

Multi-country Office Senegal

October-December 2020

Refugees in all MCO countries have had access to **health assistance and other socio-economic Government measures** to help them cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

UNHCR aid for the Governments, refugees and local host communities **continued** through **awareness-raising on Covid-19**, capacity-building for health structures and direct support.

Contingency plans have been drafted in Guinea and Togo to prepare the ground for population displacement due to the elections in Ivory Coast and Guinea.

KEY STATISTICS

46,063

Refugees (39,380) and asylum-seekers (6,683) are hosted in Benin, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

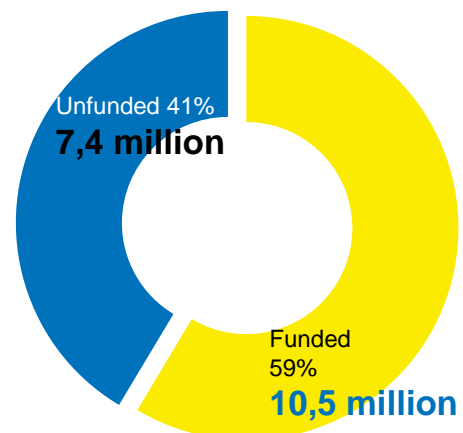
700

Refugee pupils in Senegal received school kits to facilitate their online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic within the framework of UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN COVID-19 MPTF), a joint project between UNHCR, UNESCO, UNICEF and ITU.

FUNDING (AS OF 15 DECEMBER)

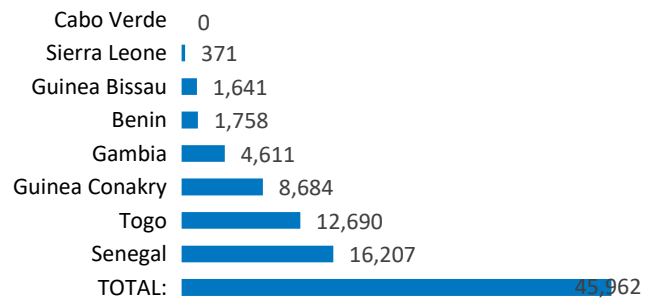
USD 17,9 million

requested for the MCO Senegal operation



POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Host Countries



* Above-mentioned figures include refugees and asylum-seekers.



Meeting between the Guinea-Bissau Minister of External Affairs and Monique Ekoko, MCO Senegal Representative, 27 November.

Operational Context

- Against the backdrop of presidential elections in **Guinea** on 18 October, UNHCR was appointed as the Lead of the Protection Sector to ensure that the contingency plan was operational before the elections. Eventually, no major incidents were noted, and no population displacement took place.
- On 27 November, Monique Ekoko, MCO Senegal Representative visited **Guinea Bissau** and met with the President of the Republic, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Interior, and held meetings with the UN Resident Coordinator, Guinea Bissau UNHCR Staff, the partners: CNRD and Manitese, and the DAFI Students. During the high-level discussions, Monique Ekoko requested to conduct a nationwide census to complete the naturalization process of refugees in Guinea-Bissau. The President of the Republic, Umaro Sissoco Embaló, pledged his support to this initiative. While the last census of refugees in Guinea-Bissau was carried out exclusively in the Cacheu region in the north of the country, the authorities estimate that many refugees are also present in other regions. The new census aims to cover all regions of the country to complete the process of naturalization of refugees.



Sensitizing caravan within the #IBelong campaign against statelessness in Dakar, Senegal, 6 November.

Achievements



IVORY COAST SITUATION

- On 31 October, Cote d'Ivoire held its presidential election against the backdrop of violence before, during, and after the voting. On 3 November, the Independent Electoral Commission declared incumbent President Alassane Ouattara the winner with 94.27% of the votes and a 53.9% participation rate. The Ivorian refugees, who began fleeing in small numbers since September, stated that they feared the escalation of electoral violence. In this context, UNHCR has drafted and approved contingency plans in the countries neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire, including **Guinea and Togo**.
- **In Togo**, the number of arrivals reached 35 Ivorians, all of whom were received by the National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR), UNHCR's government partner. UNHCR drafted a contingency plan, bringing together a variety of stakeholders, such as national authorities (Ministries of Territorial Administration, Security, Social Action), United Nations Agencies (UNAIDS, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF), and civil society organizations (CNDH, ATBEF).
- **In Guinea**, some 380 individuals from more than 125 households have arrived to the districts of Lola and Conakry, all of whom have been residing within the host communities. In line with the contingency plan, UNHCR stepped up its border monitoring activities and established a network between local authorities and communities equipped with phones to alert UNHCR in case of any influx. UNHCR requested the authorities to open a humanitarian corridor and presented its contingency plan to the UNCT.



