

NIGER

Flash Update Diphtheria # 01
10 November 2023

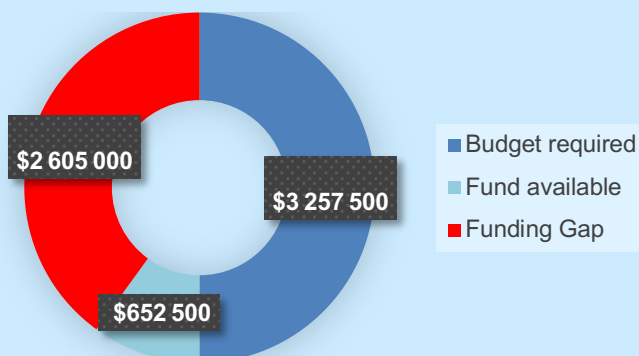


Consultation of a child at the Kantche site, Matamaye Health District, Zinder region. UNICEF ensures access to healthcare for every child, aiming to minimize the effects of illness. © UNICEF, Laouli Kalla, October 2023.

Highlights

- On 20 October 2023, the Government of Niger, through the Ministry of Public Health, Population and Social Affairs, declared a diphtheria outbreak.
- The first case was registered on 17 July 2023. As of 02 November, all eight regions of the country have notified at least 1 case of diphtheria. A total of 1,838 suspected cases of diphtheria, including 91 deaths (lethality: 5%), have been reported.
- The regions of Zinder (1,578 cases) and Agadez (132 cases) are the most impacted, contributing to 86% and 7% of the total caseload, respectively.
- 47% of positive cases are among children aged 5 to 14 years, 22% of positive cases are aged 12 to 59 months, 2.5% of positive cases are less than 1 year old and about 28.5% are aged 15 and above.
- Since the onset of the outbreak, UNICEF has initiated its response in support of and partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and other partners involved in the response. To date, 50,000 children aged 0 to 14 years have already been vaccinated.

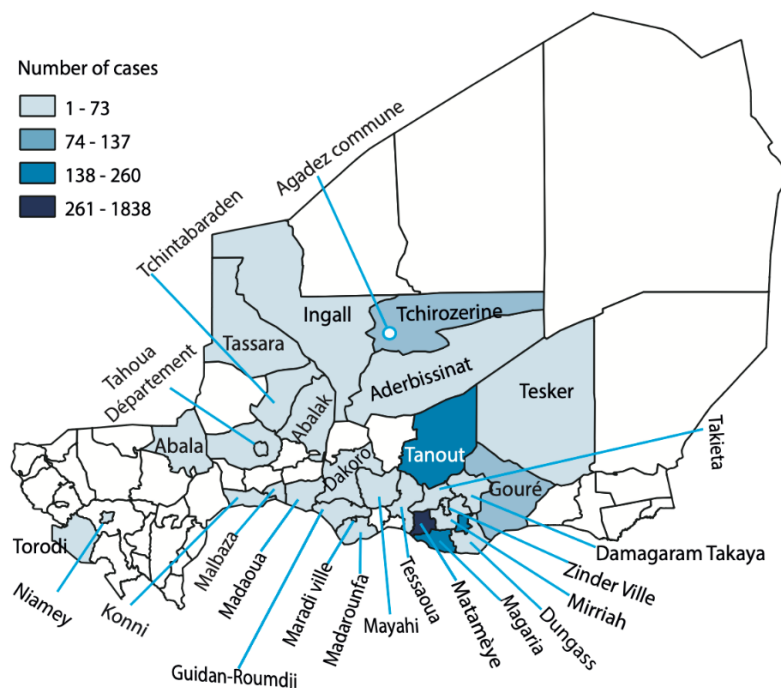
Funding Requirements



Epidemiological Situation (as of 02 November 2023)



Distribution of suspected diphtheria cases by district



UNICEF 's Response

Since the beginning of the outbreak, UNICEF has been supporting the preparedness and response efforts through multisectoral and integrated approaches, with a focus on Zinder region, where 86% of the total number of cases have occurred.



Health

- UNICEF has launched a joint initiative with the Ministry of Public Health to combat the spread of the disease.
- In line with the national response plan developed with the support of UNICEF, provision of medical supplies (Azithromycin) to support the treatment of 5,000 people in the most affected health districts (HDs) of Maradi and Zinder regions.
- Ongoing technical support to strengthen the routine vaccination programme for catching up the vaccination of children aged 0 to 23 months, including mechanisms for locating those who have been lost in the follow-up.
- Technical and logistical support for the vaccination response in the health sites of Kantche and Amsoudou, in collaboration with *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF) Switzerland. 50,000 children aged 0 to 14 years have been vaccinated.
- Support for the mid-November vaccination campaign targeting a total of 291,218 individuals (174,585 children aged 0 to 7 years and 116,633 children aged 8 to 14 years) in the most heavily affected HDs.
- Capacity building of 68 healthcare workers across 42 health centres in the Matameye Health District (20) and Mirriah Health District (22) within Zinder region. This training focuses on the identification and treatment of diphtheria cases in collaboration with the MSF Switzerland team.
- Delivery of three tents to establish a second treatment site in the Matameye Health District (Zinder region).
- UNICEF supports the Ministry of Health in its coordination efforts by strengthening the coordination mechanism involving all sectors and technical and financial partners in the response.



Training of healthcare personnel, Mirriah Health District, Zinder region. UNICEF is committed to ensuring that health workers have the capacities to provide appropriate health care to the patients. © UNICEF, Moriba Kone, October 2023.



Social and Behaviour Change

- Capacity building of 188 community health workers in interpersonal communication for diphtheria prevention.

- Provision of communication materials for hygiene promotion in community and school to 3,000 community health workers.
- 596,510 individuals in the Diffa, Maradi, Zinder, and Agadez regions reached through radio and interpersonal broadcasts on risks and preventive measures.
- Over 800 community leaders (traditional chiefs, religious leaders, women leaders, and youth leaders) engaged in promoting children vaccination for prevention, as well as the recommended actions in case of signs of illness.
- Advocacy to the Sultans of Zinder, Katsina, and Gobir for their support in the epidemic response.



Meeting with the Sultan of Zinder © UNICEF, Fati Hamza, October 2023.



Meeting with neighborhood leaders, Maradi Health District, Maradi region. UNICEF is engaging with community leaders to ensure their active involvement in the dissemination of positive messages. © UNICEF, Laouli Kalla, October 2023.



Water, Hygiene and Sanitation

- Provision of WASH supplies to health facilities in the Matameye Health District in Zinder (53 boxes of soap, a 25 kg drum of calcium hypochlorite, and 3 handwashing stations) for infection, prevention and control (IPC).
- Training of 80 community health workers to support the IPC at community level.
- Distribution of hygiene kits (soap, Aquatabs) to 500 households and provision of handwashing stations to 20 public institutions (schools, healthcare facilities, markets) in Kantche municipality (Zinder region). Priority is given to households and institutions with cases or contact persons.
- As part of the preparedness actions, 10,000 Aquatab tablets, 10,000 PUR sachets, and 200 boxes of soap were provided to the Regional Directorate of Public Health (DRSP) in Maradi.