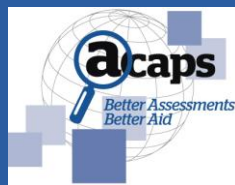


Secondary Data Review

Niger

31.10. – 07.11.2011

ECB

Emergency Capacity
Building Project

Date of publication: 07.11.2011
 Prepared by: ACAPS, Geneva
 Nature of the crisis: Food Insecurity

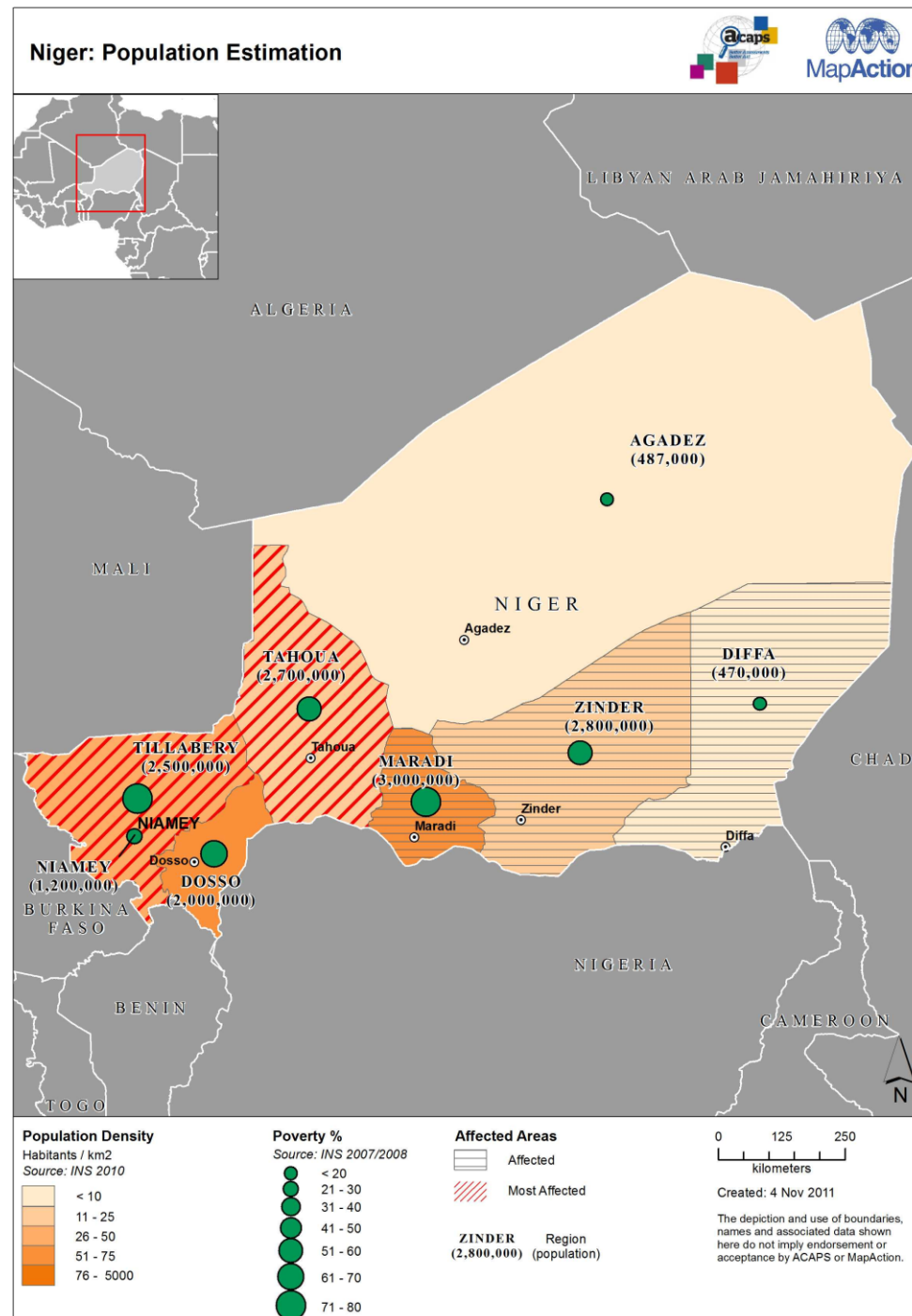
About this document: This document is a desk study in which estimates of scale, severity and likely impact of a natural or man-induced disaster are determined. It aims to inform decision making for preparedness and emergency response. Information has been gathered through a review of secondary data, field studies on-going during the emergency, contact with individuals working in the field, use of lessons learned and experience from past similar crises or disasters. The SDR is intended to complement and integrate assessment-related information from other agencies and feedback is welcome on how this document can be improved (Operations@acaps.org). CaLP, ECB, infoasaid and ACAPS thank agencies and NGOs who have shared the data and analysis which made this report possible. **Disclaimer:** Information provided is provisional as it has not been possible to independently verify field reports. As this report covers highly dynamic subject, utility of the information may decrease with time. Please use the most recent update.

Disaster Overview

Niger has seen rapid population growth and environmental change over the last 40 years: arable surfaces have decreased, and the population has multiplied by four. Over half the population suffers from chronic food insecurity, and 22% of the population is extremely food insecure (SWG 2011). 2011 is seeing failure of both cash and food crops due to drought and insects (Tufts 3/11). Chronic malnutrition in children <5 has increased from 27% in 1992 to 46% in 2009 (CaLP 2011, NNS 2009). In 2010, 250,000 children affected by severe acute malnutrition were admitted to therapeutic centres for direct life-saving interventions. Half the population suffered from food insecurity (UNICEF 2010), while fully 3.3 million were severely food insecure (IFRC 31/10).

This report coincides with the harvest season in Niger, thus, this should be the most food secure time for the country with high levels of food availability nationwide. However, early predictions indicate that close to three million people are at risk of food insecurity due to production shortfalls in 2011/2012, predominantly in Tillabery and Tahoua (FEWSNET 9/2011). Previous food crises in Niger rapidly evolved from manageable to crisis levels when Nigerian import prices rose in light of regional food shortages. It is problematic that limited information on cross border market trade with Nigeria is available. Gaps in understanding of the impact of flooding in Southern Nigeria on harvest outputs and ensuing availability of food for import to Niger also need to be addressed (Tufts 4/11).

Available data on food needs are limited and inconsistent making it difficult to determine if current food insecurity will remain localised or whether Niger is in a state of national pre-crisis food insecurity that will expand countrywide as harvest food availability decreases and import prices continue to increase to levels similar to previous food crises.



Key priorities

Most affected areas

- Main food insecure regions: **Tillabery** and **Tahoua**
- Impacted regions: Diffa, Maradi and Zinder
- Urban Niamey, especially areas bordering the Niger River

Most affected groups

- Children <5
- Women and girls
- Severely food insecure households, poor and very poor agricultural households
- Returnees and their families and communities hosting them

Priority Interventions

- Address food deficits through appropriate avenues, including local/regional purchases, food imports, relocations of stocks in country, or other relevant solutions.
- Provide emergency health services in cholera affected communities.
- Monitor potential epidemic outbreaks to enable quick response.
- Increase access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.
- Distribute water treatment and water storage materials, i.e. purification tablets, disinfecting materials for latrines, and jerry cans.
- Rehabilitate damaged and out dated water pumps/wells, maintain current pumps and other improved sources.
- Distribute WASH and hygiene items to flood and cholera affected communities.
- Provide comprehensive reintegration assistance to returnees and their families.

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Information gaps and needs

- There is a lack of information on crop production in Nigeria, on whether markets/production areas are in distress and on what levels and types of food are available for import into Niger.
- Need for summary mapping of ongoing and planned assessments (survey of surveys) and systematic analysis of assessment findings.
- Lack of regularly updated information on movement of returnees, disaggregated by sex and age.
- Need for updated and consistent baseline information, including detailed population figures (census).
- Need to increase consistency among agencies on collection and analysis of food insecure and vulnerable population figures.
- Lack of information regarding the disaster impacts and the efficiency and efficacy of humanitarian assistance.
- Detailed information on structural changes in pastoral zones affected by successive droughts could be expanded to provide a clearer picture of pastoral vulnerabilities.
- Systematic information gathering on the needs and priorities directly expressed by affected persons themselves remains limited.
- There is a gap in in-country capacity for information gathering and analysis to support effective programme design (CaLP 01/11).
- Continued and improved coordination at national and local levels on targeting, market monitoring, and methods of analysis are vital to ensuring that standards on information collection and analysis are applied (CaLP 01/11).

Recent and ongoing assessments

- UNICEF supported a rapid assessment to the Maradi region ([UNICEF 01/09](#)).
- The Red Cross Society of Niger (RCSN) carried out a quick health assessment in Tillabery at the onset of the floods ([IFRC 02/09](#)).
- RCSN further conducted rapid health assessments in Zinder and Tahoua. A second assessment was conducted by governorate and health authorities in Tillabery and Maradi in collaboration with the RCSN ([IFRC 24/10](#)).
- The first Sahel Household Economy Analysis (HEA) took place in 2007. Since 2007, 19 additional HEAs have been conducted across Mauritania, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso: 11 in agricultural zones, four in agro-pastoral zones, three in pastoral zones, and one in a peri-urban context ([SWG 2011](#)).
- FEWS NET assessed harvest prospects for 2011/12, supported by evidence collected from field assessments, producers, and government technicians ([FEWS NET 9/2011](#)).
- A mid-term crop assessment with ground observations has been organized by the Statistics Bureau and the Ministry of Agriculture in conjunction with food security partners ([FEWS NET 9/2011](#)).
- The national Early Warning System (EWS) assessed vulnerability to food insecurity during their annual June assessment ([FEWS NET 9/2011](#)).