COVID-19

Achievements and Impact

- On 22 October in **Guinea**, UNHCR donated health kits for the Prefectural Directorate of Health in the city of Macenta, which hosts the refugee camp. The donation consisted of thermometers, hydroalcoholic gel, hand washing devices, surgical masks, gloves, protective clothing, soap, and bleach. The Nzérékoré Regional Hospital received a similar donation.
- In **Senegal** during the month of October, the distribution of food as part of the Government's social resilience measures against COVID-19 reached refugees living in Woudourou, Aly woury and Ndioum. Each family received 100kg of rice, 10 liters of oil, 18 pieces of soap, and 10 kg of pasta.
- In October, UNHCR partners in **The Gambia**, GAFNA and GCR, conducted monitoring of refugees' settlement rural areas to assess the protection environment and to reaffirm the dangers of COVID-19 as well as remind of measures put in place to contain its spread.

- In **The Gambia**, as part of the Back to School project, between 17-20 November, UNHCR partner, The Gambia food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA), implemented a training on COVID-19 that targeted schools and community representatives from upper and senior secondary schools. A renowned Gambian Comedy Team 'Kitabu D' delivered a training for 24 participants.
- In **Guinea**, a series of trainings was organized in November by the partner of UNHCR, the Organization for Integrated Community Development of Guinea (ODIC). As part of building the capacities of health structures in the city of Nzérékoré, training sessions took place: on 2-4 November for 20 health workers; on 5-6 November for 15 health workers; on 9-10 November for 20 people. In addition, in November UNHCR and partners organized 5 awareness-raising sessions on COVID-19 in the camp for 67 people between 15 and 60 years old, including 34 women.
- In **Senegal**, as part of the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund in Senegal (UN Covid-19 MPTF), from 12 to 23 November, 18 radio broadcasts were organized in the departments of Matam, Kanel, Bakel, Ranérou, Dagana, and Podor, to raise awareness among refugee students, parents and educational staff, including the host populations, on compliance with barrier measures against Covid-19.
- In **Togo** in November, within the framework of the fight against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp, the total number of PoCs assisted with psychological counseling reached 99 beneficiaries. In addition, during the reporting period, the total number of refugees assisted with medications due to Covid-19 co-morbidities grew to 128 refugees.
- In **Guinea-Bissau**, on 9-13 November UNHCR organized in S. Domingos a sensitization session for 100 teachers and 100 parents on Covid-19 prevention. In addition, between 25 November and 4 December, UNHCR and Manitese delivered in-kind support to 40 villages in the Cacheu Region in terms of basic needs' products and hygienic items, as well as sensitization posters on COVID-19.
- During the reporting period in **Togo**, UNHCR's partner, the Green Village Foundation (GVF), organized awareness-raising sessions on survival sex during the COVID-19 pandemic and the prevention of HIV / AIDS. In addition, within the framework of the fight against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp, UNHCR and partners assisted 125 refugees with psychological counseling. 20 anti-drug peer educators have been trained on awareness raising against drug consumption in the Avépozo camp.
- In December, GAFNA in **The Gambia** has disbursed the second phase of CBI for 57 vulnerable rural and urban refugees within the framework of the COVID -19 response. On 31 December, GAFNA also launched the Manual for Community Engagement on Emergencies as part of COVID -19 Response. Copies of the manual were distributed among the event's participants and partner institutions.
- In **Guinea**, at the end of December UNHCR donated an ambulance to the health authorities of the city of Nzérékoré.

**PROTECTION****Achievements and Impact**

- In **Benin**, UNHCR partners participated on 20-24 October in a meeting aiming to draft the legal framework on the status of refugees and stateless persons. In addition, on 22 October, UNHCR partners participated in the awareness-raising training on the asylum application procedures in Benin organized by Amnesty International in collaboration with the CNR.
- On 16-17 November, UNHCR in **Guinea-Bissau** carried out a refreshment training on child protection. Participants included the Magistrates, journalists, civil society, the UNHCR partner Manitese, and other stakeholders.
- With the upsurge in irregular migration in **Senegal**, UNHCR met on 20 November with the General Directorate of Support to Senegalese Abroad aiming to reaffirm UNHCR's commitment to assist the Government, strengthen cooperation and communication in the context of identification and referral of people likely to fall under UNHCR's mandate. Among the series of irregular departures was a canoe that exploded on 23 October sailing in the direction of the Canary Islands. Out of 200 people carried by the boat, 51 people were rescued and taken to the naval base according to the Senegalese army. More than a hundred people have disappeared.
- In **Togo**, on 10-12 November UNHCR organized a training workshop on refugee status determination (RSD) for the members of the Appeals Commission (CR), new members of the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) as well as new eligibility officers of the National Commission for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR). Providing legal assistance to asylum seekers appealing the decision and providing interpretation services were among participants' recommendations.
- In **Togo**, after 3 minors were reported missing in the Avepozo camp and found at the Benin-Niger border, UNHCR assisted them to bring them back to their families, making sure they can continue their education. Two psychologists provided psychological support for 16 refugees.

