JOINT HUB IN NIGER
2022 – 2024

Niger hosts the largest number of forcibly displaced people of any country in West Africa, with over 400,000 refugees from Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso and other countries, and 550,000 internally displaced people.[1] In 2023 the security situation in the country worsened, causing further forced displacement. Combined with the food price crisis and recurrent climatic shocks, these factors have contributed to increasing vulnerability for both refugees and Nigerien nationals alike; a total of 3.3 million people—13 percent of the population—are acutely food insecure.[2]

JOINT HUB SUPPORT

The Joint Hub has been supporting the UNHCR and WFP country offices in Niger since June 2022, with the development and implementation of a common targeting strategy for basic needs assistance for refugees, IDPs and host populations. The new targeting strategy was implemented from May 2023 onwards, commencing with the community-based selection of households (May-August). The new lists of eligible households were used for food assistance from November 2023.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- **Assessment and analysis**: In July 2023, the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) report was published, providing detailed analysis of the vulnerability of refugees, IDPs and host populations living in the regions of Tillabéri, Tahoua, Maradi and Diffa. The findings were used to inform the re-targeting approach for WFP's food assistance (see box below). The analysis is also intended as a starting point for collective reflection, with the aim of finding sustainable solutions to better support displaced populations and the communities that host them, in a context where humanitarian and development resources – as well as community solidarity - are increasingly stretched in the face of growing needs.
- **Accountability to affected people**: The Joint Hub provided considerable technical support, both remotely and through in-country missions, in order to integrate protection and accountability. A total of 72 community consultation sessions were held with refugees and asylum seekers, IDPs and host communities, as well as local authorities and NGO partners; the qualitative data was used to inform the analysis, develop and refine the targeting approach. A joint communication strategy was also developed and rolled out, focusing on sharing key messages about the retargeting of WFP's food assistance and how to make appeals.

- **Documentation**: The Joint Hub produced technical documentation detailing the process for targeting for WFP's food assistance in 2023.

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[1] Niger | Global Focus (unhcr.org)
[2] Niger | World Food Programme (wfp.org)

TARGETING STRATEGY

FOR WFP'S FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES, IDPS AND HOST POPULATIONS IN NIGER

On the basis of the JAM assessment and analysis, which provided an estimation of vulnerability levels by geographic region and type of population, the Joint Hub supported UNHCR and WFP in developing the method for re-targeting WFP food assistance.

The chosen targeting method uses a combination of categorical eligibility criteria and community-based selection of households.

Eligibility criteria: the same categorical eligibility criteria were used for all population groups (refugees, IDPs and hosts) across all geographic regions, based on the quantitative results of the household survey and validation through qualitative community consultations ("categorical" approach).

The eligibility criteria were all households with **at least one** of the following characteristics would be selected for assistance:

- Female household head, with no other member able to work in the household
- At least 1 disabled member
- At least 1 chronically ill member
- At least 4 children under 5 years old
- Household head aged 60 years or above, with no other member able to work in the household
- Assistance as the most important income source

Selection of eligible households: these categorical criteria were then applied as part of a community process inspired by the Household Economy Approach, during which the communities themselves identify and select the households that meet the agreed upon eligibility criteria ("community-based" approach). This selection process took 3-4 months (May-August 2023).

The rationale for this approach was: i) the country operations' decision to use rigorous, objective, quantitative data to build an evidence-based targeting strategy; ii) the fact that communities already receiving WFP assistance were familiar with community-based methods (and specifically the Household Economy Approach); and iii) the need for a harmonised approach for all three population groups (refugees, IDPs and host communities), thus avoiding differential approaches that could be perceived as unfair and negatively affect social cohesion.

Source: Mission d'évaluation conjointe (JAM) PAM-UNHCR auprès des populations réfugiées, déplacées internes et hôtes au Niger (2023)