Recommendations for further assessments

- Strengthen capacity of regional, national and decentralised institutions to conduct needs assessment, planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of cross-sectoral programs, as well as the use of analytical tools.
- Address identified needs through a multi-sectoral approach to allow for more specific recommendations for intervention ([OCHA 2011](#)).
- Needs assessments take into account significant differences in livelihoods strategies and productive assets between different socioeconomic categories of households ([OCHA 2011](#)).
- More detailed assessments on food security needs and current shortfalls to inform decision making on emergency food assistance.
- As a food crisis evolves, migration increases, and vulnerability of marginalised categories of people on the move should be assessed.
- EWS should incorporate indicators of purchasing power that relate to the poorest households. Monitoring of vulnerability should extend below the level of districts, and the vulnerable zones should provide information on the situation at the local level.
- In drought related emergencies needs assessments are increasingly coordinated and rigorous, yet remain overly focused on or biased to crop production, and often concentrate disproportionately on food insecurity ([ALNAP 01/10](#)).
- To assess the impact of humanitarian interventions, sex and age disaggregated data is needed to improve the analysis of specific needs ([OCHA 2011](#)).
- Gathering of evidence on the short- and medium-term impacts of cash transfer programming from both humanitarian and development perspectives (CaLP 01/11).

Operational Constraints

- Late donor response to appeals has been a factor constraining effective field operations (IFRC 27/07). The 2011 CAP is only 44% funded (OCHA 04/11).
- Delays distributing food aid to affected areas, particularly food aid from foreign sources (SWG 2011).
- Food aid distributions are also inadequate in quantity, leaving gaps in need for food insecure populations (SWG 2011).
- Returning armed Tuaregs and other nomadic groups from Libya and a large influx of refugees from Cote d'Ivoire and Libya may lead to **increased inter-communal tension** and negatively impact the delivery of humanitarian aid and potentially limit humanitarian access (AFP 29/08 , FAO/EU 31/10).
- Shortages of food and services available through health facilities is discouraging mothers from accessing services at Integrated Health Centres (IFRC 27/07).
- Cost of fuel - fuel has undergone successive price increases since June, however fuel prices stabilised in September, reaching an historical price level of 2008 which saw a global food and fuel price crisis (WFP 02/11). If food will need to be imported from Burkina Faso or Benin, transport costs will further push up the costs of food (Tufts 3/11).
- Devaluation of both the US\$ and the Euro and their subsequent loss of purchasing power is reducing Nigerian exports to Niger (ACF 2/11).
- The creation of Al Quaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has affected security in the Sahel, including the northern part of Niger. Several kidnappings and assassinations of expatriate workers occurred in 2011 (MAE 2011).

Lessons Learned

- Links and differences between humanitarian and development programming have not been clearly defined, impacting management of prior crises (OCHA 2011).
- At the onset of the 2010 food crisis, humanitarian needs were underestimated due to lack of an appropriate evaluation of the needs of adequate resources, especially within the nutrition sector (OCHA 2011).
- The absence of standard international criteria of intervention has impeded a clear definition of priority needs. Identified needs should be addressed through a multi-sectoral approach (OCHA 2011).
- Official estimates of food insecurity are based on the Ministry of Agriculture's food balance sheet, which does not include vulnerabilities in different livelihood zones. This incomplete picture of food needs may have contributed to inadequate response to pastoralist populations' needs during the 2009/10 drought (ALNAP 01/10).
- Prevention at an early stage of a food crisis is cheaper than a large humanitarian response. During the 2005 food crisis, it would have cost US\$1 per day to prevent malnutrition among children had immediate intervention been forthcoming. By July 2005, it was costing US\$80 to save a malnourished child's life (CARE 26/10).
- In 2010, a lack of transport, pastoralist lifestyles and pressure on women to prepare fields for harvest meant severely malnourished children were taken out of therapeutic feeding programmes before treatment was complete. Health centres in remote rural areas, where treatment was provided, were too far away for families to reach (IRIN 2010).
- In large parts of Niger and Chad, hundreds of thousands of men left their homes to search for food or income. Women were left to care for themselves, their children and older persons. When food stocks were exhausted, women were reduced to searching for wild foods in the countryside, becoming weak and malnourished as a result (SWG 2011).
- The international community has repeated mistakes made in previous food crises. A slow response resulted in deterioration of the situation, unnecessary suffering, a loss of assets by poor households in both agricultural and pastoral areas, a huge increase in the level of need and a significant rise in costs (SWG 2011).

Affected Population

Food crisis affected

- As of 31 August 2011, assessments indicate that crops will not be fully harvested in 2,496 farming villages, affecting an estimated 2.9 million Nigeriens and putting them at risk of malnutrition and asset depletion (CARE 26/10).
- Humanitarian organizations in Niger had expected to treat 200,000 children this year for malnutrition. However, three months before the end of the year this number has already been exceeded by 17,000 (CARE 26/10).

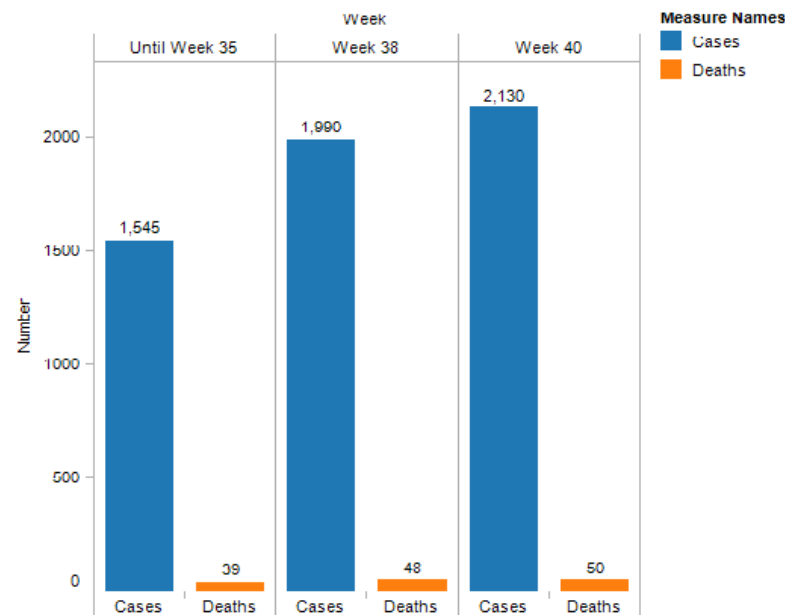
Flood affected

- Torrential rains have caused flooding since 17 August 2011 in Tillabery (Ouallam, Tera, Tillabery and Kollo); Tahoua (Abalack, Konni, Tchintabaraden, Azai, Tabalack, Bouza), Maradi (Mayayi) and Dosso regions (IFRC 02/09).
- Nine people have been reported dead, over 1,750 houses destroyed; 28,175 people have been left homeless. Affected persons have taken refuge in schools, mosques, neighbours and relatives' houses (IFRC 02/09).
- 1,929 hectares of crops have been destroyed or washed away; loss of livestock and small ruminants includes 512 animals (IFRC 02/09).

Cholera affected populations

- Since the first confirmed case on 16th March, the 2011 cholera outbreak has affected seven regions (IFRC 24/10).
- By week 35 of 2011 (29 August-4 September), 28 active sources in four regions (Tillabery, Maradi, Zinder and Diffa) were identified. By week 35, 1,545 cases with 39 deaths were recorded with a case fatality rate of 2.52% (IFRC 24/10).
- In week 38 (19-25 September), 240 new cases were reported in these areas. In addition, 205 cases and 9 deaths were reported in three new locations, namely Niamey I and II, with 183 cases and 6 deaths), Dosso (2 cases), and Tahoua regions (Illéga, 20 cases and 3 deaths) (IFRC 24/10).
- By week 40 (3-9 October), **2,130 cases** and **50 deaths** had been reported throughout the country (IFRC 24/10).

Cholera affected populations: cases and deaths



Source: (IFRC 24/10)

Displacement profile

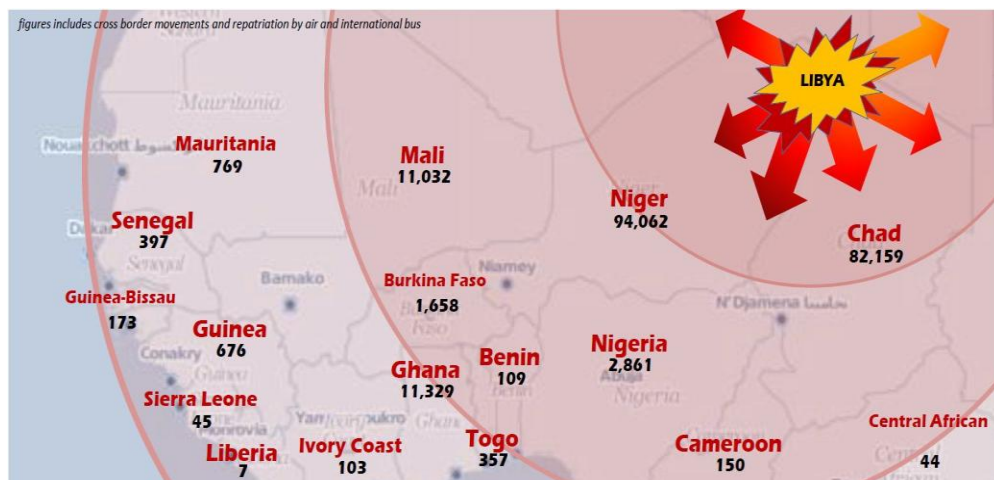
Inter-communal violence

- Internal displacement has resulted from armed conflict between government forces and Tuareg factions in Agadez, and by clashes between sedentary farmers and nomadic pastoralists across Niger, especially along the western border with Mali (IDMC 2010).
- In Tillabery, inter-communal violence has increased since the armed conflict ended in 2009. But, little is known about resulting displacement (IDMC 2010).
- In 2007, a militant group, the Niger Movement for Justice, reignited a conflict between government and Tuareg factions displacing an estimated 11,000 people (IDMC 2010).
- When the conflict abated, roughly 4,500 IDPs returned to their homes late 2008, early 2009. The number of remaining IDPs as of 2010 was unknown (IDMC 2010).

Migrants

- On 1 January 2011, 314 refugees and 18 asylum seekers were living in Niger, with 803 refugees and 325 asylum seekers originating from Niger (UNHCR 2011).