**STATELESSNESS**

- In the Bafata Region in **Guinea-Bissau**, from 19 to 23 October, UNHCR organized jointly with the Ministry of Justice and UNICEF, a registration of children aged from 0 to 7 at risk of statelessness.
- Between 19-20 and 21-22 October, UNHCR held two workshops on statelessness in Bissau, **Guinea-Bissau**, for a total of 60 participants from notaries offices, the Justice Ministry, the Interior Ministry (Direction of Migration and CNRD), the UNHCR partner Manitese, civil society organisations, and journalists. In addition, in October-November, UNHCR in collaboration with UNICEF organized in the Islands a registration exercise for children aged between 0 and 7 at risk of statelessness. In the Region of Bafata, 1449 children were registered.

- **In Guinea-Bissau**, to celebrate the #Ibelong campaign, on 6 November UNHCR participated in a TV debate about statelessness together with the focal point on statelessness from the Ministry of Justice and a UNHCR expert on statelessness.
- **In Senegal**, within the framework of the #Ibelong campaign, UNHCR in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and its partner, the National Committee for the Management of Returnees and Displaced Persons (CNRRPD), as well as the civil society organizations, organized two activities, namely on 4 November a caravan in Dakar with artists of the group Bidew Bou Bess, aiming to engage the general public for the fight against statelessness. In addition, on 6 November, a webinar was organized under the theme "Raising awareness of the commitments made by states to eradicate statelessness by 2024". The webinar saw the participation of about 50 representatives of the Government, United Nations Agencies, Journalists, civil society organizations, refugees and others.
- **In Togo**, as part of the celebration of the 6th anniversary of the #Ibelong campaign, UNHCR organized a series of activities including a poetry competition and a conference debate. Taking place on 5 November, under the theme: "2024, a world without stateless persons", the conference helped to raise awareness among the participants, who included Togolese authorities, members of civil society, university professors and the members of the National Commission for the fight against statelessness. Through video clips broadcasted via social media, Togolese well-known personalities, civil society, and United Nations Agencies supported the campaign and helped raise awareness on statelessness.
- **In Senegal**, from 12 to 20 November, UNHCR partner the African Office for Development and Cooperation (OFADEC) organized in Kanel, Bakel, Orkadiere, Matam, Golaya, Ndioum, and the Richard-Toll valley, 7 sensitization radio programs on statelessness and how to fight against statelessness. In addition, 7 focus groups were organized with civil status officers, community relays, teachers, heads of refugee sites, village / district heads in Fanaye, Golaya Ourosogui, Kanel, Orkadiere and Gabou, bringing together around twenty stakeholders for each meeting.
- In **Senegal** in December, 300 cases of refugees born in Senegal without a birth certificate were collected and transmitted to the authorities. While due to the COVID-19 context all mobile court hearings are suspended, UNHCR advocated with the President of the Court of Matam to expedite the case.
- In December, the **Sierra Leone** Minister of Internal Affairs signed and adopted the National Action Plan (NAP) on Statelessness. In addition, the statelessness focal point, MCO Senegal, during a mission to Sierra Leone conducted a training on the participatory approach used during assessments. The participants included Parliamentarians, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), CI-SL, Human Right Commission and CSOs on Statelessness.
- On 31 December in **Guinea** has started a TV campaign on the channels of the Radio-Television Guinea (RTG), which for one month will broadcast a TV spot made by UNHCR on birth registration to tackle statelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**EDUCATION****Achievements and Impact**

- In October, in **The Gambia**, GAFNA, the UNHCR partner, and the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education launched the back to Senior Secondary School Education project. Its implementation started by providing 120 handwashing buckets accompanied with assorted detergents and by organizing a fumigation of classrooms and schools.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 12-14 October, the UNHCR Field Office organized trainings to improve literacy among girls living in São-Domingos and Ingore aiming to create and dynamize girls' clubs for alphabetization and non-formal education.
- The UNHCR **Senegal** Field Office in coordination with the German Embassy, the Ministry of Higher Education, OFADEC, CARITAS and the Refugee Committee held on 19 October the DAFI scholarships committee for the academic year 2020-2021. Based on the results of the 2019-2020 academic year, out of a total of 37 scholarship holders, 7 students were recommended for the renewal of the scholarship, and 13 students left the program after having received their graduation diplomas (license). Another scholarship renewal commission was organized on 27 November, when a total of 95 scholarships comprising vocational training, secondary education and DAFI scholarships for higher education have received a favourable opinion.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 15 October, following an earlier evaluation of the living conditions of certain DAFI students, the UNHCR donated furniture to help two DAFI students living in precarious conditions.
- In **Benin** on 21 November, an awareness session on the COVID-19 pandemic was organized by DAFI students as part of the DAFI CLUB activities.
- In **Guinea-Bissau** on 16-17 November, a training was organized on online education for 40 teachers in S. Domingos. On 19-20 November, a similar training was organized in Bissau, also for 40 teachers.
- In **Sierra Leone**, within the secondary school education initiative, trainings and payments of cash grants were organized in November for 100 secondary school

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