UNICEF is responding to the

humanitarian needs of 16,603 affected people who lost their homes and livelihoods. It is also ensuring the continuity of services to IDPs and migrants, mainly in the north of the region.

- The impact of sanctions is beginning to be felt in several sectors of activity due to the lack of electricity and fuel transportation, the increase in the price of basic necessities and the shortage of certain pharmaceutical products.
- Due to regional sanctions, migrants living in ECOWAS countries can no longer send money to their parents in Tahoua, thus increasing the vulnerability of local households. Increased poverty in insecure areas such as Tébaram, Takanamat and Bangui, where families often have to pay "taxes" to armed groups, could increase the risk of violence by these groups against parents and children.
- A local partner capacity assessment has been conducted as part of the development of a Humanitarian Programme Document to support the implementation of the emergency activities to cover Wash and Education needs.

Maradi and Zinder regions

- The regional Protection cluster has developed a document on the impact of the current situation in the Maradi and Zinder regions, as well as awareness messages and case management guidelines translated into local languages.
- The two Regional Directorates of Water and Sanitation (DRHA) in Maradi and Zinder have set up contingency stocks of WASH kits.
- UNICEF provided cholera prevention support to the Regional Directorate of Public Health (DRSP) Maradi and the District Health of Madarounfa.
- In the Maradi region, UNICEF provided training of 104 members of school management committees (CGDES) and 52 school principals on the development of emergency preparedness and management plans.
- UNICEF is also working to strengthen nutritional and medical supplies in the two regions and is partnering with NGOs to strengthen nutrition and health preparedness and response capacity.