West African Refugees from Libya



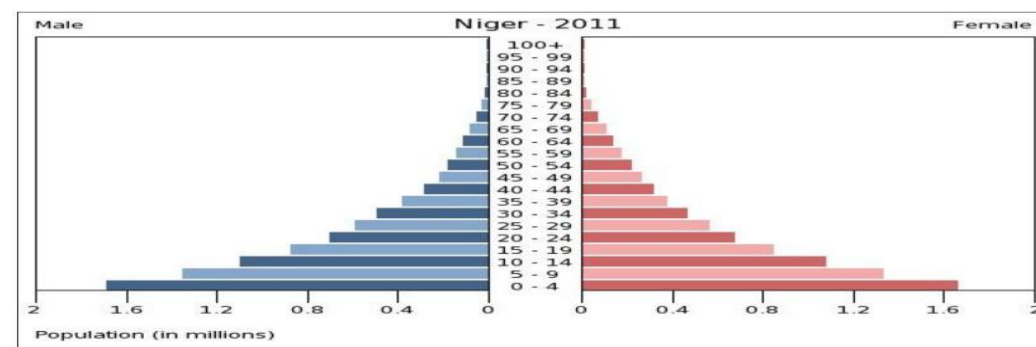
(Source: IOM 27/10)

- By 27 October, statistics on cross border movements and repatriation by air and international bus services indicated that 94,062 returnees from Libya had arrived since March (IOM 27/10).
- Cross-border movements account for a total of 84,428 people who have arrived in Niger, 94% of whom are Nigeriens and 6% are Third Country Nationals (TCNs) (IOM 27/10).

Population profile

- The 2011 population of 15.5 million (EU 31/10), an increase from 11 million in 2001 (INS 2010, 2011).
- Approximately 80% of the population lives in rural areas (INS 2010).
- Population density is almost 12 inhabitants per km² (INS 2010).
- Niger is divided into seven regions and the capital district Niamey. Regions are subdivided into 36 departments. South-western regions are the most populous areas, in terms of population number and density (INS 2010).
- North-eastern regions Agadez and Diffa comprise more than half of the land cover of Niger, but only contain a combined 961,000 inhabitants (INS 2010).
- The provinces in the far south west of the country, where the Niger River flows, house a population of 5.7 million. This is one of the most densely populated areas

of Niger, with Niamey having 4792.4habitants/km², Dosso having 59.6 habitants/km², and Tillabery having 25.6 habitants/km² (INS 2010).



(Source: US Census 2011)

Country profile

Key indicators

Main indicators

- Population: 15,511,000 (EU 31/10)
- Life expectancy at birth: 58 (INS 2010)
- Literacy rate: 29% (WB 2005); Women (15 and +): 15.1%; Men: 42.9% (HDR 2009)
- Rural population: 83% (EU 31/10; WHO 2009)
- In 2009, the population growth rate was 4% (UNFPA 2011).
- Human Development Index: HDI value: 0,261. Rank: 167/178 (UNDP 2010)
- Natural disaster Risk Index: High Risk (NDI 2010)
- Demography (INS 2010):
 - 7.9 million (51.9%) children <15
 - 6.9 million (45.6%) persons aged 15-64
 - 380,000 (2.5%) persons aged 65+

Health indicators

- Mortality rate < 5 (per 1,000): 160 (UNICEF 2009)
- Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000): 650 (UNICEF 2009)

Main characteristics

Country size

- Total (Sq. Km): 1,267 Sq. Km (CIA 2011)
- Country comparison to the world: 22nd, slightly larger than Angola and slightly smaller than Chad (CIA 2011)

Geography and climate

- Climate: desert; mostly hot, dry, dusty; tropical in extreme south (CIA 2011)
- Temperatures: average 31°C to 41°C, minimum in wet season 29°C, maximum in dry season 40.5°C (Map of World 2011)
- Arable land: 11.43% (CIA 2011)
- Terrain: predominately desert plains and sand dunes, flat to rolling plains in south, hills in north (CIA 2011)
- Natural resources: uranium, coal, iron ore, tin, phosphates, gold, molybdenum, gypsum, salt, petroleum (CIA 2011)

Economy

- Gross national income per capita: US\$680 (OCHA 2010)
- Corruption Perception Index : 2,6; Rank: 123/178 (TI 2010)
- Poverty rate: 59.5% (UNSTAT 2011), 65% lives on less than 1\$ per day (OCHA 2011; EU 31/10)
- Labour force per occupation: 70% works in the agricultural sector (OCHA 2011)
- Employment rates: women 25% , men 11.8% (OCHA 2011)

Comparison between economic and demographic growth

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
GDP growth (annual %)	5.8	3.4	8.7	- 1.2	8.8	n/a
Demographic growth (annual %)	2.92	2.9	2.88	3.68	3.66	3.64

(WB 2010, CIA 2011)

Socio-cultural characteristics

- Ethnic groups: Hausa (56%); Djerma-Songhai (22%); nomadic and semi-nomadic inhabitants - Peul (8.5%), Tuareg (8%), Beri-Beri or Kanouri (4.3%); and Arab, Toubou and Gourmantches people (1.2%) (NE 2011)
- The majority sedentary groups are the Hausa (56%), mainly based in central Niger and the Djerma-Songhai (22%) in the West (NE 2011, Geo confluences 2006).
- Tuareg and Peul are the main pastoralist groups (NE 2011, Geo confluences 2006).
- Demographic growth is higher for sedentarists than pastoralists (IRED 2006).
- Competition between scarce resources has created stress between sedentary and pastoral populations. Even although water sources are legally shared, a dispute between Bororos and Tuaregs nomad groups and cultivators arose five years ago in the Maradi and Zinder regions. Cultivators blocked the access to the water sources, when the nomad groups came to water their cattle. Mediation has been promoted since then, to restore the former transhumance ways. Despite this measure, tensions remain between nomads and sedentary populations, and can be only resolved by an increase of the resources (IRED 2006).
- Languages: French, Arabic, other national languages include Hausa, Zarma, Peul, Tamjeq, and Kanouri (INS 2010, Université Laval 2010)
- Religion: Muslim: 90-98%, Christians and Animists comprise 2% of the population (CIA 2011, MOW 2011, NE 2011)

Political environment and Security

- Government: Niger has been a multiparty system since 1999, through the adoption of a new constitution. The regime is semi-presidential, Mamadou Tandja was re-elected president in 2004 ([INS 2010](#)). In 2009, his mandate was extended by three years following a controversial referendum. A year later (18th February 2010), he was overthrown in a coup d'état led by the military chief Salou Djibo ([BBC 2010](#)). A presidential election organised by the transitional government on 31st January 2011 saw Mahamadou Issoufou win the elections and become president ([RFI 16/03](#)).
- Security: Until 2007, a Tuareg rebellion in the North East of Niger was a major concern ([BBC 2007](#)). Tuareg returns from Lybia of Tuaregs involved in the Kadhafi security forces may affect security in Niger ([AFP 19/10](#)).

Education

- The net school enrolment rate in 2008 was 58% ([UNDP 2008](#)).
- The gross school enrolment rate in 2003 was 42.6% in rural areas and 52.7% in urban zones ([UNESCO 2003](#)).
- Rates of girls attending school are steadily increasing, though boys continue to outnumber girls in the classroom. In 2006, 73 girls attended primary school for every 100 boys, increasing to 74/100 in 2007, 78/100 in 2008, 80/100 in 2009, and 82/100 in 2020 ([WB 2011](#)).

Media and Telecommunications

Media Overview ([InfoasAid 2011](#))

- Radio is the most popular method for receiving news and information in Niger. The most popular types of radio programming are news and current affairs updates. Community radios are nominally organized through the Community Radio Network.
- Main newspapers include Le Sahel, Le Republicain, and Roue De L'histoire. However, newspapers and magazines are less widely accessed than radio and television due to low national literacy rates.
- Niger has over 20 private radio stations, 129 community radio stations, one daily newspaper (though 84 registered private newspapers), and 5 TV channels.
- The main media outlets which run both radio and TV stations are ORTN (state media), Tenere, Sarraouina, and Anfani.
- Reliable listener and viewer figures in Niger are hard to come by; most radio and TV stations estimate (and in some cases exaggerate) their own figures.
- No figures are available for ownership of TV and radio sets nationally.
- Mobile phone use increased from 2,000 subscribers in 2000 to 3,805,592 in 2010 ([ITU 2010](#)).
- 35% of households have a mobile phone ([Tufts 03/11](#)).
- The four mobile phone companies (Airtel, Moov, Sahelcom and Orange) provide service across Niger's eight regions, with some claims of 100% coverage. However, there is almost no mobile coverage in the northeast desert (half of Niger's land area) and reliable figures for those covered by the mobile network are not available ([ITU 2010](#)).
- Mobile phones are being utilised for the distribution of cash transfers by humanitarian agencies.
- Only one in a hundred (1.1%) has access to a personal computer ([UNDP 2005](#)).
- Internet use outside of urban areas is low. Internet use is just 0.83 users per 100 inhabitants ([ITU 2010](#)), one of the lowest figures in the world.

Traditional channels of communication

- Traditional channels of communication, mostly through village elders, chiefs and Islamic leaders are important. Doctors and teachers are important community leaders and conduits of information, particularly in rural areas.
- A popular method of getting messages across on sensitive or taboo topics is to engage local theatre companies to write 'sketches', often used on community radios.

Freedom of Media

- A new media law was introduced in 2010 has introduced self-regulation of journalists for the first time, allowing for creation of the Nigerien Observatory for Media and Ethics and widespread access to Government information.
- Reporters without Borders note that Niger could become a regional model of good governance and respect for media freedom, but must first consolidate what has been achieved ([RSF 28/07](#)).

Key characteristics

Food Security Profile

Although the magnitude of poverty and food insecurity is most evident during years of drought, food insecurity in Niger is chronic. Low levels of food availability, high population growth, limited economic access to food due to low incomes relative to market prices, and inadequate health care have resulted in poor nutritional status for many Nigeriens, even in years of normal harvest (WB 2009).

With 2/3 of daily caloric consumption from cereals, cereal production, availability, and market performance are crucial determinants of food security (WB 2009). Grain accounts for a high share of total household expenditure and as almost all households are net purchasers of grains, fluctuations in grain production and prices impact household food security (SWG 2011). All households get at least 40% of food requirements through purchase. Poor and very poor households only grow 30% of their annual food requirement (SCF 2009). The cost of food is a heavy burden for very poor households: it accounts for 60%-75% of their entire expenditure in a normal year (SCF 2009).

Nutritional data show that most rural inhabitants usually experience seasonal food insecurity during the annual hungry season of June to September (SWG 2011).

Niger relies mainly (over 80% of total cereal availability) on its own domestic grain production, dominated by millet and sorghum. Agriculture is characterized by subsistence farming and production of rainfed food crops (SWG 2011).

Millet is the dominant staple food crop accounting for 76% of cereal production, followed by sorghum (22%). These crops are major determinants of both national food availability and rural household incomes (SWG 2011).

The vulnerability of households to food insecurity is highly variable even within the same communities. In agricultural zones, there is growing inequality in the distribution of productive assets (SWG 2011).

Wealthier households generate 9-15 times the revenue of poorer households. Wealthier households comprise about 25% of the population (compared to the very poor who comprise 30%), but possess half the cultivated land, 65% of the sheep and goats, and more than ¾ of the cattle. A similar process of growing inequality of income and wealth also exists in the pastoral and agro-pastoral zones, but there traditional systems of social solidarity help mitigate the effects (SWG 2011).

78% of the rural population relies on subsistence (mainly rainfed) agriculture and herding (SCF 2009).

Underlying Factors of Food Insecurity

Structural:

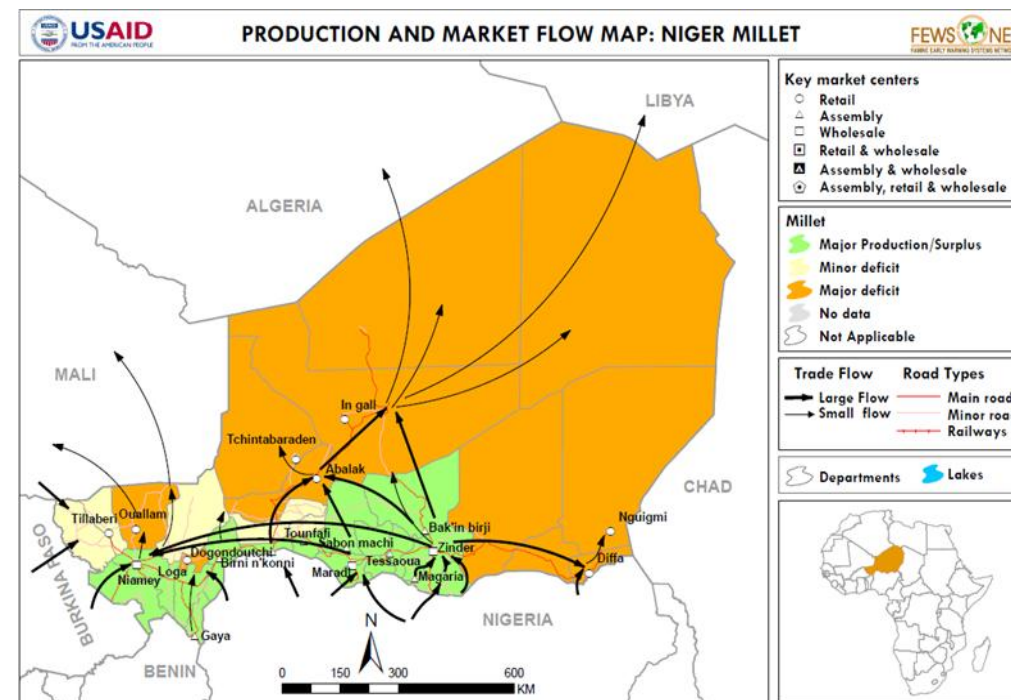
- Erratic rainfall, drought, agricultural production lows, and livestock mortality are the main causes of food insecurity in Niger. Successive droughts in 1973, 1984 and 1991 decimated the production capacity of agricultural and pastoral households (FEWS 2011).
- The depletion of natural resources and rapid population growth strain the capacities of agricultural and pastoral households to produce sufficient amounts of food even in periods of adequate rainfall. For one single year of deficit, several successive years of good harvests are necessary to recover (FEWS 2011).
- The depletion of pastoral resources is expressed in decreased livestock productivity linked with under-nourishment, high prevalence of animal disease, and a lack of capacity of pastoral households to meet increasing/high costs of sustaining livestock (FEWS 2011).
- Desertification and soil degradation, low soil fertility, unreliable and inconsistent rains, high levels of crop and livestock disease, and pest attack make agricultural activities risky. However, most small-scale farmers and herders (the majority of Nigeriens) rely on annual crops and grasses to meet basic food needs. Even in good years, many poorer farm families produce insufficient food to meet household nutritional needs for more than 3-6 months (SWG 2011).
- In some zones of Niger, up to half the landmass is totally unproductive because land degradation and erosion has resulted in hardpan formation. Extensive water runoff and flooding occur, destroying crops and increasing erosion. Few farmers have sufficient organic matter to maintain soil fertility; fewer still can afford artificial fertilizers. Many technical solutions require labour, which is constrained because much of the male workforce is absent for 65% of the year in search of income elsewhere (SWG 2011).

Socio-economic and economic:

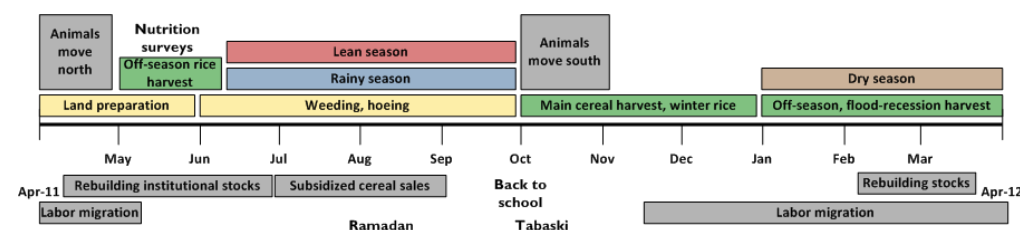
- The biggest factor worsening food insecurity is rural poverty in a context where the development of infrastructure and services is weak (FEWS 2011).
- Annual and seasonal highs of prices significantly affect the access of households to basic food supply (FEWS 2011).
- Because economic activities are limited, the only strategic alternative during food crises is urban migration which is cited as an essential element of their coping strategy (FEWS 2011).
- Over generations, the poorest farmers are losing land to better-off farmers. This is exacerbated during crises, due to the limited ability of poorer households to cope with shocks, and increasing inequality among rural households (SCF 2009).

Livelihoods

- Most middle-income and better-off households gain a large proportion of their income from temporary work, livestock farming, and cattle and sheep fattening. Income from the sale of agricultural produce is almost negligible for poorer households, but significant for middle-income and better-off households who can invest more in farming in terms of hired labour and resources (SCF 2009).
- Income from agricultural production mainly comes from the sale of groundnuts, and from small quantities of cowpea, sorrel and *wandzou* (SCF 2009).
- Livestock are the mainstay of cash earnings in the agricultural economy. Owning livestock, particularly cattle, determines the wealth or poverty of a household (SCF 2009).
- Pastoralists tend to rationalise livestock sales in periods when the market is not favourable (SCF 2009).
- Only the poorest pastoral households, with few animals, are unable to store grain for several months. They are most vulnerable to the high fluctuation of cereal prices on the markets (SCF 2009).
- Economic work migration is a major source of income for the poorest pastoralists. Poorer agro-pastoralists are more likely to do casual agricultural work for wealthier landowners in neighbouring areas (SCF 2009).
- Government data indicates that in April 2011 in 14 agro-pastoralist departments, breeders with small herds lost on average 90% of their livestock during the 2009-2010 drought against 25% for pastoralists with big herds. People who lost most of their assets have reduced both quantity and quality of foods being consumed (IRIN 31/10).
- In the south, there is some redistribution of cattle from wealthier to poorer households through loans usually of bulls/oxen whereby the borrower keeps the young animal for up to three years and fattens it for eventual sale. The borrower uses the animal for labour and benefits from a portion of the sale price (SCF 2009).
- Economic migrants used to send remittances home to their families (IOM 20/10). Since returning to Niger, they have met with extreme destitution and unemployment (CARE 26/10). Their homecoming has increased competition for local resources and created an additional burden on communities which are chronically food insecure (IOM 25/10, WFP 28/10).
- 86% of returnees had been providing remittances sufficient to support five family members (IOM 25/10).
- In Tahoua, which hosts the majority of returns, household food insecurity has been exacerbated by the majority of returnees being jobless or without the financial means to engage in self-employment. This has also negatively affected chronic poverty in Zinder, Tillabery, Maradi and Diffa (IOM 25/10).
- However, households in Tahoua have reported that many returnees have expressed the intention to go back to Libya and other destinations to seek employment (Tufts 03/11).



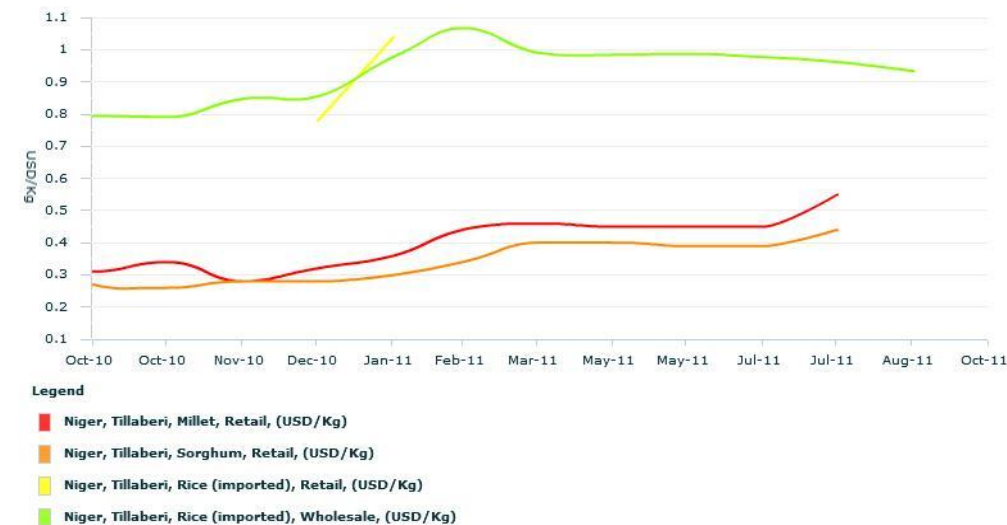
Seasonal calendar and critical events timeline



(Source: FEWS 9/2011)

Markets and Prices

- Niamey is the most important national market and an international trade centre (FEWS 2011).
- A key reason for high price instability in Niger is the inflexible regional supply of food combined with limited capacity of the region to respond to increased food needs caused by climatic shocks (CGDEV 2008).
- Grain market performance in Niger follows market performance in Benin and Nigeria. Nigeria supplies 75% of Niger's millet and sorghum imports and 35% of total maize imports. As a result, potential and actual imports from Nigeria play an important role in grain market performance in Niger (CGDEV 2008).
- Millet prices in Tillabery went up by 21% (April-May) and remained high through August (ECHO 31/10). In Zinder, local millet prices, after a sharp rise (13%) between April and May, fell by 17% in August (ECHO 31/10). Prices for imported rice in Zinder showed a significant increase (+6%), and prices in Tillabery a smaller increase (AVI 2011). This shows the overall situation – outside of the immediate harvest time - of lower or stable to low prices for local cereals (millet and sorghum) and high and increasing prices for imported cereals (especially rice and maize) (AVI 2011)
- Tillabery and Zinder markets are among the most expensive in country (AVI 2011).
- Due to the rainfall uncertainty, wholesalers have withheld their millet stocks in July-August. In August, the millet prices were higher than last year at the same period on markets: Tillabery (+4%), Niamey (+3%) and Dosso (+2%). In western Niger, there has been a decrease in maize imports from Burkina Faso, reducing the availabilities in this area (FAO 09/2011).
- Traders from Niger have begun buying millet from Nigerian markets particularly along southern borders, further increasing demand and prices. The millet price in Nigeria is high in drought-affected areas. In Nigeria's Geidam/Yobe state, a cross-border market with Niger, millet prices were approximately NGN 5,400 per 100 kg (US\$ 33) in mid-October, compared to NGN 4,000 per 100 kg (US\$ 25) at the same time last year. This is attributable to increased demand from the Nigerien traders and increased commodity speculations due to dry spells (FEWS 31/10).



Source: FAO 2011

Food Insecurity in 2011

Current information depicts a contradictory and changing picture of food needs across Niger. Greater clarification on food security needs and current shortfalls is vital before informed decisions on emergency food assistance can be made.

What can be said is that Niger's current food security situation is characterised by three certainties: measurable food deficits; lower food production than normal in specific regions, and existing high levels of food insecurity.

Food deficits

- Crop assessments confirm a **national cereal deficit** in October 2011 of around 500,000 tonnes or 14% of the annual food needs for 2011/2012. This deficit is worse than those experienced during the food crises during 2005 and 2010 (WFP 28/10, OCHA 31/10); the food crisis in 2005 affected 3 million people and the 2010 food crisis left 3.3 million people severely food insecure (IFRC 31/10).
- Official Ministry of Agriculture data has financed a market-gardening input support program to compensate for a possible national cereal deficit up to 400,000 tonnes as part of contingency planning (FEWS 25/10), leaving a potential gap in cereal stocks.

- Some sources indicate that the overall needs for *emergency* food assistance to Niger are projected to be close to the annual average for the 2011/2012 consumption year (FEWS 25/10). What this obscures is that roughly 3.4 million people are annually vulnerable to severe food insecurity (FEWS 25/10).

Lower than normal food production

- The current food deficit has been caused in part by a cereal output for 2011 of 4.9 million tonnes which is measurably below 2010 production of 5.6 million tonnes (ECHO 31/10).

Ongoing levels of food insecurity

- Food supplies are already insecure in 85% of rural villages (GAA 31/10).
- Over half the population suffers from chronic food insecurity, and one in ten are extremely food insecure (SWG 2011).
- The return of migrants from Libya has also increased the demand for food (USAID 30/09).
- Every year, over 3 million people are affected by food insecurity at a moderate, severe or extreme degree. The most affected households are the ones unable to stock food because of low income or few production; female-headed and single-parent households, living with limited income (from craft industry or wood selling for example), and/or households owning less than 3 cultivable hectares or less than two cattle heads (FEWS 31/10).

Coping Strategies

- Traditional coping strategies, especially in rural areas affected by food insecurity are proving to be inadequate.
- Common strategies used by households to respond to natural shocks include migration, asset and livestock sales, and borrowing money. In 2005, food aid was rated as the most common strategy used to mitigate the effects of shocks, especially during drought when almost ¼ of households cite food aid as the main coping strategy. Severe shocks also leave households more vulnerable to future food insecurity: 60% of households were still in debt after the 2005 food crisis (WB 2009).
- Coping strategies for vulnerable populations include reducing the number of daily meals and selling assets, further eroding resilience to shocks (SWG 2011).
- People are already migrating to urban areas, without waiting for the harvest. The situation is worsened by the fact that food prices are increasing and not falling, as they normally do post-harvest (GAA 31/10).
- Inhabitants of Tahoua have already adopted the *lamtse* coping strategy, which includes consuming millet grains that have not yet matured directly from the stipe without harvesting (OCHA 31/10).

2011 Food insecure areas

Food deficits

- Cereal deficit varies across affected regions.

Region	Predicted food deficit
Tillabery	164,146 tonnes
Agadez	123,576 tonnes
Diffa	68,115 tonnes
Tahoua	18,357 tonnes
Zinder	10,052 tonnes

(OCHA 31/10).

- Tillabery faces a deficit of 164,146 tonnes, Agadez 123,576 tonnes and Diffa 68,115 tonnes. Tahoua has a negative balance of 18,357 tonnes and Zinder 10,052 tonnes (OCHA 31/10).
- 500 out of 606 agricultural villages in Diffa are deficient in October 2011 as compared to 129 in 2010 (OCHA 31/10).
- Almost 4 in 10 villages in Maradi are deficient according to the last evaluation by the Ministry of Agriculture (OCHA 31/10).
- Localised cereal deficits will be concentrated in Tillabery where many households have switched from cereal production to shorter cycle cash crops (e.g. cowpea, melon, and squash) (FEWS 25/10).

Lower than normal food production

- Food production is expected to be lower than usual in regions of Western Niger; Tahoua and Tillabery anticipate a major decrease in production (IRIN 31/10).
- In Tahoua and Tillabery, drought is affecting millet production and pests are destroying cowpea crops resulting in almost complete crop failures for populations there (Tufts 3/11).
- Flooding in mid-August affected nearly 14,000 people in Tillabery and Maradi, destroying over 100,000 hectares of crops and 1,000 houses (USAID 30/09).
- Due to climate variability two in nine villages may see significantly below average agricultural production. More than half of them are agricultural villages in Tillabery and Tahoua, potentially leading to above average vulnerability to food insecurity in 2011/12 (FEWS).
- At the middle of the rainy season, normal to good vegetation conditions were observed throughout the country except for Zinder and Tillabery where a rainfall deficit in June affected the vegetation development (ECHO 31/10).
- In northern Tillabery, millet has been blighted by caterpillars and compromised by little rain. The poor harvests are a heavy blow for communities already weakened

by the 2010 food crisis (ICRC 24/06). In Tillabery, further crop losses of up to 15% due to grasshopper attacks are likely (FEWS 25/10).

- Early prospects for the 2011 cereal crop, for harvest from September are uncertain due to the late start of the rainy season resulting in replanting in several regions. However, significant rains in August improved crop growing conditions, but continued rains remain crucial for crops to reach full maturity. Pastures have improved significantly, but regeneration has been hindered by the dry spells in parts of Tahoua and Diffa (GIEWS 12/09).

Food insecurity

- Food assistance needs will be above average in Tillabery, particularly in the agro-pastoral areas. Acute food insecurity is forecast to peak between June and August 2012, but is anticipated to not exceed crisis levels (IPC Phase 3) (FEWS 25/10).
- The food security situation is generally good in non deficit areas due to food availability in the markets in relation to the harvest period. Vulnerable households have accessed government subsidies on millet and sorghum; free food distributions in food insecure departments of Ouallam, Téra, and Tillabery are further improving access to food for poor and vulnerable households. Nevertheless, GIEWS anticipates substantial shortfall in food supply specifically in Zinder (ECHO 31/10).
- In Tillabery, which survives on small scale subsistence farming, herding and commerce, returns of migrants have aggravated extreme poverty and hunger, affecting more than half of Tillabery's 2.5 million inhabitants who are threatened with food insecurity this year (IOM 25/10).
- In Tahoua, which has seen the majority of returns, household food insecurity has been exacerbated both by the sharp drop in remittances and because an overwhelming majority of returnees have neither jobs nor the financial means to engage in self-employment activities (IOM 25/10).

The pastoral situation is not at high risk except in areas where the onset of rainfall has been delayed and followed by localized dry spells: Tahoua, Tillabery and Dosso in Niger have been affected (FAO 09/2011).

Lessons Learned

- Pastoral households face structural difficulties to maintain an adequate size of livestock because they are unable to replace livestock lost during droughts. The costs to acquire and care for livestock have increased exceeding capacities of vulnerable populations. All of this puts vulnerable populations in a permanent precarious situation where some can only survive by selling natural resources such as wood and straw or by working for big livestock owners (FEWS 2011).
- Populations living in the outskirts of the agricultural zones and the desert are most confronted with economic shocks linked to natural hazards (OCHA 2011).

- Food aid has served as an important Government resource and is considered to be integral to the provision of safety net interventions, especially emergency response (WB 2009). However, early indications are that government resources will not be sufficient to address need, especially if post-harvest food insecurity spreads nationwide.
- Evidence suggests that the targeting of food aid has been either non-existent or has focused on helping all those affected by drought rather than only poor households affected by drought (WB 2009).
- Although the need to support poor and food insecure households is substantial, safety net programs are small, receive limited government funding, and are designed for emergency food crises (WB 2009).
- Payment in kind to agricultural labourers by middle-income and better-off employers is a key food source for poor and very poor households (SCF 2009).
- The increasing frequency of droughts in the Sahel means that communities have not had time to recover from the last food crisis and to replenish household food stocks and build up their herds of livestock (WFP 28/10).
- Implications on food insecure households:
 - Diets are increasingly composed of cereal grain.
 - Animal products are almost absent in the diet, posing a serious risk to nutrition.
 - Poor households, even if they own land, are obliged to neglect their fields to work for wealthier families.
 - Alternatively they migrate to other areas, to earn enough income to survive, greatly reducing their agricultural production. In crisis years, this problem worsens (SWG 2011).

Key priorities

Most affected areas

- Tillabery, Tahoua, Diffa

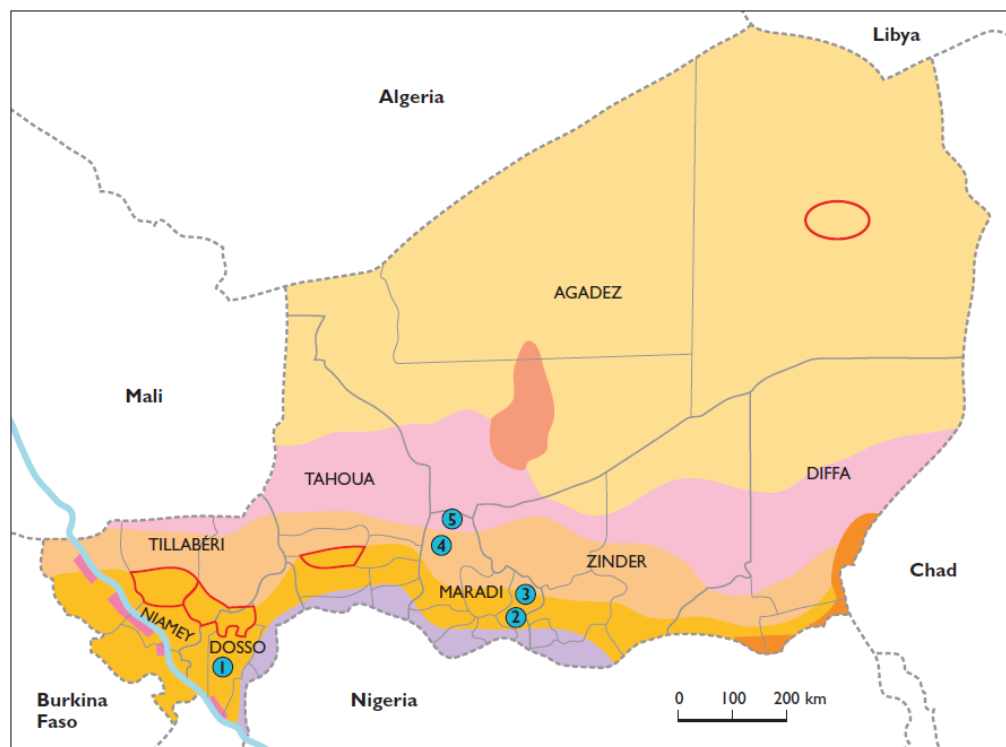
Most affected groups

- Women and girls
- Severely food insecure households
- Returnees and their families and communities hosting them
- Pastoralist populations who have been unable to rebuild stocks

Recommendations for intervention

- Provision of emergency food supplies
- Support agro-pastoralists with restocking
- Cash for work and/or food for work
- Reinforcement of the cereal banks

Map Livelihood Zones



Key

Livelihood zones

- Desert
- Bilma oases sub-zone: dates – caravan trade
- Air mountains cultivation
- Pastoral
- Agropastoral
- Rainfed agriculture
- Sub-zones with high work-outmigration
- Southern irrigated cash-cropping
- Kamadougou – Lake Chad irrigated and flood retreat cultivation
- Niger river irrigated rice

Livelihood zones studied in this research

- 1 Dozzo central agriculture zone (Djerma)
- 2 Tessaoua south-central zone (Hausa)
- 3 Tessaoua north settled zone (Hausa)
- 4 Dakoro agropastoral zone (Katsinawa)
- 5 Dakoro pastoral zone (Bororo)

---- International border

— Regional border

— District border

— Niger river

Source: FEWS NET

Source: SCF 2009

Cash Transfer Programming in Niger

Since 2005, there has been an exponential growth in the use of cash transfers (CT) across the humanitarian sector in Niger (CaLP 2011). In 2010, up to 15 different humanitarian agencies used CTs as a mechanism to help people cope with the food and nutrition crisis in Niger. The total households served with cash or vouchers in Niger in 2010 exceeded 165,000, or over 1 million people (7% of the population).

Cash transfer programming in response to the evolving food and nutrition crisis was made possible by sustained functioning of regional markets and commercial imports of surplus food from non-drought affected regions elsewhere in West Africa.

CTs and vouchers in Niger are used as an alternative to food aid to cover entitlement gaps that arise from market price volatility and/or food and fodder production deficits. They are also used increasingly to support early recovery in pastoral and agricultural contexts. Because Niger is land-locked and highly dependent on imports there are clear cost-saving advantages to using cash compared to in-kind aid.

In 2011, the Niger Government launched two major cash-based interventions in the most vulnerable parts of the country. Firstly, an emergency 6-month CT programme was initiated in response to the food security crisis announced in early October. Secondly, a 6-year, US\$ 70 million social protection programme funded by the World Bank was launched. From 11 October 2011 to 30 June 2017, activities will include (i) a social safety net system (3.2 million US\$), (ii) a direct-cash transfer programme for food security (48.6 million US\$), (iii) a *cash-for-work* programme (10.5 million US\$), and supporting costs (7.7 million US\$).

There is extensive global and regional evidence on how CTs are an effective tool in responding to food crises and other humanitarian needs. Studies have shown that CTs have the potential to address underlying factors of vulnerability to food insecurity and disease and thus play a role in preventing acute humanitarian crises before they occur (DFID 2011). More and more, cash-based interventions are being used to support sustainable livelihoods, enable restocking in pastoral contexts, reduce negative coping strategies, and support populations during the lean season.

CaLP Cash and Voucher Technical Working Group (CTWG)

As CTs continue to be an appropriate and effective tool to support vulnerable populations in Niger, it is important for national and international actors to consolidate lessons learned, harmonise tools and approaches, and build local capacities to prepare, plan and manage CT programmes. To facilitate this effort, in February 2011 humanitarian actors in Niger established a Cash and Voucher Technical Working Group (CTWG).

The CTWG includes participation of organization with experience in CT programming and those looking to start these programs: NGOs, UN, the Red Cross, Government institutions, local microfinance institutions and other interested parties. CTWG members meet once a month to share information, discuss challenges and solutions and coordinate on technical and policy issues related to CT programming, with a focus on the response to the humanitarian crisis in Niger.

Key Issues and Gaps

The CTWG has already achieved some key milestones, including assisting the Government to develop a framework for cash-for-work standards in Niger. In 2011, the CTWG established sub-working groups to undertake data collection on targeting methods and on market monitoring methods and methods of analysis, with the objective of sharing information, developing standards and harmonising approaches.

The CTWG has been active in providing inputs into the design and implementation of the Niger Government's CT programmes. Also, officials from neighboring countries (Mali and Burkina Faso) seeking to set up similar programmes have approached CaLP with requests related to designing such programmes. As such, there is a strong need to build national and regional capacity to effectively design, implement and evaluate cash based programming so that the rapid uptake of cash transfers as a mechanism for humanitarian response is balanced by strong technical capacity in order to ensure good quality programming.

However, although cash-based interventions have advantages over food-based interventions, they are dependent on sound analysis and monitoring of the price and availability of goods on local and regional markets. Cash-based interventions are generally preferred if food is available on the local markets, distribution channels and marketing systems are functioning well, and there is little inflationary pressure (CGDEV 2008). Given the low production of affected areas, specific attention to the Niger context must be taken into account.

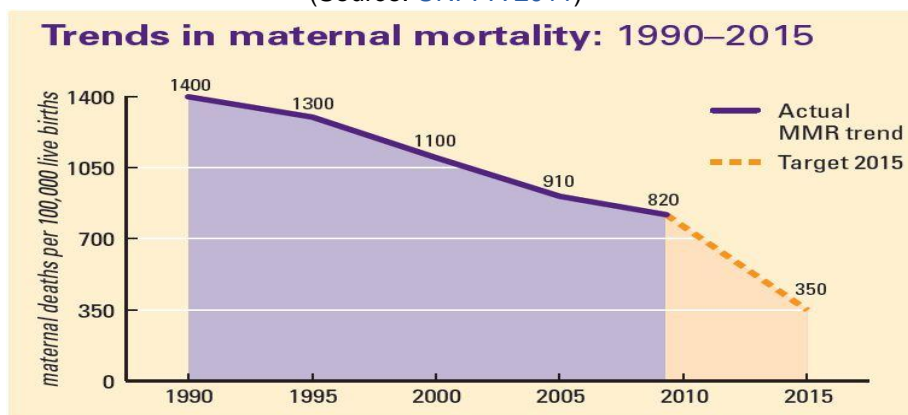
Key characteristics

- Niger has the highest fertility rate in sub-Saharan Africa and access to reproductive health services and information is limited (UNPFA 2011).
- Distance between health centres, especially in rural areas, transport costs, a preference for traditional healers, and concerns by male family members for women to visit unknown service providers has stymied access to and take up of health care (UNICEF 14/07).
- Only 48% of Nigeriens have access to primary health care (WV 2007). Yet, the expansion of rural health posts is working to address this gap care (UNICEF 14/07).

Morbidity and Mortality

- In 2009, **<5 mortality** was 160 per 1,000 live births, an improvement over the 1990 rate of 305 per 1,000 (UNICEF 2009). However, one in six children dies before their fifth birthday, and the country's child mortality rate is the 11th highest in the world (SCF 2011).
- Infectious disease are primary causes of mortality and morbidity. Meningitis, cholera, and measles are major contributors, with **malaria** the main cause of morbidity and mortality in Niger. Malaria and malaria deaths are on the increase. During the first nine months of 2010, 2,633,197 persons were diagnosed with malaria and 3,371 died, more than all diagnosed cases and deaths in 2009 (OCHA 2011), a fourfold increase diagnosed cases since 2002 (WHO 2007).
- Data from 2006-2009 indicates that 78% of households owned one treated bed net, and 43% of <5s slept under treated nets (UNICEF 2009).
- Niger has witnessed a marked reduction in **maternal mortality** since 2000, in spite of this improvement, it retains one of the highest rates in Africa (UNPFA 2011). Maternal mortality in 2009 was 650 cases per 100,000 (UNICEF 2009).
- **Antenatal care** coverage for one visit was 46%, but for mothers having four visits, rates dropped to only 15%; only 1/3 of all births were attended by a skilled health expert (UNPFA 2011).

(Source: UNFPA 2011)



- **Tuberculosis** prevalence is at 328 per 100,000 (WHO 2011).
- **Measles** outbreaks consistently begin in the dry season and decline at the onset of the seasonal rains (NIH 2010). Before intensive measles control activities began in 2004/05, measles was a major cause of childhood death and disability. Since 2005, the number of cases/fatalities has decreased from 40,000 cases and 500 deaths in 2003 to 478 cases and 4 deaths in 2006 (UNICEF 2006).
- In January 2006, Niger was taken off the **polio** endemic country list, having successfully interrupted indigenous wild poliovirus transmission for 12 months. Since then, Niger has had cases of polio imported from northern Nigeria. But through adherence to international outbreak response protocols, Niger has prevented these polioviruses from re-establishing themselves. Even with a decrease in new cases in northern Nigeria in 2010, Niger will continue to be at risk until all transmission from Nigeria stops (PolioGEI 2011).
- **HIV** prevalence is 0.8% for adults aged 15-49 (UNICEF 2009), compared to an average of 2% in 12 regional countries, increasing to 3.6% in Nigeria and 3.4% in Côte d'Ivoire (UNAIDS 2011).

Maternal & Child Health

- Rates of exclusive **breastfeeding** are low overall. Data from 2005-2009 indicate that only 10% of children <6 months were exclusively breastfed (UNICEF 2009), a decrease compared with 2006 data showing that 14% of children <6 months breastfed (INS 2007). Data from the 2010 child survival survey shows an increase with 27% of Nigerien mothers exclusively breastfeeding children <6 months (UNICEF 20/07).
- National **immunization** of one year olds in 2009 included vaccination coverage of: BCG 78%, DPT1B 82% and DPT3B 70%, polio 71%, measles 73%, and HepB 70% (UNICEF 2009). Immunization of newborns against tetanus was 84% (UNICEF 2009). However, less than a third of all (29%) of children 12 to 23 months are *fully* vaccinated against tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, and measles (INS 2007).
- Nearly all Nigerien children aged 6-59 months have full vitamin A supplementation coverage (UNICEF 2009).
- Women have an average of 7.7 children (OCHA 2011).
- Overall contraception prevalence in country is 11% (UNICEF 2009). Social norms and limited access to reproductive health services/information reduce use of modern contraceptives. Among married women rates of use only increased from 4.6% in 1998 to 5% in 2010 (UNPFA 2011).
- Only 17% of births take place in a health facility, and only a third of births are assisted by a trained health professional. Assisted deliveries decreased from 44% in 1998 to 33% in 2006. Three quarters of rural women give birth without trained professional assistance, compared to 21% in urban areas (INS 2007).

Cholera

- Children are more vulnerable to cholera, as they dehydrate faster, and malnourished children are especially at risk (UNICEF 11/10).
- There are currently three major cross border cholera epidemic outbreaks in West and Central Africa: the Lake Chad Basin (Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger), the West Congo Basin (DRC, Congo and CAR) and Lake Tanganyika (DRC and Burundi) (UNICEF 11/10).
- The size and scale of the outbreaks mean the region is facing one of the biggest epidemics in its history. Case fatality rates are 2.3% to 4.7% (UNICEF 11/10).

Cholera affected areas of Niger: 1 January 2011-12 October 2011

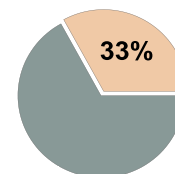


(Source: UNCS, GAUL, OCHA 13/10)

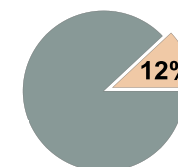
Nutrition

- One in three children <5 is either moderately or severely underweight. 12% is wasted and 46% stunted (UNICEF 2009).
- Roughly half of all children in Niger and 61% of children age 12 to 47 months are too small for their age (INS 2007).
- Unacceptably high rates of chronic malnutrition persist for children of all age groups following an increase from 48% in June 2010 to 51% in June 2011 (UNICEF 20/07).
- Even in a normal harvest year, nearly one in every two children <5 is chronically malnourished, and one child in ten is acutely malnourished (SCF 2009).

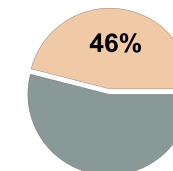
Children <5 underweight



Children <5 wasted



Children <5 stunted



(Source: UNICEF 2009)

- The prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) among children <5 has decreased to one in eight children dying in 2010 from one in five in 2005. However, GAM remains above the emergency threshold of 15% (UNICEF 27/06).
- Evidence suggests the prevalence of GAM is increasing. GAM among children <5 is back to the levels experienced in June 2009 (12.3%), registering a decrease of more than three points (16.7%) from the last survey (November 2010), but remaining above the emergency threshold for seven of the country's eight regions (UNICEF 20/07).
- Children aged six to 23 months account for a large share of the nutritional burden with one in five children affected by GAM and 4.2% of them by severe acute malnutrition (SAM). These figures have dropped from June 2010 but remain well above those that prevailed in June 2009 before a serious food and nutrition crisis that struck the whole nation in 2010 (UNICEF 20/07).
- Causes of malnutrition include: inadequate sanitation, poor public health and hygiene, and poor childcare practices such as delaying breastfeeding, the early introduction of water and semi-solid foods, and weaning with a nutritionally poor millet-based gruel (SCF 2009).
- In Tessaoua district, 2/3 of all households (about half the population) cannot afford a balanced diet, even when sufficient food is available locally (SCF 2009).
- Access to free milk through livestock ownership significantly contributes to a healthy diet and reduces child malnutrition. However, access to milk is more difficult for the poorest households in the south of the country, which, together with the higher levels of poverty and sub-optimal feeding and weaning practices, helps explain the high levels of child malnutrition in the south (SCF 2009).
- Fewer than half of all households consume iodized salt (46%) (UNICEF 2009).

Current Situation

- The GAM rate of 16.7% is up from 12.3% in 2009 (OCHA 2011).
- Although national rates of SAM have dropped, Diffa (22.1%), Maradi (19.7%), Zinder (17.8%), and Tahoua (15.8%) are cited as exhibiting the highest levels of severe acute malnutrition rates (OCHA 2011).
- In 2011, Niger has recorded 2,130 cases and 50 deaths from cholera (IFRC 24/10). Affected areas are Tillabery, Maradi Zinder and Diffa regions. The source of contamination is the Niger River and its tributaries. With the floods caused by heavy rainfall, the situation may worsen if interventions are delayed. This outbreak is affecting vulnerable populations with minimal access to potable water (IRFC 22/09).
- None of the cholera outbreak sites so far are located in flooded districts or in areas which accommodated people left homeless (IFRC 24/10).
- The harvest and pastoral season in late 2010 did not yield positive nutritional results for children; more than 15 children in 100 still suffer from acute malnutrition. The government of Niger has called on the international community to intensify mobilization efforts to curb alarming levels of child malnutrition and its structural and underlying causes (UNICEF 20/07).

Key priorities

Most affected areas

- Diffa, Maradi, Zinder, Tahoua, and Tillabery,
- Urban areas of Niamey
- Populations dependent on the Niger River for their water sources

Most affected groups

- Children <5
- Malnourished populations

Recommendations for intervention

- Provide emergency health services, especially in cholera affected communities
- Ensure continued immunization
- Monitor possible outbreaks
- Provide medication and care to persons with chronic illnesses

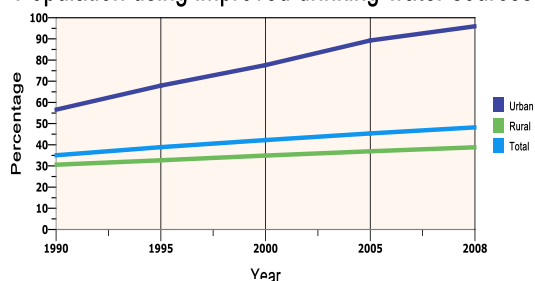
Key characteristics

Although 3/4 of Niger is covered by desert, the country has valuable renewable water sources including about 31 billion cubic metres of surface water, 2.5 billion cubic metres of groundwater in natural aquifers, and 2,000 billion cubic metres of non-renewable water. Only 20% of the renewable sources and almost none of the non-renewable source are being utilised (IRIN 2010).

Access to improved water and sanitation

- Nearly half the population (48%) has access to improved drinking water sources (96% urban, 39% rural), while those using improved sanitation facilities is minimal at 9% (34% urban, 4% rural) (UNICEF 2008).
- Where there is no access to improved water sources, water is collected from unimproved wells, the Niger River, and standing bodies of water such as ponds (UNICEF 2006).

Population using improved drinking-water sources



(Source: WHO, 2011)

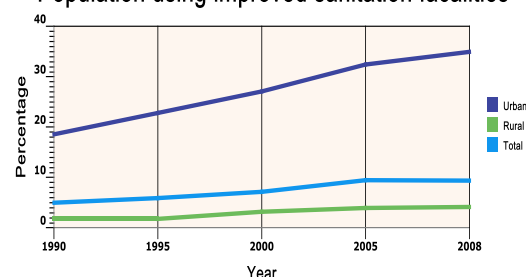
- 64% of the rural population does not have access to safe drinking water, relying on pond water that is often contaminated with guinea worms, animal waste, and chemicals (USAID 2010).

- One in ten Nigeriens (7% urban, 10% rural) has access to an improved drinking water source more than 30 minutes away (UNICEF/WHO 2008). In some cases, key informants

suggest that they may need to make the 20 minute water collection trip up to 15 times a day to collect necessary amounts of water to meet household needs (UNICEF 2006).

- Water collection points and water collection tools are contaminated with animal matter and bacteria (UNICEF 2006).
- Water shortages impact upon human, livestock and agricultural needs (IRIN 2010).
- Water-borne diseases account for 20% of <5 mortality (UNICEF 2008).
- Overall, four of five infant and childhood deaths in rural Niger are linked to exposure to contaminated water, lack of hy-

Population using improved sanitation facilities



(Source: WHO, 2011)

giene, and inadequate sanitation (UNICEF 2006).

- Cholera risk factors are poverty, lack of latrine use and dependence on the Niger River by populations living along the banks. The epidemiological situation worsens when people use polluted water, ignore hygiene rules and defecate in the open air, factors which are main causes of cholera spreading (IFRC 24/10).

Current Situation

- Since March, there has been an outbreak of cholera in the Lake Chad Basin countries and along the Niger River in Mali and Niger (IFRC 24/10).
- Vibrio cholerae* is the infectious agent of the cholera outbreak which is spreading rapidly through the use of contaminated objects. Source of contamination is the Niger River, along with its tributaries and water pools. The water fetched from these places is used to cover all washing needs (IFRC 24/10).
- Poor hygiene practices are also pointed as a factor causing the spread of the disease (IFRC 24/10).
- Poor access to improved water and sanitation sources is a major challenge in the fight against the outbreak (UNICEF 01/09).

Most affected areas:

- Cholera affected areas: Tillabery, Maradi, Zinder, Diffa, Niamey, Dosso and Tahoua
- Flood affected areas: Tillabery and Agadez

Most affected groups:

- Communities with minimal access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities
- Households with poor hygiene practices living in high density areas
- Migrating populations

Recommendation for intervention:

- Increase access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas
- Distribute water treatment and water storage materials, i.e. purification tablets, disinfecting materials for latrines, and jerry cans
- Provide water for migrating populations (human and animal)
- Rehabilitate damaged and out dated water pumps/wells, maintain current pumps and other improved sources
- Distribute WASH and NFI items to flood and cholera affected communities
- Monitor the situation in non-cholera affected but flooded areas to enable quick response to cholera outbreaks.
- Hygiene education focused specifically on how to limit the spread of disease.

Key characteristics

Children

- Children < 15 account for about half of the country's population (UNICEF 2010).
- Most children live in rural areas with limited access to education; only 38% of children attended primary school between 2005 and 2009 (UNICEF 2009). Fewer girls attend school than boys (WV 2007).
- Child labour is a major concern with 43% of children aged 5-14 years involved in some form of work. Trading on the streets, girls are exposed to harassment and sexual abuse.
- To earn a daily income children turn to prostitution. They frequently have little knowledge of HIV and other STDs and limited means to protect them (UNICEF 2010).
- 32% of children are married by age 15 (INS 2007).

Women

- Niger's rural women are among the country's poorest people; they have little economic power, are almost entirely dependent on the land for their livelihoods, and their ability to access land depends on their relationships to male family members. If those relationships end due to death, marriage, or divorce, women risk losing their means of survival (USAID 2010).
- Despite Constitutional provisions for women's rights, traditional belief in the submission of women to men is deeply rooted in Nigerien women (Afrol). 70% of surveyed women cite it normal that their husbands, fathers and brothers regularly beat, rape and humiliate them (IRIN 2007). The frequency of the crimes and impunity granted to the attackers partly explain the broad social acceptance of it, activists say. Rape is increasingly common in Niamey (IRIN 2007).
- Many women are part of polygamous families, mothers traditionally have fewer rights over their children than fathers do irrespective of the laws in place to protect women's rights (SCF 2010)
- Niger is a source, transit, and destination country for children and women trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation (SCF 2011).
- The rate of female genital mutilation (FGM/C) decreased by more than half from 1998-2006, from 5.8% to 2% nationally (EDSN MIC III). However, in Tillabery, Diffa and Niamey, FGM/C impacts about 66% of women (UNICEF 2009).
- Fetching water for drinking, cooking, bathing and other uses is the responsibility of women and girls (UNICEF 2006a). This interrupts girls' education and adversely affects women's health, contributing to low birth weights (UNICEF 2006b).

Human Rights

- 8,800 to 43,000 Nigeriens live under conditions of traditional slavery (SCF 2011).
- Widespread human rights abuses in the north of the country during 2007 were cited as a major human rights concern, including deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians, especially in Tuareg communities (AI 2007).

Land Rights

- The 1993 Rural Code decentralizes land administration and allows for registration of customary land rights, but confusion over what rights can be registered, and the lack of capacity to manage land registration, has caused an increase in land disputes and increased risk that those with less power to assert claims, such as women and pastoralists, will lose land rights (USAID 2010).
- In principle and under law, women and men have equal rights to land and other natural resources. However, in practice, rural women are among the country's poorest people and their ability to access land depends on their relationships to male family members (USAID 2010).

Current Situation

- Some 1.5 million Tuaregs have traditionally lived in Niger, Mali, Algeria, Libya and Burkina Faso. The Tuareg rebellions shook Mali and Niger in the 1990s and early 2000s, with a resurgence between 2006 and 2009, which caused tens of thousands of Tuaregs to take refuge in Libya. Hundreds of armed Tuaregs from Mali and Niger who fought for the toppled Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi have started to return to their home nations, security sources said, raising fears of conflict. Locals have expressed fear of these fighters since they left Libya, warning that their return with Libyan heavy weaponry might benefit Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which originated in Algeria and operates in several countries (AFP 29/08).
- Returns of Nigeriens from Libya and Côte d'Ivoire is deteriorating security conditions as well as disrupting the flow of remittances, an important source of income for families (FAO May-Aug 2011).
- Both climate change and food insecurity are causes of inter-community clashes in Niger (UNHCR 2011).

Key priorities

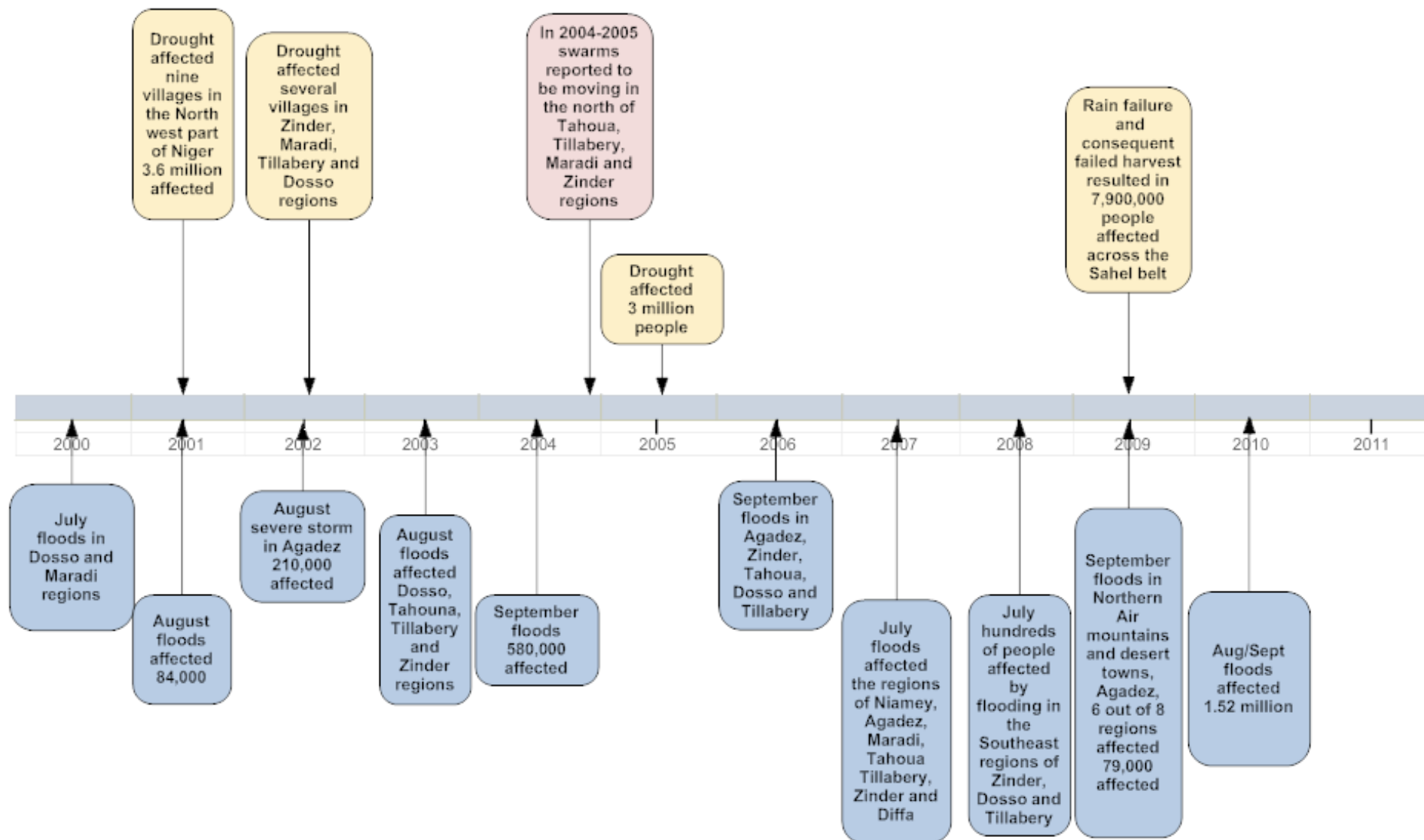
Most affected areas

- Tillabery, Diffa, and Niamey
- Communities hosting large numbers of returnees from Libya and Côte d'Ivoire

Most affected groups

- Children <5
- Women and girls

Natural Disaster Timeline



Key background documents

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The **infoasaid** project is a DfID funded Internews/BBC WST consortium that wants to help humanitarian organizations integrate two-way communication into their emergency programs. Among other tools for humanitarian agencies, infoasaid is producing over 20 media and telecommunications landscape guides to developing countries that are vulnerable to humanitarian crises. For more information, visit: <http://infoasaid.org>



The **Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP)** is a consortium of international NGOs that aims to promote appropriate, timely and quality cash and voucher programming in humanitarian response and preparedness. Originating from the will to gather the lessons learnt from the Tsunami emergency response in 2005, the CaLP is today composed by Oxfam GB, the British Red Cross, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Action Against Hunger / ACF International. For more information, visit: www.cashlearning.org